



GENERAL COMMENTS

This year students prepared very well for the oral examination and performed well in the Conversation section. Students performed exceedingly well in the Discussion section of the examination, presenting a diverse range of topics, which included art, literature, literature and film, history and science. Students were able to explore the selected sub-topics in depth.

The variety of topics studied enabled students to excel in the areas of research, discussion and the presentation of content and relevant opinions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students showed a good to excellent level of understanding and were able to carry the conversation forward and answer questions spontaneously with minimum support. The majority of students spoke about their interests and hobbies, school subjects, future aspirations and family. They usually understood questions and often expanded their responses without needing to be prompted. It was noted that in some cases intonation and stress were a problem. Students would benefit from greater exposure to the language to overcome this.

It is important that students know the difference between formal and informal settings and the appropriate language to use in these settings. The range of vocabulary and grammar used in the Conversation was appropriate and students were able to use the correct tenses.

Students who performed exceptionally well showed that they were able to use a range of vocabulary, demonstrating linguistic ability which extended to apparent reading more extensively. This helped them expand their vocabulary and assisted them in being able to apply it.

While overall, students showed that they had prepared well for the Conversation section, students should participate more in group and pair work where speaking and listening skills develop and can be monitored. Encouraging students to use the language for a variety of purposes and to express themselves in the classroom setting more often should lead to better results in the oral examination.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students chose a variety of topics ranging from historical and literary topics to modern living. The historical topics covered Kosovo as a historical battle, the Hilandar monastery and Saint Sava, a founder of schools and churches and literary sources such as folk poems, myths and legends, modern poets, and writers and films. Students also chose to talk about historical figures such as famous rulers of medieval Serbia such as Czar Lazar, or about priests and educators of the Serbian people.

Specific literary topics covered stories about Saint Sava, poems by the most famous Serbian poetess Desanka Maksimovic, daily life in the literature of Stevan Sremac, Radoje Domanovic and Momo Kapor and Laza Lazarevic discussing love, patriotism, satiric views of the society, youth and their values and memories from Second World War.

Topics that covered modern living spanned science and famous scientists such as Nikola Tesla, architecture and life in Belgrade as it is known today.

Well-prepared students used a variety of resources such as paper-based and audio-visual materials and the Internet, and could easily explain what they gained from each source. They were also able to mention sources when introducing their topic.

Well-prepared students spoke clearly and without hesitation. They sometimes used prompts such as a picture or a map to help them explain what they had learnt. They compared their sources and were able to form their own opinion about the topic discussed, agreeing or disagreeing with the major source, yet able to explain their reasoning. They also had a very rich vocabulary and could use well-structured sentences when stating their point of view.

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Most topics chosen this year were challenging and required a great deal of reading in order to successfully present the Discussion section of the exam.

Students who drew their knowledge only from the Internet sites or films struggled to explain their points of view. These students should be encouraged to read more and discuss/present their topic in class before the oral exam. In doing so, they will gain more confidence, fluency in the language and will also know how to time their introduction, as well as to prepare clever responses and a well-presented point of view.