



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students were well prepared for the conversation section and were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively. They were able to converse with assessors efficiently about aspects of their personal world. However, students' performances overall were not as strong in the discussion section. Some students had not prepared an effective introduction that allowed for a constructive discussion nor did they display an ability to present ideas and opinions that were highly relevant and well-linked to the texts studied. Students need to be better prepared in terms of being able to use language spontaneously in unrehearsed situations, as this section requires a more objective approach and students can not rely on pre-learned information. A number of students supported their discussion appropriately with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps, elaborating on these and stating why they considered them important. The support material was free of writing, except perhaps a heading. Overall, assessors felt that this year students were more familiar with the expectations of the oral examination.

In 2004, a revised assessment scheme was introduced which regrouped criteria and was based on a ten-point scale. This scheme was a better discriminator of the students' oral performance. It highlighted more clearly the differences between those students who were well prepared and those who were less adequately prepared. The well-prepared students performed well in both sections because they were able to link effectively with the assessors, expand on their answers and offer interesting ideas and opinions using vocabulary and grammar accurately. The descriptors for the criteria are published on the VCAA website (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au). It is important that teachers and students are familiar with these when preparing for the oral, as any issues can then be addressed prior to the examination.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

Most students were able to talk fluently about areas of their personal world, such as school, home life, family and friends, and interests and future aspirations. They were able to hold a conversation for seven minutes, discussed more than one topic effectively and developed more than one aspect of those topics. Their interaction with the assessors was very good, as they were able to respond to and build on comments made by assessors. Most students were able to express their ideas with clarity, paying particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Content

Well-prepared students were able to add breadth and depth to their conversation and supported and elaborated on their statements. These students presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas in highly relevant and logical responses. Students who were less prepared found it difficult to extend beyond the obvious and were unable to follow up with more detailed responses. Instead of asking for clarification when they did not understand a question, some students responded with what appeared to be a memorised answer. Others did not listen carefully and concentrated on one word from the question and responded to this, unfortunately not addressing all the required parts. It is vital that students are prepared to elaborate on their responses with reasons, examples and evidence and that they do not give shallow responses.

Language

Overall, vocabulary was suitable and relevant; however, this was the weakest criterion in this section. While many students were able to use an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately, others had a limited vocabulary and made some basic grammatical and syntactical errors. Accents were placed incorrectly, for example *ο δασκάλος, η τροφή*, and gender and case did not agree, *τα πηγή, τα έλληνες, η κολύμπι*. The active and passive voice and verb endings in general also presented problems; for example, *με αρέσει τα ελληνικά να παντρέψω, συμμετείχεσα*. Agreement between nouns and adjectives was also at times incorrect, as for example *οι Ολυμπιακές αγώνες, λίγες μήνες, πολλούς πόλεις, οι αγώνες ήταν σημαντικό*. Some students also used English words and phrases; for example, *ήταν (wrong)*, and *πήγαμε στο (pictures)*.



Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

Students need to make good use of the one-minute introduction and steer assessors towards aspects of their chosen sub-topic that they can talk about with confidence. Successful students were able to outline the sub-topic within the one-minute limit, stating the names of the three texts studied, the title of the sub-topic, and giving a brief elaboration while focusing on the issues. In the seven-minute discussion that followed the introduction, good students demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of the chosen topic. Such students were skilled in expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions, and supported these with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied and/or new ideas. These students used a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures and maintained a high degree of interaction with the assessors. They were able to advance the discussion with interesting comments and at times even lead the discussion. They spoke confidently and fluently with very good pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Other students simply retold the content of the texts studied, which they had pre-learned, instead of discussing the texts and giving ideas and opinions. At times the topics did not suit the linguistic ability of the students and, as such, the students were not able to carry the discussion forward or deal with a variety of questions, nor did they have good repair strategies when in difficulty. More practice is needed at specifically addressing the questions and responding more effectively to a wider variety of questions. Clarity of expression in this criterion was addressed well by most students. Even the weaker students had good pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Content

The choice of the sub-topic is very important. Students were expected to have studied their sub-topic for 15 hours in class and to have been exposed to a variety of resources so that they could draw from these for their discussion. This was not always done as successfully as possible. Some topics were not broad enough to accommodate a range of interests and perspectives and did not cater well for individual responses. Some topics were also beyond the language skills of some students and thus students were not able to offer a range of information, ideas and opinions or to clarify, elaborate or defend these opinions and ideas. Other topics enabled the more competent students to display an excellent knowledge of their topic and to demonstrate their ability to elaborate on ideas and opinions with reasons/examples/evidence and new ideas. One main concern this year was that the majority of students studied the topic 'The role of women and men in the Greek family', partly because it was made available in the form of a resource kit. Although the topic in itself has a lot to offer, assessors were concerned that it did not challenge all students appropriately by enabling them to present an excellent range of information while supporting and defending their opinions and ideas. Students also referred to the same resources without always appreciating the ideas they contained and were often not able to develop their own opinions and ideas. It is important that a greater variety of topics and resources are chosen that will cater more effectively for the abilities and interests of different students. The topics of 'soccer' and 'heroism' also presented problems, as they did not allow all students to present a very good and relevant range of information, ideas and opinions.

Some good sub-topics this year were:

- famous Greeks, like Melina Merkouri
- popular Greek composers/singers, like Mikis Theodorakis and Georgios Dalaras
- the Olympic Games – the differences between old and modern games
- drugs in sport
- Greek Australian identity.

Language

Many students were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures in their interaction with the assessors. These students spoke in an appropriate manner, catering well for their audience and the purpose of the task. However, as in the conversation section, this was the weakest area, with similar types of grammatical and syntactical errors. Students should know the vocabulary and grammar required to discuss their sub-topic with ease so that an interesting discussion can take place. Mistakes, like *στις αγώνες σήμερα* when the student has prepared the topic of 'Olympic games', or *οι δύο φίλοι* instead of *τα δύο φύλα* when referring to the two genders (men and women), could have been avoided with proper preparation. Some students had a more limited vocabulary and grammatical range and were not able to use complex syntactical structures. Those students should have been advised to select more appropriate topics that would cater for their linguistic abilities.



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2004 Greek written examination exposed students to a variety of text types from various topics as prescribed in the Greek Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design, such as: 'Greece in the European Union', 'the environment', 'famous Greeks in a selected field of endeavour', 'friendship', 'the neighbourhood', 'future job skills', 'experiences of schooling', 'the Asia Minor experience' and 'Greeks of the diaspora'.

Students were expected to demonstrate an understanding of general and specific information from spoken (Section 1) and written (Section 2) sources. In Part A of Sections 1 and 2, students needed to respond in English, while in Part B of both sections they were required to answer in Greek. This year most students were able to provide appropriate answers in the correct language as prescribed by the instructions. Teachers and students should note that no marks are awarded for answers written in the wrong language.

There was a general improvement in students' ability to access information from the Greek aural and written texts and all questions on the examination were answered appropriately by a number of students. There was also an improvement in students' ability to use the appropriate characteristics of the text types in which they were expected to respond. Teachers are reminded that students need to be familiar with all the text types listed on page 13 in the Study Design. Text types indicated with an asterisk are those which students are expected to produce in the written examination. The main characteristics of common text types can be found on page 58 of the Study Design. Teachers must also note that there have been changes to the prescribed themes, topics and sub-topics for 2005. These changes can also be found on page 13 of the new Study Design.

It is vital for students to read all instructions, texts and questions carefully in order to provide correct and meaningful answers. Responses should answer the questions and not be mere translations of the information provided in Greek. The amount of space given to answer a particular question is a good indicator of the length of the anticipated answer. One or two lines indicate a short answer is required and several lines indicate that the question requires a longer answer. Students should avoid restating the question to ensure they have sufficient space for their own answer.

Overall, students were able to successfully communicate their ideas in Greek, but their writing often reflected a poor understanding of the grammatical rules which govern the Greek language. Teachers need to give more emphasis to the teaching of grammar in order to improve students' ability to write with accuracy and fluency. Some areas of concern were:

- inability to distinguish between certain letters of the alphabet, such as δ and θ , ζ and ξ
- failure to use accents
- incorrect use of the definite article
- incorrect use of the gender of articles, noun and adjectives
- poor use of the genitive case
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives in gender, number and case
- inability to conjugate verbs, even in the present active tense
- incorrect use of the passive voice.

Students' use of English was often poor and in some instances incomprehensible. In order to be understood and receive the allocated marks, answers must be coherent and legible. Students' use of appropriate vocabulary was generally satisfactory. There were, however, a number of students with very poor vocabulary who also demonstrated poor dictionary skills.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A (answer in English)

Overall, students demonstrated a good understanding of the information provided in the listening passages. Students should ensure that they have listened to a range of texts in various text types prior to the examination. They must practise their listening comprehension skills by picking out key points in Greek aural texts from various sources, such as Greek films, SBS radio or television. During the examination, students should spend some of the ten minutes of reading time examining the questions for the listening section to determine what kind of information is required. Effective use of the note-taking space on the paper is also useful. Students should ensure, however, that their final answer is stated in the writing space provided. There is no need to restate the question in the answer.

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Text 1

Question 1

At the age of six.

Question 2

He defeated the then champion, Peter Sampras.

Question 3

Because he hits the ball with incredible speed.

Question 4

Because, despite many injuries, he returns to the game and improves his performance, or because of his love for the sport.

Students were required to include both parts of the answer in order to gain the full two marks.

Text 2

Question 5

To raise money/awareness of the need to save the brown bear.

Either one of these points gained one mark

Question 6

In northern Greece

Students were required to make reference to 'northern' Greece in their answer.

Question 7

Any three of:

- the bear has been hunted down
- its habitat has been destroyed for logging
- its habitat has been destroyed to make way for houses and roads
- its habitat has been destroyed for farming
- its habitat has been destroyed for raising stock.

Question 8

The scientific centre aims to study the bear and inform the public.

Some students confused the aims of the scientific centre with the aims of the park.

Text 3

Question 9

Mrs Anagnostou is informing people about job skills that will be required in the future.

Question 10

The employee must:

- have a degree or diploma
- be computer literate
- be willing to use initiative.

One mark was awarded for each point.

Question 11

To cooperate with others and work productively in a team.

Students needed to include the notion that workers must work well as individuals and within a group of people.



Question 12

We live in a global community and companies trade with different countries or companies to increase their profits.

Students needed to include two out of the three points.

Part B (answer in Greek)

Students needed to answer all questions with the correct information in Greek. Most students showed a sound understanding of the content of the texts and many were able to respond in sentences as required, conveying information accurately and appropriately.

Text 4

Question 13

ΣΑΕ aims to bring Greeks in Greece closer to Greeks living abroad and to unite all Greeks around the world.

Question 14

Issues discussed included the need to:

- maintain Greek identity/culture
- maintain the Greek language
- pass on Greek culture to their children
- support Greek programs at universities
- build nursing homes/health centres for the aged.

Students were required to include any three of the above points.

Text 5

Question 15

Greece and Turkey agreed to exchange populations (or all Greeks living in Turkey were forced to go to Greece and all Turks living in Greece were forced to go to Turkey).

Question 16

They took with them a few clothes and an icon of the Virgin Mary.

Question 17

Difficulties endured by the grandmother's family were that:

- they had nothing
- there were no jobs
- housing conditions were poor.

Students were required to include any two of the above three points.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A (answer in English)

This section assessed the students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts. Most students were able to successfully complete the activities related to the reading passages. Students should ensure that they carefully read and understand the questions and make an effort to use a dictionary effectively and appropriately. As was the case in the 'Listening and responding' section, poor English expression may lead to unclear answers which can be marked incorrect.

Text 6

Question 18

The European Union has become such a strong economy because:

- the European Union is a large market
- there are no borders or taxes within the European Union
- the euro is a strong currency.

Students were required to include any two out of the three points to gain two marks.

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Question 19

- agricultural produce/livestock are no longer in danger of not being sold
- Greek commerce is developing
- the large Greek merchant fleet is involved in EU trade
- the euro has helped the economy.

Students were required to include any three of the above four points to gain three marks.

Question 20

Greece is part of a European family that supports and protects it.

Both points needed to be included in order to receive two marks.

Question 21

- Greece is becoming full of foreigners
- foreigners are purchasing land in Greece
- foreign cultural elements are influencing the Greeks
- the Greeks are distancing themselves from their cultural roots.

Any three of the above four points were awarded three marks.

Text 7

Question 22

Sections of the temple are carefully removed, cleaned/preserved and returned to their right place.

Question 23

Because the restoration of the Parthenon has taken a very long time.

Question 24

Progress has polluted the city's atmosphere which in turn has eroded/destroyed the temple's surface.

Both cause and effect points needed to be included in order to gain two marks.

Question 25

- the sculptures have been removed from the Parthenon
- they have been placed in the acropolis museum for their protection
- they have been replaced by copies on the temple.

Students were required to include any two of the above three points to receive two marks.

Question 26

- the Parthenon is referred to in the text as 'this important cultural monument' and 'the symbol of Greek civilisation'
- since the liberation of Greece, the Greeks have put great effort into preserving the temple
- Greeks hope for its preservation
- scientists are searching for solutions.

Any two of the above points were awarded two marks.

Part B (answer in Greek)

Text 8

Question 27

Students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and their ability to convey information accurately and appropriately. Their task was to write a personal journal entry on ways to improve their diet, having considered the food pyramid on the Mediterranean diet.

Students needed to include at least four of the following points from within the pyramid:



- bread/pasta/rice/grains/potatoes should be consumed daily
- fresh fruit and vegetables/legumes should be eaten regularly
- olive oil should be used instead of butter or animal fats
- fish/poultry/eggs should be eaten in moderate quantities
- red meat and sweets should be eaten only a few times a month in small quantities.

Students also needed to include four of the following points from outside the pyramid:

- eat natural/unprocessed foods
- use fresh ingredients
- do not overcook vegetables
- spend sufficient time preparing food
- drink wine in moderate amounts.

Most students had little difficulty in including the required points from the food pyramid in their journal entry in well-sequenced sentences and paragraphs that linked well. The correct format for a journal entry was used by many students, who clearly demonstrated a structure that related to a sequence of thoughts, often with some reflection/evaluation. The poorest journal entries lacked well-sequenced ideas and often included a simple list of points taken from the pyramid without cohesion or appropriate linking. Some students expected that this question would require a letter response and went on to write a letter even though the task clearly required a journal entry. A few students decided not to use the pyramid and wrote about their own, unrelated diet plan. Students must read questions carefully and focus on the task as it is prescribed.

Section 3 – Writing in Greek

This section assessed the student's ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Greek using the following criteria:

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

Students were required to write 200–250 words in Greek one of the four topics. Each topic represented a different text type and style of writing.

Question 28

In this persuasive piece of writing students were expected to convince an audience that the Olympic Games should be returned permanently to their birthplace, Olympia.

Overall, this question was well answered. Students' writing was characterised by coherent, well-organised content and appropriately persuasive writing. The required text type, the script of a speech, was well-handled with conventions, content and style appropriate to the task. Some common arguments used by students were the historical link between the games and Olympia, the need to return to the true ideals of olympism, great monetary savings in having the Games staged permanently in one place and the great success of the 2004 Athens Games. Some students took the opportunity to use pre-learned material and gave historical details about the ancient Games and others made a comparison between the ancient and modern Games without truly addressing the question.

Question 29

This task required students to continue an imaginative story on friendship and perhaps explain how they met their friend, how their friendship evolved and what made their friendship so special.

This was a popular choice with students and most handled the topic competently, creating an appropriate time, place and atmosphere for their story. Many students were skilled in the devices of storytelling and their ideas were well organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well. Less successful students did not use the conventions of a story. Some answers resembled personal letters to a friend in which they directly addressed their friend and reminisced about their past.

Question 30

In this informative letter, students were expected to describe their neighbourhood in Australia and their relationship with their neighbours.

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This was a popular choice amongst students, and most students addressed the question well. The text type, an informal letter, was well handled, with conventions, content and style being mostly appropriate to the task. Some students gave a good physical description of their neighbourhood but did not make reference to their relationship with their neighbours. Others described relationships but made no reference to their neighbourhood. A few students dedicated the bulk of their letter to predictable conventions in letter writing such as long greetings and salutations, inquiring about one's health, the health of others, explaining why it had been so long since the last letter, and informing or inquiring about irrelevant things beyond the scope of the task.

Question 31

This task required students to write an evaluative article for a school magazine addressing the statement 'There's no time for a good time in Year 12'. Students were to state their position on this, supporting it with at least four points.

This appeared to be a more challenging linguistic task that was attempted by fewer students. Most handled the topic competently and were able to successfully develop four arguments to support their position. The text type, a magazine article, was handled well and the conventions, content, register and style were mostly appropriate to the task.