



2007 LOTE: Chinese Second Language Advanced GA 3: Examination

Oral Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, a wide range of abilities was demonstrated in the oral examination this year. Most students seemed adequately prepared for both the Conversation and Discussion of the Detailed Study, although many did not appear confident.

Most students were willing to engage with the assessors during both sections of the examination. Some students were nervous at the beginning of the oral examination, but were able to overcome this as they progressed. Students should speak clearly at an adequate speed in order to demonstrate their abilities better and to avoid becoming nervous or developing a mental block. This also demonstrates preparation and confidence.

Students listened carefully to the questions and responded adequately to the topics raised, although a few students had difficulty in expanding or elaborating on their answers when asked to explain further. Capable students were able to handle complex and further questions and gave interesting and extended responses. In the weaker responses, students tended to give a brief generalisation of their opinion, with irrelevant or insufficient supporting information, or to use inappropriate expressions. However, most students used their initiative and were prepared to give examples or cases to support their talking points. High-achieving students are expected to be challenged by more difficult questions related to the sub-topic, and students should be prepared for this.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were expected to interact with assessors in talking about aspects of their personal world, including family and friends, school and home life, interests and aspirations.

**Communication: Demonstrated capacity to maintain and appropriately and effectively advance the exchange
Clarity of expression**

There was a tendency for students to try to cram a great deal of information into this section using standard, pre-prepared answers. For example, in discussing the advantages and disadvantages of co-educational schools with single-sex schools, or the generation gap between parents and themselves, some students responded in a common and vague way and could not give examples to elaborate their arguments. Thus, students' opportunities for responding to questions appropriately was limited by pre-prepared responses that did not always fit the questions asked, especially if presented in an unfamiliar way.

Some students did not pronounce correctly or failed to differentiate the four tones, thereby confusing the assessors. For example, 新婚 was pronounced 兴奋; 买 to 卖.

Content: Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Students' performance on this criterion was slightly lower than for the communication criterion. Their capacity to support or elaborate on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence is crucial to performing well.

In this section, students who respond only with simplistic answers do not demonstrate their capacity. Students should avoid generalisations and stereotypes in their comments. It is important to present a good range of information, ideas and opinions clearly and logically. Most students were well prepared in terms of organising information, providing alternative phrasing and spontaneously justifying statements in unrehearsed situations without resorting to pre-learned material.

Language: Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Generally students' vocabulary and grammar was quite good. Stronger students knew how to use idioms and alternative vocabulary appropriately in their conversation; however, a few students used idioms or proverbs inappropriately. Plentiful use of idioms and proverbs does not imply high standards if other elements do not meet the standards expected.



Grammar misuse was an issue for some weak students; for example; 做商业（做生意）；聊话（聊天谈话）；交通能力大（交通容量大）。However, most capable students provided extended answers and opinions through naturally-flowing conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students introduced their topics appropriately and presented a general introduction about the aspects of their sub-topic. It is recommended that students outline their topic and aspects clearly and logically.

The choice of topic and sub-topic to suit students' interests and levels is crucial. Some students chose difficult or obscure topics to demonstrate their unique content. However, some students were not able to construct the content at their own level and pieced information together inappropriately. In this case, the linkage between the topic and aspects did not clearly demonstrate structured content.

Several students seemed to be using the Chinese First Language format of a persuasive presentation instead of a discussion. Time management appeared to be an issue for some. They seemed to have difficulties allocating their time effectively. At times they were able to complete one aspect while other aspects were not sufficiently expressed.

Communication: Demonstrated capacity to maintain and effectively and appropriately advance the exchange Clarity of expression

Most students understood the questions and responded according to their research. Although some students appeared not to understand the assessors' questions, some of these were able to appropriately ask for help when trying to maintain the discussion. This is one of the crucial repair strategies.

Some students tended to recite content instead of engaging in a discussion. However, there were silences when they were asked unexpected or unusual questions. Students are expected to give their opinions on the topic and support their stance or arguments with relevant information.

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

The average performance level on this criterion was better than for the other criteria. There was a clear distinction between the more capable and the less capable students. Students who performed well had carefully considered their topics or sub-topics and had anticipated a range of questions. Using resources such as books, movies and documentaries would further support students' study and preparation. Weaker students had not practised the structures and content and needed to elaborate more on their research rather than just piece together information during the discussion. Inadequately prepared students seemed to have little to talk about.

Only a few students were unable to answer 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. Students should focus on a particular topic or sub-topic. Students also need to learn how to keep both the depth and breadth of the discussion within the seven-minute time limit.

Most students chose one the following topics: Chinese tea, Chinese jade, Chinese local food, historical figures, festivals, celebrations and tourist destinations in China.

Language: Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

In this section, students who performed well showed in-depth knowledge of the topics, explained their thoughts and opinions logically and convincingly, and offered possible solutions to the issues they presented. However, certain students only gave general, simple and shallow information that relied on their limited experiences.

Students should be aware that assessors will often follow students' initial responses with further questions. Thus, at times, rote-learned passages will not help them cope with alternative questions.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most of the 365 students who participated in this year's Chinese Second Language Advanced written examination performed reasonably well and demonstrated a fairly good understanding of the requirements of the examination.



In Section 1, Listening and responding, most students appeared to understand the texts well and demonstrated their ability to summarise and analyse information. However, some students seemed to have trouble comprehending the meaning of 'between the lines'. Students should use the reading time to focus on the questions in this section as it is often the most challenging part of the examination. Students should also learn note-taking skills and 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 only focused on one aspect of the question and missed the rest of the details.

Similarly, the majority of students answered all questions satisfactorily in Section 2, Reading and responding, although most questions in this section were quite challenging. However, quite a few students did not read the questions carefully and provided answers only when they comprehended the questions. It seemed that most students needed to improve their skills in analysing information and summarising rather than copying the whole paragraph or passage for the answer. 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 to gain an answer, not just one sentence or paragraph. Students are also advised to consult their dictionaries when answering the questions as many of their responses contained spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

In Section 3, Writing in Chinese, the majority of students chose Question 18 or 19 for their writing although there were five topics to choose from in this section. Most students produced a good piece of writing for Question 18, but quite a few students did not comprehend Question 19 fully as it also required students to provide reasons of why it was not good to have their holidays on the mountains this summer vacation. Some students used too many idioms in their writing. In terms of content, some students lost balance between breadth and depth. In addition, a few students did not adhere to the formats required for the different writing styles and text types. Students should be advised to develop a plan before they start the writing task. Students should also be aware that the length is strictly limited to 250–300 Chinese characters and avoid exceeding this limit (as credit is not given for writing that exceeds the word limit) or submitting responses without sufficient words to provide substantial content.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1

Both of:

- he carries a red koala-shaped school bag/backpack
- he is carrying a teddy/toy bear in his hands.

Question 2

At the front entrance/main entrance/doorway/door of the first floor.

Text 2

Question 3

Either of:

- because two pandas from China will be exhibited in Australian/Melbourne zoos next March/March next year
- if one is going to see the two pandas, he/she needs to book/order a ticket beforehand/in advance.

Question 4

The Internet/a computer

Text 3

Question 5

All of:

- channels/programs from other cities
- Japanese channels
- Korean channels.

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Question 6

Both of:

- game shows
- documentaries.

Question 7

Both of:

- a travel/tourist program
- a sports program/Asian Soccer Cup.

Part B – Answer in Chinese

Text 4

Question 8

- 在中国一年只有寒假和暑假(两个假期)
- 澳洲(墨尔本)一年有四个假期(每个学期有假期)
- 早自习(一小时)
- 每天早上7点就得到学校
- 8点开始上课
- 下午5点才放学
- 大多数同学晚上还得补课
- 做两个小时的作业
- 澳洲九点上课, 三点半左右下课
- 中国学生作业多

Question 9

- 中国午休两个小时
- 中国学生可以回家吃午饭
- 中国女学生不是一年四季都穿裙子

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 5

Question 10

Customer's full name	Wang Qianwen
No. of adults travelling	Adults 2
No. of children travelling	Children 1
City of departure	Melbourne
Destination	Beijing
Timing of Travel	Chinese New Year/Spring Festival
Preferred airline and why	Qantas (Australian airlines) It's a direct flight

Question 11

China airlines, because:

- it is cheaper
- it takes less time/is a short flight
- it is more suitable for a family with kids
- there are seats available.

Question 12

Hong Kong

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Question 13

On your way back/when you come back:

- fly to Guangzhou (Canton) first
- take a train to Hong Kong
- arrange meals
- accommodation
- sightseeing/travel/tour.

Part B – Answer in Chinese

Text 6

Question 14

- 短信中的数字有特别的意思
- 短信中的字母有特别的意思
- 有些短信很风趣

Question 15

- 对想省钱的人
- 对常不在家或经常在外的人/常外出(海边、山上等)的人/常使用公共交通工具的人/旅游的人
- 对用手机短信来说不方便或不好意思当面说出话的人
- 对学生
- 对短信不能理解/明白的人

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

Question 16

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the diary should have included:

- at least two activities in relation to rural life
- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type diary required:

- the date and week
- a description of the weather.

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

Responses needed to include:

- correct grammar
- correct language, a range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- a range of sentences and idiomatic phrases.

Question 17

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the article should have included:

- an introduction of at least two departments in the company
- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type article required:

- a title
- an author/writer.

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

Responses needed to include:

- correct grammar
- correct language, a range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- a range of sentences and idiomatic phrases.

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Question 18

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the speech should have included:

- at least two aspects each about advantages and disadvantages of online shopping
- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type speech required:

- acknowledgement of the audience and salutation to the audience
- a topic
- an indication of the end of the speech.

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

Responses needed to include:

- correct grammar
- correct language, a range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- a range of sentences and idiomatic phrases.

Question 19

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the letter should have included:

- at least two advantages of having a holiday at the beach
- one disadvantage of having a holiday at a mountain this time
- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type letter required:

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

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

Responses needed to include:

- correct grammar
- correct language, a range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- a range of sentences and idiomatic phrases.

Question 20

Criterion 1: Relevance, breadth and depth of content

The content of the story should have included:

- at least two activities that the naughty dog did
- a clear indication that it was only a dream
- some supportive reasons and evidence.

Criterion 2: Appropriateness of structure and sequence

The conventions of the text type story required:

- a title
- an author/writer.

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

Responses needed to include:

- correct grammar
- correct language, a range of vocabulary and accuracy of character writing
- a range of sentences and idiomatic phrases.