



## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2012 Turkish written examination paper consisted of three separate sections.

- Section 1 assessed skills in Listening and Responding. In Part A, students were required to listen to four texts in Turkish and answer questions in English. In Part B, students listened to two texts spoken in Turkish and were required to answer the questions in Turkish.
- Section 2 assessed skills in Reading and Responding. In Part A, students were asked to read two separate texts in Turkish and answer questions in English. In Part B, students read a text written in Turkish and were asked to write a formal letter in Turkish, using all the points in the given text, to express dissatisfaction about a situation and to persuade the reader to amend their resolve.
- Section 3 contained four alternative topics for the writing task. In this section, students were required to demonstrate their skills in Turkish by writing on one selected topic and using the prescribed text type.

It was pleasing to see that very few students made the error of writing their responses in the incorrect language. However, there were still a few students who wrote some answers in both languages in an attempt to overcome the difficulty of expressing themselves in the required language. Students need to be aware that writing their responses in the incorrect language will not be awarded any additional marks and those writing in both languages will only be marked for the responses written in the language required in that particular section of the examination paper.

Students must ensure that they read all instructions carefully. A few students wrote their responses in pencil instead of the required ink or ball-point pen.

Students should always check to see if the question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences. The sections of the examination that require students to respond in Turkish carry marks for language, and students are expected to write in full sentences in order to demonstrate linguistic accuracy and sequencing of ideas in Turkish. Some students attempted to give one-word answers and, although these could have been accurate responses, students were required to demonstrate their skills in manipulating the language. The amount of space given to answer a particular question is also a good indication of the length of the expected response and the details required for the allocated marks.

Most students were able to take accurate and detailed notes. However, some failed to incorporate the ideas noted into the required response. No marks are given for note-taking.

In order to be understood and to receive the maximum marks available, answers must be coherent and legible. This is also the case for responses in English. Emphasis must be given to the study of grammar in order to improve students' ability to write in Turkish with accuracy and fluency.

Following are some other areas of concern.

- When responding in English, some students gave incorrect answers to questions that required sequencing. The distinction should be explained in class in order to eliminate mistakes.
- While writing in English, students should avoid colloquialisms and slang so that they give more appropriate responses.
- Some students were not able to distinguish Turkish words correctly and then used English words simply by literally translating. Students should check the spelling and existence of an English word in a dictionary.
- In the reading section, direct quotations should be avoided as the responses are expected to be precise and not in the original wording of the text. Responses should be paraphrased rather than copied directly from the given text.
- Students should avoid direct translation of fixed, idiomatic expressions from English to Turkish and vice versa.
- Students need to practise some Turkish sound assimilation rules in order to avoid spelling mistakes, especially when using suffixes at the end of a word.
- Phrasal or idiomatic words that contain prepositions such as 'with', 'on', 'at' and 'off' in English are usually expressed with suffixes in Turkish. These change depending on the meaning. Noun phrases are also used with suffixes in Turkish. Using the wrong suffix will cause misunderstanding or produce grammatically incorrect sentences. For example, in a formal letter, students must be careful to use the polite form of suffixes/prefixes:



*sizden rica ediyorum* must be used instead of *senden rica ediyorum*. Structures and rules for forming noun phrases as well as adjectival and verbal phrases vary from one language to another.

- Verb endings that indicate person and number should agree with the subject of the sentence.
- The repetition of words, sentences and paragraphs should be avoided.
- When writing in Turkish, anglicisms should be avoided if a Turkish equivalent exists.
- The use of *ki*, which is a noun phrase marker, and *de* or *da* when used to mean 'in addition, also' should be written separately as they are separate words rather than suffixes in these cases.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what the answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

### Section 1 – Listening and Responding

#### Part A – Answer in English

The majority of students gave appropriate responses to most questions in this section of the examination; however, some responses were too basic. Students were generally able to extract the main points required and could find reasonable English equivalents for their answers. Some students competently answered questions based on simple note taking, while others took elaborate notes but failed to use the information accurately in their responses.

Students should practise their listening comprehension skills by selecting key points from a variety of spoken texts during their examination preparation. In the examination reading time, students should read the questions carefully to predict the type of interactions they will be hearing and the sort of information that may be required. They should take notes during the first and second playings of each text and, in the pause between playings, they should read the questions again to determine the importance of what they have heard and use their dictionary to check the meanings of unfamiliar words. After the second playing of the text, students have time to confirm their earlier information and compose an appropriate answer for each question.

Students can manage their examination time wisely by reading the questions of the following text during the pause.

#### Text 1

##### Question 1

(B) a swimming pool for young children

#### Text 2

##### Question 2a.

2008	second place in the freestyle diving competition held in Tokyo
2009	member of the Ladies Underwater Hockey team – third place, held in İzmir
2011	first place in the freestyle diving competition – Melbourne Underwater Sporting Competition/world championship 50 m diving/gold medal for diving

The majority of students did not sequence their responses correctly.

##### Question 2b.

She has increased her diving depth from 130 m to 150 m.

The text tells us that she achieved the first depth in 2008 and the second depth in 2011. Only a handful of students were able to answer this question correctly.

##### Question 2c.

Because freestyle diving

- helps to improve your self-confidence
- gives you the opportunity to see the life hidden under the water/in the depths of the seas.

Only one third of the students were able to answer this question correctly.

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## Text 3

### Question 3a.

His sister was born the day before the camp.

### Question 3b.

- Treasure hunt: held between two groups (a girls' group and a boys' group)
- Trivia quiz: held between groups/pairs made of one boy and one girl

### Question 3c.

The correct answers were

- how to put up (pitch) a tent
- how to use a compass to find directions
- how to interpret maps (map reading)
- listing/identifying the tree species/types of trees in the bush/forest.

## Text 4

### Question 4a.

It is 'World Wetlands Day'.

### Question 4b.

The wetlands help water quality by

- adding useful minerals
- filtering out the poisonous material/matter
- helping to purify water (by contributing to the evaporation process).

### Question 4c.

- internationally: (135 of the Turkish) wetlands have been put under the protection of international law
- locally: educational programs have been developed

## Part B – Answer in Turkish

Few students were able to answer the questions in this section with clarity and most did not write in as much detail as expected from students at this level. Some responses were written in basic Turkish and lacked structure, accuracy and fluency.

Students should be prepared to give responses that are appropriately structured to the question asked. If the question asks for the information to be presented in a list, students should respond in this way. Where a question requires an additional explanation, the response should be constructed in the appropriate manner rather than just giving the key words as an answer. Students should also give precise responses when multiple answers are possible rather than attempting to give all possibilities.

## Text 5

### Question 5a.

Those who may volunteer for the bird counting/study/observation

### Question 5b.

- They may have to do this work from dawn until dusk/for up to 10 hours a day (very long days).
- They may encounter illegal hunters/they may have to deal with illegal hunters.
- They will have to work in groups when they might prefer to work individually.
- They may think that bi-monthly observations take too much time.
- The task might be too difficult for them.

## Text 6

### Question 6a.

- They go away every two years.
- It would be good to see a different country/culture.
- They don't see much of Turkey anyway as they spend so much time with the family.
- Ahmet would have the opportunity to improve his Chinese.



- The brother can take photos instead.
- The teacher has offered to suggest places to visit in China.
- Derya states that her husband had previously expressed an interest in visiting China (including the Great Wall) during a television program they watched.
- Derya will be able to see her sister Aysel as Aysel is also going to China.

Fewer than half of the students were able to extract all of the answers expected for this question, and a substantial number of students scored fewer than the half of the total marks allocated.

**Question 6b.**

Her husband has accepted Derya's proposal to go to China/they agreed to go to China. We know this from her husband's words, 'Then that means you will not need to go to England to see your sister this year.'

## **Section 2 – Reading and Responding**

### **Part A – Answer in English**

This section of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of a written text. Part A of Section 2 was worth 20 marks and consisted of questions on two separate texts that required responses in English. Most students were able to draw the appropriate information from the texts.

A number of questions related directly to the content of the text, while others required students to infer information from what was written. Students were also required to analyse the stylistic features of the texts.

The spaces provided for the responses generally indicated the length of the anticipated answer. Students were asked for a global understanding of the text and although many managed well, with some sophisticated understanding of text construction and the purpose of this text in particular, some students simply attempted to translate statements from the text.

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

Before attempting the questions in this section, students should read the text a few times and use their dictionaries to clarify the meanings of unfamiliar words. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all words; students should try to understand the gist of the passage and find the information required to answer the questions. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the text.

#### **Text 7**

##### **Question 7a.**

The book's main theme is time. We complain that time is short (or we worry about time passing); however, we often spend the day carelessly, giving no real thought to what we are doing (or we waste time).

Fewer than half of the students were able to answer this question accurately.

##### **Question 7b.**

The reviewer is very positive because

- of the modern language of the book
- s/he strongly recommends that the book should be brought forward on readers' list of books
- the book shows that people in our lives help us to make us what we are
- even though it was written about 50 years ago, the book still has relevance today.

The reviewer's reservations are that

- there are too many minor (insignificant) characters in the book
- the minor characters destroy the flow of the story
- this aspect made parts boring.

Few students were able to gain full marks for this question. Most answers were disorganised and lacked accurate information.



### Question 7c.

He reminds people that the book is interesting by telling them that every time they see a clock that shows an incorrect time, they will think about this book (be reminded about this book). This shows that the book will have a big impact on them.

Nearly half of the students answered this question correctly.

### Text 8

It was disappointing that many students did not receive any marks for some of the questions asked on this text. Students should be prepared to use their dictionaries to explore the meanings and the ideas presented in a written text, rather than attempting to confine themselves to a basic understanding of the topic.

### Question 8a.

The author thinks that

- people nowadays do not get to know their neighbours
- today, neighbours often argue with each other
- we have too many neighbours today due to the crowded living (density) in the cities
- technical developments such as the internet are affecting social/personal interaction in a negative way.

### Question 8b.

- In some developed countries, there are special courts that deal with these issues.
- In Britain, there is a law that deals with issues: the Anti-Social Behaviour Law.
- In Australia, complaints may be made to the local council or the police.

### Question 8c.

- The writer does not like the changes in relationships between neighbours/neighbourly relations.
- We understand this from his comments such as, 'People no longer ask their neighbour for a cup of sugar.'
- People are no longer living in small communities, but have to interact with many different people.
- There are no links with those in the immediate neighbourhood.
- However, despite all the social change, the writer is not entirely pessimistic because he believes that things can change for the better – we can start by saying 'good morning' to a neighbour.

## Part B – Answer in Turkish

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 Turkish. The task required students to demonstrate their skills by writing a formal letter in persuasive style using only the information provided in the text.

Students need to practise writing in different text types to prepare for this part of the examination and should refer to the *VCE Turkish Study Design* for the identified conventions of these text types.

Most students produced work that conveyed all the necessary information and many did it in a variety of grammatically correct and interesting ways. The more capable students manipulated language authentically and creatively and organised the information and ideas well in Turkish in order to meet the requirements of the task. Some students used only a few of the ideas provided in the text and attempted to complete the task based on their personal knowledge and experience. Some students deviated from the task and produced unrelated texts based on their emotions rather than the ideas presented in the text. Students need to address all aspects of the set task to perform well in this section.

## Section 3 – Writing in Turkish

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of original text in Turkish using the following criteria.

- 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

Students were required to write in Turkish in response to one of the four questions. Each question represented a different text type and kind of writing. (It should be noted that the text types marked with an asterisk in the *VCE Turkish Study Design* are those that students can be expected to produce in the examination.)

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In 2012, the majority of students chose to write on Question 12 (an imaginative story) or Question 13 (a personal speech) and produced creative pieces of authentic writing. Many of those who selected to write on these topics were quite successful in creating a convincing text.

Most students displayed a good knowledge of the text types and kinds of writing they chose. However, many responses demonstrated a lack of depth in the treatment of the task, often because students did not read the questions thoroughly or because they had a limited range of vocabulary. The selected topic should be one for which students have a good range of vocabulary and one in which they are able to express themselves in Turkish with accuracy.

Whichever topic is chosen, students must first do a simple plan before commencing their writing. Those students who did not plan their writing often jumped from one idea to another, formulating different structures around the same ideas. Other students demonstrated their planning skills by writing basic notes prior to embarking on the actual writing task. Ideas should be developed coherently and grouped into separate paragraphs with effective links between and within them. It is therefore essential that students set aside time to plan their response and time to proofread it at the end.

Students need to be familiar with the assessment criteria used in this section of the examination and structure their writing accordingly.

A significant number of students wrote very little or used extremely basic language. These students were not able to demonstrate any knowledge about the topic, text type conventions or the kind of writing and, as a result, could not score well. Students need to read, think about and address the task specified in order to do well in Section 3.