



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Student performance on the 2011 Sinhala written examination was very good. It was evident that many students had used their dictionaries to find the appropriate English words for Sinhala terms. However, there were some grammatical mistakes. Although any note-taking may be in point form, when writing in Sinhala it is important for students to write their actual answers appropriately in complete sentences in order to demonstrate their ability to write in the language.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A: Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

Both of:

- to identify the drivers who flout/disobey the road rules
- to reduce/limit road accidents.

Question 1b.

Drivers should be more careful/vigilant when driving vehicles.

Text 2

Question 2a.

The air–water taxi service

‘Air taxi’ or ‘water taxi’ alone was not accepted.

Question 2b.

Any two of:

- as they fly at a low altitude, passengers can enjoy the beauty of nature
- passengers can listen to the commentary
- the travellers can reach their destination quickly without getting caught in road traffic
- the low cost.

Text 3

Question 3a.

- To go out at night/for dinner and then for a film or a stroll, to celebrate Thushan’s birthday.
- Her mother would not like the idea of her going out at night.

There were two parts to this question. Some students answered only one part and therefore did not score both marks.

Question 3b.

Her parents (all of):

- take care of all her (and her sister’s) needs very affectionately
- view her and her sister as children and therefore protect them
- put their daughter’s requirements before their own
- are fair and trust her to go out in a safe environment.

Question 3c.

To possibly meet at Thushan’s house

Text 4

Question 4a.

The number of tourists expected for the current year was 600 000, but 650 000 have visited Sri Lanka.

**Question 4b.**

Any three of:

- the present peaceful situation in the country
- Sri Lanka is a beautiful country/has many important historical places
- Sri Lanka is rated/recommended as the number one place to visit in *The New York Times* and/or as the number two place to visit in *The National Geographic*
- native medicinal treatments have become popular among foreigners.

Question 4c.

By (any three of):

- expanding the facilities required for tourists to enjoy the historical and cultural locations and the natural beauty of the country
- renovating the tourist lodges in wildlife parks
- constructing five-star hotels (with the support of the foreign investors)
- offering rest house or lodges (the private sector).

Part B: Answer in Sinhala

Text 5**Question 5a.**

Any two of:

- rice is more tasty, nutritious and healthy
- eating rice is cheaper than eating bread
- rice is home grown.

Question 5b.

The son wanted to eat bread rather than rice for his meal. The mother says that eating rice is better and that it is locally grown. In contrast the mother explained that the flour for bread is imported. Therefore, rice is better and is grown locally.

Many students only explained the statement without referring to the context of the text.

Text 6**Question 6a.**

Any two of:

- be fully prepared beforehand
- face the competition with confidence
- accept the three outcomes with courage.

Question 6b.

- The school and teachers provided the required knowledge and were dedicated to student success.
- The family provided a suitable environment at home for his studies.
- He studied with his friends; they shared knowledge and helped each other with their difficulties.

Question 6c.

He said it was up to them to make the best use of the environment (school and home) to achieve their goals.

Section 2 – Reading and Responding

Part A: Answer in English

Text 7**Question 7a.**

Any four of:

- it supplies services to ships that enter the port, such as repairing, bunkering and medical facilities
- the exports and the imports of the region are handled through this port, saving on transportation costs
- since the area around the port is declared duty free, it has attracted foreign investors
- it has created jobs for about 50 000 people
- the infrastructure has increased and has led to economic development.

**Question 7b.**

Any four of:

- a port (harbour) is marked on Ptolemy's map of this area from the sixth century BCE
- the rock inscription found in a nearby temple says that the income from the port was donated to the temple
- excavations in the area have revealed buildings similar to the jetty of a port, seals with a lion mark and the anchor of a ship
- divers have found broken pieces of clay and ceramic pots from a shipwreck
- people have found ancient coins (Chinese, Greek and Roman) in this area.

Question 7c.

The title says that history has repeated itself because, in two instances when new construction was done (that is, the port and the dam), the remains of an ancient port were discovered. Therefore, this title is very appropriate to the story.

Students needed to show that they understood the meaning of the title, and connect it to the content of the text by referring to the examples.

Text 8**Question 8a.**

Both of:

- there are endangered flora and fauna (plants and animals) at these sites
- there is a great biodiversity (variety of plants and animals) at the sites.

Question 8b.

Gene piracy involves taking away the resources and the knowledge of a country illegally. Certain medicines are produced with natural resources from Sri Lanka, then the producers obtain patent rights and sell the medicines back to the people in Sri Lanka at high prices.

There were two parts to this question. Most students answered both parts correctly.

Question 8c

The people in Sri Lanka/local people are to be blamed because:

- local people hunt the animals and clear the forests to build houses and roads
- local people assist foreigners in illegal activities such as the export of local animals and plants.

There were two parts to the question. Some students gave only one reason to support their answer.

Question 8d.

All of:

- enforce strict laws to punish the offenders
- use modern technology to closely watch the protected areas
- encourage the environmentally friendly volunteer groups to report on any suspicious activities going on in these areas.

Part B: Answer in Sinhala

Question 9

Format

- addresses the audience appropriately
- ending – thanks the audience for listening
- separated into paragraphs

Language

- informal
- persuasive

Content

- brief description of historical places and other important and beautiful places given in the itinerary
- mention of the facilities



- low cost of the trip
- some past experiences

Some students reproduced the entire itinerary without writing much to persuade their friends to join the trip. There were some good pieces of writing where students made use of the itinerary to choose a few important places to highlight different aspects and also mentioned their past experiences.

Section 3 – Writing in Sinhala

Most of the responses in this section were very good. The grammar and sentence structures were correct, and the language and vocabulary used were appropriate.

Question 10

Only a couple of students attempted this question, which asked for an evaluative article about the strengths and weaknesses of the statement ‘Most television advertisements about consumer goods mislead viewers’. All responses were good and evaluated positive and negative aspects of TV advertisements appropriately.

Question 11

This question required students to write a report based on their participation in the ‘Clean Up Australia’ campaign. This was the least popular question. Generally, it was not very well answered, and students tended to omit their own opinions about the event.

Question 12

For this question, students had to write a letter to a friend about school education and extracurricular activities in Australia. This was the most popular question and was selected by the majority of students. Some responses were well compiled, and even compared Australian education to classroom education in Sri Lanka. Some students forgot to mention the extracurricular activities undertaken in schools. There were a few who described only the positive aspects of classroom education and invited the friend to come to Australia to complete his education here. This was not the purpose of the question.

Question 13

This imaginative story on the topic ‘Dreams do come true’ was also not a popular choice. Some of the responses were not very exciting and did little to maintain the interest of the reader.