

Chinese (continuers)

2011 Assessment Report



Government
of South Australia

SACE
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CHINESE (CONTINUERS)

2011 ASSESSMENT REPORT

OVERVIEW

Assessment reports give an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Teachers are advised to be alert to possible plagiarism and to establish appropriate procedures at the school level. A number of folios and in-depth studies contained sections that appeared very reliant on other sources. Teachers are advised to implement verification processes to ensure work presented is the students' own.

Teachers are encouraged to consider ways to develop consistency in interpreting and applying the performance standards, such as co-marking work with experienced teachers.

Assessment Type 1: Folio

Almost all folio tasks were performed very well. Most folios contained very high quality work demonstrating the ability and skills to meet the learning requirements and assessment design criteria described by the performance standards in the subject outline. In general the evidence presented in the text analysis tasks and text productions was stronger than that for the oral tasks. A small number of oral tasks were presented in a written style using formal language, rather than as an interaction as required. Although evidence for the text analysis was strong, some questions were not sufficiently challenging to facilitate achievement at higher levels against the assessment design criteria as described by the performance standards.

Some oral questions for the interaction task were at a simple level and did not facilitate performance at the highest levels, with most of the questions being 'who and what' type of questions. Questions could be provided that require more reflective responses, especially if the task specifies reflection.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

Most in-depth studies were very good and followed the requirements of the subject outline, and were described appropriately in both the task sheets and the learning and assessment plans for schools. Most in-depth studies demonstrated good quality work produced capably and with a sound level of skill. They contained work that demonstrated well the ideas, expression, and interpretation and reflection listed in the performance standards. They also tackled cultural and linguistic issues. The

depth of treatment of ideas and information, and use of language were also of a good standard.

However, the three assessments comprising the in-depth study — the oral presentation, the written response in Chinese, and the reflective response in English — were in some cases very similar or differed minimally. In the better responses, the three assessments differed in context, audience, and purpose, as per the subject outline.

Some recordings of oral tasks were not clear enough for moderators to hear what was being said. In general, the written components of the in-depth studies, as with the folios, demonstrated a higher level of achievement than the oral components.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Examination

Oral Examination

For the oral examination, teachers should encourage students to prepare for a range of questions in the general conversation and the in-depth study discussion, rather than predicting questions and memorising scripts to be recited as responses.

Section 1: Conversation

In general terms, the responses during the conversations were competent and delivered confidently. Responses to the questions in the style of sample questions, which may be distributed and practiced in advance of the examination, were well-prepared. There was more hesitancy in response to spontaneous questions, partly because those questions were less well understood. Students should be encouraged to ask for clarification if they do not understand the questions. The responses in general were expansive, but on occasion students required further prompting before the responses were extended.

Most responses comprised simple and familiar sentence structures. Many of the better responses used a wide range of grammatical forms and few English structures or Anglicisms. The responses were mostly relevant but simplistic, and additional prompting was necessary in many instances to elicit depth in the responses, particularly when examiners asked for students' opinions. Most responses contributed to the continuity of the conversation, although additional prompting was often necessary. Preparation of the responses was generally very good. Few students used support objects in the general conversation.

Pronunciation in the responses was generally good. Responses at times indicated an unwillingness to risk the use of extended responses and more sophisticated cohesive devices.

Section 2: Discussion

Responses to the individually-selected topics were often stronger than the responses in the conversations and most responses indicated a genuine interest in the topic. However, there remained a lack of expression of personal opinions and beliefs. As with the conversation, the discussion was less strong when the examiner departed from expected or rehearsed set questions.

Language transfer from English was evident in responses that departed from rehearsed questions, and appeared to be the explanation for many of the word order errors. Some responses were fluent but truncated (sentence endings were omitted). The responses were often shallow.

Topics such as sport, leisure, school life, or festivals may constrain the breadth or depth of the responses. Almost all responses delivered adequate factual information, but the logical progression of some of the responses could have been stronger. The better responses incorporated justifications, evidence of critical thinking, and/or indications of beliefs or opinions.

Very few responses were supported with objects, which may have been useful as prompts. Otherwise, responses were usually well prepared.

Written Examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

For section 1 of the written examination, students would benefit from practice with authentic materials and exposure to questions in different formats. They should practice giving answers in different formats.

Q. 1: In general, responses to question 1 were very good, with high marks recorded. The most common error was interpreting the term for 'shopping centre' as 'market' or 'supermarket'.

Q. 2: Text 2 was straightforward and most responses for this text were very good, with high marks recorded.

Q. 3: This text was more challenging and provided most discrimination between student responses. Most responses indicated good comprehension of the spoken text, but almost a third of the responses did not reflect the spoken text in any way.

Q. 4: In general, responses to question 4 were good. The better responses demonstrated a good understanding of the spoken text, and were not based solely on the vocabulary list provided.

Q. 5: Again, responses were good generally and the better responses were based on the text rather than the vocabulary list.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

For section 2 of the written examination, students are advised to read the whole text and seek a thorough understanding of the linguistic and cultural context before answering the questions.

Part A

Q. 6 (a): Most students provided a complete and appropriate response to this question.

Q. 6 (b): A number of responses stated that the author went to Chinese school on the weekends, demonstrating that not all students fully understood the text.

Q. 6 (c): Two concerns were readily identified. The better responses included the third concern that the author was too young to have a boyfriend.

Q. 6 (d): Some responses were simply translations rather than explanations. The better responses included an interpretation of the final sentence and described what it indicated about the author.

Q. 7 (a): Most responses indicated that formal language was readily recognised.

Q. 7 (b): Two points were required. The better responses mentioned the hotel's Internet facilities and swimming pool as well as that the hotel was reputed to be one of the best in Adelaide.

Q. 7 (c): Most responses were good. Many responses indicated understanding of the delay in the time taken to respond to the parents' complaint about the lack of hot water.

Q. 7 (d): The better responses included identification of the tone of the letter.

Part B

The responses for Part B were generally good.

The responses indicated general understanding of the main aspects and purpose of the text, and many included phrases and sentences transcribed from the given text, but used appropriately. As the text provided some information that could be transcribed in blocks into responses, students needed to competently and coherently meld this information.

A few responses indicated miscomprehension of the task, because they focused on the effects of global warming rather than on personal reactions and responses to global warming. Mostly, the responses were structured logically and coherently, and used vocabulary accurately. Most responses comprised a variety of sentence structures, but those structures were generally simple.

Most responses to the topic were relevant and covered the main aspects, and some supported the main ideas with additional detailed information. A few responses were not consistently relevant to the topic due to limited vocabulary and grammar. Most responses observed the conventions of the text type, with the better responses finishing with appropriate closing remarks.

A few of the grammatical errors in the responses were transposition of English grammar when translating into Chinese characters. There was also some use of regional and colloquial forms that differed from mainstream Chinese. For example, 你觉得什么? (怎么样)/上班开车去(开车去上班)/一篇文章关于全球变暖(一篇关于全球变暖的文章)/学校离开我的家近/学校和我的家离近(。。。离。。。近/不远)。

Section 3: Writing in Chinese

For section 3 of the written examination, students are advised to ensure that they fully understand the tasks required by the question and pay particular attention to character writing, grammar, the use of link words, the coherence of their paragraphs, and the different text types.

Question 9 was the most popular question in section 3, followed by question 11 and then question 10. The responses to question 9 were generally well-argued, but most responses to question 10 did not argue the importance of Chinese or clearly indicate why Chinese was important for the particular job, and did not indicate any reflection as required in the second half of the question. Many responses to question 11 merely compared city and country living without identifying the location as China. Many responses did not describe the country, make comparisons, or cover the issue from the perspective of personal experience.

Overall, most responses included a variety of vocabulary and attempts to use complex sentence structures. Some responses used incorrect characters and/or meaning, whereas other responses included characters extracted from the dictionary that didn't comfortably fit in the context of the prose.

Most responses stayed on topic, but other responses indicated that the questions weren't fully understood, and as a result, some of the paragraphs in some of the responses were irrelevant. The responses were generally well structured and sequenced (particularly the responses to question 9). The better responses included justification of an opinion or argument. Sequencing in the responses to question 11 often confused 'city' and 'country'.

Some responses to question 9 were not consistent with formal letter writing format. Most responses to question 10 used the correct format. Many responses to question 11 were not in an appropriate text type and lacked a title.

Common grammatical faults were incorrect positioning of adverbs and adjectives in sentences, incorrect terms used to make comparisons, incorrect language transfer, and incorrect descriptions of actions. For example, 我的建设是很好/
我体验了农村生活在中国/ 他是很聪明/ 说了很有道理/ 拉小提琴非常好.

The character writing within the responses was very good overall. The main problem was in the detail of the strokes within the characters.

OPERATIONAL ADVICE

Not all schools included the required learning and assessment plans and task sheets with their moderation materials. Valid reasons were not always given for the omission of student work in the sample materials, which should have been indicated on the 'Variations in Materials for the Sample for Final Moderation' form. Other supporting paper work may be helpful, such as summaries of all tasks and grades. Some schools did not present audio records of the oral presentations, which significantly hindered the moderation process.

Chief Assessor
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