



2006 LOTE: Chinese Second Language Advanced GA 3: Examination

Oral Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Although students' abilities varied widely, in most cases they had prepared well and listened carefully before accurately and confidently responding to questions. Students were able to extend their answers, elaborate on their opinions and use conversational repair strategies adequately.

Some students were nervous and jumped into their answers before the assessors had completed asking the question. It is not wise to conclude the content of the question after hearing a few words, and students should wait until the assessor has finished talking before they answer. It is also not advisable to rely on rote-learned material or passages.

It is important that students not speak too fast, even if they are very confident and have a lot to say. Chewing gum also tends to produce mumbled speech that impacts on students' performances. Speaking clearly at an adequate speed better demonstrates preparation and confidence and allows the assessors to properly understand the student's answers.

Students tended to prepare better for the Discussion than for the Conversation. Students and teachers are encouraged to look carefully at the assessment criteria: 'communication', 'content' and 'language' for both the Conversation and Discussion.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were expected to interact with assessors and converse on aspects of their personal world, including family and friends, school and home, interests and aspirations.

Criterion 1: Communication

Demonstrated capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively; clarity of expression

None of the students had difficulty understanding the questions being asked in this section. Most demonstrated an excellent level of understanding and carried the conversation forward with confidence. The most successful students engaged the assessors' attention and provided extensive responses to the questions asked.

Only a small number of students were unable to provide relevant responses when they were asked questions that either they were not anticipating or that were not in the order they were expecting. Some students resorted to pre-learned material to compensate for their lack of preparation and repeatedly experienced difficulty in expanding on opinions.

Criterion 2: Content

Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Students' performance in this section was not quite as good as in the communication section. Their capacity to support or elaborate on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence is crucial. However, most students were well prepared in terms of organising information, alternative phrasing and spontaneously justifying statements in unrehearsed situations without resorting to pre-learned information.

In this section, students who respond with only simplistic answers do not demonstrate their ability. They should avoid generalisations and stereotypes in their comments. It is important to clearly and logically present a good range of information, ideas and opinions.

Criterion 3: Language

Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar; range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

The performance level of students in this section varied. Some students were able to demonstrate an awareness of appropriate style and register, such as modest ways of talking about their own strengths.

Students would benefit if they were able to apply a range of grammatical patterns in their answers, such as: 'although', 'not only/but also', 'as long as', 'since' and 'prefer to'. Students must realise that this conversation task is more than a dialogue test of their Chinese speaking skills. Often students forget to use certain alternative phrases and linking grammatical patterns to shape their speech. It is also important that students are able to self-correct their errors.



Section 2 – Discussion

Time management appeared to be an issue for some students, who had difficulty effectively allocating their response time. At times they were able to complete one aspect while other aspects were not efficiently expressed.

Criterion 1: Communication

Demonstrated capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively; clarity of expression

It is important that students choose a topic and sub-topic that suits their interests and skill level. Some students tend to choose difficult or rare topics to demonstrate their unique content. This is fine as long as the topics they choose follow the study design and are related to Chinese-speaking communities. Some students chose topics, such as young people's idols or the generation gap, that were not specific to the Chinese community. These topics often did not fulfil the requirements of the Detailed Study.

Although the one-minute introduction is not assessed, it is recommended that students clearly and logically outline their topic and aspects.

Criterion 2: Content

Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic

The average performance levels for this criterion were not as good as with other criteria. Students who performed well had prepared their Detailed Study logically and sequentially and were able to express their knowledge of the aspects, their opinions and their own analysis. Students should use resources such as books, movies and documentaries to support their study. Supporting material is allowed in this section; however, it also should not contain any text, apart from a title, heading or labels.

Only a small number of students were unable to answer all of the questions related to the topic they had chosen. Students need to understand that the discussion should be an analysis of their chosen texts rather than just an introduction of a broad topic. It is recommended that students focus on a particular topic or sub-topic. Students also need to learn how to keep both depth and breadth in balance within the seven-minute discussion.

Most students chose the following topics: Chinese tea, an historic figure, festivals or tourism spots in China.

Criterion 3: Language

Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar; range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Students who performed well in this criterion had selected a topic that interested them and allowed for a language level that suited their ability. Some students presented sophisticated 'written Chinese language' that was not easily understood during the oral discussion. Most students had prepared well in terms of sentence structure and sequential consequence. Some students were not able to appropriately link passages; therefore, their language levels were quite unbalanced.

Students should be aware that assessors will often ask further questions following their initial answers. Thus rote-learned passages will often not serve them well in responding to alternative questions.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

There were 392 students who participated in the 2006 written examination. Most students demonstrated a fairly good understanding of the requirements and performed reasonably well, particularly in Section 3 – Writing in Chinese.

Section 1 – Listening and responding and Section 2 – Reading and responding discriminated between students well in this year's examination. In Section 1, most questions contained two or three aspects that needed to be answered, but some students only focused on one aspect of the question and missed the rest of the details. In Section 2, quite a few students did not read the questions carefully. Some responses contained spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

The five topics in Section 3 were well-designed, within the students' abilities and of similar difficulty. Some students did not adhere to the formats required for the different writing styles and text types. Students should be advised to develop a writing plan before they begin the task. Students should also be aware that the length is strictly limited to 250–300 Chinese characters; they should avoid exceeding this limit or submitting responses without sufficient words to provide substantial content.



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A

Text 1

Question 1

The doctor:

- asked her questions (or Lisa told the doctor she had...)
- checked her pulse
- checked her tongue.

Question 2

It is likely that she had not well/not thoroughly/semi-/half-cooked chicken.

Question 3

Both of:

- she had two (specialist maths and psychology) examinations tomorrow
- an injection would help her to recover more quickly/more effectively.

Question 4

Two of:

- tablets have fewer side effects
- an injection is not a typical Chinese treatment
- she will recover quickly with tablets.

Text 2

Question 5

The day before yesterday.

Question 6

All of:

- it is a good environment (or two of: beautiful scenery/many trees/quiet/no noise)
- it is close to shops (within walking distance)
- there are two good primary schools
- there are good recreational facilities (children's play ground, swimming pool and gymnastic facilities)
- friendly/helpful neighbours.

Question 7

A weekend street barbeque.

Part B

Text 3

Question 8

姨夫 or 外甥女

Question 9

山东农村

Question 10

- 林枫的爸爸妈妈要她来山东老家看他们
- 了解中国农村的情形

Question 11

住房:

- 以前房子很小, 现在又宽又大, 有三间卧室, 两间客厅

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娱乐:

- 以前晚上只能听收音机, 现在家家有电视, 每星期六还常常去歌厅唱卡拉 OK

交通:

- 以前进城只能走路或骑自行车, 现在可以骑摩托车或坐公共汽车, 有的还自己开车

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Text 4

Question 12

Name of applicant	Fang Xiaolin
Job application for	Chinese-speaking waiter
Education	high school graduate
Work experience	
Years of experience	Places of work
Two years	Chunge Restaurant/Hotel
Two years	Hong Lou Restaurant/Pub/Hotel
One year	Sanxin (three star) snack (take away)
One year (Jan 2001 – Dec 2001)	Year 7 student
Talents	speaks Chinese, English and French
Special award	best waiter award
Interests	cooking and Chinese food

Question 13

Any three of:

- working conscientiously (and providing guests with the best service at all times)
- taking initiative in finding out more about the job
- willingness to take on different roles
- can speak three languages.

Question 14

Any two of:

- wishing you happiness (greetings)
- date under the name
- hello at the beginning of the letter
- colon after name addressed at the start.

Part B

Text 5

Question 15

- 孙中山的出生地命名为中山市
- 中国和台湾很多马路命名为中山路

Question 16

- 去美国 (海外) 读书 (求学)
- 在香港和广州当医生
- 参加救国活动

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Question 17

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the report should have included:

- at least two aspects of the importance of extra-curricular activities

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- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type report (evaluative) required:

- addressing the audience
- topic
- ending
- correct word length.

Criterion 3: Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- grammar
- language: range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- punctuation

Question 18

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the speech should have included:

- different opinions on the issue of mobile phones
- discussion of advantages
- discussion of disadvantages.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type speech (informative) required:

- topic
- author/writer
- name of magazine
- number of issue or date.

Criterion 3: Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- grammar
- language: range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- punctuation

Question 19

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the letter should have included:

- a suggestion for coming to Melbourne
- comparison of Melbourne and Sydney
- reasons/evidence for studying in a Melbourne university.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type letter (personal) required:

- addressing the audience
- greeting/salutation
- name
- date.

Criterion 3: Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- grammar
- language: range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- punctuation

Question 20

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the diary entry should have included:

- travel experience to space
- happenings in space

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- personal feelings.

Criterion 2: appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type diary entry (imaginative) required:

- who (you)
- when (year of 2048)
- where (travel to space)
- title.

Criterion 3: Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- grammar
- language: range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- punctuation

Question 21

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the article should have included:

- a plan
- a length of three months
- details of activities.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type school newspaper article (persuasive) required:

- date and week
- weather
- appropriate register, style
- correct word length.

Criterion 3: Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- grammar
- language: range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- punctuation