



GCSE

BENGALI

8638/LF Listening Foundation Tier
Report on the Examination

8638
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General Comments

This year's GCSE Bengali Listening Foundation paper differentiated well between the students for which it was set. The number of students who sat in this tier was almost 150. The mean mark on the paper was 22 out of 40 and it was good to see that many students understood a great deal of what they had heard and were able to respond well to the questions. Section B, the part of the paper where students had to understand questions written in Bengali, was more challenging, and only the ablest students scored high marks here. In some cases, basic items of vocabulary were not well known by students; intensifying expressions also proved challenging for some. Few students left questions unanswered, except in Section B where more students did not attempt the hardest questions on the paper. Only a few students wrote their answers in English in section B.

Teachers need to remind students to use make best use of 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 it might have asked for particularly negative views or the most relevant option to choose;
- looking at any examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- underlining keywords which 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 01-03

These questions were easily accessible to students and they answered most of the questions between 01 and 03 well. Question 02 provided a straightforward introduction to the examination, with about 93% of students getting it correct although students found question 01 comparatively hard. This might be because some students did not read the question stem carefully where '*porikkha sheshey (at the end of the exam)*' was very important for choosing the correct answer for this question. In this specification, comprehension questions cannot test single lexical items, even at the lowest grades, and this means that questions of this type must contain distractors; it was comforting to see that students coped well with these distractors and were able to choose the correct answer in a large majority of cases such as on question 03.1, where about 85% got the answer correct. Question 03.2 caused difficulties for many and about 23% of students got it right.

Questions 04-07

An impressive 83% of the candidates gained marks on question 04.1, 97% on question 05 and about 94% gained marks on question 07. Candidates found question 04.1 and question 06 comparatively hard. Question 04 covered the topic 'family' and questions 05, 06 and 07 were under the topic 'technology in everyday life' and candidates handled- them well.

Questions 08-09

This part of the paper was about 'environment' and 'neighbourhood'. Question 08.1 was accessible to most of the students (about 92%). Question 09 had a lower success rate; about 20% in question 09.1 and 39% in question 09.2. Presumably students struggled to understand the words '*ultodikay* (opposite direction) and *dalaan* (building)' in question 09. These questions were set at the mid-level of difficulty.

Questions 10-15

These questions did not pose too many difficulties for most students, with about 38% getting question 10 correct, 72% scoring a mark for question 11, 75% on question 12, 79% for question 13, 70% on question 14 and 73% getting a mark for question 15. Most students were comfortable with the topic of 'free time activities' and 'life at school' as well as familiar with the vocabulary used to talk about learning.

Questions 16-17

These were overlap questions which talked about the context of using textbooks. There was evidence that a majority of students knew the key vocabulary such as '*pata* (page)', '*moyla* (dirty)', '*bhari* (heavy) and '*note lekha* (note taking)' tested in questions 16 and 17. Almost 73% of candidates scored 2 marks on this question and a little less than 53% on question 17.

Question 18

Students coped well with this long passage. It was evident from their annotation that many had been well prepared, in that they recognised from the numbering (18.1, 18.2, 18.3) that all three questions were to be answered in one go. In 18.1, the clues of being homeless led about 65% of students correctly to select option B. For 18.2, about 64% of students selected the correct answer and almost 50% were able to gain the mark on 18.3, showing their understanding of the keywords.

Questions 19-20

These questions were aimed at the higher grades at the foundation tier and were overlap questions. Candidates performed better on question 19. almost with 10% getting all three options right and more than 50% securing two options correct. Question 20 did pose difficulty as expected. Approximately 20% of the candidates managed to identify key information needed to answer this question. These questions discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said and those whose understanding was only partial.

Section B

Questions 21

This question in Section B was a straightforward introduction to the Bengali section (Section B), with about 10% getting all four options correct, and 34% getting three options right. Although the vocabulary used here was relatively simple, the questions in the target language did pose a limiting factor.

Question 22-23

These were overlap questions as well. It was pleasing to see that many students attempted this item. Those who singled out the lexical items '*porisromer (hard work)*' and '*nirapod (safe)*' picked the wrong answer. On question 22.1, about 45% got both options correct and on question 22.2, the percentage was 25%. Both questions 23.1 and 23.2 produced similar outcomes. These were expected to be challenging questions and did indeed prove to be so.

Advice to students

- Students must make sure that they make their final answer is 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 signalled to the marker and be placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.
- Ensure that students give precise answers avoiding lots of details.
- Try 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.