

2021 ASSESSMENT REPORT

JPN315114 - JAPANESE

Oral Examinations

Feedback on Student Performance

The Japanese oral examinations were conducted in the first week of November 2021. Students took part in an interview with two examiners which lasted approximately 10-12 minutes. They were questioned on their basic details (name, age, birthday, place of residence), family, school life, daily routines, hobbies, leisure activities, likes/dislikes, helping at home, friends, part-time work and future plans.

There were many students who performed well on Criterion 2 for this assessment. Most students understood the questions well and responded with little hesitation. Students were also able to elaborate on their answers by offering an appropriate amount of extra information without launching into pre-rehearsed speeches. This showed good interview technique. For example, when asked a question such as *~はどんなところですか How is~?*, most students were able to provide detailed answers by combining adjectives together. The overwhelming majority of students seemed well-prepared for their interview and engaged in the process in a positive manner, despite any feelings of nervousness. They should be congratulated on their efforts. The following points from the examiners highlight characteristics of students who performed very well and those who were less confident.

Students who performed well on the oral examinations:

- Understood most questions that were asked and sought clarification appropriately in Japanese when required. No English was used.
- Responded to the questions with a moderate amount of detail. Launching into a pre-rehearsed speech is not advised in this interview, however, adding a sentence or two of extra information is advised.
- Deliberately tried to include a more sophisticated grammatical structure in their response. For example, instead of describing a family member with just one adjective, they did so with the joining adjective structure or a relative clause.
- Incorporated a variety of vocabulary.
- Showed good control over verb and adjective tenses.
- Showed evidence of self-correction if/when required.
- Were able to respond to impromptu questions and quick changes in the discussion.
- Were able to maintain the conversation when it ventured beyond the suggested questions.

Less confident students:

- Requested frequent repetition of questions.

- Could not maintain the conversation in Japanese and slipped into English for unknown words or to give more explanation.
- Asked for the meaning of several words in English.
- Gave limited or shortened responses which did not naturally lead to further conversation.
- Used a limited range of Level 3 structures accurately or did not attempt Level 3 structures in their interview.
- Had difficulty with pronunciation or intonation.

Written Examinations

Part 1 – Listening and Responding

Answers / Marking Tool

Question 1

- a) She wants/needs (1) to ask him something (1) OR
- b) She wants (1) to talk to him (1) OR
- c) She wants (1) his advice (1) OR
- d) She wants (1) someone to listen to her (1)
- e) Give/pay for/shout/buy/get (1) coffee (1)
- f) She doesn't look like/looks less (1) she is well/healthy/energetic/happy (1) OR
- g) upset/not looking well (1) as usual/always/comparison (1)
- h) She said /made/told (0.5) lots of (0.5) bad (0.5) jokes (0.5) and they had an argument/fight (1)
- i) He was her best/closest (1) friend (1).
- j) Yes (0.5), because she said she'll try (0.5) talking (0.5) before (0.5) dinner (0.5) tonight/today (0.5)

Question 2

- a) Japan mystery quiz (1) incomplete answers (2 words that were correct) (0.5)
- b) i. about (0.5) 10 years (0.5) ago
- c) ii. through tv (0.5) and internet (0.5)
- d) No one lived there before/zero (1) but now there are about (0.5) 6 people (0.5)
- e) No (0.5), because ferries (0.5) run only/ only have (1) twice (0.5) a day (0.5)
- f) i. play/hang out/pet (0.5) with cats (0.5); take photos (1)
- g) ii. feed/give food (1) to cats; you can't stay there (1)
- h) Drinks (0.5) and food (0.5)
- a) People who know (1) the name (0.5) of the island (0.5)

Question 3

- a) He wants (0.5) a car (0.5) OR To buy (0.5) a car (0.5)
- b) Various (0.5) new (0.5) and old (0.5) cars, 100 cars (0.5) in total/altogether/available (1)
- c) The cost/price/affordability (0.5) because he doesn't have (0.5) much/enough (0.5) money (0.5)
- d) 400000 yen (1)
- e) He doesn't have to (1) pay (0.5) it all at once/in one go/lump sum (0.5) OR
- f) He can pay in instalments (2)
- g) He'll try OR test drive/ drive and see/look at (1) the cheapest (1) car
- h) He doesn't live nearby/ lives far away/not familiar with area (1) and he doesn't know his way/streets/roads/how to get there (1)
- i) OR
- j) So he can go look at the cheapest car / he wants to go to the shop (as question could be interpreted this way). (2)
- k) Map 2 (1)

Question 4

- a) 16th of September OR 4 days before (0.5) 20th (1) of September (0.5)
- b) If they completed the homework and if anyone has questions (1)
- c) Little bit (1) complex/complicated (0.5) and hard/difficult/hard work/awful/terrible/despaired (0.5)
- d) Second box 1. Geography 2. History 3. Maths 4. Science (1)
- e) i. Download it (1)
- f) ii. Japan (0.5) only/just (0.5)
- g) It's small (1) and hard to see (1) on the computer (0.5) screen (0.5)
- h) Pencils (0.5) and colouring pencils (0.5) on the desk (1)
- a) Because you'll take/write (1) lots of (0.5) notes (0.5)

Feedback on Student Performance

The listening section of the examination appeared challenging for students this year. Four spoken texts were presented, and students were asked to respond to questions about the texts in English. The spread of overall results for Criterion 1 varied greatly. There were several open-ended questions in the listening section which meant that the markers had to accept a variety of responses. This variety has been recorded in the marking tool (answers) in the previous section.

For Spoken Text 1, students provided a range of responses for Question (a) including: the female needed advice, needed to talk to someone, needed someone to listen to her etc. Question (c) also elicited a range of responses including: she didn't look as happy she usually does; or she seemed unhappy which was unusual. The markers were particularly looking to see that the students were able to identify the comparison of the girl's usual state and how she appeared on that particular day.

Spoken Text 2 was perhaps the text where students showed the most confidence. Most students were able to identify at least part of the name of the quiz show for Question (a) and were also able to identify the correct responses for Question (b). Questions (c) and (d) proved challenging for students as they had to identify several details in order to complete the question correctly and receive full marks. Many students missed details regarding the population of the island initially being zero (Question c) and the ferry running only twice a day (Question d). Most students successfully identified things that patrons could and could not do on the island (Question e), but the strongest students were able to answer Question (g) successfully. Some students were able to identify individual words like 島 *island* or しります *to know*, but were not able to give a full answer for Question (g). Students are advised to remember to include quantifiers like ぐらい *approximately* or *about* in their answers where appropriate.

For Spoken Text 3, most students were able to respond to Questions (a) and (c) appropriately. Most students were able to identify key adjectives in Question (b) such as 古い *old* and 新しい *new* but several missed information such as the number of cars and vocabulary like ぜんぶで *altogether*. The price for the car was challenging for students. Some students were able to determine that the answer was 四十万円 *400,000 Yen*. However, most students wrote “40,000 Yen” as their answer. The stronger responses were able to ascertain that the shop-assistant suggested a payment plan or to pay in instalments in Question (e). Question (f) appeared a little confusing for students with some giving the correct answer (test-driving the cheapest car) and others giving vague answers such as “he will think about it”. Most students were able to identify the correct map in Question (h) even though the map did not contain a direction marker (starting point). Students are always advised to look at the number of points allocated to each question as this is a good indication of how much detail is required in the answers. As you will see in the answers section, half-marks are often given to specific vocabulary.

The first question for Spoken Text 4, required some mental arithmetic that unfortunately no student was able to perform correctly. Markers therefore awarded some points to students who were able to identify 九月二十日 *20th September* as a key detail in the text. Most students selected the correct answer for the multiple-choice Questions (b) and (d). Very few students were able to answer Question (h) correctly with many inferring that the students would be doing some kind of mapping work in class. Very few students identified つくえ *desk* as a key word in the answer for Question (g), which was disappointing. Some students were able to identify the problems with seeing the computer screen and responded to Question (f) appropriately.

Written Examinations

Part 2 – Reading and Responding

Answers / Marking Tool

Section A, Question 5 – Responding in English

- a) He heard (1) it on the news (1)
- b) Because the trains (0.5) and buses (0.5) are stopping/have stopped/not running/out service (1)
- c) Whether the earthquake was big (1), if she can ring/phone (1) her parents (1)/mother (0.5) and father (0.5)
- d)
 - i. the house (1) will break/damage/destroy/fall down (1) OR thought that the earthquake will break/damage/destroy/fall down (1) the house (1)
 - ii. scared/frightened/terrified (1)

- e)
 - i. Her uncle's (0.5) house/place (0.5)
 - ii. Because their house is sturdy/strong/durable/tough (1)
 - iii. They have power/electricity (1) and water (1)
- f) Tomorrow (0.5), before school (0.5) or (0.5) after school* (0.5).
*if school wasn't mentioned, 0.5 points were deducted
- g) From 5 (1) to 7.30pm (1) OR From 3 (1) to 5.30PM (1) Japanese time/ Australia is two hours behind/
3-5.30PM (1) h) Miyuki and Jason live apart from each other (1)

Section A, Question 7 – Responding in English

- a) 570 (1) roughly/about/approximately (0.5) years ago/before (0.5)
- b) An English person/man/woman (1) called (0.5) Clark (0.5) came to Yokohama (1) and opened the first bakery there.
- c) Sweet bread (1) EITHER jam (1) and an-pan/sweet bean/azuki (1) custard cream (1) Melon (1)*
* Maximum of 3 marks given for this question.
- d) For breakfast (0.5) or lunch (0.5)
- e) People who have a busy (0.5) life/lifestyle (0.5) OR don't have to cook (1)
- f) The writer is in favour of bread (1)
- g) They learnt from countries (0.5) such as America (0.5), France (0.5) and Germany (0.5)
- h) Become* (1) popular (1), *need to show understanding that a change as occurred
- i) This post has inspired others to try some bread in Japan (1)
- j) Where (0.5) is a delicious (0.5) shop (0.5) in Tokyo (0.5)
- k) An answer similar to: people in Tokyo (or want to go to Tokyo) who want to try food, particularly bread.*
*Many answers were accepted here if they had some mention of Tokyo, food and/or bread.

Section B Question 8 – Responding in Japanese

- a) ワーキングホリデーの人(1) とりゅう学生の人(1)
- b) やさいや(0.5) くだもの(0.5) をとるしごと (1)
- c) 広くて・広い(1) りっぱ (1)*
- d) 車(1) やバス(1)
- e) 古くて(1)、れきしがある(1)、とても(0.5)きれい(0.5)。
- f) ねぼう(1)
- g)
 - i. いいえ(1) てつだったり (0.5)
 - ii. しごとは人をてつだったり (0.5) 忙しい(0.5) OR
人を手つだったり、いそがしいです。でも、みんなよくがんばって、たくさんはたらきます。

OR 友だちといっしょにするしごと*

* Many answers were accepted here provided they made some mention of a type of work as extracted from the passage.

- h) か月ぐらい (1)
- i) 七月(1)から 九月(1)まで
- j) 十二月 (1)一月 (1) OR 1 ヶ月 Or 2 ヶ月 (2)
- k) 十二月にはストロベリーをとることができる (1)

Feedback on Student Performance

For the reading section of this year's examination, students were asked to respond to three written texts. The first two texts involved answering questions in English, whilst the third text required a response in Japanese. Overall, there were mixed results on this section of the examination. Whilst some students were able to achieve high results, responding to most questions appropriately, there were also a large number who seemed to find this section challenging.

Question 5 presented a text-message dialogue between a Japanese girl and her Australian friend in the aftermath of an earthquake. The word じしん *earthquake* was given on the text to help students obtain the gist of the conversation. Elements of this text that appeared challenging for students included: the function of the か *ka* particle, meaning "or"; Question (g) which required students to calculate the time difference between Australia and Japan to find the correct answer; the verb こわす *to break*; and the subtle difference between おじさん *uncle* (correct answer) and おじいさん *grandfather*. Most students were able to answer the multiple-choice Question (h) well. Students are always encouraged to attempt such questions, even if they are not 100% sure of the answer as an attempted question is always better than a blank answer. There were a variety of answers for Questions (c) and (e) as students interpreted these questions in different ways. The examiners were able to give marks for different interpretations as indicated on the marking tool.

Question 6 presented an online post about bread in Tokyo. Most students were able to answer Question (a) correctly, but several left out ぐらい *about* which attracted points. Question (b) appeared to confuse students with several missing the words はじめ *first/start* and はじめた *began*, and instead wrote about Portugal or Kimura. For Question (c) points were given to あまいパン *sweet bread* and any two of the examples given (see marking tool in previous section). Question (d) required students to understand the two Kanji 朝 *morning* and 昼 *noon*. If these were missed, students were not able to receive points for this question. Whilst the examiners initially expected students to answer "people who have busy lives" for Question (e), some students answered with "don't have to cook" which was relevant and so therefore awarded points. The final two questions, Questions (i) and (j) proved extremely difficult for students, with many not attempting these. A large range of responses were awarded marks for Question (j) provided they contained some mention of people in/going to Tokyo, food or bread. Students are encouraged to have a go selecting an answer to multiple-choice questions rather than leaving them blank.

The final question in the reading section, Question 7 asked students to read a poster and table about working holidays in Tasmania and then respond to questions in Japanese.

Question (a) asked students to reflect on who the poster was for. Some were able to identify the vocabulary りゅうがくせい *exchange students*, but others missed the concept of people engaging in ワーキングホリデー *working holidays*. The required answer for Question (b) was やさいやくだものをとるしごと *work picking vegetables or fruit*, however many students found the verb とる, which they may have learned as “to take”, challenging as “to pick”. Students are encouraged to watch for adverbs such as とても *very*, as they often attract points in the examination. Question (i) was extremely challenging for students as it required reading of the entire table to ascertain when the quiet periods were. Several students missed this question. Question (j) was another challenging question for students, with many missing the 何か月 *how many months* and simply answering from December to January. The marking team still awarded full marks to these students.

Written Examinations

Part 3 - Writing

Answers/Marking Tool

Section A, Question 8

The following information was required in students' responses to Question 8:

- New, white laptop
- Intend to sell, want to sell, do you want to buy it?
- University students
- 20th birthday present
- Hasn't been used
- I don't want it
- 5000 yen, negotiable
- Interested people call mobile from 9.00AM to 5.30PM

The following Kanji and Katakana characters could be used in the response:

大学生、白、二十、買、五千、円、たん生日、人、電わ、ご前、ご後、九時、五時半、下さい、
プレゼント、コンピューター、ノートパソコン、ラップトップ

Finally, the following grammatical structures could have been used in the response

- Joining adjectives
- Past tense
- ～たことはありません
- ほしくない
- ～てください
- ～ませんか
- ～ましょうか

- ~たい
- Relative clause きょうみがある人
- ~から~まで

Feedback on Student Performance

Section A, Question 8

Most students were able to include all the required information in their responses to Question 8. The following aspects were generally completed well by students:

- 白くて新しい new and white (joining adjective structure).
- 買いませんか。買いますか。買いたいですか。 Would you like to buy? written with different expressions/grammatical structures.
- 話しましょう Let's talk.
- Katakana words such as: laptop ラップトップ and present プレゼント
- The price of the item 5000Yen 五千円
- The grammatical structure for requests ~てください please (verb).

The following points appeared more challenging for students:

- Placement of the 午後 PM and 午前 AM Kanji/words. The second Kanji in each word is required for writing by students but not the first.
- Use of Kanji for 才 years old and たん生日 birthday. Students are reminding to still use Kanji that they know, even if they do not know all the Kanji for a particular word (as in たん生日).
- Past tense for "It was my 20th birthday". Many students wrote this in the present-tense instead.
- The relative clause "people who are interested" (きょうみがある人) was often missed by students and only some attempted this.

The stronger responses showed a breadth of knowledge of Level 3 grammatical structures and good levels of accuracy in their texts. Weaker responses included relevant information but showed less control with particles, tense, and Level 3 grammatical structures. Students are encouraged to write in pen for their examinations and to double-space their work for editing opportunities if they should wish.

Section A A of the written examination was marked according to the Criterion 4 standards outlined in the TASC course document. [Japanese - TASC](#)

Section B, Questions 9-13

Part B of the writing examination asked students to select a topic from five questions presented covering the following text-types: email/letter, diary entry, conversation script, profile and story. Question 9 (email) and Question 10 (diary entry) were the most popular questions in 2021. Most students were able to respond to questions in the appropriate genre and constructed texts at their ability level. Students should be congratulated on their Kanji skills this year.

They were generally able to write the prescribed Kanji characters accurately and appropriately. On the other hand, Katakana characters were somewhat neglected, leaving room for improvement. Common words like オーストラリア *Australia*, ケーキ *cake* and テレビ *TV*, which are listed on the vocabulary list of the course, were often written incorrectly. The use of adjectives with sentence structures was difficult for many, especially with the structure.

い adjective と思います *I think it is ~*. An interesting and frequent error was made by students in the beginning of Question 10, where many students wrote あたらしいのしゅみ *new (no) hobby* instead of simply あたらしいしゅみ *new hobby*. There were many cases of misusing to あります/います *to exist/to be* as well. It is recommended that students take time to learn word usage and particularly verb usage when learning/reviewing vocabulary. Reviewing simple sentence structures using simple vocabulary such as あります/います *to exist/to be* can help build students' accuracy in writing. It was disappointing to see examples of writing where students had mastered complex sentences with complex grammatical structures, and yet simple mistakes were made on simple sentences, particles and/or word use. Such students were generally not able to obtain an "A" rating for Criterion 4, despite showing evidence of some advanced skills in grammar.

Students who obtained higher grades for this section of the examination:

- Wrote approximately 300-350 characters.
- Used both simple and complex vocabulary.
- Attempted a wide range of complex grammatical structures with correct verb conjugation.
- Wrote on topic.
- Showed good control of tense, particularly past tense of verbs and adjectives.
- Showed high levels of accuracy with spelling, particles and grammar.
- Used Kanji where required.

Less confident students:

- Wrote under the required character length.
- Used only simple vocabulary.
- Used mostly simple sentence structures OR attempted more complex sentence structures but did not master verb conjugation or tense changes in verbs and adjectives.
- May have written off-topic
- Did not show good control of tense or may have mixed polite and plain Japanese.
- Showed several inaccuracies in their writing whether it be spelling of Katakana words, particle errors or grammatical errors.
- Did not use all the required Kanji.

Section B of the writing section was marked according to the Criterion 4 standards in outlined in the TASC course document, [Japanese - TASC](#)