Statistics

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Listening section

Task 1

Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content)

*What is the female speaker enquiring about?*

She is enquiring about a group trip to Hong Kong and Macau lasting 7 to 8 days in mid-April next year. She is planning this trip for her husband and herself.

Question 2 (Content)

*What does the male speaker offer?*

He said that there will be three groups of 10 travellers each during that time, departing on the 10th, 15th and 20th of April respectively. All groups will depart on an express train and return with Southern Airlines. The cost is ¥5500 per person, inclusive of airline and train tickets, local transport, four-star accommodation, meals and entry passes. Booking time is three weeks prior to departure.

Question 3 (Content)

*What documents are required?*

Special passes are required to visit Hong Kong or Macau. The travel agency can help obtain them at a cost of ¥300 extra.
Question 4 (Content, Deduction)

Is she likely to go ahead with her plan? Why or why not? Explain your conclusion using information from what has been said.

(Yes) The female speaker is making the enquiry because she and her husband are planning to visit Hong Kong and Macau. When she heard that the booking isn’t required until closer to departure time, she told the agent that she would like to keep in touch.

(No) Although the female speaker is planning to visit Hong Kong and Macau and she told the agent that she would like to keep in touch, it is still quite some time before the actual booking is required. It is possible that she may find another trip during the waiting time.

Comments

Most candidates responded adequately to this task. To achieve a better result, candidates need to address the Content part as well as the Deduction part of the criterion.

Task 2

Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content, Deduction)

Why does the male speaker require a tutor? Explain your conclusion using information from what has been said.

He requires a tutor for their daughter who is experiencing difficulty with school work and her new school environment. Their daughter is 10 years old. She has just returned from the USA where she has been living for the past seven years. She doesn’t understand Chinese well and finds it difficult to follow in class. Her parents are too busy to help her with her studies.

Question 2 (Content, Deduction, Recognition and appreciation)

How suitable is the female speaker for the job? Explain your conclusion from what has been said.

The female speaker is suitable for the following reasons.

• She is a third-year university student, majoring in commerce.

• Her best subject is Mathematics and her English is also very good, which are two of the subjects required to help the girl.

• She is a member of a dance club, which may indicate she has social skills apart from dancing skills.

• When told she will need to help with English, Mathematics, Natural Science and Society, as well as Chinese, she sounds very confident and says she can do all of them.

• She appears to have the patience required to work with children. When told the girl is not doing well with her school work, she says that she is happy to spend time helping her.

• She sounds very willing to help. When the father indicates that he wants the tutor to be with his daughter often to help her settle into the new environment, she suggests that her summer holiday is close at hand and she can be with the young girl almost every day.

Comments

Most candidates responded quite well to the questions in this task.
Task 3

Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content)
According to the program, what is the meaning behind each number mentioned?

There are four numbers mentioned: 1, 6, 8 and 9.

According to the text, 1 means “first”; 6 means “smooth” and “without a hitch”; 8 means “prosperity” and 9 means “longevity”.

Question 2 (Content, Deduction)
Suggest why the message sender targeted this particular mobile phone owner. Justify your response using information from what has been said.

This particular mobile phone owner was targeted because his phone number was 159 6678 1888. With three consecutive eights in the number, the message sender believed that the owner would be a very rich person. Once, in Shanghai, a number plate with three consecutive eights was sold for over ¥100 000.

Question 3 (Content, Deduction, Recognition and appreciation)
What lesson could be learnt from the story?

One should not overestimate what so-called lucky numbers can do. They may not bring luck or happiness as expected. In the story, the three consecutive eights did not bring fortune to the phone owner, but nearly got him into trouble.

Comments

Most candidates responded adequately to this task. To achieve a better result, candidates needed to address the Content part as well as the Deduction and Recognition and appreciation parts of the criterion. In addition, arguments or conclusions should be appropriately supported by the information in the given text.

Candidates need to demonstrate their understanding of the elements in the assessment criterion, e.g. Content, Deduction, and Recognition and appreciation. They also need to make clear references between their responses and the information provided in the texts. Candidates generally also need to improve their English language literacy. Although minor spelling or grammatical errors will not affect the overall grade awarded for the Listening section, candidates’ results will be affected if their responses cannot be fully understood.

Speaking section

In 2011, all candidates were required to present a prepared two-minute speech in Chinese to an examiner. The majority of candidates were individually assessed in person, with the remaining candidates assessed during individual telephone conversations. Candidates were sent information on four topics several weeks before the assessment date and required to research and prepare a two-minute speech on each topic. Candidates were able to take notes (written on one double-sided palm card for each topic) into the examination room and refer to them as they presented one of their four speeches.

There were two tasks in this section.
Task 1
Each candidate presented a speech (the examiner selected the topic). A demonstration of relevance, logic and organisation at a high level was expected. Most candidates performed well in this task, with appropriate and clear divisions of introduction, development and conclusion evident.

Task 2
Candidates were required to respond spontaneously to any questions from the examiner. This task provided candidates with the opportunity to express themselves on a variety of themes and topics based on the syllabus. Most candidates performed well in this task.

Candidates should ensure they have an appropriate understanding of the Speaking section task instructions and respond accordingly.

Reading section

Task 1
Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content, Deduction)
*Describe Wang Wu’s personality. Support your response with reference to the text.*

Wang Wu was full of arrogance. He believed that he was very intelligent and knowledgeable as he claimed that he could answer any question under the sun. He also appeared to be easily offended when he felt that his pride was challenged. An example of this is his behaviour when he was questioned about how much he knew.

Question 2 (Content, Deduction, Recognition and appreciation)
*Suggest what the lesson of the story might be. Explain your response using information from the text.*

The lesson of the story might be that one should never assume he or she knows everything. In the story, Wang Wu assumed that the old man had a full head of hair when the old man challenged him about how much he knew. Wang Wu then claimed that he knew as many things as there were strands of hair on the old man’s head. He made a fool of himself when the old man took off his hat — he was bald!

Comments
Most candidates responded adequately to this task, although many simply translated the text. To achieve a better result, candidates need to address the *Content* part as well as the *Deduction* and *Recognition and Appreciation* parts of the criterion. Conclusions should be well supported by appropriate reference to the given text.
Task 2

Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content, Deduction)

How suitable do you think the title of this text is? Explain your response using information from the text.

The title suggests that a smile is worth a thousand words. The text explains why this is the case. Firstly, a smile usually suggests positiveness and self-confidence. It conveys one’s kindness, friendliness and happiness. Secondly, it can quickly remove the distance and promote harmony between people. A smile to a stranger can make them smile at you. A smile can also make it difficult for people who disagree to be angry with you. As a result, it paves the way for good communication with people.

Question 2 (Content, Deduction, Recognition and appreciation)

Explain the significance of the final sentence of the text.

It suggests that one should use the smiling technique appropriately in communication, that is, to smile naturally. Otherwise, people might think they have come across a psychotic patient and, therefore, they might call the hospital or the police!

Comments

As in Task 1, most candidates responded adequately to this task. To improve results, candidates need to demonstrate their understanding of the key words in the questions. This will enable them to respond using the most suitable information from the text to meet the elements of the criterion. Simply translating information does not receive full credit.

Task 3

Suggested responses

Question 1 (Content)

Suggest a title (in English) for the news article. Explain your title with reference to the text.

The title could be “Drinking Appropriately for Life”. It was chosen for the following reasons. The article states that water is the source of life as 70% of the human body is water. The way people drink water today will determine their health in ten years’ time. The article suggests that it is appropriate to drink at least two litres of water daily and that people should drink approximately four times a day (after getting out of bed, at 10 am, at 4 pm and at 8 pm). Those working in air-conditioned environments should drink the same amount despite the fact that they may not feel hot. Finally, the article discusses the healthiest drink for first thing in the morning.

Question 2 (Content, Deduction, Recognition and appreciation)

Suggest what might make the healthiest drink for first thing in the morning. Justify your choice, with reference to the text.

The article suggests that it is not healthy to drink fresh fruit juice first thing in the morning because it cannot adequately provide the much-needed fluid that the human body requires. The article recommends three drinks for first thing in the morning: boiled water, boiled water with honey and warm boiled water with a slice of fresh lemon. Boiled water provides much-needed fluid. Boiled water with honey provides not only fluid but also nutrition from the honey. Warm, boiled water
with a slice of fresh lemon provides fluid but also cleans toxins in our body. Therefore, the best choice is a combination of a glass of warm, boiled water with a slice of fresh lemon and a little bit of honey, which provides much-needed fluid, cleans toxins and adds nutrition.

Comments

Again, most candidates responded adequately to this task. They were able to make conclusions, but were less effective in supporting their conclusions with information from the given text.

Candidates should ensure they have an appropriate understanding of the assessment criterion’s elements: Content, Deduction, and Recognition and appreciation. They should also practise how to best respond to questions — identifying the key words in questions and effectively using the appropriate information from the given texts to support their opinions or conclusions. Translations do not necessarily provide appropriate responses. Many candidates also need to improve their English language literacy.

Writing section

Task 1

Write a description of the Australian town or city you live in for a travel brochure designed to attract Chinese tourists. Include information about its location, climate and attractions.

All candidates responded to this task although quite a few appeared to have misread it. The task required candidates to describe an Australian town or city, rather than a state. In addition, articles for publication usually have titles, content is often divided into paragraphs and the language used is generally formal. Most candidates neglected these conventions.

Task 2

Write an email to a Chinese friend overseas about your plans for the future.

Most candidates responded quite well to this task. To achieve a better result, apart from following the appropriate genre format, candidates needed to demonstrate their knowledge of a variety of appropriate expressions, their ability to organise their ideas logically and their skills to organise their response accordingly.

Advice to prospective candidates

Prospective candidates should ensure that they have a good understanding of:

- the terminology used in the task suggestions in the syllabus
- the task instructions in each section of the examination paper
- how to identify key words in the questions of each task and respond accordingly
- how to use information from a given text effectively to support their opinions or conclusions in responses to the Listening and Reading sections.
Candidates also need the ability to:

- express themselves clearly in English in responses to the Listening and Reading sections
- write in paragraphs and include more than one or two full stops in an article of 200–300 characters.