

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/01

Reading

Key Messages

To do well in this paper, candidates are expected to answer **Question 1** in a concise manner always relating to the information in the text. To score high marks for Quality of Language, candidates should display a good command of the language by spelling words correctly, varying the way they start the sentences and showing a good grasp of grammatical structures. Full sentences instead of bullet points also score a better mark.

In **Question 2** candidates are expected to use their own language and write their own text on the basis of the two texts they read. They are rewarded for their capacity to summarise the main ideas on both texts and to produce their own well-structured piece of writing. Candidates who do very well in this question always organise ideas into different paragraphs, use correct punctuation and accents, link ideas by means of a variety of connectives and use a broad range of vocabulary.

General Comments

The topic was very near to the candidates' heart and something that most of them have unfortunately already experienced either through friends or colleagues. Therefore the texts were well understood and candidates were able to answer the questions in a reasonable way. Some candidates were still too attached to the original text and struggled to find their own words to answer some of the questions. There were some very concise answers but also some detailed ones.

Candidates should carry on making an effort to write as neatly as possible, there was an improvement from last year but some papers were still very difficult to read not only due to the handwriting but also because there were a lot of sentences crossed out and re-written with footnotes. A lot of papers looked very untidy maybe because candidates did not have a plan and kept adding information in the wrong place. Centres should remind candidates how important an initial plan is and work with them on how to write paragraphs with an introduction and conclusion.

It needs to be emphasised how important it is for candidates to work hard on their writing. Examples of some of the things that need to be learnt or revised are spelling and aspects of grammar such as verb endings, conjugation of irregular verbs, difference between *estudam*, *estudaram* and *estudarão*, direct object pronouns (-o, -a) and indirect object pronouns (-lhe) and accents. Centres should work with candidates on this and stress the importance of quality of language with more practice and exercises as it's very important to get a better mark.

Some common mistakes were:

- inseguridades
- depreção
- agressor, agrissão, agressadores;
- tecnologia;
- têm;
- reza-se, chumba-se, quise-se;
- soperar;
- avanso;
- características
- seja, sejam;
- discriminação;
- qualquer;
- preventer, previnir;

- vingouçe, emocionalmente
- comessam;
- fazerão;
- trousse;
- apezar;
- avançamento;
- customão;
- em general;

Some candidates write the way they speak and there's clear interference of another language in some of the papers. This can be avoided if candidates practice their reading and writing skills, on the day make a plan of their answer and re-read and check their work.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates got this answer right.
- (b) Some candidates only answered "physical, moral and material" and forgot to mention "aggression".
- (c) This question proved problematic for a lot of candidates. Most of them just repeated the question and wrote that they agreed that technology created a new way of bullying. However, what was expected from candidates was that they were able to identify this technology as the mobile phone, Internet, etc.
- (d) Some candidates did not score marks for their answers because they copied the paragraph from the text and were unable to interpret what was said.
- (e) Nearly all candidates got this answer right.
- (f) This question was not difficult and most candidates mentioned that cyberbullying is a very serious problem with terrible consequences.
- (g) Nearly all candidates got this answer right.
- (h) Nearly all candidates referred to the text and were able to point out more than three reasons.
- (i) The majority of candidates copied the three reasons from the text: "I don't know", "for fun" and "they deserved to be punished".

Question 2

In **Question 2** candidates were required to read both texts and use their own language to answer the question. Candidates should be able to summarise the main ideas of both texts and to produce their own well-structured piece of writing and unfortunately that was not always the case. There was a lot of repetition, sentences and examples copied from the texts and sometimes even quotes. A lot of candidates struggled to blend the concept of cyberbullying from both texts and the ideas were very limited. The vocabulary used was mainly a reproduction of what was written in both texts, only a few candidates managed to plan the answer well and come up with a well structured text.

In this question candidates were also asked to suggest ways to solve the problem at school and it became apparent that many candidates lacked ideas. Many candidates wrote that school, parents and pupils should work together and debates about cyberbullying should take place at school, so all pupils would be able to discuss the problem and learn a bit more about it. Some candidates suggested that teachers should talk individually to every pupil once a month.

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/02

Writing

Key Messages

This component of the exam consists of two parts (**Section 1** and **Section 2**). Candidates will choose one discursive or argumentative title out of 4 in **section 1**, as well as one descriptive or narrative title out of four from **Section 2**.

To do well in this paper, candidates are expected to answer **Section 1** and **Section 2** in a concise manner, always relating to the chosen titles. To score high marks for **Style and Accuracy**, candidates should display a good command of the language by spelling words correctly, varying the way they start the sentences and showing a good grasp of grammar structures. They will also be evaluated in the range of vocabulary used to vary their choices accordingly. As for **Content and Structure** it is essential that candidates understand the three different essay types and choose those ones which suit their writing abilities. Successful candidates will demonstrate that they have developed their ideas consistently into paragraphs, displaying interesting openings to compositions in order to engage the reader from the start.

General Comments

For this part of the exam most candidates did present very good control of the language and on several occasions they made use of very sophisticated vocabulary items, which were appropriate to the tasks. Some however lost marks due to poor expression of the language and misspelling of some key words. Teachers are advised to instruct their candidates to avoid repetitions as well as to proof read their writing as sometimes errors lead to misunderstandings of the general gist.

The most common errors encountered in this year's exam were:

- (1) The misuse of the graphic cedilla “Ç” before the vowels “e” and “i”
- (2) Incorrect usage of the adverb and adjective “mal” and “mau”
- (3) Wrong use of the accent “crase” ‘a; which should always precede a feminine noun
- (4) Lack of the subjunctive, especially in the argumentative essays when presenting or justifying their points of view
- (5) Wrong usage of verb and subject agreement, which is paramount in the Portuguese language
- (6) Interference of the English language, e.g. *Technologia*
- (7) Too much repetition when displaying their ideas, mainly in the narrative compositions
- (8) Misuse of some accents, especially in the ‘proparoxitonas’

There were various instances when less able candidates lost marks as they used the wrong register appropriate to the different writing tasks (e.g. wrong usage of personal pronouns and verbs; slangs, etc.). As for quality of language, some candidates lost marks due to wrong usage of vocabulary (interference of L2) and misuse of accents in Portuguese.

Teachers are advised to practise reading and following instructions throughout the course as this is a crucial element to the successful accomplishment of these tasks.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section 1

Question 1

Argumentative/Discursive compositions

- (a) (i) **As gerações futuras viverão menos se a obesidade não for controlada dequadamente. Desenvolva**

Several candidates chose this topic and successfully presented and justified their arguments for or against it.

Quite a few candidates also presented effective introductions to the theme and displayed a clear context. Some, however, repeated themselves and thus made the reading a little bit tiring. – ‘Teachers are advised to instruct their learners to avoid repetitions and aim to look for sophisticated vocabulary to grab the reader’s attention

- (b) (ii) **As atividades extracurriculares sobrecarregam os estudantes. Dê a sua opinião.**

Most of the candidates chose this topic as it seemed to relate to their own experiences, therefore they had no problems in displaying their personal viewpoints and these essays sounded very convincing to the reader.

Some candidates however found it a bit confusing to present their arguments for or against to support their answers. It is, therefore advisable that teachers practice at length the appropriate usage of “for” and “against” arguments in an argumentative essay.

- (c) (iii) **Os pobres não precisam de caridade, mas sim de oportunidades. Desenvolva**

A few candidates chose this topic and successfully presented some evidence from the media, facts, statistics to support their arguments in favour of or against the chosen title; thus indicating that such candidates are well read and prepared for this type of essay.

- (d) (iiii) **Segundo as estatísticas a mulher profissional, além de trabalhar, também assume a maior parte das responsabilidades com os filhos. Você concorda?**

Very few candidates chose this topic and some were able to argue effectively for and against the mentioned title. A few however lacked the use of connectives to help the reader follow their ideas throughout the composition.

Teachers are advised to instruct their learners to practise the use of linking words and sequencing.

Section 2

Descriptive and Narrative compositions

- (a) **Faça uma narrative intitulada. “Como tornarei meus sonhos realidade.”**

Quite a few candidates chose this title as their narrative essay and those who got higher marks successfully used the correct verb tenses (either past or present) throughout; some however moved between present and past, making the essay patchy and inconsistent.

Successful candidates mastered the building up of the whole text to a climax and leading it naturally to a conclusion.

Teachers are strongly advised to train candidates to plan their essays before they start writing as these elements are fundamental to a good narrative essay.

(b) **Descreva uma pessoa que seja um exemplo de coragem em situações difíceis.**

A few candidates chose this topic as their descriptive essay and managed to write a descriptive answer. The successful ones used a wide range of vocabulary and were able to engage the reader's interest. The less able ones failed to use interesting vocabulary and did not use a good variety of sentence structures.

Teachers once again are advised to instruct their learners to avoid all forms of repetition.

(c) **Uma aventura em uma floresta. Descreva como você se sentiu, o ambiente, o cheiro, o que viu e ouviu.**

This was a very popular choice amongst the candidates for this year's writing paper. Most of the candidates managed to make good use of the adjectives and nouns needed to evoke senses and create the appropriate environment and atmosphere to describe this adventure in a forest. Most candidates were successful in doing so as they seemed to relate to the topic and gave plenty of details of size, shape and colour, making the whole experience quite pictorial.

(d) **Eu e um grupo de amigos estávamos assistindo a um jogo de futebol 'a noite. De repente o estádio ficou 'as escuras. Termine a narrativa**

This was definitely the most popular choice of all as the paper set date coincided with the world cup and most candidates seemed to be engaged with the topic of football. Those candidates that were able to reach the top band of marks successfully elaborated their sentences displaying their stories and including some elements of flashback to illustrate them effectively. Some of them; however overused the dialogues amongst their characters losing marks for that respect.