

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in Japanese (5JA01/01)
Paper 1: Listening and Understanding
in Japanese

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Publications Code UG041902*

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GCSE Japanese
Unit 1 Listening and Understanding
Examiner Report

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. Students were tested on their ability to understand spoken Japanese through a variety of tasks which require a response, written or non-verbal, to demonstrate their understanding.

In general, students coped well with the exam format. However, it was felt that many students would benefit from familiarising themselves with the 'x' answering method. Teachers should encourage students to follow strategies which will prevent duplicate answers in one row and no answer in another row. Students should answer all questions in English as answers in Japanese are not accepted. Students are also expected to spell common Japanese place names accurately. Students 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 questions 2, 6 and 9, it was felt that many students did not read the questions properly and failed to notice that some of the answer boxes were already filled in. In Q9 in particular, students are also required to answer some questions in detail and in full sentences. Teachers need to be aware that it is important for students 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 students that difficulty level varies throughout the paper, and more difficult questions do not necessarily appear towards the end of the paper and easier ones at the beginning. Similarly, the difficulty level varies within the question. Students must be encouraged to attempt to answer all questions throughout the paper.

All students performed well in Q1 and every candidate identified 'America' correctly in Q1(v). Most students performed well in Q2 but a surprising number of them failed to recognise the word '店員' in Q2(iv). Students were familiar with the question format used in Q3 and 4, and they were well answered. Some students found identifying the topic of conversation challenging in Q5. It was clear that many did not recognise the words '歴史' and '野球'.

Many students found Q6 challenging. A surprisingly large number of students failed to recognise the time and the platform number. Incorrect spelling of 'Hiroshima' was not accepted in Q6(b). On the whole, many students were familiar with the topic used in Q7. However, many students did not recognise the word '旅館' again this year. Teachers must ensure that students know the difference between ホテル and 旅館, and accurate translations for them. In general, students coped very well with the plain

form used in Q8. However, there was evidence of students not listening to the whole conversation before selecting their answers.

In the final question, many students 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. Teachers should also explain to students that where the conversation is divided into smaller sections, they should be listening to the whole section before writing their answers. Many students failed to describe accurately what Toshiaki was doing in Germany in Q9(b)(ii). Similarly, many students did not write their answers fully and lost marks in Q9(c)(ii) and Q9(d)(ii).

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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