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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Japanese (5JA01)

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding in
Japanese

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GCSE Japanese
Unit 1: Listening
Examiners 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 variety of tasks which require a response, written or non-verbal, to demonstrate their understanding.

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.

Like previous years, 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 answers in another row. Similarly, where students are choosing numerous boxes such as Q3 and Q4, students should look at the mark allocation carefully and make sure the correct number of boxes are selected. When answering questions by writing letters as in Q5, students must ensure their letters are clearly written and 'B' and 'E', for example, are distinguished. When confronted with spaces to be filled in, such as in Q2 and Q6, 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 write their answers in detail and in full sentences. Teachers need to be aware that it is increasingly important for students to write their answers fully and clearly as the Mark Scheme is strictly adhered to. Students also need to be reminded to listen to the whole conversation before selecting their correct answers.

Most students performed very well in questions 1 and 2. Many students were familiar with months of the year in Q1. Some students struggled to recognise the word 石鹼 in Q2. A surprising number of students failed to identify 和食 correctly in section (v). Many students were familiar with the topic and did very well in Q3. Similarly, many students scored very well in Q4. As mentioned above, however, students must ensure the correct number of answers are selected in this type of question. Overall, Q5 was also well answered. However, a surprising number of candidates answered C instead of F in (i).

On the whole, students performed well in Q6. However, some students misheard 熱 and thought she was talking about cats. Teachers are strongly recommended to find strategies to improve students' skills in listening to

messages and announcements. They must also familiarise themselves with the question layout and ensure they use appropriate words to complete sentences. Generally, students coped very well in Q7. However, many students found Q8 challenging. There was a strong evidence of students not listening to the whole conversation before selecting their answers. Again, students must ensure that they select the correct number of answers. Teachers should find strategies to help them to cope better with this style of question.

Students coped very well in the final question this year. Nearly all students identified that Claire was from New Zealand and they are planning to go to Hawaii. However, in other questions some 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. A surprising number of students still did not recognise 火山 and 星 in (b)(i). Moreover, some students did not look at the mark allocation despite of the clear layout and only put one answer. Teachers should help students be more aware of number of marks allocated to each subsection and write answers in appropriate spaces. As before, some students failed to write their answers fully and lost marks, for example, in (a)(iv) and (c)(ii). For instance, simply writing 'call' is not enough to gain a mark in (c)(ii). Similarly, writing 'volcano' in (b)(i) does not answer what Yuya said you could do there. Teachers should make it clear to their students that they are required to write their answers in detail and in full sentences.

