



2011

Languages: Arabic GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The majority of students made an excellent attempt at each section of the 2011 Arabic oral examination. Most students listened carefully, understood assessors' questions and asked for clarification when they were unsure.

Although the Conversation and the Discussion criteria are similar, they assess different aspects of the oral performance. In the Conversation section, students need to speak and interact with the assessors in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner about their personal worlds.

Most students were well prepared for the Conversation section of the examination. They were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively, expanding efficiently on comments related to aspects of their own world.

In the second section of the oral examination, the Discussion, the Detailed Study requires a more objective approach so that the language used is less predictable. Some students did not prepare well for the Detailed Study.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

This section consists of general conversation of approximately seven minutes related to the student's personal world. This year's students were able to converse competently on the Conversation topics. Most students had prepared quite adequately and gave appropriate responses to questions asked or to comments made by the assessors. Some students used initiative and elaborated on their responses by providing details and introducing new ideas.

Section 2 – Discussion

This part of the oral assessment explores aspects of language and culture. Students are expected to make reference to texts they have studied and to show links between the resources that they have used.

The choice of topic for the Detailed Study is extremely important. Topics need to lend themselves to discussion and should lead to students being able to generate and express various opinions and ideas. Although there has been a significant shift in the Detailed Study topics selection this year, it was still evident that some students had prepared themselves for the task in a relatively short period of time. The study design recommends at least 15 hours of class time be given to the Detailed Study.

Communication

Successful students were able to respond with confidence by advancing the exchange with original ideas and information. The majority of students prepared well and managed to introduce their topic within the prescribed one-minute time frame.

It is recommended that students have many opportunities to discuss their topics and their selected resources as they need to develop relevant ideas for discussion. They should also avoid closed responses, for example 'yes' and 'no' answers, wherever possible. Students could also improve their performance by leading the conversation.

Content

This year, many Detailed Study topics related to Arabic-speaking communities and the problems facing the younger generation. Some students selected topics of a political or religious nature, which is not recommended. The topics selected by students should be analysed in depth in order to develop adequate scope that extends beyond the basic concepts. The Detailed Study topics should be chosen long before the examination date in order to accommodate the number of hours required to prepare for this examination.