

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/01

Reading

Key message

To do well in this paper candidates should:

- take care to read the question carefully in Part 1, taking into account the number of marks available, in order to produce a relevant and full response. Candidates should use their own words as far as possible in order to gain higher marks for Language;
- produce a structured response in Part 2, making each point briefly, rather than expanding on each point.

General comments

In general, candidates responded well to the texts and tasks set in this year's paper. All candidates completed both questions.

On the whole, the quality of language was high. It is important, however, that candidates use their own words, as asked for, in **Question 1**, as word-for-word copying directly from the text without attempting to tailor a response to a specific question will have a negative influence on a candidate's performance. It is therefore important that candidates acquire a vocabulary and stylistic range varied enough to enable them to answer questions in their own words.

There was room for improvement in the structure of some responses to **Question 2**, where some candidates would have benefited from writing a plan or drafting rough notes before writing up their answer. A few candidates misunderstood the question and wrote a general summary that bore little relation to the specific requirements of the task.

Although language was generally accurate, there were a number of persistent errors, especially in verb formation. Common spelling mistakes included 'waneer', 'allebij', 'bijde', 'betekeend' and 'mischien'.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Weaker candidates copied from the text and did not tailor their response to the phrasing of the question. It is worth remembering that candidates do not have to alter the text extensively to show they can use their own words.
- (b) This question was answered well, but it is worth noting that, if a question is worth two marks, the answer needs to provide two bits of information in order to receive both marks.
- (c) Candidates needed to convey that the type of language used in *terapie* is different from the type of language used in a *filosofisch consult* and that one should not expect to get answers to questions raised in a *filosofisch consult*. The second of the two differences asked for in the question required close reading of the sentence '*Wie bij haar komt met een vraag, moet niet denken dat hij met een antwoord weer weggaat*'.
- (d) Candidates had a range of examples from the text to choose from to illustrate Tromp's confrontational style. Many candidates focused on the vocabulary used to describe Tromp's personality ('rechtdoorzee' 'allergisch voor zwetsklets'), her appearance ('strak in het pak', 'voorzien van een strenge knot') and her actions ('beende', 'dwong').

A small number of candidates did not provide sufficient details to score both marks available.

- (e) Most candidates experienced no difficulties answering this question.
- (f) The majority of the candidates answered correctly, but a number of candidates did not use their own words.
- (g) Some candidates confused the opinion held by some people with Tromp's opinion. The use of the passive '*word ... gevonden*' indicates that the view expressed is not hers. The rest of the paragraph then proceeds to give Tromp's comments on this commonly held opinion. At this level, candidates should be aware of the need to synthesise information from more than one sentence or phrase in the text in order to give an accurate answer.
- (h) This question on the effect of reflecting on one's experiences was answered well by a majority of the candidates.
- (i) This challenging question was specifically targeted at the better candidates. Other candidates tended to struggle with determining the exact function of the word '*Terwijl*' in the context in which it was used in the part of the text indicated in the question.
- (j) This question was well answered by most candidates.
- (k) This last question required a good, synoptic understanding of the whole text. The better candidates were able to explain clearly why the particular example referred to was typical of Tromp's style of consultancy.

Question 2

Generally, the quality of the summaries this year was very good.

Good candidates were able to write an appropriate introductory sentence, such as: '*Tekst 1 en tekst 2 gaan allebei over hoe mensen filosofie in hun leven kunnen benutten, maar daar houden de overeenkomsten op*', or: '*Van begin af aan kunnen we zien dat de twee teksten tegengesteld zijn.*' In addition, such candidates were able to sustain the quality of their summaries by using appropriate conjunctions and other linking devices, and by devising a logical structure for their answer. Many candidates made effective use of paragraphs in their summaries and were able to formulate a suitable conclusion to their response.

Candidates had to identify 15 similarities and differences between the two texts to be awarded the full marks for content. Many candidates discussed the obvious differences of opinion of the two writers on the topic of philosophy, and most commented on the fact that the first text was more informative while the second text was more argumentative. The best candidates were able to write a suitable conclusion to their summary. Among the most impressive conclusions were those in which candidates were able to offer a synoptic link between the two texts, e.g. that the author of the second text should follow one of Tromp's courses to understand better why we need to think philosophically in our daily lives.

A small number of candidates wrote a general summary, which failed to address the points the question asked them to focus on. It is strongly recommended that candidates read the questions more carefully in future to ensure their answers are fully relevant.

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/02

Writing

Key message

To do well on this paper, essays should be accurate, use a wide range of vocabulary and structures, be well organised and coherent, with well-developed ideas.

General comments

The level of writing was on the whole very good, and most candidates could write effective essays.

Some candidates wrote essays that lacked structure or that were either too long or too short. These candidates might have benefited from an essay plan to tackle these problems and to help them focus on the essay question.

Candidates may find it useful to be reminded that they are awarded two sets of marks for each of the two compositions; the first mark is for style and accuracy and the second, depending on the type of essay, on the argumentative, descriptive or narrative content.

Most candidates wrote linguistically accurate compositions. There were, however, a number of spelling mistakes which usually did not impede communication but which occurred quite frequently:

- third person singular form of *worden* was often written without *dt*
- addition of a *t* after verbs ending in *d* in the past tense
- errors in the formation of irregular verbs
- confusion with the use of *ei* or *ij* in words such as *bijvoorbeeld* and *eigen*
- confusion with the use of *oe*, *ui* or *eu*
- words written as two or more separate words when they should be written as one word, e.g. *wapenstilstand* for *wapenstilstand*

Most candidates wrote essays in a style which was appropriate to the task. In a small number of cases candidates used an informal or colloquial style in the argumentative essay which was not the right register for this particular task.

The emphasis in **Deel 2** is more on creative writing as candidates choose between descriptive and narrative tasks, each type of task demanding a different approach. Most responses were written in an appropriate style, and there were noticeably fewer narrative responses to descriptive tasks than there have been in previous sessions, indicating that candidates were perhaps better prepared.

Comments on specific questions

Deel 1

Discussie en betoog

Many candidates tackled the **Question 1(a)** with enthusiasm. Most agreed that candidates were ultimately responsible for their performance at school, but many also counterbalanced this view by pointing out that parents and school staff had a big role to play.

Those candidates who opted for **Question 1(b)** usually argued that global warming and diminishing fossil fuel reserves were the two main reasons why shops should not have their doors open when the central heating or air-conditioning was switched on. The best candidates were also able to discuss views for and

against – the need to conserve energy vs. the open door as a sign of welcome to shoppers, for instance – including views that ran counter to their own.

In **Question 1(c)** there was the same number of candidates against advertising for sweets and snacks as there was in favour of this. Nearly all recognised that bad teeth and obesity were due to overeating and unhealthy food and that the advertising of certain foods was problematic. Some emphasised the need for self-restraint, others believed it was the responsibility of the state to protect consumers. Quite a large number of candidates expressed concern that an advertising ban would lead to many food manufacturers going out of business, which, they argued, would have a negative impact on the world economy. Again, the strongest candidates were able to discuss opposing views before reaching their own verdict in a suitable conclusion.

Opinion was divided on the issue of whether or not it was a good idea to produce cinematic versions of books in response to **Question 1(d)**. Many candidates were in favour and cited films such as *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings* as good examples of how the filming of books should be done. The better responses were able to look beyond listing films and discussing their storylines to articulating what makes a screen adaptation successful in general. Some candidates thought that films inevitably fail to do justice to the books they are based on. A minority of these candidates were also worried about the impact on literacy and reading skills on those who choose to watch the film rather than read the book. Once again, candidates who discussed pros as well as cons and provided a solid structure and line of argument achieved the highest scores.

Deel 2

Beschrijving of verhaal

Question 2(a) and (b) proved to be equally popular. Many of the candidates had travelled in a variety of different countries and were able to describe what made their chosen country particularly appealing. Some candidates might have written more about the sights and sounds and the atmosphere of their chosen country instead of giving a list of positive attributes which were factual rather than descriptive in nature. Candidates who wrote about the *kermis* on the whole did so effectively and evocatively. A small number of essays lacked sufficient detail for a higher score.

In **Question 2(c)** candidates were asked to write the beginning of a story in which they had to imagine that they had just been asked by an unknown person to deliver a parcel to a house in their neighbourhood. Good candidates made effective use of sophisticated plot devices, such as unexpected twists and flashbacks, to enhance their response. Weaker candidates wrote rather repetitive stories in which a limited range of vocabulary and style was used.

The lonely figure on the dike in **Question 2(d)** gave rise to stories that were usually melancholy and reflective in tone. Many candidates were able to write with empathy about the person. The best stories on this topic were moving and often contained unexpected elements which aroused the reader's interest.