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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCSE Japanese 5JA01 01

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Paper 1 (5JA01 01) - Listening and Understanding

This unit draws on vocabulary and structures from across the four specified common topic areas. The examination consisted of a number of passages or interactions in Japanese with a variety of question types. Candidates were tested on their ability to understand spoken Japanese through a variety of tasks requiring a written or non-verbal response.

In general, candidates coped well with the new syllabus. However, it was felt that many candidates would benefit from familiarising themselves with the 'x' answering method. Teachers should encourage them to follow strategies which will prevent duplicate answers in one row and no answers in another row. Candidates also need to be reminded to listen to the whole conversation before selecting their answers.

When confronted with spaces to be filled in, such as in Q2, Q6 and Q9, it was felt that many candidates did not read the questions properly and failed to notice that some of the answer boxes were already filled in. Similarly, in the new syllabus all written responses are required to be answered in English. However, some candidates were unaware of this change and attempted to answer them in Japanese. Teachers need to be aware that it is important for candidates to write their answers fully and clearly as the Mark Scheme is strictly adhered to.

Overall, the paper followed 'peaks and troughs' of difficulty pattern which was spread out throughout the paper. Teachers should remind candidates that more difficult questions no longer appear towards the end of the paper and easier ones at the beginning. Candidates must be encouraged to attempt to answer all questions throughout the paper.

Most candidates performed well in Q1 and Q2 although the words とり and どくしょ in Q1 and おてら and おんせん in Q2 were obviously unfamiliar to many.

Candidates were familiar with both topics in Q3 and Q4, namely colours and food. Therefore, both questions were well answered.

Many candidates chose クラブ for Q5(ii). This is an example of candidates not listening to the whole conversation before selecting their correct answer which was としょかん. On the whole, candidates were familiar with various locations.

The word for 'east' seemed to be unfamiliar to many candidates in Q6, and a surprisingly large number failed to recognise the date and day of the week. Many candidates did not know Nagoya.

The country was also a familiar topic for many and Q7 deemed accessible to the most candidates.

In Q8 some candidates did not look at the mark allocation carefully and did not indicate correct number of 'x' for each person. There was also an evidence of candidates not listening to the whole conversation before selecting their correct answer.

In the final question, many candidates fabricated answers based on hearing a single word correctly and did not appear to consider whether the given answer might fit the context of previous answers. Some candidates failed to write their answers fully and lost marks. For instance, for section (c) some wrote 'three times' as supposed to 'three times a day'. A surprising number of candidates did not know おととい and あさって.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	50	41	36	31	26	21	16	11	6	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	70	63	56	49	42	35	28	21	14	0

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