



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Greek oral examination is divided into two parts: a seven-minute Conversation and an eight-minute Discussion of a Detailed Study. The Discussion includes a one-minute introduction. The assessment for both parts of the oral is divided into three sections: communication, content and language. The descriptors for the criteria are published on the VCAA website <www.vcaa.vic.gov.au>. It is important that all teachers and students are familiar with the criteria and practise using them in class as part of the examination preparation, so that they can address any problems prior to the examination.

In 2007, more students seemed to be familiar with the expectations of the oral examination and the components of the examination criteria used for assessment. The well-prepared students performed well in both sections because they were able to link effectively with the assessors, expand on their answers and offer interesting ideas and opinions using vocabulary and grammar accurately. Most students were well prepared for the Conversation section and were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively and expand efficiently on aspects of their personal world.

The Discussion section requires a more objective approach and students cannot rely on pre-learned information. Students need to be able to use language spontaneously to handle unrehearsed situations. This section tests students' skills in presenting information and exchanging ideas, opinions and information. Most students were better prepared for the Discussion than in previous years; however, for some students, the preparation of an effective introduction continues to be problematic. Some students presented very good information and showed a very good understanding of their selected sub-topic, but were unable to express ideas and opinions and defend them effectively. A number of students supported their Discussion appropriately with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps, elaborating and stating why they considered them important. This was often a useful prompt, especially for weaker students. Students must remember that support material must be free of writing, except for a heading. This year a small number of students, in their eagerness to perform well, wanted to bring into the examination room a well-displayed folder with all the work they had done in class. Teachers and students are reminded that such material cannot be brought into the examination room.

It was noted that a number of students commented that they were assisted with the preparation of the oral examination by their parents and, in many cases, grandparents. The positive contribution of such assistance should be acknowledged and encouraged by teachers.

It should once again be highlighted that students must use the correct formal register. When addressing one or both assessors students should use the second person plural; for example *θα σας μιλήσω*. Also, students need to use appropriate language. The use of colloquial terms such as *γκόμενα/ γκόμενος* is not appropriate for the formal setting of such an examination.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

In this section most students were thoroughly prepared to discuss their personal world and speak fluently about areas such as school and home life, family and friends, interests and future aspirations. They were able to hold a conversation for seven minutes, effectively discussing more than one topic and developing more than one aspect of the topic. Their interaction with the assessors was very good, as they were able to respond to and build on comments made by assessors. Students needed minimal support and had good repair strategies. A small number of students who relied heavily on rehearsed responses were thrown off guard when interrupted by assessors. Students must be prepared to respond to unanticipated questions in depth.

Most students were able to express their ideas with clarity, paying particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. A very small number of students did not pronounce words, especially word endings, clearly.



Content

Good performances once again clearly reflected students' sound preparation. Well-prepared students were able to add breadth and depth to their conversation and support and elaborate on their statements. These students presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas in highly relevant and logical responses.

A few students were less well prepared in the Conversation section and resorted to anglicisms and rote-learned material. These students found it difficult to extend beyond the obvious, to follow up with more detail or reflect on their own experience. For example, when discussing a holiday in Greece it is important to be able to describe some places, talk about the people they met, how they felt, what they enjoyed most, etc. Students should also know the vocabulary that they will need to use; for example, when discussing school and subjects and they should not use the English word for their subject names. They should also know the appropriate form of the word for the job they aspire to have in the future; for example, if they want to become a psychologist they should say *ψυχολόγος* and not *ψυχολογικός*.

Students need to listen carefully and concentrate on all words in the question in order to respond to and address all the required parts. When students do not understand the question, they should ask for clarification, and not respond with what appears to be a memorised answer. They should be able to self-correct and develop repair strategies to avoid lengthy pauses. It is vital that students come well prepared to elaborate on their responses by giving reasons, examples and evidence. Students should not give shallow responses. At school they should practise responding to questions that are asked in different ways and practise answering unrehearsed questions without resorting to prepared answers.

Language

As in previous years, students' performance was weakest on this criterion. The more able students displayed an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures which were used accurately. Weaker students had a more limited vocabulary and made some basic grammatical and syntactical errors. Students continued to have problems with *πρέπει*, *χρειάζομαι* and *προσπαθώ*, making errors such as *πρέπεις*, *έπρεπα*, *χρειάζω*, *προσπαθαίνω*. Accents were placed incorrectly (for example, *θαλάσσα*, *ο νούνος μου*) and incorrect articles were used (*η τραγούδι*, *μία κορίτσι*, *ένα ζωγραφιά*, *τις καφέδες*). Gender and case, as well as agreement between nouns and adjectives, were also at times incorrect (*όλοι τους συγγενής μου*, *ένα μεγάλο μηχανή*, *ένα από τους παππούδες μου*, *τις ίδιες χόμπυ*). The use of the active and passive voices and verb endings in general also presented a problem (*οργανώζω*, *δεν το αρέσω*). Some students also used English words and phrases (*να πάω next year*, *να πάω university*, *πολλά independence*), while others translated expressions from English (*η κιθάρα είναι πιο εύκολη να παίζω* – the guitar is more easy for me to play, *για κηδείες πήγαιναν σε αγγλικούς εκκλησίες* – for funerals they went to English churches, and *πόσο σημαντική για αυτούς η φιλία ήτανε* – how important for them friendship was).

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

Most students used the one-minute introduction to their benefit. They concisely stated the topic and sub-topic of the Detailed Study and the names of the three texts studied, gave a brief elaboration that identified issues that they had focused on, and steered assessors in the direction of areas they could discuss with confidence and strength. A wide range of texts was used: interviews, articles, short stories, films, poems, songs, pictures, etc. Students should be aware that they do not need to list all the resources used in their class; to do so means that they are not using the one minute for the introduction effectively. They should only mention the texts that they concentrated on.

Some students did not introduce the topic and resources appropriately in the one-minute timeslot. They simply named their topic, for example 'My topic is migration', and then began retelling the content of the texts studied, which they had pre-learned, instead of discussing the texts and giving ideas and opinions. These students had not formulated their own opinions on the sub-topic. Other students talked for too long in the one-minute introduction and assessors had to stop them politely and ask them questions on their topic and the resources used when studying the Detailed Study. At times the topics did not suit the linguistic ability of the students; such students were not able to pronounce all the words correctly, carry the discussion forward or deal with a variety of questions, nor did they have good repair strategies when in difficulty. Practising a wide range of impromptu answers to a variety of likely and less likely questions helps students to improve their performance and avoid pre-learned material.

In the seven-minute discussion that followed the introduction, students generally demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of their chosen topic. These students spoke confidently and were skilled in expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions, supporting them with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied. They used a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures and had a high degree of interaction with the assessors. They were able to advance the discussion with interesting comments and at times were even able to lead the discussion.



If students bring photos or images as support material, they must be able to analyse and have an opinion about them and not simply describe the image.

The criterion 'Clarity of expression' was addressed well by most students. Even the weaker students had good pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Content

Many students had obviously enjoyed their Detailed Study and spoke enthusiastically about their sub-topic. Only a small number showed little active interest in the topic and relied on rote-learned passages that retold the plot of the texts studied. Students should be aware that **pre-prepared responses hinder them from pursuing a meaningful discussion**. The choice of the sub-topic is very important and should reflect the interests and abilities of the class, as well as those of the individual student. Some topics are ideal for competent students but can be too difficult and challenging for weaker students. The topics chosen must cater effectively for all students' linguistic ability. Teachers should allow students, where possible, to select their own specific focus of the topic and resources so that they can understand it fully and have an empathy for it. Students will then be more likely to engage in an active and interesting exchange with the assessors, expressing their opinions and generating ideas by expanding on the topic.

Students are expected to have dedicated 15 hours of class time to the Detailed Study and to have been exposed to a variety of resources from which they can draw in the discussion. Good sub-topics 'should enable the student to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the Greek-speaking community through a range of oral and written texts in Greek related to the selected sub-topic' (*Greek VCE Study Design*, page 24). **Informative/historical topics, when they are above the linguistic capability of students, are generally not dealt with successfully**, as students find it difficult to recall specific information and then process it in their response. In these cases students should attempt to find a personal angle that could make the discussion more interesting. Sometimes very factual texts may not allow students to develop and express ideas and opinions. Also, if the texts are too short or too simple, the discussion may lack breadth and depth.

Students should be able to link their texts to their sub-topic, as well as see common themes in the material to make the discussion more interesting. They should try to analyse and think for themselves and be prepared to give some original opinions rather than just repeat ideas from texts or discuss the topic broadly. At times students referred to resources without appreciating the ideas they contained and were not able to develop their own opinions and ideas. For example, when referring to a film or a short story they should not simply give a summary of the plot, but be prepared to comment on the text effectively. A few students alleged that they had studied a number of texts, but could not recall them or were unable to demonstrate adequate knowledge of these texts by showing the links between the topic and the texts or the different issues relating to their chosen sub-topic. When students are preparing for the oral examination they may find it useful to make notes summarising the sources and write down how their chosen texts relate to one another, rather than seeing them in isolation.

Appropriate topics enabled students to display an excellent knowledge of their topic and elaborate on ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence. It is important that a greater variety of topics and resources is chosen that will cater more effectively for the abilities and interests of different students. Teachers, with some exceptions, seemed to expose students to similar topics to previous years.

The following continued to be good sub-topics:

- family relationships/problems
- the Greek family/the role of men and women within it
- Greek-Australian identity
- migration
- the marbles of Parthenon
- Greek music
- Greek song.

Some sub-topics that were not handled well by some students this year were:

- Greek mass media
- friendship
- fires
- the Internet.



It is important to note that the success of the topic is dependent upon appropriate and adequate preparation in class and the students' interest in it, as well as their willingness to prepare thoroughly for the oral examination.

Language

As a considerable amount of time has been spent on the Detailed Study, students should have mastered the vocabulary associated with their chosen sub-topic. They should be able to use correct words and genders and be able to express ideas and opinions accurately and appropriately using a variety of vocabulary, structures and expressions.

Many students spoke in an appropriate manner using a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures in their interaction with the assessors. However, as in the Conversation section, the performance in this criterion was weakest, with similar types of grammatical and syntactical errors. Students should understand the grammar required to be able to use the appropriate words in their correct form with ease, so that an interesting discussion can take place. They should not make mistakes like *πόσο σημαντική για αυτούς η φιλία ήτανε* and *και ο μπαμπάς το Στέφανος, είναι το γιό του Αχμέτ* when discussing the sub-topic of friendship, or *τα παλάτια χτισμένο*, instead of *τα παλάτια χτισμένα*, when referring to the content of the specific text studied. They should know the genders of the key words, learn to use a variety of adjectives correctly and not make mistakes such as *άμα έχουμε αληθινοί φίλοι, είμαστε πολύ διάφοροι*. They should master syntactical structures that will be necessary to discuss the sub-topic. Mistakes like *θέμα λεπτομέρης μελέτης, με τη γυναικα του η Λαμπρινή, τα έθιμα για τα βάπτισι* would have been avoided if adequate preparation had taken place.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2007 Greek written examination covered a variety of topics based on the themes prescribed by the *Greek VCE Study Design*. In general, students demonstrated an improvement in their listening and reading comprehension skills by successfully identifying information related to context. All questions on the examination were answered adequately and the majority of students displayed effective time management, completing all sections of the examination within the specified time.

Students appeared to be more familiar with the format of the examination and nearly all were able to respond in the appropriate language for each section. No marks were awarded to answers in the wrong language.

Students must ensure that they read all instructions carefully. The amount of space given to answer a particular question is a good indication of the length of the anticipated answer. The number of marks allocated to each question usually corresponds to the number of points needed in the answer. Students should always check to see if the question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences. They should also avoid restating the question, as this takes up valuable time and space and does not allow enough scope to complete the requirements of the task. All answers must be based on the texts. This is clearly stated in the instructions of every section of the examination. Students should not provide information beyond the scope of the question and they should not include prior knowledge of the topic if it is not included in the texts.

Students should be prepared to comment not only on the content of a text but also on the purpose of the text and the type of audience it is addressing. Also, questions on aspects of the language of the text, such as the use of tone and register and the appropriateness of the language for its specific purpose, should be expected. All of these types of questions are clearly prescribed in the study design.

In contrast to the good comprehension skills demonstrated by students, their ability to respond in Greek often reflected a poor knowledge of basic grammatical rules. Students' use of Greek was sometimes poor and in some instances incomprehensible. In order to be understood and receive the allocated marks, answers must be coherent and legible. This is also the case for the English responses on the paper.

Teachers need to give more emphasis to the teaching of grammar in order to improve students' ability to write in Greek with accuracy and fluency. Some areas of concern were:

- inability to distinguish between certain letters of the alphabet, such as δ , θ and β , (*δάσανα* instead of *βάσανα*, *δέλω* instead of *θέλω*); ζ , ξ and χ , (*έχω* instead of *έξω*, *δεν ζέρει* instead of *δεν ξέρει*); ξ and ψ , (*ζυχίατρος* instead of *ψυχίατρος*, *καταφλιφη* instead of *κατάθλιψη*)
- failure to demonstrate the existence of the double consonants ξ and ψ (*ήκσερε* instead of *ήξερε*, *απόψε* instead of *απόψε*)



- failure to use accents
- incorrect use of the definite and indefinite articles
- incorrect use of the gender of articles, nouns and adjectives (*η τουρίστες* instead of *οι τουρίστες*, *οι κοινωνία* instead of *η κοινωνία*)
- poor use of the genitive case (*το βιβλίο την Μαρία* instead of *το βιβλίο της Μαρίας*, *το σχολείο τους μαθητές* instead of *το σχολείο των μαθητών*)
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives in gender, number and case (*η μαύροι κάλτσες* instead of *οι μαύρες κάλτσες*, *αγαπητέ μου ημερολόγι* instead of *αγαπητό μου ημερολόγιο*)
- lack of agreement in number between the subject and the verb of a sentence (*οι μαθητές θέλει* instead of *οι μαθητές θέλουν*, *οι νόμοι προστατεύει* instead of *οι νόμοι προστατεύουν*)
- inability to conjugate verbs correctly, even regular verbs in the present active indicative
- incorrect use of the middle/passive voice (*πάντρεψαν* instead of *παντρεύτηκαν*, *ονειρεύω* instead of *ονειρεύομαι*)
- inability to use the common verbs *πρέπει* and *μου αρέσει/μας αρέσουν*
- use of anglicisms *η φάρμα*, *η μαρκέτα*
- inaccurate use of vocabulary (*με αυτή την αποστολή ήθελα να σας ενημερώσω* instead of *με αυτή την επιστολή ήθελα να σας ενημερώσω*, *πολιτική* instead of *πολιτισμός*).

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

This part of the examination was handled quite well by students. Overall, the responses in English demonstrated a good understanding of the information provided in the listening passages. Some students misread Question 2 and instead of providing the qualities of the dance instructors they gave reasons why students should learn Greek dancing. It is wise for students to check the question again at the end of each response to ensure that their response is appropriate. Question 7 required students to complete a table and the majority of students were able to successfully complete the column on the negative effects of tourism; however, a number of students were unable to provide the appropriate answer for the first column on aspects of Greek tourism which were responsible for the negative effects. When completing tables, students must ensure that they have understood what type of information is required under each heading.

Students must practise their listening comprehension skills by picking out key points from various oral sources. During the examination they should spend at least part of their 15 minutes of reading time familiarising themselves with the questions in order to determine the information they will be required to extract from the listening passages. The pause between the readings of the texts should be used to consult the dictionary to determine the meaning of key words only. Effective use of the note-taking space on the paper is also useful. Students should ensure, however, that their final response is given in the space provided for the answer. No credit is given for answers in the note-taking column.

Text 1

Question 1

Students studying Greek.

Question 2

Any four of:

- experience
- talent
- love of dancing
- ability to transfer their love to students
- can teach dances from different parts of Greece.

Question 3

Both of:

- to preserve Greek heritage/culture
- to maintain Greek identity.

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Text 2

Question 4

Mr Hatzidakis is the Minister for tourism.

Question 5

Any two of:

- tourism brings money into Greece, which assists the country's economy
- more jobs are created for locals
- the government initiates more public works, which benefit all.

Question 6

Either of:

- tourism promotes close links between Greece and other nations
- tourism promotes Greek culture.

Question 7

Aspects of Greek tourism	Negative effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• greater demand for products, houses and land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• increased prices/cost of living.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• tourists bring a different way of life and thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sometimes it affects/changes the behaviour of Greeks

Part B – Answer in Greek

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand aspects of a Greek listening text by responding in Greek. Most students this year showed a sound understanding of the content of the text.

Specific marks for each question are not indicated in Part B; students therefore need to be guided by the number of points indicated in each question for the length/detail required in responses. In this part of the examination, 10 marks were awarded for the comprehension of the text and five for conveying information accurately and appropriately in Greek.

Students must ensure that they respond in complete sentences when requested. 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 own ability to communicate fluently in the language and thus were not awarded full marks.

Text 3

Question 8

Yiannis' father is the boy holding the crucifix and all the children are swimming towards the shore.

Question 9

Yiannis' father felt pride and joy.

Question 10

The children went from house to house with the crucifix to collect money for the church/for good luck.

Question 11

Any four of:

- they are demonic creatures
- they arrive on earth during the festive season
- they leave after the Epiphany
- they eat all the sweets
- they turn houses upside down
- they pester people.



Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Most students successfully completed the questions related to the comprehension of a Greek reading text in this part of the paper. Section 2, Part A carried 20 marks based on one text. A number of questions related directly to the content of the text while other questions were deductive. As mentioned previously, students should be prepared to comment not only on the content of a text but also on the purpose of the text and the type of audience it is addressing. Both these and questions on aspects of the language of the text, such as the use of tone and register and the appropriateness of the language for its specific purpose, should be expected as they are clearly prescribed in the study design.

Some students misread Question 14 and referred to Bouboulina's heroic achievements on the battlefield when the question clearly stated that the information required related to the heroine's personal life **beyond** the battlefield. Question 18 required students to explain why Bouboulina's death was inglorious. Some students indicated that she was killed over a domestic dispute. This response alone did not explain why her death was not a glorious one. The question was allocated two marks, so two points were required; students needed to comment on the inappropriateness of the circumstances of her death given the greatness of her past heroic achievements. Many students found Question 20 rather challenging. It required students to provide two different methods by which the biographer demonstrated Bouboulina's heroism. Some students gave general statements such as 'her use of language' or 'the adjectives' without explaining what this meant or without giving examples to highlight the point they were making. Nevertheless, the more competent students were able to clearly identify two different methods.

In order to prepare for this section of the examination students should read extensively in Greek, including a wide range of texts in different text types. They should also practise identifying and summarising the main points and ideas in the texts.

Before attempting the questions students should take the time to read over the text a few times. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all unknown words. 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 and not on prior knowledge.

Text 4

Question 12

All of:

- as a child she had a passion for the sea
- she loved listening to the stories told by sailors about their adventures at sea
- she loved listening to their hopes for the liberation of Greece.

Question 13

She inherited her fortune from her husbands and she increased her assets through her own initiatives.

Question 14

When the Turks confiscated all her property she went personally to Constantinople and demanded her rights from the Turkish authorities.

Question 15

Any four of:

- Bouboulina raised the flag of the revolution in Spetses
- she led her men in battle against the Turks
- she made a substantial financial contribution to the revolution
- she was a member of the 'Filiki Eteria'
- she encouraged others to fight.

Question 16

Both of:

- it was a secret organisation
- it aimed at organising the Greeks for the revolution.

Question 17

She risked her own life to save the lives of her enemies' wives and children.

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Question 18

Both of:

- Bouboulina did not die on the battlefield, although she was a hero
- she was killed over a domestic dispute.

Question 19

Any two of:

- as she was portrayed on the old 50 drachma note
- pointing her finger at the enemy/castle of Nafplion
- ordering her men to fire.

Question 20

Any two of:

- through the inclusion of many events/achievements that demonstrate Bouboulina's courage
- the use of adjectives by which the biographer praises/highlights Bouboulina's achievements, such as 'exemplary heroism', 'fiery words', etc.
- the reverential tone of the text (the biographer adopts a tone that demonstrates her admiration/respect for Bouboulina's heroic achievements).

Part B – Answer in Greek

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 Greek. 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 Greek and English.

Students are required to answer in full sentences. They should avoid copying directly from the text or restating the question as Part B carries a language mark and students need to demonstrate their own ability to write effectively in Greek.

Text 5

Question 21

The Greek government has received pressure from the European Union.

Question 22

Any four of:

- the turtle faces extinction due to the growth of tourism on Zakynthos
- the noise from seaside nightclubs distracts the turtles from laying their eggs on the dry sand
- the turtles are forced to lay their eggs at sea resulting in the loss of eggs
- shop lights confuse the turtles, which end up on coastal roads and meet tragic deaths
- sand cleaning machinery may ruin nests/destroy eggs.

Question 23

All of:

- through the establishment of a national marine park
- no new buildings are to be constructed in the national park
- entry to the public is prohibited during the egg laying season.

Section 3 – Writing in Greek

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of original text in Greek 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 200–300 words in Greek 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 informal writing tasks. This year



students on the whole displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and style of writing they chose to write in. Students must remember that text types marked with an asterisk in the study design are those which they may be expected to produce in the examination.

Of the three criteria in this section, students did not perform as well against ‘accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar’. 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 for which they have a good range of vocabulary and one in which they are able to express themselves with accuracy.

Students must establish the tone and register of the task from the onset and must always keep in mind the audience for whom they are writing. They should ensure that they do not digress from the topic or include pre-learned material that is unrelated to the task. Ideas should be developed coherently and grouped into separate paragraphs which are linked effectively. It is therefore essential that students set aside time to plan their response and time to proofread it at the end.

Question 24

This question required students to write a formal letter to their school principal in an attempt to persuade him/her to make the necessary changes so that the school canteen provided only healthy food choices. Students were expected to present at least three persuasive arguments and to provide convincing suggestions for such changes.

This was the second most popular choice amongst students and was well answered overall. Capable students exhibited very good writing skills in this topic. Their responses observed the conventions, content and style appropriate to formal letter writing. These students adopted the correct register and tone. They were also able to put forward convincing arguments for the necessary changes to the canteen and to provide appropriate suggestions. However, some students were unable to express themselves in the second person plural and thus failed to use the formal register required by the task. These students also displayed a tendency to use informal address, salutations and signing off.

Question 25

In this informative speech students were expected to identify at least three major problems facing young people today. Students were also expected to explain the chosen problems in some depth and to suggest plausible solutions.

This question produced a number of very good responses. Most students who attempted the question were able to adopt the required informative approach and display the appropriate conventions of a speech. They drew from their own experiences as young people and successfully communicated to their audience the main concerns facing their peers today. The majority of students who attempted this question also demonstrated a good range of vocabulary and language that was appropriate to the purpose and the audience of the task.

Question 26

In this personal journal entry students were expected to provide a personal account of a memorable experience during a recent holiday. Students were required to both describe the experience and explain why the experience was unforgettable.

This was the most popular choice amongst students and the question was attempted with varying degrees of success. The majority of students chose to describe their holiday in Greece. Whilst most students successfully gave their own personal account of their experience(s) and explained why the experience was special to them, some students gave a running itinerary of destinations visited in Greece without providing any reflection on their experiences. The text type, a journal entry, was generally handled well, with many students presenting a sequence of contemplative thoughts; however, in some instances the response resembled an informal letter with long salutations and greetings rather than a journal entry.

Question 27

In this review students were expected to evaluate in some detail at least two positive and two negative aspects of a new restaurant.

Few students attempted this question, perhaps indicating unfamiliarity with the characteristics of the ‘review’ text type. This topic, nevertheless, produced a number of good responses. Students were able to draw from their experiences and successfully discuss and evaluate positive and negative aspects of a restaurant. They relayed this information successfully to the target audience and made appropriate recommendations. These students provided ideas that were well organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well.

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Question 28

In this imaginative story students were expected to develop a plot triggered by something that impressed them at a train station.

Only a few students handled this topic competently. These students were skilled in the devices of storytelling; they created an appropriate time, place and atmosphere and their ideas were well-organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well. However, most responses to this question were predictable and lacking in creativity and originality. Many students demonstrated a lack of imagination, little plot development and poor descriptions of setting and characters. A poor range of vocabulary and understanding of language structures often contributed to a weaker story line