

Examiners' Report  
June 2013

GCE Japanese 6JA01 01

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## **Introduction**

The 2013 examination was very similar to the 2012 examination, and candidates appeared familiar with the format of the paper and confident in tackling the different question types. The continuous writing was very well tackled this year, with many candidates able to write long and detailed answers to the bullet points. It was not the same for the translation, with some candidates not attempting any part of it. Another part in which candidate performance could improve is in the quality of writing used to answer the final reading comprehension questions in section A. Overall, there is considerable evidence that candidates have been prepared very thoroughly by their teachers on the topic areas, grammatical structures and kanji required for the AS level examination.

## **Question 1**

Question 1 required candidates to write the pronunciation of certain kanji words in hiragana. Part (b), *tanoshinde*, was the most accessible and seemed to be known by most candidates. In part (a), *katsudo*, some candidates did not gain marks because they failed to include the long vowel. Part (c) was the most challenging, with many candidates writing "era te" as an incorrect answer.

## **Question 2 (i)**

Question 2 required candidates to match the beginnings and ends of sentences according to the text they had read. These questions were generally well tackled, with (iv) perhaps being the most difficult.

## **Question 3**

Question 3 asked candidates to fill in gaps in a passage using words from the box below. Most candidates filled in all the blanks on this exercise. Few were thrown by the kanji distracter for "sunde", although choosing between "aite" and "shimatte" in (e) proved more problematic, with many candidates writing in the incorrect word.

## **Question 4**

Some candidates lost marks on question 4 as they did not choose 5 correct answers. Candidates should be encouraged to always read the rubric carefully, and mark the correct number of boxes. Most candidates were able to identify A and B as correct answers. The task appeared to be more challenging for candidates as they worked toward the bottom text box, with F or H often chosen as a correct answer by candidates instead of G.

## **Question 5**

Some less able candidates left many of the answer lines on question 5 blank. However, most candidates of medium to strong ability tackled all these questions. Particularly accessible was (c)(i) - identifying that the classroom had been decorated with origami and pupil work, and particularly difficult was (f), giving two examples from the passage to illustrate "kokoro ga itai". "Otanoshimi kai mo arimasu kara" was often given as an incorrect answer for (e). Candidates showed evidence of having been well prepared for this section, with many underlining the question words or writing the English translation under key question words. However, some candidates only gave single word answers, and therefore could not gain the extra 5 marks for quality of language and kanji. Others often seemed to forget that there are marks available for quality of language on this section, and copied out the answers straight from the text. Candidates should be reminded that there are marks available for quality of language, if they can generate some sentences of their own in answer to the questions.

## **Question 6**

Some of the less able candidates failed to make any attempt at all at the translation question. Candidates of all abilities should be encouraged to try the translation

Most candidates were able to make a reasonable attempt at the first sentence, although many made errors over even such basic kanji as "south west". Understanding the "hokani" in the second sentence seemed to be much more difficult. Surprisingly, quite a few candidates did not seem to recognise "Kyushu". Candidates should be reminded of the importance of knowing these basic GCSE level kanji compounds.

Numbers continue to cause huge problems, and the "60,000" and "400,000" tourists were translated incorrectly by some candidates. In addition, the word "kankokyaku" often seemed to be unknown, and was regularly translated as "population."

The sentence about collecting a landing fee from everyone who comes to visit the island was the most challenging in the whole passage. Candidates should be reminded that the verb "asobu" is not always best translated as "play" in English. "Koya" was a vocabulary item not familiar to the some candidates, and was typically translated as "small shop". Many candidates, even the less able, were able to translate the section about renewing (improving) the toilets.

This translation was given a mark of 6.

### Protect Yakushima!

Yakushima is an island located at around 60 kilometres away from the south-west of Kyushu. Other than the highest Mt. Miyanourada ~~in Kyushu, there are a lot of~~ (1936 metres high) in Kyushu, there are a lot of mountains which are above 1000 metres high in Yakushima.

There were around 60000 visitors in 1983 but, the number increased to 400000 visitors in 2007. ~~And~~ But, the mountain-climbing cross is something made in around 30 years ago and, there aren't even 10 toilets. ~~And then~~ Also, the narrowness of the walking path is a problem.

If the <sup>over-use</sup> ~~abuse~~ continues, the beautiful nature of the island will be ruined regrettfully. ~~Next time~~ <sup>Now</sup> ~~there is a plan of collecting entry fee from those who travels to the island next time. And then, the money is used to hire staff in the small houses ~~in~~ on the island and to build new toilets. ~~The thing~~ The things to do ~~to~~ of ~~protect the~~ protecting the nature are very important.~~



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##### Examiner Comments

Whilst the main meaning of the passage has been conveyed, there are many small errors in the quality of the English, which caused the piece to lose marks; for example the "at around" in line 1, the missing "ke" in line 2, the spelling of "high" in line 4. Word order and choice of vocabulary is also sometimes a problem, for example the "regrettfully" in line 11, and "next time" in line 12.



#### ResultsPlus

##### Examiner Tip

Remember that spelling, punctuation and grammar are important, as it says on the front cover of the paper.

This is a very good piece of work, which was given 8 marks.

Lets look after Yakushima!

Yakushima is an island ~~is~~ about 60 kilometers south-west of Kyushu. Apart from the tallest mountain which is in Kyushu called Miyajiradake, ~~Yakushima has many~~ (height of 1936 meters) Yakushima has many mountains more than 10000 meters tall.

The number of tourists in 1983 was ~~5,000,000~~<sup>50,000</sup> but by 2007 it has risen to 400,000. However the hiking course is over 30 years old so there are only 10 toilets. ~~The fact~~ The fact that the footpaths where people walk are very narrow has also become a problem.

If this kind of ~~overuse~~ <sup>beautiful</sup> continues the ~~beauty of the~~ nature on the island will be ruined. The next time people come to visit the island, the plan is to ~~collect~~ get them to pay an entrance fee. Then with this money we will staff the ~~shack~~ <sup>house/shack</sup> ~~building~~ on the island and building new toilets. It is very important to look after nature in this way.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

There are a small number of minor errors, such as the "The next time people come to visit the island" the tense in "by 2007 it has risen to". Nevertheless, this is a very careful and thorough translation.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Check your work very carefully, to make sure that you have not missed out any words.

This is an example of the work of a less able candidate. This piece was given a mark of 3.

Let's save Yakushima!

Yakushima is an island which is South West of Kyushu and about 60 Kilometres away. Yakushima is ~~one of the~~ the tallest place in Kyushu, with its height being 1936 metres above the ground and with its many mountains which are all ~~at~~ least 1000 metres tall.

In 1983 there were about 6000 ~~sightseers~~ tourists, but in 2007 this increased to 40000. However, there has also been a mountain climbing course for 30 years and so there are only 10 places for this. Also, another problem is that the paths which people walk on are also be coming eroded.

If this ~~overuse continues~~ kind of overuse continues, the island's beautiful natural resources will become completely ruined.

Next time, people who come to play on the island there will be plans for the people in charge of the natural resources of the island to meet the people who come to play on the island. Then, they will use money ~~and~~ <sup>to</sup> do such things as help the staff from the island's shop and help make the toilets new again. ~~This task~~ Doing these tasks to help save the ~~ress~~ natural resources of Yakushima is very important.



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### Examiner Comments

If we look at the second paragraph as an example, the numbers (60,000 and 400,000) have been incorrectly read, as mentioned above. The katakana word "toilet" does not seem to have been understood, and the "eroded" appears to be a guess from the general context of environmental protection.

"Resources" or "materials" came up a lot in the last paragraph as an error - presumably this was an attempt to make sense of the "ryo" kanji.



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### Examiner Tip

Make sure you keep going and keep trying all the way through - although this is an example of a less able candidate, they have picked up some marks all the way through.



## **Question 7**

Most candidates were able to answer at least 2 or 3 of the bullet points for the continuous writing, which was pleasing. Candidates should be reminded that they should address each of the bullet points; they should make sure that they write at least a basic answer to the bullet point (containing the key information asked for); but that they should also make every effort to expand on each bullet point, once they have covered the basic answer.

Many candidates took inspiration from the passage and wrote about a concert, although parties, various festivals and sponsored events were also popular themes to write about. Some candidates missed the second half of the third bullet point (why do you want these people to come). The fourth bullet point was designed to lift the intellectual demand of the question to give candidates the chance to write about the long term positive impact of their event. Some candidates did so, whilst others wrote very literally eg "after the concert we will all go out to a restaurant". Both were given marks, but the most able candidates should be encouraged to challenge themselves to include interesting and original ideas.

The quality of language was reasonable. The less able candidates need to be encouraged to work on accuracy rather than including as many AS grammar structures as possible. Sometimes when candidates had written a list of structures to include, these structures did duly appear in the essay, but they made little sense in context. Candidates would do better to learn fewer structures to a higher level of accuracy and appropriateness.

This is an example of a candidate who has done well by addressing the bullet points, and so scoring well on the "content and response" criterion. It was given a mark of 21, as all four of the bullet points have been addressed, with some expansion (ie task understood and developed successfully). It would be easier to spot the answers to the various bullet points if there were paragraphs.

This is just a reminder that there are 28 marks for "content and response", compared to the 18 available for "quality of language". If candidates are seeking to improve their marks, it is therefore possibly easier to move up a mark band on the "content and response" criterion than on the "quality of language" criterion. This candidate appears to have been extremely well prepared by his / her teacher to go all out to get the content marks, rather than trying to cram in as many AS grammatical structures as possible.

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Examiner Comments

The quality of language was given a 10. It is "satisfactory" at AS, in that the candidate clearly knows (and likes!) kamo shiremasen. There is also a couple of attempts at the use of "koto", one use of "node" and one use of "ho ga ii". Therefore this candidate is giving evidence that s/he has studied an AS course and has developed their knowledge of the language beyond GCSE level. The accuracy (particles etc.) is reasonable. More kanji would be good.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Do use basic kanji you know, such as "onna".  
Do write in paragraphs.

This is only the last page of the essay, but illustrates the quality of language produced by a candidate who would have been given a mark at the top end of the 12 - 15 (good communication) band.

Please write our first #by rugby.

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#### Examiner Comments

This candidate is clearly making a big effort to include lots of grammatical structures they have learnt - such as the relative clause right at the beginning (kino itta ragubii gemu), an (incorrect) attempt at toki, miemasu, the use of tame ni, koto, n desu and "te miru" right at the end.



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#### Examiner Tip

Make an effort to include AS grammatical structures where you know you can use them accurately.



## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

1. Candidates are aware that they need to use a wide range of kanji and vocabulary in producing their piece of continuous writing, and should be encouraged to continue to do so.
2. Candidates should be encouraged to write appropriately on genko yoshi. They should also be reminded to set their work out in logical paragraphs.
3. All candidates should be encouraged to at least attempt the translation, however poorly they think they may do, and to find one or two easy sentences and tackle those, if nothing else.
4. Candidates should be reminded that there are up to 5 marks available for the quality of language used when answering the reading comprehension questions at the end of section A. They should be encouraged to answer these questions writing in full sentences, using good grammar and kanji.
5. Native speakers of Chinese and Korean should be made aware that this is a Japanese examination and they must write in Japanese - they will not be given credit for writing whole sentences in Chinese or Korean.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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