

2015 VCE Arabic written examination report

General comments

In the 2015 Arabic examination, students' overall performance was good and they were generally aware of the parameters of the various questions. To achieve excellent results during the examination, students should ensure that they respond to all questions. They should also try to identify the key words and respond to all aspects of the questions. Students are advised to practise their writing skills regularly. Some students missed out on marks by not attempting questions.

For students to be successful in the Arabic written examination, they need to be familiar with all sections of the examination paper and the requirements of the study, as set out in the *VCE Arabic Study Design*. Grammatical accuracy and scriptwriting were good; however, a number of students made some errors. Students and teachers should review grammatical rules and practise these regularly to help students to prepare for the examination.

It is important that students learn effective dictionary skills so that the dictionary becomes a valuable tool in the examination for checking spelling as well as selecting the most accurate form of a word. When reading the questions, students should also carefully refer to the English translations on the paper to ensure that they have accurately understood the questions and, therefore, the answer that is required.

Students should make effective use of the 15 minutes of reading time.

Specific information

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

Section 1 – Listening and responding

To perform well in this section, students should practise their listening and note-taking skills. They are advised to use the two readings of the text to take thorough notes on the information that is presented, so that they are ready to respond to all key words in the questions.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

The majority of students did very well in answering the questions related to this text.

Question 1a.

The mother rings her son to tell her son that:

- Māhir/Fā'iz's brother has had an accident/broken his leg and needs an operation
- She will be home to pick him up/collect him.

Question 1b.

Fā'iz needs to do the following before his mother arrives home:

- remember to switch off the computer and make sure/ensure that the answering machine is on/works
- ask her son to put things in a bag for Māhir/prepare a bag for the hospital.

Question 1c.

Fā'iz will be ready in half an hour because:

- that's when his mother returns home
- then they can go to the hospital together.

Question 1d.

The mother will contact the father (also accepted were: the boy's father, Māhir's father). The reason for this was to ask him to come to the hospital.

Text 2

Question 2

Many students answered the entire question well; however, a small number of students gave only half of the required answer to Question 2b.

Question 2a.

The purpose of this interview was:

- to congratulate Rāmī °Āshūr on his victory the previous week being crowned world champion of squash
- finding out more information about the tournament.

Question 2b.

Students were expected to provide evidence from the interview indicating what led to a moment of disappointment for Rāmī °Āshūr. The following responses were acceptable:

- His father went to get a drink and missed the last point scored.
- His father went to get a drink and missed the crowd cheering him.

This question proved to be challenging for some students who did not address all parts of the requirements of the question.

Question 2c.

The following surprised Rāmī °Āshūr about the consequences of the heat:

- It was hard to earn victory.
- He will need to prepare better so he doesn't have health problems.

Part B – Answer in Arabic

All responses in this section needed to be based on the text. All students needed to listen carefully to the text in order to answer the questions with accuracy.

Text 3

Question 3a.

This advertisement would appeal to the following:

- إِلَى مَنْ يُحِبُّ \ يَهْتَمُّ بِالتَّارِيخِ الْقَدِيمِ
(People who like/are interested in ancient history.)
- إِلَى مَنْ يَسْتَمْتِعُ بِرُكُوبِ الْمَرَاكِبِ الْعَائِ
(People who enjoy boat trips.)
- إِلَى الْآبَاءِ وَالْأُمَّهَاتِ مَعَ أَطْفَالٍ
(People with children.)

Question 3b.

The following makes this place unique:

- مَا الَّذِي يَجْعَلُ هَذَا الْمَكَانَ مُمَيَّزًا
(Visitors [to this place] can return to the world of the Pharaohs.)
- يُمَكِّنُ زُورًا هَذَا الْمَكَانَ الْعُودَةَ إِلَى عَالَمِ الْفَرَاعِنَةِ وَيُمَكِّنُهُمْ أَنْ يُشَاهِدُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ النَّاسُ يَعْشُونَ وَيَعْمَلُونَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْعَصْرِ.
(Visitors can see/experience how people lived and worked during the time of the Pharaohs/back then.)

Question 3c.

Visitors can learn about the industries in the age of the Pharaohs in the following ways:

- يَسْمَعُونَ الْمَعْلُومَاتِ وَفِي نَفْسِ الْوَقْتِ يُشَاهِدُونَ النِّشَاطَاتِ وَالْعَمَلِيَّاتِ بِشَكْلِ مَشَاهِدٍ تَمَثِيلِيَّةٍ.
(they hear the information [while] at the same time, they see the activities and procedures in the form of scenes imitating the past)

Question 3d.

The evidence that indicates that souvenirs are available in the village is:

- يُوجَدُ فِي الْقَرْيَةِ سُوقٌ - يُقَدِّمُ السُّوقُ الْعَدِيدَ مِنَ الْبَضَائِعِ الْفُرْعُونِيَّةِ الْمُخْتَلِفَةِ
(There is a market in the village. The market offers numerous different Pharaonic wares.)
- يُقَدِّمُ السُّوقُ الْمُنْتَجَاتِ كَالْعُطُورِ وَالْمُنْتَجَاتِ الرَّجَاجِيَّةِ وَالنُّحَاسِيَّةِ وَالْجُدِيَّةِ
(The market offers products such as: perfumes, glassware, brassware and leather goods.)

Listing all products was not required.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

This section of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of the reading texts. Students were required to source their answers from different parts of the texts. Many students were able to do so successfully.

Text 4

Question 4a.

According to the text, the disadvantages of negligence, selfishness and lack of generosity are as follows:

- They can lead to accidents.
- They can lead to confusion when people cannot find misplaced things.
- They cause people to waste time in the workplace.
- Work is/may be delayed.
- These can annoy people (get on people's nerves).

Question 4b.

To address the disadvantages of negligence, selfishness and lack of generosity the author offers the following solution:

- education
- heads of families
- schools (should pay attention to this issue).

Question 4c.

- The author is suggesting that education concerns more than just (teaching) about technology
- The author states that without human and social values scientific progress has no value
- So, while working to achieve scientific progress, people should not lose sight of human and social values.

Question 4d.

The following evidence from the text indicates that the author still has faith in people:

- Anxiety was quickly chased away by hope.
- (He saw a record of) good and valiant people.

Question 4e.

The following are two examples that the author uses to describe selfishness:

- the driver not removing stones that he had put on the road
- the family member not returning something/utensil he/she has borrowed.

Question 4f.

Using evidence from the text, students were asked to write a note to a friend explaining why jugs should not be left empty for someone to fill. Answers needed to relate/refer to information in the text in order to demonstrate full understanding of it.

The note should have included the correct features of a note such as: 'To'; 'From'; Topic; Content; possible headings/subheadings; register; style and correct layout.

Part B – Answer in Arabic

In this part of the examination, students were assessed on their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and on their capacity to convey the required information accurately and appropriately. Marks were allocated for identifying the correct points and marks were also awarded for language.

Students needed to use the cues in the text and manipulate language to respond in full sentences and produce a coherent and cohesive paragraph in Arabic that included the main points from the text. Most students understood the purpose of the question, and many were able to convey the information accurately and effectively in Arabic without copying information directly from the text.

In high-scoring responses, ideas were accurately expressed and well linked in sentences within the paragraph. Answers given in point form did not allow students to demonstrate their ability to manipulate language authentically and consequently were not awarded full marks.

Text 5

Question 5

Responses could have included the following points:

- drive smaller cars
- difficult – but use public transport

- awareness campaign
- aware of their own behaviour
- economise on electricity and water.

The personal message should have included: a date; salutation; appropriate content; farewell/signing off; the register should have been appropriate, as should have the style and layout.

Section 3 – Writing in Arabic

In this section of the examination, students were asked to show their ability to write an original text of 200–300 words in Arabic on one of five topics. These topics reflected the five kinds of writing. Students were assessed according to the following criteria:

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

All five questions in this section of the examination were attempted by students. Most students displayed good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and style of writing in which they chose to write. Conversely, some students who had good linguistic skills seemed not to be familiar with the text type and style. High-scoring responses did not digress from the topic and did not include pre-learned material that was unrelated to the task. Ideas were developed coherently within paragraphs and were linked effectively. When selecting a topic, students should choose one that is familiar to them and requires the kind of writing and text type that suits them best or that has more familiar text type characteristics.

Some students still need to learn to organise their ideas into coherently developed paragraphs. Improvement is needed with accuracy of language and Arabic script as this can detract from the logical flow of the writing.

Question 6

Students were required to write a personal letter to a friend overseas about their final secondary school exams and their future plans. Acceptable responses included the following:

- Text type: must be in the form of an informal letter (and contain a personal profile, title/heading, content [factual information], headings/subheadings, register, style, layout)
- Audience: informal letter to a friend
- Kind of writing: personal writing
- Introduction, middle, conclusion
- Informative content and language referring to recent examinations; possible issues or areas of concern encountered; two or three future plans and/or opportunities maybe for career and/or future study
- Outcome(s) or concluding statements.

Question 7

Students had to imagine that there is no more petrol and that all fossil fuel resources are gone. They were required to write an imaginative story about life on planet Earth with no petrol or fossil fuels. Acceptable responses included the following:

- Text type: story (title/topic, structure, content, author [fictional name], register, style, layout)
- Audience: young adults/to any age group but this must be clear in the story written
- Kind of writing: imaginative
- Reference to the context: no petrol and fossil fuels and what has led to this; consequences; three or four events/life on earth

- Development of the story: situation, complication, resolution, conclusion
- Three or four well-developed ideas.

Question 8

Students had to write an informative report about a big technology exhibition for a local youth magazine. Acceptable responses included the following:

- Text type: newspaper article (title/topic, date, place, content, by-line [fictional name], register, style, layout)
- Audience: readers of a local youth magazine; formal writing
- Kind of writing: informative
- Title should have been as indicated in the writing task
- Reference to technology exhibition and possible reason for it
- Discuss and develop about three or four well-developed ideas
- Conclusion.

Question 9

For this question, students were asked to write an evaluative script for a talk in a radio program on the following topic: 'Housework: do women do more than men?' Acceptable responses included the following:

- Text type: speech (topic/title, structure, content, register, style, layout)
- Audience: listeners of a radio program
- Kind of writing: evaluative
- Interjections, suspension points, rhetorical questions, etc.
- Greetings; lead-in sentence(s), three or four points that have been elaborated
- Reference to why the speech is being given
- Comments related to two or three reasons to support each side of the argument
- Formal, evaluative language offering possible ideas and reasons
- Taking a viewpoint and supporting three or four arguments.

Question 10

Students were asked to write an article for their school's magazine to persuade their fellow students of the importance of languages in developing cross-cultural relationships. Acceptable responses included the following:

- Text type: school magazine article (title, content, author [fictional name], register, style, layout)
- Audience: students
- Kind of writing: persuasive
- Introduction, middle, conclusion
- Three or four well-developed points regarding the importance of languages and how they link in developing cross-cultural relationships.