

2019 VCE Russian written examination report

General comments

Many students responded well to all sections of the 2019 VCE Russian written examination.

In Section 1, students generally demonstrated the ability to understand general and specific aspects of the texts by identifying and analysing information and conveying the information accurately.

In Section 2, students responded to most of the information, ideas and opinions in the texts. They organised information and ideas to meet the requirements of the tasks. Generally, students understood the vocabulary and sentence structure, but they should be encouraged to practise in order to deepen their understanding of vocabulary and sentence structure.

In Section 3, students demonstrated some breadth and depth in the development of information, ideas and opinions, and satisfactory knowledge of vocabulary, tense, mood, sentence structure and different genres.

Specific information

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

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1

- Mum is annoyed / not in a good mood.
- The son has not started the dishwasher / has not done his chore.
- The son has not finished his school assignment.
- He asked her at the wrong time / for money / because she has to go to her 'favourite' job / can't find a clean cup.

Not all students were able to discern that the mother was angry.

Text 2

Question 2

- A plastic straw stays in the earth or the ocean for hundreds of years.

- A vast number of straws are used in Australia and the rest of the world.
- A straw is difficult to recycle due to its small size.
- Their size and shape make straws extremely dangerous for marine creatures and birds.
- They are more harmful than other plastic rubbish due to their shape and size.

Some students added alternative straws as one of the reasons, and many students compared different types of plastic. Students need to be attentive when reading the questions so that their answers are relevant.

Text 3

Question 3a.

What item does the sales assistant recommend?	What arguments does the sales assistant use in favour of this recommendation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a blue suit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all schoolchildren buy them • it fits the customer ideally / it's a slim cut / sits perfectly / is tailored for you • it's fashionable

Question 3b.

- It is up to the customer to choose which suit to buy / to try on.
- It is up to the customer to decide whether to go to other stores or not.

Very few students understood the meaning of the expression *хозяин барин* and the two uses of the expression.

Part B – Answer in Russian

Text 4

Question 4a.

The story told at the beginning of the text is funny because:

- *Обезьяна высокого мнения о себе / считает себя и красивой, и умной, хотя это спорно, особенно её красота.* (The monkey has a high opinion of itself / thinks that it's both beautiful and smart. However, for the reader, it's doubtful, because it appears neither smart nor beautiful.)

Question 4b.

Two examples from the text that explain what makes a successful storyteller are:

- *История должна быть рассказана к месту* (A story should be told at the right time in conversation.)
- *Анекдот рассказывается с определённой интонацией, мимикой, жестами и паузами.* (A storyteller has to use proper intonation, facial expressions, gestures and pauses.)

Not all students understood the meaning of the anecdote.

Text 5

Question 5a.

The benefits of a cat's purr are:

- *Мурлыканье расслабляет и успокаивает (человека) (лечит – неправильный ответ, т.к. не относится к мурлыканью. Удовольствие и любовь к хозяину – неправильный ответ, это эмоция, которую выражает кошка, а не эффект от мурлыканья).* (Purring relaxes and soothes [people].)
- *Мурлыканье способствует заживлению ран и обезболиванию (кошек).* (Purring heals and relieves pain [for cats]).

In the first part of the answer, the option 'treats' is not correct, because it does not apply to purring. The answer 'pleasure and love for the owner' is also incorrect, because these are cats' emotions, not the effect of purring.

Question 5b.

Domestic and wild cats are different because:

- *Домашние кошки могут мурлыкать, а дикие – нет.* (Domestic cats can purr, wild cats can't.)
- *У диких кошек на подъязычных косточках располагаются хрящи, которые не дают голосовым связкам вибрировать. У домашних кошек хрящей нет.* (Wild cats have cartilage on their hyoid bones that prevents the vocal cords from vibrating. Domestic cats have no cartilage.)

Most students successfully answered this question.

Text 6

Question 6

Students were asked to write a paragraph that described the positive changes brought about by new lighting in some metro stations and named each of the metro stations.

It appeared that the task was not understood by many students. Some students failed to organise the information into a paragraph, using note form instead. Some overlooked the request to write only about positive changes. Some students did not emphasise lighting.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 7

Question 7a.

Two instances when the Suvaro-Chuvash nation was at its most powerful were:

- when it was an empire with the Huns, when ruled by Attila
- when it founded powerful Volga Bulgaria.

Question 7b.

Four areas in which the Suvaro-Chuvash nation settled were:

- Caucasus
- Europe
- Caucasus and North of Volga
- the forests of the right banks of the Volga river.

Most students were unable to name four areas and seemed to find the text quite challenging.

Text 8

Question 8

The advantages of suborbital flights compared to flights that took place at the beginning of the 21st century included:

- They are regular and less expensive.
- The period of weightlessness is shorter and does not affect health as much.
- They do not require preliminary preparation.
- They are less inconvenient because they require shorter breaks from family and work/home.

Many students supplied comparisons but they needed to mention only advantages.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part B – Answer in Russian

Text 9

Question 9

Students were asked to write an informative interview in which they and a human resources specialist discussed the future of foreign language teachers, doctors and drivers, for publication in a school newspaper.

Responses could have included the following points:

- *должна быть соблюдена форма информационного интервью, в котором студент ведёт беседу со специалистом. Студент, в основном, задаёт наводящие вопросы, развивающие дискуссию. Специалист предоставляет информацию, делает прогнозы, приводит примеры. Студент соглашается или возражает собеседнику, приводя свои доводы.* (The form of an informative interview should be maintained. A student is leading a discussion with a specialist. The student mainly asks questions, advances the discussion. The specialist provides information, gives examples and makes predictions. The student agrees or disagrees with the interviewee, providing their arguments.)
- *Вежливая форма обращения.* (Polite form of address.)
- *Обсуждаются 3 заявленные профессии с точки зрения возможности замены человека роботом. Приводятся аргументы за и против, используя данные из текста о преимуществах роботов (точность, аккуратность, быстрота) и человека (нестандартность мышления, индивидуальный подход).* (Three professions are being discussed, whether people will be replaced by robots or not. The student refers to the text analysing the advantages of robots (accuracy, attention to detail, quick reaction) and of people (creative thinking, individual approach).)

Many students didn't paraphrase the stimulus text. Some responded with a speech instead of an interview. The opinions were not always supported with relevant examples.

Section 3 – Writing in Russian

For this section, students are advised to practise recognising different types of texts and take care to thoroughly read and understand what they are being asked to do. Any proverbs or Russian phrases need to be written accurately.

Question 10

Students were asked to imagine that they are a pagan creature that occupies every house and looks after it, and can tell of events that have happened in a house. Many students attempted this diary task and many responded with interesting and imaginative diary entries. Some students did not appear to understand what Domovoi is and his role in the household.

Question 11

Students were asked to write a blog entry for fellow students in which they provided information about resources and evaluated the resources. The blog needed to be informative, evaluative and personal. This task was not popular with students. Only a few students attempted the task.

Question 12

Students were asked to write a persuasive letter to their elderly aunt. Many students chose this question as it appeared they felt comfortable with the letter form. Many students only partially completed the task: while they wrote well in persuading the aunt, they did not successfully convey how she could convince the young brother to house-sit.