

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

There were some excellent results in the 2014 Dutch written examination. Students were very familiar with all the requirements of the examination.

Despite this, responses to both the listening and written sections of the paper contained a large number of grammatical and spelling errors.

It is recommended that students listen to as much spoken Dutch as they can. There are many Dutch clips on YouTube, and SBS Dutch news is stimulating and excellent practice. It is highly recommended that students complete previous Dutch examination papers, which are accompanied by the relevant examination report, available on the VCAA website.

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

Part A – Respond in English

Student responses about the spoken texts were generally well done, but some students did not include the relevant information in their answers or misinterpreted the question. Students can take notes in the space provided on the right-hand side of the paper and should use this space to the full. There were a large number of grammatical errors of all kinds in this section.

Text 1

Question 1

- In your unit you will find (D) an internet connection.
- The offer will be attractive especially to (C) people wanting an idyllic getaway.
- If you arrive on a Sunday (A) the cost will be 189 euros.
- The offer is valid for (B) a stay near a castle.

Text 2

Question 2a.

- In the Netherlands you are allowed to buy your own fireworks.
- The Dutch mainly prefer to stay at home (with *oliebollen*)/They eat *oliebollen*.
- They set off their own fireworks on New Year's Eve (at midnight).

Question 2b.

- They are worried about serious injuries (including blindness)/They are worried about blindness.
- People increasingly go to the (safer) public fireworks displays.
- Public fireworks displays are of superior quality.
- They love the displays above water/canals and rivers.

Text 3

Question 3a.

- the popularity of historical, Dutch novels with younger people
- historical books for younger people sell very well

Question 3b.

- Is it a longing for a smaller world, which leaves more to the imagination?
- Do younger readers want to identify with the heroes of their own past and country?
- Are they attracted to heroes that really existed?
- Are they simply exciting books?

Part B – Answer in Dutch

Text 4

Question 4

- Two pearls were found in wild oysters, which is very unlikely.
- They were found on the same day.
- They were found in the same village.
- The chance of finding a pearl in a wild oyster is one in 15 000.

Text 5

Question 5a.

- Euro myths are untrue stories circulating in the community about the EU.
- They make people forget about the good things done by the EU.

Question 5b.

At the beginning, she thinks the EU is useless. At the end of the conversation she says, ‘Yes, well, if you look at it that way...?’ / *‘Tja, als je het zo bekijkt ...’*

Question 5c.

- We now buy fruit that is not sprayed with dangerous substances.
- Stricter safety regulations apply to protect people in dangerous professions.
- Employers are no longer allowed to let their employees work in the burning sunshine all day.

Text 6

Question 6a.

Selfishness/egoism/egotism/impatience, and one of:

- people answer phone calls only if and when they want to
- people treat urgent phone calls only as urgent if they are urgent for them
- they only keep dates if nothing better comes up.

Question 6b.

- Mobile telephones have advantages: using them in emergencies can save lives.
- They are useful when cars break down on country roads.
- Mobile phones can give immediate access to accurate information on almost any topic/subject.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students had to read two texts in Dutch and answer questions about the texts in English. This was generally well done. Some students included too much irrelevant information in their answers.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Fons Westerloo uses the information that he gathers for television programs.

Question 7b.

- to show off: 16th century status symbol, meant they could show off beautiful interiors after the introduction of teak furniture or ‘modern day pride’
- cost of textiles in historical terms – too expensive to hang in front of a window
- the Calvinists directing people to leave curtains open so they could check whether their neighbours were drinking or gambling

Text 8

Text 8 presented difficulties for some students.

Question 8

- gradually and with few words

- the father had no interest in Jojo
- Jojo retreated into his love for the bird
- Jojo showed his father the true meaning of love
- the father showed very little emotion

Part B – Answer in Dutch

The text type to be completed by students was a short note to an aunt telling her about the child prodigy singer Amira Willighagen. Students were asked to compare the views of two opera singers and to say which one had a more positive view of Amira.

This section was very well done by students, and this year the word limit of 150 words was adhered to.

Students also needed to adhere to the correct text type. The main characteristics of common text types can be found on page 55 of the *VCE Dutch Study Design*.

Students also need to be aware that only information from the text can be used – information not found in the text must be omitted.

Question 9

Possible answers included the following.

Alfonso is more negative regarding Amira because:

- Amira has only one per cent of what a singer needs to be able to do
- she will need to work hard
- he thinks Amira imitates
- technically it does not work
- her breathing and high notes are not quite right
- we need to be patient for 10 years/she may amount to something
- he doesn't see the point in glorifying the child.

Maria is more admiring and positive regarding Amira's talent because:

- she thinks her performance was moving
- she also thinks Amira imitates, but thinks she does it well
- she has a pure voice
- she looks for true emotion
- she is pleased Amira devotes attention to classical singing
- she will make opera accessible to the listener
- youthful overconfidence is attractive.

Section 3 – Writing in Dutch

This piece of writing of approximately 250 words assesses students' ability to express ideas in clear and concise Dutch and should include a number of more complex grammar structures and idiomatic usage. The most popular question in 2014 was Question 12. Competent students were able to demonstrate excellent grammatical skills and to develop their topic creatively and often humorously, with the use of a wide range of vocabulary.

Despite these positives, a number of students made many grammatical mistakes, some of which could have been easily avoided if they had consolidated grammar rules consistently throughout the year. Spelling was also poor in many cases; students need to take note of their spelling errors and correct them. Writing in Dutch should be practised consistently during the year, writing on a wide variety of topics.

Common grammatical errors in students' written Dutch tasks include the following.

- subject/verb agreement: *de mensen heb een leuk huis* (*de mensen hebben een leuk huis*)
- adjective inflection: *zij woont in een mooie land* (*zij woont in een mooi land*)
- correct verb auxiliaries: *zij heeft verdwenen* (*zij is verdwenen*); *ik ben geslapen* (*ik heb geslapen*)
- incorrect genders: *de strand* (*het strand*), *het natuur* (*de natuur*)
- incorrect use of basic verbs and prepositions: *wij wachten voor onze vrienden* (*wij wachten op onze vrienden*); *ik ga thuis* (*ik ga naar huis*)

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- verb agreement with collective nouns: *de familie verhuizen (de familie verhuist); de groep gaan (de groep gaat)*
- correct use of ‘uw’ and ‘u’: *uw ouders, uw mening, hij komt met u, ik bezoek u*
- correct use of ‘jouw’ and ‘jou’: *jouw vrienden, jouw jas, komt hij met jou? Ik zal jou betalen*
- The difference between ‘en’ (and) and ‘een’ (a/an): this is a constant error and one where students must learn the difference: *een beest, een vader but een beest en een vader*

Common spelling errors included the following: *zij (zei), sturen (sturen), hoort (hoort), overall (overal), eigenlijk (eigenlijk), gebijten (gebeten), slaapen (slapen), woonen (wonen), waneer (wanneer), doodelijke (dodelijke), misschien (misschien), klijn (klein), best (beest), diren (dieren), kommen (komen), tog (toch), peg (pech), vondt (vond).*

Question 10

Students were required to write a humorous article about their problems on an exchange experience for a Dutch student newsletter.

Question 11

Students were required to write a letter of application, including a personal profile, for a job as a junior leader at a holiday camp for young learners of Dutch.

Question 12

Students were required to write an email persuading their Dutch penpal that Australia is a safe place to visit by sharing what their life is like here.

Question 13

Using the given cartoon, students were required to write an imaginative story for a school competition.