2024 VCE Karen written examination report

General comments

The majority of students performed well in the 2024 VCE Karen written examination.

High scoring students paid close attention to examination instructions and to the command terms in each question, making sure to clearly address these in their responses. Students are advised to refer to the mark allocation for each question as this will generally provide an indication of the number of distinct points or pieces of information required in the response.

Where responses were required in Karen (such as in Section 1 Questions 4–6 and Section 2 Question 9), spelling mistakes were common; however, where the intended word and meaning was clear, this did not prevent responses from being awarded marks. Students should read instructions carefully to ensure they provide their responses in the correct language and format.

Specific information

Section 1: Listening and responding

Text 1

Question 1a.

The things Saw Kwar and Thoe did on their farm were:

* raise animals
* grow vegetables.

The majority of students responded to this question correctly.

Question 1b.

Reasons customers love the Farmer Fresh Market products:

* affordable / cheaper / prices are lower than other markets
* fresh products.

Responses such as ‘variety of products’ and ‘listing the product’s name’ were incorrect.

Text 2

Question 2a.

The gifts purchased were:

* a banana tree
* a mango tree.

Question 2b.

The benefits of the gifts were:

* saving money, because they don’t need to buy bananas and mangoes
* sharing the fruit with neighbours so they become closer friends
* the trees provide shade
* the trees remind his mother of growing up in Karen State.

Text 3

Question 3a.

The two jobs the speaker did during his gap year were:

* picking fruit
* working in a cafe and hotel.

The majority of students were unable to identify the speaker’s second job as ‘working in a cafe and hotel’. Responses needed to accurately convey information from the text and not include any unrelated information or information that was not in the text.

Question 3b.

The places where the speaker travelled during his gap year were:

* Northern Territory
* Uluru
* Mount Buller.

Responses needed to include all three places to be awarded full marks.

Text 4

Question 4

The underlying meanings of the colours were that:

* tvGJ>0g = w>pDw>qSH (white represents purity)
* tvGJ>vg = w>’d.xD.vJRxD. (green represents growth).

The majority of students responded to this question correctly.

Text 5

Question 5a.

The things Patoe learned at the meditation centre were:

* od.vd,Rw>\*JRvdvXub.uog’fvJ. (breathing exercises)
* rRysDuGHmyo;w>qdurd. (to clear his mind)
* w>[l;w>\*JRvXrRvDRuykmyxl.yys>wz. (a muscle-relaxing activity).

Question 5b.

The ways meditation improved Patoe’s life were the following:

* rHrkm’d.xD. (His sleep has improved.)
* w>o;pX>qXvXuFdw>rR\*hR’d.xD. (He can focus better on schoolwork.)
* o;bSh.bSD.’D;td.rkmud;eHR'J; (He has a greater sense of calm every day.)

The majority of students responded to Questions 5a. and 5b. correctly.

Text 6

Question 6a.

The number of people who performed in the show were the following:

* ySR’d0.xD’l.td.0J 12 \*R (Twelve people held and moved the bamboo sticks.)
* ySR\*JRuvH.zdtd. 8 \*R cJvXm 20 \*R (Eight people performed the dance.)

The majority of students responded to this question correctly.

Question 6b.

The traditional aspects of the dance were:

* unDw>qJ;w>vRuluR (traditional decorative Karen costumes)
* w>’hw>tlyDD;vD (traditional musical instruments)
* 0.bdusdA0.z;xD (freshly cut, long, straight pieces of bamboo).

Some responses to this question included extraneous detail such as the risks of getting hit by the bamboo. It is important for students to note the keywords in exam questions and respond to these specifically.

Section 2: Reading and responding

Text 7

Question 7

The initiative is contributing to the preservation of wildlife in Karen State by:

* establishing a large-scale area of land dedicated to preserving the habitat
* using cameras to locate and monitor the number of tigers and leopards
* alerting rangers to the presence of poachers
* collecting and reviewing data to inform a breeding program
* establishing an education program.

This question was not answered well. Some responses were very long without specifically answering the question. For example, some responses focused on the purpose of the initiative generally rather than explaining the way it is specifically contributing to the preservation of wildlife. It is important for students to note the keywords in exam questions and respond specifically to these words. Students should note the correct translation of w>\*DR’X is ‘camera’, not ‘photography’.

Text 8

Question 8a.

The ways the celebration reflected a traditional Karen wedding were the following:

* The choir sang beautifully.
* Their best friends were the best man and maid of honour.

Question 8b.

The Western influences that Say Nay talked about in the letter were the following:

* There were five bridesmaids and five groomsmen.
* The reception was held in the evening instead of being held after the ceremony.
* The meal consisted of three courses.
* A big wedding cake was served at the end of the celebration.

Higher-scoring responses were precise and paid attention to the finer details in the text.

Text 9

Question 9

Text type: script of speech

Kind of writing: evaluative

Audience: students

Advantages of increased smartphone use that students may have included in their responses:

* vDwJpdtCdw>qJ;usd;\*hRxD.nDxD.vXunDySRw0Xtusg (communication made easier)
* z;w>upD.’D;[h.eDR[h.cDw>upD.wz. (reading and sharing information made easier)
* oh.ngb.w>upD.’D;wuD.cgw>\*h>w>usdRwz. (easier to stay up to date with news and current affairs)
* yShRw>’D;[h.w>bl;w>vJvXvDrk>ysDylRnD0J (more convenient to shop and pay bills online).

Disadvantages of increased smartphone use that students may have included in their responses:

* [h.w>qXuwD>vX[H.zdCDzd’D;wHRoud;pSRvDR (less time spent with family and friends)
* vDwJpdwz.uJxD.w>b.’db.xH;vXcd.CXRehqX. (smartphone pollution)
* -uX; vXrR\*hRrRoDxD.’D;oluhRtDRvXurRpSRvDRw>b.’dvXcd.CXRehqX.t\*D> (smartphones need to be refurbished and upgraded).

The responses suggested that the majority of students understood the text well. Higher-scoring responses addressed a range of different points from the text, including both advantages and disadvantages, to provide a balanced, evaluative piece of writing. However, some students wrote in point form rather than in complete sentences, which was inappropriate for this text type.

Section 3: Writing in Karen

Students were required to write an original text in Karen on one of two topics. In order to comply with the criteria, they needed to present relevant content with depth and meaning. Students should have demonstrated an ability to express themselves in Karen, to match the register of the response to the question asked, and to write a response in the text type and kind of writing required for the specified audience.

Question 10

Text type: storybook

Kind of writing: imaginative

Audience: younger sibling

Points that students needed to keep in mind:

* The story needed to clearly respond to the prompt by involving ‘nature’ and/or ‘animals’.
* The language used needed to be appropriate for the audience: younger sibling.
* Students needed to demonstrate a good grasp of grammar and vocabulary to create an engaging story.
* The piece of writing should have been clearly structured as an imaginative story, including:
* an introduction to the story that set the scene and introduced the main character(s)
* a description of the main conflict or situation
* a main event or climax
* a clear ending to the story in which the conflict or situation was resolved.

Question 11

Text type: letter

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: school principal

Points that students needed to keep in mind:

* The letter should have begun with a clear introduction outlining the letter’s purpose.
* The tone and language used should have been appropriately formal and included a respectful greeting to the principal.
* In order to adequately persuade, the letter must have:
* provided a compelling reason for the fundraising and described the benefits of the event
* outlined the fundraising activities proposed
* included details on planning and management
* concluded with a respectful appeal, expressing gratitude for the principal’s consideration.