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FIRST LANGUAGE CZECH

Paper 0514/02
Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

Overall, candidates handled both parts of the paper very well, and had few difficulties particularly in the first part.

However, there are several comments regarding the most frequently occurring spelling and grammatical mistakes:

- Candidates had the greatest trouble conjugating the verb 'to be' in the conditional tense.
- Candidates generally use the colloquial, informal forms of the verb 'to be'.
- There were frequent minor errors in choice of vocabulary. Candidates confused the forms of certain words, sometimes creating rather nonsensical phrases. For example, instead of *obnáší* they used *donáší*, instead of *záležitost* they used *příležitost*, instead of *dojeli jsme cílí* they used *dojeli jsme vcelku*, etc.
- Punctuation in simple and compound sentences is an ongoing problem, although the situation has improved considerably compared to previous years.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

In the first sub-question, the candidates were asked to formulate three pieces of advice based on the text. Most managed to understand what was required, but Examiners would recommend clearer, briefer and more concise formulations in response to this type of question, and strongly recommend that answers are structured in paragraphs.

In the second sub-question, most of the candidates were successful as well. Unfortunately, some misunderstood the question and answered it incorrectly. Therefore, candidates are, again, strongly reminded to read the assignment carefully before starting to write.

Question 2

In the second part of the test, the candidates were asked to write a short e-mail message. The main points assessed were clarity, accuracy, conciseness and informational content, as well as the necessary etiquette. Candidates should think primarily of the addressee when writing an e-mail or a letter and assess whether the message will be comprehensible to him/her and especially whether he/she will receive all the information he/she needs.

The welcome speech for candidates from foreign schools, which was the last assignment in this test, was found to be quite challenging for some candidates. Unfortunately, a large number of speeches were rather impersonal and relied too much on clichéd expressions or formulations. Successful candidates could articulate why they thought exchange programmes were important and useful in a wider sense. Providing only specific information about this particular exchange programme was not enough to score high marks for this exercise.

Nevertheless, almost all candidates were able to structure their speeches quite well, using a salutation and a suitable closing statement.

Paper 0514/03
Continuous Writing

General comments

The most common question was **Question 1**, “*Work – Exploration of the role of work in human life*”, followed by **Question 2**, “*I was really lucky that time – a story*” and **Question 8**, “*Farewell to school – a speech*”.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Work

Unfortunately, most candidates could only perceive the term ‘work’ in a rather limited way, i.e. as boring and tedious. In a few cases, candidates regressed to the subjects such as school, studies, sports and other hobbies.

Question 2

I was really lucky that time

This topic gave the opportunity to write a story. Most narratives were interesting to read. However, there often were detailed and colourful introductions followed by brief conclusions, so the opportunity to develop stories by using such devices such as direct speech, changing tenses, using interjections, etc. was not taken. Most stories were, nevertheless, highly descriptive, often depicting in detail the events of a single day.

Question 3

View from a window

Vividly describing the landscape through a window is a difficult task. Strictly speaking, there are no limits to fantasy and colourful descriptions, but a descriptive essay such as this should create a plausible and engaging image of the landscape.

Question 4

My field of study

Only a very small number of candidates chose this topic.

Question 5

Media

A common error was the failure to interpret the topic correctly. Unfortunately, candidates often had limited knowledge of the current world of media and their essays tended to be sketchy, lacking in comprehensiveness.

Question 6

My class

Very few candidates chose this topic, but those who did wrote good, straightforward essays.

Question 7

Olympic Games

The purpose of this topic was to write about the role of the Olympic Games in the present day. This is a very extensive topic, and the candidates often expressed their thoughts during the course of their writing. As a result, most of the work was a mixture of thoughts about the Olympics and the meaning of sport in general.

Question 8

"Farewell to school" speech at the end of the year

Good work was produced on this topic. Generally, the structure of the speech was clear and strong.

Question 9

Life with my relatives

Most essays were humorous, imaginative and original, although there was some exaggeration which marred some essays.