

# VCE Yiddish written examination report

## General comments

The standard of student responses was generally very high in the 2020 VCE Yiddish written examination. Most students communicated effectively, writing accurate and appropriate responses in Yiddish.

Students demonstrated excellent comprehension skills, and well-developed ability to communicate effectively in Yiddish. Students also applied most grammatical forms correctly. Students mostly demonstrated excellent skills in following complex grammatical principles correctly, such as using the correct auxiliary verb in past tense and ensuring that the verb is the second clause in the sentence.

Areas for improvement include using the dative case after a preposition. Students are also advised to read questions carefully, to ensure they are responding directly to the question asked. Students should also ensure that they provide the appropriate number of responses required (for example, three responses for a question worth three marks).

In general, however, students seemed well-prepared, and utilised Yiddish vocabulary and grammatical structures effectively.

## Specific information

### Section 1: Listening and Responding

#### Part A – Answer in English

Students performed very well overall in this section of the exam, demonstrating strong comprehension skills. They showed the ability to move from one language to another effectively, by listening to the texts in Yiddish and then responding to the texts in English.

In response to Question 1, students generally demonstrated a very good understanding of general and specific aspects of the text. Some students did not transmit sufficient information in their answer, did not answer the question comprehensively, or provided responses that were off-topic or extraneous.

Overall, students appear to have found Question 2a challenging. While it specifically asked students to provide four answers about three religions, students tended to provide only three answers. Some students appear to have had difficulty either in identifying the question being asked, or in analysing the information required in response.

Question 2b elicited excellent responses overall.

Students generally produced excellent responses for Question 3.

#### Question 1

In describing the skills and benefits highlighted during the expo, the follow answers were correct:

- How to protect nature/the land (using techniques which are 60 000 years old and current technology).
- Trade in agricultural work.
- Land management.

## Question 2a.

The following four pieces of evidence show that three religions were practised in Cordoba:

- The engineering of number of buildings reflects the three religions/buildings from different religions.
- La Mezquita was originally a Mosque.
- La Mezquita later became a Catholic church.
- A synagogue that is one of the only surviving Jewish buildings in Spain.

## Question 2b.

Correct answers:

- one of the greatest Jewish philosophers
- he played a leading role in scientific research, astronomy and medicine.

## Question 3.

In the following table, students had to identify the three revolutions discussed in the text and the underpinning factors that drove them.

Type of revolution	Underpinning factors
1) Industrial	Coal/gas/petroleum/machines
2) Electronic revolution	Transistors
3) Synthetic intelligence revolution	Clever robots

## Part B – Answer in Yiddish

The ability, in general, of students to convey their responses in clear and comprehensible written Yiddish is particularly noted, as is the degree of comprehension demonstrated by the students.

Students provided a range of responses for Question 4a. Some students produced excellent answers, which were clear and comprehensive, conveying all relevant aspects of the text accurately and appropriately. Others provided only partial or limited responses.

Responses to Question 4b were generally strong, clearly expressed and providing all the relevant information.

A range of responses was evident for Question 5. High-scoring students gave detailed answers that communicated all the required information thoroughly and effectively. This differentiated these students from those who demonstrated sufficient understanding of the text but omitted some relevant information in their responses.

In Question 6, students demonstrated a thorough understanding of the text, and of the questions being asked. They were therefore able to respond accurately and appropriately. This was a high-performing question.

### Question 4a.

The correct answers:

- צו פיל אויטאָס פֿאַרן ספּעציעל אין די הויפט שעהן (Road works/one must drive slowly)
- וועג און גאָס אַרבעט/מען מוז פֿארן פֿאַמעלעך (Too many cars, particularly at peak hour)

Students received 2 marks if they demonstrated a very thorough understanding of the text by conveying all relevant aspects of the text accurately, and 1 mark if they only adequately conveyed relevant aspects.

### Question 4b.

Correct answers:

- טראַמוווייען שטעלן זיך כסדר אָפּ דאָס פֿאַרלענגערט די רייזע (Trams stopping frequently extend the travel time).
- באַנען פֿאַרשפּעטיקן זיך צוליב עלעקטרישע פֿראַבלעמען/זי ווערט פֿאַרשפּעטיקט (Electrical problems on trains caused travel delays/makes her late).

## Question 5

Relevant answers:

- that he says it is exceptional
  - the feeling and warmth of songs sung in Yiddish
  - surtitles make it a pleasure even for non-Yiddish speakers
  - bringing the town of Anatevka to life
  - the quality of the acting
  - the speaker wants to see it again.
- ער זאגט אז עס איז געווען אויסערגעוויינלעך
  - דאס געפיל און ווארעמקייט - געזאנג אויף יידיש
  - די איבערטייטונג אויף ענגליש העלפט דעם עלום פארשטיין
  - די שטאט אנטעווקע לעבט אויף
  - טאלאנטפולע אקטיארן
  - דער רעדנער וויל עס זען א צווייט מאל

## Question 6a.

Correct answers:

- he has a veterinary degree
- he is a researcher
- he has worked with dogs in a clinic and zoos (10 years' experience).

## Question 6b

Relevant answers:

- the length of time it took to test
- getting approval to trial the new medicines.

## Section 2: Reading and responding

In Section 2, students read Yiddish texts and responded to a set of questions about the texts.

### Part A – Read in Yiddish, respond in English

Students performed very well in this section of the exam, demonstrating excellent comprehension and analysis, including the ability to compare, contrast, summarise, evaluate and convey content of the texts effectively.

#### Question 7

The following two benefits for each year of the Joint's support for the Shanghai ghetto.

1941	1943	1945
The establishment of the ghetto kitchen as a result of Joint funds	New cooking stoves purchased	List of survivors/posted in the kitchen
Gave people hope/fed people	Providing 5000 meals per day	Enabled the Jewish refugees to survive the war

#### Question 8

The following evidence from the text demonstrates the Joint is an international humanitarian organisation:

- It has delegations to support Jews around the globe (70 countries).
- It funds / gives grants to Jewish aid organisations/ helps with obtaining medicine, food and housing.
- It helps Israel (with immigrants and the unemployed).
- It helped Jewish refugees come to Australia in WWII.

### Part B – Read in Yiddish, respond in Yiddish

Students generally responded very well to this task, demonstrating the ability to analyse Yiddish content, and express themselves clearly and effectively in Yiddish. Very high-performing students did not rely on the wording in the texts in their responses. They paraphrased relevant aspects of the text, demonstrating an excellent range of vocabulary and a strong command of written Yiddish.

Following is the Section 2 Part B marking scheme.

#### Question 9

In writing a personal journal entry reflecting on the ideas mentioned in the blog, the following are suggested points students could include in their response:

- agreement or disagreement with the views expressed
- comment on the sources used e.g. scientists; satellites; depth and breadth of evidence used
- the emotions aroused in the student by the text:
  - unusually fierce bushfires
  - animal death tolls
  - global warming

- areas of the globe drying out/droughts
- deforestation
- increasing world population.

## Section 3 – Writing in Yiddish

Section 3 required students to write an extended response of approximately 250 words in Yiddish, on one of three possible topics. Each of the three topics required students to produce a different type of text: persuasive, imaginative or informative.

The most popular topics selected by students were writing a persuasive text, in the form of a letter to the school principal, urging them not to go ahead with the planned removal of all hard-copy books from the library; and an imaginative story about what happens when a neighbour's dog suddenly starts barking.

Responses were generally of a very high standard, demonstrating breadth in the presentation and some depth in the development of information, ideas, opinions or storylines relevant to the task. Texts were written appropriately and were relevant to the task and the selected topic. A very good knowledge and understanding of vocabulary, tense, mood and syntax was evident in the responses. High-scoring responses demonstrated depth of treatment of information, opinions and ideas, and utilised idiomatic Yiddish authentically.

### Question 10

Suggested points/responses students may include:

- א ביבליאטעק דארף פארשידענע לערן מאטעריאלן און מיטלען צום לערנאן (libraries need a range of study resources)
- נישט אלע ביכער ווערן דידיזשיטאליזירט (not all books have been digitised)
- א ביבליאטעק איז א וויכטיקער ארט טרעפן קאלעגן (libraries are an important source for social interaction)
- נישט יעדער שילער האט טעכנאלאגישע מעגלעכקייט אין דער היים צום לערנען (not all students have access to technology at home for their studies).

### Question 11

The task is an imaginative story which must be written for a children's magazine.

Suggested points/responses may include:

- the dog is barking at an unexpected guest
- there is a cat in the tree
- a stranger is in the yard.

### Question 12

Suggested points/responses students may include:

- Drive/chauffeur the visitors around
- Pick them up from the airport
- Take them to the sea
- Introduce to Aussie rules and our sport
- Take in other sights interstate.