
GCSE

POLISH

8688/WF: Writing (Foundation)
Report on the Examination

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

This has been another unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

There were just over 300 entries this year. The quality of work produced was mixed. The ability to use varied vocabulary, a range of tenses and knowledge of structures was on a fairly good level. The majority of students were also able to express opinions. What was rather striking was students' spelling, with some answers written phonetically and some written in such a way that it affected communication. Some students, not knowing how to write a word in Polish, wrote it in English and added Polish endings. This is reflected in generally lower marks for the quality of language across the paper.

Question 1

Students are required to write four sentences about what is **in** the photograph. Each sentence is marked separately and is worth a maximum of two marks. Because clarity of the message is the key element, the students who were most successful in this question were those who used simple language, usually with a verb like *widzę* or *jest*, followed by something they could see in the photo. This year around 50% of students managed to gain full marks in this question and that was less than in previous sessions. Many answers were ambiguous. The most frequent cause was very bad spelling, but some answers had no verb or included an incorrectly conjugated verb. This caused a delay or entirely broke the communication, which meant fewer, or a total loss of, marks.

Question 2

In this question there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 40 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points are compulsory and must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets. Many successful responses were concise and addressed all bullet points. It seems that all of them (*park w okolicy, jak często się tam chodzi, z kim i co się tam ostatnio robiło*) were understood by most of the students, but many students did stop short of developing their answers further. 57% of the students scored eight or more marks for Content. The Quality of Language was mixed, with 35% of students scoring marks in the highest band. Those who scored marks in lower bands wrote in a repetitive, inaccurate and sometimes even inappropriate language, e.g. *park sa oboc, nie lasze tam, bo poco, sam, tam ostatnio robiles*.

Question 3

For this question, there are 5 marks for Conveying key messages and 5 marks for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. Given that the level of demand of the messages was aimed at covering Grades 1 to 5, the question differentiated well. It seemed that many students found the translation challenging. 57% of students scored three or more marks for Conveying the message, while 50% managed to gain three or more marks for quality of language. Students are reminded to practise high frequency words and phrases and make sure they are familiar with the Vocabulary List for Foundation level.

The sentences in this question were divided into 12 key messages, and the main issues were as follows:

- *Tomek's uncle* was often mistranslated, for example *wujek Tomek, wujka Tomek, kuzin tomek*
- *Flat* proved to be a difficult word with many students not attempting to translate it at all
- A numeral (*seventh*) was often translated erroneously, with *sem, piontym, or siedem* among others
- *Underground station* caused many problems and was either not attempted or translated as *stacja ziemna, w ziemi*, and *close to* was mistaken by many as *closed* and therefore rendered as *zamknięta* (often spelled inaccurately)
- *Bakery* attracted many innovative, yet incorrect renderings, for example *becernia, pecania, pecenia*
- *Saturdays* was often mistaken for *Sundays*
- *New Year's Eve party* was translated correctly by just a fraction of students, therefore *impreza/przyjęcie noworoczne* was also accepted

Question 4

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 90 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets.

This year's students had one more option than just the usual two, as Question 4 included an additional option 04.3. Most of the students chose either Question 04.1 (nearly half of all students went for this topic) or 04.2. They focused on technology and healthy lifestyle respectively. The bullet points were well understood and most of the students were able to respond successfully to all of them. Many students wrote with details and shared their opinions, for example *nie wyobrażam sobie życia bez mojej komórki. Dzięki niej, wiem, która jest godzina, czy mam jakieś zadania domowe i w każdej chwili mogę zadzwonić do mojej przyjaciółki Isabelle*. Option 04.3 which focused on school and future plans was least popular and was chosen by 20% of students. These were also the weakest answers, often missing responses to one or more bullet points, written in a repetitive language, with no variety of structures. Bullet point number two was often misunderstood and students wrote about school trips (*ostatnio byłem na wycieczce w parku, to było fajne wydarzenie*) or sport events instead (*wczoraj byliśmy na meczu i wygraliśmy, to było super wydarzenie*). While many of those who chose 04.1 or 04.2 were able to score marks in the highest band for Content (32% and 22% respectively), only 9% of those who opted for 04.3 performed at that level.

Overall, in this question students attempted to use a variety of language, e.g. different adjectives, particularly around expressing opinions; variety of structures and appropriate linking words. Having said that, a large number of answers contained many accuracy errors and were written phonetically.

As in previous years, there were some very short or unintelligible answers. Also, it seems that some students were under the impression that they should not be writing more than the recommended number of words thus limiting themselves to a couple of sentences for each bullet point, sometimes leaving out the last bullet point, or ceasing writing in the middle of the sentence. Teachers are reminded that the whole student's answer is read and marked.

Concluding Remarks

It is worth pointing out that the spread of marks was comparable to previous years, as was the difficulty of the paper as a whole, but one area that seems to be significantly different is the accuracy which was poorer than in previous sessions. One reason could be the loss of teaching and the other less writing practice in advance of sitting the exam.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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