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Examiner's Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In Japanese (9JA0)

Paper 1: Translation into English, Reading  
comprehension and Writing (research task)

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## **Introduction**

Candidates appeared well prepared for all aspects of the examination. Most candidates were able to work through the entire paper in the given time.

### **Question 1**

Most candidates tackled the entire passage. The negative question in the first sentence was off putting to some candidates, but there were also some lovely idiomatic translations, as there were for the final sentence. The name ゆりん was often incorrectly translated as "Yuri", and a significant number of candidates missed out this entire sentence. Do please encourage candidates to work carefully and to check their work.

### **Question 2**

This was a multiple-choice question about the employment conditions of delivery drivers. This question was generally tackled well, including (iii) which tested grammar.

### **Question 3**

The text was about new textbooks for 道徳. Option A was often chosen incorrectly – candidates were not paying sufficient attention to the difference between 社会 and 会社.

### **Question 4**

This was the literary text, which candidates generally tackled well. There was some confusion about who was doing what action – between the narrator, the disabled boy, his older sister and the other parents. This was reflected in poorer responses to (d).

### **Question 5**

This question was very well answered by most candidates. Presumably they could relate to the experience of Makiko, who volunteered in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami. The hardest part was (e), where some candidates mistakenly said that Makiko had started her own organisation for volunteers.

### **Question 6**

This question was about the changing nature of marriage in Japan. Candidates varied on whether they agreed that marriage in Japan is currently increasingly being understood as between two people rather than two families. Most candidates were able to use some details from the text to support their argument, but fewer had solid evidence from research to offer. Sometimes candidates lost marks as they tried to set

up a “on the one hand... on the other hand...” argument, but the conclusions they were drawing did not come across clearly to the reader.

### **Question 7**

This question was about the role of food in Japanese festivals, and whether newer festivals introduced to Japan also became food-centric. Candidates had done their research well, and clearly knew lots of facts about traditional Japanese festivals. On this question there was a temptation to digress – sometimes into how trick and treat is an essential part of Halloween as celebrated in the England and whether or not this has transferred to Japan; and sometimes into White Day and how Valentine’s Day was another festival that had changed as it came into Japan.

### **Question 8**

Candidates had done their research well and knew facts and figures about the ageing population in Japan, the numbers living alone and so on. Some candidates argued that there should be more events put on for the more senior, whereas others argued that there should be more events put on that were open to everyone to increase intergenerational interactions in society. Both groups were able to use some details from the text to support their position.

### **Question 9**

This question was about whether one could live without air conditioning through a Japanese summer. Again, some candidates said yes, whilst others argued no. In both cases there was a lack of evidence of research, and some candidates seemed to be writing from their general knowledge. The candidates were able to take details from the text and use them in their essays, but on the whole they tended to react emotionally or at a superficial level (“Cooling a mask in the fridge won’t work”) rather than arguing at a factual level.