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 to 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, requiring straightforward and specific answers. Candidates need to read the passages carefully and should answer using their own words based on the information given in the passages. No credit can be given for responses which contain whole sentences that are identical to the original texts, or which use candidates' general knowledge, or personal experience.

- **Question 5 (a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year were concerned with how hobbies and interests impact on everyday life and the history of knitting. **Question 5 (b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience and opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5 (b)** should be personal and not a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. Responses to **Question 5** must be kept no more than 200 characters.

General Comments

Most candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked. Some did an excellent job, responding to the questions fully, using clear expressions and giving focused answers.

Candidates should be reminded to ensure that all questions are answered. In some cases this year, candidates did not give answers to **Question 1 (e)**, **Question 3 (e)** or **Question 3 (g)**.

Many good and clearly expressed responses to **Question 3** and **Question 4** were seen this year. Many candidates demonstrated their ability to rephrase information through using appropriate connectives, using synonyms, rearranging the word order or extracting the key information. Care needs to be taken not to stray from the passages; candidates should ensure they are not changing the meaning of the information given in the passages in an effort to use their own words, as this may render the answer incorrect. Phrases such as, 脑力， 体力， 锻炼身体 etc. do not need to be rephrased.

At the other end of the spectrum, some candidates this year formulated their answers by extracting text directly from the reading passages, sometimes indiscriminately and in great length. Candidates should be reminded that they are expected to answer using their own words wherever possible, or to manipulate text from the reading passages to formulate a precise answer.

It is important that candidates cover all the points required by the questions, as some able candidates lost marks in **Question 3 (c)** and **Question 4 (e)** by not giving full enough answers.

Centres are reminded to make sure that work is fastened together at the end of the examination.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section 1

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to answer this question confidently. Some candidates had difficulty with part **(e)**, giving 进一步 instead of 渐渐. A small number of weaker candidates did not manage to score any marks at all on this question.

Question 2

Most candidates answered part **(a)** well, and part **(b)** was handled well by many. When answering part **(b)**, a number of candidates kept 当 and 便 as well as adding the connective 一旦…就. Very few candidates wrote 一但 instead of 一旦. In part **(c)**, a common mistake made by candidates was to keep 喜悦 as the subject in the rephrased sentence, e.g. 喜悦被不快代替了。

Question 3

A strong performance was seen on this question. The vast majority of candidates managed to manipulate text from the reading passage when answering the questions to avoid lifting too much language. Candidates coped well with parts **(a)**, **(b)**, **(d)**, **(f)** and **(g)**, although some candidates gave more detail than required for part **(b)** by giving actual activities, such as 太极拳 for 体力 and 下棋 for 脑力. Some candidates only gave a partial answer to part **(c)** and needed to also include the points covered by "增加获得快乐的途径与机会".

For part **(d)**, most candidates made a good effort, and there were many succinct answers such as "我们会感到痛苦和失望". Others even managed to substitute "痛苦" for "难过", or "失望" for "失去希望".

There was a tendency in part **(e)** for some candidates to give lengthy, unfocused answers. Candidates needed to be careful to include "学到新东西."

Section 2

Question 4

The majority of candidates handled this question well, particularly parts **(b)**, **(c)** and **(d)**. In part **(a)**, most candidates answered **(i)** and **(iii)** well, and were successful in producing answers using their own words. However, for part **(ii)** of this question, a number of candidates lifted the whole phrase, "因为沿海一带气候恶劣" from the reading passage, without attempting to manipulate the language. Many candidates also relied heavily on the passage to retrieve vocabulary to answer part **(e)**. Some common character writing mistakes were seen in this question, for example, 手衣 instead of 毛衣.

In **Question 4**, 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. In part **(e),** for example, some candidates did not include "一针一线的积累" in their answer.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every single word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary, but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions

Question 5

There were a number of 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.

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware of the need to keep to the limit of

200 characters for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of 200 characters is disregarded by Examiners, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for **part (b)**.

Many candidates wrote excessively but only managed to cover one or two relevant points, as they concentrated on illustrating their personal views.

Candidates are reminded that they need to refer to the information in the reading passages and must state 10 clear points in order to be awarded the maximum 10 marks for part **(a)**. Part of this exercise is to show an ability to summarise, and so it is important that the points are presented clearly and succinctly.

CHINESE

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

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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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Candidates should be reminded to ensure that all questions are answered. In some cases this year, candidates did not give answers to **Question 1 (e)**, **Question 3 (e)** or **Question 3 (g)**.

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CHINESE

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CHINESE

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| **Paper 9715/31** |
| **Essay** |
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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.

General comments

The performance of candidates on the whole was very good. The majority of candidates seemed well-prepared for the examination, and a wide spread in the performance spectrum was noted this year. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of taking note of the instructions before commencing the exam.

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 and illustrated, together 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 employing a combination of pinyin, Chinese characters and English. Candidates should be aware that their essays should be written in Chinese characters, as no credit can be given for pinyin or English. Candidates should be advised that if they struggle with certain vocabulary, they should refrain from using pinyin, English, or a combination of both, and should instead try and find alternative vocabulary for which they know the Chinese characters.

Most, but not all candidates followed the rubric concerning the number of words to be used. (250 – 400 words being stipulated). Some excessively long essays were seen, with over 1000 characters in this year's performance. This is not advisable, as essays which are vastly outside of the stated length often lose the coherence and tight structure needed to access the higher marking bands. In some cases, candidates could have improved their essay structure by ensuring that they evidenced the necessary components of a competent piece of work, i.e. introduction, argument and a relevant conclusion.

Improvements could be made in the following areas:

- Use of punctuation: candidates need to be able to use appropriate punctuation confidently. In some essays this year, full stops were the only form of punctuation used throughout the written piece.

- Paragraphing: candidates should avoid presenting their compositions as a single paragraph, which can render the piece clumsy and difficult to read.

- Some very able candidates appeared to misread or misunderstand the questions. Candidates should be advised to read all the questions very carefully as soon as the examination begins and to respond to the actual title selected and not merely the topic area in general.

- Essay content and structure. An increased number of candidates failed to use a purposeful introduction and/or conclusion and instead produced a piece which amounted to statements of facts. On some occasions, this was numbered sentences, or a single paragraph. An adherence to structure is required.

- Candidates should avoid relying on anecdotal or personal experiences, rather than reasoned argument, to support their opinions. Such arguments without depth or substance are not recommended.

1 人与人之间

This title was by far the most popular topic among candidates, and produced a range of performance. Some candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the convenience that the internet has brought to people, as well as the negative internet-syndrome some users display. Other candidates focused heavily on the benefits of the internet alone and needed to address the other side of the argument to score more highly. Instances were seen where candidates confused the internet with mobile phones, and therefore set about tackling the importance of mobile phones rather than the core topic. It should be noted that although an example of a particular function of the internet may be appropriate as evidence to back up an argument, creating a lengthy list of apps and social platforms was not necessary, and should be avoided, as this showed a lack of a reasoned argument.

2 城乡生活

Some outstanding essays were produced in response to this title. Some pieces effectively highlighted the phenomenon of migrant movement, which covered a wide range of aspects including cultural background, traditional family values, disparity of living standards, and the high demand on travel systems. Such background knowledge and critical analysis was impressive. Weaker candidates often merely listed the merits of city life, while a further small number of candidates hardly wrote anything associated with the 'spring movement' and instead focused on pre-learnt material based on the differences between the city and rural environments. Candidates must be careful to focus their answers on the question asked, rather than the topic area in general.

3 娱乐休闲

This title was the second most popular topic this year. The majority of candidates were able to produce relevant and detailed pieces of information. It was noted that there was a tendency at times for candidates to rely on personal experience or anecdotes to illustrate the topic areas; candidates needed to add more substance to their work. The use of such personal views can be effective, but there needs to be a balance between well-founded opinion and simple subjective viewpoints. Furthermore, some candidates expressed very strongly that the younger generation shoulders a heavy burden from parents, peers and school. Whilst strong views can certainly be used to support arguments, candidates should be mindful to avoid their entire essay turning into a tirade.

4 战争与和平

This title was less attractive to candidates. Despite this, the performances were strong with some excellent essays. The majority of candidates seemed to be knowledgeable about the subject and the vast proportion of answers disagreed with the statement of reasoning based on the 'one world, one society' doctrine and its accompanying sense of responsibility. Candidates generally handled this topic with great maturity and provided refreshing ideas. However, a small number of candidates dwelled on the amount of money being spent and tried to simply argue what amount could be deemed sensible and what amount was not, which was slightly off topic.

5 环境

A relatively smaller number of candidates opted for this question, and performance was wide-ranging among those who did. Opinions were clearly and equally divided for this task; while some candidates provided convincing arguments that the environment is the price we pay for the development of the economy, others argued that the advancement of an economy brings further research and development opportunity to improve the environment. Some candidates effectively highlighted different perspectives on developments, which may not all bring negative impacts to the environment. Overall, a good range of language and examples were used in the arguments. There was evidence of pre-learnt material being employed, which only tackled the importance of protecting the environment without the inclusion of any independent reasoned argument. This should be avoided, and candidates should be careful that their responses address the question asked.

CHINESE

Paper 9715/32
Essay

Key messages

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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 and illustrated, together 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 employing a combination of pinyin, Chinese characters and English. Candidates should be aware that their essays should be written in Chinese characters, as no credit can be given for pinyin or English. Candidates should be advised that if they struggle with certain vocabulary, they should refrain from using pinyin, English, or a combination of both, and should instead try and find alternative vocabulary for which they know the Chinese characters.

Most, but not all candidates followed the rubric concerning the number of words to be used. (250 – 400 words being stipulated). Some excessively long essays were seen, with over 1000 characters in this year's performance. This is not advisable, as essays which are vastly outside of the stated length often lose the coherence and tight structure needed to access the higher marking bands. In some cases, candidates could have improved their essay structure by ensuring that they evidenced the necessary components of a competent piece of work, i.e. introduction, argument and a relevant conclusion.

Improvements could be made in the following areas:

- Use of punctuation: candidates need to be able to use appropriate punctuation confidently. In some essays this year, full stops were the only form of punctuation used throughout the written piece.

- Paragraphing: candidates should avoid presenting their compositions as a single paragraph, which can render the piece clumsy and difficult to read.

- Some very able candidates appeared to misread or misunderstand the questions. Candidates should be advised to read all the questions very carefully as soon as the examination begins and to respond to the actual title selected and not merely the topic area in general.

- Essay content and structure. An increased number of candidates failed to use a purposeful introduction and/or conclusion and instead produced a piece which amounted to statements of facts. On some occasions, this was numbered sentences, or a single paragraph. An adherence to structure is required.

- Candidates should avoid relying on anecdotal or personal experiences, rather than reasoned argument, to support their opinions. Such arguments without depth or substance are not recommended.

1 人与人之间

This title was by far the most popular topic among candidates, and produced a range of performance. Some candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the convenience that the internet has brought to people, as well as the negative internet-syndrome some users display. Other candidates focused heavily on the benefits of the internet alone and needed to address the other side of the argument to score more highly. Instances were seen where candidates confused the internet with mobile phones, and therefore set about tackling the importance of mobile phones rather than the core topic. It should be noted that although an example of a particular function of the internet may be appropriate as evidence to back up an argument, creating a lengthy list of apps and social platforms was not necessary, and should be avoided, as this showed a lack of a reasoned argument.

2 城乡生活

Some outstanding essays were produced in response to this title. Some pieces effectively highlighted the phenomenon of migrant movement, which covered a wide range of aspects including cultural background, traditional family values, disparity of living standards, and the high demand on travel systems. Such background knowledge and critical analysis was impressive. Weaker candidates often merely listed the merits of city life, while a further small number of candidates hardly wrote anything associated with the 'spring movement' and instead focused on pre-learnt material based on the differences between the city and rural environments. Candidates must be careful to focus their answers on the question asked, rather than the topic area in general.

3 娱乐休闲

This title was the second most popular topic this year. The majority of candidates were able to produce relevant and detailed pieces of information. It was noted that there was a tendency at times for candidates to rely on personal experience or anecdotes to illustrate the topic areas; candidates needed to add more substance to their work. The use of such personal views can be effective, but there needs to be a balance between well-founded opinion and simple subjective viewpoints. Furthermore, some candidates expressed very strongly that the younger generation shoulders a heavy burden from parents, peers and school. Whilst strong views can certainly be used to support arguments, candidates should be mindful to avoid their entire essay turning into a tirade.

4 战争与和平

This title was less attractive to candidates. Despite this, the performances were strong with some excellent essays. The majority of candidates seemed to be knowledgeable about the subject and the vast proportion of answers disagreed with the statement of reasoning based on the 'one world, one society' doctrine and its accompanying sense of responsibility. Candidates generally handled this topic with great maturity and provided refreshing ideas. However, a small number of candidates dwelled on the amount of money being spent and tried to simply argue what amount could be deemed sensible and what amount was not, which was slightly off topic.

5 环境

A relatively smaller number of candidates opted for this question, and performance was wide-ranging among those who did. Opinions were clearly and equally divided for this task; while some candidates provided convincing arguments that the environment is the price we pay for the development of the economy, others argued that the advancement of an economy brings further research and development opportunity to improve the environment. Some candidates effectively highlighted different perspectives on developments, which may not all bring negative impacts to the environment. Overall, a good range of language and examples were used in the arguments. There was evidence of pre-learnt material being employed, which only tackled the importance of protecting the environment without the inclusion of any independent reasoned argument. This should be avoided, and candidates should be careful that their responses address the question asked.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/41 |
| Texts |

Key Messages

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- 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. Part **(b)** of each question in **Section 1** should also include reference to the whole text.

- 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.

- Handwriting must be legible.

General comments

All candidates showed a very good standard of written Chinese and most candidates produced well-structured, focused and detailed essays. Most candidates showed that they had a detailed knowledge of the Chinese texts and there was also evidence that many candidates had researched the author, as well as the background and themes running through the books.

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 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 text, but were often 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 orders to do themselves justice, candidates must know the context of and background to the texts, as well as the texts themselves.

In a small number of cases, answers showed virtually no evidence that candidates had read the text for which they were answering the question. A minority of candidates continue to refer only to the first few pages of a text in their answer, or write a summary of a television drama with the same name as the set text. Candidates entering for this examination should be aware that they will not be able to score highly if they have not read the text for which they are writing an answer, regardless of their level of written Chinese.

Once again this year there was evidence that candidates are still misreading the question paper rubrics. Centres should ensure that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front of the question paper, and remain unchanged. 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 should be on a different text. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

The essays of most candidates would have benefited from the 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 back up or illustrate the argument of a well-planned essay and to show an in-depth knowledge of the 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 back up this point the candidate should make very close reference to the text or choose a short quote 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.

The nature of the questions on this type of paper is such that no single answer is right or wrong; the candidate needs to write a well-argued essay, backed up by evidence from the text. Most candidates managed to structure their essays well, including an introduction and conclusion and presented their arguments in a very clear and logical manner.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

朱自清：《朱自清散文》 (Selected prose by Zhu Ziqing)

(a)   This was a popular question and there were many good answers. Most candidates were able to discuss and evaluate material and come to a clear conclusion. Stronger candidates showed the ability to pay close attention to the detail of passages, and used perceptive illustrations and insight when discussing the different thoughts and feelings Zhu Ziqing conveys about his father. In **Question 1(a)(ii)**, some candidates gave somewhat simple and superficial answers, saying "the author was so young and proud at that time that he thought he was smarter than his father" without pointing out that the use of "being too smart" was an indication of "sarcasm".

(b)   Most candidates who chose this question gave thorough and intelligent answers. Candidates needed to choose two pieces of Zhu Ziqing's work to write about here, but not all candidates seemed to realise this.

Question 2

舒婷：《诗选》(Selected poems by Shu Ting)

(a)   Many candidates provided good answers, which not only analysed the whole poem, but also addressed the theme of the liberation of women from feudal ethics. The work of weaker candidates was characterised by a lack of understanding of the author's intentions, and by taking a modern view of young people's love to interpret the author's symbolism.

(b)   Generally, this question was not well-answered. Candidates needed to understand the definitions and usage of Symbolism and Imagery (象征和意象), in order to meet the requirement of the question.

Question 3

阿城：《棋王》 ("Qi wang" by Ah Cheng)

(a)   This was a popular question, and some excellent essays were seen. For **(iii)** the strongest candidates were able to look beyond the immediate material and show a deeper understanding of the underlying themes, for instance, 因"后继有人"而感到安慰; the champion was pleased to see that there were successors to carry on the traditions of Chinese chess. At the other end of the

spectrum, weaker candidates adopted a more simplistic approach and merely used the descriptive passage about how talented and skilful Wang Yisheng was, quickly jumping to the conclusion without using material from other parts of the text.

(b)   There were some very good answers to this question, analysing the character's attitude to life with well-chosen and apt illustrations.

Section 2

Question 4

铁凝：《哦，香雪》 ("Oh, Xiangxue" by Tie Ning)

(a)   Candidates showed a very good understanding of the text. Most candidates provided relevant points in their answers about how the village and people had changed. Some candidates seemed confused by the question, and tried to respond to **Question 4(b)** and **Question 4(a)** at the same time, i.e. they wrote much about the personality and characteristics of the girl Xiang Xue in answer to the question about the features and characteristics of the village itself.

(b)   All candidates showed they had a good understanding of the character, producing a detailed analysis of her personality.

Question 5

曹禺：《日出》 ("Sunrise" by Cao Yu)

(a)   There were relatively fewer candidates who responded to **Question 5**. Candidates needed to include an explanation of the relationship between Chen Bailu and Fang Dasheng, and not all candidates managed this. It was evident that some candidates had not read the play but answered with reference to the TV drama of the same name.

(b)   Those who answered this question conveyed good insight when discussing the characters and the dark side of the society. In their answers they all pointed out that Jinba was the person who controlled everybody's fate.

Question 6

鲁迅：《藤野先生》 ("Tengye Xiansheng" by Lu Xun)

There were many very good answers to both **6(a)** and **6(b)**.

(a)   Many good answers analysed the overseas Tokyo students' life in detail and discussed this with reference to the whole text, including the author's use of the literary techniques.

(b)   Again, there were many excellent answers to this question. All candidates discussed the impact of the two major incidents, and the best answers also analysed Mr Fujino （藤野先生）, and the teacher's impact on Lu Xun.

CHINESE

Key Messages

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- 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.

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General comments

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(b) Most candidates who chose this question gave thorough and intelligent answers. Candidates needed to choose two pieces of Zhu Ziqing's work to write about here, but not all candidates seemed to realise this.

Question 2

舒婷：《诗选》(Selected poems by Shu Ting)

(a) Many candidates provided good answers, which not only analysed the whole poem, but also addressed the theme of the liberation of women from feudal ethics. The work of weaker candidates was characterised by a lack of understanding of the author's intentions, and by taking a modern view of young people's love to interpret the author's symbolism.

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CHINESE

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CHINESE

| Paper 9715/05 |
| 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

The majority of candidates showed that they had a thorough understanding of the passage to be translated. Most candidates demonstrated that they were able to use of a range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures correctly in the Chinese translation.

Comments on specific questions

Candidates found the following phrases challenging.

- '*causing the mountain road to ice over*' (山上的路结冰了) was sometimes translated as 山上的路融化了.
- '*stopped by a small tree*' (被一棵小树挡住了) was sometimes translated as 被一棵小树停下来了.
- '*would not leave me*' (没有离开我) was sometimes translated as 不会离开我 or 离不开我.
- '*as if to kill her*'(好像要去杀它) was sometimes translated as 好像杀死了它.