

2015 VCE Russian written examination report

General comments

In Section 1 – Listening and Responding, students were able to identify specific details and descriptive language in order to address the questions. Students also performed well in Section 2 – Reading and Responding.

Students should practise writing in a variety of genres to improve their ability to express themselves coherently. For some students, underdeveloped writing skills prevented them from expressing their ideas and opinions clearly, particularly in Section 3.

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 – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

This is an old traditional Russian dish/one of the oldest Russian dishes.

Most students received full marks for this question.

Question 1b.

Kind of fish: Sea fish

Detailed explanation: Fish from a lake or river may smell of algae or stagnant water, and the soup may taste bitter.

Not all students were able to explain in detail why a particular fish should be used for this dish.

Text 2

Question 2

Some people say that slang:

- brings an element of a game/fun into language/playing with language in an amusing way/but should be used only in spoken language or in school
- is very popular in the media (to keep up with modern life).

Other people say that slang:

- is a sign of a lack of professionalism and should not be used in offices/in business
- may destroy the beauty and richness of the standard Russian language.

Most students were able to summarise the different opinions about the use of slang.

Text 3

Question 3

- work is amusing (crow's nest story)
- challenging work
- helping people
- professionalism (keeps information confidential)
- saving people's reputations
- solving puzzles
- pride/solves 90 per cent of his cases

Most students answered this question correctly and achieved high marks.

Part B – Answer in Russian

Text 4

Question 4

- атмосферные явления: ветер/облака
 - Поведение животных: сбиваются в стадо
 - Поведение растений: бутоны цветов закрываются
 - Луна: меняет цвет
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- Atmospheric condition: wind/clouds
 - Animal behaviour: cows get together in the herd
 - Plant behaviour: flower buds close
 - Moon: changes its colour

Most students were able to name four different categories of weather predictors and provide one example of each.

Text 5

Question 5

- different programs for children
- there is a huge amount of instruments and equipment
- big star hall
- 4D cinema
- children can attempt different experiments
- children can drive Yuri Gagarin's car
- children can imagine themselves as passengers of a spaceship

Most students received high marks for this question.

Text 6

Question 6

- studying academic subjects
- running a lot of interesting programs aimed at the development of children's creativity
- award ceremony for the best performance of Pushkin's poems
- all-Russian literary contest
- award ceremony for talented writers
- housing Pushkin's manuscripts and memorabilia

This question was not answered well.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 7

Question 7a.

- Black River – Pushkin: he valued his honour more than his life.
- Decembrists' Square – Decembrists valued their ideals more than their wellbeing and prosperity.
- Summer Garden – Russian people valued the beauty of nature and historical heritage more than their lives.
- Piskarevskoye Cemetery – Russians love their motherland, shown by the fact that the paths in the cemetery lead to a statue representing the motherland.

This question appeared to be quite challenging for some students.

Question 7b.

- The writer took his hat off.
- The writer put flowers on the monument.
- The writer sat quietly.

Most students answered this question correctly and scored high marks.

Text 8

Question 8

For sport

- heroes for young people
- discoveries/revolutions in sport and science
- sport is popular/there are many records

Against sport

- harmful for health
- dangerous/can be lethal
- competitive

Most students achieved high marks for this question.

Part B – Answer in Russian

Text 9

Question 9

Students were assessed on how well they:

- demonstrated an understanding of the stimulus text
- wrote text appropriate and relevant to context, purpose and audience
- structured and sequenced information and ideas
- manipulated language structures and vocabulary in Russian.

Students were asked to write about their childhood memories for their class magazine entitled 'Motherland'.

Most students demonstrated good writing skills in Russian, manipulated the language authentically and creatively, used sophisticated vocabulary and demonstrated extensive grammar knowledge.

Some students copied most of the sentences from the original text, thus not providing their point of view or demonstrating their writing skills.

Section 3 – Writing in Russian

Students were assessed on how well they:

- demonstrated depth of treatment of information, ideas and/or opinions
- wrote text appropriate and relevant to context, purpose and audience
- structured and sequenced information and ideas
- manipulated language structures and vocabulary in Russian.

Question 10

Students needed to write a formal letter to the Minister for the Environment, expressing their opinion on whaling and its effects on the environment.

This question was one of the most popular. Students who attempted it produced a well-argued opinion with considerable depth and supported the arguments with evidence. The formal letter writing conventions were observed.

Question 11

Students were asked to write a story for the Ghost Lovers Society's magazine. Although this was the least popular question, students who attempted it demonstrated their ability to produce a correctly structured response in the form of an imaginative story and showed a good understanding of register and style.

Question 12

This question asked students to write an article for the school newspaper, evaluating the question, 'Is a university degree essential in order to become a successful and independent person?' Many students attempted this question, but their responses included pre-learned ideas on further education and their evaluation was one-sided. The organisation of ideas was satisfactory. The article-writing conventions were sometimes not observed.