



2011 Languages: Japanese First Language GA3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Japanese First Language oral examination assesses students' knowledge and skill in using spoken Japanese. In the Presentation section, students must present the results of the Detailed Study they undertook in class on a topic of their choice. In the Discussion section, students engage in a discussion with the assessors and elaborate on the results of their Detailed Study.

The Detailed Study requires well-developed reading and research skills, including the ability to use an analytical approach. These have not traditionally been part of the secondary school curriculum in Japan. Victorian teachers should be aware of overseas Japanese students' weaknesses in these areas and the need to develop students' analytical comprehension and research skills in preparation for the VCE oral examination.

The most popular topics focused on various aspects of natural disasters (including the March 2011 earthquake) and their effects in Japan. Other popular topics were: Bullying, Japanese and Self Identity, Isolated Society, English Classes in Primary Schools, Internet and Society, and the Territorial Dispute North of Japan.

Insufficient preparation becomes readily apparent in the Discussion section of the examination and students are reminded that they should prepare thoroughly. Students should use a variety of resources from the field of Literature and the Arts in order to explore their sub-topics in sufficient depth. Extracts from news items, recorded interviews, blogs, graphs and data can be used as supplementary materials.

The use of cue cards was problematic. The cue card should be no more than 20 × 12.5 cm, and notes should be written in point form and only on one side of the card.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Presentation

Communication

Most students performed at average to above average levels, using appropriate register and style. Generally, the range of vocabulary and structure was to a good to average level. Some students delivered their presentation too quickly, and this affected their clarity of expression. Most students completed their presentation within the set time. However, only a small number of students were able to engage well with the assessors.

Contents

A few students demonstrated the results of in-depth research, referring to books they had studied and to appropriate data. On the other hand, many students presented superficial information derived mainly from news items or Internet sources. While suitable books on recent issues may not be readily available, there are older resources that could have been used. A wide variety of audio and visual materials is available on the Internet; however, their effective use for the Detailed Study



should be carefully monitored as these materials are rarely drawn from the field of Literature and the Arts.

When students select the option ‘Language and Culture Through Literature and the Arts’ for Detailed Study, it is suggested that three texts ‘drawn from the field of Literature and/or Arts’ be studied in order to provide substance for their exploration of chosen sub-topics (*VCE Japanese First Language Study Design*, pp. 22–23).

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

In general, students maintained good to satisfactory levels of control of the language. Some high-achieving students demonstrated remarkable skills in discussion. They used a wide range of appropriate and sophisticated expressions and responded readily to assessors’ questions. Their responses were animated and engaging. However, weaker students appeared satisfied to take a passive role in the discussion.

Content

Students who researched their topic thoroughly and were genuinely interested in their sub-topics had much information to discuss with assessors. These students were able to demonstrate their ability to collect a variety of relevant information, analyse it from an objective point of view, and express the results with clarity and enthusiasm. They showed that they had experienced both the enjoyment and challenge of a research study.