



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

On average, the majority of students understood the questions asked and were able to carry the conversation forward.

Students' performances varied from exceptional to those who found it difficult to maintain a fluent dialogue. There is still room for progress and improvement. A few of the students seemed to be calm and confident, but a number of others were tense and nervous and this may have contributed to their hesitation in using fillers and other conversational devices.

To be clear, concise and express their ideas and opinions efficiently, students must be aware of the criteria for assessment. The conversation is an exchange and should not just be a question and answer session.

Section 1 – Conversation

The students who used a greater range of vocabulary and were able to switch from one tense to another without problems achieved higher marks. These students built on comments and interacted more with the assessors. However, weaker students used minimal responses. They used anglicisms frequently and were unable to correctly use verb forms or the gender of subjects. Students at the VCE level ought to know how to converse using basic tenses such as present, past and future.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topic and sub-topic chosen for the Detailed Study are important. If students don't have any interest in the topic chosen, it is harder for them to discuss and express opinions and ideas. There was a mixture of topics chosen this year, but the most popular and successful ones were about tourism. These students came prepared to discuss a city of their choice from a Portuguese-speaking country. Some of them brought materials such as photographs, maps and posters to support their presentation. The sub-topic chosen should suit the linguistic ability of the student, be easy to discuss, and allow for the expression of opinions and ideas.

In the Detailed Study, the students should be able to:

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

The students who had memorised their information found the discussion difficult and were often unable to maintain the flow of the presentation when interrupted. However, many students were able to answer questions well because they had sufficient knowledge of the discussion themes.

Other students were not well prepared and found it difficult to discuss specific aspects of the sub-topic. These students were not able to express their opinions or ideas well.

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

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

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



Section 1 – Listening and responding

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

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 the key points
- 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
- obtain a range of vocabulary from the topics and themes in the *Portuguese VCE Study Design*.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Most of the students were able to select and rearrange the relevant information. However, due to a limited range of vocabulary and lack of application in reading in Portuguese and responding in English, some students had difficulty selecting the correct information from the text and did not perform well in answering some questions.

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

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

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

- use a wide range of texts and activities in the curriculum to improve students' ability and skills in the language
- pay more attention to providing key words on various topics, according to Study Design specifications
- give students the chance to enhance their vocabulary
- explain language structures to students
- teach students the grammar needed for the necessary language skills.

Section 3 – Writing in Portuguese

Students could choose between a variety of topics, kinds of writing (personal, imaginative, informal and evaluative) and text types. The imaginative task was the most popular, followed by the evaluative.

Most of the students were able to clearly give their opinions and ideas in writing. However, more breadth and depth in terms of content was needed.

When doing the writing task, students should:

- choose a topic they enjoy
- read through their work to ensure that it has continuity and makes sense
- avoid using words whose spelling or meaning they are unsure of, and use the dictionary when necessary
- proofread their work.

Teachers should promote the use of proofreading as a skill so that students can learn to correct unnecessary mistakes such as disagreement of tense, lack of subjects and verbs in phrases, omission of articles and prepositions, and/or failure to pluralise.