



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The majority of students in 2009 successfully attempted all sections of the examination within the prescribed time allocation. They once again displayed good comprehension skills and an ability to successfully identify the required information from the aural and written texts. Students appeared to be familiar with the format of the examination and nearly all of them responded in the appropriate language for each section. Students are reminded that each section of the examination clearly states the language in which students are required to respond; no marks were awarded to answers in the wrong language.

Students must ensure that they read all instructions carefully. The amount of space given to answer a particular question is a good indication of the length of the expected response. Students should always check to see if the question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences. The sections of the examination that require students to respond in Greek carry a mark for language and students are expected to write in **full** sentences in order to demonstrate linguistic accuracy and sequencing of ideas in Greek. Students should also avoid restating the question, as this takes up valuable time and space and does not allow enough scope to complete the requirements of the task. Students **must** ensure that all answers are based on the texts. This is clearly stated in the instructions of every section of the examination. Students should not provide information beyond the scope of the question and they should not include prior knowledge of the topic that is not included in the texts.

In contrast to their sound comprehension skills, students' ability to write in Greek was very disappointing. Responses in Greek often reflected a poor understanding of basic grammatical rules. In some instances, students' use of Greek was incomprehensible. In order to be understood and in order to receive the allocated marks, answers must be coherent and legible. This is also the case for responses in English.

Over the last few years teachers have been very successful in ensuring that students understand the format of the examination, the different topics set out in the study design and the different text types and kinds of writing required. It is essential for teachers now to also focus on language learning. Lexical and linguistic accuracy is imperative. An emphasis must be given to the teaching of grammar in order to improve students' ability to write in Greek with accuracy and fluency. Some areas of great concern were:

- inability to distinguish between the Greek and Roman scripts (*παίχουν* instead of *παίζουν*, *βουνά* instead of *βουνά* and *έχω* instead of *έξω*)
- inability to distinguish between certain letters of the Greek alphabet such as *δ*, *θ*, *φ* and *β* (*φρήκα* instead of *βρήκα* and *δόρυβο* instead of *θόρυβο*)
- failure to demonstrate the existence of the double consonants *ξ* and *ψ* (*κσύπνησα* instead of *ξύπνησα*, *πσένοι* instead of *ξένοι* and *πσάρι* instead of *ψάρι*)
- failure to use accents
- incorrect use of the definite and indefinite articles (*οι οικογένεια* instead of *η οικογένεια*, *ένα γυναίκα* instead of *μία γυναίκα* and *η Έλληνες* instead of *οι Έλληνες*)
- lack of agreement between article, adjective and noun (*η σύγχρονους μητέρες* instead of *οι σύγχρονες μητέρες* and *πολλές οργανισμούς* instead of *πολλοί οργανισμοί*)
- lack of agreement in number and person between the subject and the verb of a sentence (*εγώ φοβούνταν να πάω* instead of *εγώ φοβόμουν να πάω* and *οι άντρες βοηθάει* instead of *οι άντρες βοηθούν*)
- poor use of the genitive case (*ο πρόεδρος την κοινότητα* instead of *ο πρόεδρος της κοινότητας* and *τη γυναίκα ο ρόλος* instead of *ο ρόλος της γυναίκας*)
- inability to conjugate verbs correctly, even regular verbs in the present active indicative
- incorrect use of the middle/passive voice (*ενδιαφέρει* instead of *ενδιαφέρθηκε* and *πάντρευε* instead of *παντρεύτηκε*)
- inability to use the common verbs *πρέπει* and *μου αρέσει/μας αρέσουν*
- use of the anglicisms *το κάρο* and *η μαρκέτα*
- poor use of dictionaries (confusion of words *πολιτισμός* and *πολιτική*, and *κοινότητα* and *κοινωνία*).



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students responded well to most questions in the first section of the examination. They displayed very good listening comprehension skills and their responses in English demonstrated a good understanding of the information provided in the listening passages. Examination questions often require fairly specific responses. Students must exercise caution when deciding on a response; they need to reread their responses to ensure that the question has been appropriately addressed. For example, when answering Question 1a., students were expected to indicate that Eleni and Kostas were planning a surprise party for Katerina's name day. A number of students wrote that they were planning a birthday party for Katerina; such responses were not awarded any marks. Question 2c. required students to indicate what made Mt Olympus appealing to the eye according to the female speaker. Answers that referred to the religious/mythological/historical importance of the mountain had nothing to do with the visual appeal of the mountain and were not awarded marks.

Students must practise their listening comprehension skills by picking out key points from various aural sources. During the examination they should spend at least part of their fifteen-minute reading time familiarising themselves with the questions in order to determine the information they will be required to extract from the listening passages. The pause between the readings of the texts should be used to consult the dictionary to determine the meaning of key words. Effective use of the note-taking space on the paper is also useful. Students should ensure, however, that their final response is given in the space provided for the answer. No credit is given for answers outside of this space.

Text 1

Question 1a.

A surprise party for Katerina's name day

Question 1b.

	Items
Mother	spanakopita/baklava/traditional food/decorations
Eleni	chocolate cake
Kostas	drinks/invitations
Friends	Greek music

Text 2

Question 2a.

- female speaker: travel agent
- male speaker: customer

Question 2b.

All of:

- nature
- the mountains
- adventure
- something different/not an island experience.

Question 2c.

All of:

- beautiful forests
- beautiful views
- the highest point in Greece/Greece is at your feet.

Part B – Answer in Greek

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand aspects of an aural Greek text by responding in Greek. Ten marks were awarded for the comprehension of the text and five for conveying information accurately and appropriately in Greek.



Most students showed a sound understanding of the content of the text. In Part B, specific marks are not indicated for each question. Students should be guided by the number of points required by each question.

Students must ensure that they respond in complete sentences when requested. Their sentences should communicate their ideas in their own words. Some students answered in point form, removing extracts directly from the spoken text. They did not demonstrate their own ability to communicate fluently in the language and thus were not awarded full marks.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Either of:

- to inform the public on the state of the Greek community of Melbourne
- to discuss how the Greek community is maintaining its identity.

Question 3b.

Four of:

- the community is organised
- there are many Greek organisations
- the Greeks maintain their language
- there are many schools in which Greek language and history are taught
- Greeks are able to participate in many cultural events.

Question 3c.

Both of:

- Greeks are given the opportunity to meet each other/form relationships with other Greeks
- Greeks maintain their identity.

Question 3d.

Three of:

- Greeks learn to be Greeks in their family
- Greek parents maintain/transfer Greek customs to their children
- Greek background children speak Greek in their household
- Greek households celebrate important cultural events
- Greek families listen to Greek music
- Greek families eat Greek food.

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 text. Most students successfully drew appropriate information from the Greek reading text. Part A of Section 2 carried 20 marks based on one text alone. A number of questions related directly to the content of the text, while other questions required students to infer information from what was written. The order of the questions generally corresponded to the order in which the information was presented in the text. However, it should not be assumed that this is always the case. Some questions required a response that related to the text as a whole. Such responses needed to be drawn from various parts of the text.

Once again the number of points allocated to each question corresponded to the number of points that were expected in the response. The spaces provided for the responses indicated the length of the anticipated answers. Some students restated the questions in their responses. These students often ran out of space and did not provide full answers.

In order to prepare for this section of the examination students should read extensively in Greek, including a wide range of texts in different text types. They should also practise identifying, rephrasing and summarising the main points and ideas in the texts.

Before attempting the questions in this section, students should read over the text a few times. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all words; students should just try to understand the gist of the passage. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the text and not on prior knowledge.



Text 4

Question 4a.

Someone who has (all of):

- a great interest/respect for Greek civilisation
- learnt Greek
- studied the ancient authors
- been influenced by/admired Greek thought and way of life
- promoted Greek ideas in their country.

Question 4b.

Four of:

- assisted the Greeks to achieve their freedom
- offered financial support
- offered moral support by writing articles in the international press
- organised events to inform people
- put pressure on their governments to assist the Greeks.

Question 4c.

Byron (all of):

- came to Greece in person to fight against the Turks
- offered a substantial part of his wealth for the struggle
- personally trained a group of soldiers
- organised the printing of a Greek newspaper to inspire the Greeks to battle.

Question 4d.

All of:

- there are many monuments in Greece which are dedicated to Lord Byron
- an Athenian suburb bears his name
- many Greeks have named their children after him
- April 19 commemorates Byron's death and Philhellenism Day.

Question 4e.

Three of:

- to remember the contribution of the Philhellenes
- to create a new philhellenic movement
- to promote the love of Greek culture
- to promote friendship/respect among people.

Part B – Answer in Greek

This part of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and their capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately in Greek. The task required students to convey what would impress the recipient of the letter if she were to attend the celebrations of the Carnival of Patra. Most students provided information on the carnival, but were unable to describe what actually impressed the author of the letter. The more capable students understood the purpose of the task and responded with some skill.

In Part B students were required to answer in Greek and in full sentences. This was clearly stated in the instructions for this section of the examination. A number of students copied information directly from the text and replied in point form. This did not allow students to demonstrate their ability to process information and write effectively in Greek. The more capable students manipulated language authentically and creatively and organised information and ideas well in Greek in order to meet the requirements of the task.

Text 5

Question 5

Five of:

- the carnival of Patra lasts for a number of weeks
- the many events during the carnival
- the evening/masquerade dances



- the great atmosphere/fun
- the long procession
- the colourful floats/floats with a variety of themes
- the amazing fireworks.

Section 3 – Writing in Greek

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of 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.

Each criterion carried five marks. Students were required to write 200–300 words in Greek on one of the five topics provided. Each topic represented a different text type and style of writing. It should be noted that the text types marked with an asterisk in the *VCE Greek Study Design* are those which students may be expected to produce in the examination.

All five questions in this section of the examination were attempted by students. The informative speech (Question 6) and the imaginative story (Question 8) were the most popular choices. Most students displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and style of writing they chose to write in. In contrast, a number of responses demonstrated a lack of depth in the treatment of the task and a poor and often predictable development of ideas/opinions.

When selecting a topic, students should choose one that is familiar to them and which requires the kind of writing and text type that suits them best. Students must establish the tone and register of the task from the onset and must always keep in mind the audience for whom they are writing. They should ensure that they do not digress from the topic or include pre-learned material that is unrelated to the task. Ideas should be developed coherently and grouped into separate paragraphs with effective links between them. It is therefore essential that students set aside time to plan their response and time to proofread it at the end.

The selected topic should be one for which students have a good range of vocabulary and one in which they are able to express themselves in Greek with accuracy. Of the three criteria in this section, students did not perform as well against the third, 'accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar'.

Question 6

This question required students to write a script for a speech which they were to deliver in class, informing their fellow students of the ways in which the family unit has changed with time.

This was a popular choice among students and was completed with varying degrees of success. Most students observed the conventions, content and style appropriate to an informative speech delivered in class. Some responses resembled articles or reports rather than scripts for a speech. A number of students focused on the differences between the traditional Greek family and the non-Greek family today, rather than informing an audience about how the family unit has changed over time. Some students also concentrated only on the changing role of women in the family unit, thus limiting the breadth of their responses. The latter students tended to include pre-learned material that did not relate directly to the task.

Question 7

In this book review students were required to identify and evaluate at least three things that made their chosen book interesting to them.

This question was attempted by a small number of students. Teachers need to ensure that students are familiar with the characteristics of evaluative reviews and gain practice in producing this text type. The more capable students were able to successfully identify, discuss and evaluate at least three aspects of their chosen book. Again, a number of students included pre-learned material from other topics covered at school, without processing and manipulating the information to suit the task.



Question 8

In this imaginative story students were expected to write about a dream which may have caused them some distress. Students were also expected to express their relief upon awakening when realising it was only a dream.

This was another popular choice, but only a few students handled the topic competently. These students were skilled in the devices of storytelling; they created an appropriate time, place and atmosphere and their ideas were well organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well. However, most responses were predictable and lacking in creativity and originality. Many demonstrated a lack of imagination, little development of plot and poor descriptions of setting and characters. Few students expressed their relief when realising that what had transpired was only a dream. A poor range of vocabulary and understanding of language structures often contributed to a weak story line.

Question 9

This task required students to write a personal journal entry to discuss course information gained after visiting a university. Students were expected to reflect on their impressions.

This question produced a number of very good responses. Most students who attempted this question were able to adopt the required reflective approach and display the appropriate conventions of a personal journal entry. In their personal account of their visit to the university they successfully reflected on what they experienced and what they learnt, often comparing courses and explaining what impressed them. The majority of students who attempted this question also demonstrated a good range of vocabulary and language appropriate to the purpose of the task.

Question 10

Students were asked to write an article for a Greek community newspaper in an attempt to persuade its readers that the water shortage problem facing Melbourne is significant and that we must all take measures to reduce the consumption of water.

This question was generally answered well by the more capable students. These students exhibited very good writing skills and an appropriate formal register for the topic. Students were able to draw from their experiences and successfully put forward some convincing arguments to persuade the reader of the gravity of the water shortage problem. They also proposed measures that could be adopted by the reader to combat the problem. Many students provided ideas that were well organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well. The text type, a newspaper article, was handled well by the majority of students.