

# 2017 VCE Russian written examination report

## General comments

In Section 1 – Listening and Responding of the 2017 VCE Russian written examination, 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.

- One does not really want to smile in  $-20^{\circ}$  frost.
- Russians suspect people who smile pointlessly all the time as being silly/stupid.

For the second point, students could have answered with the Russian saying 'Laughing without a reason is a sign of being silly'.

##### Question 1b.

Any two of:

- to express feelings (warmth, trust or gratitude)
- in response to a compliment
- in response to a joke or an anecdote.

#### Text 2

##### Question 2a.

- It's about UFOs/extraterrestrial beings/space exploration.
- It includes amazing special effects/computer graphics.

##### Question 2b.

Any two of:

- UFO hovering above Saint Basil's Cathedral

- strange things happening – the flickering blue lights around the Kremlin Clock and bubbles appearing in the murky water of Patriarch’s Pond
- the Army is trying to establish contact with the visitors.

‘Kuranty’ or ‘Kuranti’ was not accepted as it is a Russian term.

**Text 3**

**Question 3a.**

Orientation day (discussing the conditions of the job and being shown the studio)

**Question 3b.**

- work from 9 to 5 for 20 000 roubles per month
- sometimes stay back late, receiving double pay of the usual rate

**Question 3c.**

Style	Description
Arabic	wooden furniture decorated with fine carvings and mosaics
Chinese	red draperies showing a phoenix
English	comfortable solid armchair with a high back and a footrest/a soft, checked throw rug
Russian	heating stove covered with ceramic tiles/clay jars or jugs

For English style, ‘Sherlock Holmes’ was not considered incorrect but could not be awarded a mark on its own.

**Part B – Answer in Russian**

**Text 4**

**Question 4a.**

*Витебск - родной город Марка Шагала.* (Vitebsk is Mark Chagall’s hometown.)

**Question 4b.**

Можно посетить: (One can attend:)

- *Научные конференции* (academic conferences)
- *Лекции* (lectures)
- *Концерты* (concerts)
- *Выступления театральных и цирковых исполнителей* (theatrical and circus performances)
- *Выставки работ Шагала* (exhibitions of Chagall’s work)

**Text 5**

**Question 5**

- *Если папа бросит курить, это сэкономит семье много денег.* (If Dad quits, it will save the family a lot of money)
- *Улучшаются вкусовые ощущения.* (Food taste will be improved.)
- *Папе будет легче ходить по горам, если он не будет курить.* (It will be easier for him to go hiking without puffing.)

- *Запрещается курить на борту и папа злится, если долго не курит.* (Smoking on board is not allowed and Dad will become angry if he can't smoke for a long time.)  
*Он не выдержит долгий перелёт.* (He won't survive a long flight.)

### Text 6

#### Question 6

- *Честолюбив (стремится к успеху) / Ревность к достижениям братьев и сестёр / соперничество с братьями и сёстрами.* (Firstborns are jealous of other siblings' achievements/compete with other siblings.)
- *Общителен и дружелюбен / отличный игрок в команде и посредник / трудно решать проблемы в одиночку.* (Middle children are sociable and friendly/excellent team players and mediators/find it hard to solve problems alone, without help because they have both elder and younger siblings.)
- *Милый / избалован / манипулятор. / Не отстаёт от старших братьев и сестёр.* (Younger children are nice/spoilt/motivated/manipulate others for personal gain because they try to keep up with elder siblings – in studies.)

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

### Part A – Answer in English

### Text 7

#### Question 7

Examples could have included:

- friends:
  - appointed to an important position
  - conversation partners
  - confidantes
- not friends:
  - was aware of her proud and independent personality
  - was unhappy about Dashkova's role in the coup
  - accused of writing an allegedly dangerous book
  - issued a warning
  - Dashkova retired.

This question appeared to be quite challenging for students.

Evidence should have included examples of both when they were friends and not friends, to adequately demonstrate how the relationship was complicated.

### Text 8

#### Question 8

- increased number of hot days
  - longer time for crop production
  - longer tourist season
  - impact on human health – heatwaves and pollen allergies
  - bushfires
  - floods
- less snow
  - access to forests for timber industry/deforestation

- increased hunting
- less sea ice
  - new shipping routes
  - easier transportation of goods

## Part B – Answer 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.

### Text 9

#### Question 9

Students were asked to write a review of a resort for a travel website.

Most students demonstrated good writing skills in Russian, and their response was evaluative. The students provided sufficiently detailed facts and examples, thus offering good advice to potential travellers. They manipulated the language authentically and creatively, used sophisticated vocabulary and demonstrated extensive grammar knowledge.

Some students copied most of sentences in the original text, thus lacking any demonstration of their writing skills.

## Section 3 – Writing in Russian

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.

#### Question 10

Students had to write a letter to a family friend, expressing an opinion on their classmate's personality traits and skills and persuading the friend to employ the classmate.

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

#### Question 11

Students were asked to write an imaginative piece of writing in a blog format.

Though this was a less popular question than others, students who attempted it demonstrated their ability to produce a correctly structured response in the form of an imaginative story, including fantastic ideas on what may happen in 50 years' time with technology.

They demonstrated a good understanding of register and style of imaginative writing and blog conventions.

### **Question 12**

Question 12 asked students to write the script of a speech for a school presentation, reflecting on IS Turgenev's ideas.

Many students attempted this question, reflecting on Turgenev's ideas on the importance of learning and preserving the Russian language. They demonstrated well-developed writing skills and addressed the task. Speech conventions were observed.