



GCSE

CHINESE (MANDARIN)

8673/LH: Listening Higher
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This was the first time that our students have sat an external Listening examination in June since the start of the pandemic. The paper proved to be reasonably accessible for the majority of students. It was pleasing to see students knew what was required of them and attempted questions across the paper.

Nevertheless, this year's paper provided evidence that the pandemic has had a particular, and in some cases tremendous, effect on students' listening skills. Whilst many students were able to gain some marks for each question regardless of the question type, in some cases even basic items of vocabulary were not known well by students. There was an increase in answers that were left blank this year. In questions requiring responses in English, the answers often lacked precision and/or clarity.

Teachers should remind students of the following techniques:

- maximise the 5 minutes' reading time by -
 - reading the questions carefully
 - using the question title, the rubric and any examples given to help focus on the topic and understand the context
 - identifying the questions which have more than one part, e.g. 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3;
- listen to the whole utterance once before writing down your answer;
- follow the examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- pay particular attention to the words which have been emboldened;
- ensure that you give precise answers and avoid giving alternatives and/or unnecessary additional information;
- cross out clearly the answers you do not want to be marked;
- write down option letters carefully and legibly;
- only write answers which are possible, e.g. A, B or C in an A B C multiple-choice question.

Questions 1-2

These overlap questions proved a positive start to the paper and were obviously answered more successfully by Higher tier students than by Foundation tier students. Nearly half of the students scored both marks for Question 1, although the mistakes made at Foundation tier appeared at Higher tier as well, with 晚上 being mistaken for 网上, producing the (incorrect) answer 'dad goes online every day'.

Question 2 was answered correctly by a majority of students with the simple vocabulary (三个哥哥, 爱我, 太吵了) being understood. However, the answer 'annoying' was not rewarded due to a lack of precision and clarity.

Question 3

This was an overlap question. As expected, students at this tier performed much better than those at Foundation tier. Question 3.2 nonetheless proved challenging, even at this tier, with about 40% of students being unable to draw the correct conclusion from the passage. As at Foundation tier, although 学习 and 教室 seemed reasonably accessible words, students found it hard to relate them to 'school'. Students should be better trained at drawing conclusions.

Question 4

As expected, this overlap question was universally answered more successfully by Higher tier students. This was a straightforward question for Higher tier students with most students choosing correctly both the problem and time frame. A common mistake was that a number of students produced the answer ‘homework’ or ‘lots of homework’ for 没有做作业, which were both rejected due to lack of precision and clarity.

Questions 5-6

This was a lower demand section of questions which were all very well answered. Question 5 was slightly less successfully answered than Question 6. Those who did not select the correct answer might not be familiar with the comparative sentence structure 她玩儿得比她朋友好, and thought it referred to the sister ‘wants to skateboard with her best friends’. Question 6 was the best-answered question on the paper – 每天在运动中心 proved to be understood by over 95% of the students, who were able to choose the correct answer ‘in the sports centre’ and reject the distractor 想去日本 ‘in Japan’.

Question 7

This question was also a low demand question, but the passage was quite lengthy. It was pleasing to see a very high success rate for this question, with nearly 75% of students gaining all 3 marks. Compared to the other two correct answers, F (The shop is near the sea.) was less frequently identified as a correct answer, thus suggesting that the structure 离海边不远 was not known by some students.

Questions 8-10

This section differentiated well. Question 8 attracted the highest number of correct answers, most likely due to the accessibility of the country ‘Singapore’ being tested. Question 10, on the other hand, proved to be the most challenging. This question was aimed at the more able students as it required some manipulation. Furthermore, a number of students mistook the expression 叔叔的小狗 for the puppy belonging to someone called ‘Shushu’. After careful consideration, it was eventually accepted as a correct answer due to the particularities of Chinese grammar which facilitated this misunderstanding; hence accepting the answer seemed fair.

Questions 11-13

This section met with a mixed response and proved quite challenging, revealing gaps in many students’ vocabulary. The majority understood 空气很新鲜 and 很多人病了, but 吃了河里的鱼 was less well recognised and some were tempted to answer ‘drinking’ or ‘fishing’ which were not rewarded.

Questions 14-17

Students have clearly been well trained by their teachers in how to answer these P / N / P+N questions and Questions 14 and 16 were answered very well indeed, perhaps because the vocabulary used in the text was straightforward.

Question 15 was also well answered, although not quite as well as Questions 14 and 16; the inclusion of the word 也 led many students to answer P; students should be reminded that they need to listen to and understand the whole text before choosing their answer – it is not necessarily the case that every time they hear 但是, 可是 or 不过 the answer will be P+N.

Question 17 was more challenging, with about one-third of students choosing the wrong answer; the use of the expression 考试多 and the negative word 没 in 没关系 were probably the reasons why many chose N instead of the correct answer P.

Question 18

This question caused difficulties for many students, particularly Question 18.2, which was the least well-answered question on this paper. All parts of the question were targeting the highest grades, in that they required precise understanding of vocabulary items. Some complex vocabulary was used in this question. The most able students demonstrated an impressive knowledge of 影响学习和 理想的地方.

Question 19

This question was aimed at the most able students and produced good outcomes. In such questions, students must take extra care and ensure that they write down their answers in the correct box.

Of the two aspects, positive and negative, the positive was correctly identified more frequently, suggesting that 好吃 was very familiar to students. Some students might have found it challenging to translate 点心, but the prompt of 饭馆 led students to assume 'the food is delicious', which was accepted.

Students were less successful, however, in identifying the negative aspect, and this section proved challenging to some students. 服务员 was either not known or mistaken for 'friend', thus leading to answers which created ambiguity, e.g. 'she doesn't like Chinese food'.

Question 20

This question was tackled very well and students understood the details sufficiently to rule out the incorrect answers and select the correct ones. The verb 找 had an impact on Question 20.2 where 找工作 was incorrectly selected by a number of students due to the distractor 'on-the-job training'. Undoubtedly 工作 was familiar to the students, but the actual answer 'job opportunities' was unfortunately less likely to be chosen than the distractor by some students.

Questions 21-23

On the whole, this section of questions was answered well by most of the students. The vocabulary used in Question 21, i.e. 大学, 学了, 地理, 地理老师, proved to be accessible, which enabled nearly 90% of the students to conclude the fact that the speaker ‘studied a related course at university’.

Question 22 was also well answered, with over 80% of the students understanding that 父母希望 indicated a parental expectation. Even though 我试试看 might not be a familiar expression to the students at this level, the correct answer of ‘wants to make their parents happy’ could be achieved through well-trained communicative skills.

Question 23 was considerably more demanding than Questions 21 and 22 for the simple reason that many students did not understand the fairly complex phrase 赚的钱, involving the attributive verb 赚. Quite a few students selected the answer ‘has a long annual holiday’; it is possible that they picked up the meaning of 一年 but misunderstood its use in the comparison 一年比一年多 and hence made an incorrect assumption.

Question 24

This question required written answers in English on healthy living. It was challenging in that it tested students’ precise understanding of vocabulary items and question words. The main issue here arose because students did not read the scene-setting introducing the question carefully enough, and failed to understand that Question 24.1 required as an answer two examples of unhealthy lifestyles, whereas Question 24.2 required suggestions for how to be healthier. As a result, less than half of the students scored both marks in each part of the question. The phrase 看电视 led to many answers referring to watching TV, e.g. ‘watching too much TV’ for Question 24.1, ‘watching less TV’ for Question 24.2, which were both incorrect.

Students should be reminded to always read the question title and the rubric carefully to ensure that they are clear about the context, as well as pay particular attention to the words which have been emboldened. In this way, any educated guesswork can be channelled in the correct direction. In longer answers, usually indicated by two lines provided for the written answer, students should expect to provide all the details they hear.

Question 25

This was a more straightforward question for Higher tier students and was also a lower demand question. Compared to the outcome in the Foundation tier, each part of the question was correctly answered by nearly three-quarters of the students. However, students need to be trained to listen carefully and reject the distractors in this type of question, e.g. the vocabulary in Question 25.1 was not overly challenging, but many students were unable to choose the correct answer 大学 after hearing the distractor 买东西; similarly in Question 25.2, 长城 distracted some students from the correct answer 艺术馆更有意思.

Question 26

It was pleasing to see that this final overlap question produced a much better outcome than at the Foundation tier. As at Foundation tier, some students did not manage to correctly choose Option A

in Question 26.1, failing to identify the speaker's dad as 'her role model' because they were not able to infer this from 我从小就想和他一样. Question 26.2 was answered better, with 电视剧 being spotted by over 83% of the students who chose the correct answer Option B, 'in a TV drama'.

Question 27

This question differentiated well due to the longer length of the text. The inclusion of the words 欧洲和北美洲 was perhaps the biggest clue to the correct answer to Question 27.1, yet they proved to be demanding items of vocabulary. Students were more successful in responding to Question 27.2 than Question 27.1, but both parts were well answered, given the relatively complex nature of both the vocabulary used in the listening material and the challenge of the written options.

Question 28

As one would expect, this type of question always proves challenging to students. However, the mark scheme for this section allowed for one-word answers in English for all parts of the question. This enabled students to gain marks even if the details were missing. As a result, a majority of the students scored marks for at least one part of the question, and it is pleasing to note that 23% of the students gained all 4 marks on offer. Answers which contradicted the key idea or made it ambiguous were rejected. This was particularly the case in the last part of the answer, where some students wrote 'say which country you would like to go to the most'.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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