

2015 NZ Scholarship Assessment Report

Chinese

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to the 2015 examination.

Q1 worked well and most candidates seemed to understand what was required of them. One problem was noted in writing Chinese characters. Some candidates used pinyin instead of Chinese characters. This was always clearly not a problem for native speakers, but most non –native speakers found it difficult to use Chinese characters. This was probably due to the fact that candidates were used to writing with supported resources in Level 1 up to Level 3

Q2. This question was poorly handled in general. It seems that most candidates didn't take it seriously or were not well prepared for. Candidates used very informal language including too much slang without showing their understanding in depth. There was no evidence that the native-speakers felt in any way challenged by having to use English in Q2- most of answers were fluent, if at times overly informal.

Q3 linked very well with Q1 and 2. It provided an ample opportunity for candidates to express their point of view. For candidates who showed evidence of planning produced better answers across the board. But the 5-minute preparation time appeared to have had an adverse effect on the quality of answers provided (even for native-speakers). A number of candidates were not able to speak for more than 2 minutes. Many became quite repetitious, even if they had good language skills and demonstrated good thinking skills elsewhere in the paper. Those who did the best had clearly been able to make good bullet-point notes to speak from.

Therefore their answers were at times simplistic and unbalanced often due to insufficient preparation time. The 2016 assessment specifications allocate 10 minutes preparation time. When delivering their recording, only a bullet point outline can be allowed. This would be avoided a tendency as in the past to simply read out a fully developed essay.

Part B: Report on performance standard

Scholarship with Outstanding Performance	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed thorough understanding of all the ideas from the stimulus materials, and developed substantiated responses from them went beyond paraphrasing the ideas from the stimulus materials, to give a first person account of what they had seen, experienced and felt were able to extrapolate and develop their own thoughts and opinions in a logical and well-justified manner demonstrated language ability beyond Chinese Curriculum Level 8 and expressed their ideas confidently and convincingly, integrating a wide range of vocabulary and structures used language flexibly, showing the ability to link ideas from the materials in their own original and creative way in both Chinese and English.
Scholarship	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed they understood all the ideas from the stimulus materials, and developed response from them expressed their opinions fluently demonstrated language ability at or beyond Chinese Curriculum Level 8, and confidently expressed their ideas with a range of vocabulary and structures used language flexibly, showing ability to link ideas from the materials to their own ideas in both Chinese and English.
Other candidates	<p>Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> did not answer all questions fully, or did not fulfil the requirements of the questions used language that contained a reasonable variety of vocabulary and structures appropriate to Curriculum Level 8, but not comfortably integrated into their writing/speaking

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not create interest for the reader or listener • repeated main points of the text without rephrasing, summarising or using their own language to introduce ideas from the text • gave inaccurate/insufficient information • answered questions without flair or confidence.
Standard specific comments	<p>The examination assessed language up to and including Curriculum Level 8, or equivalent, to ensure fairness and equity for candidates studying Chinese as an additional language.</p> <p>As with NCEA Level 3 Chinese, the examiner was not restricted by language in the Level 3 Appendix for external assessment. Scholarship candidates should be aware that they are expected to make educated guesses about unfamiliar words using context and prior knowledge.</p> <p>The theme of the examination was both relevant and appropriate to the candidates. Language was generally not an impediment to candidates' ability to answer the questions.</p> <p>The overall performance of the standard was of a good level with many candidates achieving one or two questions at scholarship level.</p> <p>However, candidates (and teachers) need to be reminded that they must answer all the questions specifically with reference to the stimulus material and not just express personal opinions.</p> <p>Candidates were expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show understanding of the stimulus material and its inferences, through analysis and evaluation, independent reflection, and extrapolation • assemble ideas in logical, clear, concise and seamless / coherent manner, and make minimal use of expressions from the stimulus material <p>Inappropriate register of response was of concern (particularly in Q2 which required a response in ENGLISH). Candidates should be reminded that this is a formal, academic context; therefore use of slang, abbreviation and casual language is not appropriate.</p> <p>Candidates who were able to use the structure of their writing effectively (paragraphing, connectors, rhetorical devices) produced more convincing answers.</p> <p>Candidates need practice in planning for and responding to Q3. Many quite competent speakers short-changed themselves by appearing to assume they could 'wing it'. These students started well, but faded after about 90 seconds and lapsed into trite examples or repetition of points already made. The question itself allowed for ample development, but it seemed that lack of planning was often the handicap.</p> <p>Candidates are reminded they are assessed on their speaking skills and not reading skills, so if they make bullet points with key ideas as part of their planning they should focus on delivering their spoken response to Question 3 in a way that captivates and holds the interest of the intended audience.</p>