



## 2005 LOTE: Chinese Second Language GA 3: Examination

### Oral component

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

Many students were well prepared for the general conversation and Detailed Study discussion. They responded readily and clearly to the questions and gave interesting information and opinions. However, there were some students who were inadequately prepared and had considerable difficulty.

Generally, most students performed well in the general conversation. They understood the questions asked and were able to present relevant responses. Student performances in the discussion of the Detailed Study varied, ranging from some outstanding students to others who had trouble sustaining the interaction. Some students demonstrated a thorough preparation of their sub-topic and were able to explore it in sufficient depth. These students were generally willing to take the initiative, despite some vocabulary and grammatical errors. Students who gave a memorised mini-presentation about their topic had to be interrupted by the examiners.

It was not necessary for those who are from families with a Chinese background to emphasise during the conversation that they only speak English at home or that they only started to learn Chinese in Year 7. The assessors mark all students according to the VCAA oral examination criteria, not their family background.

Students should be reminded that thorough preparation as well as confidence is needed to support their ideas and opinions.

#### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

##### Section 1 – Conversation

This task consisted of a seven-minute conversation about the student's personal world, which included school and home life, family and friends, and interests and aspirations. This section was designed to test the students' ability to speak Chinese in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way.

##### **Communication: Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively** **Clarity of expression**

The most successful students provided extensive responses to the questions asked, moving the exchange forward confidently while using accurate language, a sophisticated range of vocabulary and complex structures. Some students interacted effectively with the assessors, volunteered to share information and were able to move the action forward with good repair strategies.

Students should be aware that relying too heavily on prepared responses can be detrimental to the natural flow of the interaction, especially when the answer requires extra information. Therefore, it is important for students to develop a range of repair strategies, including the ability to rephrase and use different ways of requesting clarification. Some students needed to provide more information when asked questions rather than respond in single sentences. Other students answered too quickly and did not hear the whole question. Students must listen carefully to the assessors and respond relevantly and appropriately.

There were several students who used some English words in their conversation, such as 'oh, well' and 'oh, sorry'. It is important that once students walk into the assessment room, everything they say (except their student number) is in Chinese only. Although there were some errors in the four tones, students were mostly able to emphasise their opinions and ideas by using intonation and stress. Tempo was also generally well maintained.

Students should not mention the name of their school but talk about their school in general terms.

##### **Content: Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas**

The majority of students were able to sustain a coherent conversation and express their ideas efficiently. Those who elaborated on and explored their ideas with ease achieved the highest marks. They came up with interesting responses and engaged the assessors by using eye contact and appropriate body language. Some students lost valuable marks by failing to enter into a more detailed discussion, even though they had understood the questions. Weaker students gave monosyllabic responses and waited to be supported with further questions.



Assessors always follow the leads they are given during the conversation. If a student says that their favourite subject is Chinese, they should be prepared to explain why when asked. For example, they may provide more details about how learning Chinese is fun, the benefit of studying Chinese for their career prospects and the influence of the Chinese language in the world. However, some of the students only gave single sentence responses, such as ‘因为学汉语很有用，也很有意思。’

**Language: Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar**  
**Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

Most students were able to express themselves clearly in a linguistically and culturally acceptable way. Many used a wide range of appropriate and correct vocabulary and grammar, which was crucial to attaining high marks. Successful students showed consistent use of style and register and were able to rephrase. However, some students struggled when using complex sentence patterns. Some students confused the interrogative question words, such as 为什么, 什么, 什么样, 怎么样, 谁, 哪儿 (where) and 哪 (which).

## Section 2 – Discussion

The students were required to give a brief introduction to their Detailed Study (in no more than one minute) by indicating the main focus of their sub-topic and bringing to the assessors' attention any objects they had brought in to support the discussion. It is not necessary for students to pause or wait for the assessors to write down each aspect the student has covered under a certain topic.

It is very important for students to carefully choose the sub-topic for their Detailed Study. Any topic selected is acceptable, so long as it follows the guidelines of the *Chinese Second Language VCE Study Design* and is related to Chinese-speaking communities. As this section is a discussion, a good topic needs to have suitable content and issues for the student and assessors to discuss. The topic also needs to suit the student's language capacity and allow the student to express his/her opinions. Some students had covered too many aspects in their Detailed Study and as a result all aspects were lacking in depth and focus. This did not lead to a good discussion.

**Communication: Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively**  
**Clarity of expression**

Many students were able to handle questions well and had sufficient knowledge to maintain an even flow of conversation during the eight-minute discussion. Support objects were often very helpful in assisting students to develop their answers and sustain the discussion.

Students need to practise what to do when asked a question that they do not understand or do not hear clearly. Students should ask for clarification by saying, for example, ‘老师，请您再说一遍，好吗?’ or ‘老师，(某某词)是什么意思?’ If they are asked about an aspect they did not cover in their Detailed Study, instead of giving a long awkward pause, the student should politely say, ‘老师，对不起，这部分我没学过，可是我学过...’ Students cannot assume that assessors will only ask the questions they have practised at school. In addition, students should be able to elaborate on their own ideas and opinions, demonstrating a sophisticated level of content.

Pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo are also assessed in the communication section. Strong students maintained a smooth conversational flow. Some students' pronunciation was good but their intonation could have been better. Students who did well used accurate vocabulary, expressed themselves clearly and used a wide range of sentence structures. Some students were too soft in their vocal delivery and avoided eye contact with assessors.

**Content: Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic**

Most students were able to follow the flow of discussion, keep their answers relevant, provide a range of information and ideas on the topic and support their opinions with good examples. Examiners awarded marks for initiating topics and maintaining the conversation with minimal assessor support; however, some students tended to rely too heavily on the assessors to guide them through the discussion. At times students answered in very brief sentences when they could have conveyed their understanding of the sub-topic to a greater extent.

Many students chose a topic that reflected their interests, allowing them to exhibit their linguistic ability and promote discussion of the issues and resources studied.

Some students' responses came across as rigid and unnatural, which could be a result of relying too much on prepared material. During the discussion, their answers tended to be irrelevant, at times repeating previous answers. Students should reshape their responses and ultimately answer the question asked.



Any supporting material brought in by students should not have any Chinese characters or Pinyin on it (apart from a label or a heading). A well-chosen supporting item can provide valuable content and raise the opportunity for a stimulating discussion and the expression of worthwhile ideas.

Some of the students were not clear about the relationship between the topic chosen and the resources used; therefore, they failed to clarify, elaborate on and defend their opinions and ideas by using these resources. Some of the sub-topics were too specific and it was difficult to develop the discussion, while others tended to lead students towards a mini-presentation rather than a discussion. Students should remember that the second part of the oral examination is a discussion, and therefore the interaction should be natural. Students need to practise expressing their opinions and extending them beyond the basic level.

**Language: Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar**

**Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

Students who did well used appropriate vocabulary, expressed themselves clearly and provided a wide range of sentence structures. They also maintained the flow of conversation. The vocabulary and grammar used by most students was generally accurate. Some students' pronunciation was good but their intonation could have been better. In the Detailed Study, there were some errors, such as: 下年（去年），非常不西方的龙（东方的龙）and 喜马拉雅山比天山非常高（喜马拉雅山比天山高得多）.

## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

There were 707 students who participated in this year's Chinese Second Language written examination paper. Most of them were well prepared and demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements.

Students are advised to take notes in Section 1 – Listening and responding. Those who took the time to do this performed much better than the ones who did not. In future mock exams, teachers should teach their students the skills of note taking and methods of identifying key points in this section.

Many spelling and grammatical errors occurred in English answers in Part A of both Sections 1 and 2. Students should use the Chinese–English dictionary to ensure that their responses can be clearly understood.

In Section 3, most students chose Question 20 or 21. They generally handled the format and text features well but the writing lacked depth and breath. A higher standard of writing is expected in the future. Students should compose their work with better overall structure and more sophisticated vocabulary. Inclusion of Chinese sayings or idiomatic phrases would also be an advantage.

Students should be aware of the word limit of 200–250 characters and must not exceed or go under the limit. It is important that students carefully plan their time to allow them to complete all the answers. Students should also practise writing in appropriate styles for different kinds of audiences.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – Listening and responding

##### Part A

##### Text 1

##### Question 1

Because she was elected as the class monitor/leader/captain/representative.

##### Question 2

- Because he didn't understand one of the essays/passages/articles.
- Because he didn't know/understand/how to write (many) characters.

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## Text 2

### Question 3

- Transport: school bus
- Venue: National Concert Hall
- Starting time: 7.30 pm

### Question 4

- the (concert) program
- names of performing students

### Question 5

Non-performing students

## Text 3

### Question 6

His car broke down/was not working.

### Question 7

Because he is accompanying/with/seeing his mother who has just been admitted to the hospital.

### Question 8

Spring rolls

### Question 9

- Lanlan: (green) tea
- Li Ping: (red) wine

### Question 10

Lanlan doesn't want Li Ping to drink (and drive).

## Part B

### Text 4

### Question 11

因为大成从来，没有，工作过。/因为大成没有工作经验。

### Question 12

学做生意的方法 (商业对他容易)。可以在， 银行或， 大公司工作。 找工作容易。

### Question 13

白天， 再找工作， 晚上， 去学习商业/上课

A total of 15 marks were available for this section: 10 marks for specific aspects of texts and five marks for characters (except 验 & 银) and grammatical accuracy.

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

### Part A

#### Text 5

### Question 14

Geographic features (three of the following)

- biggest island country
- flattest island country
- all large cities are located on the coast
- costal/beaches

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## Tourist attractions

- Sydney Opera House
- the Melbourne Cup/Spring Racing Carnival/Horseracing festival
- the Australian Open
- the Grand Prix/car racing competition

## Social

- multiculturalism
- many units (aspects) of culture

## Question 15

- warm(-hearted)/enthusiastic
- generous/naturally poised/unaffected
- very hospitable

## Question 16

	People who:
<b>Independent travel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• want a choice of transport</li><li>• want a cheap holiday/have less money to spend</li><li>• wish to visit many places/want a wider range of places to go</li><li>• can work while travelling.</li></ul>
<b>Package tours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• want to visit large cities (like Melbourne and Sydney)</li><li>• have limited time</li><li>• want convenience</li><li>• have more money/are prepared to pay more.</li></ul>

## Question 17

To encourage people to come to Australia/to promote tourism in Australia.

## Part B

### Text 6

## Question 18

- 他们没机会练习
- 他和大为前两天生了病，下半场体力不行
- 场地上的雨水太多，他们队也越打越差
- 悉尼中学队有一个打得很好的新队员

## Question 19

我觉得是，-因为我队先赢后输/ 因为比分很接近。/ 我觉得不是，因为我队输了。

There was a total of 10 marks available for this section: five marks for giving specific aspects from the text and five marks for character writing and grammatical accuracy.

## Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

The word limit for Section 3 was 200–250 characters. Responses that went over this length did not have the extra portion assessed.

## Question 20 – Evaluative

Question 20 was an evaluative task that asked students to write a speech about the advantages and disadvantages of working immediately after graduating from high school.

### Criterion 1: Content

- 好处 2 到 3 点
- 坏处 2 到 3 点
- 需描写

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## Criterion 2: Structure

- format
  - (各位老师), 各位同学
  - 你们好, 大家好
  - 题旨
  - 完了 / 谢谢
- paragraphing
  - introduction
  - description
  - conclusion
- linkage

## Criterion 3: Vocabulary and grammar

- range
- accuracy
- sentence patterns
- idiomatic phrases

### Question 21 – Informative

Question 21 asked students to write an informative letter to their school principal about learning Chinese at Beijing No 24 Middle School.

## Criterion 1: Content

- 设备
- 课程
- 老师
- 在 24 中学汉语的好处

## Criterion 2: Structure

- format
  - 尊敬的校长/(xx)校长
  - 你好
  - 祝您 愉快
  - 名字, 日期
- paragraphing
  - introduction
  - description
  - conclusion
- linkage

## Criterion 3: Vocabulary and grammar

- range
- accuracy
- sentence patterns
- idiomatic phrases

### Question 22

Question 22 asked students to write an article for their school newspaper persuading Year 12 students of the benefits of living away from home during university.

## Criterion 1: Content

- 住外面自由
- 增加经验
- 培养独立能力
- 结论需有说服力

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## Criterion 2: Structure

- format
  - topic
  - writer
- paragraphing
  - introduction
  - description
  - conclusion
- linkage

## Criterion 3: Vocabulary and grammar

- range
- accuracy
- sentence patterns
- idiomatic phrases

### Question 23 – Personal

Question 23 asked students to write a diary entry describing their first day of work.

## Criterion 1: Content

- 介绍自己
- 强调工作第一天
- 工作性质
- 有趣事件
- 领导和同事

## Criterion 2: Structure

- time sequence
- format
  - date (date, month, day of week)
  - weather
- paragraphing
  - introduction
  - description
  - conclusion
- linkage

## Criterion 3: Vocabulary and grammar

- range
- accuracy
- sentence patterns
- idiomatic phrases

### Question 24

Question 24 asked students to write an imaginative story about the outcome of meeting a lovely young person at a party.

## Criterion 1: Content

- 自我介绍
- 舞会情形
- 可爱的年轻人
- 舞会后的发展
- 发展的结果

## Criterion 2: Structure

- time sequence
- format

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- story
- title
- author
- paragraphing
  - introduction
  - description
  - conclusion
- linkage

## Criterion 3: Vocabulary and grammar

- range
- accuracy
- sentence patterns
- idiomatic phrases