2023 VCE Bengali written external assessment report

General comments

Students generally performed well in the 2023 VCE Bengali written exam and many of them completed all sections of the paper adequately.

In Section 1, Listening and responding, Parts A and B, most students demonstrated an adequate understanding of the listening texts. Responses that scored highly demonstrated a sound comprehension of the listening texts and a careful reading of the questions. In some cases, the grammar and vocabulary were of a good standard. In Section 2, Reading and responding, the responses for Part A and Part B questions generally ranged from average to above average. Some students demonstrated that they had the required skills not only to understand the context and specific information of the reading texts, but also to write the response in their own words using the correct format of the required text type. In general, responses in Bengali were not as good as responses in English.

Spelling was not an important consideration for answers in Section 1 Part B and Section 2 Part B where responses had to be in Bengali; however, words were frequently spelt incorrectly, and occasionally, it was difficult to work out what the intended word was.

In Section 3, there was a choice of three questions, one of which had to be answered. It was important for students to develop a response addressing the exact requirements of the writing style, text type, context and audience. Students who did not address these requirements did not score well.

Some students wrote on pages or spaces that should not be written on; these answers were not assessed.

In general, students preparing for the exam should focus on the key words in the questions and ensure that they address them in their response. Students need to consolidate their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, and develop a good understanding of the writing styles and text type features.

Specific information

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

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

Question 1

Any four of the following:

* it is a ragdoll cat
* blue eyes
* green collar
* white in colour with brown patches (mention of only white colour or brown patch accepted)
* responds to the name Mini
* likes to drink milk.

Most students answered this question well. However, the behavioural features (responding to the name Mini and drinking milk) were not always picked up by students.

Question 2a.

* The flowers generally live several years.
* The vegetable plants are usually seasonal, and they need to be planted anew each season.

This question was answered well by students.

Question 2b.

* Avi can spend quality time there while taking care of the garden.
* He can get physical exercise.
* The family gets fresh produce from the garden.

This question was also answered well by students.

Question 3a.

* Fenugreek
* Panch foron

This question was answered very well by students.

Question 3b.

* Using raw potato will take 20 minutes of cooking time.
* Boiled potato will reduce the cooking time to 10 minutes.

The answers to this question were average. Some students did not pick up the relevant difference in cooking with boiled potato.

Question 3c.

With luchi, or on its own.

This question was answered very well by students.

Part B – Listening and responding in Bengali

Question 4

Four of the following:

* বক্তার অনেক দিনের স্বপ্ন পূরণ হয়েছে নায়াগ্রা দেখে । (Their long-lasting dream was fulfilled by their visit.)
* জলপ্রপাতগুলি দৃষ্টিনন্দন ছিল । (The waterfalls were eye-catching.)
* এই প্রাকৃতিক সৌন্দর্য পৃথিবীতে বিরল । (This natural beauty is rare in the world.)
* এই অভিজ্ঞতা তিনি কখনও ভুলবেন না । (This is something they will never forget.)
* প্রচুর পরিমান জল উচ্চতা থেকে পড়ছে । (Massive amount of water falling from a high altitude.)
* পৃথিবীর সকল প্রান্ত থেকে লোকজন এই জলপ্রপাতগুলি দেখতে আসে । (People from all around the world visit to see these falls.)

The response was assessed on how well students showed general and specific understanding of text through identification and analysis of information, alongside conveying the information accurately and appropriately. The performance of the students was average on this question. This text had a few difficult words, and responses indicated a lack of understanding. Students are advised to consult their dictionaries as needed.

Question 5a.

পক্ষিরাজ কথাটির অর্থ পাখিদের রাজা। যেহেতু ডালিমকুমারের এই ঘোড়া পাখির মতো উড়তে পারত, তাই তাকে পক্ষিরাজ ঘোড়া বলা হতো। (The word ‘Pokkhiraj’ literally means the king of the birds. Since Dalimkumar’s horse could fly like the birds, it was called by that name.)

This question was answered well by students.

Question 5b.

* দৈত্যদের দেশে যাওয়া খুব কঠিন, কিন্তু ডালিমকুমার সেখানে যেতে পেরেছে । (In this story the country of the demons was very hard to travel to; Dalimkumar had the courage to go to this country.)
* দৈত্যরা ভয়ঙ্কর যোদ্ধা, কিন্তু ডালিমকুমার তাদের ভয় পায়নি । (The giants were ferocious warriors, but Dalimkumar did not fear them.)
* অনেক দৈত্যকে ডালিমকুমার একাই সাহসের সঙ্গে যুদ্ধে পরাজিত করেছে । (He fought single-handedly against a large number of demons to rescue the princess.)

From all of these we can understand that Dalimkumar was brave. This line was not necessary to earn marks.

Most students picked up the second and the third points from above, with some picking up the first point.

Question 6a.

* দৈনন্দিন ব্যবহারের অনেক জিনিসই প্লাস্টিক দিয়ে তৈরি । (Many objects in daily use are made of plastic.)
* অনেক ধরণের প্লাস্টিক আছে, যেমন শক্ত এবং নমনীয় । (There are many types of plastics, hard and flexible.)
* প্রায় সব প্লাস্টিকই ওজনে হালকা । (Almost all plastics are lightweight.)
* প্লাস্টিক বিদ্যুৎ অপরিবাহী । (Plastics are usually non-conductors of electricity.)

Students’ performance on this question was average.

Question 6b.

Environmentally friendly plastics help in reducing pollution in two ways:

* বার বার ব্যবহার করা যায় । (Some of these plastics can be recycled multiple times.)
* কিছু কিছু প্লাস্টিক মাটিতে বা পানিতে (পরিবেশের সাথে) সহজে মিশে যায় । (Some of these plastics decompose and are absorbed in the environment easily.)

Students’ performance in this question was also average.

Section 2

Part A – Reading and responding in English

Question 7a.

* She worked tirelessly with courage and perseverance.
* She started a school for Muslim girls.
* She educated many girls / taught in the school for 24 years.

Students generally answered this question well.

Question 7b.

* Begum Rokeya portrayed women as decision makers and leaders in many of her writings, which is inspirational and relevant even today because of the ideas and spirit in those writings.
* She envisaged the teamwork of people against sufferings in society in her writing; this is inspirational given the present-day situation of the sufferers.
* Despite some progress, many members of our society, particularly women, are deprived of rights even today; therefore, Begum Rokeya’s efforts and contributions are still relevant and inspirational.

This question was not answered well by students. A key point was the relevance and inspiration for ‘today’, requiring reference to the current situation.

Question 8a.

Any two of the following:

* business and governments still use them
* there are parts of the world where not everyone has access to internet and mobile phones
* for some people, and in some countries, the use of phones and internet is costly.

This question was answered reasonably well by students.

Question 8b.

* The internet has made personal letters less frequent, so there is less need for letter delivery.
* The internet has made online shopping possible, which in turn has created demand for parcel shipments.

Students’ responses to this question were average. Many students failed to pick up the point that the internet facilitated the process of online shopping, which increased online shopping and parcel delivery by post.

Part B – Reading and responding in Bengali

Question 9

This question required writing about 150 words in Bengali. In general, the standard was not satisfactory, although some students did produce a satisfactory response.

Some points that could be included are:

Advantages of AI:

* can understand instruction in plain language
* efficacy of tasks improves
* improvement of time management
* economical to do a household or office task
* can follow rules and drive cars (with some improvement).

Rebuttal of disadvantages of AI:

* data security can always be improved, and any other mode has security problems
* education systems can be made smarter to avoid unfairness
* unemployment increase is a usual complaint against new technology; it does not often materialise.

Section 3 – Writing in Bengali

Students were asked to answer one of three questions: an imaginary story (Question 10), an informal letter to a friend (Question 11), and a review of a movie/TV program (Question 12). Question 11 was attempted by many students; the other two were also attempted. In general, the sentence structures and vocabulary were not very satisfactory, except for a few students who did markedly well.

Some notable mistakes observed were in words written together (e.g. দেখাহয়েছে, দেখাহয়নি, কোথাথেকে, মনেহয়) and in punctuation, in particular the use of commas and full stops (দাঁড়ি).

Question 10

The story was about a time-machine. Few students attempted it, but those who did wrote reasonably well. Their imaginative writing included details of technical aspects as well as social interactions, depicting a realistic world.

Question 11

The letter was to include the description of a pleasant experience of visiting a tourist attraction. Some students scored highly in the letter-writing question; their writing included realistic descriptions of the places visited, and of the travel experience. Students maintained their focus on writing to a friend and structured the letter well.

Question 12

Very few students chose to write a review and generally the question was not well answered.