2023 VCE Chinese First Language written external assessment report

General comments

The 2023 VCE Chinese First Language written examination assessed students’ knowledge and skills in using written language. The examination has three sections.

In Section 1 – Reading, listening and responding, the majority of the students performed well, especially in Questions 1a. and 1b. A small group of students placed their answers under the wrong parts of Questions 1c. and 1d. There was a considerable amount of character errors in students’ responses.

Students are advised that responses must directly address the topic and be written in complete paragraphs. Paragraphs should be logically structured with smooth development. Students are required to demonstrate their ability to identify and integrate information. They are encouraged to practise their skills in identifying information and ideas from different types of texts and integrating them into their response. Students are advised to avoid copying sentences and paragraphs from the original texts.

In Section 2 – Reading, listening and creating text, there was a noticeable improvement in terms of student performance. Most students were able to integrate and synthesise relevant ideas and opinions from the stimulus texts. The features of evaluative writing style and newspaper article were well addressed.

Students are advised that the information must come from the two stimulus texts and is relevant to the task. The organisation and synthetisation of information must adhere to the purpose of the task, and argument development should be reasonable, organised and logical. The language used should meet the requirements of the task. Copying information without proper integration/synthetisation must be avoided.

In Section 3 – Writing in Chinese, students were required to write a text and present ideas and/or information and/or opinions and/or arguments. There was a choice of two tasks; an increased number of students selected the imaginative writing option.

Students are advised to pay extra attention to the context, purpose, audience, writing style and text type.

Overall, the majority of students demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of this written examination and attempted all questions within the 120 minutes examination time. Only a very small group of students didn’t manage to complete all the tasks. A few students didn’t attempt Questions 1c. and 1d. of Section 1.

Responses that scored highly demonstrated:

* an excellent understanding of the task requirements, including the purpose
* an excellent understanding of the written and audio texts and the questions
* the ability to identify and integrate relevant information and ideas from the texts and weave them seamlessly with the theme
* the ability to convince, encourage and move the audience through a good understanding of the main characteristics of the evaluative writing style and school newspaper article text features
* the ability to create a strong sense of context and situation through a good understanding of the main characteristics of the personal writing style and diary
* a good understanding of the main characteristics of the imaginative writing style and story
* excellent linguistical control by using a broad range of sophisticated vocabulary and maintaining a high degree of grammatical accuracy.

Responses that did not score well:

* lacked a full understanding of the written and audio texts and the questions
* lacked sufficient information from the texts and did not integrate and synthesise the relevant information and ideas
* contained minimal information and ideas and relied heavily on the language from the stimulus texts
* lacked understanding of the main characteristics of the required writing styles and text features
* were written in the wrong writing style
* lacked coherence and logic
* included character and grammatical errors
* used a mixture of character and Pinyin
* did not complete the question.

It is important that students familiarise themselves with the specifications for written examination, available on the [VCE Chinese First Language webpage](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Chinese-First-Language.aspx)*.*

Specific information

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 ‒ Reading, listening and responding

Students were assessed on the following criteria in Section 1:

* the capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts
* the capacity to identify and integrate relevant information and ideas from the texts
* the capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately.

Question 1a.

* 诸葛亮当时面对强大的威胁和刁难 (Zhu Ge Liang was facing giant threats and challenges.)
* 诸葛亮自己势单力薄 (Zhu Ge Liang was in a weak position with limited resources.)
* 善借帮助诸葛亮扩充实力，实现目标 (‘Wise borrowing’ could expand Zhu Ge Liang’s capability to achieve his goals.)

Question 1b.

* 古今中外的学者们没有“尽信书“，这才让我们的社会在各个领域得以向前发展 (From ancient times to the present, in east and west, great scholars did not blindly believe in what was said in books. We should attribute the advancement in all fields of our societies to real ‘wise borrowing’.)
* 不盲听盲从：波兰天文学家哥白尼不盲听当时权威宣扬的“地球处于宇宙中心”学说，提出地球是围绕太阳运动的，实现天文学的根本变革 (Polish astronomer Copernicus did not blindly believe in the prevailing theory stating that Earth was the centre of universe. Instead, he argued that Earth was orbiting around the sun. He contributed to the fundamental revolution of astronomy.)
* 理性的质疑：中国年轻数学家陈景润通过论文质疑数学前辈华罗庚，指出其理论的不完善之处 (A young Chinese mathematician Chen Jing Run wrote an essay to challenge Hua Luo Geng, a predecessor, in a rational and professional manner because Chen believed there was something wrong with Hua’s theory.)

Question 1c.

* 万物皆可借，善借人力、外力、局势 (Make use of virtually everything: skilfully leverage human effort, external resources and circumstances.)
* 人力:一个好汉三个帮，它山之石可以攻玉 (Human resources: ‘two heads are better than one’ and ‘stones from other hills may serve to polish the jade of this one’)
* 借朋友之力：比如诸葛亮借鲁肃之力，甚至可以借敌人的力量：诸葛亮借曹操的箭 (Rely on friends: Zhu Ge Liang sought assistance from Lu Su, and even from enemies: he ‘borrowed’ the arrows from the Cao Army.)
* 外物：向书本借鉴；积累知识，借别人的心理，如诸葛亮借曹操多疑心理来安排作战计划
(External resources: rely on knowledge and accumulating knowledge [books]; take advantage of people’s temperament, e.g. Zhu Ge Liang made use of Cao Cao’s suspicious personality when planning for attacking.)
* 局势：借有利的局势，借坡下驴，顺水推舟 (Circumstances: ‘By slope under the donkey with favourable terrain under the donkey’, ‘Push the boats with the current’; this is making the best out of the situations and momentum.)
* 利用技术向自然界借用资源，比如地热能发电；借助科技的产物，比如手机帮助人们实现“指尖生活” (Borrow from natural resources, e.g. using technology to make use of geothermal to generate power; scientific and technological products, with phones in hand, people can enjoy life on their fingertips.)
* 借天气和地利环境，比如大雾迷江、东风，诸葛亮借铁锁连环船的地利 (Make use of the weather and the surrounding lands, e.g. Zhu Ge Liang made use of the foggy weather, the eastern winds, and his knowledge that the Cao Army chained all their boats together.)

Question 1d.

* 笃学加实战：卷帙书海，万卷书让我们脑中知天地；躬身实践，万里路帮我们心中有丘壑 (Diligent study combined with practical experience: one needs to read a vast sea of books, thousands of volumes to understand the world. Personal practice: travelling thousands of miles would enrich and nourish our minds.)
* 拥有广博的知识和智慧以及极高的认知，有助于我们正确地认识人、了解物、理解局势 (Having extensive knowledge and wisdom as well as high cognition helps us correctly understand people, comprehend phenomena, and grasp situations.)
* 交万般友、历万种事，把自己放低，谦虚，同时也要临危不惧 (Make a variety of friends, diversify experiences, humble ourselves, and be modest, but also be fearless in the face of danger.)
* 要有敏锐的触觉，才能善于发现可借的资源，捕捉各方力量并“借”为己用 (One needs to have a keen sense to be good at discovering available resources and capturing various forces to ‘borrow’ for oneself.)
* 在信息大爆炸的时代，人们要学会独立、辩证思考 (In the age of the information explosion, people need to learn to think independently and dialectically.)
* 要掌握原则、目的：不乱借，不可以为达目的不择手段，比如巧取豪夺、剽窃侵用 (Master principles and goals: do not ‘borrow’ indiscriminately, and do not use any means to achieve the goal, such as extortion or plagiarism.)
* 要掌握尺度：不能过度依赖所借用之物，比如手机依赖症 (Maintain a balance: do not excessively rely on ‘borrowed items’, for example, ‘smartphone addiction’.)

Section 2 ‒ Reading, listening and creating text

Students were assessed on the following criteria in Section 2:

* the capacity to identify, integrate and synthesise relevant information and ideas from the texts
* appropriateness of structure and sequence
* accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar (including punctuation and, where relevant, script).

Students were required to write an article for their high school’s newspaper to discuss the development of AI’s positive and negative impacts on students’ future career options.

* text type: newspaper article
* kind of writing: evaluative
* audience: newspaper readers.

Relevant information and ideas (identified from the two texts) that could have been included were:

* 人工智能可以复制和模拟自身的功能对未来就业的影响 (The replicating and self-simulating function of artificial intelligence (AI) will impact on future career choices.)
* 高级智能的人工智能对将来就业的影响（如能完成多元复杂任务，甚至提供解决方案的翻译、机器模型、语言处理系统） (Advanced AI, such as translation, mechanical models, and language analysis systems, can complete complex tasks and even provide solutions; this will impact on future career choices.)
* 人工智能导致社会中行业的结构和性质产生了翻天覆地的变化，让一些人感到职业前景、生存空间受到了挤压 (The emergence of AI has led to radical changes in the structure and nature of existing industries and occupations in society. It is causing some people to feel anxious about their living and careers.)
* 人工智能可以成为择业辅助工具，提高效率，人力资源的例子 (AI can act as a supplementary tool and improve efficiency, e.g. the use of Al in the field of human resources.)
* 人工智能出现后就业市场的特点在于人类和人工智能的合作，而非竞争，比如，艺术家 (The characteristic of the job market after the emergence of AI will be cooperation, rather than competition, e.g. the artists.)
* 职业规划会越来越难，不少职业极可能在短期内就被人工智能取代，比如电脑编程。很多兼职工作都是机械重复型，或劳动力密集型工作，工作岗位锐减，就连互联网开发这一类相对复杂，或需要基础分析的工作，现在的人工智能模块也能轻松胜任 (It is more and more challenging to plan for future careers; lots of occupations and jobs might be replaced by AI in a short period of time, e.g. computer programming. Many part-time jobs are repetitive, or labour-intensive. The advent of artificial intelligence has led to a sharp reduction in these jobs. Even jobs such as internet development, which are relatively complex or require analysis skills, can now be easily handled by AI or robots.)
* 有需要去学习新知识技能，改变职业规划 (We need to learn new knowledge and skills, and change career plans.)
* 人工智能了解人的思维方式，它通过采集分析使用数据，对一个人长处和短处了如指掌，甚至还能提一些恰到好处的就业建议。 (AI understands people’s way of thinking, collects and analyses the data of usage, knows one’s strengths and weaknesses, and can even provide the right advice on how to get a job.)
* 学习新技能不容易，要开发全面技能,比如创造力、情商和决策力 (Learning new skills is not easy; we need to develop well-rounded, holistic skills, e.g. creativity, EQ, decision making.)
* 求职上要拓宽思维，要了解人工智能，学会与人工智能共生 (We need to broaden our minds when it comes to job hunting, get to know AI and learn to live in symbiosis with artificial intelligence.)

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Students were assessed on the following criteria in Section 3:

* relevance, breadth and depth of content
* appropriateness of structure and sequence
* accuracy of vocabulary and grammar (including punctuation and, where relevant, script)
* range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Students were required to complete an extended response on one of the two topics ‘Write a diary entry to reflect on a meal that is of special significance that soothed your body and soul’ or ‘Write an imaginative story to an adolescent story magazine based on the picture’.

Most students demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of the task and met them satisfactorily. The main characteristics of personal writing and imaginative writing were well presented in the responses; however, many responses lacked depth and breadth in content. Many students were unable to express their ideas in a sophisticated way. A small group of students did not demonstrate their understanding of the topic. It is pleasing to note that an increasing number of students chose imaginative writing in Section 3.

Question 3

* Text type: diary entry (events, emotions and reflections on the day)
* Kind of writing: personal
* Audience: oneself

The response was expected to include:

* content: balancing relief of soul and the significance of a meal; the food not just alleviates hunger but also has special soothing effects
* key elements: emotions/feelings, a meal, and a comforted and eased mind
* emotions/feelings: worries, concerns, pressures, losses, misunderstanding, setbacks, emotional ups and downs (homesick) etc.
* the suffering being mitigated and soothed
* language: detailed and reflective on changes in emotions/feelings.

Question 4

* Text type: story
* Kind of writing: imaginative
* Audience: public adolescent readers

The response was expected to include:

* creativity and imagination
* key elements: creates a strong sense of context and situation (fish, bottle, water); includes descriptions (person, place, emotion, atmosphere); careful control of structure and sequencing to add the overall effect
* young adolescent theme possibilities: climate, coming of age, personal growth, relationships with family/friends
* language: careful selection of language (adjectives and adverbs or equivalents) to demonstrate the characteristics of imaginative writing style and story text type, and appropriate to the young adolescents audiences.