

JAPANESE

Paper 8281/01

Speaking

General comments

In general, the Examiners are to be congratulated on their efforts to ensure that the examinations are conducted in the appropriate manner and that the candidates are given the opportunity to do their best. The candidates should also be commended on their thorough preparation and attempts to express themselves on a range of topics.

The recording at most Centres was generally audible and clearly labelled – thanks to all Centres where these jobs were done professionally. Centres should also be reminded that cassette(s) or CD(s) should be well protected in a padded envelope or something similar to avoid any damage on their journey back to CIE.

Most questions by the Examiners were well prepared and used a wide variety of vocabulary and grammar. However, Examiners should also remember to stretch candidates by asking more challenging or unexpected questions which allow candidates to show their full ability in the target language.

Examiners should ensure that they have read the syllabus thoroughly and are clear about the structure of the Speaking test.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Presentation

This year once again, there was a wide range of topics chosen by candidates. Candidates had prepared a variety of suitable topics on Japanese culture, youth culture, the environment etc. Some candidates had also included photographs as part of their presentation, which shows their enthusiasm for the subject. Examiners and candidates are reminded that they are expected to give a presentation of no more than 3½ minutes on a specific topic.

Section 2

Topic conversation

Most candidates had clearly practised and researched their chosen topic to enable them to respond to the Examiner's questions, and show their knowledge of the subject. Some candidates managed to have a discussion about their topic with their Examiner, which clearly showed their high level of competence in Japanese.

Again, Examiners should try and ask questions which prompt candidates to give more detailed and thoughtful responses, rather than asking simple factual questions. It would be helpful if the Examiners clearly indicated to candidates when the Topic Conversation finished.

Section 3

General conversation

The majority of candidates were able to communicate very well with their Examiners again this year. In some Centres, high level questions were asked, and the candidates coped well. Examiners need to prepare a wide range of questions, not only in terms of structures used but also in terms of content.

Candidates should be reminded that they should not call the Examiner あなた; 先生 is appropriate in this situation.

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Paper 8281/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

There was a good spread of performance on this paper this year. The best candidates set very high standards giving full and accurate answers in fluent and idiomatic Japanese. Some of the weaker candidates struggled to express themselves clearly but very few were unable to cope with the comprehension tasks and thereby succeeded in making relevant mark bearing points.

A lot of candidates managed to write answers in their own words without missing the key points. This shows the effort made by both the Examiners and the candidates in preparing for this examination.

Centres are reminded to ensure that the attendance register is despatched with the papers.

Comments on specific questions

Passage One

Question 1

- (a) 3
- (b) 1
- (c) 1
- (d) 2
- (e) 3

The majority of candidates got 4 or 5 marks. Many candidates made a mistake in (c) choosing no.3 たくさん. Some candidates made mistakes in either (a) or (d).

Question 2

- (i) e.g. きのう、学校を休んだのは、だれですか。
- (ii) e.g. しけんの勉強をしなければなりません。
- (iii) e.g. 日曜日にしかひまがありません。
- (iv) e.g. ねむくても、しゅくだいをしなければなりません。
- (v) e.g. 電車の中で、さいふを取られました。

Again this year, most candidates managed to use their knowledge of Japanese well, although a few candidates struggled to produce well structured sentences.

In (iii), the candidates had to write a negative sentence instead of affirmative.

Some candidates wrote (く)でもいいです。 (allow to do) instead of writing a sentence meaning no matter how (even though) in (iv).

Some candidates made mistakes with the particle for a passive structure in (v).

Question 3

- (a) むかしの学校です。
- (b) 国がきめたきょういくをしなければなりませんから。
- (c) (i) 入し／入学しけんをしなくてもいいです。
(ii) 家のそばの学校に行くことができます。
- (d) クラスが大きかったり、いろいろなうちから来ていますから。
- (e) 入学しけんをしなければなりませんから。
自分が行きたい学校をえらぶことができませんから。
- (f) 学校がしたいきょういくができるからでっす。
- (g) 小学校から大学（ぜんぶ）ある学校です。
高校や大学の入しがありませんから。
- (h) ストレスをかんじたり、学校に行きたくなくなったりしています。
- (i) たくさんの人にあって、人間かんけいを学んでせいちょうできますから。

In general, the candidates performed well in this question. However, some candidates wrote answers based on their opinions or their general knowledge. In order to gain marks here, candidates must write answers which refer to the text.

Candidates seemed to find (a), particularly problematic, and a number of incorrect answers were seen. The majority of candidates received 2 marks.

Passage Two

Question 4

- (a) 学校が近くにないです。
何かもんだいがあって、学校に行きたくないです。
親や子どもが学校にあわないです。
- (b) 小学校からはじめます。
小学校に行ったけれども、理由があってホームスクーリングにかえます。
- (c) 1たい1でじゅぎょうができます。
親が教科書で教えます。
子どもがきょうみあることについて勉強します。
つうしんきょういくを使います。
子どもにあったペースで勉強できます。
- (d) まわりの人にやさしくできます。
こうげきのではありません。
- (e) こどくをかんじるかもしれません。
ほかに人とうまくつきあえないかもしれません。
- (f) そばにいる人たちにホームスクーリングをよくわかってもらうことです。
子どもがいろいろなことをけいけんでできるかんきょうをつくることです。
たくさん大人の子どもに会うことができるかんきょうをつくることです。

On the whole, candidates performed better here than in Passage One, despite the less familiar topic. Some candidates managed to express their opinions fluently in Japanese. Although there were some very well written answers, some candidates were not able to score due to their answers not referring to the text. A lot of candidates achieved full marks in **Question (a)**.

Question 5

Again this year, most candidates managed to do both **Questions (a)** and **(b)** despite having to write their answers in a limited number of letters. To achieve high marks, candidates needed to mention 10 points from both passages, and marks could not be awarded if the points given did not refer to the texts. For example, candidates could not gain marks for writing about their own school or whether they like/dislike school. For exercise **(b)**, many candidates managed to express their opinions clearly. Every candidate coped well with **Question 5**.

JAPANESE

Paper 8281/03

Essay

General comments

All the candidates performed well in this examination this year, showing their competence in Japanese. Candidates had clearly prepared for this exercise and coped very well in expressing their opinions on a given topic. It was pleasing to see that some candidates had learned how to structure their essay properly, using paragraphs, arguing advantages and disadvantages and presenting a conclusion.

There were some instances where the polite form and the plain form were mixed, which should not happen in written Japanese. Some candidates were not able to use *こと* and *もの* precisely, for example; *わるいことを食べたり、飲んだり* instead of *わるいものを食べたり飲んだり*. Many candidates made errors with connective adjectives this year. Some candidates also still use spoken language like *ね* or *よ* at the end of sentences and generally this is not appropriate.

If possible, Centres should try and supply genkoyoshi or similar paper to write on, as some candidates used their time making squares on the paper by themselves.

Again, some candidates wrote over 800 characters, and candidates should be reminded of the word limits, namely 600-800 characters. Candidates are also reminded to keep their work neat in order to avoid misunderstanding in their performances.

Topic 5: *Food and Drink* was the most favoured topic amongst candidates. Many candidates who chose this topic referred to the health issue. They mentioned why schools sell unhealthy food and how this could be changed, expressing their opinions well. Some of them even extended their argument to include the effect diet has on educational matters. They seemed to have a lot of ideas about healthy diet at school. However, a few candidates wrote simply about their favourite food.

Topic 1: *Young People* was the second most popular choice. In this topic, some candidates showed excellent knowledge about what young people are like in modern Japan, as well as having an awareness of how this might have been different in the past. In particular, they used a range of modern words to describe young Japanese people in positive and negative ways. Also, they seemed to be familiar with the culture and society as well as the topic. A lot of candidates wrote about the change of mentality and values between young people now and in the past.

Topic 3: *Pollution* and Topic 4: *Jobs and Free Time* were the third most popular choices of topic. In Topic 3, all candidates expressed their opinions in detail, mentioning things like building dams, how to clean water to be able to drink it and what people in advanced countries should or could do to help. Many of them manipulated the grammar very well, using a wide range of vocabulary and kanji. Interestingly, in Topic 4, some candidates talked about not becoming an employee or not being able to become an employee, which is a deeper interpretation of the question that was expected. They showed their understanding of the target language extremely well. Candidates also wrote about the job hunting situation for young people.

Topic 2: *The Travel Industry* was the least popular topic this year. However, some candidates who chose this question argued the advantages and disadvantages of development from their real experience and this worked very well. A few candidates did not manage to express their opinions clearly, so it was not easy to see if they agreed or were against the ideas.

Centres are reminded to ensure they despatch the Attendance Register Sheet with the examination papers.

Finally, candidates and Examiners are to be commended on their hard work, it was pleasing to see such well-structured and interesting essays.