

2014 Languages: Japanese Second Language GA 3: Examination

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The majority of students were well prepared for the 2014 Japanese Second Language written examination and demonstrated their knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Most students were able to answer the questions in all sections of the examination. In particular, many students exhibited a good understanding of Text 6 and Text 7 in Section 2 and were able to provide correct responses to the questions. A large number of students were able to produce good pieces of writing in Section 3.

In Section 1 – Listening and responding, Part B, many students understood the recorded conversation and passage but found it difficult to convey their responses accurately in their own words in Japanese. Students are encouraged to practise these kinds of listening exercises throughout the year, in preparation for this section of the examination. They also need to pay closer attention to their writing as there were many students who made careless spelling errors. Moreover, more attention should be paid to the use of basic particles and tense in answers.

For Part B in both Section 1 and Section 2, students could write in plain form or *desu/masu* form. In this report, the answers are written in plain form.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

Note: Students responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

**Section 1 – Listening and responding
Part A – Answer in English**

Text 1

Most students understood the text and were able to respond to the questions. In their responses to Question 1b., some students wrote the name of Michiko’s boyfriend, although the name was not required; many provided wrong names and failed to gain a mark. A considerable number of students did not recognise *までに* in Question 1c.

Question 1a.

Food	Where to find it
onigiri or rice balls	on the table
watermelon	in the refrigerator

Question 1b.

Because she will be on a date with her boyfriend

Question 1c.

She will be home by 6.30.

Text 2

Most students responded well to these questions. Question 2a. was answered correctly by most students. In their responses to Question 2b., some students wrote ‘4’ instead of ‘7’. Some students missed *ぐらい* and were not awarded a mark. The majority of students were able to write the correct directions in Question 2d.

Question 2a.

A farewell party

2014 Examination Report

Question 2b.

- next Friday
- from 7 o'clock

Question 2c.

About 15 minutes

Question 2d.

Turn right at the corner of the bakery and go about 200 metres. You will find a park. Takashi's house is next to the park.

Text 3

In their responses to Questions 3b. and 3c., a few students provided information that was not in the text; as a result they missed out on marks. Their answers were based on their assumptions about what people should do during natural disasters. Identifying まどとドアを開けることが出来なくなって and このカバンを持って proved difficult for many students. These were key words in providing correct answers to the questions.

Question 3a.

Tom was doing his Japanese homework.

Question 3b.

She immediately opened all windows and doors. She did this because when a big earthquake happens, windows and doors are impossible to open (so one can't escape from the house).

Question 3c.

- She has prepared a bag with water, medicines and a radio.
- She did this so that they can escape (to a safe place immediately) with the bag.

Part B – Answer in Japanese

In order to receive full marks, students were required to give correct and relevant information to each question. The responses in this section should have been written in Japanese. Therefore, VCE *Kanji* and accurate script and grammar patterns should be used in responses.

Text 4

Students generally understood the recorded conversation of Text 4 and attempted to answer all questions. High-scoring students presented answers that were succinct and relevant, and they were written with accurate script and used prescribed *Kanji* where necessary.

The majority of students gave a correct answer to Question 4a. あいている as in 夜おそくまであいている and 休みの日にもあいている caused problems for many students. Question 4c. was problematic, as many students could not express their answers in correct Japanese although they seemed to understand the problem *ekinaka* caused. There were many script errors in their answers; for example, 駅、スーパー、レストラン、ゆうびんきょく、ぎんこう、駅の外 and 少なくなる.

Question 4a.

Either of:

- 駅の中のことです。
- 駅の中にあるいろいろな店のことです。

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

駅ナカとは、駅の中のことです。日本の大きい駅の中には、色々な店がたくさんあります。

Question 4b.

Any two of:

- (駅の中に) いろいろな店があること
- 仕事のあとで、買い物ができること
- 夜おそくまであいていること

2014 Examination Report

- 休日（休みの日）にもあいていること

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

仕事が終わって、買い物をして家に帰れます。駅の中の店は夜おそくまでしているし、休みのときもあいています。

Question 4c.

たくさんの人が駅ナカで買い物するので、駅の外の店はおきゃくさんが少なくなってこまっていることです。

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

今はたくさんの人が駅ナカで買い物をしているから、駅の外にあるお店はおきゃくさんが少なくなってこまっている。

Text 5

This text was challenging for many students. Although *fukubukuro* is one of the traditional New Year events in Japan, it seemed that the topic was unfamiliar to many students. They attempted to answer all questions; however, failed to include all the necessary information appropriately in their responses. In Question 5a., お正月に was missing from many answers. Many students understood shop owners' reasons for selling *fukubukuro*, but found it difficult to express themselves appropriately in Japanese in response to Question 5c.

Question 5a.

いろいろな物が入っている（きれいな紙の）バッグで、お正月に、デパートや店でうっています。

Question 5b.

- （ふくぶくろのねだんより）高い物が入っているから
- 何がはいっているか分からないので、楽しみだから

Question 5c.

Either of:

- おきゃくさんに新しい年がいい年であるようにねがうこと
- ふくぶくろに入っているしあわせをおきゃくさんにあげたかったから

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

ふくぶくろはしあわせが入っているふくろで、おきゃくさんに新しい年がいい年であるようにとねがうためです。

Section 2 – Reading and responding Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

Most students understood the text and handled this section of the examination very well, providing correct answers. Those who did not read the text carefully made basic errors when translating sentences from Japanese into English; for example, in Question 6a. 'music' and 'in the mountains' were missing from some answers. 七月に3日間 was translated as 'July the 3rd'. In response to Question 6c., some students missed 近く and wrote 'it was first held at Mt Fuji'. Translating クリーン ('clean') as 'green' was a very careless error.

Question 6a.

It is Japan's biggest music event in the mountains.

Question 6b.

It is held in July in Naeba ski resort (in Niigata Prefecture).

2014 Examination Report

Question 6c.

Because the event was first held at a ski resort near Mt Fuji in 1997.

Question 6d.

- to enjoy music in natural surroundings
- to protect the environment

Question 6e.

The festival is famous for being the cleanest festival in the world because there are strict rules and regulations about garbage, drinking alcohol and smoking.

Question 6f.

- buy souvenirs
- eat foods from various countries
- enjoy camping
- see Bon-Odori or fireworks

Text 7

Students performed very well on Text 7. There were again some careless mistakes, such as ‘Tokyo’ instead of ‘Kyoto’ in Question 7a., and ‘working’ translated as ‘walking’. Some students did not know ‘Korean’.

Question 7a.

Kyoto

Question 7b.

Collecting old stamps

Question 7c.

- She has experience as a waitress.
- She has come to Japan on a working holiday.
- She can speak English, Korean and Japanese.

Part B – Answer in Japanese

This part assessed students’ capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text, as well as their ability to convey information accurately and appropriately in Japanese. Students must use the prescribed VCE *Kanji* in their responses. Misspelling of the scripts and grammatical errors resulted in students missing out on marks.

Text 8

A large number of students managed to give some answers for this section; however, only a handful received full marks. Many students found it difficult to express their answers in their own words and continued to copy sections of the text in their responses. Students must learn to rephrase some parts of the sentences, to avoid copying chunks from the text.

Question 8a.

自分の名前を使わないと言いたいことが書けるのでじゅうでいい。そして、インターネットでみんなにしゃしんなどを見せるのはいやだと思ふ人がたくさんいる。漢字で書けば、140字で言いたいことが書けるのでツイッターのようなサイトのほうが、使いやすいと思ふ。

Question 8b.

日本人はプライベートなことを家族や自分の友だちやグループとシェアするが、あまり知らない人とシェアしたくないというせいかく。

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

日本人は家族や友達などのしたいグループの中で話したり、しゃしんを見せてたのしみます。だけどあまり知らない人とプライベートをあまりシェアしたくありません。

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

In this section, students had the choice of five topics, with five different text types and five different kinds of writing. The options were an essay (personal), a review (evaluative), a speech (informative), an email (persuasive) and a story (imaginative). Approximately 40 per cent of students selected Question 9. Question 12 and Question 10 were also popular topics; very few students responded to Question 13.

The majority of students were able to complete the task in this section. Many students produced satisfactory pieces of writing.

Question selection is important. Students are reminded of the importance of sufficient practice at writing on all possible text types and a broad range of topics throughout the year, in preparation for this section of the examination.

The areas of greatest weakness were accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary, and grammar. Students should use the prescribed VCE *Kanji* where necessary in their essays. A considerable number of students made spelling errors in *katakana* and *hiragana*. Incorrect use of particles and inconsistent use of tense continue to be widespread problems.

Students should avoid writing lengthy introductions. These introductions sometimes used up half the essay space. As a result, the overall content of these essays frequently lacked sufficient detail.

Question 9

This was the most popular question; however, a large number of students wrote about what they were going to do or did during their trip rather than describing their impressions, feelings and observations of their first day in Japan. High-scoring students described what busy cities such as Tokyo are like and how crowded the transport network is, talked about the presentation and smell of Japanese cuisine or observed Japanese people's efforts to recycle, evidenced by the prevalence of bins in the streets.

Question 10

This question was also popular. There were many interesting evaluative pieces that clearly outlined the positive and negative points about the dining experience. They included the variety of foods on the menu, the convenient location, the chef and waiting staff, the music playing in the restaurant and the opening hours as positive points. As negative points, they included the food being too expensive, the small portion sizes and the venue being too small.

Question 11

This question required students to write a formal speech, informing Japanese students how Australian schools raise funds. Those who attempted this question included various types of fundraising activities, but some found it difficult to explain the reasons why the school chose to support those causes or how the activities were organised.

Question 12

This was the second-most popular question. There were many interesting, persuasive emails that aimed to convince an exchange student, Hiromi, to participate in the Year 12 formal by developing and supporting several convincing arguments. Some students wrote too much about their own formal experience and needed to tailor their response to the question. This was an email to a friend; therefore, expressions such as お元気ですか。お体にきをつけて。ご家族によろしく were not appropriate.

Question 13

Writing a story in Japanese requires a sufficient control of grammar and knowledge of vocabulary. Very few students attempted this question. Some students had difficulties with developing a convincing storyline with a strong sense of context, and the question was not handled satisfactorily in many cases.