



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students' performance in both sections of the 2011 Hebrew oral examination was very creditable. Many students were fluent in spoken Hebrew. Students were well prepared and there were fewer grammatical mistakes than in previous years. However, there is still considerable room for improvement. Students should aim at increasing their working knowledge of using gender forms correctly, the conjugation of verbs and the agreement between nouns and adjectives.

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were highly competent in the general conversation. They interacted with the assessors confidently and were able to maintain the flow of conversation without needing to be prompted. They conversed freely on a wide range of topics related to their personal world, such as home, school and personal aspirations. Many also expressed their opinions on more complex subjects, such as the environment, technology and social issues.

The high-performing students gave relevant and well thought-out answers, had a wide range of vocabulary and used it appropriately. The vocabulary of some students was more limited and they tended not to expand the conversation beyond short and simple answers. Most students were able to maintain the conversation without the assessors' support.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students who performed well in the conversation often also performed well when discussing their chosen topic in the discussion section. A wide vocabulary and a working knowledge of language structures are equally important in both parts of the assessment.

The high-scoring students demonstrated very good knowledge of their topics and resources, and presented the information clearly and logically. They referred to the resources to support their own ideas and were able to develop and maintain an interesting discussion. As in the conversation section, these students demonstrated excellent language skills. Although they were familiar with the resources, some students' command of the language was not always sufficient to clearly communicate the information they had learnt when researching their topic of choice. Students should pay attention to the key words used in the resources and utilise them while practising the discussion of their topic. This would make it easier for them to express their own ideas and to streamline the discussion.

The choice of topic is very important. Topics must lend themselves to the development of an in-depth discussion. When selecting topics for discussion, students should seek their teachers' advice in choosing a topic that is appropriate to the student's proficiency. It is important for students to research and explore a range of different resources to be able to discuss various aspects of their topic. In some cases the content of the three resources was so similar that it limited the scope of the discussion.

The range of topics this year included:

- Inventions and advancements in Israel in science, technology and medicine
- Education in Israel
- The gap between various generations of settlers
- The kibbutz: now and then
- Immigration and settlement
- Archeological sites in Israel.