2023 VCE Japanese First Language written external assessment report

General comments

Overall, students sitting the examination performed well in the listening section. Students who scored highly were able to link their answers to the image presented in the relevant section. One notable area for improvement was in the writing of kanji Japanese characters. Some students made a significant number of kanji letter errors, such as inaccurately writing the kanji characters as 意図. It is recommended that a Japanese dictionary be used when students are unsure, as is permitted.

Additional brief general observations about the examination are included in the discussion of Sections 1, 2 and 3 below.

Section 1 ‒ Reading, listening and responding

Section 1 required students to read Text 1A and listen to a reading of Text 1B and answer the associated questions. The answers in Japanese are shown below, followed by a suggested model English translation.

Question 1a.

* ちゃぶ台を囲んで家族みんなでご飯を食べていた。(The whole family ate together around the circular dining table.)
* 家族みんなで同じテレビ番組を見ていた。(The whole family watched the same TV program.)
* 縁側で、家族で団らんしていた。(The family was gathering on the porch.)

Question 1b.

行く前の昭和に対する考えは、生活が不便で物やサービスの質が悪いイメージがあったが、行った後は、現代の生活の便利さとは引き換えにできない何かがあったと感じた。また、今より家族が一緒に語る・過ごす機会があり、人と人の関係が濃密だったと思い、昭和という時代がうらやましく思えた。

(Before going to the Showa themed park, the author thought that life was inconvenient in general and the quality of goods and services poor, but after going to the park, the author felt that there was something that could not be exchanged for the convenience of modern life. The author also thought that families had more opportunities to talk and spend time together in the past than now and that relationships between people were closer. She became jealous of the Showa-era lifestyle.)

Question 1c.

Ｚ世代の人々の気質の特徴は、とにかく焦らないこと。また、それが顕著に現れている場面は、キャンプなどに行き自然を満喫したり、仕事を定時であがって帰宅したり、友達や家族を優先する。

(The characteristic of Generation Z is that they do not rush, whatever happens. The situations which demonstrate this characteristic are when they enjoy outdoor activities such as camping, get off work on time, and prioritise their family and friends over work.)

Question 1d.

Students should have included the following points in their responses in Japanese.

* 昭和の家が体現しているように、昔はもっと人と人のつながりが濃く、それへの憧れがあるから。(As the Showa house embodies, people used to have stronger connections with each other, and Generation Z longs for that.)
* 古い物のシンプルさに、温かみを感じるから。(They feel joy in the simplicity of old things.)
* 今は、昔のテレビ番組、アニメや文化などの情報が簡単に手に入るから。(Nowadays, they can easily obtain information about old TV shows, anime and Japanese culture.)
* Z世代が大人になり、子供の頃買えなかったおもちゃを沢山買えるほどの経済力が蓄えられたから。 (Gen Z, which has grown up and has accumulated financial strength, is buying a lot of anime figurines that they could not afford in the past.)
* レトロな服を古着として買う・着ることが、環境に配慮することにつながるから。(Buying or wearing retro clothes as used clothes is environmentally friendly.)
* レトロな物の写真をSNSにアップすることで、人々と繋がり、共感を得られるから。(By uploading photos of retro things to SNS (social networking service), they can connect with people and gain empathy.)
* 物やサービスに完璧さを求めない昭和が、今よりストレスの少ない生きやすい時代に思えるから。(The Showa era, where perfection in goods and services was not demanded, seems to be a less stressful and easy-to-live-in era.)
* 行動制限がある令和の息苦しさを、昭和レトロブームが打ち壊してくれると感じているから。(The Gen Z feel that the Showa retro boom will break the suffocation of the Reiwa era with its restrictions on movement.)

Most students completed their answers correctly throughout this listening section. However, one of the answers in 1a. related to a presented image, reference to which was required but not included in many of the students’ responses. Students should remember that they are required to include in their answers a reference to any provided image when they are asked to do so.

Section 2 ‒ Reading, listening and creating text

Section 2 required students to read Text 2A, listen to a reading of Text 2B, and then answer in Japanese. Students needed to identify, integrate, and synthesise relevant information from both texts.

Question 2a.

From Text 2A:

* 映像を早送りで見る人が増えている。(More and more people are fast-forwarding videos.)
* 倍速で見て「鑑賞した」「観戦した」と言えるのか、面白さは半減しないのか、作品を味わうことができないのではないか、などという危惧。 (I fear that when I watch a movie or game at double speed the fun will be halved and I won’t be able to fully appreciate it.)
* 時短やコスパ主義で育ってきた若者。(Young people have grown up with shorter working hours and a cost-effective approach.)
* 大量の情報、消費しきれないほどの膨大なコンテンツの中、結果や正解を早く知りたいと思うのは当然。(With so much information and so much content to consume, it is natural to want to know the results and correct answers as soon as possible.)

Question 2b.

From Text 2B:

* タイパとは時間に対する生産性（を重視する考え方）。(Taipa is a concept that emphasises productivity (and an emphasis on time).)
* 動画のコンテンツに興味があるかわからない時、倍速視聴する（ことが役に立つ）。(When you are not sure if you are interested in video content, watch it at double speed [which helps].)
* 映画は映画館で観た方が充実した時間を過ごした気になる。(I feel like I spent more quality time watching a movie in a movie theatre.)
* 昔は時間を気にせずに趣味を楽しんでいた。(In the past, people enjoyed their hobbies without worrying about time.)
* 今は社会全体が時間や効率にとらわれすぎている。(Society as a whole is now too obsessed with time and efficiency.)
* そのほかのタイパ重視の例（本の要約サービス、結婚マッチングアプリ、完全栄養食）(Other taipa-emphasis examples, such as book summary services, marriage dating apps, full nutrition diets.)

All students answered Question 2 and most used at least some of the relevant information from the texts.

Some students used inappropriate Japanese words and kanji letters. It is very important that students use a dictionary when they are not sure of accurately depicting kanji letters, and they should ensure that they have sufficient practice in doing so before the examination.

Students were required to write in an appropriate writing style (blog post) when answering Question 2. However, not all students followed this instruction. It is advisable that students refer to the VCAA Japanese First Language study design regarding appropriate writing styles.

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

Section 3 required students to choose either Question 3 or 4 and write a response text in Japanese. Both questions were equally popular.

Question 3 required students to write a fictional story about the experience of a person on the last overnight train, aimed at a target audience of railway magazine readers, and creating a fictional name for the train. This question was generally well answered, although some students did not carefully follow the instructions and described events not directly relevant to the question.

Question 4 required students to write a persuasive article incorporating ideas for effective measures for the preparation of a school newsletter. Most students introduced persuasive expressions and ideas for reducing plastic waste, but some of the responses lacked content depth, and others did not meet the requirements for the article text type.

It was apparent from the Section 3 responses that some students were not proficient in the writing of some aspects of the Japanese text. The regular use of genkō yōshi (manuscript paper) is recommended to remedy this shortcoming. It helps students learn how to write sentences and paragraphs in Japanese, as well as covering other important conventions of Japanese writing.