

# 2015 VCE Portuguese written examination report

## General comments

In general, students were able to identify the required information from the texts and respond accurately and appropriately to the questions on the 2015 Portuguese written examination. Many students performed well, but some were unable to complete all questions.

The majority of students understood the texts in Section 1 – Listening and Responding. They answered questions appropriately and demonstrated good listening skills. A few students were unable to select the main points in the text or present their ideas clearly.

Students need to listen to and read different types of texts and practise selecting the key points as part of their examination preparation. Responding accurately and in full sentences should be practised throughout the year. Students should also listen to texts from past examinations. They could also listen to Portuguese radio or watch and listen to Portuguese movies.

In Section 2 – Reading and Responding, most students were able to identify the correct information and produce a fluent piece of writing. Students need to practise identifying keywords in questions, translating them correctly and responding in the appropriate way.

In Section 3 – Writing in Portuguese, Question 11 was the most popular choice. Students should choose the topic and type of writing they are most confident in using.

Students should allow themselves time to proofread their responses. When referring to their dictionary, students need to take care and check the spelling of the word to ensure that they access the correct meaning.

Attention must be given to the study of linguistic elements in order to improve students' ability to write with fluency and accuracy in Portuguese. Students need to train in all grammatical structures and concepts indicated in the *VCE Portuguese Study Design*.

## Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, the sample answers provided are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

## Section 1 – Listening and Responding

Overall, students demonstrated a good understanding of the information given in the listening texts. Students who performed well in this section provided responses that were accurate, concise and based on the texts. They were able to demonstrate that they understood general and specific aspects of texts by identifying and analysing information.

Students should familiarise themselves with the questions in order to determine the information they will be required to extract from the listening texts. The short break between the playings of the texts should be used to consult a dictionary to determine the meaning of keywords. Students should make effective use of the note-taking space on the examination paper.

### Part A – Answer in English

#### Text 1

##### Question 1a.

The three activities mentioned were:

- a (five-day) boat trip
- travelling 1713 kilometres by river/Amazon
- viewing of animals and scenery/dense, pristine forests.

##### Question 1b.

Apart from transport, the cost included:

- accommodation in luxury tents
- all meals.

#### Text 2

##### Question 2a.

Filipa is not happy because:

- Marco doesn't sort waste
- Marco puts all his rubbish in the same bag
- Filipa believes that everyone should make an effort to separate waste.

##### Question 2b.

- Filipa says that the recycling issue has already been addressed in schools.
- Filipa says that even ten-year-old children are aware of the rules for recycling/Filipa says that children (ten year olds) know what items are to be placed in different coloured bins.

#### Text 3

##### Question 3

Realisation: He realised that some students were not able to learn because they didn't have pens and books.

Action:

- He suggested ideas in a speech at assembly.
- He set up a website where people could donate notes and textbooks.
- He encouraged students to get involved in providing free tuition.
- He received sponsorship from companies to set up homework centres.

### Part B – Answer in Portuguese

Most students demonstrated a sound understanding of the content of the listening text. Students who performed well responded in complete Portuguese sentences containing well-linked ideas. These students were able to communicate their ideas in their own words.

#### Text 4

##### Question 4

- *Estuda na universidade (Universidade da Terceira Idade)* (studying at university [University of the Third Age])
- *Pratica desporto (ténis, golf)* (plays sport [tennis, golf])
- *Tem conhecimentos das novas tecnologias (telemóvel)* (is up-to-date with technology [mobile phone])
- *Andar de bicicleta* (cycling/riding her pushbike)
- *Viajar com o avô e com amigos* (travelling with grandfather and friends)

#### Text 5

##### Question 5a.

*Oferta de trabalho: Trabalhar para uma empresa de pecuária em Angola.* (The work offer Nuno has received is to work for a livestock company in Angola.)

Students needed to include 'in Angola' to be awarded full marks.

Nuno's reaction to the offer:

- *nao está seguro* (unsure)
- *tem dúvidas; Ele diz: "Ainda não sei se vou. Tenho que refletir" e mais para a frente no texto diz "quando tomar a minha decisão".* (has doubts: he says, 'Not sure if I will accept it; I have to think about it', and later in the text says, 'should I decide to accept'.).

##### Question 5b.

Examples of the techniques mentioned in the text to improve the work that Nuno will teach if he accepts the work offer were:

- *Como fazer queijo e manteiga a partir do leite.* (How to get the milk to make butter and cheese.)
- *Usar a pele para fazer sapatos, carteiras, cintos,* etc. (Using the skin to make items [e.g. shoes, handbags, belts, etc.].)

'Meat consumption' was not accepted.

#### Text 6

##### Question 6

Students were expected to write a paragraph explaining why Madeira would appeal to tourists even when not considering the weather and food choices perfect. Relevant responses may have included:

- *Um verdadeiro paraíso natural* (true natural paradise/dream vacation)
- *Riqueza e beleza* (wealth and beauty)
- *Destino de férias para todo o ano* (holiday destination for the whole year)
- *Tamanho e características* (size and natural features)
- *Maior destino cultural e turístico* (largest cultural and tourist destination).

## Section 2 – Reading and Responding

In this section, students were assessed on their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the texts. They were also assessed on their capacity to convey the required information appropriately.

### Part A – Answer in English

Students were required to read the text and then answer the questions in English. They were also required to source the answers from different parts of the text and most students were able to do so. Students should not assume that the order of the questions in the examination reflects the order of the information contained in the texts.

#### Text 7

##### Question 7a.

In the writer's opinion, the names 'Vinicius' and 'Tom' were a good choice because:

- musicians and music are important to Brazilians
- they were pioneers of bossa nova – the iconic music that caused Brazil to become known for that style
- in the 1960s they wrote one of the most played songs in the world, which is still globally popular.

##### Question 7b.

The aspects of Brazilian identity that the mascots will showcase are:

- fauna and flora (animals and plants)
- Brazilian music.

#### Text 8

##### Question 8

Acceptable responses included:

- the university team entered a competition to get the first living organisms from Earth to Mars
- Portuguese scientists gained the opportunity to demonstrate the feasibility of life on Mars by growing seeds in controlled conditions
- experiment conducted by the scientists to send seeds in an autonomous growing box with the aim of growing these on Mars
- first time man sends life to Mars – 'seeds' are the basis of growth/life
- 'Seeds' could represent 'a number of' scientists being part of the group.

Most students understood the purpose of the question and clearly identified five different reasons why the name 'Seed' was appropriate without copying information directly from the text.

Some responses included information that was not in the text and that was beyond the scope of the question. In a number of responses, students provided their personal opinions and made little reference to the text. Students are reminded that all answers must be based on the text.

### Part B – Answer in Portuguese

#### Text 9

##### Question 9

Students were required to write a persuasive email to their local Member of Parliament (MP) expressing their concerns about and giving ideas and suggestions to protect koalas.

Possible responses could have included the following:

- formal email (subject/title, content, author [fictional name], register, style, layout)
- correct salutations and format (introduction, middle, conclusion)
- formal, persuasive language
- comment on concern for endangered species
- ideas/suggestions to protect koalas.

## Section 3 – Writing in Portuguese

In this section of the examination, students were asked to show their ability to write an original text of approximately 250 words in Portuguese on one of three topics, which included three kinds of writing and three text types. The choices included a personal story, a diary entry and an evaluative report. Students were assessed according to the following criteria:

- demonstrate depth of treatment of information, ideas and/or opinions
- write text appropriate and relevant to context, purpose and audience
- structure and sequence information and ideas
- manipulate language structures and vocabulary in Portuguese.

All three questions in this section of the examination were attempted by students. Most students displayed good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and kind of writing in which they chose to write; however, it seemed that some students who had good linguistic skills were not familiar with the text type and kind of writing. Ideas were developed coherently within paragraphs and were linked effectively.

Students should choose a topic that is familiar to them and that requires the kind of writing and text type that best suits them or that has more familiar text type characteristics. However, when preparing for the written examination, students should practise writing in a variety of text types and kinds of writing, including those requiring a formal register.

### Question 10

Students were required to write an imaginative story for their younger sister about the birthday party of her dreams.

- Text type: story (title/topic, structure, content, author [fictional name], register, style, layout)
- Audience: younger sister
- Kind of writing: imaginative, personal

Responses may have included:

- reference to the context
- development of the story
- situation, complication, resolution, conclusion
- well-developed ideas.

### Question 11

Students were required to write a diary entry about how much they had discovered about themselves while working as a volunteer in Mozambique.

- Text type: diary entry (topic, structure, content, register, style, layout)
- Audience: self
- Kind of writing: personal, reflective

Responses may have included:

- features of a diary (e.g. weather, personal conversational comments, interjections, fillers, suspension points)
- comments that infer you just having returned from six months in Mozambique as a volunteer helper
- comments about loving the country and feeling at home
- comments about how much you have discovered about yourself by helping others.

### **Question 12**

Students were required to write an evaluative report about their experience training for, participating in and making other necessary arrangements for an ultramarathon.

- Text type: formal report (for the organising committee)
- Audience: organising committee
- Kind of writing: evaluative

Responses may have included:

- positives and negatives about the experience training for the ultramarathon
- comments on making other necessary arrangements
- travel advice for people wanting to participate in the following year's ultramarathon.