



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

In the 2009 Ukrainian oral examination the majority of performances in both the Conversation and Discussion sections were very good. Overall the majority of students engaged in a real dialogue with the assessors very enthusiastically and were able to present their ideas and successfully substantiate their opinions.

There were no incidents where students did not understand assessors' questions or the meaning of what the assessors had said. Throughout the examination all students were polite and maintained a very positive outlook. All students demonstrated an excellent knowledge of Ukrainian customs, including greetings, forms of address and civilities.

Communication

In both sections, the majority of students demonstrated a high capacity to link with the assessors and the ability to advance the exchange and move the conversation forward without frequent support from the assessors. A good number of students this year had exceptionally good clarity of expression and were skilled in using correct Ukrainian phonetics, stress and intonation. They confidently introduced their sub-topic in the Discussion section with a variety of communicative strategies. Most performances were well paced.

Content

The presentation of ideas and the coherence of the dialogue in both sections of the examination were generally of a high quality. The depth and the range of the information in the majority of performances were very good. In almost all performances the students made some original input and introduced complex and original ideas and views, which were highly relevant to the context. In some of the very best performances the emphasis was placed upon the originality of views and perceptions. In a few isolated instances students tended to follow a prepared script which meant that they could not score highly.

Language

Accuracy in vocabulary and grammar was also very good this year, and in some performances it was exceptional. The students consistently used a wide range of highly appropriate vocabulary and very complex grammatical constructions, and forms. The very best students also demonstrated a very good knowledge of the stylistic aspects of the Ukrainian language. The rest of the students used a middle register suitable for most communicative situations. A small number of students repeated an error in case endings or tense and used prepositions in conjunction with nouns where these were not required, since the meaning was conveyed by the case of nouns.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Section 1 – Conversation

In this section, the majority of students demonstrated very effective communication skills and a good knowledge of prescribed topics of the Conversation. They engaged in the dialogue with the assessors and provided highly relevant and informed responses to the questions about personal interests, favourite school subjects, plans for the future, and family issues and traditions. These students were generally very successful in clarifying and elaborating on their ideas and opinions. They appropriately used a wide range of vocabulary and expressions, and highly effective repair strategies. A very small number of students relied to some degree on rote-learned language.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topics for the Discussion in 2009 were 'Ukraine's Orange Revolution' and 'History of Ukrainian language'. Both topics were broad enough to accommodate a wide range of views and perspectives, and proved to be successful in the majority of performances.

The majority of students demonstrated an excellent ability to discuss in depth a great variety of aspects of the history of the Ukrainian language and of Ukraine's Orange Revolution. They successfully discussed the establishment, development and survival of the Ukrainian language in literature and the contribution of many prominent Ukrainian writers to this development and survival. Most of the students showed a great of personal interest in this topic and expressed their satisfaction with the sources selected for the Detailed Study. Students also discussed the political and socio-economic reasons for the demonstration at Independence Square in Ukraine and various developments since the

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revolution: the implementation of the principles of democracy, changes in the market economy, the ethnic-territorial divisions and unifications during and after the Revolution, and the change of national identity. The majority of high-scoring students also made highly relevant and well thought through comments on the changes in the image of Ukraine as a consequence of the Revolution, on the electoral democracy and corruption, and on the significance and the meaning of the Orange Revolution for people of Ukrainian background outside Ukraine (including comments on personal experience of the event).

In general, the majority of students presented a wide range of information from a number of sources, and the ability to successfully and confidently defend their personal opinions and original ideas. In a very small number of discussions the quality of the content presented was only of mediocre standard. In some instances students were too dependent on texts they had studied and on learned versions of interpretation.

The sources selected for the Detailed Study enabled students to develop a good understanding of both topics. The sources included Ukrainian poetry and prose, critical reviews, newspaper articles, documentaries, music, short films, electronic texts and interviews with the participants of the demonstrations.