



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

On the whole, students demonstrated a high degree of competency in the oral examination. They had well-developed language skills and had prepared well.

Areas of strength

- good preparation
- the ability to elaborate on a wide range of topics
- the capacity to support ideas with examples and evidence
- familiarity with a broad range of vocabulary
- good understanding of grammar
- the ability to structure sentences accurately
- good pronunciation, intonation and tempo

Areas of weakness

- occasional use of anglicisms (for school subjects in particular)
- occasional English influence on sentence structure
- incorrect case endings
- inaccurate use of gender
- inaccurate tenses
- occasional lack of information about the topic
- occasional inadequate involvement from the student in the examination process

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students displayed a strong capacity to express their views and opinions in relation to general topics about their personal world, such as their family, friends, school, interests, leisure time activities and future aspirations.

Most students were confident in their use of vocabulary and used correct grammatical forms that were appropriate to the general conversation. They were able to respond readily to examiners' questions, providing relevant and meaningful replies. A good knowledge of grammar and everyday vocabulary and expressions allowed most students to liaise effectively with the assessors and to correct their own mistakes if needed.

Some students experienced difficulty in fully understanding some questions, and others needed support with the pronunciation of more complex words. The most frequent mistake occurred with the use of the present tense (third person, both singular and plural). Assessors also felt that a greater pool of adjectives could have helped students to reach the required level of semantic precision. Other common mistakes included case endings and incorrect sentence structures.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students came well prepared for the Discussion part of the examination and were able to present an excellent range of information, as well as their own ideas and opinions.

Three topics were chosen for the Detailed Study: 'Zagreb, Croatian Capital City' 'Migration' and '*Sinjska alka*'. Students had often taken different approaches to the topics, which indicated a high level of student involvement in the sub-topics chosen. Students were able to enrich the material learned in school with personal experience (for example, visits to Zagreb and/or migration stories of their family or friends).

A variety of resources were used by teachers and students when preparing the Detailed Study. These included handouts, books, magazines, guests, items from the Internet, songs, brochures, videos and posters. Students who used a variety of different texts and a good range of information were able to produce comprehensive explanations of the sub-topic chosen and carry discussion forward with relevant input.

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Some students were not well prepared for the discussion of their Detailed Study and were only really able to converse about their chosen sub-topic for three to four minutes, even though many of them were fluent Croatian speakers. Such students tended to repeat information or, if asked questions, were unable to respond appropriately. Students must understand that preparation and practise are essential to achieving high marks in the examination.

Some students brought in supporting material, mainly in the form of posters they had prepared themselves, which contained illustrations of the main points for discussion. Such posters were generally made with a great deal of imagination and resourcefulness. This support material often proved to be useful to students, as it served as a guide when presenting their responses.

Although students demonstrated a high level of language skills, a lesser degree of grammatical accuracy was noticed in the Discussion part of the examination. This indicated that students were less familiar with the vocabulary and sentence structures needed to discuss specific aspects of their Detailed Study. Students should be reminded to learn an accurate and in-depth body of vocabulary related to the topic as part of their preparation for the examination.

Common mistakes in the Discussion included inaccurate words, errors with tenses, incorrect cases or gender endings and occasional English influences on sentence structures.