

2020 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced written examination report

General comments

2020 was the first year this study was delivered according to the newly accredited *VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced Study Design 2020–2024* and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers are familiar with the [specifications for written examinations](#), available on the Chinese Second Language Advanced examinations webpage of the VCAA website.

Most students were able to complete all sections to an appropriate standard, suggesting adequate preparation and good time-management skills under examination conditions. Students who scored highly demonstrated a strong understanding of the specific requirements of the task and addressed all points effectively. Students should take every opportunity during the year to improve their skills in interpreting questions and analysing information from texts given.

In the listening and reading sections, students needed to respond to questions in either Chinese or English and demonstrate their ability to grasp the main ideas, interpret and compare information, and convey relevant details. High-scoring responses not only showed these abilities but also made correct reference to the original texts. Other responses, however, did not address all aspects of the questions. For example, in Question 1c., responses indicated that many students understood some facts about Lin Lan and her grandmother but did not explain their relationship. Students are encouraged to read and listen carefully to the specific and general details of the texts in order to extract the key information and respond to the task appropriately.

Similarly, for Section C – Writing in Chinese, students are encouraged to spend adequate time reading the essay tasks carefully to make sure they fully understand the requirements of the question they choose. For example, in Question 5, students were required to write a blog post about their unforgettable experience of travelling on the high-speed train for the first time during their visit to China; however, many students wrote mainly about their visit to the famous cities instead.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

There were two parts in the listening component of the exam. In Part A, students listened to one text and responded to questions in English. In Part B, students listened to one text and responded to questions in Chinese characters and full sentences.

Many students were able to provide accurate information in both parts, demonstrating excellent aural skills. A small number appeared to have difficulty comprehending the texts or lacked effective note-taking skills, and they did not score well. A large number of students, however, lost marks because they misinterpreted the question or did not include enough details. This was particularly the case in Part A.

Overall, students performed better in Part B, where they answered questions in Chinese characters and in full sentences. Only a few students made spelling errors in characters: for example, ‘古老肉, 度假和邻居’. A small number of students wrote down details in the note-taking space but did not transfer them to their answers. Students are advised to practise effective note-taking skills and to use the marks and space provided as a guideline in answering the questions.

Text 1

Question 1a.

- Lin Lan is receiving a new message/notice/notification on her mobile phone.
- Lin Lan’s grandmother is sending some (travel) photos of her recent US/American trip.

Question 1b.

Any four of the following:

- aged 50+ and female (both needed to score a full mark)
- love taking photos of themselves/selfies
- love wearing colourful clothes and carrying/using scarfs as a prop
- love square dancing/dancing ‘Guangchangwu’ in the park
- love travelling together.

Question 1c.

- They are very close/have a good relationship as they live together. / Lin Lan was brought up by her grandmother.
- Lin Lan finds her grandmother annoying as she is always sending photos or messaging her.
- When she was little, her grandmother dragged her to square dancing which she hated. / Grandmother made her do things she hated.
- Lin Lan misses her grandmother now that she is away/travelling in America (for a few days).

Part B – Listening and responding in Chinese

In this part of the examination students were assessed on their understanding of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information from the text in Chinese. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were marked holistically according to the following criteria:

- the capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts
- the capacity to convey information and opinions accurately and appropriately.

They were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in Chinese were awarded full marks.

Text 2

Question 2a.

- 他们很少交谈。(They hardly talked to each other.)
- 邻居法国夫妇不太开心/高兴, 因为一到吃晚饭的时候, 王亮家就传出(各种各样的)香味。(The neighbours were not happy as they can smell Wang Liang's delicious dinner almost every dinner time.)
- 邻居很好奇, 却不好意思问怎么做的/怎么回事。(They were very curious; however, they were too shy to ask how to cook/what happened.)

Question 2b.

邻居的收获有 (The French neighbours' gains):

- (春节) 被邀请去王亮家吃饭/王亮请他们去家里吃饭。(They get invited to Chinese New Year dinner. / Wang Liang invited them to Chinese New Year dinner.)
- 学做家常(中国)菜/春卷和古老肉(咕咾肉/咕嚕肉)。(They learn to cook their favourite Chinese dishes [spring rolls and sweet & sour pork].)

王亮的收获有 (Wang Liang's family gains):

- 王亮跟男的/男邻居学做园艺。(Mr Wang learns gardening from the husband.)
- 王太太跟女的/女邻居学做法国甜点/点心。(Mrs Wang learns how to cook French desserts from the wife.)
- 他们去度假时邻居帮王亮家看狗和拿信。(The French couple look after Wang's dog and mail when they are on holidays.)
- (小)女儿跟邻居练习/学/说法语。(The daughter learns/practises/improves her French from talking to the couple almost every day.)

Section 2

Most students performed well in Part A, particularly when answering questions related to either the listening text or the reading text; however, some students struggled with questions that related to both texts, possibly indicating a lack of practice. Question 3e. proved to be challenging for some students. Another challenging question was Question 3f. as it required students to extract the key information from both listening and reading texts. Those who included accurate and specific information achieved higher marks. Students are reminded to read the questions carefully to avoid misinterpreting them, and to include detail and accurate information in their response to demonstrate their thorough understanding of the text.

Many students performed well in Part B, which required them to write an email to a friend to persuade him to attend a performance, based on the information on star chasing in Text 4. Lower scoring responses were due to one of three common problems:

- The email was not persuasive enough as the topic sentences were more informative than persuasive in style. In addition, too much information was quoted or copied from the original text. Students need to know that quality is more important than quantity, so writing 500 plus characters does not guarantee an effective response. Some students even wrote about 700 characters and ran out of time for the essay-writing in Section C.
- The email was almost a replica of the original text. A few students only changed a few sentences of the given text, and their responses therefore did not meet the task's requirement. Students are reminded to read the question carefully and use the information effectively.

- The email was written based on the student's own knowledge, and insufficient key information from the text was utilised in the response. Some students totally ignored the stimulus text and based their email on their own knowledge of a favourite star or celebrity.

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

Texts 3A and 3B

Question 3a.

- With the rapid development of science and technology and the widespread use of computers, students are becoming more interested in AI.
- The science and related subjects offered by school are no longer meeting the needs/desires of the students.
- Students need a venue where they can further investigate science and technology.

Question 3b.

- Install/assemble/make robots, objects or animals.
- Learn programming/coding.
- Design new games.

Question 3c.

- Allow students to showcase their talents (especially for introverted students).
- Enrich students' school lives.
- Cultivate the real talents for the AI of the future.

Question 3d.

- They are both made of plastic pieces/similar parts.
- They both need to be programmed/coded to think/make decisions/respond on their own.

Question 3e.

- He says that it is fun. / He shows great interest. / He shows interest by asking a lot of questions.
- He has indicated that he 'wants to learn'. / He wants to invite his wife to join him/start lessons tomorrow.
- He agrees that robotics or AI is a top priority/our future/future direction.

Question 3f.

She could have:

- used the school facilities/devices/equipment
- received guidance from the teacher
- worked together with team members/reinforced her teamwork
- produced more interesting products
- presented the finished product to the public/a broader community
- showcased her talents/shared the same passion with other like-minded students.

Part B – Reading and responding in Chinese

Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus text(s) and to address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the text(s) that was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

Student responses were assessed holistically according to the assessment criteria and the expected qualities published in the examination specifications on the VCAA website. The criteria for this section are:

- the capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts
- the capacity to convey information and opinions accurately and appropriately.

Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language accuracy; however, language accuracy was an important expected quality that was considered in the assessment. A number of students provided lengthy responses beyond the scope of the task and some included additional information that was irrelevant.

Text 4

Question 4

Text type: email

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: a friend

Suggested points students may have included:

- 明星的出现让青少年有一个可以效仿的榜样/青少年可以有希望和目标
- 青少年可以追随他们，向他们学习。
- 激励青少年在某一方面取得成就
- 增加/添青少年的兴趣爱好
- 满足青少年的心理和情感要求
- 学会审美/带来欢乐

The benefits of star chasing:

- give young people a role model/hope/goals to aim for
- young people can follow the stars and learn from them
- inspire the young to be the best in a certain area
- give the young a hobby choice
- satisfy the emotional and psychological needs of the young
- teach them how to appreciate beauty / bring joy to the young.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

收件人: xiaoming@gmail.com

发件人: lanlan@hotmail.com

主题: 跟我一起看阿伦的演唱会

时间: 12月1号(10点)

小明,

你好! 我的最爱--阿伦要来墨尔本开演唱会了, 你和我一起去看看吧!

首先, 明星可以成为我们效仿的榜样。大多数像阿伦这样的明星在表演或体育方面都有出色的成就, 我们可以追随他们, 向他们学习。去看这场演唱会一定能激励我们在自己的兴趣爱好上取得成就!

其次，追星可以满足我们的心理和情感需求。明星们外表出众，看他们表演不但可以让我们学会审美，还能给我们带来快乐，真是“赏心悦目”！

还有，这次阿伦的演唱会时间不长，不会影响我们学习，而且票价也不贵。只要你答应去，我来请客！

心动不如行动，我们一起去吧！等你的回信。

祝好！

友： 兰兰

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Students attempted a full range of the writing tasks, with Question 7 being the most popular. The standard of writing varied, with a large number of responses in the high-medium band of the marking scale. Responses that scored highly demonstrated a well-structured, coherent text in fluent language that effectively addressed the question. For example, Question 7 required students to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using electronic textbooks. High-scoring responses presented unbiased and balanced opinions that were well supported by strong evidence or examples. Low-scoring essays presented positive and negative implications that either contradicted each other or concentrated solely on the benefit or the drawback itself. Quite a few students wrote unnecessarily long and wordy essays, which is not recommended.

Students need to pay attention to the style of writing required for their chosen question. Some students who chose Question 6 wrote a persuasive piece instead of the required informative piece. When planning their responses, students should carefully consider both the range and the depth of the information. For example, in Question 6, in addition to describing the venue, activities and opening hours, students could have included other aspects of the rock climbing centre such as the training programs and special discounts to give more breadth to the writing. In general, students demonstrated an appropriate command of Chinese, but they should ensure that they have enough time to thoroughly proofread their work in terms of spelling and grammar.

Question 5

Text type: blog post

Kind of writing: personal

Audience: readers of the travel blog

Points students could have included:

- general impressions of the cities/destinations/country
- the journey/ride on the bullet train (the seating, speed and services)
- the unforgettable experience / reflections on the trip / the impact of the Gaotie on transport or people's lives.

Question 6

Text type: report

Kind of writing: informative

Audience: students/schoolmates

Points students could have included:

- location and opening hours of the rock climbing centre
- description of the activity/facilities
- what is offered in terms of services/training/aid/special discount/programs or fees.

Question 7

Text type: article

Kind of writing: evaluative

audience: high school students

Possible advantages:

- save paper/environmentally friendly
- are convenient/portable (can be used anywhere and anytime)/easy to carry/no need to carry heavy bags/good for the students' health (less strain on backs and shoulders)
- well suited for the current generation/attractive to students/future trend.

Possible disadvantages:

- are distracting
- are not good for health in the long run (can affect eyesight, posture etc.)
- are not good for exam or test conditions (students need to practise handwriting skills).

Question 8

Text type: story

Kind of writing: imaginative

Audience: children

- must include the two characters portrayed in the image
- could be a journey to see the army/history and get inspired
- could be a journey back in time.