

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:

- Carry on making 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

The benefits or the disadvantages of following the dream of being a model or an extra was a topic that most candidates could relate to, from a personal point of view or from things they had heard, seen or read. 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 attention to both texts to answer **Question 2**. Nevertheless, some candidates ignored both texts and just gave their opinion.

Some candidates unfortunately got a bit confused and could not separate both professions mentioned in both texts, which made it harder to reach the important 15 marks available for the Content of this question.

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 routinely ignored by some candidates.

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. There were at least four options as an answer, which made it easier for candidates to score full marks here.
- (b) Some candidates only got 1 mark out of 2 in this question because they mentioned that models had to know how to sell clothes and accessories which was not correct. Other candidates got **Question (b)** mixed up with **Question (e)** too and for that reason did not get any marks.
- (c) This question was answered correctly by nearly every candidate.
- (d) Many candidates understood the question but found it difficult to explain the expression using their own words. Some candidates missed out the part where they needed to convey that 'the professionals had experience', or did not fully link what they wrote to the main idea of 'understanding the potential and what models would become in the future'.
- (e) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly. Some also completed this answer providing extra information which often was the answer to **Question 1 (f)**, but they were not penalised.
- (f) Most candidates managed to get full marks in this question. There were at least 7 possible pieces of information relevant to the question and most candidates found at least three relevant answers to get their full marks.
- (g) Many candidates only got 1 or 2 marks out of 3 available in this question as they had left relevant information out of their answers. Candidates mentioned 'signing contracts' which was correct and the fact that parents should 'support their children' but did not explain why.
- (h) Most candidates managed to answer this question correctly but we did not accept 'playing tricks' – 'pregar partidas' on its own as they had to explain its meaning in order to get 1 mark for this part of the answer.
- (i) Many candidates found this question particularly difficult as they only answered part of it. The importance of 'being realistic', 'control expectations' or 'being a hard job' were mentioned by many. However, we do not believe that the vast majority of candidates truly understood the meaning of the expression and some also repeated the words from the question which was not accepted.

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 need to read the question, link both texts and summarise the ideas in order to get the 15 points available for Content.

Some candidates needed to develop their approach on the question as they had written non relevant paragraphs, mainly because they tried to describe the life and struggles of a model without referring to the texts. Other candidates thought a model and an extra were similar jobs or even got both occupations mixed up which led to confusion and repetition when producing their answers.

Although there was some lifting of key words from the texts, some candidates managed to achieve good marks using simple sentences. Candidates showed a good grasp of descriptive language. The level of grammar and the content produced by candidates was good or above average with not many serious mistakes to refer.

There was not much erasure this year and most candidates reached the target of 250 words, with a few exceeding it. The handwriting was generally legible and easy to understand. However, candidates are recommended to plan their work first to avoid chasing side notes or footnotes and having a lot of text crossed out, which sometimes proves to be harder to read and to mark.

Overall, the level of the candidates was above average, and they seemed generally well prepared for the exam. Some of them were very repetitive in their writing and confused in the development of their ideas. 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 Discursive and Argumentative**, 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 question.

In order to achieve better results, the candidates need to have a clear idea of the structure and specific characteristics of argumentative, discursive, narrative and descriptive texts and to plan their writing in accordance with each genre. Argumentative/Discursive essays should include facts, reasons, explanations, and examples. The Narrative tasks require more complex and sophisticated answers, and candidates need to elaborate on the suspense and climax. Taking 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 with elements that establish a connection between the parts. Candidates should avoid long, embedded sentences.

Candidates need to be aware of the assignment request for a minimum of 350 words and a maximum of 500 words for each of their answers. Some 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

Overall, most of texts written by candidates were interesting and well-structured, which showed how much candidates appreciated the examination.

Candidates are advised to write clearly and ensure their handwriting is legible.

This year the most selected question was **Question 1(b) (Section 1)**, followed by **Question 2(d) (Section 2)**. Candidates truly enjoyed writing about social media (**1b**) and its impact on young people, as well as sharing their memorable experiences (**2d**). The least selected question was **Question 1(c)**.

The quality of the language varied from excellent to poor, while the majority of candidates presented a good quality of language. The weakest candidates struggled to express their ideas in a clear and structured way. A common difficulty was the agreement of the verb with the subject and the overall incorrect use of verbs.

Candidates need to consider selecting different verb tenses to ensure sentences make sense. Use the subjunctive to talk about hypothetical or conditional situations (e.g., '*Se nós fôssemos ao baile...*'). Use the imperfect past to refer to things that used to happen (e.g., '*Ele acordava cedo todos os dias.*'). Use the past simple to indicate concluded actions in the past (e.g., '*Ele acordou às cinco naquela manhã.*').

Some candidates need to better understand the correct use of 'tem' and 'têm'. Candidates should understand that the verb 'ter', when conjugated in the third person plural ('eles' and 'elas'), has a circumflex accent. For example: '*Ele tem muito calor*' and '*Eles têm muito calor.*'

Candidates should also better distinguish the use of 'há' and 'a'. 'há' is a form from the verb 'haver' and is used to indicate the past tense: 'A minha avó nasceu há muito tempo.', while 'a' is a preposition and only marks distance: 'O cinema fica a 10 minutos daqui.'

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Discursive and Argumentative compositions

Question 1

(a) As garrafas de plástico estão a destruir o meio ambiente. Elabore.

Writing about the impact of plastic bottles on the environment was a topic which allowed some candidates to write strong and interesting essays. Candidates showed a solid understanding of the topic and demonstrated an urge to discuss environmental issues. Most candidates provided satisfactory explanations of their suggested effective ways to engage people to be more concerned about the environment.

(b) Os jovens não deveriam usar as redes sociais porque estas prejudicam a auto-estima. Dê a sua opinião.

This question was the most popular choice and overall, candidates performed very well. Candidates gave their opinion about the topic when writing about social media and its impact on young people. Candidates demonstrate a strong knowledge on the topic and often wrote about their own experiences with social media or other people close to them. Less able candidates struggled to express themselves and discuss different viewpoints and often presented some ideas without developing them. The very best essays were extremely well argued and logically organised.

(c) Um bom filme pode ajudar a fazer esquecer a realidade. Desenvolva com exemplos.

Fewer candidates chose this topic. There was a good variety of texts, candidates with very good texts, scoring high marks and candidates who did not do so well. The weakest candidates found difficult to explain the reasons why a film may be a good escape from reality as they struggled to provide examples. Other candidates end up describing and explaining films in detail and did not develop much of their writing on the central topic of the question. The strongest texts presented a solid structure and clear elaboration of the topic, illustrating their ideas with examples.

(d) Deveria ser permitido aos alunos levar animais para a escola. Dê a sua opinião.

This was the least chosen question demonstrating that the candidates were less confident with this topic. Candidates struggled to express their ideas for and against the given theme. Strongest candidates were able to identify advantages of taking animals to schools and as an example referred the use of dogs as a therapy to help students with their wellbeing. However, most of the candidates seemed to only find disadvantages on this topic.

Section 2

Descriptive and Narrative compositions

Question 2

(a) Descreva uma pessoa que influenciou a sua vida pela positiva. Elabore sobre as suas características físicas e psicológicas.

Most of candidates that chose this question wrote about their parents, but we also had a few others who wrote about a grandparent or a teacher. Overall, candidates found it difficult to describe physically and psychologically the person of their choice. The descriptive style seemed to be an area that requires improvement.

- (b) **Pense num momento da sua vida que gostaria de reviver. Descreva o ambiente, o local e as pessoas.**

Question 2(b) was, along with **Question 2(d)**, the most popular choices in **Section 2**. The best answers integrated a formal description with an attractive story. Candidates shared their own experiences, mostly related with their holidays or family events, such as weddings. The best responses rightfully addressed to the question asked and considered all aspects, describing clearly all the elements related to their stories.

- (c) **Escreva uma narrativa que termine com a seguinte frase: ‘Esse foi o melhor conselho que alguma vez recebi.’**

Overall, this seemed to have been a question that candidates found more difficult to answer as they demonstrated some difficulty in creating suspense, the climax and the conclusion required in narrative tasks. The strongest candidates told a story through a sequence of facts, showing to the reader which characters were involved in their story and what was the context addressed (time and space). Some candidates found it difficult to structure a climax or ending the story.

- (d) **Narre uma história sobre uma situação ou experiência inesquecível.**

Question 2(d) was one of the most popular choices in **Section 2**. Candidates focused on their own happy moments and memorable times to attempt writing their answers to this question. Often, candidates wrote about family holidays or sports events and did not shy away from expressing their feelings or writing about their sports accomplishments. As in **Question 2(c)** candidates found it difficult to structure a climax. Weaker candidates needed some development on presenting story details and building up a character.