

JAPANESE

Paper 8281/01

Speaking

General comments

The majority of candidates performed very well. The teachers/examiners were generally well prepared for delivering this Paper and gave candidates scope to perform to the best of their abilities.

When assessing candidates, examiners are reminded to refer closely to the procedures for marking the oral examination, which are printed in full in the syllabus document.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Presentation

This year, once again a wide range of topics was chosen by the candidates. Most candidates presented appropriately for the AS Level. Additionally, some candidates impressed by showing their knowledge about Japanese culture or customs as well as their language skills.

Section 2

Topic conversation

Most candidates were able to respond to some degree to the Examiner's questions. Some candidates took full opportunity to discuss their topics with their Examiner.

If candidates do not ask questions during the course of conversation, Examiners are reminded to prompt them to do so in order to give them the opportunity to score marks for this element of the examination. However good the candidates, if they do not ask questions in one of the conversation sections, a mark of zero must be recorded for that section.

Section 3

General conversation

The majority of candidates were able to communicate very well this year. Examiners are reminded to be prepared to engage with the candidates to develop the dialogue as fully as possible.

It is helpful for both the Moderator and the candidates if there is a clear distinction between the Topic Conversation and the General Conversation sections, for example, if the teacher/examiner says, 'Now we will move on to General Conversation.' Examiners are reminded that the General Conversation should cover a different topic area to that chosen by the candidate for their Presentation and Topic Conversation.

JAPANESE

Paper 8281/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

On the whole, candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the Japanese language in Paper 2. Most candidates set very high standards giving full and accurate answers and using idiomatic Japanese. Also, a number of candidates were able to produce good Kanji words to answer the text. Overall, candidates seemed to have prepared and practised carefully for this paper. Very few candidates were unable to cope with the comprehension task and so most were able to make relevant points and score marks.

Candidates are reminded:

- not to use a highlighter pen or pencil, but to use a black or dark blue pen;
- to write their candidate name/number and their Centre number correctly on the exam paper.

Comments on specific questions

Passage One

Question 1

- (a) 2
- (b) 3
- (c) 1
- (d) 2
- (e) 3

The majority of candidates got full marks. Some candidates made mistakes in either (c) or (e) and some candidates used a tick or a cross instead of using a circle in the correct box. Candidates are reminded to read the question and instructions carefully at all times.

Question 2

- (i) e.g. きのう、ねないでしゅくだいをしました。
- (ii) e.g. わたしの友だちは、あたまがよくてやさしいです。
- (iii) e.g. 朝、おきると、雨がふっていました。
- (iv) e.g. ケーキをぜんぶ食べてしまいました。
- (v) e.g. お金をためるためにアルバイトをするつもりです。

Again this year, most candidates coped well with this question. Answers to (i) occasionally referred to *ない* *でください* sentences instead of sentences which mean 'without'. (ii) tests candidates' ability to connect two or more adjectives in a sentence. In (iii), candidates needed to produce a sentence using *と* to mean 'when/if', and not 'and'. In **Question (v)** some candidates lost a mark because they used the wrong particle.

In this exercise, candidates are advised to produce a short sentence which is to the point. Candidates are not allowed to write more than one sentence.

Question 3

- (a) 四人です。
- (b) 海で魚をとっています。
- (c) お父さんのきゅうりょうは、よくないからです。
or お父さんの仕事のお金は、あまり高くないからです。
- (d) お金のことをあまりしんぱいしません。or みんな、明るいです。or やさしい家ぞくです。or にぎやかな家ぞくです。／ とても好きです。or 大好きです。
- (e) いろいろな魚の名前です。
- (f) (i) 本を読むことです。
(ii) 小さい時おばあさんがよく本を読んでもくれたからです。or 小さい時おばあさんが赤西くんの本をたくさに読みました。
- (g) きびしくてこわいですが、子どもにやさしいです。or おこるとこわいですが、子どもが好きでやさしいです。
- (h) いっしょにいと楽しくなるやさしい人で、りょうりが上手です。or いつも親切で、いっしょにいると楽しくて、りょうりがとくいでおいしいです。or いつもわらっていて、いっしょにいと楽しくて、おいしいりょうりを作ります。
- (i) 大事にしていきたいです。or いいかんけいでいたいです。or 今と同じかんけいをつづけたいです。

In general, candidates performed well in this Question. However, a number of candidates answered '3 people' in **Question (a)**; the question asked for how many brothers and sisters all together, and therefore the answer has to be 4, including Akanishi. In **Question (e)** candidates were expected to include the name of the fish in their answer.

Passage Two

Question 4

- (a) 七才の時りょう親がわかれたからです。
- (b) お父さんがいなくなって、おにいさんが毎日かなしんだことです。
- (c)(i) おにいさんよりかなしくありませんでした。
(ii) 小さくてよくわからなかったからです。
お父さんは仕事で忙しくて、あまり会っていなかったからです。or あまり、いえにいなかったからです。
- (d) お父さんとわかれて、お金がひつようになったからです。
- (e) 元気がよくて、明るくなりました。
- (f) (i) たくさんのいろいろな人に会うことができ、楽しいです。
(ii) じゅうような仕事で、大へんです。

- (g) 今のお母さんがとても好きだからです。or 仕事でがんばっているお母さんが大好きだからです。or お母さんがじまんだからです。
- (h) お父さんに会いたい時に会うことがむずかしいです。
カナダにいますから。or けっこんして小さい子どもがいますから。

On the whole, candidates coped well with this question. Despite the challenge of the comprehension task, some candidates did very well and achieved full marks. Candidates are reminded not to try to write too much information in their answers. Some candidates answered the questions from general knowledge rather than looking in the text for their answer.

Question 5

This year all the candidates were able to summarise material from both texts and then add their opinions. In order to score highly, candidates are reminded to include as much information as they can from both texts, then to give their opinions in short sentences which are to the point.

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Paper 8281/03

Essay

General comments

40 marks were available for the essay, of which 24 were for quality of language and 16 for content. The best work submitted showed excellent grammatical control, impressive fluency and an extensive range of vocabulary and structures. Again this year, the general standard of performance was extremely good, with many candidates demonstrating sound mastery of the Japanese language. Weaker candidates should concentrate on improving their fluency and use of linking devices in order to produce more structured work.

Again, some candidates wrote over 800 characters, and candidates are reminded of the word limits, namely 600-800 characters. Also, candidates are reminded to keep their final draft presentable so the Examiners are able to read their essays. Candidates should not use spoken language like *ね* or *よ* at the end of sentences. Also, it is not appropriate in an AS Level essay to write *こんにちは* at the beginning.

Some candidates mixed plain and polite forms. This gave the impression that they were able to handle the language appropriately.

The majority of candidates chose topic 2 – Health and Fitness. Most candidates were able to point out the positive and negative aspects involved in issues such as taking vitamin pills and going to a sports club, and they expressed their opinions about this well. Topic 1 – Family – was the second most popular choice. Candidates who chose this option made comparisons between Japan and their own families, backgrounds and cultures. Topic 4 – War and Peace – was less chosen, although candidates who chose this topic produced thoughtful opinions on the theme.

Finally, candidates are reminded to indicate on their answer sheet which question they are answering. In addition, candidates should remember to write their candidate name/number and their Centre number clearly and correctly on each answer sheet.

Overall, candidates clearly prepared well for this paper and are to be congratulated on their hard work.