



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The oral component of the Dutch examination is divided into two parts: a seven-minute Conversation and an eight-minute Discussion of a Detailed Study. All students in 2008 were quite familiar with the assessment criteria in both sections. They were generally able to give extensive responses and advance the conversation, as well as provide opinions and additional information. The topic chosen for this year's discussion was 'The Netherlands are an emigration country again: The emigration wave from 2003 up to the present'. On the whole, students had researched their topic thoroughly and were able to speak about it confidently without needing to be prompted by assessors. Capable students demonstrated a sound knowledge of the topic, were able to expand on it with confidence and showed excellent linguistic skills. A few students were less able to carry the discussion forward and had not prepared adequately. Grammatical inaccuracies were most prevalent in the Discussion section. Students should be aware that merely reciting pre-learned material is not sufficient and that the conversation and discussion should be moved forward in a spontaneous manner.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The Conversation section consists of a seven-minute discussion of the student's personal world, including school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. Capable students demonstrated sound preparation and possessed a good knowledge of tenses and more complex grammatical structures, maintaining an easy pace without any unnatural pauses. They were able to go beyond the required response in Dutch and expand on a range of topics. Some weaker students, however, struggled with simple questions and were less able to advance the conversation. Other areas of weakness were the incorrect use of tenses, word order, gender and resorting to English words or anglicisms if a Dutch word was not known. There were also some weaknesses in pronunciation.

Section 2 – Discussion

'The Netherlands are an emigration country again: The emigration wave from 2003 up to the present' was a very good choice, especially as it gave students the opportunity to identify personally with the topic and express their opinions. Most students were enthusiastic about, and inspired by, the topic. The resources chosen were interesting and capable students were able to understand and expand on the links between the texts studied and the theme of the topic. Some students were able to expand in an interesting way on what they had learnt from their interviews. Other students found it difficult to relate relevant information from the texts studied to their topic, resulting in an inability to expand on their comments or provide opinions.

Generally, students' communicative competence was high in spite of a number of grammatical errors and, in some cases, a lack of more complex linguistic structures. Good eye contact, body language, appropriate intonation, skilful presentation and the use of more complex grammatical structures all contributed to the best performances.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students were quite familiar with the requirements of the listening, reading and writing sections of the paper and were able to express themselves in clear and concise Dutch. Some students produced outstanding work with relevant, creative and interesting responses. Some responses, however, lacked depth and sufficient detail. In Section 3, a number of students were not able to expand sufficiently on their chosen topic and their writing lacked grammatical accuracy. Students are reminded that they **must** adhere to the set word limits in Section 2 and Section 3. Please refer to the *VCE Dutch Study Design* for the requirements of the examination.

To improve their listening skills, students should try to listen to spoken Dutch in films, the news on SBS and other Dutch programs, or articles and newspapers on teacher approved Internet sites. To improve written skills, students should read Dutch texts as widely as possible and practise their language skills using previous examination papers. These papers are available on the VCAA website <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au>.



Leaving sufficient time to proofread student responses to the examination paper is highly recommended, as a number of careless grammatical errors can be picked up in this way.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Students were generally able to select and use the relevant information from the five spoken texts, but a number of students included too much irrelevant information in their responses. Some students failed to include relevant information from the texts in their answers. Students are advised to listen very carefully to the texts and take as many notes as possible in the space provided.

In Text 5 a number of students found it difficult to supply the four pieces of information required by the text or failed to supply the correct four pieces of information.

Some students demonstrated good grammatical competence and used more complex grammatical structures and a broad range of vocabulary in their responses. There were still many basic grammatical errors including gender, adjective inflection, sentence construction, word order and spelling.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

Even for author Remco Campert, it is a thin book/little book

Question 1b.

- skirt
- glasses
- she thinks they are sweet
- she thinks they are odd

Question 1c.

- the vacuum cleaner ('menacing thing')
- the cat named Red Harry ('the terror of the gardens')

Text 2

Question 2a.

- to attract a greater number of/more younger visitors
- more than 26 000 visitors came. Three quarters of the visitors were between 18–35 years of age

Question 2b.

Mr Muskens explained that:

- a museum night is not a good idea
- a museum should just show works of art without any gimmicks (for example, chips).

Text 3

Question 3a.

Elsie often does not tell the truth.

Question 3b.

- She has a test at school the day after tomorrow.
- She has to help her mother (with the cooking and the washing up) tonight.

Question 3c.

- flour
- brown sugar
- eggs

2008 Assessment Report



Question 3d.

If I do not help my mother 'again, for the umpteenth time...'

Question 3e.

- email Nico the recipe
- help to draw up amusing comments/notes for the other friends

Part B – Answer in Dutch

Text 4

Question 4a.

To inform students about an award that will be given to Joost van den Berg at lunchtime

Question 4b.

To sell Dutch chocolate letters for charity in December

Question 4c.

- he has too many orders to handle the sales himself
- he needs time to do his homework

Text 5

Question 5a.

A radio youth program

Question 5b.

The project 'School at its best'

Question 5c.

- students can give more input into matters involving them
- businesses where you may want to work later can make suggestions
- the website will show developments and facts
- you can see how well your school scores compare to other schools
- you can comment on which changes you would like

Section 2 – Reading and responding

In general, students were able to select and use the relevant information from the two reading texts. However, students did not always glean sufficient information from the texts in their answers. Some students did not supply sufficient answers, for instance, where two points were allocated to a question, two points were required from the text in the answer.

In Text 7, Question 7c., some students were not familiar with the English word 'exploited', and so did not realise that the answer was that the neighbour of the Anne Frank house was offering chestnuts for sale and planned to continue doing so.

Students are advised to read the questions a few times before attempting to answer them.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

Question 6a.

As he was unfamiliar with children's poetry

Question 6b.

As Komrij classified his poetry chronologically according to the poet's date of birth

Question 6c.

- it was frightening to observe how parents punished their children

2008 Assessment Report



- children were often treated harshly

Question 6d.

- children should enjoy poetry
- children should be able to understand poems
- children's poetry should have spirit
- children's poetry should have movement
- children love absurdities

Not all students listed four aspects of children's poetry that Komrij thinks are important.

Question 6e.

- he says the anthology is brilliant
- he strongly recommends this fantastic collection of poems to his audience

Text 7

Question 7a.

- the local Amsterdam council is in support of chopping down the tree
- the Tree Foundation and local residents are against the chopping down of the tree

Question 7b.

- even though the tree is diseased there is no need to chop it down
- the tree will not fall in a storm
- the tree has a life span of at least another five years

Question 7c.

- a neighbour of the Anne Frank house is offering chestnuts from the tree for sale
- he is planning to continue offering the chestnuts for sale

Question 7d.

- the tree has caused a lot of discussion
- the tree is mentioned a few times in Anne Frank's diary
- the tree has sentimental value because it is behind the Anne Frank house

Question 7e.

- the planting of another new young tree
- growing a tree from a cutting of the present tree

Part B – Answer in Dutch

The text type to be completed by students was a note in response to an email. Some students did not reply in note form and others did not adhere to the correct word limit of 150–200 words. It is imperative that students adhere to these requirements and they **must** use only the information from the text. Many students added too much extra information that was **not** contained in the text. All information for this written task must come from the text. Students must read the text and the question carefully before attempting to write a response.

There were many grammatical errors such as incorrect genders, plurals, adjective inflection, word order after subordinating conjunctions and verb and subject agreement. Some students were unable to demonstrate a broad range of vocabulary range and presented weak sentence structures.

Section 3 – Writing in Dutch

The written task is designed to assess students' ability to express ideas by creating an original piece of writing in 200–300 words. Of the four possible topics, Question 9 (a short story about Sinterklaas in bed with the flu) and Question 12 (a report evaluating the positive and negative aspects of computer games) were the most popular.

Most students adhered to the correct word limit and text type. Some students produced some creative and engaging writing which was interesting to read. A text type must be developed logically with a beginning, middle and conclusion.



Some students wrote well but unfortunately failed to adhere to the set topic. Please see the *VCE Dutch Study Design* for details of the main characteristics of each text type.

The most competent students maintained excellent control of the language and were able to apply more complex linguistic structures to their writing. They were also able to draw on a wide range of interesting vocabulary and authentic Dutch idioms. Most students, however, still need to concentrate on consolidating and revising grammar structures and spelling. If they wish to improve their written style, students should practise writing Dutch on a variety of themes and topics regularly. Students are advised to write a plan in Dutch of their chosen topic at the start of the examination and to allow time at the end of the examination to proofread their work.

Some grammatical errors included:

- genders; for example, *het (de) dag, deze (dit) briefje, het (de) haven, de (het) geld, het (de) sfeer, het (de) wereld, het (de) tijd*
- adjective inflection; for example, *een leuke (leuk) idee, een oude (oud) huis, lekkere (lekker) weer*
- correct past participle; for example, *gelezed (gelezen), ontvangd (ontvangen), gereed (gereden), gestuurt (gestuurd)*
- word order; for example, *morgen ik ga naar mijn werk (morgen ga ik naar mijn werk)*
- the difference between *en (and)* and *een (a, an)* as they are frequently confused with each other
- the difference between *na (after: na het eten)* and *naar (to: naar het station)*
- correct auxiliary of the verb in the past; for example, *ik ben (heb) gelachen, wij hebben (zijn) gegaan*
- personal pronouns and possessive adjectives; for example, *hij ziet jouw (jou), hij ziet jou (jouw) hond*
- *Niet een* becomes *geen* when a noun follows; for example, *ik heb geen auto* but *ik werk niet vandaag*
- common spelling errors; for example, *doorp (dorp), luek (leuk), autotje (autootje), zaal (zal), hoofd (hoofd), daarom (daarom), hep (heb), heft (heeft), well (wel), all (al), slaapen (slapen), better (beter), name (naam), verttelen (vertellen), grapig (grappig), snell (snel), will (wil), verkoopen (verkopen), daght (dacht), noiet (nooit), s'morgens ('s morgens), mischien (misschien), houd (houdt), neit (niet), steeds (steeds), zeen (zien), geaad (gehad), wandt (want), kwaamen (kwamen), sommes (soms), tog (toch), kadoetjes (cadeautjes), April (april), wanner (wanneer), gezeligheid (gezelligheid).*