



## Oral component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The work of the 2008 VCE students was of a good standard as exhibited in the oral and written examinations. Some students still had difficulty with certain grammatical constructions and with vocabulary with which they should be more familiar.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – Conversation

Students performed reasonably well in this section of the oral examination, however vocabulary seemed to be more limited than in previous years. Some students did not understand important words such as *oysforshn*. They tended to confuse the direct and indirect object pronouns *mikh* and *mir*. Reflexive verbs should be reviewed to avoid frequent errors.

#### Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of sub-topic this year was suitable and appropriate. It dealt with the migration of Jews to the United States and to Australia. It was noted in the 2007 Assessment Report that students had not explored the experience of their own family members and/or members of their community who themselves had been migrants to Australia. Students in 2008 again chose not to explore this aspect of the topic, which would have given more breadth to the sub-topic.

Generally, more preparation is needed with the Detailed Study.

## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Once again students found the paper fair and the CD clear and entertaining. Responses showed that students understood the Listening and responding texts well. All students attempted all questions and provided adequate responses to most questions. However, some texts were better handled than others. Text 1 was well answered. Text 2 was handled well but was not answered fully enough. Text 3 was not answered as well as expected and it was evident that the students found the statistics confusing. Texts 4 and 5 were well-handled.

In Section 2 – Reading and responding, students understood the first text very well, however had more difficulty with the longer text. Students are encouraged to practise unseen texts more. In Section 2, Part B, many students did not write the required number of words. Students are reminded that they must adhere closely to all instructions.

Students should be guided by the number of marks allocated to questions as to the length and depth of their response. The number of marks often represents the number of points required in the answer.

Students did very well in their writing tasks in Section 2, Part B and also in Section 3. They are always challenging parts of the paper as students are required to express themselves in Yiddish.

Section 3 – Writing in Yiddish, was well answered. The essays had good development and depth.

The language used is of the utmost importance in order to score well in the written examination. Students were rewarded for using idiomatic language and correct vocabulary. There were some weaknesses in the language structures, which require serious emphasis and focus during students' learning. Word order in Yiddish is very different from English and very idiomatic; it needs to be studied using many examples and much repetition. The past tense is constructed with the past participle and the auxiliary verb 'to have' **or** 'to be'. There is a limited list of verbs in Yiddish which take the auxiliary 'to be' in the past tense; this list should be reviewed repeatedly and committed to memory. Correct use of the auxiliary verb in the past tense must be ensured at this advanced level of language learning. This was mentioned in the 2007 Assessment Report and needs to be addressed in classes throughout the year.



## **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

### **Section 1 – Listening and responding**

#### **Part A – Answer in English**

##### **Text 1**

##### **Question 1a.**

The library

##### **Question 1b.**

- restaurant
- auditorium (for lectures)

##### **Question 1c.**

She met a group of Yiddish speakers, spoke Yiddish with them and they all enjoyed speaking Yiddish.

##### **Text 2**

##### **Question 2a.**

It is about a Jewish family/boy.

##### **Question 2b.**

Italy

##### **Question 2c.**

Mauro's parents are political activists and have to go into hiding from the police.

##### **Question 2d.**

- Mauro grew up in a middle-class neighbourhood.
- His grandfather lives in a poor district, with people from various countries, speaking a variety of languages, including Yiddish.

##### **Question 2e.**

Mauro is left on his own/A kindly neighbour takes him in

##### **Question 2f.**

- Brazil may lose the Cup
- his parents may be arrested

##### **Question 2g.**

Mauro is left home alone due to the grandfather's death (parents were absent).

##### **Text 3**

##### **Question 3a.**

Stand up and wait for the microphone to be handed to you

##### **Question 3b.**

- One set of statistics refers to the percentage of young people who started smoking.
- One set of statistics refers to the percentage of young people who have never smoked.

##### **Question 3c.**

- government laws regarding the sale of cigarettes to young people
- government regulations regarding advertising of cigarettes
- anti-smoking programs in schools

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## Question 3d.

For sponsor advertising

## Part B – Answer in Yiddish

### Text 4

#### Question 4a.

- concentration camps
- ghettos
- what happened to the Jewish people during World War II

#### Question 4b.

No, it would not have been as emotional because among the young people there were older people who were survivors.

#### Question 4c.

- they honoured the victims by saying Kaddish (prayer after the dead)
- they sang meaningful songs OR they mourned

#### Question 4d.

- the Jewish people still lives
- there is hope for the future
- these words come from the Partisan Hymn

#### Question 4e.

- Symche was moved by the fact that he stood on the very spot where so many people had died, with so many people who were alive
- the silence moved him
- young people and survivors were honouring the dead together

### Text 5

#### Question 5a.

Any two of:

- David's grandmother has died
- no other family member speaks Yiddish
- David wants to concentrate on subjects which will get him a job.

#### Question 5b.

- he might be employed by YIVO, the Institute for Jewish Research
- he will have access to the archives on all Jewish life/treasures

## Section 2 – Reading and responding

### Part A – Answer in English

#### Text 6

#### Question 6a.

- The Lord kept the Israelites in the desert before bringing them to the land in order to induce them to keep to their spirituality through their study of the Torah (Old Testament).
- The Lord had promised Abraham a land of goodness. As the Canaanites had destroyed the land, the Lord waited for its restoration.

#### Question 6b.

- they destroyed the sources of food/sustenance (seeds and trees)
- they blocked the wells (there was no water for the invaders to drink)
- they destroyed all accommodation (destroyed houses)

#### Text 7

#### Question 7a.

- the term means the struggle for survival and the continuity of a people/its traditions/its culture

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- the education of its children

## Question 7b.

One of:

- he made furniture
- he was a carpenter
- he was a cabinet maker.

## Question 7c.

His childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• religious father</li><li>• worried or suffering mother</li></ul>
His adult life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• feelings of love</li><li>• hard work/poverty</li></ul>
Jewish society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• religious/philosophical debate</li><li>• social problems</li></ul>

## Question 7d.

- Jewish life became more secular/less religious
- Jewish orchestras and choirs were formed

## Question 7e.

- Gebirtig composed the tune on a whistle, then sang the tunes to his neighbour (a musician) who played them on the piano and wrote them down
- he had no musical training/education

## Question 7f.

Two of:

- sensitive
- musical
- poetic
- inventive.

## Part B – Answer in Yiddish

### Text 8

#### Question 8

Students were asked to write an informative letter to the editor of their school paper, suggesting how school students can alleviate the problem at school and in the home. Students needed to give specific examples.

## Section 3 – Writing in Yiddish

### Question 9

Students were asked to write a narrative account about a personal childhood experience which still brings a smile to their face.

### Question 10

Students were given the scenario that they had been appointed as a youth ambassador to the Beijing Olympics. They were asked to write the text of a speech to encourage and persuade the under-30 generation to visit Australia.

### Question 11

Students were asked to write an evaluative report putting the arguments for and against the topic 'Mobile phones should be banned at school.'

### Question 12

Students were asked to imagine that they could live anywhere in the world and write a letter to a friend overseas stating which place they would choose and why.