



2008 **LOTE: Japanese First Language GA 3: Examination**

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENT

The Japanese First Language oral examination assesses the students' knowledge and skill in spoken Japanese. It has two sections: Section 1 – Presentation and Section 2 – Discussion of a chosen Detailed Study. The Presentation requires a brief outline of the issue selected (no more than one minute), followed by the presentation itself (no longer than four minutes). The brief outline requires the student to describe the Detailed Study topic, the main texts used and the main viewpoints on the issue. The topic and viewpoints should correspond to the content of the presentation. Students may be asked to cease their presentations after four and a half minutes.

Students may use objects and/or a cue card written on one side in point form and no larger than 20 cm × 12.5 cm. Students are requested to show the card to assessors in order to verify the size and writing form before starting their presentation. Many students brought a cue card in the correct format and used it effectively without relying on it. However, some students wrote long notes using paragraphs and simply added dots in order to make it look like point form. This is not considered point form. Cue cards need to be one-sided. Students are reminded that assessors have the right to inspect cue cards and may temporarily withhold cue cards that do not comply with regulations.

In the Discussion section, which lasts for approximately five minutes, students are asked to discuss aspects of the nominated topic and clarify or elaborate on any points presented. Students are also expected to discuss related, broader issues beyond their selected topic. They may be asked questions related to the main texts studied.

In general, students this year followed the procedures and requirements of the oral examination correctly. However, there were some students who stated their full name or family name. Students are reminded to state their first name only.

Many students who chose 'bullying issues' as their topic used the same three resources and employed the same approach. Their presentations and points of discussion were very similar. Students are strongly recommended to find their own resources, and not simply use resources suggested by their teacher, to be able to develop their own approach and responses to their topic.

Students who chose an original topic had more control in the discussion. Good topics included: 派遣社員, ゲーム脳, 脳死, 裁判員制度, 笑いの医力, 食の安全, フリースクールは学校として認めるべきか.

The performance levels of students were varied. Successful students could evaluate a topic objectively and elaborate on opinions and ideas linked to the texts studied. These students were also readily able to answer the questions linking to their presentation and develop the discussion further. Weaker students had trouble linking their opinions to their presentation during the discussion time. These students tended to talk only about their personal experiences or make very general comments when responding to questions.

More students seemed to be prepared for the presentation section, while fewer students were successful in the discussion section.

For a successful examination, it is crucial to have good comprehension skills. Students need to demonstrate that they understand an author's intention and the subject matter of a text. They need to evaluate the content, expressions and views, and then critique the text using their own knowledge and experiences. Finally, they need to present their opinions and ideals logically. Students must show that their reading and thinking are clearly and logically linked.



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Presentation

Communication

Many students seemed to have prepared well to make their presentation within the set time. However, there were some students whose presentations were too long and they needed to be stopped by assessors. There were also some students whose presentations were very short.

Content

Strong students demonstrated their skills in linking to an issue and using their resources to reach a conclusion. Weaker students did not connect their resources and their opinions well and included irrelevant information.

Many students who chose ‘bullying issues’ as their topic used the same resources and consequently the contents of their presentations were very similar. This topic was also used by many students in previous years, where the assessors had similar concerns.

There were some students who used only one or two resources and could not discuss their topic in depth. The *VCE Japanese Study Design* recommends three resources.

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

Students tended to make more language mistakes in the Discussion section than in Section 1. Examples included casual language, 語尾伸ばし intonation, 短縮語 such as ファミレス, too frequent use of a word such as すごい and ‘～じゃないですか’, and misuses of honorific words.

Content

Stronger students showed a deep knowledge of the issues, explained their thoughts logically and convincingly, and gave possible solutions or concrete examples. However, weaker students presented general and superficial ideas mostly drawn from texts, or subjective thoughts that relied only on their own personal experiences, which were irrelevant to their presentation.

While many students seemed to have prepared well for their presentation, some students were unable to cope effectively with questions asked of them. It is suggested that students come to the examination prepared to explain possible solutions, to present realistic ideas and give concrete examples that are related to their topic.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students managed their time well and the majority completed all sections of the examination to the required length. Students again performed best on the listening section, showing excellent ability to comprehend spoken text.

Improvement in the use of *genkoo yooshi* was noticed this year. The position of the title and name, indentation for paragraphs and date, and the position of commas and full stops were generally done correctly by the majority of students.

Kanji appeared to be one of the main concerns again this year. There were many *ateji* (use of kanji with the same reading, but an incorrect meaning) such as 雑紙 or 雑資 (instead of 雑誌), 未成年 (未成年), 誤楽 or 後楽 (娯楽), etc. A number of wrong *okurigana* (Hiragana ending for a word which starts from kanji) was also observed, such as 思もわれる (instead of 思われる), 働らく (働く) and 冷めたい (冷たい). Students are advised to use kanji more regularly in their written activities and establish firm knowledge of *Kyooiku Kanji*.



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

The topic for this year's Listening and responding section was *manga*, which seemed to make it easier for students to understand the content and complete their answers. Students achieved very high scores for Questions 1–3.

There were two questions which required paragraph responses in this year's examination (Questions 3 and 4). Some students appeared to struggle to complete both of these questions to a satisfactory standard. It is strongly recommended that students practise writing answers in paragraphs within the required time.

Question 1

One mark each for:

- 絵がかわいい。
- ファッションがかっこいい。
- (主人公が平凡な高校生の女の子なので、) 読者が感情移入しやすい。
- 読者(女子高校生)が興味のあるテーマ。.

Question 2

One mark each for:

- サッカーの漫画の主人公にあこがれて、サッカー部に入っていた。
- 歴史がテーマの漫画が好きだったので、歴史をよく勉強した。(「歴史がよくできるようになった。」 was not accepted.).

Question 3

Difficulties

- 漫画雑誌の売り上げが 1997 年から落ちてきている こと。

Reasons

- 少子化で子供の数が減ったこと。
- ゲームに使う時間が増えたこと。
- インターネットや DVD など娯楽の幅が広がったこと。

最近の漫画は設定や話が複雑で、新しい読者が話がわからないということ。

This question required students to write about the difficulties cartoonists are facing and give their reasons. It was necessary for students to explain clearly what is identified as a difficulty and what the reasons are for this.

Students struggled to identify all four reasons and many of them did not include the fourth reason, 'It is hard for new readers to understand content as recent *manga* have complicated story lines and/or settings'.

The second and third reasons may be categorised under one reason. In that case, two marks were awarded for a combined answer.

Question 4

Four of:

- 漫画は漫画雑誌に掲載されて人気が出たり話題になったりする。
- 漫画の売り上げが減っていることは困ったことだと思っている。
- 漫画が複雑になったことで、漫画自体の評価が上がっているし、完成度の高い日本の漫画は海外でも受け入れられている。
- 読者の傾向を研究して、多くの人に受け入れられる作品を作る必要がある。
- (しかし、このような状況を)悲観していない。

Students were required to write the current situation of *manga* in 150 ji. Many students paid close attention to the required length and successfully wrote to that limit. Students who achieved a high score showed excellent sequence and well-balanced content, using conjunctions effectively.



Section 2 – Reading and responding

Question 5 stated that students needed to identify strategies of how to support NEET people in a report format for a monthly magazine of current issues. Students handled the topic well and showed good understanding of the reading texts.

Students who achieved a high score for Criterion 1, the capacity to identify and synthesise relevant information and ideas from the texts, were able to identify three strategies from two texts (Text 2 and Text 3) and rephrase the content by using key words and phrases from the original texts. Those who failed to synthesise the content tended to copy the phrases and sentences in the same order as they appeared in the original reading texts. Students are advised to practise summarising content in a logical way in order to demonstrate their synthesising skills.

Question 5

The following three points needed to be identified:

- 親教育
- ニートの若者教育(人とのかかわる力を育てる、日常生活に必要な基本活動を自分で行う力をつけさせる)
- 適当な受け皿の確保(ニートを温かい目で育てる職場の確保).

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

As in 2007, all questions were chosen this year, which indicated that a variety of scenarios was offered and students felt comfortable choosing a scenario to write about. Questions 6 and 7 were imaginative writing tasks and Questions 8, 9 and 10 were evaluative tasks.

A lack of understanding of text types was still observed. Students did not gain marks for not having proper identifiable features. It is recommended that students revise specific features for each text type and practise writing them.

As commented in the 2007 Assessment Report, many students who chose an imaginative piece struggled with creating vivid and well-considered content. Students need to learn some techniques for how to focus on a certain event or how to describe incidents to attract readers' attention.

Many students who chose an evaluative piece generally succeeded in presenting pros and cons, but some did not state their opinions. The questions clearly stated that students were required to give their own opinion. Students are advised to read scenarios carefully before starting to write their response.

Question 6

Students were asked to write an imaginative diary entry of an 'eco tour', including an unexpected incident in the tour. Students who were able to create an interesting and unexpected incident received a high score for Criterion 1 – relevance, breadth and depth of content.

Question 7

Students were asked to write a story which told the moral of a famous Japanese proverb 'One who is kind to others is sure to be rewarded'. Students seemed to struggle to come up with a story line that focussed on genuine kindness without expecting anything in return.

Question 8

Students were asked to write an evaluative speech script for a class presentation about importing various foods from overseas. Successful speech scripts presented unbiased views on the pros and cons of importing food as well as students' own opinions. There were some well-considered responses with an in-depth understanding of the topic.

Question 9

Students were asked to write a letter to an acquaintance giving advice on 'sharing a house'. Some students appeared to misunderstand the meaning of 'acquaintance' and wrote a letter to a friend instead of an acquaintance. Students were expected to use polite expressions.

Question 10

Students were asked to write an article about continuous education system. There were some exemplary pieces which presented a well-balanced view of the topic as well as students' own opinions.