

2021 VCE Hebrew written external assessment report

General comments

Students performed extremely well in Hebrew this year, which showed they were well prepared overall for the written examination.

Of all the skills required for this written examination – listening comprehension, reading comprehension, a response to a given text and expressing ideas through the creation of an original text in Hebrew – students demonstrated a good ability to understand the language and apply it. They were attentive to its nuances, became at home in the language and were creative in the use of the language.

However, at times, some students did not pay enough attention to the details and requirements of each question and task.

Students should ensure they read the question and the requirements of each task carefully so that their answers are accurate and relevant.

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: Listening and responding

In this section, students who answered the question directly and used the information they heard in a logical manner scored highly.

Students are reminded to ensure the information they absorb shows its relevance to the question.

Students found Questions 4 to 6 more challenging. These questions required clearly worded responses.

Part A

Text 1

Question 1

The correct answer was flexible activity hours (limited time) and any three of (limited budget):

- group training sessions are cheaper
- running and walking groups free of charge
- health and lifestyle coaches / lectures at no additional cost
- discounted prices on Friday mornings.

Responses that scored highly did not merely repeat the circumstances mentioned in the text but detailed what suited Ben due to those circumstances.

Text 2

Question 2

Mobile phone component	Presenter's recommendation
The screen	A small screen is preferable to hold in your hand / to fit in your pocket
The camera	For a precise and professional photo, you will need an upgraded camera
The battery	It's worthwhile paying more in order to have a strong and reliable battery

Students who understood from the structure of the table that they must distinguish clearly between a component of the phone and the recommendation by the speaker achieved a higher score.

Text 3

Question 3

A correct response included five of the following:

- comfortable clothes make us more beautiful
- unisex clothing for men and women
- using recycled clothes / era of 'buy, wear, throw out' is over
- fashion is now affordable for all pockets / cheaper clothes
- allows room for personal taste / fashion belongs to everyone.

Most students performed well in this question.

Part B

Text 4

Question 4

Relevant answers may include:

- לקום מוקדם בבוקר
- לצפות בצפורים במשך 10 דקות
- להיות מצוייד / להשתמש במשקפת / או במדריך-צפורים
- לאסוף מידע / להעלות יישומון מתאים לטלפון הנייד / לשלוח לאתר
- to get up early in the morning
- to watch the birds for 10 minutes
- to be equipped / to use binoculars or guidebook for birds
- to collect bird data / to upload the appropriate app on mobile phone / to send to the site.

Responses that scored highly demonstrated understanding of the text heard and were worded in precise Hebrew. Responses that included single words instead of clear sentences did not gain any marks. For example, 'to use a telescope or a bird guide book' was the correct answer. 'A telescope' or 'a book' was an incorrect answer.

Text 5

Question 5

Relevant answers may include five of the following.

טבע:

- האוויר במדבר בלילה נעים ונקי
- השמיים במדבר בלילה צלולים ובהירים
- אור הכוכבים נקי ובלתי-מזוהם
- מקום אידיאלי ממנו אפשר לצפות ב'מטר המטאורים' / 'אבק כוכבים'

אדם:

- תנאים נוחים: מזרונים / אירוח: מדורה ומרשמלו
- שימוש בטלסקופים / הדרכה מקצועית

Nature:

- The desert air at night is pleasant and clean.
- The desert sky at night is clear and bright.
- The light of the stars is clean and unpolluted.
- An ideal place to observe the 'meteor shower' / experience 'stardust'.

Man:

- comfortable conditions; mattresses / hospitality; campfire and marshmallow
- the use of telescopes / professional guides.

Most of the responses included the contribution of both nature and human activity to this special experience. Responses that did not include precise descriptions of the air, the sky and the stars were not awarded full marks.

Text 6

Question 6

Relevant answers may include:

- ציון יום / שבוע השפה העברית
- שמירת המורשת של א. בן-יהודה
- ייסוד 'האקדמיה ללשון העברית'
- פעילויות / רעיונות יצירתיים לקידום השימוש בשפה כמו כרזות ברכבת הקלה וכתובת ביטויים על קרטוני החלב
- מעורבות הציבור / עידוד הציבור להביע דעתו / לבחור במילים האהובות ביותר
- יחס רגשי אל השפה / האנשה של השפה / אהבה לשפה
- celebration of Hebrew Language Day / Week
- maintain legacy of Eliezer Ben Yehudah
- the establishment of the Academy of the Hebrew Language
- promotion activities / creative ideas such as railway posters, milk cartons
- public involvement / encourage the public to express an opinion / to vote for the most favourite words
- humanisation of the language / emotional attitude toward the language / love for their language.

Students were required to prove their ability to analyse the text that they heard in order to glean from it the causes that affected the development of the language.

Section 2: Reading and responding

In this section (Texts 7 and 8), higher scores were achieved when answers were based on the text and students demonstrated that they understood the text.

Part A

Text 7

Question 7

Relevant answer(s) were:

- Because the trees from which the Judean Date grew, Methuselah and Hannah, developed from kernels that were dormant for 2000 years.
- The discovery of additional date seeds in a similar location and age enabled researchers to cultivate the Judean Date.
- Because it was precisely the difficult desert conditions (heat and dryness) that resulted in their survival.
- Because the researchers in the Arava were devoted to their task and did not give up.
- Because the story of 'Tamar Yehudah' proves that the extinction of plant species can be prevented despite climate change in the world.

Text 8

Question 8

Relevant answers were:

- Bilingualism enriches the language (according to research).
- Those who grew up as bilingual babies can acquire a new language more easily.
- They excel in additional cognitive abilities.
- A bilingual child integrates into their surroundings without losing connection or becoming distant from their family heritage.
- A child who grew up bilingual will have more economic and professional opportunities in their future.
- Whoever grew up as bilingual finds their identity in both of the languages they grew up with.

Part B

Text 9

Question 9

This question required students to write an email to the general manager of the Apartment Towers expressing their concerns about the misleading nature of the advertisement.

Suggested points students may have included were:

- מגורים במגדל רב-קומתי לא בהכרח יוצרים קשרי-ידידות / יכולים לגרום לבדידות
- הרעש הטבעי של השכונה יוחלף ברעש תנועת המכוניות בעיר
- עבודה בגינה היא תחביב מעולה ודרך מצויינת לפעילות גופנית
- פעילות ספורטיבית בחוץ באוויר הפתוח, בריאה יותר מפעילות ספורטיבית באוויר הממוחזר שבמכון הכושר.
- שיפוץ בתים הוא בעל חשיבות בשמירה על המורשת שלנו
- Living in a multi-storey apartment building does not necessarily create friendships / it can be very isolating.
- Natural noise of the suburbs will be replaced by noise of inner-city traffic.
- Gardening is a great hobby and a great form of exercise.
- Outdoor sporting activities in fresh air is much healthier than the synthetic/recycled air of gyms.
- Renovating homes is important in preserving our heritage.

Responses that scored highly referenced and developed points in the text, complied with the required text type (email) and paid attention to the details of the question. Responses that diverted from the text substantially and based their email on reasons not mentioned in the prompt failed to demonstrate an understanding of the text and the requirements of the task.

Section 3: Writing in Hebrew

Question 10

Students were required to write an article for the school newspaper describing their two weeks of work experience at a logistics centre that receives and sends parcels.

Suggested points students may have included were:

- איזה תפקיד קיבלו בעבודה
 - מטרות התנסות התלמידים בעבודה: מה הן והאם הושגו
 - תיאור המקום, האנשים, חוויות מיוחדות
 - איך השתלבו בעבודה
 - 'סיפורים' על חבילות מסוימות
- the role they have at work
 - work objectives for the students: what they are, and whether they were achieved
 - a description of the place, the people, special experiences
 - how they integrated into the work
 - stories about certain packages.

Students who produced a response that was the correct structure and style of a newspaper article, concentrated on describing the work they experienced, and expressed themselves in clear and appropriate Hebrew achieved higher scores. Responses that focused on describing their social connections during the two weeks missed the main point of the task and did not score as well.

Question 11

Students were required to write a formal letter to the chairperson of the Maccabiah Games in which they asked to represent the Jewish community in Australia at the Maccabiah Games in a new sport.

Suggested points students may have included were:

- תיאור / הגדרה של ענף הספורט החדש
 - מהי חשיבותו
 - כיצד יתרום להצלחת משחקי המכביה
 - חשיבות השתתפות משלחת של הקהילה היהודית מאוסטרליה במכביה
 - המכביה כאירוע מגשר
 - מקומו של הספורט בקהילה
- a description/definition of the new sport
 - its significance
 - how it will contribute to the success of the Maccabiah Games
 - the importance (significance) of the participation of the Jewish community delegation in Australia in the Maccabiah Games
 - the Maccabiah as a connecting event
 - the position of the sport in the community.

Students who understood the meaning of representing the community in Australia, how to word a formal and persuasive letter, and who emphasised the special contribution of the new sport to the Maccabiah Games produced excellent pieces of writing that were further enhanced when original ideas were incorporated.

Responses that described sporting activities and a passion for a particular sport failed to understand the task and did not score as well.

Question 12

Students were required to write an imaginative story about mystery doors that open with the help of three keys the writers found.

The story:

- הסיפור יכלול עלילה, דמויות, מקום
- הסיפור יכול להיות מטאפורי
- יש להקפיד על כתיבת סיפור מקורי
- שפה עשירה בתיאורים היוצרים אפקט דמיוני, עניין ומתח, משפטים מגוונים
- דיוק בתיאור הדלתות, המפתחות ותפקידיהם בסיפור

- will include plot, characters, place
- could be written as an analogy
- must comply with the requirement that it be an original story
- should be rich in descriptive language that creates an imaginative effect, interest and tension, varied sentences
- should demonstrate accuracy in describing the doors, the keys and their role in the story.

The students who chose to challenge themselves with this topic submitted original, imaginative, interesting and fascinating stories. Their extended responses were written in a descriptive style and with rich language. The responses were excellent. Responses that were not original and did not adhere to the style of an imaginative story did not achieve high scores.