



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall performance of students in the 2005 oral examination was good. Stronger students were able to speak freely and fluently and corrected themselves when they made mistakes. Some students were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively and could converse with assessors about different aspects of their personal world and about their chosen sub-topic.

Some non-Victorian students did not demonstrate a clear knowledge of the requirements of the examination. Students must be aware of the examination requirements and criteria to avoid being disadvantaged.

Pronunciation

Dialects and regional differences in pronunciation were often evident. Students are advised that the Study Design states that 'the language to be studied and assessed is modern standard Arabic'.

Lexicon

It was evident that some students had translated vocabulary and sentence structures directly from English to Arabic, and English words were commonly heard when the student did not know the equivalent word in Arabic. However, these concerns were not as common as in previous years.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were required to interact with a panel of two assessors on topic areas associated with their personal world. Successful students were able to talk fluently and accurately. Many went beyond providing brief, basic answers and added breadth and depth to their responses.

Students who performed poorly often did not understand the comments or the questions made by assessors. It is important that students know how to ask for clarification if they do not understand something. Students must also be prepared to elaborate on their responses.

Section 2 – Discussion

At the beginning of the Discussion, students are given one minute to provide an introduction to their sub-topic. It is important that they make good use of this time.

The topics used in 2005 were varied and covered a range of issues, and the majority of the themes and the sub-topics were well structured and effectively organised.

Most students showed evidence of thorough preparation and had selected an appropriate sub-topic for the Detailed Study. They used adequate vocabulary and terminology to discuss their sub-topic. Such students were skilled and had the ability to express and elaborate on ideas and opinions and supported these with evidence from the texts studied. They were able to extend the discussion without excessive help from the assessors. A number of students supported their sub-topic with appropriate objects; for example, photographs and maps.

A minority of students were not well prepared for the task, and some students had chosen topics that were beyond their language skills. These students were thus unable to offer a range of ideas and opinions to defend their points of view. Some of the sub-topics chosen for the Detailed Study did not appear to be suitable for the task, and students struggled in the Discussion. Teachers should take an active part in helping students choose their topics and in preparing students to cope with the task. Students also need to be better prepared in order to use the language spontaneously in unrehearsed situations.



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students attempted all parts of the written examination. The quality of responses was reflected by the different grades and the variety of topics selected.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Most students were able to complete this task fairly well and appeared to have understood the spoken passages, although some students may have found it challenging.

Teachers should expose their students to listening activities using different text types in order to prepare students to answer various types of questions. Students need to practise how to listen effectively and extract the relevant information from the texts within the times specified in the revised Study Design. Students should also thoroughly read the questions in the 15 minutes reading time in order to understand what sort of information they should listen for and what is required in their responses.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Students needed to be able to gather information from two texts in order to accomplish this task. Some students had difficulty identifying and selecting the correct information. Students should rephrase the information in their own words and avoid repeating it word for word from the text. Students also need to be aware that the answers must come only from the information provided in the texts.

Section 3 – Writing in Arabic

All students attempted this section. Students generally displayed the necessary creative skills, and responses to the topics were expressed in good, clear language. In general, students accurately used the correct language structures, but teachers should encourage students to practise writing in different text types and ensure that they know the appropriate features of each. Once again, interstate students need to be aware of the written criteria and how to achieve maximum marks.