2021 VCE Vietnamese First Language oral external assessment report

General comments

The Vietnamese First Language oral examination assesses students’ knowledge and skills in using spoken language. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the [VCE Vietnamese First Language examinations webpage](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Vietnamese-First-Language.aspx)*.* The examination has two sections: a presentation of up to 5 minutes (which includes a short introduction of no more than one minute) and a discussion of approximately 5 minutes.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

* students may be asked a variety of questions with varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one students anticipate
* assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
* assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
* normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Details of the assessment criteria and descriptors are published on the VCAA website. It is important that all teachers and students be familiar with the criteria and descriptors and that students use them as part of their examination preparation. This will help students to engage in a lively and interesting exchange with assessors. Although there are similarities between the assessment criteria for the presentation and discussion sections of the examination, the criteria assess two very different aspects of performance. Students who are well prepared are generally able to demonstrate their abilities and proficiency in the language.

Specific information

Section 1 – Presentation

Following a short introduction of no more than 1 minute, the student presents on a subtopic selected from the topic ‘Language and culture through literature and the arts’, using supporting objects and/or cue cards if they wish. The presentation should last no longer than 4 minutes. The presentation should include a clear stance on the issue selected, relate clearly to the subtopic chosen for detailed study and be supported by evidence. The student will be expected to refer to texts studied.

Generally, students performed better in their presentation than in their discussion. Most students showed a very good understanding of the examination structure and requirements. They demonstrated thorough preparation with excellent understanding and remained within the allocated time. Having an excellent level of understanding of their subtopic is one of the factors in achieving a high score. Therefore, students should think carefully about the subtopic presented and be prepared to elaborate and reflect on information, ideas and opinions. Students who achieved high scores displayed in-depth research and had thoroughly practised their presentation. This could be seen in their well-planned and detailed work.

The most common subtopics chosen were: Vietnamese women through modern literature (*Đoạn Tuyệt, Nửa Chừng Xuân*) and Saga of Kieu (*Nghệ thuật tả cảnh/tả người/tả tâm lý nhân vật trong truyện Kiều)*. It is important for students to research their subtopic in sufficient depth. For example, if they have selected a subtopic related to Vietnamese folklore/fairy tales, it would be helpful for them to understand the significance of these fairy tales and the lesson/s behind them in the context of Vietnamese traditions and culture*.*

A small number of students attended their oral examination without any understanding of the requirements of the VCE examination specifications. It is important that students know their subtopic well enough to deliver their presentation fluently, clearly and confidently, without reading directly from their cue cards or reciting large chunks of material.

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the presentation, students are required to discuss aspects of the selected issue with the assessors and should be prepared to clarify the points presented. The student should also expect the discussion to go beyond the issue selected. The discussion may include reflection on experiences, speculation on further developments or a discussion of unfamiliar issues. The assessors may also expect the student to answer general questions on the subtopic that they have selected for their extended study of language and culture.

Students who achieved high scores answered the questions with clear, detailed responses and with confidence. They demonstrated an excellent ability to maintain the discussion in responding to a broad range of questions, including to clarify the points presented and questions that were beyond the issue.

Many students presented their subtopic very well but could only answer questions that encapsulated ideas within the content of their presentation.

Students who did not score well:

* could not answer most of the questions or their responses did not match the questions
* lacked depth in their responses
* lacked clear opinions about the chosen topic and were not able to defend their stance.

It was evident that students who did not spend sufficient time preparing for the examination could not demonstrate a clear understanding of the subtopic chosen. The lack of a thorough understanding about the subtopic undermined students’ confidence, and thus, their performance.