

# **Examiners' Reports**

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**June 2011**

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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## EXAMINERS' REPORTS

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# F881 Dutch: Listening, Reading and Writing 1

## General Comments

Candidates performed well this year and the level of knowledge of most candidates was good. However, candidates who had prepared for the exam did better, because they knew what to expect. It is useful for candidates to learn how to write a summary of a text and to take care that when questions are asked in English, the answer should be in English and when questions are asked in Dutch, the answer should be given in Dutch.

The articles chosen for Section B are taken from Dutch newspapers or magazines, chosen to suit the level of an AS student. The texts are kept as close to the original as possible, so that candidates see the same type of texts that they will have been reading in newspapers or magazines. It is possible that vocabulary used in these articles is not in the main dictionaries, but it should be understandable from the context.

Presentation was generally very good, but it is important for candidates to realise the need to provide clear answers and to ensure that writing is legible. Scripts are now scanned for electronic marking and there is a potential for confusion to arise when a candidate writes a draft answer in pencil and then uses a pen. This can give a very fuzzy result, which is difficult to read. The candidates should write their answers in the areas provided so that everything they have written can be marked.

## Comments on Individual Questions

### Section A: Listening and Writing

For the Listening element of the exam, candidates are in control of their own audio player. They are allowed to stop the CD at any point to write down their answers or to replay a section. It is important for them to take this time to deal with the questions thoroughly

### Opgave 1

The first exercise was about a member of the *Chiro*, an equivalent of the Scouts organisation in the UK. Some candidates did not realise this was an organisation in Flanders, 1(b). A few candidates had difficulty with the question of whether being the leader of such a club was a waste of time 1(c). The question which weaker candidates struggled with was the question about whether Jeroen made friends before or when he was a member of the club or that he couldn't remember. The last one was the answer.

### Opgave 2

This question was about rowing. The candidates had to choose the correct word to complete the text. Some candidates had problems because they did not use the words in the grid and tried to provide other words instead. However, most candidates answered this question without many problems. The only difficulty was *brede spanwijdte van de armen*. Some chose the word *gespierd*, as this was logical but *lang* was the right answer. The word *wegelegd* was not understood by weaker candidates.

### **Task 3**

Most candidates answered all questions in this task very well. The text was about a new type of aeroplane, the 'Antares', fuelled by hydrogen. A few candidates didn't know the three added features of the plane – that it is safe, quiet and vibration free.

### **Task 4: Writing**

This task is linked to the last listening exercise. The candidate is asked to write a letter to the person who invented the plane mentioned in Opgave 3. This required candidates to read the stimulus very carefully and then to write about what the five bullet points suggested. They should not translate the text word for word. Most candidates had the required quality of language for this exercise and performed well.

## **Section B: Reading and Writing**

### **Opgave 5**

In this exercise, candidates had to read about three theme parks and then fill in a grid identifying the differences between them. Most candidates answered these questions well.

### **Opgave 6**

This was a newspaper article about dancers in the Netherlands. Although short, it differentiated very well. A lot of candidates did well in this question, but they did find the subject matter and questions more difficult.

### **Opgave 7**

This exercise was based on a newspaper article about Spangenberg's research on modern youth. Candidates who read the text carefully did very well. A few candidates were able to rephrase the text but others had more problems and it was obvious that this article was more difficult than exercises 6 and 7. Often candidates answered (e) as if the question was 'when' rather than 'how' does one develop a set of values. The main difficulties were in questions (f), (g) and (h): the conflict between parents and children, Spangenberg's views on the causes of the problems of youth, and the changes in support.

### **Opgave 8**

Candidates were asked to read an article about how a Dutch non-governmental organisation calculates when people are poor. In part (a) the candidates are asked to summarise the article. They need to show that they understand the text in order to gain communication marks. Examiners could clearly tell which candidates had practised this skill and were able to give a concise, well-written answer. It was good to see that candidates understood that the organisation only calculated the boundary and were not social services who gave people money.

In part (b) candidates are required to give their own suggestions about material from the article. Candidates who had had plenty of practice made a plan and demonstrated their writing skills in an effective and grammatically correct composition.

## **F882 Dutch: Listening, Reading and Writing 2**

### **General comments**

This year's F882 examination went well. There were no unexpected difficulties in the paper and, overall, candidates were well prepared.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Section A - Listening and Writing**

For the Listening element of the exam, candidates are in control of their own audio player. They are allowed to stop the CD at any point to write down their answers or to replay a section. It is important for them to take the time to read the questions thoroughly, so they have a better idea what to expect in the text.

There are two Listening texts in this section. The general meaning of both texts was understood well by the candidates. The majority of the candidates answered the questions to the first task in English, as was expected of them. The answers to the second exercise need to be in the target language. The language mark for section A is based only on the answers given in the second task. It is therefore important to reply in sentences.

#### **Task 1**

Open questions in English. Most candidates did well in this exercise and managed to explain briefly what 'echolocation' was, according to Fred. In part (c) some candidates gave the answer 'bats' or 'dolphins' when asked who could benefit from this knowledge. The answer should have been 'blind people'. The answers to the last 3 question parts were quite straightforward. 'What do you need to do to learn the technique': 'practise daily for a few hours/ practise a lot'. 'Which two difficulties can occur': 'difficult to make the correct sound' and 'there are different noises outside.' Higher ability candidates did not have any problems with this exercise. The lower ability candidates sometimes got a little confused. Many used common sense or took an educated guess. These are sensible techniques though they cannot be guaranteed to work.

It is useful to realise that questions are asked in the order in which they appear in the listening text.

#### **Opgave 2**

Open questions in Dutch. The majority of the candidates got the gist of this text. In the second half the level of difficulty increased, and weaker candidates had difficulties.

#### **Section B - Reading and Writing**

In this section candidates had to show comprehension of two texts, by answering a variety of questions.

### Opgaven 3 and 4

Exercises on *Niet reduceren, maar oplossen*. It is essential for candidates to re-read the text, carefully, and more than once. Some candidates gave the everyday meaning of the words asked, but what they must do here is explain the meaning of the words as they are used in the text. Even though task 3 was answered more successfully than task 4, both tasks showed that some candidates could use extra training in the explanation of vocabulary.

### Opgave 5

This was answered well in general. Again, it is important here to fill the gaps with words that will form a grammatically correct sentence. In (e), for example, *opgelost* doesn't give a correct sentence (*het is belangrijk dat het probleem opgelost*).

### Opgave 6

This was answered quite well by most candidates. There is no need to form long, complicated sentences. As long as the information in the new sentence is the same as in the text, the mark will be given.

### Opgave 7

This exercise tested a high level of comprehension but was done reasonably well by most candidates.

### Opgave 8

Most candidates found the second text (*Een raar, verdorven land*) more difficult. In task 8 it is important to retrieve the information from the correct paragraph. In this exercise candidates can demonstrate their grammatical skills.

### Opgave 9

This task did not cause problems for most higher-scoring candidates. Every text candidates read in their language lessons can be good practice for this type of exercise.

### Task 10

Lower ability candidates found the translation of the third paragraph difficult, but the higher ability candidates did very well in this exercise.

### Opgave 11

This was a difficult task, as can be expected at this point in the exam. It should help the candidates if they remember that the questions follow the order of the text, ie the answer to question (b) will be relatively early in the text (paragraph 3) and the answer to question (c) (two reasons why Americans like living in the Netherlands) is likely to be found in the following paragraph.

**Section C - Writing**

Like last year, most candidates were able to write a well-structured essay, starting with an introduction and ending with a conclusion. Most candidates had read the instructions well and made sure they wrote what was requested in the assignment (ie 'What can the government do to deal with the problem?') The themes of environment, integration and art (graffiti) were very popular, with many candidates writing about personal experiences from the Netherlands or Belgium, which made very interesting reading.

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