



GCSE **Chinese (Mandarin)**

8673/LF Paper 1 Listening Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

It is gratifying to see the progress students have made in their Mandarin Chinese studies. The Listening exam effectively differentiated between lower- and higher-attaining students. Many students understood much of the spoken material and successfully answered the comprehension questions.

Positive aspects of this year's paper include:

- many students gained marks across most questions, regardless of type
- few students left non-verbal questions unanswered
- students were well-prepared for the variety of questions.

However, some issues persist, particularly with verbal questions requiring answers in English. These often highlight differences in ability, but students' answers can sometimes be vague or unclear. Basic vocabulary (eg numbers, time, age, family members) and topic-specific terms were sometimes not known, hindering students' ability to answer correctly.

Teachers should continue to remind students of the following tips.

- Listen to the entire utterance before writing your answer.
- Pay close attention to emboldened words.
- Identify questions with multiple parts.
- Write down option letters carefully and neatly.
- Ensure answers are within the appropriate numbered lines or sections.
- Avoid providing unnecessary additional information.
- Clearly cross out answers you do not want marked.
- Answer all questions and avoid leaving any blank.

Questions 1-2

These low-demand questions helped students start the paper confidently, with the majority scoring at least one mark per question. Food items, such as 面包 and 鸡肉, were consistently well understood by students.

Questions 3-4

This section was very well answered, with more than 90% of students scoring at least one mark for each question. The places and related activities helped most students earn marks. For example, even though 体育馆, 超市 and 美术馆 might be less familiar than 火车站, 电影院 or 公园, students successfully identified them when familiar activities like 打篮球, 买东西 and 画画 were provided. This resulted in pleasing success rates.

Questions 6-7

The response to these two questions was very positive and well received by students familiar with this type of format. Both questions posed moderate demand and effectively differentiated between students' abilities. While 有意思 and 好看 are familiar ways of conveying positive opinions for the majority of students, 太旧了 was less familiar, resulting in question 6 being slightly less well answered than question 7.

In question 7, two meals, 早饭 and 午饭, were mentioned with contrasting opinions 好吃 and 难吃, linked by 但是. This enabled students to draw the conclusion that regarding food, the speaker's opinion was both positive and negative.

Questions 8-9

Classified as low-demand questions, these were generally well answered. However, question 8 posed challenges for some students who did not understand 最多 and 最少, despite 哥哥 and 爸爸 being familiar family members.

In question 9, a few students were likely distracted by 一 in 一样 and selected option A (one hour). Others misinterpreted 小时 and selected option C (ten hours) as 时 sounds identical to 十. This question effectively tested the students' overall understanding of the spoken text.

Questions 10-11

These overlapping verbal answer questions differentiated well between students. Compared to the higher tier, where 82% answered the first question correctly and 91% answered the second question correctly, only 37% of foundation tier students answered the first question correctly, and 53% answered the second question correctly. The higher success rate for the second question in both tiers suggests that students were more familiar with 肉 than 青菜.

Questions 12-13

This section of table-matching questions was answered very well, with 93% of students scoring at least one mark in each question. 美国 and 科学家 were more familiar than 德国 and 厨师, resulting in more students scoring both marks in question 12. This highlights the importance of teaching comprehension skills: for questions such as 13, students need to be taught to listen for clues, such as the relationship between 做饭 and the job of a 厨师.

Questions 14-16

This is another set of overlapping questions. Most students answered questions 14 and 15 well, as ages and comparison sentence structures using 比 are familiar to both foundation and higher tier students. However, question 16 proved to be the most challenging, with less than 5% of foundation tier students answering it correctly, which was unexpected. It seems that the term 女孩子 is not familiar to many students.

Question 17

This longer piece of spoken Chinese was targeted at higher-achieving foundation tier students. About 50% of students scored marks in questions 17.1 and 17.3. However, question 17.2 had the lowest success rate in this section, with less than 30% of students answering correctly. The challenging vocabulary 小说 in this question was likely a contributory factor.

The topic of charity work is among the more challenging ones in the specification. Teachers could do more to prepare their students for questions on this topic. It is important to remember that nearly all topics in the specification will be tested in each examination series. Teachers who cover the specification vocabulary in full provide their students with the best opportunity to succeed.

Question 18

This two-part question was intended to be low demand, but the success rate was somewhat disappointing. Nearly one-third of students chose the wrong answer for 18.1, and two-thirds chose the wrong answer for 18.2. Many students confused 地理 with 历史, and 作业 seemed to be very unfamiliar. Teachers should focus more on the topic of school subjects and related vocabulary to better prepare students for such questions in the future.

Questions 19-20

These questions were also on the higher tier paper and, as such, were more demanding. Questions requiring verbal answers often have a lower success rate than non-verbal questions, and this was the case with this suite of questions. Only slightly over 1% of students scored both marks in each question.

In question 19, 京剧 and 流行歌曲 were not well understood, with only 40% of students scoring a mark. Question 20 required students to give detailed answers about a speaker who studies in the UK (在英国上学) but whose home/family is in Hong Kong (家在香港). While many students understood that the speaker is from Hong Kong, they failed to spell "Hong Kong" correctly in standard English, and many guessed it was Shanghai instead. Consequently, only a fraction of students achieved a mark in question 20.

Teachers should emphasise the importance of recognising and accurately spelling place names and other key terms to improve performance in similar questions.

Questions 21-22

These overlapping questions were answered well overall. All questions in this section were high demand at this tier, but 32% of students scored at least one mark on each question. Question 21 proved more accessible as 多云 and 下小雨 are familiar expressions. Question 22 was more challenging. While 晴天 is well known, 有大风 was mentioned in the middle of the sentence. Students may have focused too much on the last word, 暖和, which was not one of the answer options, causing them to miss the key word 有大风.

Question 23

This selection-style question provided a comfortable end to the paper, with almost all students able to answer something about Chinese New Year. The most commonly selected answer was 吃饺子. The options "dragon dance" and "lion dance" were less frequently chosen.

Commendations to the teachers who incorporate cultural activities during Chinese New Year, aiding students in becoming more familiar with these traditions. It is noteworthy that dumplings are becoming increasingly popular in the UK!

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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