

Italian (continuers)

2013 Chief Assessor's Report



Government
of South Australia

SACE
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ITALIAN (CONTINUERS)

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OVERVIEW

Chief Assessors' reports give an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 1: Folio

There were many good tasks, which really allowed students to extend themselves and demonstrate their knowledge. Some tasks were noticeably more challenging than others, but students coped well.

The stronger students produced work that truly reflected the performance standards. The best task designs were those where instructions were clearly and simply explained, thus allowing students to find success in the task.

Interaction

The stronger interactions were interactions/conversations with the teacher which reflected genuine interaction. Some of the interaction tasks were oral presentations with one or two questions asked by the teacher at the end. If an oral presentation forms part of the interaction the teacher must ensure that the students are provided with enough opportunity to address all of the assessment design criteria at the highest level which includes engaging in natural and spontaneous interaction.

Some interesting and successful interaction came from tasks which provided a range of questions across a broad theme, such as childhood.

Text production

The text production tasks were generally well executed and there was a good range of the tasks presented, addressing a variety of topics.

Text analysis

The majority of text analysis tasks presented at moderation came from past examination papers which is generally a good option but teachers must ensure that the questions give students the opportunity to meet all of the requirements of the performance standards.

A text analysis is the most appropriate assessment to demonstrate analysis of language, interpretation and reflection and the texts and questions must thus allow students to respond with sufficient depth and analysis of the language and content.

There were still some text analysis tasks that were merely content based questions and answers which limited the opportunity for students to analyse and reflect.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

There was a range of interesting topics and challenging In-depth study topics presented at moderation this year. These included women in the media, and more traditional topics such as migration, including personal histories.

The oral presentation and written response in Italian need to be two distinctly different pieces that differ in context, audience and purpose. There should be only a slight overlap in the information presented in each task. The best tasks presented at moderation were clearly different. The higher achieving students included more evidence of research in the three tasks, while the weaker responses often repeated information across the tasks.

The English reflection, although generally quite well done still presented a few challenges with some students reflecting primarily on the process of the research. Teachers are asked to ensure that their students understand that the purpose of the reflection is to give the students the opportunity to reflect on their understanding of cultures, values, his/her learning, belief and ideas and how these have changed or been enhanced through their learning.

General Comments

When the word count (for a text production) or the time length (of an oral presentation or interaction) is indicated in the subject outline, these should be adhered to. Falling short of the expected work count or time length, may not provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning. Exceeding the word or time limit should be avoided, as the additional work cannot be assessed or considered at moderation.

Teachers are urged to ensure that the tasks provide students with the opportunity to perform in the specific features of the assessment design criteria.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Examination

ORAL EXAMINATION

Conversation

Overall, students were well-prepared for the conversation part of the examination. The majority of students were able to express themselves confidently despite initial nerves. Very few students misunderstood questions and were able to self-correct. There was a variety of different responses to questions and answers were generally relevant. Some students were able to give detailed responses to questions and went beyond simple one sentence answers.

Some students did not understand l'anno prossimo and others confused a 'part time job' with a job after school. Students must also remember to omit the definite article when listing off subjects in Italian.

The stronger students were obviously familiar with the questions and were able to answer effectively and in depth, even if questions were asked in a different way. Their responses were quick, fluent and confident.

Discussion

There was a variety of interesting topics presented for discussion. Many students were able to make strong personal connections and reflect on the IDS and their learning. Well prepared students paid more attention to linguistic structure, and their language was refined with good use of connectives.

There was an excellent variety of topics; for example, astel Sant' Angelo, Pinocchio, Shakespeare in Italy, Gianna Nannini, The Pope, Italian Mafia, Italian Fairtrade, Venice Giorgia. The best discussions were where the students had obviously chosen a topic that they were interested in. These students were able to speak with confidence as they had researched the topic in detail and had developed their own opinions. They demonstrated clear evidence of analysis and reflection.

There was limited use of pictures or other materials to support the presentation. This may be something that students wish to consider in the future as it can be a way of enhancing the discussion.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Section 1: Listening and Responding

The overall results for this section were very positive with 70% of students achieving a C or better. Overall, 14% of students scored an A, 33% achieved a grade in the B range and 23% achieved a C. The average score was 14 out of 20.

Overall, the Listening and Responding section was tackled with more confidence this year.

Text 1

For text 1, most students were able to state the occasion – 25th Wedding Anniversary – mentioned in the conversation and while the majority could identify the presents suggested (the photo frames or two goblets and 'not to forget the sugared almonds'), only a few included that the gift should be of 'silver' as it was their silver wedding anniversary, which was a necessary detail.

Text 2

The text was a message left on an answering machine. Some students were able to decipher the necessary information that Anna has finally found a gym that offers hip hop dance courses. She says that she is going to the gym tonight to get information and, as she knows Michele is interested in learning hip hop, she asks whether he would like to go with her. She gives him direction to the gym (in Via San Giovanni, near the school, in front of the pharmacy) and suggests they meet at 6pm (18.00).

She suggests that after they could go for pizza. While most students included the 'pizza at Nino' suggestion, many incorrectly heard 'pop' dance courses and only some mentioned the gym or the meeting time.

Text 3

This conversation between Gianna and Franco included a number of details that many students found confusing and consequently, many answers were not entirely accurate. The new 'fad' is *crema ghiacciata al caffè*: a frozen coffee cream made with milk, cream and coffee (*latte, panna e caffè*) that is whipped (*frullato*). Many confused 'una via di mezzo' (half way between an icecream sorbet and a coffee granita (shaved coffee ice)) with how it is made, that is, many stated that it was made with ice cream, sorbet and coffee. There were many variations of the 'fad' (creamy coffee, iced coffee, coffee milkshake) which were not completely accurate as the 'frozen' aspect was important.

Most students were more successful in 3b and were able to highlight a number of reasons why Bar Milano would be appealing: a special offer – if you buy 9 coffees, you get a free coffee; the bar is famous for its sandwiches and focacce; it has the latest trends such as the frozen coffee cream and it has a great selection of different coffees.

Text 4

Text 4 was handled well by most students. In answer to 'why does Max enjoy working as a DJ', the majority was able to state that he is passionate about music but many missed that 'he is good at it' (*un mestiere che so fare bene*).' Some mentioned that he 'likes to choose the right music for the different disco events' or that he 'likes to find music that everyone likes' which were considered for some marks.

When asked to describe four ways that DJ Max used technology, many students were able to select 2 or more reasons from the text: to program the playlist, to search for requested tracks which he is working; the internet allows him to keep up to date with new singers who often become famous on line; the internet allows him to follow the experts in the music industry on social media; to promote himself on the internet. Any 4 points scored full marks for this question.

Text 5

Students found text 5, a monologue of a mother talking to her son, more familiar and easy to understand, answering the questions with ease.

Most were able to answer question 5a accurately using all of the 3 major facts that junk food has many dangerous fats, contains too much salt and sugar and has very little nutritional value to support the argument that junk food is harmful to one's health.

In question 5b, most students were able to understand that the speaker reads the article to Luigi because he has bad eating habits: he drinks a lot of lemonade and eats too much fried chicken. (*vedi – you see? How many times have I told you not to drink too much lemonade and to not eat fried chicken?*). Some suggested that the reader wanted to warn Luigi of the dangers but needed to be more specific in their answer to score full marks.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

Part A

Many students were successful in this section of the examination, with the majority attempting all questions. It was also positive to see students using strategies such as highlighting key words in the questions as well as relevant information in the texts. The most polished responses were written in correct sentences, rather than dot points.

Text 6

6 (a) This was an extraction question where the attractions of eco-holidays were identified. As each paragraph of the text began with listing an attraction, the most successful students were able to correctly identify six reasons to gain the full three marks. It is important to give as much relevant information as possible in the answer, and students must ensure that if direct evidence is used from the text to support an answer, it must also be at least paraphrased in English.

6 (b) This question asked students to give an opinion on the effectiveness of this article in promoting eco-friendly holidays. Supporting evidence from the text was required for full marks to be awarded. The best answers used the correct metalanguage for the techniques which had been used – emotive language to paint a picture of the tranquillity and nature, the use of factual evidence such as the numbers of those who had chosen eco-holidays and their age ranges, and the list of possible activities. Some students confused the question of HOW the article was effective, and instead gave suggestions on how they thought it should have been written, such as the inclusion of images. It is very important that students read the questions carefully.

Text 7

7 (a) Most students correctly identified that Federica initiated the on-line discussion to hear about others' experiences in volunteering on work projects in Europe or Africa. It was important to make it clear that the projects were for voluntary work, not just a holiday. Some students confused *campi di lavoro* with 'work camps' rather than 'field work'. Again, it is important to check the meanings of vocab in the dictionary.

7 (b) This question was more challenging as it asked students to infer what sort of person Christian is from his online responses. This entailed giving information about his personality rather than simply listing what he had done in Ethiopia. For example, his caring nature was evident in his desire to volunteer on humanitarian projects, and he is altruistic as he finds volunteering/helping others to be a satisfying experience. The most successful students were able to identify that he is sociable and outgoing since he enjoys meeting and working with others, that he is passionate about this work, and that he is enthusiastic, as well as encouraging Federica to volunteer. Again, the most polished responses included direct evidence from the text to support the ideas, either paraphrased in English or included as a quote in Italian as well as stated in English. Successful students gave as much relevant information from the text as possible to support their answer.

7 (c) This question asked students to identify how Christian and Marianna expressed their attitude to volunteering through their language choices. Both were positive about their experiences as neither made negative observations. Christian used emotive language such as stating it was an 'unforgettable' experience, and the fact that he is returning to Ethiopia for the third time and is encouraging Federica tells of his enthusiasm for the project. Marianna stated that it was amazing to be able to help people in need, and she found it particularly useful in her medical studies since it

gave her an insight into the health issues in other countries. Some students confused *sanità* with 'sanity' rather than 'health', highlighting the importance of checking words carefully in the dictionary.

Part B

Most students understood the text and wrote a letter as a response but the more successful students were able to refer to the text and comment on the art, the Tuscan food, the soccer, the apartment and then wrote about Australia. Some students did not refer to all of these topics in the text but were still able to write a response concentrating on themselves and Australia. A few students did not complete the letter perhaps because they ran out of time.

The grammatical errors were similar to past years, present perfect tense with the wrong auxiliary verb, agreements, definite article, and articulated prepositions, imperative.

Students are reminded to take time to reread their responses to avoid any careless errors. The word 'chissà' was mistaken for a type of food by many who guessed the meaning of the word rather than looking for the correct meaning in the dictionary.

Writing in Italian

Qu 9 – 67 Students = 54.0 %

Qu 10 – 28 Students = 23.0%

Qu 11 – 30 Students = 24%

Question 9 (a diary entry) was the most popular question with over half of the students sitting the exam choosing this question.

The majority of students were able to cope with the task to varying degrees. The stronger students provided very interesting writing pieces in Italian. They were able to write in a logical and sequential manner, and meet the word length requirements. Many Students who chose Question 10 did not adhere to its text type (an email) but rather set out their piece as a letter. It is important for students to be familiar with the specific text types and ensure they conform to their requirements.

The majority of students were able to produce a piece of writing that was relevant to context, purpose, audience and topic. The stronger students were able to expand on the amount of detail, ideas / information / opinions and provide an increased level of interest to engage the reader. Some students were able to manipulate their course work to make it relevant to the writing task while the stronger students were able to create original pieces.

It was really pleasing to see a range of language structures being utilised. A variety of grammatical structures were implemented by the more successful students. There was a good use of tenses; in particular present, present perfect, imperfect, future and conditional. Also stronger Students attempted the use of the subjunctive as well as idiomatic expressions and conjunctions to add cultural authenticity to the creative writing piece.

Some common errors were the sequencing of time (ieri, oggi, domani etc...) and the use of the Gerundio with Stare. The use of accents is also a part of spelling and should not be ignored..

Students need to make sure that if they are using vocabulary from a supplied text or questions that they copy it correctly. It is important to note that texting symbols / abbreviations like lol and haha are not always appropriate in exam writing.

OPERATIONAL ADVICE

Task sheets should provide specific instructions. These task sheets should be included in moderation materials to show the assessment design criteria the task aims to assess.

Any changes to the learning and assessment plan must be recorded on the addendum and included with the moderation materials.

If any work is missing then a Variations for must be included with the moderation materials to clearly state why the work has not been submitted so this can be taken into consideration at moderation.

It is important that recordings are audible and clear and if the same disc is used for several students these should be clearly marked so that students can be identified.

Teachers are requested not use plastic sleeves for every task but rather to place the Assessment Type 1 and Assessment Type 2 task responses in two separate affixed bundles per student and place them in one clear bag sent by the SACE Board. All teacher documentation, such as learning and assessment plans, task sheets etc. should also be placed into a separate plastic bag to facilitate easy access.