



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

All students were well acquainted with the assessment criteria in both sections of the oral examination, producing some fine, communicative performances. The chosen topic for this year's detailed study was 'Bullying' and the students were able to analyse and interpret the two main texts with good understanding and thorough preparation. They studied the Flemish film *Ben X* and the book *Niets, was wat hij zei* by Ben Sombogaart. They also studied various Internet articles and magazine extracts to gain a thorough insight into this challenging but engaging topic. Most students spoke confidently and moved the conversation forward in both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the examination. Some performances were marred by grammatical and pronunciation inaccuracies and some anglicisms were used where students did not know a Dutch word. A few students had difficulty in expanding and moving the conversation forward. This meant that the assessors had to extract information with difficulty from these students.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students generally demonstrated a high level of linguistic competency in this section, which consisted of a seven-minute conversation about the student's personal world of school and home life, family and friends, personal interests and future aspirations. Capable and well-prepared students were able to go well beyond the required responses and interacted keenly and intelligently with the assessors on a broad range of topics. In some cases, students were able to respond wittily and with a sophisticated sense of humour. There were a few weaker students who struggled with the simpler questions, whose responses were minimal and who were not able to move the conversation forward. Grammatical inaccuracies included the incorrect use of tenses, genders and word order and, in some cases, errors in pronunciation.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topic, although difficult, gave students an opportunity to express their personal opinions and ideas rationally and sensitively and, in some cases, to draw on their own personal experiences. Some students had difficulty in fully understanding some of the basic differences between the book *Niets, was wat hij zei* and the film *Ben X*. Unfortunately, some students had not finished reading the book and this reflected badly on their general comprehension and discussion of the topic. These students were not able to expand their answers in any way.

Communicative competence and fluency were generally of a high standard and interaction with the assessors through eye contact and body language were good. However, students need to pay more attention to the use of correct grammatical structures and to using a broad range of vocabulary.

It was pleasing to hear from a few students that they had learnt a great deal from their Detailed Study and had enjoyed studying a challenging topic.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

All students completed all sections of the written examination and were familiar with the requirements of the listening, reading and writing sections. However, there were numerous grammatical, spelling and vocabulary inaccuracies. Many students produced some excellent written work in Part B of Section 2 and Section 3. In contrast, some students did not expand enough on their chosen topic, and their responses consequently lacked depth and detail.

Unfortunately, a few students failed to adhere to the set word limit, either in Part B of Section 2 or in Section 3. Students **must** adhere to the set word limits. These are clearly indicated in the *VCE Dutch Study Design* and on the examination paper itself.

It is sensible for students to practise their Dutch by listening to spoken Dutch and reading as much Dutch as they can. This can be done from, for example, Dutch films, the Dutch news on SBS, Dutch newspapers such as *De Volkskrant* or *NRC Handelsblad* and Dutch grammar exercises from the Internet. It is also highly recommended that students



complete previous examination papers which are available on the VCAA website. Students should always proofread their answers before the end of the examination, as a number of careless errors can be picked up and corrected in this way.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Most students were able to select and use the relevant information relating to the five spoken texts, but there were a number of students who included too much information from outside the text in their answers. Texts 1, 3, 4 and 5 were generally well done by students but Text 2 caused some difficulties. The answer to Question 2a. was 'they were supposed to have mingled ...', which was possibly the most challenging question.

Students must listen very carefully to the texts and take as many notes as possible in the space provided. Some students demonstrated excellent linguistic competence, using a wide range of vocabulary, but other students were careless with their grammar and spelling. There were a large number of basic grammatical errors such as adjective inflection, sentence construction, word order and incorrect use of tenses and gender.

Text 1

Question 1a.

A health program

Question 1b.

It is a project that is close to her heart.

Question 1c.

All of:

- young children who have to be admitted to hospital
- their parents
- medical students
- the Teddy Bear Hospital.

Text 2

Question 2a.

One of:

- if it is true what they maintain
- they were supposed to have mingled ...

Question 2b.

- History would be changed because according to them, the Dutch people on the East India Company ships already lived on the west coast of Australia in the 17th century.
- The English only settled the east coast long after this.

Question 2c.

The people on the East India Company ships mingled with some of the Nunda people as early as the 17th century.

Question 2d.

- On board these ships were the people who had landed or were heading for the west coast.
- The Nunda people lived in an area which was a busy navigation route for the ships of the East India Company.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Three of:

- she claims to tidy her table before dinner at night, but does not do so about five times a week
- she claims not to like animals, but they are the subject of her next book and she loves her cat dearly
- she claims she is quiet but shouts when she writes
- she claims her husband is loud but he sits quietly when he writes
- it is about animals who make use of humans.

2009 Assessment Report



Question 3b.

It is about animals who have human characteristics.

Question 3c.

Cats only meow at people, not at other cats.

Question 3d.

- The interviewer uses the informal form of 'you'.
- He calls her 'Marion'.

Text 4

Question 4a.

- to encourage people to go to the flea market
- to advertise the discount on coffee and cake
- to encourage people to go to the café

Question 4b.

They sell anything at all, no matter what.

Question 4c.

The weather is good.

Text 5

Question 5a.

- Hugo does not believe in rules.
- Nicola believes in rules and thinks they protect people.

Question 5b.

- smoking (Hugo)
- seat belts (Nicola)
- naming of children (Nicola)

Question 5c.

He says they have to agree to disagree.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students were generally able to select and use the correct information from both reading texts. Some irrelevant responses were given and some students did not expand on their answers sufficiently.

Text 6

Question 6a.

His father cannot be compared with champion (speed) skater Kees Verkerk.

Question 6b.

Five of:

- skating was not in his blood
- skating was not one of his favourite activities
- he did not like nature
- he did not like cold feet
- he did not like muscle pain
- his parents did not teach him to skate.



A number of students did not list the five points as to why the writer, in his youth, did not like ice sports of any kind.

Question 6c.

Two of:

- they did not skate when they were younger
- skating was for poor Dutch people
- skiing in Austria was then the 'in thing' for the new rich Dutch people.

Question 6d.

He was reminded of why he did not like skating.

Question 6e.

He had a survival kit on his back/with him.

Text 7

Question 7a.

- to promote traditions and rituals
- to give an insight into their fascinating background
- to learn about the traditions of another

Question 7b.

- traditions, including cultural and social practices, are found in the smallest aspects of our lives
- they have been handed down by our forefathers

Question 7c.

- they date back to the 17th century
- the increasing unification of the country
- the local and regional individuality

A number of students did not fully explain the historical background of the traditions mentioned in the text.

Question 7d.

- they should be relevant
- they should be worthwhile/valuable

Question 7e.

Strange, odd, weird, peculiar

Part B – Answer in Dutch

Students were required to complete a persuasive note in response to an advertisement in a local paper. Students **must** adhere to the word limit of 150 words. Students must also adhere to the requirements of the text type, in this case a note, which required a date and place, as well as a suitable introduction and ending. The main characteristics of common text types can be found on page 55 of the *VCE Dutch Study Design*.

Only information from the text may be used in responses; this is stated quite clearly in the instructions. A few students mentioned the delights of a view with a windmill; however, this was clearly **not** mentioned in the text. Again there were numerous grammar and spelling errors. Great care needs to be taken when looking up words in the dictionary and to read and interpret the question carefully to know exactly what is being asked of students.

Section 3 – Writing in Dutch

The writing task is designed to assess students' ability to express ideas in good, clear Dutch by creating a piece of writing of 200–250 words. There were four topics from which to choose and this year Question 12 (using the title 'Never again!' for an imaginative short story) and Question 10 (write the text of an informative talk to primary school children about practical ways to protect the environment) were the most popular. The most competent students demonstrated excellent written language skills and developed their topics with relevant and interesting information and ideas coupled with a wide range of vocabulary. These students produced some original and engaging writing, which



was a pleasure to read. A few students were not able to present much more than basic information and did not have enough depth and coherence to their writing.

Some common spelling errors included the following.

- *heefd* (*heeft*), *luek* (*leuk*), *eght* (*echt*), *light* (*ligt*), *logeeren* (*logeren*), *prate* (*praatte*), *jaurig* (*jarig*), *koopen* (*kopen*), *wandellen* (*wandelen*), *overall* (*overal*), *all* (*al*), *milieu* (*milieu*) (in Question 10), *well* (*wel*), *wetten* (*weten*), *success* (*succes*), *huuren* (*huren*), *viertien* (*veertien*), *zekker* (*zeker*), *par* (*paar*), *sort* (*soort*), *snell* (*snel*), *s'nachts* (*'s nachts*), *julie* (*jullie*), *vertelen* (*vertellen*), *kliene* (*kleine*), *parkeeren* (*parkeren*), *doktor* (*dokter*), *hooft* (*hoeft*), *hop* (*hoop*), *zegen* (*zeggen*), *heele* (*hele*), *will* (*wil*), *speren* (*spieren*), *vlaak* (*vlak*), *zwembadt* (*zwembad*), *duren* (*deuren*), *merr* (*meer*), *rooken* (*roken*), *naturlijk* (*natuurlijk*), *begginnen* (*beginnen*), *grootte* (*grote*), *tog* (*toch*), *berijkbaar* (*bereikbaar*), *rondt* (*rond*), *dit betekend* (*dit betekent*) and *mischien* (*misschien*)

Some common grammatical errors included the following.

- The difference between *en* (and) and *een* (a, an), which are constantly confused with each other
- The difference between *zij* (she, they) and *zei* (imperfect of 'to say')
- The difference between *na* (after; for example, *na het ontbijt*) and *naar* (to, towards; for example, *naar school*)
- The difference between *u* (pronoun; for example, *hij kent u*) and *uw* (possessive adjective; for example, *hij kent uw zoon*)
- The difference between *jou* (pronoun; for example, *hij ziet jou*) and *jouw* (possessive adjective; for example, *jouw hond bijt*)
- Incorrect genders; for example, *de* (*het*) *land*, *de* (*het*) *voorbeeld*, *de* (*het*) *ziekenhuis*, *de* (*het*) *verschil*, *de* (*het*) *idee*, *het* (*de*) *cultuur*, *de* (*het*) *feest*, *de* (*het*) *weer*, *het* (*de*) *lucht*, *de* (*het*) *raam*, *de* (*het*) *geld*, *de* (*het*) *huisje* and *het* (*de*) *plek*
- Correct past participle; for example, *geleest* (*gelezen*), *gekeken* (*gekeken*), *gevraaght* (*gevraagd*), *gehaalt* (*gehaald*), *geeten* (*gegeten*), *gezoekt* (*gezocht*) and *gestuurt* (*gestuurd*)
- Correct imperfect tense of verbs; for example, *ik vraagde* (*ik vroeg*), *ik loopte* (*liep*), *hij hadt* (*had*) and *ik antwoorde* (*antwoordde*)
- The third person singular of present tense verbs with 'd' in the stem; for example, *hij houdt*, *hij wordt*, *hij antwoordt*, *hij vindt* and *hij rijdt*
- Word order; for example, *vandaag ik werk thuis* (*vandaag werk ik thuis*)
- Adjective inflection; for example, *een mooie huis* (*een mooi huis*), *een oude dorp* (*een oud dorp*), *geen witte brood* (*geen wit brood*), *een viesse hond* (*een vieze hond*) and *een liefve vrouw* (*een lieve vrouw*)
- Correct verb auxiliaries in the past tense; for example, *ik heb gegaan* (*ik ben gegaan*), *hij heeft aangekomen* (*hij is aangekomen*), *wij hebben gebleven* (*wij zijn gebleven*) and *het heeft begonnen* (*het is begonnen*)
- Consistency of register; that is, *jij/jullie* or *u* in one piece of writing
- Correct use of basic verbs and prepositions; for example, *ik wacht voor* (*op*) *de trein*, *ik heb geen geld met* (*bij*) *me*, *zij is bij* (*op*) *school/kantoor*, *ik ga thuis* (*naar huis*), *zij is op* (*aan*) *de telefoon* and *we gaan bij* (*met*) *de trein*

Students need to be aware not to change register (from 'jij/jullie' to 'u' or vice versa) in the middle of their writing.

Most students still need to concentrate on consolidating and revising grammatical rules and learning new vocabulary. If they wish to improve their written style in the future they should practise writing in Dutch on a variety of topics on a regular basis. They need to be able to incorporate more complex grammatical structures, idioms and a broad range of vocabulary to their written tasks. Planning and proofreading at all times are good habits to practise.