## Statistics

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## Listening section

### Suggested responses

#### Task 1

#### Question 1

*What did the husband go away to do, and why?*

The spirit/alcohol they were selling was very popular and they needed to produce more to meet demand. He went away to buy more equipment to increase production.

#### Question 2

*Why was the wife excited when her husband returned?*

She was excited because she had made more money during her husband’s absence and wanted to show him her ‘newly discovered secret’ in doing business.

#### Question 3

*What is the lesson to be learnt from the story? Explain using information from the conversation.*

The lesson to be learnt is that a successful business is based on credibility. Once credibility is destroyed, so is the business. In the story, the husband and wife adopted different business principles. The husband earned their credibility through honesty and providing a quality product at a fair price. This credibility boosted their business so much that they needed to increase production to meet the demands. On the other hand, the wife’s only business principle was making money at all costs. She added water to the alcohol and, as a result, lost their hard-earned credibility and had to close the business.
Comments

Most candidates responded well to the questions in this task.

Task 2

Question 1

*What had happened to the businessman at the start of the story?*

He lost all his money and became bankrupt. He was so depressed that he left his wife and children and became a homeless man (a tramp), which didn’t really help his depression. In fact, his depression worsened and he became suicidal.

Question 2

*What did he first do after he read the book, and why?*

He decided to go to see the author who had published a book called *Confidence*. He was inspired by the book and thought the author might be able to help him out of his difficulties.

Question 3

*How did he change his life, and what caused the change?*

He was en route to success again. He found a job earning US$30,000 a year and looked confident. He was very positive and confident about his future as he said to the author, ‘One of these days, I will call in to see you again. I will bring you a blank cheque with my signature. You are to fill in the amount you want.’

The reasons for the change are:

1. When he went to see the author of the book for help, the author helped him in a very strange way, taking him to a large mirror and urging him to fully understand the person in the mirror if he wanted change. This appeared to have sent a powerful message to him.

2. The man broke down when he saw his own image in the mirror. Then and there he was determined to change, as he recollected later in the story.

Question 4

*Using information from the story, explain the lesson that can be learnt.*

I think there are two lessons to be learnt from the story. One is that under no circumstances should you give up or give in to unfavourable situations. Believing in one’s own strength is the key to success. In the story, the businessman was en route to success again because he was determined to change the situation he was in. The other is that it is better to show people how to help themselves than to do everything for them. The author gave the businessman an opportunity to understand himself and subsequently to make the decision for change. This is a powerful way of helping others.

Comments

Many candidates responded very well to this task, demonstrating high-level critical thinking skills. They made appropriate conclusions and supported their arguments with information from the text.
Speaking section

In 2014, the majority of candidates were individually assessed in person, with remaining candidates assessed during individual telephone conversations. Candidates were sent topic information several weeks before the assessment date and were required to research and prepare a 2–3 minute speech. They were able to take notes written on one double-sided palm card into the examination room and to refer to the notes as they presented their speech. There were two tasks in this section.

Task 1

Each candidate presented a speech of 2–3 minutes in Chinese to a marker. A demonstration of relevance, logic and organisation at a high level was expected. The majority of the candidates performed very well in this task, with appropriate and clear divisions of introduction, development and conclusion evident.

Task 2

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

Reading section

Suggested responses

Task 1

Question 1

*Why did Li Na say that the one thing she would never regret was marrying her husband, Jiang Shan? Explain, using information from the text.*

It was because she knew that she owed much of her success to her husband. Li Na seriously injured her knee three times, in 2004, 2006 and 2009 respectively. After operations in 2004 and 2006, Li said to Jiang that she would retire if she was injured again. In 2009, Li was injured for the third time and she was determined to have no tennis, no training and no operation. It was Jiang’s strategic encouragement that persuaded her to undergo the third operation and rehabilitation and subsequently saved her from early retirement. She came out a stronger person, physically and mentally, and was in a winning position again. Moreover, when Li was going through the painful rehabilitation after the operation, Jiang was always there for her with his tender love and care.
Question 2

What is your opinion of the husband’s actions? Justify your response with information from the text.

In the text, Li’s husband Jiang appeared to be rather cruel when he was trying to persuade Li Na to train after Li injured her knee for the third time. He threw Li’s chips out of the window and shouted at her, calling her a coward. In my opinion, this actually demonstrated that Jiang was a very skillful coach as well as a very understanding husband.

The fact that Li went through a third operation and rehabilitation, which enabled her to play tournaments and be in a winning position again three months later, confirms that. He knew that was what he needed to do and could do to save Li’s career at that moment.

While he might appear cruel, he was always with Li when she needed him most. In the text, when Li was going through her third painful rehabilitation, Jiang was there showing his love and care: ‘Come on, Nana, for our future.’ Jiang’s appearing-to-be-cruel actions in fact saved Li’s tennis career.

Comments

Many candidates responded adequately to this task. To achieve a better result, candidates needed to demonstrate a high level of critical thinking skills, identifying the key element/s in questions and address them with appropriate information from the text.

Task 2

Question 1

What did Wang Yong think of the first taxi driver? Explain your response using information from the text.

Until Wang Yong returned to the airport, he thought the first taxi driver was a great person for the reasons below.

1. It was Wang Yong’s first experience of this city and the taxi driver was very helpful, happily answering all of his questions.

2. When Wang Yong arrived at his destination, the driver only wanted him to pay $100 rather than the $180 showing on the meter. When he returned to the airport in another taxi, the meter showed the fare was $120. It was only then that Wang Yong realised he had been conned, which made him think the first taxi driver was really evil.

Question 2

What were the incidents that made Wang Yong’s friends say that Europeans were not trustworthy? Include details from the text in your response.

The couple had a holiday in Europe. Just before they left one country, they ordered a large copy of a famous painting. While in the shop, they noticed the shop owner had made a mistake on the bill and eventually persuaded him to correct it. When the couple received the painting sent by the shop owner, they noticed that the painting was very well wrapped with no damage at all. However, the painting was smaller than the large size they had ordered in the shop!
Question 3

What is the relevance of the psychologist’s comment to the story?

The final paragraph says that it is only natural for cats to eat fish. When the cat ate its owner’s fish, it wouldn’t be fair to only blame the cat. It is relevant to both Wang Yong and his friends’ cases in the text.

In Wang Yong’s case, it was natural for the taxi driver to want to make money. It is also common sense that not everyone is honest. The taxi driver obviously took advantage of Wang Yong being new to the city and should be held responsible for that. On the other hand, if Wang Yong had checked the taxi fare rate, he might not have been ripped off. He had himself to blame for that, too.

In the case of Wang Yong’s friends, they experienced the shop owner adding figures to the total amount while they were in the shop. That should have sent alarm bells ringing, yet they still continued with the purchase, so they had themselves to blame as well.

Comments

Again, many candidates responded adequately. To achieve a better result, candidates needed to demonstrate a high level of critical thinking skills, identify the key element/s in questions and address them with appropriate information from the text.

Writing section

Task 1

Write an email to a friend about the most exciting event/s for you this year.

Write about 200 characters in the spaces provided.

Most candidates responded adequately to this task. To achieve a better result, however, candidates needed to follow the conventions for this type of writing, such as choice of language, organisation of information, paragraphing and punctuation.

Task 2

Write an article for a school magazine in China. Write about what you or others do to help improve the environment in your school or community.

Write about 300 characters in the space provided.

All candidates responded to this task and many responded well. However, articles written for publication generally use formal language, include titles and have content divided into paragraphs. Most candidates neglected some or all of these conventions. A number of candidates also misinterpreted the task and wrote irrelevant responses.
Advice for 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/elements in the questions of each task and respond accordingly
- how to draw conclusions from given information in the Listening and Reading sections
- 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 to:

- express themselves clearly in English in responses to the Listening and Reading sections
- follow appropriate writing conventions where necessary, such as titles, paragraphs and punctuation.