



GCSE **Bengali**

8638/LH Paper 1 Listening Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The paper has differentiated well between the students for which it was set. The mean mark on the paper was around 30 out of 50, comparatively higher than the previous year. Most students scored marks consistently throughout the paper. The most able students responded well to most of the questions, particularly the Bengali questions in Section B. Some students struggled with the more challenging questions, particularly those in the latter half of the examination. Although the number of students not attempting questions was fewer, there were still instances of these. Teachers should continue to encourage students to attempt all questions.

Questions requiring open-ended verbal answers such as completing sentences, identifying advantages-disadvantages, finding events in different tenses discriminated well. Most of these questions were aimed at the higher grades and required precise answers. Some also required students to draw simple conclusions and understand the material which contained more complex and less familiar language in line with the requirements of the subject content. In some cases, basic items of vocabulary were not well known by students; intensifying expressions also proved challenging for some. Only a few students wrote their answers in the wrong language in section B.

Teachers are expected to remind students to maximise the 5 minutes of reading time in the listening paper by:

- reading all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B
- checking questions with emboldened words where they might have asked for a particular point of view or the most relevant option to choose
- looking at any examples given, as these point out the level of detail required
- underlining keywords that have been highlighted in the rubrics/questions
- identifying the questions which have two or more parts to answer from the same utterance
- sign-posting Section B as it requires answers in Bengali
- being careful about listening to the question numbers in Section B as these are announced in Bengali.

Section A

Questions 1-4

As expected in this overlap section, students performed significantly better at the higher tier.

Questions 1 and 2 were about apps developed in Bangladesh and targeted higher levels of demand. The expectation was to be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the mentioned apps. It was evidenced that a significant number of students knew the key vocabulary such as ‘প্রধান’ (main) and ‘সংবাদপত্র’ (newspaper), ‘বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি’ (science and technology), ‘সব সময়’ (always), ‘পরামর্শ’ (advice), ‘দেশের বাইরে থেকে’ (outside of the country) and ‘ব্যবহারের সুযোগ’ (opportunity to use) tested in these questions. These questions discriminated well among different tiered students. It also provides a clear indication that students were rightly entered into the higher tier paper.

The topic covered in question 3 was different genres of movies and their popularity. Almost 46% got the option correct in question 3.2. Students did not perform well on question 3.1. It might be because many students did not quite catch up with the word ‘adventure’ instead they considered ‘রোমাঞ্চকর’ to sound

similar to ‘romance’ and chose this option. Around a third of students managed to get this answer correct which then had an impact on answering question correctly.

Question 4 was about school club activities. In this question, students were expected to identify different timeframes. It was a two-marked question and did pose difficulty as expected. This question discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said and those whose understanding was only partial. Some students struggled to understand the word ‘ময়লা ফেলার পাত্র’ (dustbin). Students would benefit from more practice on the vocabulary listed in the specification and events described in different tenses.

Questions 5-6

Questions 5 and 6 were about the Bengali New Year celebration. Question 5 was accessible to most students. Question 6 was less accessible with just under 40% of students gaining the mark. The target word here was ‘আনন্দ মিছিল’ (procession) and it seems most of the students were unfamiliar with this.

Question 7

Question 7 was a non-verbal table selecting type. This question was set on the working environment and was set at a higher level of demand. Almost 49% of the students were successful in identifying all three correct statements.

Questions 8-13

Questions 8 to 10 were open-ended short-answered questions and questions 11 to 13 were sentence completion type items. The success of these questions indicated that students coped well with the relatively abstract nature of some of the language used about technological advancement in Bangladesh and a celebrity Bengali chef, respectively. Approximately 31% got question 8 correct, with around 60% of students responding correctly in questions 9 and 10. From this performance, it can be discerned that some students were unfamiliar with the vocabulary (মগজের তথ্য). Similar performance was seen in questions 11-13 as that for questions 9 and 10.

Questions 14-17

These questions were designed to be challenging questions and were handled quite well by students. Questions 14 to 17 were about opinions on family life. In general, P, N, and P+N answers are difficult for students to pick out but this year the data shows that the students have handled it very well. It seems that the students, in such exercises, have listened to the whole utterance to identify the overall opinion and managed to identify the correct option.

Questions 18

Question 18 was an extended utterance, designed to challenge the most able students, with answers in English and four key points are to be found in one recorded speech.

The topic of this question was textbooks of Bangladesh. It was an inferential type of question. Only the very best students succeeded and answered extremely well, including all the details required. About 39% picked up full marks from question 18.1. On question 18.2, around 41% of students correctly identified the support provided by the government from the utterances they heard. Students found the target

vocabulary of question 18.3 challenging (তরুণ ও বৃদ্ধদের বৈষম্য- discrimination between youth and elderly people) and around a quarter of students scored on this part. A little more than half of the students scored a mark on question 18.4.

Question 19

Although question 19 was another higher-demand question for the students, it was answered well by many of the able students. This was a table fill-in advantage-disadvantage question about end-of-season sales and just over 45% of students scored full marks.

Question 20

This was a three-part non-verbal question, a personalised matching type of question. About 83% got question 20.1 correct. Students performed comparatively lower in question 20.3. Of the three parts of this question, students performed better on question 20.2. The topic of this question was air pollution and its impact on cities. Such performance shows that most of the students clearly understood the complex vocabulary and grammatical structures used in this extended utterance. Students were able to choose the correct answers with a high degree of success.

Questions 21-23

Questions 21-23 were non-verbal, were aimed at the lower level of demand and performed as Expected. Students were able to understand the environmental-related context in this question and to cope with the targeted vocabulary.

Question 24

Question 24.1 was comparatively challenging and very few students were able to score the mark here for both key points. There was a relatively better response to question 24.2.

Section B

Questions 25-26

As expected in this overlap section, students performed significantly better at the higher tier when compared to the foundation tier paper.

Question 27

This question was about spelling and the dictionary and was aimed at the more able students and therefore proved challenging for some. This question was testing students ability to understand complex language and then use some inference to get to the correct answer. The performance was similar in both parts of this question with around 60% of students correctly responding to each item.

Question 28

This question tested a detailed understanding of the language heard and there were some tricky distractors too. Students found question 28 challenging. Few students managed to understand the

language, well enough to conclude the idea of taking a shower every day. In items 28.3 and 28.4 words were in the prescribed vocabulary list, but not many students could relate to the set phrases.

Advice to students

- Finally, students must make sure that they make their final answer clear to the examiners, by writing legibly and using the spaces provided.
- If students change their minds about an answer, the final choice must be indicated to the marker and placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.
- Students should give precise answers, avoiding lots of details.
- It is always good to try attempting to answer all questions.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.