



2009 LOTE: Auslan GA 3: Interactive sign examination

Interactive Sign Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The interactive sign examination assesses students' ability to communicate in Auslan and has two sections: Conversation and Discussion, and Presentation and Response. Students who had thoroughly prepared were able to communicate successfully and effectively. It is important that students are familiar with both the specific requirements of this task and the language associated with it. Students should familiarise themselves with the *VCE Auslan Study Design* for the grammar and language requirements appropriate for this level. It is imperative that students at Year 12 level are able to use the set grammar as stipulated in the study design in order to effectively meet the criteria for this assessment.

In 2009 students performed well in the interactive sign examination. Students who were well prepared were able to communicate with confidence and advance the exchange effectively with the assessors. It was evident that teachers had used the procedural video in preparing students for the exam. Conversely, students who were less well prepared found the task more difficult.

Many students finger-spelled too many very basic signs in this year's examination.

Section 1 – Conversation and Discussion

Students were required to converse about their personal world (including family, schooling, future aspirations, hobbies, interests and work).

Students who performed very well in this section were thoroughly prepared and able to link well with the assessors. They needed minimal support to communicate their ideas and information related to their personal world. These students presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas in a logical and clear manner, using reasons and examples to advance to the conversation. These students were also able to communicate using an excellent range of vocabulary and grammar that was appropriate to the context and task.

It was also noted that some students had not prepared well and therefore lacked the skills needed to adequately meet the criteria for this examination. They were not able to link with the assessor and relied on rote-learned information for their conversation. These students could not advance the conversation when interrupted by the assessor. Their lack of preparation meant that these students experienced difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas and needed frequent support from the assessor. Students who performed poorly in this section displayed a limited range of structures and vocabulary. They frequently responded to questions with a single sign answer.

Students need to be reminded that they:

- must remember to sign their student number in Auslan
- are required to sign their student number as soon as they are seated
- must not sign their name
- must **not** reveal their own name when describing their family or the names of family members, the school they attend or their teachers' names
- should not ask the assessor questions about his or her family
- should not overuse rhetorical questions
- need to familiarise themselves with all components of the examination and the examination criteria used for assessment
- must use the correct form of address when signing with the assessor at the start and end of the exam.

Teachers need to teach students:

- how to use 'enumeration' correctly when listing family members (there was some phonologically incorrect use of movement)
- common finger-spelled words such as 'so', 'do', 'but', 'too', 'it', etc., as this is part of the Auslan vocabulary
- not to look at the marking assessors when signing and to interact only with the assessor conducting the exam
- the correct finger-spelling orientation
- to use culturally appropriate language behaviour to:
 - maintain an interactive dialogue



- correct mistakes naturally
- use fillers and facial expressions.

Students who did not perform well:

- had problems in reading/understanding the assessor's question 'what-do?' They also had problems understanding the finger-spelled sign for 'do' and asked several times for it to be repeated
- had difficulty signing 'age' numbers – most were not clearly defined and were quite sloppy
- had difficulty understanding the assessors' finger-spelling orientation
- had problems with read-back in finger spelling
- had problems linking with the assessor
- lacked preparation
- had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas and needed frequent support from the assessor
- had a limited range of structure and vocabulary
- rote-learned information for their conversation
- were unable to sustain a simple conversation.

Section 2 – Presentation and Response

Following the informal Conversation and Discussion, the student should indicate to the assessor(s) the topic chosen for Presentation and Response from the student's area of interest.

Students may support the Presentation (three minutes) and Response (five minutes) with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps. Notes and cue cards are not permitted. Upon completion of the Presentation, the student should respond to questions raised on the presentation by assessors. Note: in South Australia, the in-depth study forms the basis of the Presentation and Discussion.

The focus of this discussion is to explore aspects of language and culture.

Students are given three minutes to clearly and briefly introduce the presentation. Some students assumed that they would be allowed to present an extended monologue of their topic and were surprised when the assessor interacted with them.

The choice of topic was often an important factor in determining students' success in the Response section. Topics needed to be broad enough to allow for a discussion, but not too difficult in content and vocabulary requirements. Students need to select topics that they have researched thoroughly or topics for which they already have an in-depth knowledge. The topic should be one with which they feel comfortable discussing and presenting within the boundaries of their current language abilities. When selecting the topic, it is advisable to avoid topics covered in the Conversation section, as many students merely repeated what had already been covered. If the topic studied is related to a theme covered in the Conversation, then it is important to provide a clearly different focus. Students should choose topics that are **relevant** to them and their life experiences, as students who did this performed well.

Students are expected to have a wide range of information to discuss. Students who devoted adequate time to their topic were able to effectively support and elaborate on their ideas, information and opinions while referring to the topic studied.

2009 saw a big improvement in the use of classifiers, role shift, colloquialisms and use of space.

When presenting a title of a book or movie, students should be aware that it is not necessary to sign 'next' between each word, for example, 'the' ('next') 'red' ('next') 'house'.

A few students brought objects/materials to support their presentation but forgot to use them with the assessor. Students need to be able to cross-link their resources in order to give some depth to the discussion.

Sign Comprehension and Sign Production Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students performed well in the Auslan Sign Comprehension and Sign Production Examination in 2009.

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Teachers should advise students that it is preferable to concentrate on **one** recording of their work. Students must also be instructed to label their response with their student number and either formal or informal.

Students sitting the Auslan examination need to be familiar with all aspects of the paper. They must make effective use of the 10 minutes of reading/viewing time in order to be fully aware of the requirements of each task. During the reading/viewing time they can access their dictionary if necessary. When reading the task questions, students should carefully refer to both the DVD and the hard copy of the exam paper to ensure that they have accurately understood the questions. Students are reminded that viewing time is the same as reading time and no writing is permitted during this time.

Once again it was noted that some students lacked the ability to provide succinct responses to the questions, instead giving responses that went beyond the required answers. This weakened their responses and demonstrated a lack of comprehension skills. Students need to practise effective dictionary skills during the year so that the dictionary becomes a valuable tool in the examination.

Students must:

- attend the **practice session** for this exam. It is extremely important to attend as it allows students to familiarise themselves with the equipment. Teachers need to encourage students to attend
- practise focusing the camera on themselves. They should be able to see themselves from head to waist and from one shoulder to the other. They must sit up straight while recording and **not** bend forward
- always look into the camera when recording. Where the response is for only one person they need to look into the camera. Where they are responding to a group of people they should move their head from side to side, showing that they are responding to a group rather than an individual
- ensure they have recorded a response
- watch the position of their hands. The palms should be facing inward towards the student's chest. They should check whether they can see themselves signing or the signs they are signing
- avoid wearing colourful (fluorescent-coloured) tops; black, grey, white, light grey or light blue are acceptable. Hair should be tied back. The assessor should be able to see the student's facial expressions
- use their exam time wisely. The texts are repeated three times. Many students are still rewinding and fast forwarding DVDs during the exam
- clearly indicate the student number and whether the response is formal or informal at the start of the response. Where more than one draft is completed, students should label the drafts in numerical order, starting always with their student number and whether the response is formal or informal
- sign their student number at the start of their response
- answer the question but not repeat verbatim the resource presented
- check signs in the resources on the DVD if they are unsure of signs
- use signs from the resources
- start their answer in an appropriate way. Students should remember that Auslan is a visual language and if they get stuck or are not sure how to start they should imagine the scene visually.

Students are still:

- producing too many drafts. Usually the first draft is the best. Students who do more than two drafts seem to leave out information each time a draft is completed. They could focus more on preparing the first draft, making sure they have all the right points before recording themselves. Teachers must practise exam preparation with students during the year using past exams
- writing out whole responses in English rather than organising their responses in Auslan. Students need to keep brief reminder lists; detailed reminder lists in English may affect the student's ability to sign grammatically correctly
- confused about the difference between formal and informal signs (although there was an improvement in 2009)
- signing very short responses. Students should aim to produce a response in the time specified in the study design
- overusing signs which are culturally inappropriate
- using few current Auslan fillers
- voicing or mouthing English words during their responses rather than culturally deaf mouthing
- not structuring their responses well
- having problems with clearly defined hand shapes and incorrect movements. Some vocabulary was signed incorrectly (for example, dream, 'your' for 'you're', man, typing/typist, want, etc.)
- using signed English signs, for example, using the 'three' hand shape for 'mother'



- using incorrect role-shifting and inappropriate body shifts
- using too many classifiers in the formal presentation which were more appropriate for informal signing
- not using eye gaze and anaphoric indexing correctly
- not sequencing their ideas or information and repeating the same ideas in their responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section I: Watching and responding to informal signed texts

(the use of the term ‘informal signed texts’ here refers to spontaneous communication, namely that which is not normally recorded)

Description of the task

Section I is designed primarily to assess the students’ knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from informal signed texts. It is related to one or more of the prescribed themes.

Students observed an informal signed discourse, which was a video-recorded performance. The signed discourse was between five and seven minutes in length and was repeated three times, with a two-minute pause between each performance during which students could take notes.

Students were expected to respond in Auslan to a set task; for example, responding to a message or an announcement. The length of the response should have been approximately two to three minutes. The questions were available to the student on DVD in Auslan and written in English in the exam task book.

Students who did not score well:

- took on the incorrect role play
- ignored the question
- did not use the information on the DVD
- produced a statement and failed to engage the audience
- did not produce an appropriate informal introduction as required but began with a formal introduction
- failed to have the correct structure
- did not give an appropriate greeting/opening, body of discussion or closure of discussion/parting/arranging another meeting, etc.

Task 1 – Informal

The following is possible information that could have been included in answers for Task 1.

Dog	Cat
1. it can take a long time to toilet train a dog	1. toilet training – using a litter/teaching the cat to go outside
2. may dig in your garden	2. easy to look after
3. grooming can be expensive	3. food can be expensive (canned food, fish, raw meat)
4. food is flexible – can be given a bone	4. cat can stay home
5. can take a dog on walks	5. it is difficult to travel as a cat may scratch the furniture
6. friendly and loves people	6. it is good to have a tree for the cat to climb
7. family members can take turns to walk and feed a dog	7. can be frightened of people
8. having a dog is a good way to meet people	8. affectionate
9. a dog can be taken on holiday to pet-friendly beaches, camps or hotels	9. fussy

Students may have included the following additional information:

- size and breed of dog
- enclosed yard for the dog
- need to attend dog club/training school
- cat/dog can sleep nearby for company
- dogs may needed to be groomed often if they are long-haired



- cats are more independent than dogs.

Section II: Watching and responding to formal signed texts *(the use of the term 'formal' here refers to a communicative act prepared prior to presentation)*

Description

Section II is designed primarily to assess the students' knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from formally signed texts.

Students watched a pre-recorded formal signed discourse that was between three and five minutes in length. Students were required to produce a response in Auslan to the signed text. The task specified a purpose, context and audience. The length of the response should have been approximately three to four minutes.

Students generally had a better understanding of the nature of formal discourse and set up the introduction, main body and closure well. This was a lot better this year than in previous years.

However, some students failed to extract, classify or reorganise the information with only a minority of the students completing the task effectively.

Students are reminded to read the questions carefully as many took on the incorrect role play. Many students ignored the question by failing to identify and analyse the information on the DVD and identify the task appropriately. This also resulted in confusion over the context and audience.

Capacity to convey information

Students often produced a statement and failed to engage in a discussion. Students had difficulty observing the appropriate cultural way to structure the response.

Students' also showed a lack of ability to structure the task correctly. They should have commenced with an informal greeting or opening, followed by the main body of discussion and concluding with a closure to the discussion and an appropriate informal parting.

It was disappointing to note that many students were unable to accurately extract and then use the ideas presented on the video. The less successful students simply reiterated small sections of the DVD.

Accuracy and use of vocabulary and grammar

The standard of student responses fell in areas including clearly defined hand shapes; incorrect movements; and correct signing of some vocabulary. Some students included a few signed English words. When role shifting, students' body shifts were inappropriate and exaggerated.

Too many classifiers were used in some formal presentations; these are more appropriate for informal signing. Some students did not use 'referents' in space or anaphoric pronouns, especially in the informal task. Students may have missed the simultaneous use of eye contact and anaphoric indexing.

Task 2 – Formal

The following are possible answers for Task 2.

2009 Assessment Report



Part-time job – clothing shop	Casual job – restaurant
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• weekend work is from 9:00 am–5:00 pm (regular) but there is the possibility of an increased number of hours in the future• there is overtime on holidays; for example, at Christmas• the shop is busy• training is provided• clothing should be neat• need to provide own clothes• shoes should be comfortable• OHS safety is important• four days of sick leave• the pay is \$15 per hour• holiday pay is the same as regular pay• the lunch break is 30 minutes duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• options of hours before and after school, on the weekend, and extra hours on holidays• finish at 11:00 pm –if there are no customers there is the possibility of finishing early• prepare to be on call to work at short notice• uniform is provided and is washed for free• the colour of the uniform is black• there are no sick leave or annual leave provisions• the pay is \$30 per hour but there is the possibility to earn extra money through tips• training is provided as part of the job• there is the opportunity to meet many people