2023 VCE Japanese Second Language oral external assessment report

Refer to the relevant [study design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/Pages/languages.aspx) and [examination criteria and specifications](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Languages-index.aspx) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.

Section 1: Conversation

What students did well

In 2023, students:

* engaged in a general conversation about their personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners. Many students provided interesting responses to the questions: おどろいたことは何ですか。(What are the things that surprised you?), びっくりしたことは何ですか。(What are the things that surprised you?), こまったことは何ですか。(What are the things that troubled you?)
* provided a range of relevant information, ideas and opinions, with an appropriate depth. Students who were well prepared provided a range of information and delivered their responses confidently. They accurately used a range of grammatical structures in their responses.
* elaborated on, clarified and defended ideas and opinions. Successful students were able to respond in depth and provide interesting information that led the conversation forward and enabled the assessors to ask follow-up questions.
* used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Generally, students correctly pronounced the long vowel sounds, for example 高校 (high school), and double consonants, for example 行った (went).

Areas for improvement

Students should:

* ensure adequate preparation for the conversation with relevance, depth and range of information, ideas and opinions. Some students delivered what appeared to be pre-learned lengthy responses that were like mini speeches, instead of engaging in a natural and organic conversation with the assessors.
* practise answering a range of questions to be able to advance the conversation. Students need to listen carefully to the question and respond appropriately, and not deliver what appeared to be pre-learned responses to a question they have misunderstood.
* revise grammar. Common errors included the use of ことができます (can), 将来に行きます。instead of 将来行きます(I will go in the future), おもしろいだと思います。instead of おもしろいと思います (I think it’s interesting), and linking adjectives 楽しいとおもしろい instead of 楽しくておもしろい (fun and interesting). Students should use the correct tense when responding to the assessor’s questions.
* build vocabulary specific to the student’s personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners. Students need to use the correct vocabulary when talking about their family. For example, they should use 母 (my mum), 父 (my dad), 弟 (my younger brother) rather than お母さん (mum), お父さん (dad), 弟さん (younger brother). Some students confused 弟さん (younger brother) with お父さん (father). Some students misunderstood the following questions and question words: どんな (what type of/kind of), どの (which), どうやって (how), どうして (why) and 兄弟がいますか。(Do you have siblings?), and they did not know じきゅう (hourly rate), がっき (instrument), うんてんめんきょ (driver’s licence), なかがいい (close), せんしゅ (player), 読書 (reading), 作家 (author), じゅぎょう (lesson) and 強い (strong).
* practise pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Some students spoke in a very casual way, using language such as めっちゃ (very) and 何だっけ (What is it?), and plain-form sentence endings. Students should speak in the です・ます (polite) form throughout the examination. There were some errors in the pronunciation of katakana words, including オーストラリア (Australia).

Section 2: Discussion

What students did well

In 2023, students:

* chose an appropriate subtopic from either the prescribed theme ‘The Japanese-speaking communities’ or the prescribed theme ‘The world around us’ to suit their ability and interests, and an image that supported the discussion about the selected subtopic.
* demonstrated in-depth knowledge of their subtopic. Successful students were able to talk about their chosen subtopic in detail, supporting their information with their own opinions and evidence. They were also able to talk about the good and bad points, and make comparisons with Australia, providing depth to their responses rather than superficial information. Popular subtopics included アニメ (anime), コスプレ(cosplay), コンビニ (convenience stores), 自動販売機 (vending machines), 和食 (Japanese food), お正月 (New Year), おせち料理 (New Year food), 介護ロボット (nursing care robot), クラブ活動 (club activities), まんが喫茶 (manga cafe), キャラ弁 (‘character obento’) and温泉 (onsen).
* used the image skilfully to support the discussion on the subtopic. Most students were able to bring their image into the discussion. A successful image told some sort of story and enabled students to elaborate on different aspects of the image, and allowed the assessors to ask follow-up questions.

Areas for improvement

Students should:

* prepare a wide range and depth of information, ideas and opinions with an original perspective on the subtopic. Students should be prepared to respond to a variety of question words in order to discuss their chosen subtopic from multiple perspectives. For example, they should be able to discuss what the subject of the topic is, when it started and how it has developed, where it occurs and why, who does it and why, and how many people do it. Students should move beyond providing simple responses, and develop their information, supporting their ideas with evidence, examples and opinions.
* use the image to support the discussion on the subtopic. Some students’ images were too small or not printed clearly. It is important to prepare one clear image that is not a collage of pictures. A number of students prepared a collage or two contrasting images. These are not appropriate images for the examination.
* build vocabulary specific to the selected subtopic. Students need to be familiar with the common vocabulary associated with their subtopic. For example, if talking about キャラ弁 (character obento), students should know the word えいよう (nutrition). Students should build their opinions on their chosen subtopic using a range of adjectives.
* avoid introducing their focus point at the start of the discussion section. An introduction is no longer required at the beginning of the Discussion section.