



2004 LOTE: Japanese Second Language GA 3: Examination

Oral Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students understood the oral examination procedures such as entering, greeting and leave taking. Generally, most students performed well in the conversation section. They understood the questions asked and were able to present relevant responses.

In the discussion of the detailed study, some students demonstrated a thorough preparation of their topic and were able to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth. Ideas and opinions were well thought out, reflecting knowledge and understanding of the resources studied. Most students gave an appropriate introduction to their detailed study. However, some students gave a memorised speech about the topic rather than a brief introduction. Consequently, they were interrupted by the examiners.

Those who relied on rote learned language experienced difficulties in communicating with the assessors spontaneously in both sections.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students coped well with the general conversation, however, a lack of flexibility and memorised responses were evident. It is very important for students to learn various sentence patterns and expressions. Students need to develop their skills in rephrasing. They should also endeavour to develop the capacity to understand questions posed in different ways. It is essential that students understand that they are expected to provide succinct responses that are directly relevant to the questions posed. Examiners were not impressed by detailed, long-winded explanations that had little or no relevance.

Students' pronunciation and their communication skills were assessed in criterion 1. This is an area to which all students need to pay closer attention when they prepare for next year's examination. Pronunciation of *しています*, *っています* and *りょうこう* require more practice. There was a tendency to shorten the second vowel in words with two long vowels, such as *kookoo* and *gakkoo*. Other words which caused difficulty for some students were *いろいろ*, *四人* (not *よんにん*) and *百*. Moreover, *がいらいご* 外来語 needed more practice. Tempo, which may often be neglected, also required more attention.

Students would benefit from developing a range of repair strategies. They should learn several different ways of requesting clarification.

Students should use a variety of grammar patterns and vocabulary rather than a few simple patterns and words. Students may need to spend more time learning grammar, as many students made grammatical errors in their responses. Close attention to accurate and appropriate vocabulary is also recommended. There were many mistakes in the use of *から* and *ので*, *と思う* (omission of *だ*), *より* and *ほう*. Many students also made errors in the use of the past tense of adjectives and *て* form of adjectives and verbs.

Common interrogatives such as *だれ*, *どうして*, *どのぐらい*, and how to respond to them appropriately, need to be learnt. *ことが好き* and *たり* were often overused.

Counters and time words such as *一人*, *四月*, *一ヶ月*, and *一時間* should be familiar to students. *英語* was confused with *えいが*, as was *家族* with *かもく*, and *日本* with *日本語*. *外国語*, *きょうだい* and *さいきん* caused problems for some students. *理科* was used as a subject; however, this use is not appropriate for high school students. *かがく* 科学 should be used instead.



Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of topic is crucial for successful performance in this section. Once the topic is chosen it should be researched thoroughly. Students need to choose topics about which they can express an opinion and present interesting ideas. It is not appropriate to relate memorised facts.

Specific cultural issues were good topics. The better responses demonstrated excellent knowledge of and insight into Japanese culture. Poor topics were ones which were too broad and had insufficient focus on any specific issues. Consequently, these responses tended to generalise or stereotype Japanese people or society.

Successful students had used good resources and were able to demonstrate a broad range of relevant information. Ideas and opinions were supported by the texts studied. However, little evidence of the detailed study of texts was exhibited by some students. Indeed, there were some who vaguely stated that their resources were the Internet, books and interviews. Students should be reminded of the expectations set down in the Study Design: 'In order for the student to be able to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth to meet the relevant outcomes, it is suggested that a range of at least three different kinds of text are selected.' (Japanese Second Language Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design pp 91-92).

Following Section One – Conversation, students should indicate to the assessors the sub-topic chosen for their detailed study and briefly explain the main focus of this sub-topic. Students should give a brief introduction on the detailed study, not exceeding one minute. In this introduction, students should indicate their topic and the resources they used to research it.

Students should remember that this section of the oral examination is a discussion, not a presentation of the topic. If a student continues a memorised speech about the topic, he or she will be interrupted by the assessors.

Many students were able to talk about facts but struggled to provide their opinions. Students need to practise answering questions related to the topic in several different ways.

Learning new words associated with the chosen topic is also essential for success. There could be many new and unfamiliar words in the resources used by the students. Students should not only learn these words but actually use them in conversation. There were many occasions when students used sophisticated words and expressions in their presentation but were then unable to hear and understand them when they were used by the examiners. Practise of the pronunciation of these words would also be beneficial.

At the end of this session, an examiner may ask students if they have any more information they wish to talk about. This is not the time to present a memorised speech about the topic. Students should not feel compelled to produce another response; if there is nothing to say, a simple 'no' will suffice.

For the discussion part students should be familiar with terms such as
いいてん、わるいてん、いいところ、わるいところ、よくないてん、もんだい、かいけつ (する)、いけん、
かんがえ、どう思うか、どうすればいいか、(name of person) は 何と言っているか。

Written Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students experienced more difficulties with the listening section than with the reading or writing sections of the examination, although some students gave excellent responses to the questions in all sections. Their answers were clear, specific and relevant to the questions. Good students used their dictionaries effectively. Many students understood the texts, however their responses often lacked sufficient detail or did not include irrelevant information. Students are encouraged to appreciate the importance of distinguishing what information is relevant to the questions and to answer the questions succinctly.

In questions where a specific number of points are required, students are reminded that examiners will only assess the required number of answers in the order in which they have been written.

More specific comments on students' performances appear under the separate sections below. There are a number of possible responses but the answers given here are samples of correct responses.



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A

Text 1

Generally, many students performed satisfactorily in Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4. However, Question 5 caused problems for many students and many were only awarded partial marks. Students are encouraged to write down any difficult words in the note-taking space and to consult their dictionaries at the conclusion of each question. It is important to read questions carefully.

Question 1

To explain arrangements/plans (to the tourists) for the trip/tour (tomorrow).

Question 2

(Japanese) tourists/visitors **OR** people who are going to Phillip Island.

Question 3

2.20 pm tomorrow.

Question 4

They will stop at the animal park/zoo **OR** they will watch animals.

Question 5

Not to eat at the café (at the centre) as they will eat dinner at a restaurant (on the way home/on the way to the hotel).

Text 2

The examiners were disappointed that the questions were not well answered by many students. 'He (she/teacher) is boring' is not correct. The word エキストラ caused some students confusion.

Question 6

- The teacher speaks softly
- What the teacher (he/she) was saying/says is boring
- He came home late from work/part-time job last night/yesterday.

Question 7

Select two answers:

- He can meet famous people
- The wages/salary are/is good.
- He does not have to work every day **OR** it does not affect his study.

Text 3

A number of students did not understand the words, つうやくする、人間^{にんげん}, and ことば used in the recorded conversation. 'It stops the dog barking' is not the answer for Question 8.

Question 8

Translate/change dog's voice (noise, words, language, barking) into human language/words.

Question 9

- It is about the same size as a mobile phone/small like a mobile phone
- It is light
- We can use it anywhere.

Text 4

Many students found the recorded passage very difficult to understand. Consequently, Question 11 and Question 12 were poorly answered.

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Question 10

Bottles **AND/OR** cans **OR** recyclable rubbish.

Question 11

The driver will attach/put/stick/place red paper/tag/label/notice to the rubbish (and won't take it).

Question 12

- Rubbish does not become smelly
- People do not have to see dirty rubbish
- (Big black) birds (KARASU) cannot look for/through/eat rubbish (as it is dark at night).

Part B

Students must respond in Japanese in this section. Those who did not write their answers in Japanese were not given any marks. In Part B in the listening section, students should use VCE prescribed kanji in their answers. Misspelt script including hiragana and katakana and grammatical errors all resulted in the deduction of marks.

Text 5

Question 13

Many students omitted 山下春子さんから電話がありました。

- 山下春子さんから電話がありました。
- かぜで（かぜをひいて）（ねつがあるので）えいがに行けないそうです。
- 明日の午後、春子さんに電話してください。

Question 14

Some students demonstrated a good understanding of the recorded passage and responded in accurate Japanese. However, most students found it difficult to summarise the relevant information required to answer the questions. 言いたい事が言えない、だんだん、なかなか、and ちがいました were not recognised by many students.

自分の日本語について：

- （日本語を）聞くのは（だんだん）わかるようになった。（上手になった）
- 話すことは（なかなか）上手にならなかった。
- 言いたいことがいえなくてこまった。
- 日本りょうりについて
- （お母さんの作る）本当の日本りょうりは作り方もあじもオーストラリア（で食べたもの）とちがった。
- 日本のりょうりはきせつが大せつだ。
- 日本の高校生について
- クラブ活どうやじゅくやしゅくだいでいそがしい。
- 友だちや家族との時間が少ない。（時間がない is not correct）

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

This text seemed to be easy for many students; however, the examiners found that their answers were often ambiguous and not related to the questions. Successful students gave succinct and relevant answers.

Text 7

Question 15

Advantages:

Four of:

- Many people enjoy *manga* as there are many types
- *Manga* can be easily read by anyone
- The story is interesting

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- *Manga* have pictures and they are fun
- *Manga* keep our interest, so we can learn all kinds of things.

Disadvantages:

- Reading *manga* can discourage children from reading books
- Read too many *manga* and will not do homework
- There are *manga* which can have a bad influence on children
- You cannot have/hold your own image freely (because there are pictures)/use imagination **OR** *manga* may limit the imagination.

Question 16

- Her/his younger brother learned *hiragana* and *katakana* with *Pokemon/manga* when he was little
- He/she did not like history before, but has come to like it since he/she read a comic book about Japanese history.

Question 17

- Year 12 student
- Parent **OR** mother **OR** father.

Text 8

Question 18

- Very popular not only in Japan but also in foreign countries **OR** very popular in various countries
- Sold in various places (such as convenience stores, station, kiosk, bookshops)
- The number of *manga* cafés (where you can read and drink coffee) is increasing
- (Recently/nowadays) 40% of publications are comics.

Question 19

- The current style of *manga* started when people who are 50 years old now were children and they are continuing to read *manga* even today
- It is easy to read in the train
- They can forget the stress of work
- *Manga* have various topics/contents (romance, cooking, history and economics).

Part B

Text 9

Question 20

Most students understood the task and included most of the information required in the letter. Some students did not know the meaning of 学年 (school year) and wrote their age instead. Moreover, the information about an interest in Japanese culture needed examples that the writers were interested in. 日本の文化にきょうみがあります。 was not sufficient. There were students who did not provide any information about current popular pastime activities in Australia. Some gave only their own favourite activities, which was not relevant to the task. Successful students wrote well-sequenced letters within the required length, using a good range of vocabulary and grammatical patterns. Students were expected to produce a formal letter responding to the advertisement. It should have been addressed to 田中広. 田中広様 should have been on the top of the left hand side of *Genkooyooshi*. Many students addressed to 日本語ほうそう, which was incorrect. Expressions such as お元気ですか。 and 私をえらんでください。 are not appropriate in formal letters.

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

Students need to read the instructions both in English and Japanese. Japanese information often helps to determine the title of the essay. In general, students understood the task and demonstrated knowledge of the characteristics of the text types and the kind of writing that was required in this section. Most students used *genkooyooshi* correctly and wrote within the word length. However, if the pieces were too long, students were penalised. The assessors noted many spelling errors in *hiragana* and *katakana*. The incorrect use of particles and inconsistent use of tenses were widespread problems. There were many mistakes in the past tense and TE form of adjectives. Many students failed to use grammatical patterns accurately. There were many errors in the use of から、ので、より、ほう、あまり. Students need to learn the use of words such as 何人かの、ある人、どこか、だれか、だれでも、何でも and なにも.

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Question 21

Students who chose this question experienced some problems with the task. Many provided a description of the contestant but failed to persuade a friend to vote for a favourite singer.

Question 22

This was the most popular topic. There were excellent pieces which dealt with a range of ways that Australian Year 12 students celebrate the end of their schooling. Some students wrote only about their own plans or experiences which was not appropriate as this should have been informative writing. Students are reminded that a speech script needs a title, and opening and closing expressions. ありがとうございます。 at the end of the speech should be ありがとうございました。

Question 23

Not many students chose this topic, where they were expected to create an imaginative story. Students who selected this topic found it difficult to provide a bird's perspective of human beings.

Question 24

This evaluative piece of writing required a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of machines. Few students chose this topic. Good students used evidence effectively to support contrasting views and provided some sophisticated ideas.