



2007

LOTE: Macedonian GA 3: Examination

Oral Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The oral examination has two sections, a Conversation (approximately seven minutes) and a Discussion (approximately eight minutes). The overall results in both sections were pleasing. A range of speaking abilities was noted throughout the examination.

Generally, students were able to engage with the assessors in the Conversation and demonstrated a good level of preparation for the Discussion. The best students used appropriate vocabulary, provided extended, in-depth responses and opinions, and were able to lead the conversation in a direction that was favourable to them. The small number of students who had not prepared well for the examination found it difficult to either carry the conversation forward or to maintain an effective discussion of their topic. These students offered a limited range of information and needed frequent support from the assessors.

Some common grammatical mistakes were noted throughout the examination, such as using the incorrect gender forms. Greater attention needs to be paid to teaching more grammar, especially adjective, noun and gender consistency. Teachers also need to reinforce the use of formal greetings and explain the difference between *Ti* and *Vie*, as some students used the informal greeting with the assessors.

Some students had learnt the information by rote and recited their responses instead of conversing spontaneously. These students struggled to continue with the discussion if they lost track of their pre-learned material while answering questions from assessors. They were often unable to use repair strategies. It is important for students to know that they might be asked questions for which they have not prepared or which they have not considered. Students need to be aware that what they say will often lead the assessors to ask questions about what they have said.

Teachers are encouraged to go over the assessment criteria with their students and draw their attention to the fact that they need to meet all of the sections of the criteria. Native speakers should note that their fluency alone will not guarantee them high grades if they have not met the other criteria.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The Conversation section focuses on the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations.

The students were examined against the following criteria:

- capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively
- relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas
- accuracy of vocabulary and grammar
- range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar
- clarity of expression.

Generally students performed well in this section. They were able to draw on their own experiences and a good level of preparation was evident. Most students responded readily to the questions and were able to maintain a conversation. They generally had good pronunciation, although some students' pronunciation showed the influence of English.

The most successful students spoke fluently, provided relevant, extensive responses to questions and kept the conversation flowing. They were able to present information about themselves and elaborate on opinions or ideas using accurate language, appropriate sentence structures and an excellent range of vocabulary.

Weaker students experienced some problems with pronunciation, were slow to respond to questions, frequently hesitated and often resorted to English words. Their responses contained a limited range of information and they needed frequent support from the assessors. They struggled to expand on opinions and ideas, and were unable to advance the conversation.



Most students were able to talk about their family, school and future aspirations but some did not know the names of their subjects in Macedonian. Students are encouraged to go beyond simple responses and give extended answers that provide interesting information about themselves, keeping in mind that the assessors may ask questions about what they have said. They should be able to justify what they say with some spontaneity. Students need to understand that the conversation is an exchange of ideas and opinions and should try to build on comments made by the assessors.

Section 2 – Discussion

The focus of the Discussion is to explore aspects of the language and culture of communities in which Macedonian is spoken. Students are expected to refer to the texts studied during class. They may support the Discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps. Only one cue card, of a specified size, is permitted. Students and teachers should refer to the *Macedonian VCE Study Design* for more information on this section.

The students were examined against the following criteria:

- capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively
- capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic
- accuracy of vocabulary and grammar
- range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar
- clarity of expression.

It is essential that teachers and students take into account the interests and the ability of the students when selecting the Detailed Study topic and sub-topic. Page 23 of the *Macedonian VCE Study Design* states that ‘One sub-topic may be selected for a whole class or different sub-topics may be selected for individuals or groups of students. In the former case, it will be important to select a sub-topic that is sufficiently broad to accommodate a range of interests and perspectives, so that each student can provide an individual response to the coursework assessment task(s) set, as well as in the Discussion in Section 2 of the Oral Examination’. The choice of resources used to support the Detailed Study is also very important and they should be in Macedonian. The sub-topics chosen in 2007 included: ‘Macedonian literature’, ‘Migration’, ‘Legends linked to places in Macedonia’, ‘The environment’ and ‘Pollution’.

Students need to choose a sub- topic for the Detailed Study that truly interests them, as this will enable them to express and elaborate on ideas and defend their own opinions confidently. Thorough preparation is necessary for a successful result. An introduction, **of no more than one minute**, is required before the Discussion begins; however, some students had not prepared this. The introduction should refer to the topic of the Detailed Study, including a brief summary of the main focus. If students have chosen to use any supporting material to support their discussion they need to alert the assessors to this during the introduction.

The majority of students this year were well prepared for the Discussion. High-scoring students demonstrated an excellent knowledge of their topic, referring to resources that consisted of different text types. They knew their texts very well and spoke fluently, elaborating on their ideas and opinions. These students carried the discussion forward with some original input and provided highly relevant, in-depth responses.

Some students relied heavily on rote-learned material and when they were asked questions, they were completely thrown and unable to continue or effectively participate in the discussion. A number of students had chosen Macedonian writers and poetry for their sub-topic. Some of them recited the poems rather than analysing and discussing the poems effectively. Teachers should advise students to choose suitable topics that are not too difficult for them, and to find texts that they can understand, so that they will have some ideas to articulate if the assessors move away from the anticipated questions.

Students are encouraged to prepare concluding statements. Assessors often ask at the end of the Discussion if there is anything else the student would like to say. This gives them the opportunity to cover areas that they have concentrated on which may not have been raised during the Discussion.



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students' performances in the written examination were pleasing. There are three sections in the written examination and most students attempted all of them. Students need to work steadily through each section, watching the time closely to ensure that there is sufficient time to complete all parts. A small number of students did not complete the entire examination.

Every year some students lose marks because they give their answers in the wrong language. Students must remember that Part A of Sections 1 and 2 should be answered in English and Part B of Sections 1 and 2 and Section 3 in Macedonian. As stated on the paper, responses in the wrong language will not score any marks. Teachers are advised to draw their students' attention to this issue.

It is important for teachers to stress to students the importance of reading the questions very carefully and highlighting key words. Teachers should also ensure that they expose students to a wide range of text types in the course of their teaching programs so that they are better prepared for the examination.

Students need to be aware that illegible handwriting may affect their mark if the assessors cannot read what they have written.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

In this section students are required to listen to texts and respond to set questions. Usually the number of marks for a question indicates the number of points or responses that are required. It is important that students practise note-taking skills and ensure that they are focused when listening to the texts. They should also read the questions carefully; breaking them down and highlighting the key information they need to be listening for during the playing of the texts.

Text 1

Question 1

Any three of:

- she reminds Stevce that it is Aneta's birthday on Saturday
- she knows Aneta's tastes
- she has already looked for suitable books as gifts
- she has already researched a restaurant that she knows Aneta will like.

Text 2

Question 2a.

Buildings	Differences
1. House	Any three of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• three bedrooms• pantry• cellar• brick veneer.
2. Bungalow	Any three of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one bedroom• large terrace• attic• wooden.

Question 2b.

The bungalow has a panoramic view.

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Text 3

Question 3a.

Ohrid – any three of:

- small/beautiful town
- full of culture and history
- church of St Sofia
- monastery St Pantelejmon.

Skopje – any three of:

- modern city
- Fortress Kale
- old city bazaar
- stone bridge
- botanical gardens.

Question 3b.

He describes Krusevo using words such as (any four of):

- unique and wondrous
- a showcase of fine old architecture
- high up in the mountain /surrounded by the woods
- clear air
- first Macedonian republic
- blend of past and modern.

Part B – Answer in Macedonian

In this section students are usually required to provide a full sentence response or a sequence of connected sentences in Macedonian. This is an opportunity for them to show the assessors how they are able to use the Macedonian language when responding to questions. They should try to use the best vocabulary, correct spelling and accurate sentence structures to express their answers in Macedonian.

Text 4

Question 4a.

- When grandma Vesa's husband died, she was left alone (felt lonely).
- She was really missing her daughters in Australia and wanted to communicate with them.
- The children of Lazovo taught her computer skills.

Question 4b.

Any two of:

- she has the determination and courage to take up learning in her old age
- she has the perseverance to continue to improve
- she is grateful for the help she has received in meeting her goals
- she is loving and puts effort into communicating with her family.

Text 5

Question 5a.

- Radika is the most beautiful river in Macedonia.
- Radika has a beautiful valley and it is rich in trout.

Question 5b.

There was a deer that was chased by dogs and took flight over the bridge. At the same time, hunters appeared on the other side of the bridge. Terrified, and not having much choice, the deer took a big leap from one side of the bridge to the other. From then on the bridge has been known as 'Elenski Skok'.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

This section of the examination is designed primarily to assess the students' knowledge and skills in analysing and responding to information from written Macedonian texts. It can be challenging for some students as they are required to read three different texts containing a lot of information and to respond to them within an allocated timeframe. The



passages can contain some complex vocabulary and students are encouraged to use dictionaries. Students should carefully read the passages during the reading time and look closely at the questions before and during the reading. Teachers and students need to be aware that the skills required for this section need a lot of practice and should make sure that adequate activities are undertaken in their teaching and learning programs.

Generally, students performed well in this section. However, a significant number of students did not attempt or correctly answer Question 7c. This indicates that figurative language might be an area that needs to be revisited.

Part A – Answer in English

In this part, students are required to demonstrate an understanding of Macedonian written texts. Students were required to read two texts and extract, evaluate, compare and contrast aspects of both texts.

Text 6

Question 6a.

The rebuilding of St Kliment University is significant because it was the oldest university in Europe.

Question 6b.

Both of:

- it had thousands of students
- it was one of the Christian spiritual pillars in that part of the Balkans.

Question 6c.

Both of:

- as a living museum
- as a spiritual centre.

Question 6d.

Any three of:

- a gallery of icons
- a library with old manuscripts
- a variety of workshops; for example, for authors, scientists, translators, and foreign tourists and visitors, including painting of icons
- a site of historical significance.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Kliment was returning from his regular visit to the monasteries.

Question 7b.

Any three of:

- it made him especially happy
- he rested his soul
- he felt a blissful peace
- it united him with sacred nature.

Question 7c.

- A bird that landed on the stone.
- He talks about the monastery as a living being.

Question 7d.

Text 6 (any three of):

- newspaper article – columns
- formal style
- informative
- scientific
- logical.



Text 7 (any three of):

- literary
- personal
- descriptive dialogues
- poetic
- metaphors.

Part B – Answer in Macedonian

In this part of the examination students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of a written text by responding in Macedonian to information provided in the text.

Text 8

Question 8

Students were given an article about a missing grandfather. They were required to write an informal letter explaining that the grandfather in question is their neighbour of many years. In the letter, students had to refer to the article.

Most students were familiar with the format of an informal letter and did very well in this question. The most successful students wrote well-structured letters, manipulated language authentically and displayed extensive knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures. They demonstrated depth in the treatment of the task through the development of relevant information and ideas relating to the text.

Some students wrote letters of adequate structure and content but they had a lot of grammatical mistakes and poor spelling. A few students did not understand the task and their letters did not respond to the question asked. A very small number of students did not respond to this task at all.

Section 3 – Writing in Macedonian

This section was designed to assess students' ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Macedonian. Students were required to write a response of 200–250 words on one of four topics. This year the most popular topic was Question 11, followed by Question 9. Questions 10 and 12 had an almost even spread of responses.

Students are expected to be familiar with the kinds of writing and different text types specified in the *Macedonian VCE Study Design*. The conventions of different kinds of writing and text types are described on page 13, pages 50–51 give the main characteristics of the different kinds of writing and page 52 gives the main characteristics of common text types. Students should know these characteristics well so they can fulfil the requirements of the writing tasks. Weaker students often did not differentiate between, for example, persuasive and evaluative, or personal and imaginative writing.

The criteria used to assess responses in this section were:

- relevance and depth of treatment of ideas, information, or opinions
- accuracy and range of vocabulary and sentence structures
- the capacity to structure and sequence response and capacity to use conventions of the text type.

Question 9

Students were required to write a formal letter to the organisers of a trip evaluating that trip. The better responses:

- had a salutation
- followed the correct structure, layout, register and style
- presented two or more important aspects of an issue; for example, problems encountered with the itinerary, accommodation or transport
- had a sign off.

Question 10

Students were required to write a persuasive article about the effects of global warming. The better responses:

- had a title and followed the correct register, style and layout
- highlighted why global warming is a problem
- provided ideas or examples of how to combat problem
- ended the article with an encouraging tone that any little bit of effort counts.

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Question 11

Students were required to write an imaginative short story beginning with the line 'Since becoming famous...' The better responses:

- demonstrated imagination and skills to create an appropriate atmosphere
- included descriptions of emotions, people and places
- used a wide range of vocabulary, and sequenced and structured ideas coherently and effectively.

Question 12

Students were required to write an informative text for a speech about the sporting opportunities in their community. The better responses:

- conveyed the information clearly
- used an objective style
- used facts, examples, explanations and references to local football, netball, swimming and soccer clubs
- talked about the importance of being physically active in today's society
- chose language and structures that clearly conveyed the message and sequenced the information logically.