

2015 VCE Japanese Second Language written examination report

General comments

Students were generally well prepared for the 2015 Japanese Second Language written examination. Many students demonstrated excellent knowledge of the Japanese language across the listening, reading and writing sections of the examination.

Most students were able to answer the questions in all sections of the examination. A large number of students produced good pieces of writing in Section 3.

Section 1, Part B proved to be challenging for some students. They appeared to understand the recorded conversation and passage but found it difficult to convey their responses accurately in Japanese. Students are encouraged to practise these kinds of listening exercises throughout the year in preparation for this section of the examination.

Students are reminded that they should read all questions carefully and ensure that their response makes sense and answers the question asked.

For Part B in both Section 1 and Section 2, answers could have been written in plain form or *desu/masu* form.

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 – Listening and responding Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Most students were able to answer the questions in this part.

Question 1a.

- colder than today
- snow
- the maximum temperature will be 2 degrees
- the minimum temperature will be minus 3 degrees

Many students didn't recognise 今日よりさむくて (colder than today) and just wrote 'cold' in their answers.

Question 1b.

- wear boots
- take an umbrella

Some students needed to pay more attention to the use of two verbs, 'take' and 'bring'.

Text 2

Most students responded well to the questions on this text.

Question 2a.

It is close to Shibuya station.

Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 2b.

- took many photos of cats
- played with the cats

Some students confused おもちゃ (toys) with おちゃ (tea).

Question 2c.

She could not play with the cutest cat.

Question 2d.

She is going there again next Thursday.

Many students recognised 'next Thursday' but some failed to write where Kate was planning to go.

Text 3

Most students understood the text and responded well.

Question 3a.

More than 20 000 people

Some students did not recognise いじょう (more than) as in 2万人いじょう (more than 20 000 people) and provided only 20 000 in their answers.

Question 3b.

Two of:

- listening to popular Japanese songs
- participating in karaoke
- watching traditional dances.

Question 3c.

- People had to wait for a long time to buy food.
- They increase the number of shops.

Part B – Answer in Japanese

In order to receive full marks, students were required to give correct and relevant information in response to each question. The responses in this section should have been written in Japanese. Responses in prescribed kanji and kana and accurate script and grammar patterns were required.

Text 4

Many students responded satisfactorily to the questions on Text 4. However, (めがねを) かけています、ターミナル and 出口 caused problems for some students. 着ている、南 and 出口 are

prescribed kanji. Students should use them in their answers. A considerable number of students misspelled 黒い、せいふく and ターミナル. Students should check words in their dictionary if they are uncertain about a word's meaning or spelling.

Question 4a.

- かみが黒くてみじかい
- めがねをかけている。

Question 4b.

(学校の)あおいせいふくを着ている。

Question 4c.

ターミナルの/くこうの南(出)口で待っている。

Text 5

Most students attempted all questions on Text 5. However, some students did not include all the necessary information appropriately in their responses. It was also important that students use prescribed kanji and kana accurately and include correct information. 聞く、勉強、金曜日、家、近く、りゅう学生、れんしゅう、いそがしい、パフォーマンス and コミュニティーセンター were often not accurately written in students' responses.

Question 5a.

Two of:

- たいこはむずかしいと聞いたから。
- 勉強でいそがしいから。
- バンドのれんしゅうでいそがしいから。

Question 5b.

Two of:

- ドラムをしているので、たいこもすぐ上手になるから。
- オーストラリア人のりゅう学生も入っているから。
- 東京であるたいこのパフォーマンスにさんかできるから。
- れんしゅうが金曜日だから。

Question 5c.

金曜日の4時から6時まで、ゆみの家の近くのコミュニティーセンターでします。

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

The majority of students were able to provide correct answers in this section. Some students translated あける (to open) as to give (あげる).

Question 6a.

- You can rent cars from car parks all over Japan.
- It is 500 yen per hour and this is cheap.
- You can use the car at any time.

Question 6b.

- book on the internet
- open the car with a member card
- use the key under the seat

Text 7

Most students understood the text and handled the questions on Text 7 well. However, some students did not read the text carefully. For example, 約 (approximately) and 部活 (club activities) were missing from answers to Questions 7a. and 7b. 二人乗り was not translated correctly and many wrote 'students ride with two people' instead of 'two people riding on one bicycle'. In Question 7d., very few students included all required details. If students had consulted a dictionary they would have found the different meanings of つける as in ライトをつけないで乗っていた (without turning on a light) and 自転車にオートライトをつけなければならない (must attach an automatic light to their bicycles).

Question 7a.

Approximately one in two students

Question 7b.

- It is good for health. It is good exercise for the students who don't do club activities.
- It doesn't cost money. You don't have to pay train or bus fare.
- It is good for the environment. It doesn't emit any polluting gas.

Question 7c.

Four of:

- talking on a mobile phone
- two people riding on one bicycle
- without helmets
- listening to music with earphone
- without light in the evening/night.

Question 7d.

A student was injured crashing into a tree beside a footpath because the student was riding a bicycle without lights on in the evening.

Question 7e.

A school made a new rule. Students have to attach an automatic light to their bicycles.

A town has created paths that are for bicycles only.

Part B – Answer in Japanese

This part of the examination assesses students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text as well as the ability to convey information accurately and appropriately in Japanese. Students must use the prescribed kanji and kana in their responses. Some misspelling and grammatical errors were evident.

Text 8

A large number of students provided correct answers to the questions on this text. However, many students struggled to express their answers in their own words in Japanese and some copied the

relevant part of the text to form their responses. Students must practise how to rephrase some parts of the sentences and avoid copying chunks from the text. Students with high-scoring responses showed their skills at paraphrasing. However, some students gave information that was not from the text.

Question 8a.

お母さんたち：キャラ弁^{べん}なら、子どもたちはきれいなやさいや魚も食べる

ようちえんの先生：子どもたちは、好きなまんがやアニメの話をしながら昼ごはんの時間を楽しくすごす。

Question 8b.

お母さんたち：きれいにお弁当^{べんとう}を作るために、2時間ぐらにかかるので たいへんだ。。

ようちえんの先生：きれいに見せたいためにえいようのことをかんがえないキャラ弁^{べん}もある。

Question 8c.

見た目がきれいな弁当^{べんとう}よりもえいようのある弁当^{べんとう}のほうが大切だ。

Section 3 – Writing in Japanese

In this section students could choose one of five questions, each with a different text type and each that required a different kind of writing – an essay (personal), an article (informative), an email (persuasive), a speech (evaluative) and a story (imaginative). Most students chose Question 12 and very few students chose Question 10 and Question 13.

The majority of students produced satisfactory pieces of writing in this section and there were many outstanding responses. However, a number of students wrote pieces that were not related to the question. It is not acceptable to write on topics that do not appear in the questions. These responses did not exhibit an understanding of the tasks or the required vocabulary in any way. These students did not address the grammatical requirements.

Some students demonstrated a very good understanding of the questions. They included a broad range of vocabulary and complex grammatical structures accurately and appropriately using the prescribed kanji and kana where necessary. However, a considerable number of students made spelling errors in kanji and kana.

The following are spelling errors made by students in responses to Question 12. The correct spelling is given in brackets.

みんなさん (みなさん)、こにちわ (こんにちは)、きよしつ (きょうしつ)、じゅうぎょ (じゅぎょ) しゅうくだい/しゅくうだい (しゅくだい) かつど (かつどう) and 楽し (楽しい).

Other grammatical and expression errors were: しゅくだいをもらう (しゅくだいがでる)、友だちを会う (に会う)、するつぎる (しすぎる)、あらない (ない)、and adjective +なる.

Question 9

This was the second most popular question. It required students to create a sense of personality, emphasising feeling and thoughts rather than factual information. A large number of students stated that their biggest achievement was going to Japan. Some students discussed their feelings and excitement when they were able to communicate with Japanese people. However, many students wrote about where they went and what they did during their trip.

Question 10

Few students chose this question. It required students to have sufficient knowledge of the vocabulary related to the protection of the environment. There were some excellent articles. Students discussed what Australian schools do to protect the environment, such as planting trees in school grounds, using recycling bins and turning lights off after each lesson. However, some students who selected this question wrote about what Australian people do in general instead of focusing on Australian schools.

Question 11

This question required students to write an email to a teacher, and, therefore, they needed to write in formal language. Some students produced interesting persuasive emails by developing and supporting several convincing arguments. However, some students did not focus on the use of smart phones in Japanese classes and instead wrote about the advantages of using smart phones in schools in general.

Question 12

There were many interesting evaluative pieces of writing that clearly outlined the positive and negative points of being involved in extracurricular activities. Some students integrated their personal experiences effectively into their line of argument.

Question 13

Very few students attempted this question. There were some outstanding responses that were interesting and moving. These students demonstrated a very good control of grammar and knowledge of vocabulary. Others who selected this question had difficulties developing a convincing storyline with a strong sense of context. They lacked coherency and needed to plan the storyline more thoroughly.