

2020 VCE Tamil written examination report

General comments

Students' general level of performance on the 2020 Tamil written examination was good. Many students identified the key words or phrases within the questions and highlighted or underlined them. They took detailed notes of the information they heard in the listening texts, then transferred the necessary points into their examination responses with correct starting or concluding phrases.

Teachers and students are advised that the examination will not consist solely of questions that require translation or the simple recall of information. Some questions will be pitched at a higher cognitive level, requiring analysis, synthesis or evaluation. It is expected that students should identify the suitable information or the main ideas from the texts (not from their own general knowledge) depending on the questions and then convey them accurately and appropriately.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what may have been included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

When answering questions in Sections 1 and 2, students should remember the following.

- It is important to answer in the specified language. Some students lost marks for using the wrong language, or wasted time crossing off answers in the wrong language and rewriting them in the correct language.
- Students should wait for the second playing of the text to organise their notes and then write their response.
- Students should not use the same piece of information more than once or to answer more than one part of a question.

The reading time should be used wisely in Section 1 by identifying the key words and/or phrases in the questions before listening to the texts.

Students should read the questions carefully, word by word and as a whole. This year, the following basic vocabulary and tenses in both Tamil and English played a vital part in the examination. The words were 'women' in Question 1b., 'வேண்டுகோள்' in Question 3a., 'setting' in Question 5a., 'will' in Question 8b. and 'இரகசிய' in Question 9. These issues will be discussed below in each question where they occurred.

The allocated marks and the answer space given for each question are good indicators of the approximate length and detail of the required answer. However, if students need more space, they can use the blank spaces under each set of given lines rather than squeezing their answers into the lines provided. They should remember that only the writing in the designated note-taking space will be not assessed.

Proverbs and idioms enrich writing if they are used appropriately in context. However, some students violated Tamil linguistic etiquette by writing more than one proverb in Section 2, Part B in their informal/private letter to the mother of their friend.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Some students took detailed notes, clearly using the space given, but could not express the information and ideas accurately and appropriately. Students should remember that they must manipulate the key words and phrases suitably, with appropriate starting and concluding clauses, to obtain full marks. For example, in Question 4, some students copied all the sentences they heard as verbatim without reflecting on what the father should do.

Part A – Answer in English

Students listened to three texts in Tamil. They were expected to demonstrate their understanding of the question by providing relevant, accurate and appropriate responses in English.

Text 1

Question 1a.

This conversation took place in the foyer of a wedding/reception hall/entrance of wedding/dining hall.

Responses such as 'a wedding' or 'wedding hall' could not receive any mark.

Question 1b.

- The bride provided the receptionist detailed information about guests and together they worked to ensure the guests' comfort. This was especially the case for Chandrakanthan because of his recent surgery. He required close proximity to the bride and groom and designated signs and arrows with number plate details at the gate to lead him to his reserved car parking space close to the foyer.
- He required close proximity to the table with vegetarian food because of his vegetarian diet requirements.
- The bride and the receptionist also secretly organised the tables so that Chandrakanthan would be seated next to an old friend whom he had not seen for many years.

Some students obtained full marks for this question. A few students did not respond correctly to the word 'women' and used 'she' in all of their responses. Some students' responses were not clear enough to demonstrate their understanding that 'the bride said that Chandrakanthan ...'. Students should write as if assessors do not know what the bride said.

Text 2

Question 2a.

- To inform the patrons about the approaching modernisation and expansion of the existing library.
- To invite them to the farewell ceremony.

Most students obtained full marks for this question.

Question 2b.

- Physical changes (e.g. the number of books will be doubled to more than a million and the second floor ...).
- Children will play and develop their personal skills (e.g. through electronic games and body movement) and random social interactions will be eliminated.
- Full automation of all the library's processes means the workers will lose their jobs (i.e. no customer service, no storytelling, no cleaners).

Some students achieved full marks for this question by presenting all information appropriately. Most students mentioned all the changes that would occur without making the correct inference that many staff would lose their jobs even though they mentioned that there would be more customers/patrons. This is an example of the necessity of analysing the information rather than simply reproducing what is heard.

Text 3

Question 3a.

- Nadesan said that he sent a request to Sivahamy but it was actually a forwarded request from a lady in America (Lisa). Sivahamy was confused, thinking that the request was actually Nadesan's own.
- Sivahamy was confused about whether the message was intended for her alone or all members in Nadesan's social media.

Some students achieved full marks for this question. Many students gained only one as they did not respond to 'வேண்டுகோள்'.

Question 3b.

Nadesan and Sivahamy considered that it was a serious matter.

- Even after sending the message, Nadesan called Sivahamy on the phone. Since he was talking while Sivahamy was driving she parked her car on the side of the road to listen to the message.
- She exclaimed 'Oh my goodness!'
- Nadesan asked Sivahamy to translate it into Tamil and publish it. Sivahamy agreed, saying 'Yes, yes. Definitely.'

Part B – Answer in Tamil

Students listened to three texts in Tamil. They were expected to demonstrate their understanding of the question and provide relevant, accurate and appropriate responses that demonstrated their understanding of the text in Tamil.

Text 4

Question 4

- தந்தை, டேவிட்டுடன் தொடர்புகொண்டு அவரது முறைப்பாடுகள் பற்றிய கருத்துக்களைத் தெரிவிப்பதோடு அயல்வீட்டில் வாடகைக்கிருப்பவர்கள் எவ்வாறு நடந்துகொள்கிறார்கள் என்றும் கூறவேண்டும்.
- அத்துடன் இரவு பத்துமணிக்குப் பின்னர் நாய் குரைக்காமல் வைத்துக்கொள்ளவேண்டும்.
- வேலையைக் கடந்து மரக்கொப்புகள் பக்கத்து வளவுக்குள் சென்று இலைகொட்டாமலும் சூரியவெளிச்சத்தை மறைக்காமலும் பார்த்துக்கொள்ளவேண்டும்.
- வேலிக்கரையில் பசளையாகப் போட்ட எரு, ஆட்டுப்புழுக்கை முதலியன தூர்நாற்றம் வீசாதிருக்க நடவடிக்கை எடுக்கவேண்டும்.
- அவரது வீட்டுக்கு வருகிறவர்கள் தமது வண்டிகளை டேவிட் வீட்டுக்குமுன் இருக்கிற இரண்டு வண்டிகளை நிறுத்தக்கூடிய இடத்தை வீணாக்கி நடுப்பகுதியில் நிறுத்தாமல் கவனித்துக்கொள்வேண்டும்.

The father must do the following:

- Ring David and inform him whether the complaints are legitimate and provide additional information about the tenants in David's house.
- Take steps to stop the dog from barking after 10pm.
- Trim the tree branches, which block sunlight and drop leaves into David's property.
- Stop the bad smell from the cow and sheep manure.
- Ensure that his visitors park in a single parking spot and not take up two spots (for the sake of shade) in front of David's house.

Text 5

Question 5a.

பிரபுக்கள் தமது போக்குவரத்துக்குச் சிவிகைகளைப் பயன்படுத்திய காலத்தில், காடுகள், மலைகள், விவசாயநிலங்கள் சூழ்ந்த இடத்திலிருந்தும் பிரபு ஒருவருக்குச் சொந்தமானதுமான பெரிய வீட்டில்(மாளிகையில்), அவரது பசுக்கன்று ஒன்று காணாமற்போன சமயத்தில் இடம்பெற்றது.

At the time when lords used palanquins for traveling, a calf ran away from a lord's mansion, which was surrounded by mountains, forests and farmland.

Question 5b.

தமது சம்பளத்துக்கு மேலான சுகங்களை அனுபவித்துக்கொண்டும் ஒப்பிடுகையில் குறைவான வேலையைச் செய்துகொண்டும் இருக்கின்ற சிவிகை சுமப்பவர்கள், தான் அவசரத்துக்குக் கேட்ட உதவியைச் செய்ய மறுத்தமை, பிரபுவுக்குக் கோபத்தை ஏற்படுத்தியது. ஆயினும் கன்றைத் தேடுவது அவர்களது வேலையில்லை என்பதை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதுபோல நடித்து, அவர்கள் இனிமேல் மறுப்புக்கூறாமல் தான் சொல்லும் வேலைகளைச் செய்யும்வகையில் அவர்களுக்குப் பாடம் புகட்டுவதே பிரபுவின் உள்நோக்கமாக இருந்தது.

Technically the lord accepts/pretends in an angry tone the palanquin carriers were correct, saying that looking after the calf was not their job. However, the lord is challenging the palanquin carriers to teach them a lesson about carrying out his orders. The lord makes the workers understand that they are expected to carry out his orders and to convey his view that they want to enjoy benefits without working hard. His demand was that they should never again refuse his commands.

Text 6

Question 6a.

பகீரதி தனது முன்னைய அழகுநிலைய வேலையிலிருந்து விலகி, இப்பாதணி விற்பனை நிலையத்தில் வேலை பெறுவதற்காக விண்ணப்பித்து, அதற்கான நேர்முகத்தேர்வில் உற்சாகத்துடன் உரையாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறார்.

Bahirathy has left her previous job (at a beauty parlour) and applied for this job. She is now enthusiastically attending the job interview in this shoe shop.

Question 6a.

பகீரதி குறுகிய இருவாரங்களில் பிறர்செய்ததைப் பார்த்துப் புதிய திறன்களைப் பழகிக்கொண்டார். விண்ணப்பத்தை அனுப்ப முன்னரும் அனுப்பிய பின்னரும் கடைக்கு வந்து முன்னேற்றத்துக்குரிய வழிகளை அறிந்துவைத்துள்ளார். அவர் தனது ஆலோசனைகளை நேர்முகத்தேர்வை நடத்துபவரிடம் துணிவாகத் தெரிவிக்கிறார். மேலும் இவற்றையெல்லாம் நேர்முகத்தேர்வை நடத்துபவர் சாதகமாக ஏற்றுக்கொள்கிறாராகையால் பகீரதி இக்கடையில் வேலைபெறக்கூடும்.

In only two weeks' time, Bahirathy picked up skills through observation alone (quick learner). She took the time and effort to visit the shoe shop before and after sending her job application.

When she is being interviewed, Bahirathy confidently gives her views as to how sales can be improved in the shoe shop.

The interviewer appreciated her positive attitude and enthusiasm.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 7

Question 7a.

Students from years 7–11 of this school have submitted their expression of interest for the student leader position in writing. Student leaders would be selected by staff members and elected by a majority of students.

Submitting the expression of interest was not found in some responses.

Question 7b.

Student leaders are able to develop their personal and organisational skills by organising events such as general knowledge competitions, fundraising events, school camps, etc. They could also participate in national level seminars and workshops organised by the school council to further develop those skills.

Suitable starting or concluding phrases were not found in many responses.

Text 8

Question 8a.

Correct answers:

- inducing/making rain
- making plants grow
- assisting easy birth
- helps in developing healthy minds and bodies with no adverse side effects and enhances the ability to fight infections.

Question 8b.

Any one of the following:

- through the proof of modern and accurate scientific methods and controlled experiments
- should be properly played and recorded, then played on good quality devices at a suitable decibel.

Low-scoring responses included the following phrases:

- using the internet and social media
- already been spread to all over the world.

These students did not respond to the word 'will'.

Part B – Answer in Tamil

Text 9

Question 9

Many students produced letters showing excellent writing skills using culturally appropriate salutations, farewells and content when responding to the stimuli. They used higher levels of comprehension strategies when reading and visualised the appropriate real-life situation when writing.

In this section, the stimuli were given directly and indirectly to students to respond to in their writing. It was expected that they should respond to at least three stimuli in their writing. Some students, however, did not select any of the given stimuli for their response and instead created and imposed their own interpretation of the text. In this case, these students were unable to gain full marks because they could not satisfy the criterion 'demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus text'.

Some students used a culturally inappropriate tactic of employing proverbs in a personal letter intended for an elder.

Section 3 – Writing in Tamil

In this section, students were asked to write an original text of approximately 250 words in Tamil in response to one of three questions.

Many students were able to demonstrate their knowledge of Tamil by writing well-planned and well-written pieces that were coherent and varied in vocabulary and sentence structure. Some student responses were accompanied by the skilful and apt use of proverbs and relevant ideas appropriate to the text type and kinds of writing. It was evident that these students had a sound understanding of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, and the ability to use their knowledge effectively. Some student responses showed a lack of understanding of all these components.

Question 10

Many students demonstrated very strong persuasive speaking skills, providing thoughtful and convincing reasons for establishing a Tamil-language preschool. Some students, however, did not consider the requirement, 'You went to an English-language preschool and you have recently completed work experience there'. Some students' speeches addressed the general importance of learning Tamil rather than the specific importance of a Tamil preschool for Tamil children and their parents.

Question 11

Many students cleverly evaluated the issues raised in the question. They used real historical changes of women's rights during a long period of time, with evidence from Tamil literature, and gave evidence about the current situation and the reasons that changes have occurred. They also included the names of famous people who fought for Tamil women's rights in history. These students used proverbs and idioms suitably. They also incorporated an understanding of both sides of the issue and a conclusion. They demonstrated a good command of language appropriate to the text type.

Question 12

Some students who chose this question responded very well and demonstrated a clear understanding of the required text structure and language features. However, most students simply produced a persuasive

argument to convince the audience to learn self-defence techniques without using vivid description, which was required by the question, to deepen their presentations.