



**2004** **LOTE: Japanese First Language GA3: Examination**

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

**Oral Component**

All students had studied a sub-topic based on Language and Culture through Literature and the Arts. Generally speaking, students had a better understanding than in previous years of the requirements of this examination, and most students were well informed of the oral examination procedures. However, students should be reminded not to mention their surname when they are asked their name at the beginning of the examination. Accuracy of grammar, pronunciation and fluency were generally of a high standard, but some students occasionally used casual style speech in both the presentation and discussion, although the trend occurred more in the discussion. Students should be strongly advised not to use plain form or casual speech during the examination.

It was noticeable that quite a few students did not present a clear stance on their detailed study topic. On a few occasions, assessors did not clearly understand the student's point of view. In Japanese society it might be culturally preferred not to have strong opinions on a topic, but as this is an oral examination that requires students to demonstrate their ideas and opinions clearly and logically, students should practise adopting a stance with a view to convincing the audience. Students also need to show more depth of research and elaborate on ideas and opinions linked to the texts studied.

Some of the topics selected by students in their detailed studies this year were 'foreign words in the Japanese language', 'physically handicapped people and society', 'life and death' and 'child abuse'. It was good to see new and interesting topics. The choice of their detailed study topic is very important as students need to have a clear opinion on a topic, be able to elaborate on information and demonstrate a thorough preparation of the topic.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

**Section 1 – Presentation**

There is a need for improvement in the presentation.

**Timing**

Some students' presentations went over time and the shorter discussion time was insufficient for the full range of information and opinions required. Students whose long presentations resulted in a shorter discussion time were disadvantaged. The introduction should be no more than one minute and students are expected to refer to the texts studied.

**Use of a cue card**

It was disappointing that some students did not follow the instruction in the Japanese First Language Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design and brought cue cards with the full script written in sentences. Students should be reminded that only one cue card is permitted, and it should be no more than 20cm x 12.5cm. Notes should be in point form only. Reading from a script is not permitted in the oral examination and results in a lack of eye contact with assessors and unnatural tempo, for which students are penalised. It is essential for students to rehearse thoroughly and time their presentation before the examination.

**Content of the presentation**

Few students gave well-structured, logical and coherent presentations. It is crucial that students present relevant information, ideas and opinions clearly, as well as their stance.

Students who performed at a high level included a range of sources in their detailed study and they were able to establish conceptual links between different sources and highlight examples that supported their view. A wide variety of source materials were used again this year, including novels, journals, films, TV dramas, Internet sites and statistics.

**Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students found it difficult to present their issue and stance strongly and to take the initiative in the discussion.



Students who had not studied sufficiently in their detailed study struggled to maintain a relatively simple discussion and they tended to present little evidence of research. They could not give clear definitions for some vocabulary used in their presentation when they were asked to clarify the meaning of words. It was evident that those students also found it difficult to expand on their opinions convincingly with clear reasons and examples, and to move beyond the issues concerned. A few students changed their stance during the discussion and gave assessors ambiguous ideas on the topic. While it is important to present all sides of an argument, students should adopt a point of view and maintain it throughout the discussion. They should refer to examples that support their stance, and make reference to the sources and texts.

## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Students were most successful in the listening and responding section, and had little trouble identifying key information for Questions 1 to 5. However, they lacked the skills needed to analyse texts thoroughly and did not always write their responses appropriately. Those who did well in this examination showed a wide range of vocabulary and a good grasp of grammar, as well as demonstrating use of appropriate structures and sequences. Students are advised to read and write in various styles to build up their reading and writing skills.

It is noted that some students' handwriting was extremely messy and assessors needed to spend extra time to understand what was written. Students need to pay extra attention and write neatly for the examination; messy writing in a formal occasion is considered culturally inappropriate and incomprehensible. In the Japanese examination a pencil is permissible and students should utilise this opportunity. A number of students used pens and as a consequence their writing became illegible due to many corrections on the *genkoo yooshi*.

There were many *ateji* (writing Kanji with the same reading, but an incorrect meaning). Incorrect *okurigana* (Hiragana following Kanji) and incorrect Kanji characters were used frequently. Students must learn the *kyoiku kanji* correctly in order not to lose points in their responses.

Other common errors noted were the incorrect application of text types and incorrect use of *genkoo yooshi*. Students are strongly recommended to familiarise themselves with the specific requirements of various text types and the correct use of *genkoo yooshi* (for example, two western numbers should be in one box).

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1: Listening and responding

##### Part A – Text 1

All students understood the main points of the spoken text. However, some student responses did not correctly explain what was asked in the question. For example, in Question 3 「値段が変わってくる」 is not considered to be a correct answer as it does not explicitly mean the price is more expensive. There was also a serious misuse of kanji, which gave responses the opposite meaning to that which was intended (借し出し instead of 貸し出し).

##### Possible answers

###### Question 1

大根 (OR野菜) の詳しい生産情報を知ることができる。

OR

誰がどんな方法でその大根を栽培し、どんな流通経路をたどってきたかがたどれる。

OR

その大根が誰によってどんな方法で栽培され、どんな流通経路をたどってきたかがわかる。

###### Question 2

(千葉県富里市立) 図書館で、図書の貸し出しと返却システムに使われている。

###### Question 3

- ICタグは一つ五十円するので、その分商品の値段が上がってしまう。



- 国際的基準がないため、輸入品には使えない。
- 誰がどこで何を買ったかわかるため、消費者のプライバシーが守られない。

## Part B – Text 2

Most students gave correct answers to Questions 4 and 5. However, due to students' lack of attention to the details in the spoken text, many students gave incorrect answers to Questions 6 and 7. The factors explained in this text were closely related to each other and it is crucial to answer the questions based on the content provided in the text.

### Question 4

労働力不足を引き起こし、日本経済全般に大きな影響を与えること。

### Question 5

一億二千七百七十 (OR 1億2770万)

約六千万 (OR 6千万)

半分に減ってしまう

### Question 6

This question required students to identify the three reasons for *shooshika*, which was clearly summarised in the spoken text (see the three points below). However, many students did not pay attention to the conversation and wrongly identified reasons as 「経済的に余裕がないから」, 「パートやアルバイトをしている男性が増えたから」. The correct answers were:

- 晩婚化
- 結婚しない女性が増えたこと
- 家庭内の子供の数の減少

### Question 7

This question required a concise summary, within the word limit of approximately 150 ji, of the reasons for postponing a marriage. Some students included

「パートやアルバイトをしている男性が増えたから経済的に不安定なため」. However, the reason above should not have been included in this answer, as in the spoken text it related to the issue of not marrying and not to the issue of postponing a marriage. Students are also reminded that if the word limit is specified, they must answer within that word limit. The following three dot points should have been included in the answer.

- 昔から日本では家事や育児を妻にまかせきりにしている男性が多い。
- 女性にとって、家事、育児と仕事を両立させることは非常に難しい。
- そのために女性は「やりたいことが制約される」「仕事がしにくくなる」という理由で結婚に不利益を感じている。

↓

その結果、結婚を先延ばしにして、自分の仕事に専念する女性が増えてきた。

Students who received a high mark had a well-sequenced introduction and ended within the word limit.

## Section 2: Reading and responding

The topics and content of these reading texts were close to students' current interests. As a consequence, students seemed to have little difficulty in completing this task. However, there were a number of occasions when students misidentified 'AO Examination' as a generalised term for a new type of examination to **assess students' thinking skills**. 'AO Examination' is explained clearly in Text 1 as an examination to select students through various methods such as interview, essay writing and group discussion. It does not focus on their thinking skills only and should not be considered as a term for a new type of examination.

The following three points need to be identified as changes in university examinations in Japan:

- 今までの大学入試は暗記に重点をおいたテストで、「自分で考えてみる力」が衰えた。
- 新しい入試では「考え方」「論理的な思考力」をみている出題が多くなってきた。
- AOタイプの入試も新たに取入れられるようになってきた。



This task asked students to produce a speech script for an audience of Year 10 students. Those who got a high mark rephrased the content successfully to suit the audience and used a speech style rather than just copying what was written in the texts.

### **Section 3: Writing in Japanese**

One of the weak aspects of student writing noted was an inability to produce writing within the required text type for a particular task. Students should be reminded to read the task carefully and fulfill all the requirements in order to achieve a high mark. Questions 9 and 10 were most commonly chosen.

#### **Question 9**

##### **A story about a tiger in a zoo from the tiger's point of view - imaginative**

Many students chose this question. They were required to write a children's story of a tiger in a zoo, from the tiger's point of view. There were some very original and interesting stories which would engage children very well. However, there were a number of stories which did not suit the children's book genre as the story lines were negative, for example, 'hating noisy children in the zoo'. Students are advised to pay more attention to the targeted audience and to choose the event happening in the story carefully to suit the situation.

#### **Question 10**

##### **An article about cosmetic surgery - evaluative**

This was another popular topic. Students were required to write an article about their opinion of cosmetic surgery, including pros and cons. There were some exemplary pieces that showed well thought out views of the pros and cons; students who did not explain both pros and cons clearly lost marks. It is also important to plan the sequence before writing in order to have well-balanced content. A number of students included plastic surgery for accident-related injuries as a pro; this was not an appropriate approach as the question clearly stated that the answers should contain information relating to cosmetic surgery only.

#### **Question 11**

##### **Journal entry as a person who has made his/her debut in the circus - imaginative**

A number of students chose this topic. Those who got high marks described emotions and events vividly, using a wide range vocabulary and grammar.

#### **Question 12**

##### **A letter on the issue of women competing in sumo wrestling - evaluative**

Only a minimal number of students chose this topic. This topic seemed less relevant to the world of teenage learners. Most students did not write in the correct text type, which was a letter to the editor. There were no exemplary pieces.