

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

A small cohort presented for the Armenian oral examination in 2010. In general, students were well prepared for the examination, maintaining a high standard. Students were generally familiar and confident with the format of both the Conversation and the Discussion.

The assessors were pleased to see vocabulary, fluency and expression at a high standard. Students were able to engage the assessors using the correct register and appropriate constructs, with only the occasional instance of nerves hindering otherwise good-quality performances.

Discussion themes were well prepared. There was evidence of substantial research in all topics studied in this section. The assessors were impressed with the use of rich vocabulary and the prevalence of responses that were both logical and spontaneous.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

A wide range of topics were covered in the Conversation, including students' personal background, current studies, family structure, career aspirations, hobbies, travel plans or experiences, part-time employment and future plans. Students were well prepared in describing their personal situation, schooling and subject selections as well as recreational activities and entertainment pursuits. Most students engaged the assessors confidently. Responses were direct, highly relevant and spontaneous with a strong sense of self-awareness and reflection.

Students used an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions accurately and appropriately. Sentence structure, pronunciation, register and expression were very good, and assessors expressed satisfaction with the depth, breadth and complexity of the conversation, especially in response to open questions. Students demonstrated a good standard of grammar and used the correct tense and appropriate cases in sentence construction.

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics used for the Discussion included the Armenian Genocide and the consequent growth of the Diaspora, the Armenian-speaking communities in Singapore and Australia including the history of the phases of migration, the All Armenian Fund, the Pan Armenian games and the links between Armenia and the Diaspora. Students were very well prepared and had mastered their chosen topic for this part of the examination. Extensive research was evident with details of resources and references readily incorporated into the discussion. Students fielded open follow-up questions well. The ensuing discussion flowed comfortably and students demonstrated a capacity to engage the assessors by using appropriate responses. Students also influenced the direction of the discussion by clarifying or elaborating their answers.

Most students demonstrated good expression and sentence construction. Students demonstrated an affinity with the topic area and had mastered most of the subject matter. This was evidenced by the excellent answers given to questions, both in the content and quality of language used, which could not all have been rehearsed. Probing questions were handled spontaneously, logically and linguistically correctly. It was only in very rare instances that some students borrowed a non-Armenian word to gather their thoughts or to maintain continuity of the discussion.

The assessors were pleased that the culmination of many years of schooling in the language was evident in the quality of the performances. This was attributed to dedication in studying the language and using it regularly at a high standard outside the classroom, especially at home and with friends. Students are to be commended on their preparation and performance.