



2004

LOTE: Hebrew GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Performance ranged from satisfactory to very high, indicating students' thorough preparation for the examination.

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were well prepared for this part of the assessment. They answered willingly and enthusiastically engaged in the exchange, expanding their answers beyond the original question. Sometimes, it was even necessary to interrupt them so as to allow sufficient time to converse on additional topics.

The stronger students spoke fluently and were able to immediately self-correct when they made the occasional mistake. They displayed good communication skills and were able to carry the conversation forward by making relevant comments and seeking clarifications. The best students invariably had a rich vocabulary and used it properly.

Although the vocabulary of less successful students was reasonably good, these students were not always able to self-correct or use the appropriate word or expression. The most common grammatical mistakes were the wrong use of tenses, genders and personal pronouns. The lower-scoring students were also more prone to use anglicisms or even English words.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topics chosen for the detailed study were mostly the Holocaust, absorption of immigrants, Jerusalem, wars in Israel and the hope for peace. Most students had researched their topics well and showed an in-depth knowledge of the sources they had used. The better students introduced their topic well and cited three or more sources, as suggested in the Hebrew Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design. They were able to maintain the discussion and to confidently develop ideas and opinions relevant to their topics.

Less successful students usually demonstrated knowledge of the sources and their topics; however, they struggled to express original thoughts. Sometimes they needed the help of an assessor to expand on their chosen subject. It is important for students to know their topics well, but they must also be able to converse on related matters. These students were often hesitant and slow to find a suitable word or expression. Sometimes a student had chosen a sophisticated word which was not relevant, and made it apparent that his/her understanding of the word was superficial. Although it is important for students to have a rich vocabulary, in order to avoid incorrect usage students should be aware that words may have different meanings depending on the context. Numerous grammatical mistakes also affected their scores.

Written Component

Section 1: Listening and Responding

The aim of this section was to assess students' ability to comprehend spoken Hebrew. Students were required to respond to questions on the texts they had listened to and were assessed according to the quality of their answers. To achieve a high mark, students must read all questions carefully and ensure that their answers use information from the texts. The use of information other than that provided was regarded as ineffective comprehension and thus had an adverse affect on the given mark.

Students demonstrated good understanding of the texts they listened to. The stronger students, who extracted the relevant information and conveyed it correctly, achieved full marks. No marks were given for conclusions derived from information not contained in the texts.

Part A – Respond in English

Criteria: the capacity to understand and to convey general and specific aspects of texts

Question 1

1a

- donation of books\collection books for donation
- encouragement letters to Chabad school students.

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1b

- request to meet with Shaar HaNegev's students and to present them with a certificate of appreciation
- thank you letters from Chabad's students to Shaar HaNegev's students.

1c

- 20 classrooms
- the library.

1d

One of the following:

- cooperation across the Atlantic
- from Shaar HaNegev to San Diego
- any other title that was appropriate to the text.

Question 2

2a

- floods along the coastal region
- increase in the earth's temperature – the green house effect.

2b

- control fires
- reduce gas emission from cars
- devise a way to control industrial waste.

Question 3

3a

- to point out the good neighbourhood relations
- to enhance the mutual understanding of different religions in Haifa.

3b

Any two of the following:

- combined musical presentation
- combined art and craft market
- painting exhibition of Jewish and Arab artists.

3c

Combined celebration of the three festivals of the three religions.

3d

Any three of the following:

- cultural activities
- social activities shared by all ethnic groups
- a centre for combined interests and workshops
- by convening the 'Festival of Festivals' annually.

Part B – Respond in Hebrew

Criteria: the capacity to understand and to convey general and specific aspects of texts

Most students understood the passages they listened to and their answers in Hebrew contained relevant and accurate information. The students who did not gain full marks were those who made linguistic and lexical mistakes.

Question 4

4a

- they're unable to be forged
- to increase state security.



Question 5

5a

- lending free medical equipment to people who can't afford to buy it
- sending a mobile dental service to people who are home-bound
- organising volunteers to visit the homes of the sick
- providing a service of special vehicles for disabled people.

5b

All the workers of Yad-Sarah are volunteers.

5c

- there are 6000 volunteers
- it was a small, family project that grew to a large charity organisation/enterprise
- there are over 100 branches.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

Part A – Respond in English

Criteria: the capacity to understand and to convey general and specific aspects of texts

Overall, the answers to Questions 6 and 7 were satisfactory or better, indicating a good understanding of the written texts. Some students did not read Question 6a carefully and misinterpreted the task, summarising the whole text instead of just the leaflet. When answering the questions about the Habimah Theatre, many confused the answer to Question 7b with that to 7c, giving the points relevant to the contribution of Habimah to the Israeli culture as the reasons for the general success of the theatre and vice versa. Only a few students received full marks for the questions on Text 7.

Question 6

6a

- the actual level of radiation compared to the level allowed
- information about safety and health
- instructions regarding the use of mobile phones by children.

6b

It makes information available to all purchasers, whether they understand Hebrew or not.

6c

Any two of the following:

- it has a charger which does not require electricity
- it is an ideal solution for people who worry about a flat battery
- it can be connected while talking.

6d

- it can be a health hazard
- user dependence
- it damages the economy.

6e

Any one of the following (or similar):

- the use of sarcasm – 'get rid of the mobile phone'
- the author is amused.

Question 7

7a

- in Moscow/Russia
- in 1917.

7b

Any five of:



- the devotion of Nahum Tzemach to the idea of creating a Hebrew theatre
- the Jewish public in the world was eager and ripe for Jewish culture
- the establishment of the Jewish settlements in the Land of Israel
- the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language in the Land of Israel
- the repertoire of the theatre was based on Jewish background and the audience identified with the Jewish themes
- the great talent of the actors involved
- the use of professional actors
- the excellent stage director
- the high quality scripts.

7c

- a generation of actors and theatre personalities has emerged
- additional theatres and entertainment troupes were established
- drama schools were established
- original Israeli playwriting has developed.

Part B – Respond in Hebrew

Question 8

Students had to respond to Rachel parents' letter, advising them and commenting on the following key points:

- Rachel travelling alone
- Rachel's exposure to dangers such as drugs, diseases and evil people
- managing her trip expenses
- the trip duration
- deferral of university studies
- the educational benefits of the trip.

The answers to this question were mostly satisfactory. Students who earned higher marks were those who had carefully read the texts and the task, usually marking the key points of the text. In their response they advised Rachel's parents on the issues the parents had been apprehensive about and referred to the key points above.

Some students dealt with a few points in a lengthy and repetitious manner, while neglecting to address the rest of the issues. In some letters it was apparent that the student was discussing his/her own problems instead of those presented in the text. Some students added points which would have increased the parents' anxiety, instead of giving calming advice as required by the task. There were many examples that indicated careless reading of the text; for example, South Africa instead of South America, using an incorrect name for the daughter and even referring to Rachel as a son.

The less successful students made syntactic mistakes such as not agreeing nouns and adjectives or subjects and predicates. Mistakes were also made in the use of verb declensions. There were still students who did not distinguish between the forms appropriate to gender and to plural and singular. Spelling errors were abundant.

Overall, the students' vocabulary was satisfactory. Good students had a rich vocabulary and used it in a relevant and appropriate manner; however, some students used anglicised words or expressions not relevant to the idea they were trying to express. The use of anglicisms was particularly common in the letter.

Section 3: Writing in Hebrew

Criteria: relevance, breadth and depth of content

appropriateness of structure and sequence

accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

All four questions in this section were attempted by at least one student. The most popular was Question 12, and the least popular was Question 9. While the vocabulary of most students was broad enough to deal with the chosen topics, grammatical, syntactical and spelling errors were quite common, particularly among the lower-scoring students.

Question 9

The task was to write an imaginative story illustrating the saying 'experience is the best school'. Students who chose this task wrote fictional stories but these often fell short of supporting the saying.



Question 10

The task was to write an article about the value of sport. Most students concentrated on the benefits of sport to the physical and mental wellbeing of active participants. Many responses were very good, expressing ideas in logically-connected sentences and using a wide range of expressions. The less successful students did not address the task and instead described in length the Olympic Games in Athens and their personal experience there.

Question 11

The task was to write the script of a talk on the importance of the synagogue in the life of the Jewish community. Students who chose this topic submitted outstanding work. The best responses were those by students who were familiar with the conventions of the text type and were able to discuss in depth the pivotal role a synagogue plays in the Jewish community. Some students took a narrow view of the synagogue as a place for praying and worship only. This role is indeed very important, but the synagogue is also a social, educational and communal centre, aspects which should not have been ignored in a well balanced exposition of the topic. Students should read the question carefully to prevent misinterpretations such as solely discussing the importance of prayers and not of the synagogue itself.

Question 12

The task was to write an evaluative report on the effect of television on children. Most students handled the evaluative report very well. The students who achieved a high score preferred this topic. In the highest-scoring works, both the positive and negative aspects of viewing television were methodically explored, quoting supporting views of psychologists and sociologists. The less successful students concentrated on only one aspect and did not present information to support their views. As in the previous answers, the weaker students made more grammatical and syntactic mistakes.