



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students performed at a very good standard in their oral examination this year, satisfying the expectations of each criterion. Performances varied from good to excellent. However, some students were not well prepared and were also unaware of the assessment criteria, and consequently lost marks.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Most students demonstrated a very good level of understanding when responding to the questions asked. However, when asked about their family, some students gave only a small amount of information about their family and then gave a short description about themselves or talked about their friends or school. In these instances assessors needed to ask questions to return these students to the topic of conversation. When English terms were used, some students did not use appropriate repair strategies to correct the mistake.

Most students had excellent pronunciation and intonation; however, students need to improve stress and tempo.

Students are reminded that it is not appropriate to start a sentence with ‘*ahm*’ in Sinhala.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinion and ideas

Some students demonstrated a very good level of preparation by providing relevant information about their family, friends, school, leisure and future aspirations. Students need to elaborate more when describing the personalities of their family members and friends and also when clarifying and supporting their ideas. Very few students elaborated on the information or expressed their ideas or opinions without being asked to do so.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Most students used accurate grammar and a good range of appropriate vocabulary.

Section 2 – Discussion

The discussion topics selected were very interesting and appropriate. The topics were based on aspects of the arts and entertainment, technological advancements and environmental issues. Students had the opportunity to evaluate and express their ideas and opinions; however some students did not take full advantage of this opportunity and others gave inaccurate information.

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Most students led the discussion with confidence. They were able to engage with the assessors and respond readily to questions, and used good repair strategies. Pronunciation in most cases was good; however, appropriate intonation, stress and tempo were not very evident.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinion and ideas

Most students were very well prepared. They were able to elaborate on information, clarify ideas and opinions, supported by evidence from the texts. Students usually responded promptly to assessors’ questions; however, there were a few instances where the assessors’ support was needed to extend the discussion to the required time limit. It was evident that some students had rote-learned information, which detracted from their performance.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

In most instances students used accurate grammar and a range of vocabulary appropriate to the topic chosen.



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall quality of performance of the students in the written examination was very good. However, some students had difficulty answering questions that required an answer in English, as seen from the spelling and grammar mistakes, as well as the use of incorrect terms and expressions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

To people visiting Sri Lanka during the summer season

Question 1b.

To promote a boat trip

To see the dolphins (to visit the Southern coast of Sri Lanka/to promote Sri Lanka to foreign tourists were not considered correct answers)

Question 1c.

Three of:

- large modern boats with all facilities (draws attention to many good aspects of the boat trips by emphasising the points)
- underwater micro laser cameras to see the fish
- well-trained, friendly lifesavers for safety (adjectives used to provide emphasis)
- a delicious seafood lunch (adjective emphasised)
- enthusiastic tone and positive/repetition and stress on value
- reasonable price.

Text 2

Question 2a.

Mood

- He was in a very happy mood.

Evidence

- He was skipping around (he was jumping around/jumping up and down).
- He had a very bright look on his face (he had a smile on his face).

One mark was awarded for describing the mood and two marks were awarded for supplying evidence.

Question 2b.

Two of:

- he kept looking back because he was concerned about the puppy's safety
- he did not chase the puppy away thinking that he would run to the road
- even though he was hungry he did not want to leave the puppy and walk away or he held the puppy and waited, thinking about what he should do.

Question 2c.

- The boy did a good deed by caring for the dog and returning it to the owner.
- In return the lady thanked him and gave him lollies/sweets.

Some students did not relate the saying to the text.

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Text 3

Question 3a.

- to eat more fruit and vegetables instead of sweets and oily foods
- to drink water rather than other beverages such as fizzy or sweet drinks
- to get involved in physical activities instead of sitting in front of a television or a computer

If students fully described all the changes they received full marks.

If students listed the changes but did not describe them fully, for example, by saying 'to eat fruit and vegetables', 'to drink water' and 'to do physical exercise', they received two marks or one mark for two answers. There were a few incomplete answers.

Question 3b.

All of:

- to provide the nutrients the body needs
- to prevent poisonous chemicals from entering the body
- to prevent illnesses caused by obesity/getting fat.

Question 3c.

- to buy healthy food from the canteen
- to get involved in sports

Part B – Answer in Sinhala

Text 4

Question 4a.

Both of:

- due to the global economic crisis, the demand for the exported product has decreased
- producers are faced with difficulties as a result of low income.

Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 4b.

- The rupee should be devalued.
- The value of the rupee should be decided by supply and demand in the free market.

Many students did not answer this question correctly.

Text 5

Question 5a.

Two of:

- polythene is not environmentally friendly
- food gets stale
- polythene takes a long time to break down and therefore blocks the drains.

Most students achieved full marks for this question.

Question 5b.

Either of:

- to make it popular to wrap food in banana leaves
- the banana leaves are treated and sent to the market.

OR

Banana leaves are cut into squares and treated and 10 pieces are packed and sent to the market.

Students were awarded full marks for either description of the project.

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Question 5c.

Two of:

- it stops people using polythene, which is not environmentally friendly
- wrapping food in banana leaves gives it a better taste and smell
- producing banana leaves in this manner provides jobs.

Section 2 – Reading and responding Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

Question 6a.

Positive: He is an artistic/creative/skilled person because he built Sigiriya. He made beautiful parks with fountains and paintings that brought recognition to Sri Lanka and still attracts tourists.

Negative, either of:

- he is a bad person because he killed his father
- he is a greedy person because he seized kingship and asked for his father's wealth.

One positive and one negative aspect were required to achieve full marks.

Question 6b.

View 1 (Professor Paranavithana)

Sigiriya was a fortress

Characteristics

- people could see a vast area from the top of the rock and therefore could see if enemies were coming
- there was a water trench around the rock for protection

View 2 (Professor Sirigunasingha)

Sigiriya is not a fortress

Characteristics

- there is no escape for the King if the Sigiriya rock is surrounded by the enemy
- since the Kassapa-Muganlan War took place in Anuradhapura, the King would not have been hiding in Sigiriya
- the features of Sigiriya are not the features of a fortress

OR

Sigiriya was a pleasure garden for the King

Characteristics

- there were parks with fountains
- there were beautiful paintings on the walls of Sigiriya

Most students scored highly for this question.

Question 6c.

- They think that Sigiriya is an art gallery.
- They like to see/think about the highly developed ancient technology.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Three of:

- there are no proper roads or transport facilities
- there is no proper irrigation in this area
- it is an underdeveloped area
- the area had been badly neglected.

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Many students only described the political and indirect reasons as to why the area was underdeveloped; however, this answer was not acceptable. A few students did not answer this question correctly.

Question 7b.

Four of:

- the farmer received land and compensation to build houses with facilities
- the fishermen were given a special place in the project
- the businessman received compensation and land to start a new business
- other people were happy because their children got permanent jobs
- the temporary dwellers received houses
- people were happy that they could do something for their country and future generations.

Question 7c.

- Farmers contested in court that their farmland was being overtaken for development and won the case.
- The environmentalists protested about taking the land from the sanctuary.
- The environmentalists pointed out that migratory birds needed to be considered and this was accepted.

Part B – Answer in Sinhala

Text 8

Question 8

Format

- topic
- name of the reporter

Language

- formal and in past tense

Content

- including the information about area, cause, the dangers and solutions suggested by Mr Silva

Presentation

- separating to paragraphs

Most students used formal language and included all the information from the text. However, many students wrote in article format without making reference to Mr Silva's speech using the present tense. When writing a report, reference should be made to an incident or person and should be written in the past tense.

Section 3 – Writing in Sinhala

Question 9

Format

- topic
- the name of the writer

Language

- formal language
- correct grammar

Content

- at least two points for and two points against the event, and finally expressing the writer's opinion

Presentation

- separating to paragraphs

There were a few good responses which provided points for and against the event, ending with a personal opinion.

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Question 10

Format

- addressing the audience, the teacher and friends
- an introduction

Language

- informal but appropriate for the audience

Content

- describing at least three cultural experiences

Presentation

- separating the text into paragraphs

Students were expected to write about their personal experiences and not simply describe a culturally valuable place or event. Some students did not address the audience.

Question 11

Format

- addressing the audience, the teacher and friends
- an introduction

Language

- informal language appropriate for the audience

Content

- describing at least three cultural experiences

Presentation

- separating to paragraphs

There were some very good responses to this question which used the appropriate language with which to address a friend. These responses discussed relevant facts and used persuasive language.

Question 12

Format

- topic
- the name of the writer

Language

- describing the incident in formal or informal language

Content

- describing an interesting incident

Presentation

- writing in connected paragraphs

There were only a few responses to this question. Some students did not write a topic for the story. The incident described should have been exciting for a young audience.