

2016 VCE Chinese Second Language written examination report

General comments

A majority of students performed well in the 2016 Chinese Second Language written examination. It was evident that most students understood each task well and planned their time effectively for the completion of the written examination. Most students achieved good results. A small number of students, however, struggled in all sections, but in particular with listening comprehension.

Most students appeared to be quite familiar with the format of the examination, and almost all responded in the appropriate language for each section. However, a few students did not read the questions carefully and did not provide all necessary information in their answers or did not write their answers in the correct place. No marks were awarded for answers written in the incorrect place. Students need extensive practice in critically reading questions and producing appropriate answers, particularly for questions that require analysis of a text.

Students should remember that the amount of answer space given and the number of marks allocated should be used as a guide to the length of response required. Students should check to see if a question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences; students are required to answer in full sentences in Chinese in Part B of Section 1 – Listening and responding and Section 2 – Reading and responding.

The majority of students understood the listening tasks quite well and provided all the information that was required; however, some students did not provide enough detail in their answer, which seriously affected their results.

Many students answered all questions satisfactorily in Section 2 – Reading, responding and translating, despite some questions in this section requiring some analytical skills; however, quite a few students did not read the questions carefully and provided inappropriate or incomplete answers. It seemed that many students needed to improve their skills in analysing information and summarising, rather than copying out the whole paragraph or passage. Teachers and students must understand that analysis and evaluation skills, as well as comprehension skills, are required in this section. The questions in this section may require students to look at the whole passage – not only one sentence or paragraph – to gain the answer. Students are also advised to consult their dictionaries when answering questions as many of their responses contained spelling and grammatical errors. Students should not provide information beyond the scope of the question or include prior knowledge of the topic.

Many students understood the translation tasks well and made good attempts; however, some students seemed to understand the Chinese wording but were unable to translate it into appropriate English. Some seemed to misinterpret the meaning of the Chinese passages due to their lack of Chinese knowledge and vocabulary. Students are advised that they should not translate word for word from Chinese.

Most students performed well in Section 3 – Writing in Chinese. They completed the questions in the correct register, format and style; however, some students did not correctly follow the requirements of the task. Students are reminded to read all question instructions carefully.

In Section 3, the majority of students chose Question 8, 9 or 10 for their writing task. Most students who chose Question 10 produced a good piece of writing, but quite a few students did not comprehend Question 10 fully, as it required students to present two different views on the impact of the increasing number of overseas tourists on Australia, but not the impact of the overseas tourist industry on Australia. A few students did not adhere to the different formats required for the different writing styles and text types. Students should be advised to develop a plan before they start the writing task.

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 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Many students appeared to understand the two listening texts well and demonstrated their ability to summarise and analyse information; however, some students seemed to have trouble conveying their meaning in English or providing all the information required. Students should use the reading time to focus on the questions in this section so they can predict what the listening texts might be about. Students should also learn note-taking skills so they can provide as much relevant information as possible when answering each question. Most questions contained two or three aspects that needed to be answered, but some students focused on only one aspect of the question and missed the rest of the details.

Text 1

Question 1a.

Li Hua is taller and thinner/skinnier/slimmer than Li Ming.

Question 1b.

Li Hua is half an hour/30 minutes older (than Li Ming).

Text 2

Question 2a.

It was caused by a heavy rain/big rain/rainstorm and the delay would be approximately/about/probably two hours.

Question 2b.

They were advised to go to lounge 1/resting room 1/waiting area 1 to wait and have some refreshments/snacks/bites.

Part B – Answer in Chinese

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand aspects of a Chinese listening text by responding in Chinese. Three marks were awarded for comprehension of the text and two marks were awarded for conveying information accurately and

appropriately in Chinese. Most students showed a sound understanding of the content of the text and did well in this part.

Students must ensure that they respond in complete sentences and their sentences should communicate their ideas in their own words. Some students answered in point form, taking extracts directly from the spoken text. This did not allow them to demonstrate their ability to communicate fluently in the language and thus they were not awarded full marks. Students needed to ensure that they provided a full answer to each question.

Text 3 Question 3

兰兰喜欢她的新房子，因为房子和花园都很大。兰兰也有她自己的房间了，再也不用和妹妹住一个房间了。

另外，现在买东西 很方便，因为她家的后面就有一个又新又大的商场。

Lanlan likes her new house, because both the house and its garden are spacious. Lanlan also has her own room now and no longer needs to share a room with her younger sister. In addition, it is very convenient for her family to do shopping now as there is a new big shopping centre just behind her house.

Section 2 – Reading, responding and translating Part A – Answer in English

Most students successfully completed the questions relating to the comprehension of a Chinese reading text in this part of the examination. Part A was based on one text in Chinese and was worth 15 marks. A number of questions were directly related to the content of the text, while other questions were deductive. Students should be prepared to comment not only on the content of the text, but also on the purpose of the text and the type of audience it is addressing.

Some students confused or misunderstood Question 4. In order to prepare for this section of the examination, students should read the questions carefully before giving an answer. They should also practise identifying and summarising the main points and ideas in the texts. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all unknown words if they are not key words in the text and students should try to understand the gist of the passage. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the text only.

Text 4 Question 4a.

Name	Name of festival(s) celebrated	Activities that people do during the festival(s)
<i>Li Ying</i>	Spring Festival/Chinese New Year and Christmas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (kids) eating with adults • receiving red money packet/pack/envelope/bag (for Chinese New Year)
<i>Lin Daming</i>	Easter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating fish • giving people coloured/Easter/painted eggs
<i>Chen Long</i>	Spring Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • getting up early the first day for exchanging New Year greetings/pay a New Year's

		call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> going to parents' house/visit parents early the second day sleeping at home on the third day
<i>Ma Li</i>	<i>Christmas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shopping for presents/gifts for family members and friends

Question 4b.

Li Ying's family is from Xi'an/China/Chinese origin. They celebrate Chinese New Year but they also celebrate Christmas.

Question 4c.

It has the meaning of rebirth/resurrection/revival/resurgence and hope.

Part B – Answer in Chinese

This part of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and their capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately in Chinese. Most students provided the correct information to adequately complete all questions, although some students lacked the skills needed to analyse and summarise the passage. They simply copied one or two paragraphs as their response. Students should take advantage of the fact that the questions in this section are given in both Chinese and English.

Text 5**Question 5a.**

大为是一个澳洲人(从澳洲来的), 他在中国教英语/做英语老师。

David is an Australian (or comes from Australia). He is teaching English (or is an English teacher) in China.

Question 5b.

西北的学生(不怕苦/能吃苦, 因为)每天上学要走两个小时的路 (Students in China's northwest are not afraid of hardship [as they walk two hours from home to school every day].)

他们上课认真听讲 (They are attentive in class.)

他们还喜欢学唱英文歌 (They also like to learn singing English songs.)

他们不常问问题。(They don't often ask questions.)

Question 5c.

大为将来还要回西北教那些可爱的孩子们, 因为他在西北的一个月太有意义了。(David intends to return to teach English to these kids in the northwest of China because he found that his one-month stay there was quite interesting and meaningful.)

Part C – Translation

Most students comprehended the translation passages well and conveyed the meaning of these passages accurately and fluently. Some students seemed to have a good comprehension of the

passages in Chinese, but had poor expression in English. Students are reminded that Chinese and English are different in terms of syntax and expression and they should not translate word for word from Chinese.

Question 6

Over the last 35 years, China has changed greatly. The industry has grown rapidly, so have the imports and exports. China is now the world's second-largest country for imports and exports. It is also the world's largest manufacturing centre. Last year, over 250 Chinese products such as mobile phones, bicycles, clothes and computers etc. were No. 1 in the world. China also made 30 million cars. These cars are both cheap and advanced, so they are very popular with people.

Question 7

The fast development of mobile phones has made our lives extremely convenient, but at the same time, there are many shortcomings. Nowadays, students will look at their mobile phones any time of the day/all the time, message and chat online. Some even look at mobile phones while in class and during their mealtimes, regardless of whether others are happy or not. Overusing mobile phones makes the writing and face-to-face communication skills of students worse and worse. That's why many of them are lacking in confidence during job interviews.

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

This section assessed students' ability to express ideas through the creation of an original text in Chinese using the following criteria:

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Students were required to write 200–250 characters in Chinese on one of the five topics given. Each topic represented a different text type and style of writing (personal, imaginative, informative, persuasive and evaluative). All five questions were attempted by students, although there was a clear preference for the informative and persuasive writing tasks.

On the whole, students displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text type and the style of writing they chose; however, students must be aware that they need to provide all the features of the text type or writing style.

Of the three criteria in this section, students did not perform well against 'relevance, breadth and depth of content'. When selecting a topic, students should choose one that is both familiar to them and that requires the kind of writing and text type that suits them best. Students should have a good knowledge of, and a good range of relevant vocabulary about, the selected topic, and it should be a topic in which they are able to express themselves accurately.

Question 8

Students were required to write a speech to persuade Year 11 students to run for a school leadership positions. Responses could have included some of the following points.

- 锻炼培养领导才能 (gain leadership experience)
- 学会和不同人交往/相处/结交更多地朋友 (learn to get along with different people)
- 丰富学校生活/丰富人生 (enrich their school lives)
- 提高自己的知名度 (increase one's own popularity)
- 对将来走向社会有帮助 (help them settle into society in the future)

Question 9

Students were required to write a letter to their penpal in China, informing her about the new stores, the food court and the entertainment facilities of Melbourne's newest shopping centre. Responses could have included some of the following points.

- 新商店：如连锁店，超市等 (new shops such as supermarkets or outlet chains)
- 小吃部：如西式快餐店和中式快餐店/餐馆等 (food court: Western- and Eastern-style fast food)
- 娱乐设施：如电影院，游乐室等 (entertainment: cinemas and game rooms, etc.)

Question 10

Students were required to write an article for a travel magazine in which they evaluated the impact of overseas tourism on Australia. Responses could have included some of the following points.

- 带动澳洲经济发展/促进旅游业 (benefit economic growth/tourism)
- 促进文化交流 (promote cultural exchanges)
- 破坏自然环境 (environmental impact/damage)
- 造成景点的压力如拥挤，安全隐患等 (concerns for safety, overcrowding)

Question 11

Students were required to write an entry in their personal diary, recounting how they got their job, explaining why it ended today and describing one of the most significant events in the last three months. Responses could have included some of the following points.

- 怎么得到这个工作 (recounting how they got the job) 最有意义的一件事 (describing one of the most significant experiences)
- 为什么今天结束 (explaining why it ended today)

Question 12

Students were required to imagine they were a family pet and write a story to tell their owner about an adventure they had. Responses could have included some of the following points.

- 说明是一只什么样的会说汉语的家庭宠物 (establishes the role/character of the family pet)
- 说明宠物与主人的关系及发展 (develops a relationship with the owner)
- 设想一个故事情节 (如：一次冒险) (development of a plot – i.e. an adventure)