

2008
School-assessed
Coursework
Report

LOTE: Chinese Second Language Advanced GA 3: Unit 3
LOTE: Chinese Second Language Advanced GA 3: Unit 4

UNIT 3

This report is provided for the first year of implementation of this study and is based on the coursework audit and VCAA statistical data.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The coursework observed demonstrated mostly high levels of implementation of both the teaching of the course and setting of comprehensive tasks that allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the selected topics.

Most teachers provided details of the tasks with clear instructions of how to undertake the tasks, including the date, duration, required format of each task and the total marks available by using VCAA assessing criteria and descriptors. The themes and topics selected for this unit covered a good range of topics from the Study Design.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Unit 3

Outcome 1

Express ideas through the production of original texts

Task

A 200–250-character personal or imaginative written piece

Themes and topics

Most teachers chose the first and second themes from the study design for setting the tasks. Topics include one's experience from a short stay in an exchange school in China or in a rural area, daily routines, making friends, school life, travel experience, lifestyles etc. Most teachers provided students with a choice of topics for their writing.

Some teachers failed to provide clear instructions about the task, duration of time allowed, possible use of dictionaries, word limit and insufficient information about how to do the task.

Assessment

Most teachers used descriptors from the *VCE Chinese Second Language/Chinese Second Language Advanced Assessment Handbook* or some developed their own criteria based on VCAA assessment criteria to form their judgments of student achievement. A few teachers, however, did not provide their students with any indication of how the task would be assessed.

Outcome 2

Analyse and use information from spoken texts

Task

An extended response/s to one or more specific questions, messages or instructions, extracting and using information required

Themes and topics

The popular themes for this task were ‘The Individual’ and ‘The Chinese-speaking Communities’. Topics included, for example, education and aspirations, recreation and leisure, Chinese history and culture, geography, schooling and lifestyles. However, some teachers did not try to cover a variety of topics for the Outcome, merely using just one topic to set several listening tasks.

Assessment

Most teachers developed good tasks for Outcome 2. Some teachers, however, did not follow the requirements in the *VCE Chinese Second Language/Chinese Second Language Study Design* that students are expected to respond in Chinese to all assessment task questions but instead asked their students to respond in English. Other teachers photocopied some relevant part/s of previous examination papers for this task. Yet other teachers failed to provide details of assessment criteria such as VCAA assessment descriptors.

Outcome 3

Exchange information, opinions and experiences

Task

A role-play of approximately four minutes focusing on the resolution of an issue

Themes and topics

The majority of teachers chose Theme 3 from the *VCE Chinese Second Language/Chinese Second Language Advanced Study Design* for this task. Popular topics included ‘Youth issues’ and ‘The world of work’.

Assessment

Many teachers provided students with clear instructions about how the task would be conducted and developed some scenarios which could meet the requirements in the *VCE Chinese Second Language/Chinese Second Language Advanced Assessment Handbook*.

A few teachers only gave their students one or two unclear scenarios lacking instructions about how to conduct the task. Some scenarios did not focus on the resolution of an issue but just involved a talk. Some teachers also did not provide their students any instructions about how the task would be assessed, let alone inclusion of VCAA assessment descriptors.

Teachers are reminded that when submitting details for each task for audit purposes, they need to offer more than just a cover page and an instruction sheet. The task/s, a translation if appropriate and how the task would be assessed needs to be submitted.

UNIT 4

This report provides perspectives on the first year of implementation of this study and is based on the School-assessed Coursework audit and VCAA statistical data.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The material presented for Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework was of a high standard. For each Unit 4 outcome, most schools involved in the audit presented cover sheets that provided students with detailed instructions of, for example, duration, word limit and use of language, and the comprehensive tasks covered all relevant key knowledge and skills, including the required text type and writing style, as well as appropriate marking schemas.

Some teachers, however, appear to be still confused with the language required for Outcome 1. It indicates clearly in the study design that ‘the students must respond in Chinese to all

assessment tasks' in Unit 4 (see page 34). Some teachers did not use appropriate criteria for assessment although VCAA assessment descriptors are provided and can be downloaded from the VCAA website. In addition, a few tasks from some schools could not be audited because there was insufficient detail for the task, for example scenarios for the Outcome 2b – Interview.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Unit 4 Coursework

Outcome 1

Analyse and use information from written texts, and translate part of the text/s into English.

Task description

A response to specific questions, messages or instructions, extracting and using information requested, and translating part of the text/s into English.

Themes and topics

Due to the introduction of translation into the study design, there are three parts in Outcome 1, Unit 4. Students are required to translate part/s of the text/s into English, in addition to the Reading and Responding task. Most teachers covered all the three themes from the study design for setting the tasks. Topics included parental expectations of their children, holidays and sightseeing, sports, food types and cuisine, media, technology in daily life, the growing importance of tourism and occupations of the future etc.

Tasks

The tasks set by the teachers were clear and comprehensive although it was the first time that translation was introduced into the outcome. But some teachers chose material that was too complex or required high level of translation skills for the translation section. Some teachers just chose the materials for the translation without careful reference to the assessment criteria and thoughtful consideration of appropriateness for the purpose of assessment.

Assessment

Most teachers used descriptors from the *VCE Chinese Second Language/Chinese Second Language Advanced Assessment Handbook* or some developed their own criteria based on VCAA assessment criteria, in order to inform their judgment of student achievement. Some teachers, however, did not provide their students with any indication of how the task would be assessed.

Outcome 2

Respond critically to spoken and written texts which reflect aspects of the language and culture of the Chinese-speaking communities.

Task description

A 300–350-character informative, persuasive or evaluative written response, for example, report, comparison or review.

and

An interview of approximately four minutes on an issue related to the texts studied.

Themes and topics

The popular themes for these tasks are 'The Chinese-speaking Communities' and 'The Changing world'. Topics included festivals and customs, famous people, Chinese history and culture, schooling, lifestyles, technology in daily life and tourism.

Assessment

From the relatively small sample of work collected for audit, a very high percentage of teachers designed a good task for Part A (writing) of Outcome 2. Most teachers offered choice by setting a number of topics with different text types and writing styles for the writing task. They also provided task sheets that gave students all relevant details of the task including the requirement for each topic, the date of the task, time duration, permissible dictionaries for the task, and the marking criteria and VCAA descriptors.

As part of teaching and learning activities, most teachers set the task for Part B (interview) of Outcome 2 based on the student's topic for the detailed study. For the purpose of the audit, those teachers selected should submit all the details of the task for Part B. A few teachers, however, did not provide any detail of the task. Some teachers offered instructions about the way of conducting the task but omitted details of what was to be assessed, the marking criteria or descriptors for the task.

Teachers are again reminded about submitting details of each task for the audit, not just a cover page and the instruction sheet.