

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/01
Reading

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to:

- use their own words as much as possible and not copy full sentences from the text
- write an initial plan, mainly for **Question 2**, to avoid repetition of ideas
- use synonyms in order to avoid repetition of ideas
- write a good structured piece of work, divided into paragraphs with an introduction, development and conclusion
- think carefully about what the question is asking them before they start to write.

Candidates should:

- make an effort to write as clearly as possible and make sure their handwriting is legible
- read the texts carefully
- avoid bullet points in their answers
- find the information from the text, in **Question 1**, but try to use their own words as much as possible.
- plan their answers, re-read at the end to avoid repetition and mistakes with agreement of gender and number
- in **Question 2** finish with a concluding paragraph without repeating everything that has been said previously
- look for information in both texts for **Question 2**, should not give their own opinion

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 but preferably without bullet points. 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 their sentences and showing a good grasp of grammatical structures. Full sentences also score a higher 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, not their opinion. They are rewarded for their capacity to summarise the main ideas in 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

This year's topic was very relatable to candidates as many youngsters enjoy music, concerts and summer festivals. In general candidates coped well with the questions and were able to give accurate answers to most of the questions.

It was good to see that this year candidates paid more attention to Text B to answer **Question 2**. Nevertheless some candidates ignored both texts completely and just gave us their opinion. It was also noticeable that a few candidates just went through the texts looking for key words and were not able to write a well-structured text. Candidates would benefit from practising how to link ideas and reading and writing on a variety of topics in order to get used to different structures.

Quality of Language

The quality of language varied from excellent to poor. The weakest candidates found it difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form. The notion of agreement of verb with subject is important. Basic agreements of adjectives were also ignored by some candidates. It was good to see that as last year fewer candidates used bullet points in their answers.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This was not a difficult question and it was answered correctly by the majority of candidates. 'Sol e mar' had to be mentioned together for 1 point, but there were at least four options as an answer which made it easier for candidates to score full marks here.
- (b) Some candidates did not understand this expression.
- (c) Most candidates got this answer right; again there were quite a few options here.
- (d) This answer proved to be a bit tricky to many candidates who often skim the text and copy information. For this question candidates were expected to write a bit more and justify this evolution and for that reason the word 'rock' or the quote from the text 'mais tarde o rock se juntou' were not accepted on their own. 'Fado e música erudita' also had to come together. Some candidates also mentioned the ticket prices, food and nice weather in their answer.
- (e) Many candidates only scored 1 or 2 points for this question because they only answered part of the question.
- (f) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (g) Most candidates got this answer right. Candidates had to mention 'comida e bebidas' together for 1 point.
- (h) Some candidates only got 2 points out of 3 here because they wrote: carrying a bottle of water was 'maçador' this word was not accepted because it was in the question already, we were looking for adjectives such as *inconveniente*; *pesada*; *chato*, etc.
- (i) Most candidates got at least 1 point here. 'Respeitem as regras' was not accepted as it does not communicate the spirit of festivals.

Question 2

In general it was clear that many candidates had an opinion about the topic but their opinion is not being assessed here. Candidates are reminded that they have to refer to both texts for the information they need in order to get their 15 marks available for content and it was good to see that a lot more candidates paid more attention to Text B this year.

Although there was some lifting of key words from the texts, some candidates managed to achieve good marks using simple sentences. However, there was a lot of repetition. Some candidates struggled to put the texts into a reasonably concise order.

There was not much erasure this time and most candidates reached the target of 250 words, with a few exceeding it. The writing this time was generally legible and easy to understand too.

Overall, the level of the candidates was above average and they seemed to be generally well prepared for the exam. Some candidates were very repetitive in their writing and confused in the development of their ideas. The candidates scoring the highest marks showed clear evidence of planning, drafting and editing their writing with the word limit in mind.

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/02
Writing

Key messages

This paper consists of two parts (**Section 1** and **Section 2**). Candidates will choose one discursive or argumentative title out of a choice of four in **Section 1 Argumentative and Discursive**, as well as one title out of four from **Section 2 Descriptive and Narrative**. To do well in this paper, candidates need to fully understand the question topic and present their ideas in a structured and concise manner, always relating to the chosen questions.

In order to achieve better results, the candidates need to have a clear idea of the structure and specific characteristics of argumentative, narrative and descriptive texts and to plan their writing in accordance with each genre. Taking the time to consider their writing and structuring the answer would effectively help candidates.

Successful candidates developed their ideas consistently into paragraphs, displaying interesting openings to compositions in order to engage the reader from the start and following with a well-structured text. Candidates should avoid long, embedded sentences.

Candidates need to be aware of the assignment request for a minimum of 350 words. Some of the essays presented were very short.

Some candidates' handwriting poses great difficulty of understanding. Clear handwriting is a great help for the examiners to fully understand what the candidate is trying to communicate.

General comments

In **Section 1, Question parts (a), (b) and (d)** seemed to have been the most popular topics amongst the candidates. Nevertheless, this year candidates found it more difficult to develop an argumentative text and consequently some candidates did not achieve high marks.

This year a large number of candidates didn't focus on what was actually being asked and often wrote around the subject but without addressing the specific question, or they were completely off the topic. For instance, with option **1(d)**, some candidates focused on whether fashion should be a priority, instead of clearly giving the arguments to prove that it is or isn't a priority.

In **Section 2, Question part (c)** was the most popular topic and the majority of the candidates elaborated some interesting accounts of their experiences. When creating a narrative, often they would write a story, but didn't always seem aware of the specific characteristics they should follow in order to develop a narrative. Some other candidates talked about their lives without creating a story.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Discursive and Argumentative compositions

Question 1

(a) Que matérias escolares são essenciais para construir um futuro melhor? Exemplifique.

This question was the most popular choice and overall, candidates had a strong knowledge about the topic. The majority of the candidates wrote successful texts with strong and some well-argued ideas. It was clearly a familiar topic for their age. Often their answers showed the candidates' awareness of the educational system as well as current debates in regards to the topic, as well their understanding of social, economic and cultural issues. Less able candidates struggled to discuss different viewpoints and often presented topics without developing them. Such students demonstrated some knowledge about the topic but then did not develop the topic into an argumentative structure.

(b) Quais são os meios mais efetivos de motivar a sociedade a cuidar do meio ambiente? Desenvolva.

This question was the second most popular amongst this year candidates and a large number of candidates were very comfortable talking about the environment. The great majority of candidates successfully developed their ideas for and against, but generally they all seemed to conclude that there are issues which need to be urgently addressed. Other candidates went further in their answers by presenting evidence from media sources and/or studies, such as facts and statistics to support their arguments.

Overall, candidates demonstrated very good engagement and understanding with the topic.

(c) Por que é que os jovens se interessam ou não por política? Dê a sua opinião.

Fewer candidates chose this topic. The topic seemed to pose difficulty to those who chose it as their writing lacked strong knowledge and consequently they found it difficult to present organised paragraphs or more than one point was presented. Some candidates may have talked about the topic of politics but without answering the question. Others were quite vague within their answers. Candidates were unclear in the use of arguments to justify ideas, leading sometimes to rather confusing pieces of writing. Taking the time to consider their writing and structuring the answer would effectively help candidates.

(d) A moda pode ser vista como uma prioridade na vida dos jovens. Concorda?

This was the second most popular question. Nevertheless, candidates often found it hard to express their ideas for and against the given theme, which sometimes made the overall meaning of their essays rather unclear. Candidates missed the opportunity to develop ideas about the priority or not that fashion has in young people's lives, and often only explained what fashion was and why was a priority. It is always advisable that candidates practice at length the appropriate use of 'for' and 'against' arguments in an argumentative essay, to avoid presenting only one view point. The lack of arguments associated with the topic seemed to be the reason for confusing ideas and unclear messages.

Section 2

Descriptive and Narrative compositions

Question 2

- (a) **Escreva um texto narrativo intitulado: *A minha vida dava um filme!***

This question was a popular choice amongst the candidates. Those who were able to reach the top band of marks successfully elaborated their sentences, displaying their stories in a very imaginative and organised way. Their ideas were accurately joined together, building the whole story to a climax. Some candidates did not start their narrative with the given sentence.

Candidates seemed to find it easier to write about themselves and their own life.

- (b) **Imagine que está num casamento. Descreva o ambiente, o local e as pessoas.**

Amongst those candidates who attempted this topic, successful candidates mastered the descriptive style and were able to develop an interesting and attractive text, allowing the reader to picture the scene. They successfully used illustrative sentences to describe their ideas. However, those candidates who scored fewer marks found it difficult to follow the descriptive style, and they did not present sufficient and varied elaboration of details to communicate a sense of the subject being described. Some texts were too short.

- (c) **Inicie um texto narrativo com a seguinte frase: *Uma das coisas mais difíceis que tive de fazer foi...***

This question was the most popular in **Section 2**. It is always a pleasure to read the imaginative stories and well-developed ideas presented by the candidates. This year the stories were a little less creative than last year. The strongest candidates were good developing their characters, setting a plot and building up the whole text to a climax. Only a few candidates added dialogues. Less successful candidates often rushed to an end or found it difficult to 'tell' a story. Grammar, spelling issues and sentence construction also caused some candidates to present a confusing plot.

- (d) **Descreva e explique as qualidades que mais valoriza nos seus ídolos.**

Overall this seems to have been the question that candidates found more difficult to answer and perhaps the reason why it was the less popular choice. Even the candidates who chose this question found it difficult to describe their idols using appropriate details. Nevertheless, we found some good responses. It was interesting to see that the idols tend to be the same across the candidates from different parts of the world.