



GCSE

Chinese (Mandarin)

8673/RF Reading Foundation Tier

Report on the examination

Version: 1.0

June 2025

Report on the examination – GCSE - Chinese (Mandarin) – 8673/RF – June 2025

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General comments

It is encouraging to note that performance on the 2025 Reading papers showed an improvement over 2024, with students achieving higher overall grades. The mean mark rose to 30, compared to 27 in 2024. This year's paper was accessible to the full range of students, reflecting effective preparation across a broad spectrum of topics.

Questions 5, 8 and 13 emerged as the most challenging, often due to unfamiliar vocabulary or contexts. As in previous years, the translation section at the end of the paper proved difficult for many. However, students performed strongly on Questions 6, 7 and 11, demonstrating solid understanding of common vocabulary and basic opinions.

Most students' handwriting was clear, although a small proportion submitted scripts that were difficult to read. Centres should continue to remind students of the importance of writing their answers clearly and ensuring any amendments are legibly.

Question 1

This opening question, focused on family members, was generally well handled, with over 63% of students gaining all three marks. However, the slightly longer sentence structure may have posed a challenge for some, as about 30% did not secure any marks.

Question 2

This question produced mixed outcomes. While Question 2.2 saw nearly 90% of students correctly identify 公园, surprisingly 45% did not recognise 星期六 for Q2.4, underlining the need for greater reinforcement of basic time expressions.

Question 3

Students showed confidence with the topic of school subjects. 44% achieved full marks in Question 3.1, but only 26% did so in Question 3.2, largely due to difficulties with the time expression 下个星期.

Question 4

This question required students to identify key ideas from a longer text. Most sub-questions were answered successfully, with 88% correct in Question 4.1 and 76% in Question 4.2. However, Question 4.3, requiring the answer NT, saw just 47% success.

Question 5

This open-response Positive/Negative question posed difficulties for students. Both parts of the question were answered poorly, likely due to the longer text and the question format. As in previous years, some students left responses blank. Only 16% of students achieved full marks on Question 5.1, and 43% gained one mark out of two. On Question 5.2, nearly 20% of students gained one mark out of two.

Question 6

Commented [AW1]: I have amended the general comments for clarity and to ensure accurate data. Recommend the LEx use this as a model when revising the Higher report.

Commented [WG2R1]: Thanks! I will follow the instructions for the Higher Tier.

Commented [AW3]: I have rewritten the report for Question 2 as well since the sub-question numbers Q2.4 were missing in the LEx's original.

Commented [WG4R3]: Thanks!

Commented [AW5]: My revised version, as the LEx used inaccurate data and quoted the wrong phrase from the Q3 text (should read 下个星期 rather than 上个星期).

Commented [WG6R5]: Sorry about this!

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This True/False/Not in the Text question, based on a classical Chinese story, effectively differentiated Foundation Tier students by ability. While Question 6.1 (71%) and Question 6.7 (68%) were well answered, Question 6.4 proved particularly challenging, with only 22% of candidates identifying the correct answer - likely due to difficulty understanding the comparative structure 和...一样. Similarly, only 30% succeeded in Question 6.6, suggesting unfamiliarity with the word 孩子. These results highlight key areas - comparative grammar and core vocabulary - that require reinforcement in teaching.

Question 7

This school-themed question was generally well understood. Most students were familiar with the positive/negative and mixed (P/N/P+N) formats. More than 82% achieved one mark on Question 7.1. In Questions 7.2 and 7.4, over 77% and 78% responded correctly, respectively, and Question 7.3 also saw a 61% success rate. This suggests that students were well trained to spot connectives in this type of question and were confident in recognising words like 新 (new), 难 (difficult), and comparison sentences.

Question 8

Despite its shorter length, this question required careful reading and was targeted at higher-performing Foundation Tier students. Most students scored one or two out of four. While terms like 玩游戏 and 买书 were often identified, some students mistakenly wrote “read books” instead of recognising the verb 买 (buy). Similarly, many wrote “job” instead of “look for a job”, omitting the necessary verb. As a result, few students achieved full marks, which is consistent with the question’s intended level of difficulty. Nearly 20% students achieved 2 marks out of four.

Question 9

This question was generally well answered. It featured accessible content and non-open response items suitable for the Foundation Tier. Nearly all students correctly identified 猫 and 电影, with approximately 43% achieving two out of three marks.

Question 10

Like Question 9, this item was well handled. About 52% of students gained two marks, and nearly 20% achieved full marks. The topics of jobs and school proved to be suitable for this cohort.

Question 11

Students demonstrated good understanding of this question. It was encouraging to see that students performed well overall. Candidates showed solid knowledge of numerical expressions such as 八月九日, 十二个小时 and 五天. Question 11.2 and Question 11.3 were especially well answered, with 93% and 86% correct responses.

Commented [AW7]: I began rewriting the report for Q6 by first correcting the question type, but I feel there is a lack of clarity regarding the marking, such as why “work experience” is italicised.

Commented [WG8R7]: An unnecessary mistake. I will double check. It should not be italicised.

Commented [AW9R7]: I’ve revised this - note it was HQ6, not Foundation.

Question 12

This text was adapted from a Chinese fable. Although this type of question did not target the highest ability students, it required analysis and an understanding of Chinese culture. As a result, some students - despite knowing the vocabulary - may have selected incorrect answers due to cultural unfamiliarity. It is pleasing to note that over 73% of students answered Question 12.1 correctly, and nearly 60% gained marks in Question 12.3. Just under half of students achieved marks in Question 12.2 and Question 12.4.

Question 13

This question was one of the more challenging ones on the paper. In Question 13.1, many students translated 滑雪 as "go to play in the snow". While they were familiar with 雪 and 玩滑板, they did not understand the correct meaning of 滑雪. As a result, only around 30% of students gained a mark for this question. In Question 13.2, a small number of students wrote "roast duck" instead of "roast chicken". In Question 13.3, the word 毛衣 also proved difficult for many students to recognise.

Question 14

The translation section of the Reading paper remains a challenging part for many students. Most candidates translated the first two sentences successfully, but the final two proved more difficult, with very few achieving full marks. This indicates limited familiarity with vocabulary such as 地理课, 自行车, 动物园 and adjective 累. However, most students understood 昨天 correctly and showed confidence with common hobby terms like 跑步 and 游泳. Precision is essential in translation tasks - students must ensure every word is accurately conveyed and closely follows the original text.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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