

2021 VCE Chinese Second Language written external assessment report

General comments

Some parts of the examination required high-level analytical skills, in particular Part B of Section 2 and the viewing and writing task in Section 3. However, some students responded well to all sections of the 2021 VCE Chinese Second Language written examination. These students generally demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of the requirements for the examination.

In Section 1, students exhibited good comprehension skills and an ability to identify most of the required information from listening to the text. Students are reminded that they are required to respond specifically to the question. Some responses indicated good listening comprehension but did not answer the question correctly or include the relevant information.

In Section 2 – Reading, listening and responding, it appeared that some students did not understand the questions fully and provided inappropriate or incomplete answers. Students are reminded to practise analysing and summarising skills, rather than copying out the whole paragraph or passage. Students need to understand that analytical and evaluation skills, as well as comprehension skills, are required in this section. The questions in this section required students to read the questions more carefully and pay close attention to all the details of the whole passage, in order to provide the correct response.

It required students to demonstrate their comprehension skills in abstracting, summarising and analysing the information for their extended response. Some students seemed to misunderstand the information from the reading and used it incorrectly in their response, while some other students did not understand how to fully use the points from the reading to complete this part.

Students are advised to read carefully and understand the requirements of the question before they provide their response. They are also urged to consult their dictionaries when answering questions, as many responses contained spelling and grammatical errors that could have been avoided. It is important that responses are based on the text provided, and that students do not include irrelevant information.

In Section 3 – Writing in Chinese, responses generally included the correct register, format and style. Some students did not read all aspects of the task carefully and did not answer the question correctly.

In Section 3, most students chose Questions 5, 6 or 7. Most students who chose Questions 5 and 6 did not understand the question fully. In addition, some students were constrained by limited vocabulary and were unable to express themselves fully in order to complete the requirements of the task. Quite a few students did not provide relevant points for Questions 7 and 8 due to unfamiliarity with the content and poor time-management. Students are encouraged to have a writing plan and ensure they understand the requirements of the task for this section of the examination.

In terms of content in each of the four writing tasks, some students did not provide adequate depth in their responses. In addition, a few students did not adhere to the task requirements, such as the different writing styles and text types.

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

This section assessed the students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts. Many students appeared to understand the two listening texts well and demonstrated their ability to summarise and analyse information; however, some students seemed to have trouble summarising the points and conveying the meaning in English. Students should use the reading time to focus on the questions in this section, so they can predict what the listening texts might be about.

Part A – Listening and responding in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

- She will borrow a book.
- She will pick (get, grab) her school (book) bag.

Question 1b.

- Basketball/ it is hot/ the weather is hot
- Rowing / canoeing / ride a boat / boating
- He needs to complete (finish) homework (or do homework by next Monday)

Question 1c.

- The best rower of the rowing competition
- Good at planning
- Good at everything (can do anything)
- A really good friend of hers / caring and friendly / offering to row together

Part B – Listening and responding in Chinese

In this part of the examination students were assessed on their understanding of general and specific aspects of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information and opinions from the text in Chinese. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in Chinese were awarded full marks.

In addition, students must ensure that they respond in complete sentences when required and that their sentences communicate their ideas in their own words. Some responses included answers in point form, taking extracts directly from the spoken text. This did not allow them to demonstrate their ability to communicate fluently in the language and thus they were not awarded full marks. Students need to ensure that they provide a full answer to each question.

Text 2

Question 2a.

他们选择去这家饭馆，因为 (They chose this restaurant, because):

- 他们两个人都喜欢那家饭店。（女孩也喜欢……） (they both like it)
- 这家饭店离小明住的地方很近/小明想去离他家最近的那家饭店 (it is close to Xiaoming's home)
- 这家饭馆是网红/大家给的分数很高/大家都喜欢…… (it has a good review online / the restaurant has a good rating)
- 这家饭店非常大，可以请很多人来 (it is big enough to cater for a lot of people / Xiao Ming can invite a lot of people)
- 它有不同口味的菜肴（为了迎合每个人的口味，这家饭店有很多不同的东西） (it has different cuisine to suit everyone's taste / they can order their favourite dishes)

Question 2b.

- 芳芳想吃牛肉面，可是她觉得太咸了，听说现在不咸了，这次她想点牛肉面。(Fangfang will have beef noodles because she always likes beef noodles and because Xiaoming told her the restaurant has made this food less salty.)
- 小明想吃春卷，他以前都吃妈妈做的，这次，他想吃这家饭馆做的/他想换个口味，试试他们做的。(Xiaoming would like to try the spring rolls that the restaurant offers because it's his birthday and he wants to try a different flavour.)

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

In order to prepare for this section of the examination, students should read the questions and think through their answers carefully. When preparing for the examination, students should also practise identifying and summarising the main points and ideas in the texts. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all unknown words, especially if they are not key words in the texts, but students should try to understand the main ideas of both the reading and listening texts. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the texts.

Question 3a.

- Zhao Hai was making video clips of himself / singing and playing guitar online.
- Lin Ying became famous as she won second place in a national singing competition.
- Zhang Li was famous as he played (a major role) in a well-known musical (singing performance, musical concert).

Question 3b.

- He started singing (playing the guitar) early (at the age of five).
- He became famous at the age of 11.
- Later on, he stopped writing songs and his career did not last long. / Later on, he stopped singing and was soon forgotten by people.

Question 3c.

- Singing from a young age
- Participating in the choir in both primary and secondary schools
- Having a private tutor/teacher/expert
- Studying music in college
- Participating in a national singing competition

Question 3d.

- She thinks to have an undergraduate degree (one major) is not enough.
- She wants to focus on song writing / become a singer and write songs / she loves writing songs.

Question 3e.

- Zhao Hai didn't have time to write his own songs.
- Zhao Hai had to support his family after his father's business had closed down.
- Lin Ying thought she didn't have the talent for singing.
- Lin Ying was so introverted that she had to force herself to perform on stage.
- Not everyone/all liked Zhang Li's voice when he was a child.
- At first Zhang Li found it a little difficult to live abroad.
- When Wang Lan took part in the national singing competition, the rehearsals venue was so far away from her home. It took her two hours on the bus to get there.

Part B – Reading and responding in Chinese

Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus text and address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the text that was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

The reading text included a visual stimulus. Responses that scored highly successfully incorporated information from the visual stimulus in their response.

Student responses were assessed holistically according to the assessment criteria and the expected qualities published on the VCAA website. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language accuracy; however, language accuracy was an important expected quality that was considered in the assessment.

It was possible to achieve a high score for this question without exceeding the specified word/character limit.

In this part, students are required to write a response of approximately 150 characters. Many students were able to use the information and evidence from the text and the visual stimulus to develop their ideas, opinions and arguments adequately and appropriately to complete the task. Some students found it difficult to complete the task due to a lack of vocabulary and skills needed to analyse, summarise and organise the information/evidence for their writing, and some simply copied one or two paragraphs as their response.

Text 4

Question 4

The students were required to include at least four reasons from the text. Their aim is to convince the grandparents to buy the house using the original information.

要求学生能找出原文中包含的最少 4 个信息点。他们要学会用原始的信息转变成具有说服力的论点，说服祖父母买房。以下是几个建议的观点 (Students may include in their response any four of):

- (面积不小) 80 平方米的房子，两个睡房和一个小花园。(The house is 80 square meters, having two bedrooms and a small garden.)
- 周边已有市场，一家商店。医院和公园会在明年建成。(There are a market and a shop nearby. A hospital and a park/public garden will be built next year.)
- 目前已经卖出了 90%，最近有越来越多的人开始住进来。(90% of the houses have been sold out. More and more residents start to move in.)
- 那儿的常住人口有多达 30% 的人会说汉语，有利于祖父母交流 (Up to 30% of residents there can speak Chinese, which would be convenient for the grandparents for communicating with the people there.)
- 虽说住房离墨尔本市中心较远，可以坐火车到最近的小城，中间不用换车。(Though it is relatively far away from Melbourne CBD, if taking the train to the nearest small town, the grandparents will not need to change transport.)
- 新城房地产离墨尔本市中心 200 公里，开车两个小时左右就可以到达 (New Development Property is approximately 200 km from Melbourne. It can be reached in about two hours driving by car.)

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Questions 5–8

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Chinese. Student responses were assessed against the following criteria:

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Students were required to write between 200 and 250 characters in Chinese on one of the four questions given. Each question represented a different text type and style of writing (personal, imaginative, informative and evaluative). All four questions were attempted, although there was a clear preference for the informative and evaluative writing tasks.

On the whole, students displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and the style of writing they chose; however, they should be aware that they need to provide features of the text type or writing style as required.

Students did not perform well on the criterion of 'relevance, breadth and depth of content'. Students should exhibit a good range of relevant vocabulary and express themselves accurately.

Question 5

Points that could be included:

- 在澳洲国庆日参加义务清理活动的意义 (the significance of being involved in volunteer cleaning activities on Australian National Day)
- 清理活动主要包括哪些内容或发生的趣事，你主要参与了什么活动 (some interesting things that happened on the day and what activities you took part in)
- 你对当天的经历有些什么感想或联想 (your feelings/reflection of what you experienced on the day)

The personal writing style should:

- create a sense of person/personality for the writer in the reader's mind
- establish a relationship between the writer and the reader
- employ first- and/or second-person; subjective; informal, familiar style/register; often include emotive language
- emphasise ideas, opinions, feelings and impressions, rather than factual, objective information
- use the act of writing to help the author understand and unravel his/her own feelings or ideas.

Question 6

Points that could be included:

- 时间、地点 (time and venue)
- 三个活动分别是什么，各有什么特点 (what the three activities are and their uniqueness)
- 这次露营活动对学生的影响 (the impact of the camp on the students)

The informative writing style should:

- aim to convey information from the writer to the reader as clearly, comprehensively and accurately as possible
- use objective style and impersonal expressions
- have no particular point of view to convey
- use facts, examples, explanations, analogies and sometimes statistical information, quotations and references as evidence
- use language, structure and sequence to make the message clear and unambiguous, so the sequencing of information is usually logical and predictable
- use few adjectives, adverbs and images, except as examples or analogies in explanation.

Question 7

Points that could be included:

- 论题的内容 (the topic of the argument)
- 有利的一面 (两点) (two points in favour)
- 有弊的一面 (两点) (two points against)
- 结论 (conclusion)

The evaluative writing style should:

- aim to reach a conclusion through the logical presentation and discussion of facts and ideas
- present two or more important aspects of an issue or sides of an argument and discuss these rationally and objectively, using evidence to support the contrasting sides or alternatives
- use objective style; appeal to reason not emotion; create an impression of balance and impartiality
- include expressions of cause, consequence, opposition and concession.

Question 8

Points that could be included:

- 画的内容 (the content of visual stimulus)
- 画的涵义：十年种树，百年育人 (the implications of the visual stimulus: planting trees for 10 years, educating people for a hundred years)
- 儿童成长 (children's growing up)

The imaginative writing style should:

- use the writer's creativity and imagination to entertain the reader
- create a strong sense of context (physical surroundings and atmosphere) and situation
- include description (person, place, emotion, atmosphere), so careful selection of language such as adjectives and adverbs (or their equivalents) are important
- use techniques such as variation in sentence length, juxtaposition of different sentence lengths and careful control of structure and sequencing, to add to the overall effect by creating the desired atmosphere or conveying the required emotion
- break normal sequencing for added impact, such as in a flashback or in a final disclosure, which puts a different interpretation on preceding passages.