



2003

LOTE: Chinese Second Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, many students handled the General Conversation and (Detailed Study) Discussion well. Student performances ranged from outstanding to those who struggled to maintain the exchange. Some students were very willing to participate, taking the initiative to respond appropriately. Not surprisingly, these students did well, even if their language did contain some vocabulary and grammatical errors. Other students needed more preparation and confidence in order to support and further elaborate upon their ideas and opinions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were expected to interact with the assessors about their personal world, for example school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations.

Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Most students were well prepared for the general conversation, and were able to interact with the assessors and demonstrate effective communication and repair strategies. However, some relied too heavily upon their rehearsed responses and, as a result, found it hard to carry out a natural flow of interactive conversation when extra information was required in the answer. In addition, some students answered with haste, opting not to hear the complete question. Students must listen very carefully to what the assessors are asking and respond relevantly and appropriately.

Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Most students were able to maintain a relevant conversation and efficiently convey their ideas. Students who performed well were those who expanded on and explored their ideas with ease. They came up with interesting answers and engaged the assessors with eye contact and appropriate body language. Some students understood most of the questions, but were unable to expand their answers. Weaker students gave monosyllabic responses and waited for further questions.

Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and 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 vocabulary and correct grammar. They showed consistent use of style and register and were able to rephrase if necessary. Some students had difficulty using complex sentence patterns.

There were several common errors made by students such as: 下学以后 (after school), 我家不有 物 (There is no animal in my family), 去打 球星期天 (go to play basketball on Saturday). Furthermore, there were few students who were familiar with the oft-used sentence pattern: A 比 B + adjective (得多).

Clarity of expression

Most students had good pronunciation although some needed to pay careful attention to the four tones. On the whole, students were able to emphasise their opinions and ideas through intonation and stress. Tempo was generally well maintained.

Section 2 – Discussion

Before the Detailed Study discussion, students need to indicate to the assessors the sub-topic chosen and, in no more than one minute, briefly introduce the main focus of their sub-topic, alerting assessors to any objects brought to support the discussion. Most students demonstrated the competence to cope with the discussion. Others were under-prepared and had difficulties in responding when they were asked unexpected questions. Some students brought in notes of the aspects of the sub-topic they studied in order to help or to remind the assessors of their detailed study focus. It should be noted that this is not necessary as the assessors should have been informed of the aspects during the one-minute introduction (if presented correctly). Some did not specify in their one-minute introduction what aspects they had studied, while others had too many aspects and it became impossible to discuss every single aspect during the discussion.

Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

In the discussion, many students were able to handle questions well and had sufficient knowledge to maintain an even flow of discussion for eight minutes. Excellent students were able to direct the discussion and make interesting contributions. Support objects often worked quite well as they helped develop answers and sustain the discussion.

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

Many students chose a topic which not only reflected their interests, but also suited their linguistic ability and promoted discussion of the issues and resources studied. However, some students relied too much on pre-prepared material. During discussion, their answers tended to be irrelevant and at times repeated previous answers.

Most students were able to follow the flow of discussion, keep their discussions relevant, provide a good range of information/ideas on the topic under discussion and support their opinions with good examples. Their discussions demonstrated good breadth and depth. Successful students were keen to initiate topics and to sustain the conversation without support from the assessors. Some students relied on assessors to prompt them and lead the conversation. Their responses were too short when they could have expanded beyond a single sentence. Some students were not sufficiently prepared for their detailed study. As a result, they were unable to expand upon their sub-topics, providing only factual information. Some sub-topics were too specific and it was difficult to develop the discussion.

Some topics were too narrow for an eight-minute discussion such as: 吐番, 二氧化碳。For an effective discussion, these kinds of topics should be avoided as they do not promote discussion, expression of opinions or new ideas. In addition, a poor choice of sub-topic invariably inhibits the students' chances of meeting the criterion assessing 'capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic'.

Some students used pre-prepared sentences to avoid answering difficult questions, that is, if they did not understand a particular question asked by the assessors, they tended to say 'I haven't learnt this part'. Therefore it made the assessment much harder as the assessors could not judge their linguistic ability.

Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar and Clarity of expression

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.

Written component

In total 618 students participated in this year's written paper (8% increase from 2002). Students generally demonstrated an understanding of the requirements. Only a handful of students replied in wrong languages; that is, in Section 1 Part A answered in Chinese characters instead of the required English. Most students handled the format and text features very well. They also demonstrated a clear understanding of the different styles of writing.

Section 1 (Listening and Responding) seemed to be the major discriminator in this examination. Some students had difficulty in identifying important points. It is important for teachers to give their students plenty of practice with examination-type questions. Students need to be aware of the word length, time constraints and the reasons for neatness of character writing.

Teachers and students must be aware that the vocabulary used in this Section is not bound by the character list on pages 14 to 17 of the Study Design.

In Section 3, most students chose Question 25 and wrote about some popular outdoor activities in Australia. The standard of writing is a concern as many students jumbled a few activities in one paragraph with poor introductions and endings. Only a few students elaborated on 'encouraging classmates to participate in the summer camp'.

Students should be aware of the word limit of 200 characters and must not exceed or fall short of the limit by 10 per cent or more to avoid losing marks. Students must plan the time carefully to allow them to complete all the answers. Students should also practise writing in appropriate styles for different kind of audiences. Possible answers in the examination were:

Text 1

Question 1

- (wear school) uniform
- (bring) paper
- pen
- bring (own) lunch/food
- have food (inside opera house)
- talk (loudly inside), make noise/shouting.

Text 2

Question 2

- black
- (has 2 Chinese) characters.

Question 3

Any three of:

- (2) magazines
- a red/mobile phone
- a wallet/purse
- jumper/sweater
- cardigan.

Question 4

- in a travel service/agency/library/newsagent/bookshop/info centre/office.

Text 3**Question 5**

Any one of:

- to find out where the ice cream shop is
- ask direction
- buy ice cream.

Question 6

- 4
- 7

Question 7

- pen pals/friends.

Question 8

- (because) Xiaohua loves ice cream
- (because) it is Xiaohua's welcoming party.

Question 9

- buy a fruit ice cream cake
- ring first before going to the shop.

Text 4**Questions 10 to 13**

Content – facts

- 上 (上)

Anything with ‘ ’

- (美好的) 音
- (最流行的) 舞蹈/跳舞
- 体育
- 西
- 口
- 网上/

Text 5**Questions 10 to 13**

- 墨 本海
- 12月13号
- 游泳衣
- 球

Text 6**Question 14**

- hot
- no wind/breeze, still day.

Question 15

- before 8.00 am or after 8.00 am.

Question 16

- a radio.

Question 17

- school subjects in China
- Chinese lifestyles
- extra-curricular activities in China after school
- study (Arts/Humanities) in Chinese universities.

Question 18

Any two of:

- near the lake
- on the grass/lawn
- hot autumn day
- picnic outing.

Text 7

Question 19

- people can attend TV university.

Question 20

Any four of:

- can attend TV university
- obtain new knowledge
- apply new knowledge to their work
- get richer/make more money
- better lifestyle
- provide enjoyment
- bad for eye sight
- affect study/work.

Question 21

- 5
- 3
- 4
- 1
- 2

Text 8

Question 22

Criteria 1 to 5 全 回答:

1. 平 工作
2. 周末活
3. 圣 活
4. 特 的 运
5. 特 的 物

Criterion 2 度、格式、构、法、字

<70, >185 -2

70-90, 165-185 -1

Questions 23 to 26

Criterion 1 内容

Criterion 2 格式、构

Question 23 目、名字

Question 24 目、名字

Question 25 各位、你好、目、尾

Question 26 信格式

Criterion 3 度、法、字

<160, >240 -2

160-180, 220-240 -1

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Published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

41 St Andrews Place, East Melbourne 3002

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