CHINESE

| Paper 9715/21 |
| **Reading and Writing** |

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning with those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions. Those requiring simple and straightforward answers were done well, while answers to more stretching questions needed to contain more explanation.

- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal responses to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience, and opinion of the issues raised. These should be kept as two separate sections.

- Candidates should be made aware of the relation between the number of points expected and the number of marks shown in brackets in **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**

- Candidates are reminded that, as far as possible, they should use their own words in response to **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

This question was generally tackled well. Where candidates did answer incorrectly, this tended to be in parts **(b)** and **(d)**. For **Question 1(b)**, some candidates answered "参加", which was not in the second paragraph of the reading passage, the correct answer being "参与". For **Question 1(d)**, some candidates answered "涉及到" instead of "涉及". Candidates need to take care to answer using words from the specified paragraphs.

Question 2

Part **(c)** was answered correctly by most candidates, and **(a)** was handled well by many. Where candidates did make mistakes in part **(a)**, it was generally caused by candidates not understanding the usage of "为了". Part **(b)** proved to be the most challenging part of this question, with a number of candidates answering incorrectly by not dropping "便" from the sentence.

Questions 3 and 4

Most candidates did very well on these questions, and showed good levels of comprehension. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

Improvements were seen in candidates answering using their own words. In doing this, however, candidates must be careful not to change the meaning of the point being re-phrased, as this may render the answer incorrect.

It is also worth reminding candidates that reading comprehension questions are intended to test the extent to which candidates have understood the reading passages in the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these reading passages. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from the candidate's personal knowledge.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question in which candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/22 |
| **Reading and Writing** |

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning with those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions. Those requiring simple and straightforward answers were done well, while answers to more stretching questions needed to contain more explanation.

- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal responses to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience, and opinion of the issues raised. These should be kept as two separate sections.

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General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

This question was generally tackled well. Where candidates did answer incorrectly, this tended to be in parts **(b)** and **(d)**. For **Question 1(b)**, some candidates answered "参加", which was not in the second paragraph of the reading passage, the correct answer being "参与". For **Question 1(d)**, some candidates answered "涉及到" instead of "涉及". Candidates need to take care to answer using words from the specified paragraphs.

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Part **(c)** was answered correctly by most candidates, and **(a)** was handled well by many. Where candidates did make mistakes in part **(a)**, it was generally caused by candidates not understanding the usage of "为了". Part **(b)** proved to be the most challenging part of this question, with a number of candidates answering incorrectly by not dropping "便" from the sentence.

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Improvements were seen in candidates answering using their own words. In doing this, however, candidates must be careful not to change the meaning of the point being re-phrased, as this may render the answer incorrect.

It is also worth reminding candidates that reading comprehension questions are intended to test the extent to which candidates have understood the reading passages in the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these reading passages. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from the candidate's personal knowledge.

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CHINESE

Key messages

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- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

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Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Most candidates answered these questions correctly. Where mistakes were made, these tended to be in parts **(b)**, **(c)** and **(e)**. Candidates are reminded that they should not add extra words to those given in the passage.

Question 2

This question was well answered, with most candidates answering **(a)** and **(c)** correctly. Several candidates found part **(b)** difficult, their mistakes indicating that the usage of "被" needs to be better understood.

Questions 3 and 4

The majority of candidates were able to show very good to excellent levels of comprehension in their responses to these questions. **Question 4** in particular was very well answered with most candidates scoring well. In **Question 3**, where candidates did not score full marks, it was often either as a result of the answer not being full enough, or not accurate enough. Candidates are reminded of the need to read the questions carefully to ensure that their responses fully answer the question. Candidates should also be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question in which candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/31 |
| Essay |

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to provide a clear focus by selecting relevant pieces of information, and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination, and the level of linguistic ability displayed by some candidates was outstanding. Most managed to keep within the stated word limit.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clear understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the chosen question was maintained throughout. A coherent structure was demonstrated with a logical progression of ideas leading to a sound conclusion.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalised statements and limited use of supported examples. Some candidates restricted their marks for Content by writing pre-learnt essays that were not a sufficient response to the title, rather more of a generalised set of ideas on the topic. There was a tendency to write around the topic and use irrelevant material.

1 家庭 – family

This title was by far the most popular with candidates. The strong essays effectively explained the reasons for conflict and friction between teenagers and parents. The weaker essays suggested that teenagers ought to be obedient, and good communication was essential for improving the relationship between parents and teenagers. A number of candidates used 予盾 instead of 矛盾 in the essay.

2 法制 - law

This title was less attractive to candidates and the performance was not as strong as for other topics. Candidates needed to build up an argument leading to a strong conclusion, rather than merely listing examples of recent criminal cases. There were suggestions on how to build a harmonious society, but they did not manage to answer the question fully.

3 体育 - sport

Many candidates wrote essays which attempted to explain why sport is important, but did not answer the key question – why sport is important to *young people*. Some candidates gave lengthy examples, though the material presented was not consistently relevant.

4 就业 - employment

Most candidates dealt with this topic with confidence, by providing supporting information on their chosen career paths. Some candidates could have achieved higher marks by providing further information on how to pursue and realise their goals.

5 科技 - technology

This was the second most popular question, and most candidates who chose this topic answered it well. Candidates are reminded of the need to focus on the question asked; some wrote beautifully about developments in modern technology and the benefits it brings to our daily life, but failed to address the question fully.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/32 |
| Essay |

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to provide a clear focus by selecting relevant pieces of information, and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination, and the level of linguistic ability displayed by some candidates was outstanding. Most managed to keep within the stated word limit.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clear understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the chosen question was maintained throughout. A coherent structure was demonstrated with a logical progression of ideas leading to a sound conclusion.

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Most candidates dealt with this topic with confidence, by providing supporting information on their chosen career paths. Some candidates could have achieved higher marks by providing further information on how to pursue and realise their goals.

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This was the second most popular question, and most candidates who chose this topic answered it well. Candidates are reminded of the need to focus on the question asked; some wrote beautifully about developments in modern technology and the benefits it brings to our daily life, but failed to address the question fully.

CHINESE

> **Paper 9715/33**
> **Essay**

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to give a clear focus, selecting relevant pieces of information and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination and the level of the linguistic ability shown by some candidates was truly outstanding.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clearer understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were very effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the specific question was maintained. There was a coherent structure to the answer, with a logical progression of ideas leading to a conclusion or conclusions.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalisation with little specific exemplification.
Some candidates restricted their marks for Content by writing pre-learnt essays that were clearly not a response to the title set but more a generalised set of ideas on the topic. There was a tendency to write loosely on the topic and use some irrelevant material. There was little build-up of an argument leading to a conclusion.

1 家庭 – family

This was the second most popular question, and the majority of candidates tackled this topic with a clear structure. However, some candidates spent time explaining in great detail about current Chinese family structure only, without comparing it with the family structure of fifty years ago, which was the key expectation set by the question.

2 法制 - law

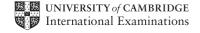There were too few answers to this question to make comment appropriate.

3 体育 - sport

This was by far the most popular question and attracted candidates from across the ability range. In general, candidates scored highly on this topic. A small number of candidates wrote wordy responses on the merit of sports in general rather than answering specifically about the sport they had chosen to write about.

4 就业 - employment

The candidates who attempted this topic handled the question competently; they wrote in a balanced way, supporting their arguments with convincing information points. However, some students spent too much time on the relationship between capability/talent and securing a good job, rather than referring back to the question and arguing the relationship between an education/certificate and a good job.

5 科技 - technology

There were too few answers to this question to make comment appropriate.

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CHINESE

| Paper 9715/41 |
| Texts |

Key messages

In order to do well on this Texts paper, candidates should take the following into account:

Part **(a)** of each question in *Section 1* includes a passage from one of the set texts. This is a stimulus passage, and to answer questions fully, candidates need to go further than simply relating their answers to the given passage. They should consider how the issues raised in the selected passage reflect the book as a whole.

The questions in *Section 2* and part **(b)** questions in *Section 1* are best answered using a clear essay structure containing an introduction and a conclusion. The use of carefully selected quotations from the texts helps candidates to illustrate the points they wish to make or to develop their argument.

Candidates should be encouraged to show analysis of the texts in their answers, commenting on the author's use of descriptive and expressive techniques.

General comments

All candidates displayed a good or excellent standard of written Chinese, in terms of the level required for a Chinese as a foreign language paper. Most candidates showed they had a good knowledge of the texts and authors, and an understanding of the characters or plots. Many of the general comments below are similar to those made last year, as many of these same comments are still valid.

Many candidates taking this paper did well, writing carefully organised short answers and essays, showing an in-depth knowledge of the set text and an awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time it was set. Other candidates showed a good knowledge of the set text, but were unable to set the events they read about within the context of the period in mainland China in which the text was set, or seemed only to have a rather hazy knowledge of context. In order to do themselves justice, candidates must know the context of and background to the set texts, as well as the texts themselves.

Once again this year there was evidence that candidates are still misreading the question paper rubrics. Candidates should answer **three** questions in total (choosing **either (a) or (b)** in each case). They should answer one question from *Section 1*, one from *Section 2* and one other of their choice. Each answer must be on a different set text. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

The essays of most candidates would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. The apt use of quotation has improved, but too many candidates still quoted overly long chunks of texts in their essays, sometimes without any quotation marks to indicate that they were actually using the words of the text. Even where there were quotation marks, there was often insufficient reference as to how the quotation was contributing to the argument in the candidate's answer. The purpose of a quotation is to support or illustrate the argument of a well-planned essay and to show an in-depth knowledge of the set text. The examination questions frequently ask the candidate to (literally) 'give examples to explain'. This means that the candidate should first have a point to make (as part of the argument running through the essay) and that to support this point the candidate should make very close reference to the text or choose a short quotation to illustrate it, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay. In some cases, candidates appear to go through the text looking for any quotation which might have some bearing on the question, however tenuous the link, and then quote them without any explanation.

Most candidates managed to structure their essays well, including an introduction and conclusion and presenting their arguments in a very clear and logical manner.

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Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1 老舍: 《茶馆》 ("Chaguan" by Lao She)

(a) A number of candidates answered this question and there were many very good answers. Some candidates did not know the meaning of 家伙 (cookware) in part **(ii)** of the question, directing their answers instead towards '孩子 (children)' or '伙计 (staff)'. The best answers were those which were not only based on the selection of text given on the question paper, but also referred to other parts of the text, showing different aspects of the social and political situation in the context. Candidates need to remember to illustrate their answers with relevant quotations and reference to the set text.

(b) This was another popular question. Candidates showed a good knowledge of the character 常四爷 with many providing a description of his whole life. Many good essays also drew a conclusion by discussing the author's intention and underlying themes with illustrative examples.

Question 2 徐志摩: 《诗选》 (Selected poems by Xu Zhimo)

(a) This question required a good understanding of poetry and literary techniques, and candidates who did well on this question were those who really knew the poems well and were likely to have discussed and analysed the imagery with teachers and fellow candidates. Some candidates did not understand the symbolic meaning of 雪花 (snow) in the poem. For question **(iii)**, candidates might improve by discussing rhetoric, the rhythm of the poem and the subject of the poem.

(b) Candidates demonstrated that they had understood the poetry well and produced an in-depth analysis on the content of each poem. In this question, candidates needed to explain how Xu Zhimo expressed his hope and aspiration in each of the three poems.

Question 3 王安忆: 《本次列车终点》 ("Benci lieche zhongdian" by Wang Anyi)

(a) This was a popular question and there were many very good answers.

(b) There were a number of very good answers to this question, with well-chosen and apt illustrations. In some cases, candidates could have improved their answer by discussing the conflicts encountered between the brothers, and how they treated each other, rather than just focussing on the positive aspects of the brothers' relationship.

Section 2

Question 4 余华: 《我没有自己的名字》 ("Wo mei you ziji de mingzi" by Yu Hua)

(a) There were some good answers to this question. Many candidates managed to discuss the different aspects of 名字的意义 (the significance of the name) and linked this to the author's intentions. However, some candidates quoted long chunks of text without a thorough analysis or explanation of how this supported their argument.

(b) This was a popular question and most candidates answered well. Stronger candidates showed an understanding of the role of the dog in both the underlying themes and plot development.

Question 5 茅盾：《春蚕》 ("Chun Can" by Mao Dun)

(a) Generally, this question was not answered well. The majority of candidates needed a more in-depth knowledge of the period to enable them to analyse the social problems in China and their significance to the development of the plot. Many candidates did not provide adequate quotations and explanations in their answers, and needed a more coherent structure which focussed on the question being asked.

(b) Not many candidates chose to answer this question, but those that did produced thorough and in-depth responses.

Question 6 鲁迅：《孔乙己》 ("Kong Yiji" by Lu Xun)

(a) There were a number of very good answers to this question. The majority of candidates managed to show their understanding of the themes in the text well. Some answers were well outside the stated word limit.

(b) The best answers to this question were those that managed to show an understanding of the character and the society, as well as analysing the author's means of description and use of language in the text.

CHINESE

Paper 9715/42
Texts

Key messages

In order to do well on this Texts paper, candidates should take the following into account:

Part **(a)** of each question in *Section 1* includes a passage from one of the set texts. This is a stimulus passage, and to answer questions fully, candidates need to go further than simply relating their answers to the given passage. They should consider how the issues raised in the selected passage reflect the book as a whole.

The questions in *Section 2* and part **(b)** questions in *Section 1* are best answered using a clear essay structure containing an introduction and a conclusion. The use of carefully selected quotations from the texts helps candidates to illustrate the points they wish to make or to develop their argument.

Candidates should be encouraged to show analysis of the texts in their answers, commenting on the author's use of descriptive and expressive techniques.

General comments

All candidates displayed a good or excellent standard of written Chinese, in terms of the level required for a Chinese as a foreign language paper. Most candidates showed they had a good knowledge of the texts and authors, and an understanding of the characters or plots. Many of the general comments below are similar to those made last year, as many of these same comments are still valid.

Many candidates taking this paper did well, writing carefully organised short answers and essays, showing an in-depth knowledge of the set text and an awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time it was set. Other candidates showed a good knowledge of the set text, but were unable to set the events they read about within the context of the period in mainland China in which the text was set, or seemed only to have a rather hazy knowledge of context. In order to do themselves justice, candidates must know the context of and background to the set texts, as well as the texts themselves.

Once again this year there was evidence that candidates are still misreading the question paper rubrics. Candidates should answer **three** questions in total (choosing **either (a) or (b)** in each case). They should answer one question from *Section 1*, one from *Section 2* and one other of their choice. Each answer must be on a different set text. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

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Most candidates managed to structure their essays well, including an introduction and conclusion and presenting their arguments in a very clear and logical manner.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1 老舍: 《茶馆》 ("Chaguan" by Lao She)

(a) A number of candidates answered this question and there were many very good answers. Some candidates did not know the meaning of 家伙 (cookware) in part **(ii)** of the question, directing their answers instead towards '孩子 (children)' or '伙计 (staff)'. The best answers were those which were not only based on the selection of text given on the question paper, but also referred to other parts of the text, showing different aspects of the social and political situation in the context. Candidates need to remember to illustrate their answers with relevant quotations and reference to the set text.

(b) This was another popular question. Candidates showed a good knowledge of the character 常四爷 with many providing a description of his whole life. Many good essays also drew a conclusion by discussing the author's intention and underlying themes with illustrative examples.

Question 2 徐志摩: 《诗选》 (Selected poems by Xu Zhimo)

(a) This question required a good understanding of poetry and literary techniques, and candidates who did well on this question were those who really knew the poems well and were likely to have discussed and analysed the imagery with teachers and fellow candidates. Some candidates did not understand the symbolic meaning of 雪花 (snow) in the poem. For question **(iii)**, candidates might improve by discussing rhetoric, the rhythm of the poem and the subject of the poem.

(b) Candidates demonstrated that they had understood the poetry well and produced an in-depth analysis on the content of each poem. In this question, candidates needed to explain how Xu Zhimo expressed his hope and aspiration in each of the three poems.

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Section 2

Question 4 余华: 《我没有自己的名字》 ("Wo mei you ziji de mingzi" by Yu Hua)

(a) There were some good answers to this question. Many candidates managed to discuss the different aspects of 名字的意义 (the significance of the name) and linked this to the author's intentions. However, some candidates quoted long chunks of text without a thorough analysis or explanation of how this supported their argument.

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Question 5 茅盾：《春蚕》 ("Chun Can" by Mao Dun)

(a) Generally, this question was not answered well. The majority of candidates needed a more in-depth knowledge of the period to enable them to analyse the social problems in China and their significance to the development of the plot. Many candidates did not provide adequate quotations and explanations in their answers, and needed a more coherent structure which focussed on the question being asked.

(b) Not many candidates chose to answer this question, but those that did produced thorough and in-depth responses.

Question 6 鲁迅：《孔乙己》 ("Kong Yiji" by Lu Xun)

(a) There were a number of very good answers to this question. The majority of candidates managed to show their understanding of the themes in the text well. Some answers were well outside the stated word limit.

(b) The best answers to this question were those that managed to show an understanding of the character and the society, as well as analysing the author's means of description and use of language in the text.

CHINESE

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| **Paper 9715/43** |
| **Texts** |
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Key messages

In order to do well on this Texts paper, candidates should take the following into account:

Part **(a)** of each question in **Section 1** includes a passage from one of the set texts. This is a stimulus passage, and to answer questions fully, candidates need to go further than simply relating their answers to the given passage. They should consider how the issues raised in the selected passage reflect the book as a whole.

The questions in **Section 2** and part **(b)** questions in **Section 1** are best answered using a clear essay structure containing an introduction and a conclusion. The use of carefully selected quotations from the texts helps candidates to illustrate the points they wish to make or to develop their argument.

Candidates should be encouraged to show analysis of the texts in their answers, commenting on the author's use of descriptive and expressive techniques.

General comments

All candidates displayed a good or excellent standard of written Chinese, in terms of the level required for a Chinese as a foreign language paper. Most candidates showed they had a good knowledge of the texts and authors, and an understanding of the characters or plots. Many of the general comments below are similar to those made last year, as many of these same comments are still valid.

Many candidates taking this paper did well, writing carefully organised short answers and essays, showing an in-depth knowledge of the set text and an awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time it was set. Other candidates showed a good knowledge of the set text, but were unable to set the events they read about within the context of the period in mainland China in which the text was set, or seemed only to have a rather hazy knowledge of context. In order to do themselves justice, candidates must know the context of and background to the set texts, as well as the texts themselves.

Once again this year there was evidence that candidates are still misreading the question paper rubrics. Candidates should answer **three** questions in total (choosing **either (a) or (b)** in each case). They should answer one question from **Section 1**, one from **Section 2** and one other of their choice. Each answer must be on a different set text. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

The essays of most candidates would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. The apt use of quotation has improved, but too many candidates still quoted overly long chunks of texts in their essays, sometimes without any quotation marks to indicate that they were actually using the words of the text. Even where there were quotation marks, there was often insufficient reference as to how the quotation was contributing to the argument in the candidate's answer. The purpose of a quotation is to support or illustrate the argument of a well-planned essay and to show an in-depth knowledge of the set text. The examination questions frequently ask the candidate to (literally) 'give examples to explain'. This means that the candidate should first have a point to make (as part of the argument running through the essay) and that to support this point the candidate should make very close reference to the text or choose a short quotation to illustrate it, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay. In some cases, candidates appear to go through the text looking for any quotation which might have some bearing on the question, however tenuous the link, and then quote them without any explanation.

Most candidates managed to structure their essays well, including an introduction and conclusion and presenting their arguments in a very clear and logical manner.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1 老舍: 《茶馆》 ("Chaguan" by Lao She)

(a) A number of candidates answered this question and there were many very good answers. Candidates needed an understanding of the time period and background of the text in order to analyse the society and characters when answering each part **(i)**, **(ii)** and **(iii)**.

(b) There were some good answers to this question. A number of candidates did not limit their responses to only talking about the two characters but also successfully discussed the author's intentions and themes of the play learnt from the fate of these two characters.

Question 2 徐志摩: 《诗选》 (Selected poems by Xu Zhimo)

This question required a good understanding of poetry and literary techniques, and candidates who did well on this question were those who really knew the poems well and were likely to have discussed and analysed the imagery with teachers and fellow candidates. For **Questions (a)** and **(b)**, candidates could improve by including a discussion on the rhetoric, rhythm and subject of the poem.

Question 3 王安忆: 《本次列车终点》 ("Benci lieche zhongdian" by Wang Anyi)

(a) All candidates answered this question well. Some answers selected appropriate quotations but lacked a detailed explanation and analysis for why the quotation was used, such as '林荫道、小树林、甜水井 …月牙儿般的眼睛'.

(b) There were a number of very good answers to this question, with well-chosen and apt illustrations. Many good candidates did not restrict themselves to discussing the character's personalities from the story but also gave a more in-depth analysis of the background context of the text.

Section 2

Question 4 余华: 《我没有自己的名字》 ("Wo mei you ziji de mingzi" by Yu Hua)

(a) There were some good answers to this question. Many candidates managed to discuss the different aspects of 名字的意义 (the significance of the name) and linked this to the author's intentions. However, some candidates quoted long chunks of text without a thorough analysis or explanation of how this supported their argument.

(b) The best answers to this question were very well argued and organised, revealing the theme of *evil humanity*. This was achieved by comparing the kindness of the dog and the evil of human nature according to the different attitudes to Laifa from the dog and Xu Asan.

Question 5 茅盾: 《春蚕》 ("Chun can" by Mao Dun)

(a) Only a few candidates answered this question. Many answers focused on the personalities of the characters 老通宝 (Lao tongbao) and 多多头 (Duoduotou), discussing their different attitudes to 菊花 (Juhua) and the work. Good answers also analysed the different social perceptions between the two generations.

(b) Candidates needed to discuss all aspects of the social reasons; some only mentioned one or two reasons. Answers needed to be supported by illustrative examples from the text.

Question 6 鲁迅: 《孔乙己》 ("Kong Yiji" by Lu Xun)

No candidates answered **Question (a)**. For **Question (b)**, candidates needed to discuss the social problems and the author's intentions in order to gain higher marks. Some candidates, however, tended to analyse the characters rather than focussing on the question.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/51 |
| Prose |

Key messages

In order to do well in this component, candidates must accurately translate the English prose into Chinese. Candidates should not attempt to rewrite or embellish the story with their own details, as no marks will be awarded for this.

General comments

In this component, candidates are required to translate a short passage from English into Chinese.

Overall, candidates performed very well on this paper, with the majority showing a sound understanding of the English text. Many candidates were able to use a wide variety of vocabulary and complex sentence structures correctly in their Chinese translation. It should be noted that some of the mistakes that were made could be avoided if candidates read the whole passage through before starting to translate it in order to understand where the 'story' is going. In this way, they will avoid providing a translation which has no internal logic.

The following is a list of common errors seen in candidates' answers, and are areas in which candidates would benefit from further practise.

- The linking word '*unless*' (除非) was translated as 即使 or 至少.

- '*Comic books*' was translated as 武侠小说 or 科幻小说.

- '*Deliberately*' (故意) was translated as 热情地, or 急切地, or 自动地.

- '*The following day*', (singular), was translated as 在接下来的日子里 (plural).

- '*The previous night*' was translated as 珍贵的夜晚.

- '*Knelt*' (跪) was translated as 蹲, or 放.

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Some candidates found the second paragraph difficult, as the idea of making ice-skates from wooden boards was unfamiliar. Candidates needed to read through the whole description to understand what was being described before starting to translate.

The following 'time' expressions frequently caused problems:

- '*in those days*' - one of the acceptable translations was 那时候.

- '*that day*' should be translated as 那天.

- '*next day*' was translated in a variety of ways, the most acceptable being 第二天.

The verb '*knelt*' (跪) was also found to be challenging, with several candidates translating it as 蹲, or 放.

Candidates should be reminded of the need to read through the whole story before starting the translation. This would have helped candidates in the translation of the above time expressions, as the chronological sequence of the story would have been clearer.