2021 VCE Chinese First Language written external assessment report

General comments

This was the final examination for the VCE Chinese First language Study Design 2005–2021.

In general, students performed well in the 2021 Chinese First Language written examination. Most students attempted all the questions, which suggests that time was used effectively. A small number of students demonstrated excellent skills in language application. Others showed a lack of preparation, and some students did not attempt all the questions.

In Section 1 – Listening and responding, very few students answered all questions correctly or demonstrated excellent listening and note-taking skills. Most students could answer Question 1a. accurately. Some students had difficulty finding the correct answer for Questions 1b., 1c., 1d. and 1e., and many students failed to identify key points from the listening dialogue to correctly answer the question. Some students did not use full sentences to answer questions, some used many incorrect Chinese characters and a few students used a lot of Pinyin. Students are advised to take detailed notes as this can be helpful in responding accurately.

In Section 2 – Reading and responding, some responses were accurate and included the relevant information, demonstrating a full understanding of the texts provided. A few students appeared not to 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 part of the text and used it as a response without demonstrating any understanding of it. Many students found the key information needed but did not use the content appropriately to form an effective response. Many responses did not include precise or correct key sentences. Careful reading of the task and analysis of the texts provided is crucial to the satisfactory completion of the task and key sentences are important for the correct writing style. A persuasive writing style was required in this question, but some students used an informative or personal style.

In Section 3 – Writing in Chinese, most students chose Question 3, followed by Question 5 and Question 4. Some students chose Question 6 and very few chose Question 7, both of which required students to write an imaginative story. Some students who chose imaginative writing failed to produce a response that demonstrated the characteristics of the required text type. Most students showed clear understanding of text types, although some responses suggested that students were confused about them. Question 7 provided a photo as a stimuli and some students failed to view the photo carefully or develop a story from the photo.

Specific information

Note: 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
* convey information accurately and appropriately.

Question 1a.

* 演奏文曲时悠扬婉转，演奏武曲时豪放激昂。The performing techniques are different. The lute music with a civic melody sounds delicate and quiet, while the lute music with a martial melody sounds imposing and passionate.

Question 1b.

* 它音色深厚、甜润、纯正、雅致，悦耳动听，被誉为中国的“小提琴”。It produces a profound, sweet, authentic, elegant and pleasant sound and is acclaimed as the ‘Chinese Violin’.
* 二胡不仅音色细腻，能够模拟人声，演绎悲伤的情绪，比如《二泉映月》。Not only can Erhu produce a delicate and human voice-like sound but it can also express sorrow, such as Er Quan Ying Yue (The Moon Reflected in Er-Quan).
* 还能表现活泼、明快、清新、喜庆的旋律，比如《赛马》、《良宵》。It can also produce a lively, cheerful, bright and even delightful rhythm, such as Sai Ma (Horse-Racing) and Liang Xiao (Beautiful Evening).
* 二胡还能表达怡然自得的心情，比如《空山鸟语》。What’s more, Erhu can also reflect a calm and pleasant state of mind, such as Kong Shan Niao Yu (Bird Song in a Desolate Mountain).

Question 1c.

* 近代音乐教育家刘天华糅合了传统二胡的特点和西洋乐器的精粹，对二胡进行了改革。Contemporary music educator Liu Tianhua reformed Erhu by combining the features of traditional Erhu and the best of western musical instruments.
* 现代二胡具有：音位不固定、音高自由度非常大、音强范围变化广，音色自由度近乎无限等与众不同的特点。Today’s Erhu has many unique characteristics: non-fixed, wide pitch, broad range and intensity.
* 二十多年前在维也纳金色大厅首次奏响的《二泉映月》震撼了世界音乐爱好者的心灵。世界著名指挥家小泽征尔也对其赞誉有加。More than 20 years ago, Er Quan Ying Yue was played in Musikverein for the first time, striking a chord in music lovers all over the world. The world-famous conductor Seiji Ozawa also held Er Quan Ying Yue in high regard.

Question 1d.

* 在古代，“琴、棋、书、画”是文人的必修课， 而琴指的就是古琴。In Ancient China, there were four arts that all literati must learn: qin, chess, calligraphy and painting, and qin refers to guqin.
* 据先秦《礼记》记载，“士无故不彻（撤）琴瑟”，也就是说弹琴或听琴是古代文人每日的功课。According to the Book of Rites, ‘literati should not stop playing qin for no reason’. In other words, all officials shall listen to or play guqin every day.
* 西汉时期，文人一致认为：“八音之中，惟弦为最，而琴为之首”。In the Western Han Dynasty, literati all believed that of the eight categories of musical instruments, string instruments are the best, and of all the string instruments, guqin is the top one.
* 在文人心中，古琴是智慧、修养、身份的象征，是文人雅士除文字以外表达个性、思考、情操、品位的另一种媒介。It can be seen that to literati, guqin is a symbol of wisdom, culture and social status and is another way of expressing their personality, thoughts, character and taste in addition to writing.

Question 1e.

* 琴之道即人之道，琴音体现了文人之道，即人与自然的契合。For the literati in ancient China, the rule of qin is the rule of men, and guqin music expressed the rule of literati, namely, the harmony between men and nature.
* 例如，《阳春白雪》、《梅花三弄》等众多古琴名曲，彰显了大自然的优美和大度。The many classical guqin musical compositions, such as Yang Chun Bai Xue and Mei Hua San Nong (Three Stanzas of Plum Blossoms) reflect the beauty and generosity of nature.
* 质朴自然的琴音不仅能安抚、净化古代文人的灵魂，还体现了他们的处世哲学和审美情趣。Pristine and natural guqin music not only consoles people’s troubled mind but also reflects the life philosophy and aesthetics of the literati.

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).

Question 2

Students were required to prepare a persuasive speech for the school assembly, using the two texts provided. They needed to write from their perspective about what they’d learnt from visiting the elderly activity centre and persuade their fellow students not to turn a blind eye and help older people to integrate into a smart society.

The following are possible areas that could have been discussed in the speech.

Text 2

* 孝是传统 The tradition of filial piety
* “夫孝，天之经也，地之义也，民之行也。” & “教民亲爱，莫善于孝。《孝经》To teach the people to be affectionate and loving, nothing works better than educating them to be caring and respectful towards their parents.
* “新竹高于旧竹枝，全凭老干为扶持。” The new bamboo outgrows the old, relying on the elder’s selfless support.
* “为霞尚满天。” -- 刘禹锡 & “人间重晚晴。”-- 李商隐 The Heaven has pity on the humble grass in solitude, The people hold rays of the Evening Sun in high regard. (Evening sun)
* ‘我不能’，是诚不能也。 ‘我不能’，是不为也，非不能也。”-- 《孟子》 To snap a branch off a tree for an elderly, you say ‘you cannot’. This has nothing to do with your ability, but your inactivity. (Mencius)

Text 3

* 很多曾为社会进步贡献了毕生精力的老年人却在智能时代面临困境，被智能社会边缘化。Many old people who have devoted their life to the progress of the society are facing difficulties in a smart society and have been marginalised by the society.
* 感恩，回报，让老人有幸福安乐的晚年。Young people should appreciate the contribution made by old people and repay them by giving them a happy life.
* 许多老年人在外出就餐、购物及交通出行方面常常陷入困境。如：李大爷退休前是位高级工程师，他在就医时因不会使用智能设备预约挂号遇到困难。 Many older people face difficulties in dining out, shopping, travel and transportation. For example, an elderly man, Mr Li, who was a senior engineer before retirement, told a journalist of the difficulties he faced in seeing a doctor because of the inability to use smart devices to make a medical appointment.
* 帮助老人融入智能时代，享受智能时代的便利 Help old people to integrate into the smart era and enjoy the convenience brought by modern technology.
* 年轻人不能袖手旁观，帮助老人学会使用智能设备，网上购物，在线订餐，扫码付款，订票，挂号，预约等。 Young people should not turn a blind eye to this issue; they should lend a helping hand to older people and help them use the smart device, shop online, order food, make payments or purchase tickets online.

Section 3: Writing in Chinese

Question 3

Students were required to write an article to be published in a lifestyle magazine, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of working from home.

Advantages

* 节省时间，效率高，节省成本，新潮流，有利保护环境。Save time, more efficient, cost-effective, new trend, good for the environment.

Disadvantages

* 国民体质下降，人际沟通差，生活质量下降，不利管理，法律问题。Decline of people’s health conditions, lack of communication, not ideal quality of daily life, not good for management, some legal issues.

Question 4

Students were required to write a report for their teacher on the opposing views of classmates about ‘A successful life requires planning’.

Advantages

* 明确目标，提升能力，培养毅力，获得成功的喜悦。Clear goals, improve your abilities, foster one’s willpower, bring happiness of success.

Disadvantages

* 跟不上快速变化，不利创新，心理压力，错失良机。 Hard to change, not good for creativity, bring pressure and may miss opportunities.

Question 5

Students were required to write an article on their personal blog, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of fragmented reading.

Advantages

* 符合信息时代，获取速度快，阅读量大，阅读面广，阅读习惯。It is the requirement of the e-era, get information fast and read more and in a great variety, a new way of reading.

Disadvantages

* 阅读质量下降，不够精密严谨，从众心理，不利独立思考能力的培养。Reduce the quality of reading, not precise and accurate; conform to the majority and lack of independent thinking.

Question 6

Students were required to write in their diary about their magnificent experience in an underground city that they happen upon. They needed to describe the amazing city, and the experience of travelling across time.

* 审题： 要体现奇妙的概念，得是地下城市
* 要点： 神奇的经历，穿越时空
* 文体格式： 日记（时间，天气）
* 语言： 想象性

Question 7

Students were required to write an imaginative story about the adventure of the penguin brothers for a children’s story collection. They had to write an adventure story, using information from the photo.

* 审题： 要表达历险的概念，要包括图上的信息（南极冰融化了）
* 要点： 气候变化，全球变暖，对动物的威胁
* 文体格式： 故事（题目，作者），写作对象：儿童
* 语言： 想象性