2021 NHT VCE Chinese First Language oral examination report

General comments

The NHT VCE Chinese First Language oral examination assesses students’ knowledge and skills in using spoken language. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the [VCE Chinese First Language examinations webpage](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/NHT-past-exams/Pages/NHT-past-exams.aspx)*.* The examination has two sections – a presentation of approximately 5 minutes (which includes a short introduction of no more than one minute) and a discussion of approximately 5 minutes.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

* students may be asked a variety of questions with varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one students anticipate
* assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
* assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
* normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Details of the assessment criteria and descriptors are published on the VCAA website. It is important that all teachers and students be familiar with the criteria and descriptors and that students use them as part of their examination preparation. This will help students to engage in a lively and interesting exchange with assessors. Although there are similarities between the assessment criteria for the presentation and discussion sections of the examination, the criteria assess two very different aspects of performance. Students who are well prepared are generally able to demonstrate their abilities and proficiency in the language.

The majority of students demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of this examination and VCAA examination procedure and had prepared well.

Generally, students performed better in their Presentation section than in the Discussion section. However, a small group of students gave a presentation that did not embody a clear stance on the issue selected, relate clearly to the sub-topic chosen for detailed study, or be supported be evidence. A considerable number of students did not seem to have prepared for the discussion section adequately.

Some common misunderstanding in students' preparation includes:

* the subtopic did not allow for the selection of a clear stance on an issue
* lack of understanding of definition of key words and key concepts
* lack of research and preparation on the selected materials,
* lack of basic understanding and knowledge about the subtopic
* no literary work as a basis, only a few words from celebrities
* there is no argument in the speech, only examples withdrawn from texts
* no clear logical relationship between the sub-topic and supporting evidence.

Specific information

Section 1 – Presentation

Following a short introduction of no more than one minute, the student will present on a subtopic selected from the topic ‘Language and culture through literature and the arts’, using supporting objects and/or cue cards if they wish. The presentation should last no longer than four minutes. The presentation should include a clear stance on the issue selected, relate clearly to the subtopic chosen for detailed study and be supported by evidence. The student will be expected to refer to texts studied.

The characteristics of high-scoring performances:

* demonstrated a thorough research of the detailed study subtopic and an excellent understanding of the aspects chosen and the texts studied
* included a one-minute introduction of the detailed study and a four-minute presentation. The full structure of four-minute presentation included introduction, body and conclusion
* presented a fluent, well-timed presentation with an impressive range of highly relevant information, the content of the presentation was highly logical
* demonstrated an excellent control of style and register, using an extensive range of expressions with excellent pronunciation, intonation and tempo
* presented a high level of confidence.

The characteristics of low-scoring performances:

* did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the subtopic and the texts chosen
* did not show a good level of preparation
* did not present a clear stance and used incorrect style
* lacked depth of ideas/opinions
* lacked logic between opinions and the supporting evidence/samples
* lacked sufficient background knowledge of the subtopic chosen
* an inability to deliver the speech in one piece, made frequent hesitations and lengthy gaps
* unable to finish the presentation within four minutes or well under four minutes.

Suggestions for students:

* Carefully select literary works and find appropriate sources that really support arguments.
* Arguments must be logical.
* Avoid incomprehensible vocabulary.

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the presentation, the student will discuss aspects of the selected issue with the assessors and should be prepared to clarify the points presented.

The characteristics of high-scoring performances:

* demonstrated a thorough research of the detailed study subtopic and an excellent understanding of the aspects chosen and the texts studied
* demonstrated the ability to take the initiative, to advance the exchange, and to elaborate
* demonstrated the ability to defend their own stance with evidence from texts studied
* responded to questions logically and confidently with a range of highly relevant information
* demonstrated the ability to handle challenging questions ranging beyond the issue selected.

The characteristics of low-scoring performances:

* the subtopic chosen lacked strong arguments
* did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the subtopic and the texts chosen
* did not show evidence of preparation
* lacked sufficient background knowledge of the subtopic and texts chosen
* relied on rote learning or mini speeches
* contradicted responses
* responded without understanding the questions and gave irrelevant answers.

Suggestions for students:

* be familiar with the selected texts and materials
* add depth into detailed research.