



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Student performances in the 2008 Romanian oral examination ranged from good to outstanding. Most students were well prepared in both the Conversation and the Discussion of the Detailed Study and were able to sustain a seven-minute discussion. Some students brought interesting visual displays, such as pictures of the poet Eminescu and his heroine Veronica Micle.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Overall, students' performances were very good and they were very successful in answering all questions asked. Some students elaborated on their answers and tried to make them interesting and meaningful. Other students however, often answered in monosyllabic sentences or superficially, which restricted their ability to deal with the content of the conversation.

The vocabulary used was varied, although less successful students used anglicisms such as *fişuit*, *factorie* and *să mă joc la pian*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics about the nature and the love in Eminescu's poems were the most popular with students, as were aspects of Romanian history in his works. Most students prepared their topic well and mentioned at least two texts they had studied. The level of language used in this section was very high. More successful students had memorised quotations from poems they had studied in order to sustain their opinions and ideas.

Some students did not adequately display their capacity to present ideas and opinions on a chosen topic and could only discuss one poem. In such circumstances the discussion was lacking in depth.

Some common mistakes included using incorrect verb and noun endings and using too many nouns starting with 'ca' (*cacofonii*).

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Section A – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

General comprehension of this section was good, but students must read and follow the instructions more carefully and convey the information more precisely.

Text 1

These questions were answered well by most students.

Question 1a.

The announcement is important to everyone travelling, both drivers and pedestrians. It refers to traffic safety in several regions of Romania affected by fog.

Students needed to specify that the target was drivers **and** pedestrians.

Question 1b.

- visibility is very low (under 100 metres)

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And any two of:

- drivers should reduce their speed
- drivers should avoid overtaking
- drivers should keep a safe distance between cars.

It was important to say that the region has visibility of less than 100 metres and mention two safety measures.

Text 2

Most students gave correct answers. Those who identified specific information and conveyed it precisely did better than those who did not pay attention to detail.

Question 2a.

News item	No more free plastic bags in Romania
Advantage	Less pollution
Disadvantage	Stress and cost

Students did not receive a mark if they did not mention both stress and cost as disadvantages.

Question 2b.

As he rarely goes shopping, so the new measure won't affect him.

Question 2c.

Plastic takes 400 years to decompose.

Text 3

Question 3b., which asked students who influenced Zamfir's education and what evidence there was in the text to link his success to both people, proved challenging.

Question 3a.

Both of:

- 14 years old
- the accordion.

Question 3b.

- Zamfir's father influenced him to play music
- Fania Luca caused Zamfir to study the pan flute
- His success is mirrored in the pan flute music of Picnic at Hanging Rock
- His father was very pushy and took him to Bucharest
- Fania Luca told Zamfir about his success story and recognised that he was gifted

Question 3c.

All of:

- he had four art exhibitions
- he wrote poems
- he composed the music of a few films
- he was involved in politics for a short time.

Part B – Answer in Romanian

Text 4

Text 4 was about 'Romania in Europe'.

Question 4a.

To stimulate free discussions on European topics generated by the recent changes in Romania, such as changes in politics, cultural and social life.



Question 4b.

The project is organised by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the European Institute in Romania
The discussions are generated by changes in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> politics, economy, society, culture
Attending this event will be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> academic personalities from Romania people from abroad
The debates will take place in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Info Europe' in Bucharest
One can receive a summary of the debates if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one registers on the radio station's website

Text 5

Question 5a.

Any two of:

- the traditional dance, 'perinnita'
- traditional food like cabbage rolls, roast, traditional cake and wine
- breaking the glasses at midnight.

Question 5b.

- Ioana celebrated by going out and enjoying the New Year celebration with lots of people.
- Gelu spent it at home with his family

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students were required to read two texts and then answer in English. Many students did not pay enough attention to the correct way of conveying information.

Text 6

Text 6 was a love story between two very different animals – a cow and a donkey.

Some students had difficulties identifying the required language features in order to be able to correctly answer question 6c.

Question 6a.

Any four of:

- the donkey kissed the calf
- the calf started licking the donkey
- the donkey was upset when the calf left
- the calf responded to the donkey's calls
- the donkey was upset when Frumusica left
- Frumusica was comforting the donkey with a sound.

Question 6b.

The mother cow wasn't very happy and/or she scolded Frumusica.

Question 6c.

The students were asked to rewrite the story from the donkey's point of view (first person, singular).

The following is an example of a suggested response.

I saw this beautiful young calf, which looked like her mum coming towards the fence, I was ready to go but I couldn't resist. The calf licked me trying a soft kiss, her mum scolded her so she was about to leave when I started to make a lot of noise and she responded. This was true love.

Question 6d.

- Adjectives/attributes like golden-coloured etc.
- Onomatopoeic verbs: mooing
- Metaphor: name Frumusica
- Personification: animals have affinity, feelings



Text 7

Text 7 was about new tendencies in healthy diets.

Question 7a.

- Healthy foods are expensive
- These products are less tasty

Question 7b.

Romanians choose to buy these products and manufacturers make a lot of profit, they want to be healthier and it is in fashion.

Question 7c.

Differences between this article and a scientific research project:

- there are no scientific facts and figures in the text
- style is very personal talks about price
- text underlines sensational matter like this is the fashion etc.
- generalisations, without giving exact data.

Part B – Answer in Romanian

The students, using the information provided, had to write a journal entry about the unique experience they have had during an excursion in the Danube Delta.

The students had to provide information like:

- the source of the river
- the distance it travels
- the new land made every year of alluviums on the shores of Black Sea
- flora and fauna
- the biggest wetland reservation in Europe
- practically no pollution.

All students understood specific aspects of the text and responded to information. They used a variety of vocabulary and conveyed information coherently.

Section 3 – Writing in Romanian

Question 9

Students had to write a letter to the Australian school principal convincing him to organise an official exchange between an Australian and Romanian school. They had to explain how the exchange would be beneficial and talk about Romania and school in Romania.

Question 10

Students had to write a narrative about an incident during a flight to Romania. They had to describe what happened and give details in order to create a logical and interesting story.

Question 11

Students had to write an evaluative report for the school magazine about advantages and disadvantages of online shopping.

Some suggested answers include:

- advantages: buy quicker, home-delivered, lower cost, no petrol
- disadvantages: hackers, no human interaction, no specials.

Question 12

Students had to write an article for a Romanian travel agency with information about beautiful Australian landscapes including reserves, beaches and sanctuaries. The article had to include three aspects of particular interest to potential visitors. Students could have mentioned Wilson's Promontory, fauna and flora, Ayers Rock as examples.

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Question 10 was most popular. Some answers were extremely well formulated and included sophisticated language, syntax and poetical inclination.

Other students chose to write about beautiful Victoria or the formal letter about organising an exchange with Romania.

Most of the pieces of writing were relevant, the range of vocabulary used was adequate, and excellent pieces were full of ideas, opinions and information.