

2018 VCE Chinese First Language written examination report

General comments

In general, students performed well on the 2018 Chinese First Language written examination. Most students used their time effectively and attempted all questions. A small number of students demonstrated excellent skills in language application and problem analysis. Others showed a lack of preparation, particularly for Section 2 – Reading and responding, and some students did not attempt all of the questions.

In Section 1 – Listening and responding, very few students answered all questions correctly or demonstrated very strong language skills. The majority were able to answer Questions 1a., 1c., 1d. and 1e. accurately, but some students had difficulty finding the correct answer for Question 1b. Some students did not use full sentences to answer questions and some used many incorrect Chinese characters.

In Section 2 – Reading and responding, there were few responses that demonstrated a full understanding of the texts provided and that used them accurately. Some students did not understand the task and could not extract information from the given texts accurately to complete the task. Low-scoring responses ignored either one or both texts or copied out the text and used it as a response without demonstrating any understanding of it. Many students found the key information needed, but did not utilise the content appropriately to form an effective response. Analysing the task and the texts provided is crucial to the satisfactory completion of the task. Students were required to write a blog article.

In Section 3 – Writing in Chinese, most students chose Question 3, followed by Question 7 and Question 5. Some students chose Question 4 and very few chose Question 6, both of which required students to write an imaginative story. Some students who chose imaginative writing failed to produce a story, and instead wrote an imaginative statement. Most students showed clear understanding of text types, although some students were confused with text types.

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

The assessment criteria for this section were:

- the capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts
- the capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately

Question 1a.

- 《清明上河图》是北宋著名的风俗名画，它描绘了12世纪北宋首都汴京在清明时节的城市生活。(Along the River During the Qingming Festival is a famous painting reflecting the customs in the Northern Song Dynasty. It depicts the busy city life at the ancient Bian Jing, the capital city of the Northern Song Dynasty in the 12th Century.)
- 目前已知最早的版本为北宋画家张择端所作。张择端自幼酷爱画画，后来成为北宋末期杰出的现实主义画家。(The current earliest version known is the one painted by Zhang Zeduan, a painter from the Northern Song Dynasty, who had been fond of painting since he was young. Later, he became an outstanding realist painter.)
- 张择端擅长画人物、楼阁、舟车等等，但其艺术成就历来不被士大夫评论家所重视。所幸的是张择端的不朽名作《清明上河图》完整地保存至今，才确立了他在中国绘画史上应有的地位。(Zhang Zeduan was good at figure painting, the painting of architecture, the painting of boats and vehicles, etc. Yet, his artistic achievements were never noticed by the scholar-bureaucrats in history. Fortunately, his immortal masterpiece of Along the River During the Qingming Festival has survived intact to date and this has established his rightful place in history.)

Question 1b.

- 赵海认为这幅画这么长，很难让人有直观、整体的感受。(Zhao Hai thinks that this picture is too long to give the viewers a direct and holistic view of the picture in one view.)
- 陆老师认为，作者采用了长卷式构图，这样可以使画面的容量大，便于表现复杂的场景和各类人物，让人们在“窄窄的画幅”中一览当年汴京城内外的春日盛况。(However, Ms Lu explains that the painter adopted a 'long-scroll' structure so that the painting could be enlarged to facilitate the depiction of complicated scenes and various figures. By using a 'narrow scroll' painting, people can have a grand view of the spring day activities inside and outside Bian Jing city at that time.)

Question 1c.

- 因为这幅画跟交响乐一样分为三个部分，起伏跌宕，层层展开，推向高潮：(Because this picture is like an impressive symphony flowing rhythmically and layer after layer of unfolding scenes fully embodying the main theme with three sections:)
- 前段描写的是近郊的自然风光：小桥、流水、扁舟和耕农等，呈现出清明时节春回大地的一派生机。(The front section shows the natural scenery in the suburban area: small bridges, flowing rivers, boats and peasants in the fields, etc. This shows the liveliness during the spring season at the Qingming festival.)
- 中段是画中最精彩的部分。描绘得最为热闹的地方就是虹桥。画家将桥上人群的熙熙攘攘，桥下船夫们在急流中行舟的紧张忙乱，刻画得栩栩如生，令人有身临其境之感。(The middle section is the most brilliant part of the painting. The liveliest part is the bridge, called the Rainbow Bridge. The painter has so vividly painted the crowds of people on the bridge, the nervous and hectic boatmen sailing the ship in the torrent of the river under the bridge, that viewers are greatly immersed in the scene.)
- 末段则表现了城内的繁华。画面上有高大的城楼、官府衙门、民居宅院和店铺茶楼等等。街市上更是车水马龙，人来人往，显示出百业俱兴的热闹景象。(The last section shows the prosperity in the city. There are tall buildings, government law courts, houses of residents, shops, tea houses, etc. In the market streets, there is heavy traffic and busy commuters, showing a lively scene of all businesses.)

Question 1d.

- 《清明上河图》全卷所绘人物五百余位，牲畜五十多只，船只二十多艘，房屋车辆众多，道具无数。(There are more than 500 figures, over 50 animals, over 20 boats, many vehicles and innumerable tools depicted in the painting.)

- 这幅图详细真实地记录了北宋都城的商业、手工业、民俗、建筑、交通工具、生活细节等与民生有关的事物和自然景观。(The painting realistically records commerce, handicraft, folk culture, architecture, means of transportation, life details, etc., as well as objects related to people's livelihood and the natural scenery.)
- 为我们今天了解和研究那个时代提供了第一手资料，具有重要的历史文献价值。(Being an important and valuable historic work, it has provided us with the firsthand resource to understand and research this particular dynasty.)

Question 1e.

- 《清明上河图》以史诗般的笔墨，描绘数以百计的民众世俗生活与商业活动，并详细记录了市井小民商贾的生活场景，突显了作者的平民意识和现实主义的创作理念。(With epic touches, *Along the River During the Qingming Festival* depicts hundreds of activities reflecting the secular life of the people, as well as their trading activities. The detailed depiction of ordinary people and merchants reflects the painter's grass-roots and realistic approaches.)
- 这在中国古代绘画中是不多见的，就是在现代绘画中也是罕见的。(This was very uncommon in ancient Chinese painting and is also rarely seen in modern painting.)
- 在这幅画中，清明不再只是如杜牧眼中的“细雨纷纷，行人断魂”，不再只是如李清照的“冷冷清清，凄凄惨惨”，而是恢宏壮阔，生生不息。(In this painting Qingming is depicted not as a time of 'drizzling rain, with pedestrians overwhelmed with sorrows' as seen in Du Mu's eyes or 'loneliness and desolation' [as seen] by Li Qingzhao, but as a magnificent, lively and robust occasion.)

Section 2 – Reading and responding

The assessment criteria for this section were:

- the capacity to identify and synthesise relevant information and ideas from the texts
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar (including punctuation and, where relevant, script)

Texts 2 and 3

Students were required to write an article to publish on their blog, with the topic 'Never forget your true vocation, and pursue higher (things).' The following are possible areas that could have been discussed in the article.

- 社会发展，科学进步，使年轻一代越来越浮躁 (With the development of society and the progress in science and technology, some young people have become impetuous)
- 不忘初心，才能达到生活的更高境界 (Never forget your true vocation, and pursue higher [things])
- 人应该“宁静至简”：生活变得简单 (People should live in 'peace and simplicity')
- 陶渊明：采菊东篱下，悠然见南山 / 结庐在人境，而无车马喧 (Tao Yuanming's poems 'Picking the Chrysanthemum under my fence, you can see Nanshan mountain leisurely' / 'Living in the human world, without carts and horses')
- 灵魂得到升华 (The soul will be enlightened)
- 超凡脱俗，远离喧嚣 (Rise above the general run of people [get away from the hustle and bustle of life])
- 放弃追名逐利，视钱权如粪土，生活洒脱、幽雅 (Give up the pursuit of fame and profit, his life will become simple, free and easy, as well as quiet and tasteful)
- 近墨者黑，近朱者赤 / 古文（如入芝兰之室，如入鲍鱼之肆……） (Those who are near the ink become black and those near the cinnabar become red [if you enter a room of irises and orchids, if you enter a fish market])

- 出淤泥而不染 / 古文（能处而不汙其身……） (Be unstained by an evil environment. [Stay in the sludge and keep yourself clean])
- 坚定信念，保持初心 / 古文（丹可灭而不能使无赤……） (We should have firm faith, so that we can retain our own 'true heart or purpose')

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

For Questions 3, 6, and 7, students needed to focus on the context and audience given in the question and create an imaginative story. The most effective responses told the story in the first person and described the atmosphere and feelings of the characters.

The assessment criteria for this section were:

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy of vocabulary and grammar (including punctuation and, where relevant, script)
- range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Question 3

Students were required to write from the perspective of an educator, a magazine article for Chinese youth on the topic: 'The advantages and disadvantages of "Think thrice before acting" for young people'.

Audience: readers of a contemporary magazine for young people

Purpose: to evaluate this aspect of society

Kind of writing: evaluative

Text type: article (for a magazine)

Question 4

Students were required to write an imaginative story for the 'Story King of Children'. The topic was 'The World of Bees'.

Audience: people who like fiction/readers of a collection of stories

Purpose: to entertain

Kind of writing: imaginative

Text type: story

Question 5

Students were required to write from the perspective of a student who is going to apply for broadcasting as their major subject at university. They were required to write a letter to the chief editor of the 'TV Broadcasting' newspaper, talking about the advantages and disadvantages of TV announcers being required to present perfect physical images and perfect broadcasts.

Audience: people who are interested in issues to do with the media

Purpose: to evaluate something that is very common in today's society

Kind of writing: evaluative

Text type: letter to the editor

Question 6

Students were given the following scenario, 'Imagine that 100 years have passed (2118). There is a new city and everywhere there is row after row of big buildings. There is only a tiny bit of vegetation (in the city). You are employed by the city's environmental company. Your job is to fix the city's environmental problem.' They were required to write a diary entry imagining the circumstances of their first day at work.

Audience: the self

Purpose: to record something as an imagined self in an imagined situation that has a positive environmental focus

Kind of writing: imaginative

Text type: diary entry

Question 7

Students were required to write from the perspective of a commentator for a famous arts magazine, and prepare a commentary for a recent issue of '*Sports*' newspaper, on the pros and cons of athletes participating in TV variety shows.

Audience: readers who like reading about sport and associated issues

Purpose: to evaluate a common happening in the world of sport – the pressure on athletes to perform many different roles

Kind of writing: evaluative

Text type: commentary