



## GENERAL COMMENTS

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

The oral examination has two sections, a Conversation and a Discussion. Topics covered in the Conversation (which goes for approximately seven minutes) included family, school, leisure, work and future aspirations.

For the Discussion (which lasts for approximately eight minutes), students had to present a persuasive issue. The students needed to present a clear stance on their issue and support this stance with evidence from the texts studied. This evidence may have been supported by photographs, diagrams and/or maps. This section is linked to the sub-topic selected for the Detailed Study, and it is therefore assumed that students will have spent 15 hours of scheduled class time developing their sub-topic.

Students must remember that they should not identify themselves by name, or give the name of their school or the name of their teacher.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section 1 – Conversation

Students were generally very well prepared for this section.

Higher marks were allocated to students who could successfully maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively with both assessors. Their answers needed to be in full sentences, not just one word or 'co/khong' (yes/no) responses. Marks were deducted if the student's expression was not clear, if inaccurate vocabulary and grammar were used or if information was not relevant.

Some traditional and cultural manners should be taken into account such as:

- *Chao thay, chao co* ('Good morning/afternoon teacher')
- *Thua thay, thua co* (Sir/Miss)
- *Da- Vang* (yes/no)
- *Em xin trinh bay* ('I would like to display/present')
- *Em da xong* ('I finish my...').

### Section 2 – Discussion

Students are given one minute to introduce their sub-topic. The sub-topic may relate to any of the topics listed under any of the themes, but it must be related to the Vietnamese-speaking community. Students should have completed 15 hours of study on at least three texts related to the sub-topic, which allows them to discuss more than just the one aspect of the sub-topic. Assessors need not to know beforehand what sub-topic has been selected for Detailed Study or the texts the students have studied, as these should be presented in the introduction.

Most students prepared well for the discussion and had a good introduction, development and conclusion.

Some successful sub-topics were:

- *Tet Nguyen Dan va Mot vai tuc le ngay Tet* (New Year Festival and New Year customs)
- *Gia Dinh Viet Nam* (The Vietnamese family)
- *Bon phan lam con* (Filial duties)
- *Vai tro tich cuc cua gia dinh* (The main roles of the family)
- *Cuoi hoi* (Marriage)
- *Phu nu Viet Nam* (Vietnamese women)
- *Y nghia tam tong tu duc* (Vietnamese women's virtues)
- *Hanh trinh tim tu do* (The trip to freedom).

The crucial issue for sub-topic selection lies in the student's ability to support their stance with reference to the texts studied. Students are not marked on how much detail they can recall about the texts, but on how well they can use the



texts to support the stance presented. For example, when discussing the sub-topic ‘The traditions of a wedding’, students need not recall all the dates of the occasion, but should instead emphasise the meaning of the traditions which will ‘tie’ the future couple together in the hope that the marriage will last forever (*tram nam hanh phuc*: a hundred years’ happiness).

In several cases it seemed that students had left their sub-topic selection to the last minute, resulting in poor preparation and/or a topic that was not approved by their teacher. Controversial topics such as ‘youth problems’ can be difficult and should be avoided if they do not have any relevance to cultural topics. Students should also aim to select a topic that is appropriate to their level of ability in the language.

Students must demonstrate the skills to present their stance clearly, and be prepared to elaborate on and explain how aspects of their presentation can be related to wider issues. Most of the students brought in pictures, maps, diagrams or other materials to support their discussions. The majority of students who clearly expressed their ideas used these materials and examples effectively to lead an interesting discussion.

Some difficult sentence structures were incorporated and dealt with very successfully; for example, ‘*Neu vuot bien nguy hiem, tai sao nguoi ta van di?*’ (‘If escaping by boat was so risky, why would people still attempt to?’). As this question is in the conditional mood, it can be quite hard for students to discuss and answer.

The students who excelled were those who impressed the assessors with their originality of thought and the depth of traditional and cultural responses in the discussion. Students with weaker responses tended to concentrate on relating facts or information and had difficulty sustaining the discussion. Students should pay special attention to their pronunciation, phrasing and intonation during their discussion.

## Written Component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The written examination is designed to assess students’ knowledge and skill in dealing with spoken and written texts, and in expressing ideas through the creation of original text in Vietnamese.

All the themes and topics of Units 1 to 4 were included in the three sections of the examination paper. Section 1 covered topics such as Vietnamese families and the convenience of digital cameras. The spoken texts appeared in different discourse forms, such as a song, conversation, and an advertisement.

Section 2 topics included sports and the role of women in the 21st century. Two informative articles were used as the texts in this section.

Section 3 required an expression of ideas through the creation of an original text in Vietnamese.

The students who achieved good results responded to all parts in appropriate English or Vietnamese language in a logical sequence and expressed themselves in a solid structure of sentence building with correct tone marker, grammar and syntax rules.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

There were 25 questions that needed to be answered within three separate sections: listening, reading and writing

#### Section 1 – Listening and responding

Students needed to refer to the text in their answers, not base their responses on their own deductions.

##### Question 1

Motherly love is:

- compared to the vastness of the Pacific Ocean
- as strong/everlasting as the spring.

##### Question 2

The mother was in the verandah, lulling her child; the late moonlight reflects the shadow of the beloved mother.

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## Question 3

Motherhood has been idolised through:

- the mother's eternal vigilance (staying up late to look after her child)
- the mother's endurance of hardships.

## Question 4

- generation gap
- cultural gap
- different views about careers

## Question 5

- Nam loves his parents and cares about their opinion.
- His parents want him to study medicine while he wants to study aeronautical engineering. In such a situation, he finds it difficult to do what he wants. He thinks if he does not do what his parents want him to do, his parents will be disappointed. He also trusts in his parents' love for him, so he thinks he will talk and persuade his parents to change their view.
- His parents love him and want the best for him, even though the best in their view cannot be the best in Nam's view. This shows a gap between the two generations as well as a cultural point in terms of parental roles.

## Question 6

Tu empathises with Nam. He suggests a strategy that might help Nam to discuss the situation with his parents.

## Question 7

- doesn't use films
- pictures can be developed at home, saving time
- photos can be inspected at home, and good ones chosen and bad ones deleted
- a collection/album of computerised photos can be made
- photos can be printed and sent to other people

## Question 8

- the digital camera itself is not expensive, but it can cost more to use it appropriately
- cost of having the printer for digital photos
- cost of having a computer to use with the digital camera/to set up an album of computerised photos
- cost of having and using Internet services

## Question 9

The expressions are well-chosen to enhance the force of persuasiveness:

- *không Ờt lờm* (not cheap)
- *chỉ cần khoảng* (only needs an amount of about...)
- *khá tốt* (quite good).

They are only half the truth, but no one can tell they are not the truth.

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

### Question 10

It has two major fields:

- spiritual values: philosophical and moral, emphasising confidence, courage and humanity
- physical values: good health and high defensive capability.

### Question 11

Young children need parental care while parents are too busy earning a living to take care of their children properly. Because of the loss of parental care and understanding, there might be conflicts between parents and children, family discord and possible delinquency. Therefore, families need to balance wisely between work and leisure in their lives.

### Question 12

Bamboo is both resilient and tough. Vovinam martial arts techniques are like bamboo: they embrace both softness and hardness.



**Question 13**

- A Vovinam martial artist can tackle and control their opponent, evade (being attacked) or somersault – like a Judo martial artist.
- A Vovinam martial artist can punch and kick – like a Karate martial artist.

**Question 14**

The rule promotes the teachings of Vovinam that Vovinam martial artists must be strong but humane. The rule prevents Vovinam's martial artists from breaking the spiritual values that Vovinam's martial artists should only use martial arts to train their body and spirit, to defend the right and defend themselves.

**Question 15**

- Gender equality can increase the earning capacity of women and therefore families.
- It promotes social equality.
- It facilitates positive progress and change.

**Question 16**

- social prejudice
- lack of understanding of women's issues (in relation to their role on a domestic and a global level)
- women's own lack of understanding (of women's issues in relation to their role on a domestic and a global level)

**Question 17**

A conference was held to discuss women's issues and suggestions made to introduce social justice policies and supportive programs to assist women in their multiple roles.

**Question 18**

- the presence (20 per cent) of women as staff members in nationwide councils and committees
- the number of women holding government positions
- many female scientists are gaining international recognition

**Section 3 – Writing in Vietnamese**

In Section 3, students had a choice of one of five tasks:

- Question 19, an informative report
- Question 20, an imaginative story
- Question 21, a personal profile
- Question 22, the script for a speech
- Question 23, an evaluative review.

The length and type of writing for this task were taken into account. Students are expected to be familiar with the five specified kinds of writing – informative, imaginative, personal, persuasive and evaluative – and be able to produce a piece of writing within the required word length of 200 to 250 words in Vietnamese.

Most of the students understood all aspects of the task and performed well. Some did not only use information provided but also incorporated information that was not conveyed in the given question. Others gave their responses in note form; however, the questions required explanations and full sentences. Accuracy of information was another serious problem.

When responses to Section 3 were well done in a linguistically appropriate way, the final piece was generally of high quality. Students need to be clear on the criteria for assessment, as this will give them a good understanding of what is required.

**Question 19**

Question 19 asked students to write an informative report to be published in a Vietnamese newspaper about an annual event which they had recently attended. The writing needed to convey information about a Vietnamese annual event as clearly, comprehensively and accurately as possible. It should have had a number of the following features:

- an objective style, with impersonal expressions (but an informal style was still acceptable)
- used facts, examples, explanations, analogies (sometimes statistical information), quotations and references as evidence



- language, structure and sequencing that were chosen to make the message clear.

The main points the informative writing needed to cover included:

- what is the Vietnamese annual event?
- what is it like?
- when is it held?
- why is it held?
- who attends?
- what benefits and values does it bring to attendants?
- the student's feelings.

### Question 20

Question 20 asked students to write an imaginative story for a young people's magazine about the adventures of a robot that can follow any given command from its master. The writing should have manipulated the reader's responses (to the writing) to create the desired impression or response; it needed to have visual and/or emotional appeal. It should have had a number of the features below:

- a strong sense of context and situation
- a description (of the robot, place, emotion, atmosphere)
- appropriate selection of language/parts of speech
- given an impression/response and appropriate atmosphere.

The main points the imaginative writing needed to cover included:

- the name of the robot
- what is the robot like?
- what can it do?
- how does it behave? (normal behaviour/unexpected behaviour)
- what happens because of the robot's behaviour? Why?
- how to deal with unexpected behaviour?
- what message is brought forward from the situation?

### Question 21

Question 21 asked students to write a personal profile about a famous personality, and explain why the student admired them and how they have influenced their life. The writing needed to create a sense of person/personality in the reader's mind. It should have had a number of the features below:

- established a relationship between the writer and reader
- employed the first and/or second person; used a subjective, informal, familiar style, often including emotive language
- emphasised ideas, opinions, feelings and impressions rather than factual, objective information (related to the famous personality)
- may have used contracted language, such as is used in speech.

The main points the personal writing needed to cover included:

- who is the famous personality?
- what are their special attributes that have an impact on the writer?
- why does the writer admire the famous personality?
- how has the writer's life been influenced by the famous personality?

### Question 22

Question 22 asked students to write the script for a speech to persuade students to donate generously and to obtain donations from other people for an international aid agency. The speech needed to manipulate the audience's emotions and opinions. It should have had a number of the features below:

- used persuasive techniques appropriate to students
- chosen words carefully – persuasive words and vocabulary technique were important
- sometimes used exaggeration or extravagant language to create an inspiration and/or relationship with the audience – or used direct speech and questions to intensify the relationship with the audience
- used the second person for direct address and appeal.

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The main points of the persuasive speech needed to include:

- reasons for campaigning for donations
- the number of people who were involved
- the facts/background for the cause of donations
- persuasive reasons that would inspire the audience to made donations
- persuasive reasons that would inspire the audience to contribute to making other people donate.

## **Question 23**

Question 23 asked students to write an evaluative review for a TV/radio magazine commenting on the presentation, quality and timing of a number of programs the student liked. The review needed to reach a conclusion acceptable to intelligent, unbiased readers through the logical presentation and discussion of facts and ideas. It should have a number of the features below:

- facts related to the variety, quality and timing of chosen programs – a discussion, using evidence to support the writer's conclusive views
- an objective style, appealing mainly to reason, not emotion; creating an impression of balance and impartiality
- often included expressions of cause, consequence, opposition and concession.

The main points of the evaluative review needed to cover included:

- a clear introduction of a number of TV or radio programs
- the programs' features in terms of presentation, quality and timing
- comments on the features
- evaluative ideas with supporting evidence and/or discussion
- a reasonable conclusion about the programs.