



2012

Languages: Hebrew GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students were well prepared for both sections of the 2012 Hebrew oral examination. Many students spoke fluent Hebrew, albeit not always idiomatically. The vocabulary of most students was extensive and used appropriately. Common mistakes involved the use of gender forms and prepositions, agreement between nouns and adjectives, and the conjugation of verbs. Anglicisms were also common.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students understood the assessors' questions well and were able to expand on the conversation. They conversed freely on the five topics prescribed by the *VCE Hebrew Study Design* and provided relevant responses to assessors' questions. High-scoring students used correct language structures and, when required, employed effective repair strategies. Students who did not perform well sometimes found it difficult to explain their opinions, gave short and simple answers, and needed the assessors' input to continue the conversation. Some students did not stress the correct syllable or vary the tone as needed and had problems maintaining the correct tempo.

A number of students started to answer a question before it was completed, or attempted to shift the conversation to a slightly different topic from the one introduced. This may be an indication that the student was inclined to use pre-learned material. Repeating rote-learned text at times led to mispronunciation.

Overall, the range of Hebrew vocabulary and expressions was satisfactory. However, some students used high language that was inappropriate to the register and style of the conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Generally, students demonstrated an excellent capacity to link with assessors, communicating effectively and maintaining the discussion. It was clear that they had prepared thoroughly for their topics, and presented extensive information and a variety of opinions.

Most students started with a concise, one-minute introduction that was well thought out. The high-scoring students discussed their topic in depth and were able to quote sources to support their opinions.

As in Section 1, some students relied on rote-learned material and rushed to reply without responding adequately to the question asked.

Student performance in this section is affected by the choice of topic. Some students chose a very narrow topic and this limited the discussion. These students had difficulty elaborating on their ideas and could offer only limited information. Teachers should advise students on selecting an appropriate topic for the discussion. The chosen topic should match the student's language skills and should be analysed in depth, beyond the basic concepts, to give the student adequate scope for demonstrating their language proficiency during the discussion.