



2008 LOTE: Japanese Second Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students were generally well prepared for the Conversation section of the oral examination and displayed the ability to understand and respond effectively to questions on many topics, often expanding on their answers and giving opinions. In the Discussion section, however, many students were not adequately prepared. In many cases students simply gave rote-learned responses to assessors' questions and often failed to elaborate on their responses without being able to offer opinions and solutions.

While students were able to answer the questions for which they had prepared answers, many failed to give appropriate responses to unexpected questions. Students are encouraged to practise conversing with as many people as possible so that they can become familiar with different types of questioning.

All students were polite and well-mannered. Some students, however, greeted assessors by bowing with both hands together, which is not culturally appropriate.

Students who have lived in Japan must be aware of the appropriate register to use in the examination and to avoid using colloquial language. The examination is a formal setting.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Generally students were well prepared and performed well in this section. It is important, however, that students give appropriate answers to the questions asked and ask for clarification when unsure. Some students gave rote-learned answers that were irrelevant when they did not understand the questions asked. Some students were reluctant to expand on their answers.

It was disappointing that some students from the same school presented the same answers in this section. Although they were not penalised, it is not helpful to students learning the language to be trained in this way.

Weaker students often needed support from the assessors before answering their questions. These students are encouraged to develop adequate repair strategies and to ask for clarification when needed. Intonation, pronunciation and tempo need attention, especially of Katakana words.

Students are encouraged to use a variety of grammar patterns, as many often used the same patterns. Errors when using particles were quite evident this year and tenses proved problematic, especially for the weaker students. Wrong endings were often used with adjectives.

Students should stand still and avoid overuse of hand gestures as this is not culturally appropriate. In some cases there was also an overuse of *そうですね*. Some students used *わかります* after hearing questions, which is not considered to be an *'aizuchi'* and it is not appropriate.

Words and expressions such as 兄弟、海外、そつぎょう、がっき、全部^{ぜんぶ}で、たことがある、たほうがいい、and questions words such as どんな、何時間、いくつ、いつ、だれ、どうやって、週に何回、were often not known. Some students confused 学校 with 家族. It is important for students to listen to the assessors' questions carefully.

Other errors included using よんじ instead of よじ and きゅうじ instead of くじ and 二人がいます instead of (兄が) 二人います. Many students, when asked どうして or なぜ, did not use から at the end of the sentences.

Many students said 私のアルバイト、私のかもく, which does not sound natural in Japanese. 私がしているアルバイト、私が勉強しているかもく sound more sophisticated and natural.

The use of repair strategies was good this year.



Section 2 – Discussion

It was felt by many assessors that this section was not prepared adequately by a large number of students. Many needed more depth in their research and some did not have any opinions. Surprisingly, when assessors asked ~についてどう思いますか, many students did not understand. Some students seemed unfamiliar with the word かいけつほうほう. Some students ignored the assessors' questions and simply recited their rote-learned answers. Most students were able to start the discussion well but failed to keep up momentum as the conversation went on, and in some cases, it was difficult for them to maintain a discussion for seven minutes.

Students should use the one-minute introduction more effectively, listing resources and giving their focus points, which will then facilitate discussion. They should practise their introduction thoroughly, so that they can introduce their topic fluently. Some students struggled to give the introduction and did not manage to say what they had focussed their research on, which is the most important part of the introduction.

Students should be able to explain the words they use in their detailed study. For example, when asked questions such as じゅくってなんですか。給食^{きゅうしょく}ってなんですか。 They do not need to answer in detail, but should at least be able to define the word.

Students and teachers are reminded that Section 2 of the oral examination is a discussion, not a presentation of a topic. After the introduction of their topic, some students continued by saying 今日は...について話したいと思います. In general, after the one-minute introduction students should wait for the assessor's questions.

Good students sometimes talked too fast and for too long, making it difficult for the assessors to ask questions. The pronunciation of difficult words needs to be practised, as assessors sometimes found it difficult to understand what the student was trying to say. Students are reminded that this section of the examination is a discussion and one of the assessment criteria is to test effective communication skills.

Some students chose topics that had no scope for discussion and were not able to give opinions, suggestions, ideas or solutions. A large number of students needed to do more preparation as they struggled to give reasons, examples, and evidence to support their ideas and opinions.

It was disappointing that some students chose topics that were too difficult for them to comfortably discuss in Japanese, so they memorised complex sentences without understanding what they were saying. As a result, they could not answer many of the important and relevant questions and needed a lot of assistance from assessors for interaction to take place. Weaker students are advised to choose topics that allow them the opportunity to talk simply. Students also need to practise answering questions posed in different ways. They should also be able to explain and define words used in their Detailed Study.

When students were well prepared, language was naturally more varied and more accurate. This however, did not enable the weaker students to answer follow-up questions and unrehearsed questions caused problems for students who relied too much on memorised answers.

Some topics that were handled well by students this year included まんが、いじめ、自動販売機^{じどうはんばいき}、コンビニ、ファーストフード、給食^{きゅうしょく}、クラブ活動^{かつどう} but topics such as 成人式^{せいじんしき}、花見、まつり、国際結婚^{こくさいけっこん}、ファッション、ラーメン did not give enough scope for discussion and were not handled well by many students.

クラブ活動^{かつどう} was a popular sub-topic this year. This could be an interesting topic, but some students found it difficult to maintain seven minutes of discussion about it because they failed to present issues associated with this topic. They could investigate advantages and disadvantages of being a member of a club, what they like or dislike about being a member of the club and why it is important to participate. Words associated with the topic, for example, 文化系^{けい}、体育系^{たいいくけい}、部活^{ぶかつ}、放課後^{ほうかご}、せんぱい、人気、女子、男子、れんしゅう、しあい、かつ、まける、つよい、よわい、should be known.



まんが was another popular topic. There were some very interesting presentations on this topic by students who had prepared thoroughly. It was evident, however, that some students needed to spend more time investigating various issues on the topic in Japan instead of simply talking about てつわんアトム and どらえもん. For example, students could research まんがのしゅるい, the roles that まんが have in children's education and how まんが are used in the daily life of Japanese people. For example, most city councils use まんが to explain how to treat household rubbish. まんがのえいきょう、にんきがあるりゆう and まんがに使われている日本語 could be interesting for discussion. Students should at least know words such as とくちょう、きょういく、やくに立つ、まんがか.

Other problematic words were ふえている、へっている、へんか、かいけつ、りゆう、げんいん. These words are useful and often used in the discussion.

Students and teachers are again reminded that only a heading and labels are acceptable on any support materials used for discussion. Neither Japanese nor English sentences are permitted.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students coped well with the written examination in 2008. Most students were able to complete the tasks in all sections. Students who scored well provided clear, specific and relevant answers to the questions. They were also able to use a wide range of grammatical structures and vocabulary in Section 3.

Many students understood the texts both in the listening and writing sections and were able to respond to questions. However, many responses were not sufficiently correct to gain full marks. For example, in Question 2 of Section 1 – Listening and responding, the right answer was 'he ate too much cheesecake and ice cream'. Students who failed to recognise the difference between 食べた and 食べすぎた wrote 'he ate cheesecake and ice cream' and were not awarded a mark. In Question 20 of Section 2 – Reading and responding, the answer 'presents given to invited guests' was often misunderstood as 'guests must give presents to married couple'. Students should read the text more carefully to avoid this kind of error.

Once again, students would benefit from further developing their examination techniques. Students should:

- use the 15 minutes of reading time efficiently. They should glance through the paper and think about which writing task they will choose. Then they should read the questions for the listening tasks to try to predict some of the recorded information and the answers in order to make it easier to focus when the listening commences
- write their answers neatly in both English and Japanese. Marks cannot be given if the writing is illegible
- avoid rewriting the questions as they are given only limited space on the examination paper. Students should use the marks allocated and space provided as a guide to the required length of their answer
- give only the two most likely answers if asked for two answers, as only the first two will be assessed
- give succinct and relevant answers to the questions
- read the questions carefully to avoid unnecessary errors.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

For each question, a recommended answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases the answer given is not the only answer that could have been awarded marks.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Most students seemed to understand the text and were able to provide answers to all questions. In Question 1, many students answered 'stomach ache' correctly but wrote 'felt sick yesterday' when it should have been 'felt sick since last night', missing the word, から in きのうの夜から. Moreover, Question 3 caused a problem for many students. Again, students failed to recognise まで in お昼ごろまで.

Question 1

Both of:

- not feeling well (since last night)

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- has a stomach ache.

Question 2

He ate too much cheesecake and ice cream.

Question 3

Both of:

- he should stay home (does not go to school)
- if he is not better by lunchtime (noon, afternoon), he should go to the doctor.

Text 2

Very few students were able to identify the name of the person. Many students had difficulty with the words おとなしい and 話を聞いてくれる. The rest of the questions were handled well. Some students entered their responses to personality and physical appearance in the wrong boxes and therefore received no marks.

Question 4

My profile	Correct response
Name	Noriyuki Nagayama
Personality	Cheerful and/or talkative
Physical appearance	Tall and/or skinny
Future plan	Become a professional golfer and/or play in golf tournaments in various countries
My ideal e-pal	Quiet and/or (willing to) listen to chatter

Text 3

Text 3 proved to be a little more challenging. Most students provided a correct answer to Question 5 but found it difficult to identify 'Kachidoki Bashi'. Surprisingly, many students did not know やきゅう場 and those who understood the words left out 'nearby' in their response and were not awarded a mark. Some students did not recognise かもしれない in Question 7 and wrote 'you don't get a seat' instead of 'you may not get a seat.' It was disappointing to see that a large number of students did not understand the directions given in Question 8. These are basic Japanese expressions that students would have studied in their early years of Japanese study.

Question 5

24 July from 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm

Question 6

Both of:

- from the Kachidoki bridge or Kachidoki bashi
- from the nearby baseball field.

Question 7

It may be fully booked already

Question 8

Go straight (along this street) and turn left at the fourth intersection (after that you can see Sunshine 60).

Part B – Answer in Japanese

This section tests students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts and to convey information accurately and appropriately. The answers should be written in Japanese. In order to score full marks, students have to give correct and relevant information to questions. Moreover, students must use VCE Kanji and accurate script and grammar patterns in their responses. Students must pay attention to the instructions for this section, that is, to answer the questions in full sentences in Japanese.

Text 4

Students handled this section reasonably well and it was pleasing that most students attempted to answer all of the questions. However, there were many spelling errors, such as 聞ったり、聞きたり、聞いたり、見ったり、りょう行をしったり and responses in Katakana words. Some students confused お金を使って with 作って and 社会



with 会社. Some responses were not sufficiently correct to gain a full mark. For example, 町のはくぶつかん was used instead of 町やはくぶつかん, and 子どもたちに was left out from the answer to Question 10, or providing irrelevant information such as しんせきとえいがに行ったり in Question 11.

The following answers are written in plain form but desu/masu form can be used.

Question 9

家でCDを聞いたり、テレビを見たりする。

Question 10

町やはくぶつかんのガイドをしたり、子どもたちにスポーツをおしえたりする。

Question 11

海外りょ行をしたり、しんせきの家にとまったりする。

Question 12

10年ぐらい前は、たくさんお金を使って、ヨーロッパやアメリカへりょ行するのがはやっていた。

さいきんでは、家族といっしょに（よかや休日を）すごすことが多い。

Question 13

家族とすごす時間がたいせつだとかんがえるようになったから。

社会のやくにたつ仕事をしたいと思う人がふえたから。

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

This task assesses students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of the texts. Students seemed to understand most of the text and were able to answer all the questions. However, some students lost marks as their responses did not have the required detail or included irrelevant information. Errors in answers, such as using a present tense instead of past tense in Question 16, caused some students to miss out on marks. Students should always read the text and questions thoroughly, and write only succinct and relevant answers to the questions.

Text 5

一年中、あたたかい、つうじる、古い、かりられる and バスツアー caused problems for a number of students.

つうじる was translated incorrectly as 'lead to'. The word has several English meanings and students should learn to select the right English translation according to the content of a text. Some left out *ほとんど* in their response and did not receive a mark. Moreover, the relative clause *きれいな海が見えるチャペル* also proved to be difficult for some students who stated 'you can get married at a beautiful chapel', which was incorrect.

Question 14

- Hawaii – it is warm all year round. There is lots of Japanese speaking staff in hotels and shops
- Australia – minimal time difference/you can have a wedding in a chapel with a view of the sea
- France – have a wedding in a historic castle

Question 15

Both of:

- you can hire a wedding dress for half price
- you will get a free one day bus tour.

Text 6

Again, most students were able to respond to all questions but Questions 17 and 20 proved to be more difficult than some students expected and their responses were not sufficient enough to gain full marks. *ずっと安い*、*ハネムーン*も

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一緒にできる were not understood correctly. A large number of students ignored the word よく in よく知らない人. 何回も着がえなければならぬ caused problems for some students and many wrote 'the bride wears many clothes' in their response. ゆっくり in ゆっくり家族と話してもできない was translated incorrectly as 'slowly'.

Question 16

When Yuki studied (English) in Melbourne, she met her husband there.

Question 17

All of:

- it is cheaper than in Japan
- you can have a honeymoon at the same time
- it is romantic
- you do not have to invite acquaintances or relatives.

Question 18

About 4 000 000 yen

Question 19

Three of:

- airfare
- hotels
- costumes/clothing
- airport pick-up and farewell/send off
- photography.

Question 20

All of:

- (very) formal
- there are long and boring speeches given by people you do not know very well
- the bride has to change her clothing many times (and/or so she cannot enjoy chatting with family)
- you have to give presents to all the guests.

Part B

Text 7

This task assesses students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the texts as well as 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 the deduction of marks. A considerable number of students simply copied sections of the text without analysing which part was important to the question. Consequently, these answers often did not match the questions. Many students struggled with Question 23 as students had to understand the text well and their answer needed to be based on the information in the text. These types of questions are inevitable in the examination and students should pay closer attention to this area. Some students mistook the meaning of ゆたか thinking it meant financial wealth rather than personal enrichment. Students who wrote 高校生が外国に行って、いろいろなことを学んで来るから。 were not given a mark. いろいろ has no real meaning and students needed to break this down and find concrete examples from the text to support their responses.

Question 21

- 外国の高校で勉強したかもくを日本の高校で勉強したかもくと同じようにみとめたから。
- 長きりゅう学生のためにとくべつな入学しけんをする大学が多くなったから。

Question 22

- オーストラリア人だけでなく、ほかの国からの友だちができたこと。
- 自分の国のことをよく知るようになったこと。

Question 23

ひっしやは、日本の多くのわかもが自分の国ばかりでなく、ほかの国の人々をりかいするようになれば、しょうらい、日本はもっといい国になるということをいみしている。



The correct answer must include one of 自分の国のことを知るようになる or ほかの国のこと（人々、文か）を知る（りかいする）ようになる in order to achieve full marks.

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

This section was generally well handled. The majority of students wrote within the required word length and displayed a good knowledge of the features of the various text types and the kind of writing required for each task. It is very important that students pay attention to the specific task of chosen topic, both in English and Japanese. Some students did not follow the instruction of the selected question carefully and, consequently, the content of their essays was lacking in appropriate depth and relevance. The use of Genkooyooshi and punctuation was generally good.

Students should use the prescribed VCE Kanji where necessary in their essays and always check their spelling, especially of words written in Katakana. Once again, incorrect use of particles and inconsistent use of tense were problem areas. The assessors noted that students did not include enough grammatical patterns in their essays this year. In order to improve their performance in essay writing, students are encouraged to pay closer attention to the use of grammatical patterns required at this level. Appropriate use of conjunctions and linking words is also effective in a piece of writing and makes the difference between a successful and a not-so successful essay.

Question 24

Many students chose this topic. Successful students reflected on their personal experiences in enough detail but many focused on factual information such as the subjects studied this year, school and future plans rather than drawing upon specific events and their feelings. Simply adding adjectives like 楽しかった, かなしかった, きれいだった at the end of each event is not adequate for this task at this level.

Question 25

This was a popular choice. Many students seemed to be able to relate well to this topic. Better responses clearly outlined both the advantages and disadvantages of part-time jobs during the VCE years and supported their claims with interesting examples. Weaker responses provided very few good and bad points of part-time jobs or in some cases, only advantages were mentioned. Some students wrote about their own personal experiences instead of writing an evaluative report. Students are reminded that a report must include a title and the author's name.

Question 26

This was a challenging task and only a small number of students chose this topic. Those who selected the question presented good pieces of writing, including a good amount of detail about how their family conserves water and electricity. The responses were interesting and provided original ideas, however a number of students failed to include the author's name.

Question 27

This question was also a popular choice and was generally handled well. However, many students outlined a lot of good suggestions to improve his/her English but failed to connect them with persuading Kazumi to stay in Australia.

Question 28

Very few students chose this topic and those who did found it a rather challenging task to write an interesting story within the confines of their knowledge of the language. However, the assessors enjoyed several interesting and imaginative stories in 2008. Students are reminded that an appropriate format for a story needs to include a title and the author's name.