



Oral Component

GENERAL COMMON ENTS

The majority of students performed well in the oral examination, which is designed to assess students' competence and skill in using spoken Vietnamese.

Topics covered in Section 1 – Conversation (approximately seven minutes) included family, school and leisure, work, and future aspirations.

For Section 2 – Discussion (approximately eight minutes), students were required to discuss their detailed study with evidence from the texts studied. This evidence may have been justified or supported with photographs, diagrams or maps. The discussion is linked to the sub-topic selected for detailed study, and it is therefore assumed that, by the time of the oral examination, students will have spent 15 hours of scheduled class time preparing for this section of the oral examination.

Students preparing for the oral examination should:

- ensure they are at the venue on time
- prepare their topic carefully and remember to support their opinions and ideas with evidence from the texts.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – General conversation

Students were very well prepared for this section, and remembered not to identify themselves by giving the name of their school or teacher.

High-scoring students were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively with both assessors. When appropriate, they used full sentences in their answers, rather than one word responses such as *co* or *khong* (yes or no). Marks were deducted where there was a lack of clarity of expression, inaccuracy of vocabulary and grammar, or irrelevant information.

During the conversation section, some traditional and cultural manners were taken into account, such as:

- *Da*
- *Vang*
- *Thua thay, thua co*
- *Em xin trinh bay*
- *Chao thay, chao co*
- *Em da xong.*

Section 2 – Discussion

Students had one minute to introduce their sub-topic, which could relate to any of the topics listed under the theme of 'The Vietnamese Speaking Community' or have a cultural component. Students should have completed 15 hours of study on at least three different texts, which allowed them to discuss more than just one aspect of the sub-topic. Assessors need not know beforehand what sub-topic has been selected for detailed study, as this information should be presented in the introduction.

Most students prepared their discussions well and had a good introduction. Some successful sub-topics were:

- *Tet nguyen Dan va cac Tuc le* (New Year festivals and customs)
- *Di dan va ti nan* (migrants and refugees)
- *Phu nu Viet Nam* (Vietnamese women)
- *Cuoi hoi* (marriage)
- *Su lien he gia dinh* (family relationships).

The crucial issue for sub-topic selection lies in the student's ability to support their ideas and opinions with reference to the texts they have studied. The emphasis is not on assessing how much detail the student can recall from the texts



studied, but on how well he/she can use the texts to support the stance presented. For instance, when discussing the sub-topic 'the Vietnamese New Year Festival', students do not need to recall the story of every custom, but should instead emphasise the meanings of these traditions and their ability to keep the Vietnamese culture alive.

Students must present their ideas clearly and be prepared to elaborate on and explain aspects of their presentation to wider, related issues. Students should pay special attention to their pronunciation, phrasing and the way they convey information during the discussion.

The majority of students who clearly expressed their ideas used materials and examples effectively to make the discussion interesting. They used difficult sentence structures successfully. Most of the students used maps, diagrams, or pictures to support their discussions.

Excellent students impressed the assessors with original thoughts and ideas and through the depth of their responses in the discussion. Weaker students tended to concentrate on relating facts or information and had difficulty sustaining the discussion. Some students were poorly prepared due to an inappropriate choice of topic. There is no need for students to choose a complex sub-topic; rather, a topic that is appropriate to the student's level of proficiency in the language is preferred.

Students appear to have become familiar with the new task. This success is attributed to their effort and the assistance given by their teachers.

Written Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

In 2004, the written examination was designed to assess students' knowledge and skill in dealing with spoken and written texts, and in expressing ideas through the creation of original texts in Vietnamese.

Students who achieved good results for the examination responded appropriately to all parts, in English or Vietnamese as required. They used logical sequencing, expressed themselves in valid sentence structures and used correct tone markers, grammar and syntax.

Of the 345 students who undertook the written examination, about 42 percent received an A or A+, 41 percent achieved a B or B+, and 13 percent received a C or C+.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A

Questions in this section had to be answered in English. Question 11 required a discussion on environmental problems, and students should have referred to the text, rather than answering based on their own knowledge.

Question 1

It is Victoria's biggest Vietnamese bookshop.

Question 2

People of all ages who are interested in Vietnamese language and culture.

Question 3

On the television.

Question 4

Any day from Monday to Saturday, between 9:00am and 5:00pm.

Question 5

Four of the following possible answers:

- to reduce global warming
- to counteract the effects of destruction of rainforests

2004 Assessment Report



- to counteract emissions from vehicles and factories
- to respond to the CSIRO report
- to minimise/prevent bushfires and drought
- to prevent the extinction of some species of animals.

Question 6

Two of the following possible answers:

- they are good mates
- Kim has helped Tam with many things in the past; for example, homework and explaining lessons
- Tam believes 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'.

Question 7

Two of the following possible answers:

- they continuously address each other as mates (using the terms *mày* and *tao*)
- they use words such as 'no sweat' and 'don't worry'
- Tam knows it is Kim's birthday
- Kim's easy acceptance of Tam's offer.

Question 8

Two of the following possible answers:

- dust
- fumes
- large numbers of motorcycles.

Question 9

- air pollution
- litter
- pollution is three to four times higher than recommended by WHO.

Question 10

No more motorcycles can be registered now.

Question 11

- many people in Vietnam have not understood the importance of protecting the environment
- the Vietnamese Government has not allocated enough of the budget to finding solutions for environmental problems.

Part B

Question 12

It is an important occasion for:

- holidays
- family reunions
- spiritual ceremonies
- maintaining culture
- young Vietnamese people to experience traditions.

Question 13

There were themes/scenes of a Vietnamese village during a Lunar New Year festival, cooking and beauty contests, arts performances and games.

Question 14

The location of the Buddhist temple was chosen because:

- the celebrations are spiritual ceremonies; 'worshipping' ancestors
- of the religious and traditional functions of events.

Question 15

- commercial areas where many Vietnamese gather have been increasingly developed



- many Vietnamese associations are operating and helping Vietnamese people
- Vietnamese people participate in many fields of the labour market in Australia – in professional careers and trades
- some Vietnamese people participate in politics – local and state governments.

Question 16

- Australia is a democratic society that offers good and ample conditions for its citizens to live and work effectively
- as refugees coming to Australia with nothing, Vietnamese Australians have tried harder than ‘normal’ people. Everybody works hard – parents and children
- Australia is a good place, which Vietnamese Australians take to like fish in water.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Question 17

17a

Belonging to the young generation, Minh has his own priorities. Two of the following possible answers were required:

- he doesn’t care much about the cleanliness/order in the house
- communicating with friends is more important than having his clothes washed
- he cherishes independence and personal privacy (tells his mum to leave him alone and even asks her to get out of his room)
- he is straightforward (speaks out about what he thinks is right).

17b

Belonging to the older generation, Minh’s mother has her own priorities that contrast with Minh’s. Two of the following possible answers were required:

- she cares about the cleanliness/order in the house (she is tired but still working)
- she cares about children but wants them to behave according to their parents’ way of living
- she expects Minh to obey her wish to bring out his dirty clothes
- she finds it upsetting when Minh talks back.

Question 18

The ending shows that the relationship between parents and children is loving and caring.

Minh’s mother was concerned about her son, and came to his room to find out how he was. With care and love, she pulled the blanket up to cover him for fear of his being cold. When she heard him say ‘Mum’, she lovingly told him to ‘sleep, son’.

Minh pretended to sleep because he felt regretful. If he had not loved his mother, he might not have felt regretful and not pretended to be asleep. After his mother pulled the blanket to cover him, he called out ‘Mum’, which shows his care and love for his mother.

Question 19

Five of the following possible answers:

- they are a rich history of folk literature
- they provide experiences of ancient people in many aspects of life
- they provide advice on ethics
- they provide experiences of family life and love
- they help to maintain the Vietnamese cultural values/traditions
- they are resources of language usage.

Question 20

Similarities (two of the following possible answers):

- both proverbs and folk poems provide living experiences
- they were both composed by broad masses
- they both have rhymes that make them easy to remember.



Differences (two of the following possible answers):

- proverbs are short, rhymed sentences; folk poems are poems
- living experiences provided in proverbs are about planting, animal tendering, doing business and ways of living. Living experiences provided in folk poems are about people's feelings towards nature, the nation and society, particularly relationships (between parents and children, husbands and wives, and lovers)
- folk poems also tell stories in the same way that legends do, while proverbs do not.

Question 21

People are affected by their social environment, by surrounding people and circumstances; therefore it is necessary for everybody to be careful in choosing friends and work partners. If they make friends and meet with good people, they will be influenced by the positives. If they mix with inappropriate people, they may be influenced by undesirable or inappropriate issues.

Part B

Question 22

In the letter, students needed to respond to Thanh's enquiries:

- what does Tâm think about Thanh's parents' wish for him to major in Accounting or Banking Finance?
- what does Tâm think about Thanh's thought of majoring in Design?
- what course is Tâm applying for?
- why has Tâm chosen that course?
- How are Tâm's parents?

Section 3 – Writing in Vietnamese

Students had to choose one of four tasks, which offered different text types and different kinds of writing. In the assessment, the length and kind of writing for the task were taken into account. Students need to be aware of the five kinds of writing that may be required: informative, imaginative, personal, persuasive and evaluative. Students are expected to be familiar with all of these and be able to produce a piece of writing within the word limit of 200 to 250 words.

Most students understood all aspects of the task and performed well. Strong students incorporated information which was not conveyed in the given question, while weaker students responded in point form to matters that required explanations in full sentences. Accuracy of information was another serious problem.

Question 23

Students were required to write an informative report for a tourism magazine about the attractions of Vietnam and the reasons why Vietnam is becoming a very popular tourist destination. Responses needed a clear beginning, middle and end; ideas that were well organised in paragraphs; good links between ideas within paragraphs; and well-presented information about the attractions of Vietnam and reasons for the popularity of Vietnam as a tourist destination.

Attractions of Vietnam could include:

- it is a tropical country with unique beaches and scenery
- the people and society – their unique cultural/traditional features
- the cost of living – goods and services are cheap.

Reasons for Vietnam becoming a very popular tourist destination could include:

- the low costs for travellers
- Vietnam is more open to the world as a result of globalisation
- Vietnam was the place where the 'famous' Vietnam War occurred.

High-scoring responses had few minor slips, a good range of vocabulary, appropriate structure (an informative report on tourism), language appropriate to the audience (travellers/holiday makers), a purpose (promoting tourism) and a context.

Question 24

Students had to write an imaginative story for a competition run by a science magazine about a new tablet that helps people live without food and drink. Responses needed a clear beginning, middle and end, with ideas that were well organised in paragraphs, and good links between and within paragraphs.



Responses to this topic should have been organised, with an introduction to the tablet followed by its effect on individuals and society. The effects of the tablet on users could have included direct outcomes on their body, health and way of living, positive or negative effects of the tablet on society, and the writer's overall view on the effects.

High-scoring responses had few minor slips, a good range of vocabulary, the appropriate structure (an imaginative piece of writing), language appropriate to the audience (general readers of a science magazine), a purpose (entertaining) and a context.

Question 25

Students were required to write a persuasive article for a school magazine in which they presented the values of playing sports, encouraging students to take up a sport. Full and thoughtful explanations were necessary to convince students of the benefit of playing sports. Benefits could be physical, mental, social and/or national, and responses could prove either the benefit of playing sports or the harm of not playing sports in order to persuade the readers.

Responses needed to have a clear beginning, middle and end, and ideas that were well organised in paragraphs, with good links between and within paragraphs.

High-scoring responses had few minor slips, a good range of vocabulary, the appropriate structure (persuasive writing), language appropriate to the audience (school mates), a purpose (to persuade the readers to play a sport) and a context.

Question 26

Students had to write a speech about the Vietnamese proverb 'Without a teacher, it is hard for a learner to be successful', and evaluate how true this idea is in modern life. Thoughtful explanations of the meaning of the proverb were required, with an evaluation of its truth in modern life. A clear beginning, middle and end were required, with ideas that were well organised in paragraphs and good links between and within paragraphs.

The evaluation of the proverb could have:

- agreed to a certain degree that each learner needs a teacher or instructor for the right method/approach
- disagreed to a certain degree, because each learner also has their individual talents, creativeness and independence
- presented a balanced view – that every learner needs a teacher but every learner can also be their own teacher.

High-scoring responses contained few minor slips, a good range of vocabulary, the appropriate structure (an evaluative piece of writing), language appropriate to the audience (general readers), a purpose (to evaluate an issue and convince the audience) and a context.