

# FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/01

Reading

## Key Messages

To score full marks in **Question 1**:

- The answers should contain clear, precise and well-constructed sentences.
- Candidates should pay attention to the marks available to be sure whether the required answers are simple ones or complex/detailed ones with multiple points to cover.
- Candidates should concentrate on responding precisely to the wording of questions.

**Question 2** answers require comparison and contrast between Text 1 and Text 2. Thoughts and ideas should be organised and written in a cohesive fashion using relevant connectives.

## General comments

Overall, candidates performed well on this paper and most candidates demonstrated their comprehension of the texts and tasks. Many candidates showed their ability to scan, analyse and evaluate relevant information from the text for each question with a clear and appropriate style of language for their answers.

However, some candidates did not fully address the questions and there were a number of partial answers. Candidates should pay attention to the marks available for each question in order to know how much information is required to answer fully. Some questions required a simple answer indicated by 1 mark available, but some required more complex answers indicated by the 2 or 3 available marks. Also, some candidates copied their answers from the text directly rather than paraphrase them in their own words.

Candidates are also reminded that they should use a relevant and consistent style of language for their answers, rather than mixing different styles of language.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

Generally, the questions were answered adequately, especially questions requiring simple and straightforward answers, such as **(a)**, **(b)**, **(c)** and **(e)**. Candidates also answered question **(h)** well, writing what the method of drawing snow in the old paintings was and discussing how they differed from the method used in western paintings.

However, some answers to more stretching questions, such as **(d)** and **(k)**, lacked adequate explanation or discussion. Question **(d)** asked candidates to discuss, in their own words, how the relationship between music and sculpture was described. Most candidates answered correctly that if you could freeze music like ice, it would become sculpture, but failed to explore and explain further that a silent moment in music is like empty space surrounding a sculpture, and that if there is no empty space around a sculpture, then there is no meaning in a sculpture.

Some candidates answered question **(k)** inadequately. Candidates were asked to find at least three examples of metaphorical expressions of 'things that can be seen' and 'blank', and explain them in their own words. The following answers could be given to this question. '텅 빈 하늘 같은 여백 위에 뜬 달은 그 휘황함이 더욱 형상을 아름답게 보인다.', '작은 대나무 가지라도 아지랑이처럼 아득한 공간을 배경 삼아 뻗어 있다면 하잘것 없어 보이는 댓가지 한줄기가 아주 풍류롭게 보인다.', '음악에서 아주 소리가 여리고 긴 침묵의 순간에 오히려 더 큰 감정의 떨림이 있다.' and '조용한 가운데 가만히 천천히 들어올리는 가느다란 손가락의 미세한 동작 하나가 춤을 보는 이의 가슴을 저미게 한다.' Some candidates did not give specific examples, even though they were clearly instructed to do so in the question. Some candidates copied parts

of the text directly as their answer, without paraphrasing them or developing the ideas and presenting them in an orderly fashion.

## Question 2

The majority of candidates successfully linked and explored the common themes of the two texts, compared the texts and answered the question as instructed. Many candidates answered the question correctly, with good use of their own words and complex syntax. However, some candidates did not fully understand the question and did not give specific answers to each sub-question. Candidates should select and analyse what is relevant for the question, and address the sub-questions fully.

**Question 2(a)** asked candidates to write about the common features of Korean arts. Many candidates stated 'blank' (여백) as the common feature which can be found across Korean arts such as music, art and dance. However, some candidates stopped there and did not explore what the meaning and functions of 'blank' is in Korean arts. Some of the things they could have said here includes that 'blank' does not function as 'empty' as the word literally means, but contains a deeper meaning like the traditional Korean 'Yin' and 'Yang'. Artists put their heart and soul into 'blank' and express the real arts which are not seen.

**Question 2(b)** asked candidates to compare how 'blank' reveals itself differently in Korean arts from Western ones. Candidates were expected to explore 'blank' in different areas of arts, but some candidates only mentioned visual arts and not music or dance. There are many contrasting features with regard to the so-called 'blank' between Korean arts and western arts. For example in Korean painting nature which cannot be fully seen (such as sky or water), was left blank. Korean artists used a method of leaving the earth uncoloured but painting other areas. Also, in Korean art, artists draw everything in one brush stroke and they do not paint over things. In contrast, in western art, all the corners of the canvas are filled and 'blank' or white space can hardly be seen. Western artists developed a method of painting the sky with various colours. Water and sky are also filled with colour and no gap or space can be found. There are also many contrasting features between Korean and western music: Korean music uses silence to provide a profound emotion; Korean music is played with a single tune without harmony, even in group-singing or instrumental ensemble. Korean music can be characterised as horizontal. Through this monophony, we can feel warmth and tender-heartedness. On the other hand, western music is vertical and complex; it is based on counterpoint and harmony. The music feels full, detailed and systematic.

# FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/02

Writing

## **Key Messages**

In order to perform well on this paper, candidates need to select a title with which they feel comfortable and write a response that is clearly relevant, well-illustrated and coherently structured. The use of Korean should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. Sentence patterns should show some evidence of complexity and the style should be easy to follow.

## ***Section 1 Discussion and Argument***

### **General Comments**

The answers were distributed fairly evenly amongst **Questions a, b, c and d**. The quality of writing was satisfactory: most essays had a good structure with enough supporting argument and the sections followed in a generally cohesive progression. There were few spelling or grammar mistakes but more complex sentences and a more sophisticated range of vocabulary would be desirable.

### **Comments on specific questions**

- (a) 'All animals should be raised in wild without help from human beings. Are you in favour of this or against it?' About 20% of the candidates chose this question and they had a variety of opinions about the benefits and disadvantages of human involvement in the life of animals.
- (b) 'A fast-paced lifestyle changes our life in a positive way. Do you agree?' The same percentage of candidates chose this question as Question (a): 20%. Candidates offered interesting insights about how our life has sped up lately and what effect this has on us.
- (c) 'The world is a global village: the lifestyle, fashion, diet, etc. of people from different countries is becoming more and more similar. What do you think about this?' This was a fairly popular question and about 26.7% of the candidates answered it, describing similarities between different parts of the world due to better communication and transport, but also pointing out differences that still abound.
- (d) 'Currently in Korea, only men are subject to compulsory military service. What do you think about the claim that this is against the equality of sexes?' This was the most popular question in this section of the test and was answered by about 33% of candidates. Many candidates had strong views on the topic and argued vehemently for or against making military service obligatory for women as well.

## ***Section 2 Description and Narration***

### **General Comments**

As usual, writing a story was more popular than description. It seems that many candidates find it challenging to describe the atmosphere or tension of a situation and at the same time to keep up the good structure and offer a good range of details. In the narrative essays there were occasionally good plots but it would be helpful if candidates employed a more effective sequencing of events, included a culminating point and developed the characters more.

### **Comments on specific questions**

- (a) 'Describe one of the precious things you have.' Too few candidates chose this question for any meaningful conclusions.

- (b) 'Describe the scene after a graduation ceremony.' About 26% of the candidates chose this topic. The ensuing essays offered good description at times but some of them suffered from lack of structure.
- (c) 'Write a story about something that happened during a trip.' This was another fairly popular question, with 28% of the candidature choosing it and offering a wide variety of unusual and sometimes funny mishaps during trips. The stories were generally a satisfactory but some lack of build-up to the climax was observed.
- (d) 'Write a story that starts with: "It was not long after the ship left the port, when, all of a sudden, a man made an attempt to take over the ship".'

This was the most popular topic in the section – about 47% of the candidates chose it. Candidates usually wrote straightforward stories, skilfully setting the scenery and atmosphere but often events were presented randomly, without appropriate sequencing, and opportunities for in-depth development of ideas have often been missed.