

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE
in Japanese (6JA01/01) Paper 1

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Introduction

It is clear that teachers and candidates are working very hard to cover a huge amount of new grammar, vocabulary and kanji. Particularly in the continuous writing, candidates demonstrate that they have been taught a large number of new grammatical structures and are trying hard to use them.

Question 1

The "true / false / no information" questions were well tackled, with candidates clearly aware that they should use all of the options. Question (e) was possibly the hardest.

Question 2

Some candidates lost marks as they were unable to write the small letters accurately. Please stress to candidates the need to write the pronunciations of the kanji in hiragana (not romaji) absolutely accurately. Question (d) was the most challenging, with many candidates offering "りょうり" as an incorrect answer. "たい" was also regularly offered as an incorrect answer to (a).

Question 3

This was perhaps the hardest of the reading questions, with many of the less able candidates leaving the whole section blank. Most of the candidates who attempted this question were able to come up with 洋服 for part (b). "会社員" was often offered as the answer to part (c) - please stress to candidates that they need find the words in the passage.

Question 4

This question was generally well answered. The hardest part was (d), with many candidates missing the particle を and thus offering 分かります, which was incorrect.

Question 5

It was pleasing that most candidates had tried to answer most of the questions. Questions (e) and (g) were the easiest, with (c) and (d) being the most challenging. Not many candidates seemed to be aware that there are marks for quality of language on this section – please remind candidates to write in full sentences, and to take care over their grammar and kanji.

Question 6

It was very pleasing that the vast majority of candidates tried to translate the whole of this passage all the way through. The easiest sentence was 女子だけのサッカー・アカデミーは世界ではじめてです, although some candidates offered “to start” or “firstly” for “はじめて”. Place names continue to cause problems, with all of 堺市 (often translated Sakai prefecture), 関西 and 四国 causing difficulties. 試合 was sometimes confused with “exam”.

Candidates must read through their answers to check that what they have written actually makes sense, and also to check for grammatical and spelling mistakes. The quality of English produced is taken into account when assessing the translation.

Question 7

Most candidates made a good effort with the continuous writing question. As noted in the introduction, it is clear that candidates had been taught a wide variety of grammatical structures, and were making a big effort to use these. Accuracy, however, continues to be a problem, and it may be better to teach slightly fewer structures for active production but to a higher level of accuracy. Most candidates were able to answer the first 3 bullet points. The less able candidates either did not understand, or failed to address, the 4th bullet point. Please encourage candidates to set out their work in paragraphs according to the bullet points. They should also make sure that they answer all 4 bullet points, and do not write an excessive amount on any of the bullet points, otherwise they will run out of space to adequately address all four bullet points.

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