



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students' performances were generally good. Most of the students demonstrated good pronunciation and used the language very fluently. They employed body language effectively and in a culturally appropriately way. Most of the students also produced a variety of utterances to show joy or exasperation, and used succinct phrases.

Preparation is the key to success in the oral examination. Some students who seemed less fluent in Tamil appeared to have spent many hours preparing and practising before their assessment. They were able to carefully, but slowly, support and elaborate on a range of information, ideas and opinions. Some students who appeared fluent in Tamil were insufficiently prepared and found it difficult to maintain a discussion for the whole seven minutes without repetition. They answered quickly and their answers were too shallow, vague and not thoroughly considered.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were suitably prepared to talk about their families, friends, schools and future. It was disappointing to see some students giving only one-word or one-sentence answers; however, most students elaborated very effectively and were able to follow up with more detail. They had thought about their family life and schools and had already formulated some ideas and opinions on topics such as being the youngest in the family, cultural differences (especially dress or gender differences) and the difference between mainstream school and a Tamil school.

Some students who rushed in to answer questions often used English words (for example, 'so', 'yep' and 'Tamil school') instead of simple Tamil words. Students need to practise conversation in Tamil only so that they do not have to use English unnecessarily.

Most of the students were able to maintain and advance the exchange. They were able to link with assessors effectively and demonstrated good communication skills and repair strategies. Many students had well-organised, complete and accurate grammar and pronunciation, stress and intonation in their spoken expression. Interesting topics were 'looking after pets' and 'elder brother controls younger sister'.

Section 2 – Discussion

In this part of the examination, students should be prepared to interact and discuss their topic with the assessors. The focus of the discussion is to explore aspects of the language and culture of Tamil-speaking communities. The Tamil Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design (page 23) states that the detailed study should be based on a sub-topic related to one or more of the prescribed topics listed in the table on page 13. The sub-topic may be drawn from this table, or a different sub-topic may be selected.

One sub-topic may be selected for a whole class or different sub-topics may be selected for individuals or group of students. When the same sub-topic was chosen for a group of students and the same texts were used, there was a tendency for the same ideas and opinions to be presented even by very able students. During the discussion, even capable students often did not go beyond their memorised sentences and could not substantiate their own ideas and opinions. Some of the students recited memorised paragraphs in monologue style and didn't allow the assessors to ask questions. When able students' preparation was limited, they did not score as well as they might have.

Students didn't use English words or phrases in the discussion section as much as in the conversation section.

Written Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students responded well in this section. Students who read the questions carefully and underlined or highlighted what information was needed did very well in the examination. Some students had problems answering questions in English. Students should not spend a lot of time in translating questions in Tamil; for example, some used a dictionary to find a meaning for 'determination', chose a meaning in a different context and then answered inappropriately.



Students should be advised on the effective use of dictionaries. It was evident that even some of the capable students did not perform well on the analytical questions. Many students demonstrated good clarity of expression, but quite a few spelled some words incorrectly. Some commonly misspelled words were: நேயற்ற வாழ்வு, சோர்ந்து பாடுவோம், பொரிதும் மகிழ்ச்சி, மூன்று பெயர் போனார்கள், which could easily have been overcome. Students should aim to improve the standard of their written language by avoiding errors in spelling and punctuation.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1: Listening and responding

Part A

Students were presented with three oral texts in Tamil, and were asked questions in English. They were required to answer all questions in English. If the information provided was clear, no marks were deducted for mistakes in English.

Text 1

Question 1

- a delay to the train service caused by bridge repairs
- Thamayanthi called her father for a lift
- Ahilan sent a fax message

The amount of space provided and the marks allocated for a particular question are good indicators of how long the answer should be. In this case, the three lines for writing and the three marks indicate that three different points are required. Some students explained the train delay in three lines and scored one out of three marks.

Text 2

Question 2a

Intimate family/warm/friendly

- they enjoyed being together
- they meet often

A few students showed a low level of performance in providing evidence.

Question 2b

- the performance by the individual student
- the number of family members attending
- their preference for a meal

Most students responded to this question accurately and were awarded full marks.

Text 3

Question 3a

She looks familiar to him because he has seen her photo in 'Thinakkural'.

Students were required to answer in full sentences. Less successful students failed to give their answer in full sentences.

Question 3b

(B) There are no facilities for importing and exporting in Jaffna.

Question 3c

- it is the first to use computerised methods
- it offers training and production

Students were expected to give the above two points to score two marks. Some students scored only one mark.

Question 3d

He feels positive about it/is impressed by it.

Any two examples of:

- yes, that's right, I understand
- students are lucky
- it is heartening that students will gain from Nalini's overseas experience

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Question 3e

- employment
- advanced technology
- export income

There was confusion in finding three different benefits. Some students could not tell the difference between export, economic development and foreign income.

Section 1: Listening and responding

Part B

Text 4

Question 4a

Any two of:

- frustrated at first
- stayed up all night
- shivered with severe cold
- stayed/spent all night away from home

Most students responded to this question accurately and were awarded full marks.

Question 4b

Students needed to mention any one of the following ideas and discuss it:

- communities are served by the unselfish behaviours of individuals
- thinking of others is rewarded
- sacrifices made by individuals
- courage is recognised

One of the good responses was: பிறர் நலங்கருதி உயிரைத்துச்சமென மதித்து எம்முயற்சியையும் மனந்தளராது மேற்கொள்ளவேண்டும். Some of the other responses included: முயற்சி செய்யவேண்டும், பொறுமை காக்க வேண்டும்.

Text 5

Question 5

Health programs	Children's programs	Literary programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• get fit• sick free life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• kids' program• let's sing together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Kathaprasangam</i>• narration-writers' festival

There were a few incorrect answers, for example instead of literary, some students answered *veena*.

Section 2: Reading and responding

Part A

Text 6

Question 6a

The advantages and disadvantages of advertisements. The responses for this question were very good.

Question 6b

For – any four of:

- promotes sales and turn over
- quality products at reasonable prices
- keeps the cost of newspapers down
- revenue from advertising support, entertainments and sports
- promotes products and services
- informs the public
- promotes economic growth of the country

Against – any two of:

- cost passed on to the customers
- occupies a lot of space in the newspaper

Most students identified more than four points for the argument, although a few were unable to identify points raised against the argument. Some students could not tell the difference between மலிவு and இலவசம்.



Question 6c

Offering giveaways directly to the customers with their names. This question was answered extremely well.

Question 6d

Any two of:

- I insist, that is a fact
- it is crystal clear
- my opponents who conveniently overlooked the fact

Most students found the examples successfully, but it was evident that some students struggled to give two examples.

Text 7

Question 7a

Any two of:

- Mother Teresa
- suffering children
- well-wishers' support
- the Guinness Book of Records
- supporting children

Responses were extremely well done.

Question 7b

- 23GR records
- fundraising

Most students identified one activity.

Question 7c

Any one of:

- he considers the failures and record breaking of others as minor obstacles
- he first lost consciousness and then broke the record

Students were generally successful on this question.

Question 7d

- at the age of ten he continually danced in Vavuniya
- as a child he was determined to raise money to alleviate suffering, which he has done
- when he has the germ of an idea he perseveres and carries it through; for example, standing on one foot, the Guinness Book of Records

Some students found this question difficult to answer and, while being able to explain the proverb, didn't give an appropriate illustration from the text.

Question 7e

Any two of:

- raising more funds for children's charities
- 30 000 km
- maximum 60 records in Great Britain

The responses for this question were very good, but some students struggled to identify the first point.

Section 2: Reading and responding

Part B

Text 8

Question 8

In this part students were required to demonstrate an understanding of general and specific aspects of the texts. It was necessary to read the text closely to identify the aspects to be addressed. The letter should have included the student's capacity to help the exchange student. Questions to be answered included: 'How can you help?', 'What is your plan?', 'How are you going to look after the exchange student?' and 'What are the special things that you are going to do to be selected as a host family?'



Students were required to demonstrate their capacity to convey the above information accurately and appropriately. They had to connect or link their ideas with the main objectives. Many students successfully wrote the formal letter, sequenced their ideas in a clear manner and scored high marks. Less able students merely reproduced parts of the text, and some gave their address in English, which they should avoid.

Some phrases from the good responses included:

எந்தவிதத் தடங்கலுமின்றி எதையும் கேட்கலாம், எங்கும் போகலாம்.
இது இரு நாடுகளுக்கும் உறவுப் பாலமாக அமையும்
எமது குடும்பம் நல்லதோர் குடும்பம் பல்கலைக்கழகம்

Section 3: Writing in Tamil

In this section, some students demonstrated their knowledge of Tamil by writing a piece which was cohesive, varied in vocabulary and sentence structure and which handled the topic in a logical and coherent manner. They provided a well-planned and well-written piece which was a delight to read. All four topics received close to equal attention from the students.

Question 9

Students who chose to write an article were able to respond well. The ideas were well organised in paragraphs, with good links between them.

Some phrases from the good responses were:

வாரீர் வாரீர் கங்காரு தேசம் காண
அழகினில் சிறந்த நம்நாடு
அருவிகள் பாயும் நம்நாடு
வேற்றுமையில் ஒற்றுமை காணும் நம்நாடு
அவுஸ்ரேலியநாடு நம்நாடு

Question 10

As a group, many students who chose this question simply reproduced the same pre-learned and memorised story, paying no attention to the requirements that the woman be straightforward, brave and strong-willed. The 15 marks for this section were divided in the following way: five marks for content; five marks for correct text type; and five marks for vocabulary, grammar and correct spelling. When there was no evidence of correct content and no variety of content, students disadvantaged themselves.

Question 11

This was a popular choice. Students who chose this question dealt with positive as well as negative aspects of living away from home. They completed the letter with a balanced opinion and in a culturally appropriate way. Most successful students analysed various aspects of living away from home with some bad experiences of others and then came to a conclusion. The layouts were suitable and well-organised in paragraphs, with thoughtful explanations.

Some phrases from the good responses were:

சிறுபிள்ளை வேளாண்மை விளைந்தாலும் வீடுவந்து சேராது.
கடிவாளம் இல்லாத குதிரை போல் ஆகிவிடுவாய்.

Question 12

This task was to write a diary entry covering a number of days and describing dissatisfaction with the student's grandmother. The diary entry required a date, a beginning, middle and end and the correct layout. Most students were very successful in this task. They included appropriate situations, and culturally-appropriate contradictions to show their frustration.

It was a delight to read: தொப்பூழ் தெரிய உடையணிதல், தமிழ் நண்பருடன் ஆங்கிலத்தில் கதைத்தல், ஆச்சியின் தொண்தொணப்பு.