S2 Chinese Language Practice Paper (Set 2): narrative and explanatory reading, classical Chinese, language use and practical writing

S2 Chinese Language | Time: 60 minutes | Total: 100 marks | 22 questions

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Section A: Narrative Reading (16 marks)

Read the passage below and answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. (a) According to the passage, state the three steps Mr Chan took to examine the watch and what fault he found. (4 marks)

Three steps: (1) he held the watch to his ear to listen; (2) he put on a single-lens magnifier and prised off the back with tweezers; (3) he studied the movement for a while. He found that the hairspring was bent, so he replaced it and punched two extra holes in the strap.

2. (b) Which two methods of character description are used for Mr Chan? Give one example of each. (4 marks)

(1) Speech: "Thirty dollars. An old watch carries feelings; it would be a pity to throw it away" and "A watch is like a person. Running slow does not matter; what is worst is having no one willing to set it right" - short, feeling words that show his care for old things and for people. (2) Action: "held it to his ear", "prised off the back with tweezers" and "lifted screws smaller than a sesame seed without the least tremble" show his skill and concentration through movement.

3. (c) What is the function of Mr Chan's remark, "A watch is like a person. Running slow does not matter; what is worst is having no one willing to set it right"? (4 marks)

In content it uses a watch as a metaphor for people: everyone falls behind or makes mistakes, and what people need most is another person's patient help, which states the theme. Structurally it follows his choice to fit a new spring and punch holes rather than sell a new watch, and prepares for the closing image of the clearest ticking in the street, turning the account of an errand into a realisation.

4. (d) Why is it effective to end with "that tick, tick, tick was the clearest sound in the whole street"? (4 marks)

(1) It closes with sound, echoing the opening image of stalls lighting up and using the noise of the street to set off the clarity of the ticking. (2) "Clearest" refers both to the crisp sound of the repaired watch and to Mr Chan's attentiveness and care for old things standing out among the crowd, so the theme is implied and a lasting impression is left.

Section B: Explanatory Reading (16 marks)

Read the explanatory text below and answer the questions.

5. (a) In which year did Hong Kong Post begin operating? In which year were the first stamps issued? How many years apart are the two events? (4 marks)

It began operating in 1841; the first stamps were issued in 1862, that is 1862 - 1841 = 21 years later.

6. (b) How long is the Peak Tram? How long does the whole journey take? How many metres does it travel per minute on average? (4 marks)

It is about 1.4 kilometres, that is 1,400 metres; the journey takes about 7 minutes; on average it covers 1,400 / 7 = 200 metres per minute.

7. (c) What does "a steepest gradient of 48 per cent" mean? Explain with the example given in the text. (4 marks)

It means that on that stretch, for every 100 metres travelled horizontally the car rises 48 metres, so the rise is 48 per cent of the horizontal distance. The greater the gradient, the steeper the climb, which is why a steel cable has to pull the car.

8. (d) Which two explanatory methods does the text mainly use? Give one example of each. (4 marks)

(1) Quoting figures: "about 1.4 kilometres long, has six stations and takes only about seven minutes" gives concrete numbers for size and speed. (2) Comparison, here of past and present: early passengers were "mostly residents and merchants" while today they are "mainly tourists", which shows how the service has changed.

Section C: Classical Chinese (16 marks)

Read The Two Children Debating the Sun and answer the questions.

9. (a) Explain the quoted words: "arguing" (bian), "reason" (gu), "distance from" (qu) and "hot water" (tang). (4 marks)

Bian: to argue or debate. Gu: the reason or cause. Qu: distance from. Tang: hot water.

10. (b) What view does each child hold? Support each with one reason from the text. (4 marks)

The first child holds that the sun is near at sunrise and far at noon, because at sunrise it is as big as a carriage canopy and at noon like a plate or bowl, and things look small when far and big when near. The second holds that it is far at sunrise and near at noon, because at sunrise it is cool and chilly and at noon like hot water, and what is near is hot while what is far is cool.

11. (c) Confucius "could not decide". Why did the children laugh at him, and what does this show? (4 marks)

The children assumed that so learned a man as Confucius must be able to judge who was right, yet he could not answer, so they laughed and said, "Who says you know so much?" This shows that knowledge has no end and even a sage has things he does not know, and it also praises the children for daring to question and for seeking the truth honestly.

12. (d) Translate "Who says you know so much?" into modern Chinese and describe its tone. (4 marks)

Translation: who says you are the one who knows more than we do? The tone is rhetorical and mocking: on the surface it questions the claim to great knowledge, but in effect it denies that Confucius knows everything, spoken frankly and with childish directness.

Section D: Idioms and Synonyms (16 marks)

Read each item and write your answers on the lines.

13. (a) Choose the best idiom from the box to fill each blank (1 mark each, 4 marks): (1) He practised calligraphy for ten years without a break, and this _____ spirit was at last praised by his teacher. (2) Ming meant to add one brief note but said far too much, which was _____. (3) The new band _____ at its first public performance and won applause from the whole hall. (4) Chances do not come to you; sitting at home waiting is no different from _____.

(1) persevering without let-up. (2) drawing legs on a snake, that is, spoiling things by adding what is not needed. (3) amazing everyone at one stroke after long obscurity. (4) waiting by a tree stump for a hare to run into it, that is, hoping for gain without work.

14. (b) Distinguish the near-synonyms (4 marks): (1) He _____ the library to extend his loan (request / beg). (2) The flood victims _____ the rescue workers to bring water quickly (request / beg). (3) Compare the uses of "simple" and "shabby".

(1) requested. (2) begged: "beg" is more urgent and humble than "request", which suits disaster victims. (3) "Simple" means not complicated and is neutral or positive, as in a simple method; "shabby" means poorly equipped and incomplete, and is negative, as in shabby facilities.

15. (c) Write an antonym for each word (1 mark each, 4 marks): (1) generous (2) cautious (3) modest (4) thrifty

(1) stingy. (2) rash. (3) complacent. (4) wasteful.

16. (d) Write one sentence using "to persevere without giving up" and explain its meaning. (4 marks)

Meaning: to keep at something over a long period and not give up halfway. Example: if he perseveres and reads aloud for fifteen minutes every day, his Putonghua will improve noticeably within a year.

Section E: Sentences, Punctuation and Rhetoric (16 marks)

Read each item and answer as instructed.

17. (a) Correct the faulty sentences (2 marks each): (1) Through this voluntary activity, made me understand the importance of unity. (2) We must prevent such accidents from not happening again.

(1) Delete either "through" or "made" so that the sentence has a subject: "This voluntary activity made me understand the importance of unity." (2) Delete "not": "We must prevent such accidents from happening again." The double negative had reversed the meaning.

18. (b) Punctuate the sentence (4 marks): the teacher asked me why are you late I lowered my head and said sorry the bus broke down on the way

The teacher asked me, "Why are you late?" I lowered my head and said, "Sorry, the bus broke down on the way." Speech is set off by a colon and quotation marks, the question takes a question mark and each statement ends with a full stop.

19. (c) Transform the sentences (2 marks each): (1) Mr Chan repaired that watch (change to the passive). (2) Mother said, "You must come home early tonight" (change to reported speech).

(1) That watch was repaired by Mr Chan. (2) Mother said that we had to go home early that night. In the passive the object becomes the subject and takes "by"; in reported speech the quotation marks and colon are dropped and the pronoun "you" becomes "we".

20. (d) Name the rhetorical device in each sentence (1 mark each): (1) The moon hangs in the sky like a silver plate. (2) The grass crept secretly out of the soil. (3) His voice was so loud that people three streets away could hear it. (4) Spring is hope, spring is strength, spring is a beginning.

(1) simile. (2) personification. (3) hyperbole. (4) parallelism.

Section F: Practical and Composition Writing (20 marks)

Read each item and write as instructed.

21. (a) Notice (8 marks): you lost a blue water bottle in the school library. It has a name sticker on it and a small crack in the lid. Write a lost-property notice of about 80 characters, including the time and place of loss, the features of the item and how to contact you.

Model answer, with heading, body, signature and date: Lost Property Notice. On Friday 20 November at 4 p.m. I lost a blue water bottle in the reading area on the second floor of the school library. The bottle has a sticker with my name on it and a small crack in the lid. Anyone who finds it please hand it to the library counter or call 9876 5432. Thank you. Chan Siu-ming, S2B, 21 November 2026. Marks: heading, time and place, features, contact - 2 marks each.

22. (b) Composition (12 marks): write an essay of at least 400 characters entitled "An Apology I Will Never Forget".

Guidance and marking scheme: (1) Material - write from real experience, making clear whom you apologised to, what caused the quarrel and how the apology came about, and explaining why it is unforgettable; avoid a mere list of events. (2) Structure - open with a flashback or dialogue, develop the conflict and the apology in detail, and close with what you learned. (3) Expression - use speech, action, expression and inner thought, and let setting and detail carry feeling. Marks: content 5, structure 3, language 4; deduct marks if the piece is under 400 characters.

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