



Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In Japanese (6JA0) Paper 2

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Publications Code 6JA02_01_1906_ER

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Introduction

The examination consists of three sections: Section A reading comprehension, worth 14 marks: section B translation worth 10 marks: and section C two essays on topics and texts, worth 28 marks each. The total mark for the paper is 80.

Question 1

Candidates were required to read a passage on the increasing prevalence of halal food in Japan and answer comprehension questions in Japanese. Parts (d) through to (j) were generally well answered. In part (a), candidates often missed the fact that there are an increasing number of foreign tourists in Japan. In part (k), candidates often failed to be specific enough and some wrote that Tokyo subsidises the running cost of halal restaurants, which was incorrect. In part (m) some candidates did not understand the word きっかけ in the question and so answered that the restaurant owner wanted visitors from abroad to be able to enjoy sushi too.

Question 2

Candidates were required to translate a passage from English into Japanese. Candidates generally did well on the second paragraph, although Okazaki was often mis-represented as Ozaki or even Osaka. In the first paragraph expressing 'expedition' and 'fancy dress' proved difficult for many candidates.

The rhetorical question at the beginning of the third paragraph was generally well attempted, as was the next sentence, although the concept of 'all you need' proved difficult for some candidates. A surprising number of candidates wrote 九月 for October, or entirely missed out the word 'weekend'. Most candidate made a fair attempt at conveying the impersonal wish expressed in the last sentence.

Question 3 (a)

Candidates were asked to introduce what was famous about the region of Japan they had studied, and how the region were becoming more international. Most candidates were able to say what was famous in the region of Japan they had studied. Some candidates forgot to answer the internationalisation aspect of the question. A considerable number were able to make good points beyond simply the teaching of English in Japan.

Question 3 (b)

Candidates were asked about the means of transport in the region of Japan they had studied. Most candidates who chose this question clearly did so as they had specific knowledge of the transport systems, and were able to provide factual answers with many specific details.

Question 4(a)

The question required candidates to evaluate the Japanese education system. Most candidates were able to describe the education system and offer some evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses: however few seemed to have specific facts and figures up their sleeve to fully justify their opinions.

Question 4 (b)

The question required candidates to evaluate the effect of the spread of mobile phones in Japan. Generally candidates relied too much on general knowledge and broad generalisations. For example, if they are going to mention the increase of ひきこもり as a disadvantage, they are expected to know the numbers or proportion of ひきこもり in Japanese society to be able to give a realistic assessment of the extent of the problem.

Question 5 (a)

The question required candidates to evaluate a special event in the Japanese school year. The vast majority of candidates discussed the 文化祭. Most candidates were able to both describe the event and evaluate what students learn through it, although in some cases the evaluation could have been better linked to the description of the events.

Question 5 (b)

Candidates were asked to evaluate the importance of returning home at the New Year and bon festivals. Not many candidates attempted this question, and those that did tended to a description of what happens rather than an evaluation of the significance of these festivals.

Question 6 (a)

Candidates were required to write about the change which takes place in the main character from one of the stories in 'dondon yomeru iroiro na hanashi.' Most candidates were able to describe a change that had happened in the main character and comment on its significance. Some candidates chose to discuss Naigu from 鼻 and argued that he showed no learning or change: this was accepted where it was argued well.

Question 6 (b)

Candidates were required to evaluate whether 鼻 offered anything to the modern reader. There were many convincing responses to this question, including discussions of the importance of self-image in the age of social media, cosmetic surgery and so on.

Question 7 (a)

Candidates were asked what one of Hoshi's stories taught about living as a human being. Most candidates made a fair attempt at answering the question and putting forward relevant opinions: sometimes their linguistic ability did not match the complexity of concepts they were trying to discuss.

Question 7 (b)

Candidates were required to discuss the characters in 特許の品. Some candidates got so caught up in describing either the humans or the aliens that they forgot to discuss the other party. The application to what we may learn today was also often rather a poor after thought.

Question 8 (a)

The question required candidates to describe how a piece by Kaori Ekuni reflects modern Japan and evaluate whether foreigners could truly appreciate it. Not many candidates attempted this question. The responses on the whole were rather superficial and said for example that rakugo and Japanese Christmas were described in Duke.

Question 8 (b)

Candidates were asked to discuss the good and bad points of the short story Duke. Most candidates were able to produce detailed and well-structured responses, making points such as the piece helps us to think about death or coping with sadness.