

LOTE: Vietnamese GA 3: Examination

Oral component

The oral component of the examination is designed to assess the student's ability and skill in using spoken Vietnamese. Most students performed well.

Section 1 – Conversation

The conversation between the student and assessors covers aspects of the student's personal world, for example school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. High marks are allocated to students who can successfully maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively. Students should avoid one-word responses 'co, khong' (yes or no). Less successful performances were characterised by inaccurate vocabulary and grammar and scant information.

Other than body language, attention should be given to traditional and cultural manners such as *chao thay, chao co, da, vang, thua co em nghe khong ro xin co lap lai cau hoi, em khong biet nhung em se hoc them.*

Section 2 – Discussion

In this section (approximately 8 minutes), students explore aspects of the language and culture of Vietnamese communities by discussing their Detailed Study. The students need to voice opinions and ideas and support these with evidence from the texts.

Students were required to introduce the focus of the sub-topic in no more than 1 minute.

Most discussions went smoothly. Some successful sub-topics were:

- *Tet Nguyen Dan va cac tục lệ* (New Year celebration and its traditions)
- *Kinh nghiệm di dân* (migrants' experiences)
- *Vai trò tích cực của gia đình* (The main roles of the Vietnamese family)
- *Vai trò của phụ nữ* (The roles of the Vietnamese women)
- *Le hoi va le cuoi* (Engagement and marriage)
- *Day do con cai* (Raising a child)
- *Chinh phu ngam* (A warrior's wife's verse)
- *Tho Ho Xuan Huong* (Ho Xuan Huong's poems)
- *Ly hon* (A divorce).

The sub-topic requires the student to explore aspects in breadth and depth. The emphasis is not on assessing how much detail the students can recall about the text learnt, but on how well they can engage in a discussion about the sub-topic. For example, while discussing the sub-topic 'Raising a child', students were not required to cite all the steps in the process, but needed to focus on the aims of raising future people of integrity. Students should be prepared to discuss and support aspects of their exchange with evidence from the text.

Most students who expressed their ideas clearly had used resources and examples effectively to enhance the discussion. Topics that can be controversial or that do not relate to the prescribed topics in the study design must be avoided. A complex sub-topic such as *Tho Ho Xuan Huong* (Ho Xuan Huong's poems) may be attempted, but this topic should be appropriate to the student's level of interest and competency in the language.

Students who performed less well tended to concentrate on relating facts or information and had difficulties sustaining the discussion or expressing opinions. Students who excelled were those who demonstrated originality of thought and breadth and depth of responses.

Written component

The 2002 written examination paper consisted of three sections:

- Section 1 – Listening and Responding, required a response to six spoken texts
- Section 2 – Reading and Responding, required completion of three different tasks in response to three reading texts
- Section 3 – Writing in Vietnamese, required a response in Vietnamese.

All the texts mentioned in the examination paper were included in the themes and topics in Units 3 and 4.

Students who achieved good results responded to all parts in appropriate English and Vietnamese language in a logical sequence and expressed themselves by building sentences with appropriate grammar and syntax. There were 26 questions within the three sections of the paper (listening, reading and writing).

Section 1

Section 1 covered topics such as education, LOTE and careers, Vietnamese food (*Pho*), the migrant experience, the role of women, celebrations and folk literature. The text types used were conversation, radio report, a talk and interview. Part A included ten questions to be answered in English. Question 10 required students to provide an explanation and evidence to support it.

Appropriate responses included:

Question 1

- kindergarten is part-time and optional
- primary school is full-time and compulsory.

Question 2

- yes
- some schools encourage students to wear uniforms.

Question 3

- rare opportunity because it is expensive.

Question 4

- good spoken Vietnamese can help you communicate with relatives at home
- the majority of them speak Vietnamese
- culture, language and jobs.

Question 5

- can get a job
- work within the Vietnamese community
- help elderly non-English speakers in the work place.

Question 6

- in North Vietnam.

Question 7

- the bouillon must be clear and tasty
- the noodles are not too soft
- in thinly sliced beef.

Question 8

- cheap fresh meat
- free of GSM.

Question 9

- attend English classes
- listen to radio and watch TV
- read newspapers and books.

Question 10

- they are young so they can learn English quickly
- they have the opportunity to practise it everyday.

Part B included six questions, to be answered in Vietnamese. The following responses satisfied Criteria 1 and 2:

Question 11

- *Truong cong mien phi va do chinh phu dieu hanh*
- *Truong tu dong hoc phi va do tu nhan dieu hanh.*

Question 12

- *Truong tu.*

Question 13

- *Tu Tieu hoc den het Trung hoc la 12 nam.*

Question 14

- *O Uc Tieu hoc: lop 1 den lop 6, Trung hoc lop 7 den lop 12*
- *O Vietnam Tieu hoc: lop 1 den lop 5, Trung hoc lop 6 den lop 12.*

Question 15

- *Vai tro thu yeu, chong di lam vo o nha*
- *Di cho, nau an, giat giu, don dep nha cua, nuoi day con cai*
- *Doi song nham chan.*

Question 16

- *Di lam toan thoi, ban thoi, dong gop cho xa hoi*
- *Chia xe viec nha cho chong, con.*

Section 2

Section 2 covered topics such as Festivals (*Tet Nguyen Dan* va *Tet Trung Thu*), the legend of two traditional cakes (*Banh day*, *Banh chung*). Part A included eight questions to be answered in English:

Question 17

- it is a children's festival and very important for them.

Question 18

- eat mid-Autumn cakes
- sing songs
- participate in the lantern parade
- dance.

Question 19

- it is *den keo quan*; it is of circular form with pictures moving around.

Question 20

- organise the children's Festival in Australia
- maintain the traditions and culture.

Question 21

- Prince Tiet lieu is:
 - very kind
 - good filial son
 - motherless.

Question 22

- *Banh chung*: sticky rice, meat rafted with banana leaves, square shape
- *Banh day*: sticky rice, and round shape.

Question 23

- *Banh chung* symbolises the Earth
- *Banh day* symbolises the Sun
- both symbolise parents.

Question 24

'*Cong cha me sanh cung troi dat*' means the parents' toil is as great as the Sun and the Earth. They gave birth, raised and educated their children.

To fulfil Criteria 1 and 2 for Part B (answered in Vietnamese), students had to answer with a letter responding in Vietnamese to information provided in letter form. For Criterion 1 students had to understand specific aspects of the text, such as:

- the public transportation system in Australia
- the cost
- the weather in Melbourne
- wearing suitable clothes for different seasons.

To convey information accurately and appropriately, students were required to:

- answer all enquires correctly
- use specific terms of transport
- use the correct letter format
- maintain readers' interest
- write correct tone markers.

Some students included little information and did not respond directly to the questions raised in the letter.

Section 3 – Writing

This section assessed the student's ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Vietnamese. There was a choice of four tasks:

- an informative article for a magazine describing the Anniversary Ceremony of King Hung Vuong
- a script of a speech to young people, persuading them not to take up smoking
- a conversation among friends, discussing how to organise a birthday party
- a report on your visit to a secondary school in Vietnam.

The question required students to produce a response demonstrating their understanding of Vietnamese. Most organised the task in a logical sequence within the word limit range (200–250). In several cases the word length was too short or excessive, so that marks were deducted.

Some common problems included: minimal reader interest, a lack of features of the required text type, no transition between paragraphs, spelling errors and carelessness.

High marks were achieved by students who set out their thoughts clearly and presented these in correct Vietnamese.