



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students were well prepared for the Conversation section of the 2008 examination and were able to converse effectively with the assessors. Students needed to be better prepared to use modern standard Arabic and to use the language spontaneously in unrehearsed situations. Well-prepared students were able to link effectively with assessors. Teachers are reminded of the need to prepare their students well for the discussion section of the oral examination. Modern standard Arabic is used in this examination.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students performed reasonably well in the Conversation section of the examination. They were able to speak confidently about areas of their personal world such as school, home life, family and friends, future aspirations and leisure activities. Students must not rely only on pre-prepared statements for this section of the examination and need to be aware that their response should link directly with the assessors' questions. Students who were less well prepared found it difficult to extend beyond 'yes' or 'no' answers and were unable to answer in more detail.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students are expected to have studied their Detailed Study topic and to have been exposed to a number of different resources on which they could draw for the discussion. This was not always done successfully. Some topics were beyond the language skills of some students. Please refer to the *VCE Arabic Study Design* for information regarding the Detailed Study and the oral examination.

Some sub-topics studied in 2008 included:

- the role women in Arabic society
- the Arabic family in Australia
- the history of Arabic films
- the Arabic language
- popular Arabic writers.

Students needed to be more familiar with the structure and requirements of the Discussion section. The *VCE Arabic Study Design* recommends that approximately 15 hours of scheduled class time be devoted to the Detailed Study. A range of resources should also be used.

Written component

A large number of students produced excellent pieces of writing in the written component of the examination. However, students need to be aware of how to use verbs appropriately as some students used present, past and future tenses in the same sentence.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

In this section, students are required to listen to texts and to respond to number of questions and it is important that students understand the requirements of this section. Students need to be prepared to respond to questions relating to the content, purpose and audience of the text and aspects of the language of the text.

Most students attempted all questions and generally completed the task in the correct language. Some weaknesses in the language were evident, the most common being inaccurate sentence structures and tenses. Overall, most responses were of a satisfactory linguistic level.

It is important for teachers to stress to students that they must read through the questions very carefully and highlight the key words. It is also important that students practise note-taking skills.

2008 Assessment Report



Question 1

Spain

Question 2

He imitated bird flight by making himself feathered wings and launching himself from a mountain top.

Question 3

- continue studying flying
- consider adding a bird's tail to the flying machine apparatus

Question 4

Two of:

- measuring time
- clock making
- glass making.

Question 5

- the venue of the fair: community town hall
- time: 8.00 am–9.00 pm
- date: 10–18 November
- cost: ranged from \$3–\$50

Question 6

- opens the mind to new ideas
- promotes good relationships
- allows for the acquisition of persuasive skills

Question 7

Competitiveness with prizes

Question 8

He specialises in child development.

Question 9

Physical exercise is very important for the intellectual development of children because it puts an end to idleness and inactivity for both the soul and the body and it stimulates the intellect.

Question 10

Dr Salim mentions the importance of healthy nutrition.

Question 11

Physical activities help students to prosper, improve their endurance, give them a sense of responsibility, courage, initiative and a cooperative spirit. These are all important qualities which help students to achieve success in their academic and working lives.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Some students had difficulty selecting the correct information from the two texts. The texts must be read carefully and unfamiliar or difficult words can be noted as the students read. Students should read each text more than once in order to establish the overall meaning. Students are encouraged to make wise use of the time allocated for the whole of the examination.

Text 4

Question 12

- south of the capital Amman in Jordan
- it is situated among the old, narrow gorges

2008 Assessment Report



Question 13

When Petra was attached to the Roman Empire the Romans took control of its trade routes, which resulted in the city's quick decline. It was later excavated.

Question 14

In 1812, a Swiss adventurer called Johann Burckhart convinced his Bedouin guide to take him to the site of the lost city. In 1924, Jordanian and foreign teams began to excavate in search of the city.

Question 15

- the fact that it was carved out of rock
- its entry passage was 1200 metres long and 100 metres high
- its unique network of dams and canals

Question 16

The Treasury of Petra features in an Indiana Jones movie.

Question 17

Student responses could have included:

- religious life in temples, monasteries and tombs
- comfortable daily life in dwellings and public baths
- a road system and good water supply provided by dams and canals
- cultural and artistic interest in theatres, rock paintings, fine architecture
- trade routes to the outside world.

Part B – Reading and responding

Question 18

Students needed to include the following points, linking cause and effect.

Land

- melting ice
- storms due to evaporation
- shrinkage of lands
- destruction of coral reefs
- rise in temperature

Inhabitants

- extinction of flora
- extinction of fauna
- displacement of people
- shortage of water
- rampant disease

Section 3 – Writing in Arabic

Almost all students attempted this section. Some students produced excellent pieces, structuring their writing successfully with a beginning, sequenced ideas and an appropriate conclusion. Most students wrote in the appropriate text type, but common errors included incorrect vocabulary, incorrect linking of sentences and errors in grammatical structure.

Question 19

Students were required to write the script for a speech to inform parents of two major problems facing young people today, suggesting possible solutions.

2008 Assessment Report



Question 20

Students were given the following scenario 'You have a pet horse named Magic. One morning it started speaking your language'. Students needed to write an imaginative story telling how this affected their family life.

Question 21

Students were required to write a review of a film for Stars Magazine, evaluating the positive and the negative aspects of the film.

Question 22

Students needed to write an informal letter persuading an Arabic acquaintance, who is planning to do a university course in Australia, to come to their capital city.

Question 23

Students were given the following scenario 'You have just returned from a holiday'. In their personal journal students were required to write about their experience explaining why this holiday was unforgettable.