

2021 VCE Yiddish written external assessment report

General comments

Students performed extremely well overall in the 2021 Yiddish written exam, demonstrating very strong language proficiency, including solid comprehension skills and the ability to express themselves clearly and authentically in Yiddish.

Students engaged very effectively with the texts overall. They provided comprehensive and relevant responses. Most students were able to apply various grammatical forms appropriately.

Students could benefit from revising word order and correct use of modal verbs in third person singular.

Specific information

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

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A

Text 1

Students responded very well to the questions for Text 1, reflecting excellent preparation.

Question 1a.

Possible answers included:

- they are most delicious served with onion or apple compote
- they are healthy/healthier, having no/little sugar.

Question 1b.

Some people cannot eat the foods due to food intolerances.

Question 1c.

Their grandmothers will find a way to prepare the foods lactose-free and gluten-free.

Text 2

Students demonstrated the ability to comprehend complexities in this text and make connections between their understandings of both Yiddish language and culture.

Question 2a.

The Vigil is about:

- a man who must sit vigil with a body/corpse and he experiences frightening things while sitting vigil
- a dybbuk/spirit who entered a Holocaust survivor's body during the Holocaust and was looking for a new home.

Question 2b.

The films are different because:

- they are made for an audience where most viewers are non-Yiddish speakers, and subtitles/translations are used
- they have Yiddish dialogue / they are not entirely in Yiddish
- the Yiddish language is linked with the foreign and with a tragic past and frightening demons.

Text 3

Students generally responded very well to the material.

Question 3a.

- The speaker's family was poor, so they did not have a lot to eat at home.
- They ate well at the Sanatorium and became healthier during their stay.

Question 3b.

Any two of the following:

- Children were responsible for everything.
- Children repaired their own clothes and looked after cleanliness.
- Any problems that the children experienced were discussed in a group.

Question 3c.

- The children played team sports.
- The children worked together to perform beautiful children operettas.
- The children had picnics together.

Part B

Text 4

Question 4

אָ געלעגנהייט צו:

- זינגען ייִדישע לידער פֿון פֿאַרשיידענע זשאַנערס
- זיך טרעפן מיט מענטשן פֿון פֿללערליי הינטערגרונטן און פֿערספעקטיוון.
- אויפֿצוהאַלטן די ייִדישע שפּראַך און קולטור (דורך מוזיק).

Relevant answers may include the opportunity to:

- sing a variety of genres of Yiddish music
- join with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives

- maintain the Yiddish language and culture (through music).

Students generally demonstrated the ability to summarise the text correctly. Not all students were able to infer all relevant responses.

Text 5

Question 5

אַרומרייזן דורך דער אינטערנעץ האָט דערמעגלעכט אַז חנה זאָל קענען:

- פֿאַרברענגען אויף שמוחות, וווּ נאָר זיי זײַנען, וואָס פֿאַרמינדערט די איזאלאַציע פֿון זײַן אין מעלבורן
- זיך צוהערן צו ייִדישע רעפֿעראַטן אין ניו יאָרק
- זיך לערנען אויף לעקציעס אין תל-אביב
- אַנטײל נעמען אין אַ לייען קרייז אין לאַנדאָן
- זיך באַקענען מיט נײַע מענטשן, און שאַפֿן פֿרישע פֿרײַנדשאַפֿטן
- פֿראַקטיצירן איר ייִדיש

Online travel has benefited Khane by enabling her to:

- have fun at parties no matter where they are, reducing the isolation of being located in Melbourne
- listen to Yiddish talks in New York
- go to classes in Tel Aviv
- participate in a reading group in London
- meet new people / make new friends
- practise her Yiddish.

Students responded very well overall to this text, with responses that scored highly demonstrating the ability to infer all required information.

Text 6

Students displayed a thorough understanding of the text by conveying most of the relevant aspects of the text, with responses that scored highly conveying all relevant aspects accurately and appropriately.

The wording of Question 6b. assumed students would take a similar perspective to that of the narrator; however, students may have had alternative perspectives.

Question 6a.

אונטערשיידן:

- דער זיידע איז געשלאָפֿן אין אַ געצעלט און עלי שלאָפֿט אין אַ קליין הייזקע
- דער זיידע האָט געהאַט קאַלטע שפּריצן, עלי האָט הייסע שפּריצן

ענלעכקייטן:

- ביידע לאַגערן דערמוטיקן די יונגע לײַט צו זײַן אומאַפהענגיק, האָבן מײנונגען און רעדן וועגן וויכטיקע ענינים
- ביידע לאַגערן דערמוטיקן די יונגע לײַט זײ זאָלן אויפבויען די קהילה, זיך טיילן מיט דער אַרבעט, און שטרעבן צו בויען אַ שענערע, בעסערע וועלט

Differences:

- The grandfather slept in tents; Ellie sleeps in huts.

- The grandfather had cold showers; Ellie has hot showers.

Similarities:

- Both camps encourage the young people to be independent, have opinions and speak up.
- Both camps encourage the young people to create a community, share the work and try to build a better world.

Question 6b.

דער זיידע

- פֿרעגט: האָסטו איינגעפֿאקט וואַרעמע קליידער?
- זאָגט: פֿאַר געזונט און קום צוריק געזונט

The grandfather says:

- Have you packed some warm clothes?
- Travel in good health and return in good health.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Text 7

Students demonstrated excellent understanding of both general and specific aspects of the text and were able to evaluate and convey the information clearly and appropriately.

Question 7

- Benny is pleased that the Acknowledgement of Country is being said in Yiddish.
- Benny is hopeful about the Acknowledgement of Country, thinking it is a good first step.
- Benny believes the Acknowledgement of Country reminds people of the Aboriginal history of the land.
- Benny believes the Acknowledgement of Country creates respect.

Text 8

In general, students were able to answer the questions with relevant information. Students are encouraged to take time to read the questions carefully to ensure that they respond to the question being asked.

Question 8a.

- The poets in the Lodz ghetto were her teachers and mentors.
- In Montreal, she found a lively community of Yiddish writers and cultural activists.
- The publication, in Melbourne, of an English translation of her epic novel, *The Tree of Life*. The awarding of important literary awards (including the Manger Prize for Yiddish Literature).

Question 8b.

- In the Sasel camp, she borrowed a pencil and rewrote her poems from memory on the ceiling above her bunkbed.
- Chava Rosenfarb used to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to write.
- Chava Rosenfarb often burnt saucepans (when she was cooking her food) because she was so deeply engrossed in her writing.

Part B

Text 9

Question 9

Text type: email

Kind of writing: informative

Audience: newly arrived friend from India

Suggested points students may have included in their response:

- Difficulties/challenges:
 - Language not heard outside the home or on television.
- How it is addressed:
 - The project will assist families and organisations with resources, classes and support groups.
 - Supports the parents to connect with their children and maintain the culture.
 - Support groups for the parents extends the connection for them and their children.
- The attraction:
 - Maintains the language and culture.
 - Allows parents and children to extend links in their communities.

Overall, the students' written responses reflected an excellent understanding of the content of the text. Most students wrote responses that were appropriate and relevant to the context, purpose and audience. Students were generally able to structure and sequence information and were able to express themselves clearly and coherently in Yiddish.

Section 3 – Writing in Yiddish

Students generally performed particularly well in this section of the exam, with responses that scored highly providing great depth. Most students provided creative and carefully considered responses. Some students attempted to include many broad examples, which sacrificed the depth and coherence of their response.

Students demonstrated a wide range of vocabulary and language structures. Responses that scored highly were able to utilise these accurately to enhance the quality of the argument. Overall, students provided innovative, sophisticated and thoughtful responses, engaging very well with the topics. For the most part, students displayed skill in using the Yiddish language accurately and effectively.

Question 12 proved the most popular in this section, with students writing varied and highly original responses.

Question 10

Text type: story / narrative account

Kind of writing: imaginative

Audience: readers of a magazine for young people

Suggested points students may have included in their response:

- a description of the reaction of seeing themselves in person
- a clarification of how the doppelganger, clone or person came to be walking towards the narrator
- a clarification of who the doppelganger, clone or person is
- the story should be clearly explained.

As this is an imaginative story, there are many possible responses.

Question 11

Text type: speech

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: attendees in an auditorium for the final round of the school debating competition

Suggested points students may have included in their response:

- Affirmative:
 - Every person's actions can contribute to global warming (so every person can contribute by changing those actions).
 - Every person's positive actions can reduce the pressure on the environment and on the climate.
 - Every positive action is one less thing harming the environment.
 - An individual's actions can have a ripple effect that inspires others, causing a chain reaction.
 - An individual may be in a position to have an impact on climate policy, and this can create a great deal of change.
 - If we wait for governments, macrosystems or large organisations to respond, it may be too late.
- Negative:
 - The scale of the problem is beyond individuals.
 - It is too little, too late.
 - Global warming is caused by mass systems, including large, polluting corporations. Placing the onus on individuals removes the responsibility from those who cause the problem.
 - Individual actions are just a drop in the ocean. Their impact is much too small for the scale of the problem.
 - There are more people whose actions harm the environment than people whose actions reduce their impact on global warming.

Question 12

Text type: blog

Kind of writing: personal/reflective

Audience: students

Responses could have:

- suggested a change in any aspect of school life, such as uniforms, curriculum, attendance requirements, exams, school structure, or laws and rules around education
- clarified why this change is needed
- outlined the specific change/s that they would make
- discussed how they would go about making this change.