



2010 LOTE: Japanese First Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Japanese First Language oral examination assesses students' knowledge and skill in using spoken Japanese. In the Presentation section, students must present the results of the Detailed Study they undertook in class on a topic of their choice. In the Discussion section, students engage in a discussion with the assessors and elaborate on the results of their Detailed Study.

The Detailed Study requires well-developed reading comprehension and research skills, including the ability to use an analytical approach. These have not traditionally been part of the secondary school curriculum in Japan. However, a recent educational directive may improve this aspect of the Japanese curriculum. Victorian teachers should be aware of overseas Japanese students' weaknesses in these areas and need to develop students' analytical comprehension and research skills in preparation for the VCE oral examination.

Teachers of Japanese First Language must be well acquainted with the requirements of the *VCE Japanese First Language Study Design*.

There was a significant increase in the number of students undertaking the exam this year. Results were well spread, ranging from outstanding to average and below average performances. A very small number of students performed at a very low level.

In general, students' performances suggested an insufficient understanding of the requirements of the Presentation and Discussion sections of the examination. In some cases, students gave a 'promotional presentation' in terms of both style and language. It was evident that they interpreted the word *prezenteeshon* as it is used in Japan. A considerable number of students focused on personal experiences and feelings rather than objective views on their research results.

Topics chosen for the Detailed Study included Whaling, Bullying, *Bushidoo* (way of the warriors), *Nooshi* (brain death), Post-war food shortages, *Ikiru* (to live), *Yutori kyooiku* (freer education), *Freetaa* (job-hopping part-time worker), Women in the work force, Overseas workers in Japan, and the American Military Base in Okinawa.

Some students were unable to analytically study the materials to which they referred, and at times did not seem to be aware that a topic could be considered from multiple points of view. A common approach was to retell the story line of a film and/or a book.

The use of cue cards was problematic. A considerable number of students wrote their presentation on an A4 sheet in order to read it aloud. Some students wrote in full sentences on both sides of their cue cards and some typed the text in small-point font. Teachers are strongly advised to draw students' attention to the correct use of cue cards as specified in the study design.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Presentation

Communication

In general, students demonstrated an average to above average ability to convey the results of their Detailed Study using appropriate register and style. The range of vocabulary and structure was good to average. Most students were able to finish their oral presentation within the set time limit. Only a limited number of students, however, managed to engage well with the assessors.

Content

There were some outstanding cases in this category. However, the majority of students presented relevant but superficial information and ideas, indicating their insufficient preparation or their inability to analytically study the material used. It is important to select authentic materials from the Literature and Art category as suggested in the Study Design in order to give a good range and depth of information.



Section 2 – Discussion

Many students were well prepared to engage in meaningful discussion with the assessors.

Communication

Some students maintained a high level of engagement with assessors, responding readily and covering an impressive range of information. They presented their ideas and views on the topics clearly and confidently, using sophisticated expressions. These students were also able to elaborate further when required.

In general, students showed good to satisfactory control of pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

In maintaining the discussion, the majority of students acted passively, waiting for a question to be asked, and responded by repeating the key words and explanations they had used in their presentation. In this section, students are expected to add further information, elaborate on their findings and clarify their opinions and views.

Content

It is important to select appropriate materials from a variety of media, including written texts, such as a short story, essay, bi-line article or poem, and visual or audio material, such as films, DVDs, radio interviews, theatre performances, *anime*, and TV series). The study design suggests using a minimum of three texts of different types from Arts and Literature.

When using films, students are reminded that it is not sufficient to simply follow the plot, but to study the director's intent, social and/or historical background and events portrayed.

Students should consider an interesting aspect of the topic that may enrich the content and enliven the discussion.