



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The majority of students understood the questions asked by assessors and answered them appropriately. A few of the students seemed to be calm and confident, but a number of them were tense and nervous. Students' performances varied from exceptional to those who found it difficult to maintain a fluent dialogue.

There is room for progress and improvement. To be clear, concise and express their ideas and opinions efficiently, students must be aware of the criteria used for assessing the oral examination and that the examination should take the form of an exchange between the student and assessors, not simply a question and answer session.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The students who provided a greater range of vocabulary and were able to switch from one tense to another without problems achieved higher marks. Those students were able to build on comments and interact more with the assessors. Weaker students provided minimal to mediocre responses to the questions asked. They frequently used anglicisms and were unable to satisfactorily use the verb forms or the gender of subjects correctly. Students at VCE level should know how to converse in basic tenses, such as present, past and future.

Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of topic and sub-topic for the Detailed Study is important. If the students do not have any interest in the topic chosen, it is harder for them to discuss and express opinions and ideas. There were a mixture of topics presented in 2007, but the most popular and successful ones were about tourism. These students were to prepare a discussion about a city of their choice from a Portuguese-speaking country. Some students brought materials such as photographs, maps and posters to support their discussion.

The sub-topic should suit the linguistic ability of the student and be suitable for a discussion, allowing the student to express opinions and ideas appropriately.

In the Discussion students should be able to:

- discuss and express opinions and ideas
- maintain the appropriate structures and correct vocabulary
- use the language spontaneously
- efficiently communicate and make references to the texts studied.

Students who memorised their information found it harder to discuss or to maintain the flow of the discussion when interrupted with questions. Stronger students were able to answer questions well because they had sufficient knowledge of the discussion topic. Other students were not well prepared and found it difficult to converse or discuss specific aspects of the sub-topic. These students were unable to express their opinions or ideas well.

VCE teachers should design tasks and select appropriate materials for the Detailed Study to encourage students to interact effectively.

Written Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

In general, students responded accurately and appropriately to the questions. Most students performed well. Some students, however, were unable to finish all of the questions.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

The majority of students understood the questions, responded appropriately and demonstrated good skills in listening and responding. However, some students were unable to select the main points required or present their ideas clearly.

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To improve their performance in the Listening and responding section, students should:

- practise listening exercises
- listen to different texts, in various text types
- practise selecting key points from a text
- learn how to respond in full sentences
- listen to spoken Portuguese in the media
- learn how to take notes while listening to texts
- pick out key words in questions in order to respond accurately and appropriately
- obtain a range of vocabulary based on the topics and themes in the study design.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

She was asked to:

- call and cancel the appointment
- reschedule a new appointment/meeting.

Question 1b.

The appointment was cancelled because Mr Amaral had another commitment.

Question 1c.

Either of:

- Mr Amaral will be available on Monday
- Mr Gonclaves can come in on Monday.

Text 2

Question 2a.

He is being interviewed because:

- he is celebrating 40 years of his music career
- he is a very famous singer who has had a long career in the music industry.

Question 2b.

He sang:

- at school parties
- on Portuguese folk days **or** on Saints' Days celebrations.

Question 2c.

His father was against his singing career because:

- the family was very poor
- his father thought that a singer's life is very hard.

Question 2d.

He got his inspiration from:

- his personal experiences
- his emotions.

Question 2e.

He says that:

- they should be persistent
- they should fight for what they want
- the person who waits always achieves **or** the person who is patient always succeeds.

Text 3

Question 3a.

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Question 3b.

You can tell he is not paying attention because he:

- keeps interrupting
- gives wrong answers
- asks questions that are not related to the subject matter.

Any two of the above responses were required.

Question 3c.

About 200 million people.

Part B – Answer in Portuguese

Text 4

Question 4a.

Three main attractions are the:

- Madeira Musical Festival
- international fireworks competition
- wide range of street entertainment.

Question 4b.

- 21:30 or 9.30 pm
- Madeira Choir

Question 4c.

Tourists obtain the program:

- by telephone (phone)
- from the website.

Text 5

Question 5a.

He went to Brazil as an exchange student.

Question 5b.

Positive aspects of the exchange program are:

- learning another language
- learning about another culture.

Question 5c.

Obstacles that Pedro encountered in Brazil were:

- understanding the language
- it was hard to appreciate the people's sense of humour/understanding the sense of humour
- the social differences that exist in Brazil were difficult.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Although most students were able to select and rearrange the relevant information appropriately; other students had difficulty selecting the correct information from the text and did not perform well in answering some questions, due to their inadequate vocabulary and lack of application in translating into English.

To improve their performance in the Reading and responding section students should:

- select key words and translate them correctly
- read carefully and use the dictionary when unsure of words
- make sure they understand the questions before answering them.

To help prepare for the Reading and responding section, students should:

- use a wide range of texts and activities to improve their ability and skills in the language
- pay more attention in providing translations and key words on various topics according to the study design
- enhance their vocabulary

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- extend their understanding of language structure and grammar.

Text 6

Question 6a.

Air

- nitrous oxide
- sulfur dioxide
- carbon emissions

Water

- pollutants from the oil industry
- pollutants from the cellulose industry

Question 6b.

Cities produced 2.6 million tons of solid waste (or waste).

Question 6c.

Evidence that awareness has increased includes:

- there are now various environmental agencies/there is now environmental legislation
- wildlife has been threatened by extinction, which has raised awareness
- agricultural activities have caused erosion, which has raised awareness
- desertification of land has raised awareness.

Question 6d.

The most endangered species are located in:

- Portugal
- Madeira
- the Azores.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Evidence that urban populations have exploded over the last two centuries includes:

- cities have become much bigger
- London was the only big city 220 years ago, but now there are more than 400 large cities.

Question 7b.

- The major threat is unsustainable economic development.
- The loss is significant because forests are located in regions where biodiversity thrives.

Question 7c.

- The city has cut down its emissions; it consumes 23 per cent less fuel per capita.
- It is considered to be a green city because it has forest, parks and green public areas.

Question 7d.

The major environmental problems outlined are:

- air pollution
- water pollution
- solid waste
- erosion
- desertification
- danger for animals and plants (biodiversity)
- climate change
- unsustainable economic development
- growth of urban populations.

Students needed to give any five of the above responses.



Part B – Answer in Portuguese

Text 8

Students' answers should have had the following qualities:

- written in a persuasive, friendly style, with informal words and in the manner of addressing a friend
- clearly set out the reasons for coming
- included some the main attractions of the area
- may also have included other reasons; for example, catching up, good conversation, have not seen each other for a long time, chance to engage in healthy exercise, something quite different from routine life and activities, etc.

Section 3 – Writing in Portuguese

Students could choose between four topics: personal, imaginative, informal or evaluative writing. The most popular topic was the imaginative, followed by the personal. Most students were able to clearly give their opinions and ideas in writing. However, more breadth and depth in terms of content was often needed.

When completing the writing section, students should:

- choose a topic they enjoy
- read through their work each time they write a paragraph to ensure that it makes sense
- look in the dictionary for words that they are unsure of
- proofread their work before handing it in.

Teachers should promote the use of proofreading in order to find tense disagreements, lack of subjects and verbs in phrases, omission of articles and prepositions and/or failure to pluralise.