



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students generally performed very well in this year's oral examination. Some students needed more preparation for Section 1 – Conversation to demonstrate the ability to respond with spontaneity.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Most students demonstrated an excellent level of understanding when responding to the questions asked and carried the conversation forward with minimal support. Good repair strategies were used in some instances, for example, when English terms were used, students excused their mistake and used the correct term in Sinhala.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Students demonstrated a very good level of preparation by elaborating on a range of information about family, friends, school, leisure and future inspirations. They usually clarified and supported their ideas and opinions on these topics.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Students used an excellent range of vocabulary and grammar and a consistent use of appropriate style and register. In many instances they were able to self-correct their errors.

Most students had excellent pronunciation and intonation but there was a lack of demonstration of appropriate stress and tempo.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many of the topics chosen by students were current, relevant and interesting. In most instances students had the opportunity to evaluate and express their ideas and opinions. Some students were not well prepared and found it difficult to sustain an in-depth discussion on the chosen topic.

Most students chose topics suitably related to aspects of the language and culture of Sinhala-speaking communities, allowing for exploration and comparison through a range of texts. Some students, however, chose topics unrelated to language and culture.

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Most students carried on the discussion with confidence, responding readily to the assessors' questions. These students were also able to engage in and lead a discussion. Pronunciation in most cases was very good; however, appropriate intonation, stress and tempo was only evident in a few instances.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Most students were very well prepared and were able to present well-researched information. Students were usually able to clarify and elaborate on facts, express their ideas and support their opinions. There were a few instances where students needed assessors' support to extend the discussion to the required time limit.



Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

There were a few instances where students used English terms, however they were usually self-corrected. The appropriate style and register was used consistently by most students.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall quality of performance of the students in the written examination was quite high. Some questions discriminated clearly between good and weaker students. It was evident that some students had difficulty writing answers in sections requiring an answer in English. In these instances, there were many English spelling and grammar mistakes, as well as incorrect use of terms and expressions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

A tree for the future

Most students answered this question correctly. 'Planting trees' was not considered a correct answer.

Question 1b.

The trees are important for the existence of life/animals on Earth.

'The trees are important to Earth' was not considered a correct answer. There were a few students who did not mention life on Earth even though it was clearly referred to in the text.

Question 1c.

Both of:

- for students to bring plants (endemic to Australia) for the project
- for the students to participate in the project.

Instead of specifying 'endemic', 'the plants that grow in Australia' was considered correct. In most answers both points were mentioned.

Text 2

Question 2a.

Both of:

- earlier tourists came to see ancient cities/ruins/wildlife in Sri Lanka
- now they come for spa baths/body and soul holidays.

Two marks were given only when changes from past to present were described. In some answers only the new trend was mentioned, although the question specifically asked for a description of the change.

Question 2b.

All of:

- hotels provided facilities for spa baths with fruit and vegetable extracts
- water sports
- meditation programs for mental health.

Most answers provided all three points while a few responses only gave two points.

Question 2c.

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The Sidhalepa Company has opened a sanatorium with all facilities in Colombo city.

This was an analytical question. There were a few incorrect answers.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Kamala is the President of 'The Women's Services Organisation' (association)/Kantha Seva Organisation.

Many students wrote 'as Kamala is the leader or the head of a women's organisation' and this was considered correct.

Question 3b.

Two of:

- the women had the freedom to practise their religion
- the women could even become nuns
- women held positions on many occasions.

'Vihara Maha Devi became a nun' was incorrect. Students used many other terms for 'nun'. Some students only mentioned one point.

Question 3c.

In the past

Two of:

- the women did not go out to work/were less involved in the society
- she stayed at home and looked after their children
- she was involved in a small industry while staying at home to earn a small income
- she helped her husband in the fields.

In the present

Two of:

- the women are more educated
- the women are more involved in the society
- the women now work in different fields, as doctors, engineers and even as politicians.

Many students got full marks for this question.

Question 3d.

Three of:

- helps the women who get abused at home or in the workplace
- helps the women to find suitable jobs
- trains the women for jobs
- provides counselling to solve their problems at home
- educates women to look after their health.

Most students got full marks for this question.

Part B – Answer in Sinhala

Text 4

Question 4a.

He was going to achieve the record of the highest number of wickets in the world of cricket.

Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 4b.

The heavy rain prevented him from achieving this goal.

Most students got full marks for this question.

Question 4c.

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Both of:

- all the spectators in the stadium cheered for him
- all the players gathered around him to congratulate him.

Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 5a.

Two of:

- the hotel is built in a jungle and some trees were preserved, even inside the hotel
- there is a large granite rock at the entrance
- the swimming pool and the lake appear to be joined together.

Many students got full marks.

Question 5b.

Two of:

- Sinhala songs were sung and music is provided with our own instruments
- cultural dances are staged
- have segments of drumming.

The following responses were not considered cultural entertainment: offering a lotus flower and greeting the guests, saying *Ayubowan* and having traditional food. Some students missed out on one mark on this question.

Question 5c.

Both of:

- Kanthi likes to visit places of interest
- Rani likes to visit relatives and go shopping.

Students needed to mention the interests of both people to gain full marks. Many students were successful in doing this.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

Question 6a.

The elephants are an endangered species/the elephants are becoming extinct very quickly.

Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 6b.

The elephant

Any four of:

- the elephants need large forests to live
- the human beings have encroached our homeland (forest) for their needs
- we have been displaced to new places where we do not know our boundaries
- we have to go to the village to get our water
- we enjoy eating some of the crops they have grown, such as cane sugar and corn
- human beings set traps to harm us.

The villager

Any four of:

- our requirements increase as the population increases
- we need wood, therefore we have to cut down trees
- we need cleared areas to build reservoirs to get electricity
- the elephants were moved to other places for their own good
- the humans have to clear the land for cultivation
- we cannot ignore when elephants destroy our crops and dwellings.

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Most students received between six and eight marks.

Question 6c.

The lives of both humans and elephants are valuable and need to be protected.

Most students identified the correct answer.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Four of:

- the low-lying areas get flooded
- the landslide in the hill country
- loss of lives
- loss of livelihood
- the drinking water gets polluted and causes diseases
- the mosquitos breed in the water and spread diseases.

Most students received between two and three marks.

Question 7b.

Three of:

- the unauthorised constructions and short-sighted developments have blocked the flow of rainwater
- due to inadequate cleaning, the canals have become blocked with rubbish
- the clearing of forests
- growing potatoes, tobacco and tea on the slopes inappropriately.

This was an analytical question. Many students received one or two marks and some students received no marks for this question.

Question 7c.

Three of:

- to educate the people about possible dangers
- to establish an authority to plan new constructions and clearing of land
- to have a proper disaster management plan
- to provide funds for these projects.

Most students got full marks for the question.

Part B – Answer in Sinhala

Question 8

Format

- proper format for a leaflet, with topics and sub-topics highlighting the important information

Language

- persuasive language to encourage people to come to the film

Information

- all the required information and details about the film

There were some very good responses where students illustrated and highlighted the important information. A few others wrote a short passage and reproduced the information provided in the text. There was a discrimination of stronger and weaker students with this question.



Section 3 – Writing in Sinhala

Question 9

Question 9 stated that after completing their Year 12 examinations, some students prefer to spend a gap year in a foreign country. Students were required to write an evaluative article for the school magazine discussing the advantages and disadvantages of taking a gap year.

Format (2 marks)

- the title and the name of the writer

Language (4 marks)

- formal language

Content (8 marks)

- at least two points as advantages and two points as disadvantages

Layout (1 mark)

- separating to paragraphs

Two marks were awarded for each point of advantage and disadvantage.

There were many good attempts at this question. Most students provided valid reasons for both advantages and disadvantages. Most students gave two points as advantages and disadvantages.

Question 10

Students were required to write a report for a newspaper in Sri Lanka providing information about how the New Year is celebrated in Australia.

Format (2 marks)

- the title and the name of the writer

Language (4 marks)

- formal language
- past tense

Content (8 marks)

- a good description of the events held, participation of people and any other information about the events

Layout (1 mark)

- separating to paragraphs

There were a few attempts at this question. In most instances the correct format and language were used, with a fairly good description.

Question 11

Students were required to write an informal letter to a friend in Sri Lanka describing the special experiences you had during a weeklong camping trip organised by your school.

Format (3 marks)

- address
- salutation
- ending

Language (4 marks)

- informal language
- past tense

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Content (7 marks)

- a description of an event or an incident that provided some experience

Layout (1 mark)

- separating to paragraphs

There were many good attempts at this question. Some students only described the camping trip and the place they camped without any mention of the experiences they had. In the good answers, some students described the things they had done while camping and the experiences they had gained from it, while others described an adventurous experience they had while camping.

Question 12

Question 12 stated 'The truth always wins.' Students were required to write an imaginative short story for young readers on this topic.

Format (2 marks)

- title
- name

Language (4 marks)

- formal or informal language as appropriate
- past tense

Content (8 marks)

- the written piece should be relevant to the topic

Layout (1 mark)

- separating to paragraphs

Very few students attempted this question and in these responses the relevance of the content to the topic was not very evident.