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GCSE

**BENGALI**

8638/LH Paper 1 Listening Higher Tier  
Report on the Examination

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8638/LH  
June 2023

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Version: 1.0

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## General Comments

The number of students who sat the June 2023 GCSE Bengali Listening Higher tier was 315. The paper has differentiated well between the students for which it was set. The mean mark on the paper was 29 out of 50, comparatively lower than the previous year. Most students scored marks consistently throughout the paper. The most able students responded well to most of the questions, in particular the Bengali questions in Section B. Some students struggled with the more challenging questions, particularly those in the latter half of the examination. Although the number of students not attempting questions was fewer, there were still instances of these. Teachers should continue to encourage students to attempt all questions.

Questions requiring a written answer discriminated well. The majority of these questions were aimed at the higher grades and required precise answers. Some, also required students to draw simple conclusions and to understand the material which contained more complex and less familiar language in line with the requirements of the subject content. In some cases, basic items of vocabulary were not well known by students; intensifying expressions also proved challenging for some. Only a few students wrote their answers in the wrong language in section B.

Teachers are expected to remind students to maximise 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 a particular point of view 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 01-04

As expected in this overlap section, students performed significantly better at the higher tier. The comparison with the foundation tier data on these questions also supports this view. Questions 01 and 02 were about local neighbourhood and targeted lower levels of demand. The expectation was to be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the mentioned local area. It was evidenced that a significant number of students knew the key vocabulary such as 'dokan (shops)', 'bari bhara (house rent)', 'oporadh (crime) and 'shahajjo (help)' tested in these questions. On question 01, almost 41% of the higher tier students got it right, whereas this was around 6% of the foundation tier students. More success on question 02 (approximately 47%) in higher paper than seen for the same question in foundation paper, where the correct response was about 4%. It has provided a clear indication that students were rightly entered into a higher tier.

Question 03 was about holiday planning. Students were found to be familiar with the key vocabulary related to this topic. About 87% of the students got it right in part 03.1, around 63% in question 03.2 and approximately 91% in question 03.3.

The topic for question 04 was celebrating International Mother Language Day. A significant number of students found this question challenging. Only 24% of the students managed to identify both key ideas needed to answer this question, and almost 50% of the students got at least one option correct. The key word they struggled to understand was 'prodorshoni (exhibition)'. Students would benefit in more practise on the vocabulary listed in the specification. As expected, higher tier students had greater success in answering these overlap questions.

### **Questions 05-06**

These questions were accessible to most students. The topic area of these questions was a cooking recipe, and the vocabulary was familiar to the students. These were multiple choice non-verbal questions. It was pleasing to see that about 90% of the students secured marks on questions 05 and question 06, and around 83% of the students responded correctly.

### **Question 07**

Question 07 was a table selecting non-verbal type. This question was set on the International Children's Peace Prize where the winner was a Bengali teenager. This was a higher grade question and almost 42% of the students were successful in identifying all three correct statements.

### **Questions 08-13**

Questions 08 to 10 were open-ended short-answered questions and questions 11 to 13 were complete sentences completion type items. The success of these questions indicated that students coped well with the relatively abstract nature of some of the language used about a famous building and studying in England, respectively. Approximately 76% got question 08 correct, with around 55% on question 09 and just over 70% on question 10. From this performance, students found question 10 comparatively harder and this is because question 10 was set at a higher level of demand among these three sets of questions on the same topic.

Similar performance was also seen on questions 12 (about 30%) and 13 (about 48%) compared with question 11 (about 84%). In this set of questions, question 12 and 13 were set at a higher grade. Students found 'arthik showochcholota (financial solvency)' difficult to decipher.

### **Questions 14-17**

These questions were designed to be challenging questions and were handled quite well by students. Questions 14 to 17 was about students' opinion on a wedding ceremony. In general, P, N, and P+N answers are difficult for students to pick out and this proved to be the case here. Question 17 was responded to correctly by most of the students (about 87%). Question 16 was the least successful with just over 60% of the students getting this question correct. Students should be reminded that, in such exercises, they are required to listen to the whole utterance to identify the overall opinion.

### **Questions 18**

Question 18 was designed to challenge the most able students, with answers in English and four key points are to be found in one recorded speech. This question was one of the extended utterances too. The topic of this question was equality. It was an inferential type of question. Only the very best students succeeded and answered extremely well, including all the details required. About 37% picked up full marks from question 18.1. On question 18.2, only around 3% of students

correctly identified the support provided by the government from the utterance they heard. The challenging vocabulary here were ‘shikhabritti (scholarships)’ and ‘proshikkhon (training)’.

### **Question 19**

Although question 19 was another difficult question for the students, it was answered well by many higher tier students. This was a three-part non-verbal question, personalised matching type of question. About 95% got the 19.1 correct. They performed comparatively lower in 19.2 and 19.3. Almost 61% of the students got 19.2 correct and in 19.3, it was about 60%. The topic of this question was the conservation of St Martin’s Island. Most of the students clearly understood the complex vocabulary and grammatical structures used in this extended utterance. Students were able to choose the correct answers with a high degree of success.

### **Question 20**

Question 20 was about the advantages and disadvantages of online gaming. This question was answered reasonably well. Almost 37% of the students could mention both advantages and disadvantages of online gaming correctly and 32% got one piece of information correct.

### **Questions 21-23**

Questions 21-23 were non-verbal, were aimed at the lower level of demand and performed as expected. Around 70% scoring on question 21, just over 50% on question 22 and almost 85% on question 23. Students were able to understand the scenario of volunteering at different places in this question and to cope with the targeted vocabulary.

### **Question 24**

There was a mixed response to this question. Question 24.1 was answered very well, with more than 47%, scoring the mark here for both key points. There was a relatively poor response to 24.2, which was just above 5%. This might be because the word ‘kormo obhiggota (work experience)’ was unfamiliar to many of the students.

## **Section B**

### **Questions 25-26**

As expected in this overlap section, students performed significantly better at the higher tier. On question 25.1, an impressive 4 out of 5 students got the option correct whereas, at the foundation tier, only around a half of the students achieved the mark. Similarly, on question 25.2 (about 71%) students performed more strongly on the higher tier than the equivalent question in the foundation tier exam. The proportion was noticeably lower in the foundation tier (about 34%).

Question 26 has shown a similar comparison between higher and foundation students, about 85% responded correctly on question 26.1 and 51% on question 26.2 in the higher tier and about 49% and 33%, in the foundation tier, respectively.

**Question 27**

This question was aimed at the more able students and therefore proved challenging for most students. This question was relatively testing students having to understand complex language and then use some inference to get to the correct answer from the context of a study tour. The performance was similar in both parts of this question and about 31% of the students got the answer correct in each part,

**Question 28**

This question tested a detailed understanding of the language heard and there were some tricky distractors too. Students found question 28 challenging. On question 28.1 about 47% got the option correct. This was done well. Comparatively fewer students managed to understand the language, well enough to conclude the idea of wastage of food. Only about 28% of the students responded correctly in 28.2. The performance was a bit better in 28.3 and 28.4 which are around 40% and just over 35%, respectively. These words were in the prescribed vocabulary list, but not many students could relate to the set phrases. Overall, students are to be congratulated for their success in answering these questions.

**Advice to students**

- Finally, students must make sure that they make their final answer 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 placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.
- Students should give precise answers, avoiding lots of details.
- Try attempting 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.