2024 VCE Japanese First Language written external assessment report

General comments

Most students who sat the 2024 VCE Japanese First Language written examination demonstrated a good understanding of the general content of the examination. However, students could improve their responses by providing specific information to answer the questions accurately. Throughout the exam, students should make sure they take the time to read each question carefully. This will help them to identify exactly what information they need for their answers. There are spaces in the exam paper for students to make notes. The students should use these effectively, bearing in mind that notes in the note-taking spaces will not be assessed.

For Sections 2 and 3, students were required to write their responses in *genkō yōshi*. Some students need further practice to use *genkō yōshi* correctly, ensuring appropriate use of kanji and Japanese expressions. It is recommended that students should double-check their answers before the exam ends.

To prepare effectively for the exam, students are encouraged to use past exam papers and sample answers, which are available on the VCAA website.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1 ‒ Reading, listening and responding

In Section 1 of the examination, students were required to answer Questions 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d, all relating to reading Text 1A and listening Text 1B. Examples of answers in Japanese are shown below, followed by a suggested model English translation.

Question 1a

* 観光スポットや宿泊施設、飲食店の需要が増え、雇用が増加する。  
  Demand for tourist attractions, accommodation facilities, and restaurants will increase, leading to an increase in employment.
* （外国人観光客の日本での消費が増えることによる）経済効果  
  economic effects (from increased consumption by foreign tourists in Japan)
* 外国人観光客が日本で体験したことをSNSで発信することは、日本の文化や伝統への理解を世界に広め保護するために一役買う。  
  Foreign tourists sharing their experiences in Japan on social media helps spread an understanding of Japanese culture and traditions to the world and helps preserve them.
* （外国人観光客を受け入れるための多言語対応や異文化理解の必要性が高まり）、人材の多様性と国際化が促進される。  
  (The need for multilingual support and cross-cultural understanding to accommodate foreign tourists is increasing), promoting diversity in human resources and internationalisation.

Question 1b

* 時期を分散化。閑散期の特別展示や特別体験。  
  Decentralising the season’s special exhibitions and experiences during off-peak time.
* 時間を分散化。早朝や夜間参拝（・拝観）。夜間イベント。  
  Decentralising time, morning and night visits to temples, night events.
* 場所を分散化。（京都の）様々な場所の情報をウエブサイトで発信。  
  Decentralising locations, sharing information about various places (in Kyoto) via the website.

Question 1c

* ニューヨークタイムズ（の紹介する2023年訪れるべき52か所リストの一番目はロンドンだったが、二番目）に盛岡が紹介され美しい（紅葉の）写真が載せられた。  
  (London was first) on *The New York Times*’ (list of 52 places to visit in 2023), but Morioka came second, with a photo of beautiful autumn leaves.
* アニメ文化に興味をもった観光客がアニメの舞台を訪れること（が「聖地巡礼」またはアニメツーリズムと呼ばれて人気がある）  
  Among tourists who are interested in anime culture, visiting anime locations (this is called ‘sacred place pilgrimage’ or anime tourism and is popular).
* （2013年に）和食がユネスコ無形文化遺産に登録されたことで、（国内外で）和食への関心が高まった。  
  With Japanese cuisine registered as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (in 2013), interest in Japanese cuisine has increased (both domestically and internationally).

Question 1d

Relevant answers may include the following points:

* 外国人観光客が増えたことにより、英語や中国語や韓国語のメニューを用意するレストランも増えた。  
  With the increase in the number of foreign tourists, the number of restaurants offering menus in English and Chinese has also increased.
* 弾丸登山をする人が増えて、山道上で睡眠を取ったり、ごみを捨てていくことが問題になっています。山梨県では混雑時には最大８人の警備員を配属している。  
  As the number of bullet climbers increases, sleeping on the mountain trails and throwing away trash have become problems. In Yamanashi Prefecture, up to eight security guards are assigned during busy times.
* 全国的にも観光客のごみは問題になっていて、ごみ箱を増やしたり、ごみがたまると中で圧縮するスマートごみ箱の設置も各地で始まっている。  
  Tourist rubbish is becoming an issue all over Japan. Authorities have started to increase the number of rubbish bins and installed smart bins that compress the rubbish and prevent them from overflowing.
* 観光スポットでは交通整理をしたり、ルールやマナーを看板やパンフレットなどで観光客に知らせたりすることが対策として有効。  
  Traffic control at tourist spots and informing tourists about rules and manners would be a good step.
* 宿泊施設を増やしたり、交通機関を増強することが重要だ。  
  It will be important to prepare more accommodation facilities and upgrade transport facilities.
* 外国人観光客の宗教や文化、食生活などに対する理解・配慮が必要になってくるだろう。  
  It will be necessary to understand and consider the religion, culture, dietary habits, etc. of foreign tourists.

Overall, students performed well on Question 1a, and most students were able to identify key words to answer the question appropriately. In Question 1b, however, some students struggled to include key terms related to decentralising seasons, times and places in their answers. Additionally, some students provided insufficient information in Question 1c. For example, stating ‘interested in anime culture’ is not enough to fully answer the question. In Question 1d, the majority of students were able to find relevant information from Texts 1A and 1B. High-scoring students demonstrated a strong understanding by accurately identifying and presenting relevant information from the texts. However, students with lower scores struggled to identify the main points and presented insufficient information.

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 Question 2 in Japanese. Students were required to identify, integrate and synthesise relevant information from both Texts 2A and 2B.

Question 2

From Text 2A/2B

利点 (Advantages)

* カタカナ英語は便利な側面もある。  
  Katakana English has its convenient aspects.
* 小さい時（小学校三年生）から学校で英語を学習できる。  
  Children can start learning English at school from a young age (third grade).
* 授業で習う英語表現は、昔と比べてより自然なものに変化してきている。  
  The English expressions taught in class have become more natural compared to those in the past.

問題点 (Problems)

* カタカナ英語が、英語のネイティブスピーカーとのコミュニケーションを阻むことがある。  
  Katakana English can sometimes hinder communication with native English speakers.
* カタカナ英語の発音のせいで、本来の英語の発音の習得が妨げられている。  
  Due to the pronunciation of Katakana English, the acquisition of proper English pronunciation is impeded.
* 小学校三年生では、週に一度、一時間しか英語の授業がなく、授業時間が少ない。  
  In grade three of primary school, there is only one hour of English class per week, so the class time is limited.
* 日本の学校での英語教育は、会話力を伸長する授業ではないことが多い。  
  English education in Japanese schools often does not focus on developing conversational skills.
* 実際に通じる発音が身につきづらい。  
  It is difficult to acquire pronunciation that is actually understood.
* 間違いを犯したり、からかわれたりするのを恐れて、クラスで英語を使って会話をする生徒が少ない。  
  Many students in class are reluctant to use English in conversations, fearing making mistakes or being teased.
* 和製英語と実際の英語の区別をつけることができなくなる。  
  It becomes difficult to distinguish between Japanese-influenced English and authentic English.

Some students did not clearly identify the intended audience for this question. However, most students appropriately included relevant information from both Text 2A and Text 2B, along with an appropriate text type this year. High-scoring students demonstrated their ability to effectively use key information and vocabulary, along with proper paragraphing. Moreover, they successfully used correct kanji and other Japanese scripts with accuracy.

Low-scoring students showed limited knowledge of accurate kanji scripts and the proper use of *genkō yōshi*, such as the correct placement of punctuation marks and full stops. It was also noted that some students relied heavily on their own information rather than utilising details from the texts. It is crucial to use relevant information from Text 2A and Text 2B, as the question specifically requires students to draw from these sources.

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

Question 3

Question 3 required students to write an email to the local council, using the provided image and their own ideas, to persuade the council that modernising the library could make it a more inviting and attractive space for young visitors.

Many students needed to improve their understanding of the text type requirements for Question 3, where the text type was email and the audience was the local council. The text requirements included the recipient’s email address, subject line, date, salutation, body (content) and sign-off. Overall, this question was not well-answered. Both students and teachers can refer to the VCAA website for the specific requirements of each text type. In this question, students were required to incorporate the image from the question paper, and most students included information from the image in their responses. High-scoring students successfully combined the information from the image with their own ideas to persuasively argue for modernising the library. Their writing was effectively structured and met the assessment criteria for this section. These students demonstrated accurate use of *genkō yōshi* and Japanese scripts.

Low-scoring students seemed to lack appropriate information and did not clearly reference the image in their answers. Their responses did not meet the text type requirements or show good use of *genkō yōshi*. Additionally, they needed more practice writing words in kanji.

Question 4

Question 4 required students to write an imaginative story about a 100-year-old person recounting their life story. The story was framed as an online video that had been viewed more than one million times, with a target audience of nursing home residents and their families.

Some students needed to review the text type requirements provided on the VCAA website, as they did not include a title or a name. Low-scoring students seemed to not fully understand the requirements of the task, as they failed to present a coherent story. Instead, they described unrelated information rather than focusing on the life of the 100-year-old individual. These students also demonstrated inaccuracies in their expressions, scripts (including kanji), and grammar.

High-scoring students effectively crafted a story that presented the life of the 100-year-old person with strong sequencing and structure. They used *genkō yōshi* appropriately and demonstrated accurate script usage and grammar.

Overall, students are encouraged to practise the use of *genkō yōshi* and kanji writing, and to deepen their understanding of text type requirements (refer to the VCAA website). Additionally, past exam papers available on the VCAA website can be valuable resources for familiarising students with the exam format.