

LOTE: Chinese First Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

Generally, students were well prepared and demonstrated a high standard of pronunciation, fluency and accuracy in their use of language, and communication skills. Compared with 2001, a wider range of topics and resources were selected by students in their Detailed Studies. Student performance varied widely from exemplary to below average. There were few noticeable problems but some students did not understand the oral examination procedures, for example the timing for their report and the use of cue cards.

Section 1 – Presentation

Many students showed the capacity to present the necessary information effectively and appropriately within the time limit. There was clear evidence that students were aware of the requirements of the revised study design and attempted to follow them. However, some students did not seem to understand the specific features of the oral presentation, for example not adhering to the one-minute introduction of the topic studied.

Most students' presentations followed the 'Language and Culture through Literature and the Art' option. In general, students selected properly, outlined the issue and offered/gave their opinions on the topic, and supported this with evidence related to the texts studied. However, some students failed to support their opinions with appropriate evidence.

A significant number of students did not show the capacity to engage with the assessors during their presentation. Eye contact, intonation and gesture are very important, yet a number of students failed to demonstrate these kinds of communication skills. While there was no problem in their pronunciation, some students did not use their capacity to use stress and intonation to advantage.

Some students lacked breadth and depth in their information; others did not adopt a clear stance or provide any opinions and ideas at all. In general, the presentation needed to be much more persuasive. Furthermore, there is a need for explanations, examples and evidence to support the presentation. Students need to comment on their material and relate it to their chosen issue; sometimes the issue and their information were not at all related. Students should be reminded that they are not allowed to read from a script except when referring to a cue card (no more than 15 x 12.5 cm) on which only notes in point form can be written.

The choice of sub-topics is important. The most common topics this year for Arts and Literature were about traditional Chinese values and Chinese society, including marriage, family education, filial devotion and the relationship between parents and their children. Other topics, such as patriotism, and Chinese tea culture were also discussed.

More successful presentations were able to pick up the main issue/s from the texts studied, to explore issue/s in depth by providing good examples and expressing their own views/ideas on the topic convincingly. Generally speaking, few students demonstrated the ability to read texts critically and adopt a stance with a view to convince the audience. Students need to choose their sub-topics carefully, consider the stance to be taken, study in depth a minimum of three texts with the objective of gaining a broader perspective, to grasp clearly the issue/s discussed in the texts, and to form their own ideas, opinions and conclusion based on sound reasoning.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were not as well prepared for the discussion as they were for the presentation. Some students relied too much on the assessors to ask questions and only provided short answers due to apparent lack of confidence in elaborating or a lack of background knowledge related to the topics discussed. Other students, however, were able to give thorough and precise answers to questions. Some opinions were very impressive and thought-provoking, so that the discussion developed into an interesting exchange. Students should be reminded that this part of the examination is as important as the presentation.

Students should be encouraged to practise debating to better maintain and advance the exchange with assessors. The chosen issue must follow the language and culture requirement through Literature and the Arts as described in the study design. Another area in need of improvement is the skill of convincing the assessor regarding the validity of their opinions on the chosen issue. It is also very important that students remember to state their resources, including the fact they must be of more than one text type.

Some students were able to discuss their subjects in depth, using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary. However, they were in the minority. Most students handled their topics superficially, being content to repeat a simplistic, conventional opinion referring to some information from one of the texts. Assessors felt that those students might not have read the entire text but only its synopsis. Students should realise that it is not sufficient to know the contents of the texts studied but that they must pick up the issues and express their own thoughts/ideas/reactions by supporting these with plausible evidence and good examples.

If the same topic is set for a large class, it is important that the scope be broad enough for each student to study it and produce different responses or comments in order to avoid a uniform approach to the topic, (e.g. expressing the same opinions and ideas by referring to the same examples from the texts). It is advisable to avoid repeating the

same topic each year, and replace reference materials with some fresh material in order to encourage students to employ new approaches in dealing with their Detailed Study sub-topic.

Written component

Most students did very well in Section 1. However, using wrong characters or mixing up traditional and simplified characters was a common problem.

In Section 2, a number of students did not comprehend the task, the setting of the task and the kind of writing required. Many students failed to identify the points required for the written piece and lacked logic so that the written piece was simply a collection of points/notes. It was necessary for students to refer to both texts, to understand each view and the reasons behind these, and then write a persuasive script for a speech expressing their own view and suggesting a possible solution to this problem. There were some excellent written pieces, but some students just ignored the word limit.

Students need to be clear about the features of basic text-types and five required kinds of writing. In Section 3, students had to choose one of the topics to write a composition in one of the required text types. The choice of the topics was equal. Questions 9 and 11 required students to produce an imaginative written piece. In handling these topics, students were free to explore ideas and were able to describe scenes vividly in their own style and language. Many students failed to produce an imaginative piece, instead they wrote a personal account. On the other hand, work on Questions 8 and 10 required students to produce an evaluative written piece. Students who chose Question 8 had some difficulties addressing the advantages and disadvantages of wearing Chinese suits. Students who chose Question 10 on Australia's refugee policy failed to address the policy. Instead, most students commented on whether Australia should keep the refugees and the advantages and disadvantages involved. A few students even confused this topic with Australia's immigration policies. While using incorrect characters or mixing up traditional and simplified characters was a noticeable problem, a number of students did not have a clear idea of the specific requirements for newspaper/magazine articles.

Part A

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Sample answers

Criteria

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

Most students gave correct answers for Questions 3 to 6. However, using wrong characters was a noticeable problem.

Text 1

Question 1

- a. 河南
重庆
- b. 人口集中在中原古文化区及沿海地区
家庭规模继续缩小
老龄化加快
- c. 人口素质提高，经济成长加快
居住面积增加，生活水平提高
寿命延长，身体健康
就学、就业压力大
宠爱子女问题
老人福利设施不足，得不到照顾

Part B

Text 2

Question 2

玉皇大帝生日，动物过河竞赛
猫、鼠、牛一起参赛
好心的牛让猫和鼠骑在背上
鼠心眼多，推猫入水
过河后，鼠超过牛成第一名

Question 3

为人善良
对人宽容
爱助人
喜欢说话
有艺术鉴赏力
对吃、穿、用挑剔

Question 4

艺术鉴赏力
讲究穿戴

Question 5

事业发展机会大，公司有发展
健康无大碍
小病频繁

Question 6

- 运气好
- 事业方面机会重重，一切顺利
- 身体健康
- 感情生活丰富

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Criteria

- 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.

Question 7

Required points for Criteria 1
世界各国都保护古迹
有价值未列入保护的文化古迹遭破坏
保护古迹可促进旅游，带来财富
古迹可激发人的思古幽情
政府结构与工商业、居民配合
要考虑隐私权，不打乱生活
完善的立法与执行，技术和资金
古代风貌融入现代，适合现代人的生活

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Criteria

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