



**2009 LOTE: Chinese Second Language Advanced GA 3: Examination**

**Written component**

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

Altogether 315 students sat the 2009 Chinese Second Language Advanced written examination, a slight decrease in number compared with 2008. This year students seemed much more familiar with the new section of translation which was introduced in 2008, although many students still struggled with it.

Overall, the majority of students coped well with the examination. All questions were answered adequately and most students demonstrated effective time management, completing all sections of the examination within the specified time.

Almost all students responded in the appropriate language for each section; however, there were again students who did not read all instructions carefully. No marks were awarded for answers in the wrong language. Students should remember that the amount of space given to answer a particular question is a good indication of the length of the anticipated answer. Students should also check to see if a question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences. Students were required to answer in full sentences in Chinese for Section 1 – Listening and responding, Part B, and Section 2 – Reading and responding, Part B.

Most students did very well in Section 1 – Listening and responding. However, quite a few students made several spelling mistakes, which could have been avoided if they had consulted their dictionaries. Some students need to improve their note-taking skills.

Students should be aware that many of the questions in Section 2 – Reading and responding require careful reading between the lines and a full understanding of the whole passage. They should also know that no information should be provided beyond the scope of the text. Students are again advised to improve their skills of analysis and summarising in preparation for this section of the exam.

Most students understood the newly introduced translation tasks and made good attempts at translating. However, some students seemed to lack translation skills. They appeared to understand the Chinese well, but were unable to translate it into appropriate English.

The majority of the students performed well in Section 3 – Writing in Chinese. They completed tasks in the correct register, format and style. However, some students need to ensure that they read all instructions carefully and follow the requirements of the task.

Most students met the requirements for the text type and writing style of the task, but they needed to pay attention to the balance between breadth and depth. Some of them also needed to improve their vocabulary and grammar. Students are advised to develop a plan before they start the writing task. Students should also be aware that the word length is strictly limited to 250–300 Chinese characters. Credit is not given for writing that exceeds the word limit, and responses that do not contain sufficient words often do not provide sufficient content.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

**Section 1 – Listening and responding**

**Part A – Answer in English**

Many students appeared to understand the two aural texts well and demonstrated their ability to summarise and analyse information. However, some students seemed to have trouble conveying their meaning in English. Students should use the reading time to focus on the questions in this section so they can estimate what the texts will be about. Students should also practise and use note-taking skills, and provide as much relevant information as possible when answering each question. Most questions contained two or three aspects that needed to be answered, but some students only focused on one aspect of the question and missed the rest of the details.

**Text 1**

**Question 1a.**

They did not turn left at the small bridge.



**Question 1b.**

She was very tired and hungry (or had been walking for hours).

**Text 2**

**Question 2**

The toilets now have a dual flushing system and synthetic (artificial or man-made) grass/lawn has been laid for all school grounds.

**Part B – Answer in Chinese**

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand aspects of a Chinese spoken text by responding in Chinese. Most students showed a sound understanding of the content of the text. Three marks were available for comprehension of the text and two marks for conveying information accurately and appropriately in Chinese.

Most students did well in this part. However, students must ensure that they respond in complete sentences and their sentences should communicate their ideas in their own words. Some students answered in point form, taking extracts directly from the spoken text. They did not demonstrate their ability to respond fluently in the language and thus were not awarded full marks. Some students needed to ensure that they provided a full answer to each question.

**Question 3a.**

中国人常常在过年过节时喜欢穿红衣服。

**Question 3b.**

西方人比较喜欢黑色，所以在正式(隆重)场合他们喜欢穿黑色的衣服。中国人不喜欢黑色，所以中文里常常用“黑心”、“黑市”、“黑社会”等表示生活中黑暗的一面。

**Section 2 – Reading and responding**

**Part A – Answer in English**

Most students successfully completed the questions relating to the comprehension of a Chinese written text in this part of the examination. Section 2 – Part A carried 15 marks based on one text in Chinese. A number of questions were directly related to the content of the text, while other questions were deductive. As stressed previously, students should be prepared to comment not only on the content of the text, but also on the purpose of the text and the type of audience it is addressing.

Some students misunderstood Questions 4c. and 4d. In order to prepare for this section of the examination, students should read extensively in Chinese, in a wide range of different text types. They will also learn about Chinese culture while learning the language. Students should also practise identifying and summarising the main points and ideas in texts.

Students are advised that they should read over the text in the examination a few times before attempting the questions. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all unknown words if they are not key words in the text, but students should try to understand the gist of the passage. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the text.

**Text 4**

**Question 4a.**

It can cause misunderstanding if you do not

**Question 4b.**

They would address their friends' parents as 'uncle' and 'aunt'. It is impolite (rude) to use their name.



**Question 4c.**

| In a Chinese family           | Correct manners   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| When offered drinks and fruit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• don't drink or eat immediately</li> <li>• only drink or eat after you are invited several times</li> </ul>   |
| At meal times                 | Three of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• do not start eating (wait) until the host starts</li> <li>• do not refuse the food offered</li> <li>• do not eat all of the food in your bowl</li> <li>• do not say 'Yaofan 要饭'</li> </ul> |

**Question 4c.**

They would put a lot of food in your bowl to show their hospitality.

**Question 4e.**

It literally means 'want rice', but actually meant 'beggars beg for food' in the text.

**Question 4f.**

- You should not bring clocks as gifts to your Chinese friends' parents, as it means you curse your friends' parents to die (because the sound of 'clock' has the same sound of the word 'end' or 'death').
- If you are a male guest, you should not bring flowers to a hostess of a similar age, as it indicates that you intend to flirt with her.

**Part B – Answer in Chinese**

This part of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and their capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately in Chinese. Most students provided the correct information to adequately complete all questions. Students should take advantage of the fact that the questions in this section are given in both Chinese and English.

**Text 5**

**Question 5a.**

中国人庆祝中秋节的确切时间是在

1. 在 阴 历 八 月 十 五 。 2. 上 。

**Question 5b.**

庆祝方式的不同是

过去：1. 分散在各地的家人要赶回家团聚。2. 全家人一起吃团圆饭。3. 上一边吃月饼，一边观赏月亮。4. 有些地区的人还会在月下玩花灯、舞龙或是拜月神。

现在：1. 很多人没有时间过中秋节。2. 很多在外地的家人不一定回家吃团圆饭。3. 一些人会上会和朋友聚一下、叙叙情。4. 有些人在国外，只有默默地对着月亮，想念和祝福自己的家人。

**Part C – Translation**

Part C – Translation seems still to be the most challenging task; however, most students understood the translation passages well and conveyed the meaning of these passages accurately and fluently. Some students seemed to have good comprehension of the passages in Chinese, but showed poor expression in English. Students are reminded that Chinese and English are different in terms of syntax and expression and they should not translate word for word from Chinese.

**Question 6**

During late 2008, the world economy underwent a big change. Many people lost their jobs. Some banks are experiencing difficulties, which severely impacts on the economies of many countries and people's lives. In order to prevent a worsening living standard, many governments are trying various means to help everyone.



#### Question 7

What is happiness? Different people have different views on it. Some pursue material affluence. They feel happiness means having big houses and expensive cars. But some pursue emotional satisfaction. They believe happiness means that all family members care for each other and help each other, no matter how far they are apart.

#### Question 8

Li Bai is a great poet of China's Tang Dynasty. He is recognised as one of the most well-known poets in the history of Chinese literature. His poems are full of imagination, emotion and artistic appeal. Li Bai created lots of poems, but only about two hundred of his poems have survived. His most well-known poem is 'Pondering over a Quiet Night'.

### Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Chinese using the following criteria:

- relevance, breadth and depth
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Students were required to write 250–300 characters in Chinese on one of the five topics given. Each topic represented a different text type and style of writing (personal, imaginative, informative, persuasive and evaluative). All five questions were attempted by students, although there was a clear preference for the personal and informative writing tasks.

Students, on the whole, displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and the style of writing they chose. However, students must be aware that they need to provide all the features of the text type or writing style as required.

Of the three criteria in this section, students did not perform well against the 'relevance, breadth and depth' criterion. When selecting a topic, students should choose one that is familiar to them and one that requires the kind of writing and text type that suits them best. The selected topic should be one that students have a good knowledge of, for which they have a good range of relevant vocabulary, and one on which they are able to express themselves accurately.

#### Question 9

##### Content

The following points should have been included:

- 露营的时间、地点 (time and venue of the camp)
- 露营的两个以上的活动 (two or more camp activities)
- 自己的体会 (self reflections or experience).

##### Structure

The structure should have included:

- the date and week
- the weather
- paragraphing
- sentence linkage.

#### Question 9

##### Content

The following points should have been included:

- 两个著名的澳大利亚旅游景点的名称、地点 (name(s) and venue(s) of one or two well-known Australian tourist spots)
- 景点的两个以上的特点 (two or more features of the tourist spot(s)).

##### Structure

The structure should have included:

- 大家好
- 自我介绍、题旨

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- 完了/谢谢
- paragraphing
- sentence linkage.

## Question 11

### Content

The following points should have been included:

- 学生咨询的理由 (reasons for being consulted by students)
- 三个以上选择教师职业的理由 (three or more reasons for choosing a teaching career)
- 鼓励 (encourage students).

### Structure

The Chinese letter should have included the following features:

- address
- greeting
- salutation
- name and date
- paragraphing
- sentence linkage.

## Question 12

### Content

The following points should have been included:

- 争论的焦点 (the focus of the debate)
- 两个以上提供塑料袋的好处 (two or more advantages of providing plastic bags)
- 两个以上提供塑料袋的坏处 (two or more disadvantages of providing plastic bags).

### Structure

The structure should have included:

- title
- author
- paragraphing
- sentence linkage.

## Question 13

### Content

The story should have included the following features:

- 时间地点 (time and venue)
- 为什么或怎么来到了动物王国 (why and how you entered the animal kingdom)
- 与动物相处时所发生的两件事或两项活动 (two or more events or activities that occurred with the animals).

### Structure

The structure should have included:

- title
- author
- paragraphing
- sentence linkage.