

Examiners' Report June 2017

GCSE Japanese 4 5JA04 01





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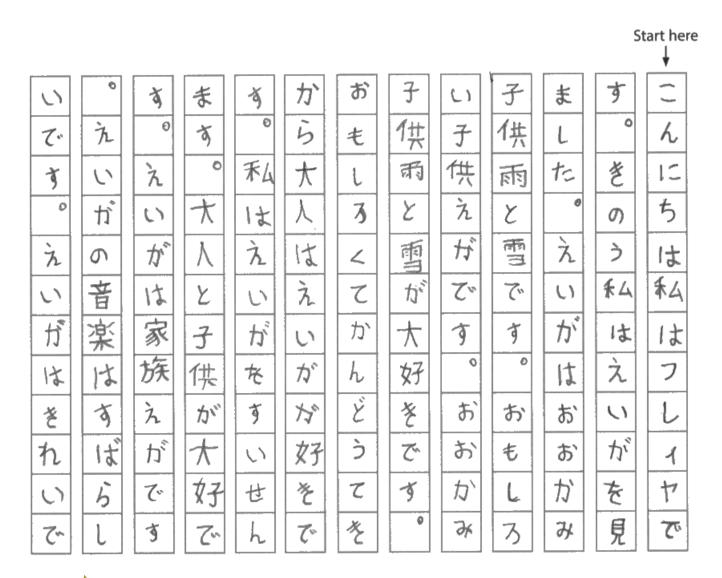
Introduction

The 2017 Japanese GCSE writing paper was broadly similar to that of previous years, and caused no particular difficulties for candidates. Candidates showed evidence of being very thoroughly prepared for this examination by their teachers.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates made a good attempt at including details about the film they had seen, although sometimes their 'katanaka' transcription was inaccurate, making the work hard to read. They were weaker on explaining why an adult might enjoy watching the film.

This is an example of a candidate who has covered the basics well, both in terms of language and in terms of content.



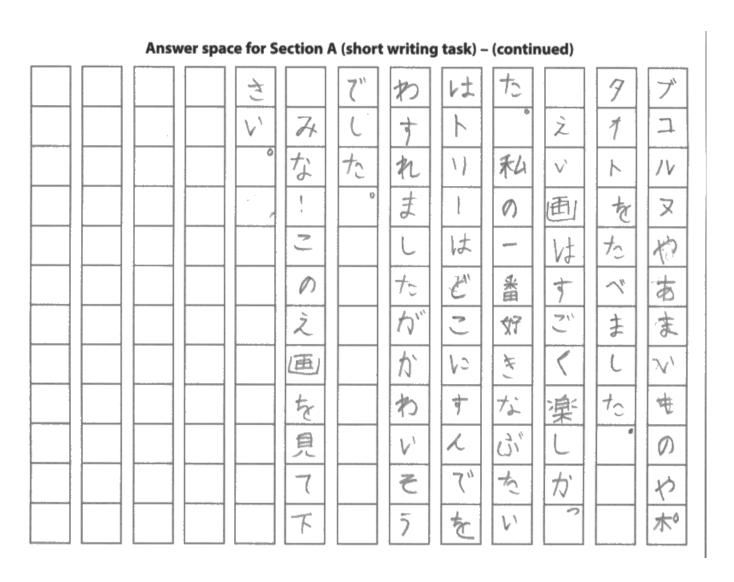


The communication and content was given 6, as most of the task is completed and relevant information conveyed, although there is no expansion. The knowledge and application of language was given 5 as there is an adequate but predictable range of vocabulary and structures, with correct syntax in simple, short sentences.



Do write in paragraphs.

Compared to the previous piece, this response has more detail and has been set out in paragraphs. There is also an appeal at the end, encouraging the reader to watch the film.



Answer space for Section A (short writing task)





This piece was given 8 for both communication and content, as there is a detailed response to the stimulus. It was also given 8 for knowledge and application of language, as there are a variety of structures, such as tanoshikatta and a 'kara' for giving a reason.

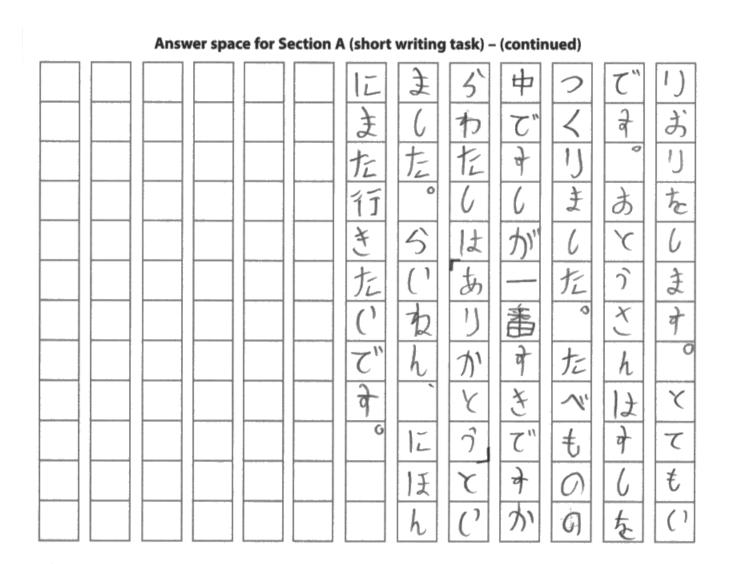


This candidate commented on the voice of the actress - if you can think of something slightly unusual that other candidates may not say, as this candidate has done, this will catch the reader's attention.

Question 1 (b)

This question was extremely popular, with many candidates describing their favourite activities in Japan. The best candidates were able to apply what they had learnt about Japan in class to mention specific Japanese cultural activities as being of interest.

This is the work of a strong candidate who has thought about the question and has written relevant content in response to the bullet points.



Answer space for Section A (short writing task) Start here 九 17 を 思 た 151 H h 宋 t a 3 ŧ あ 1 वे 忆 4 E # L ば お # बे d 0 ने ま £ 1 12 H d 0 4 さ

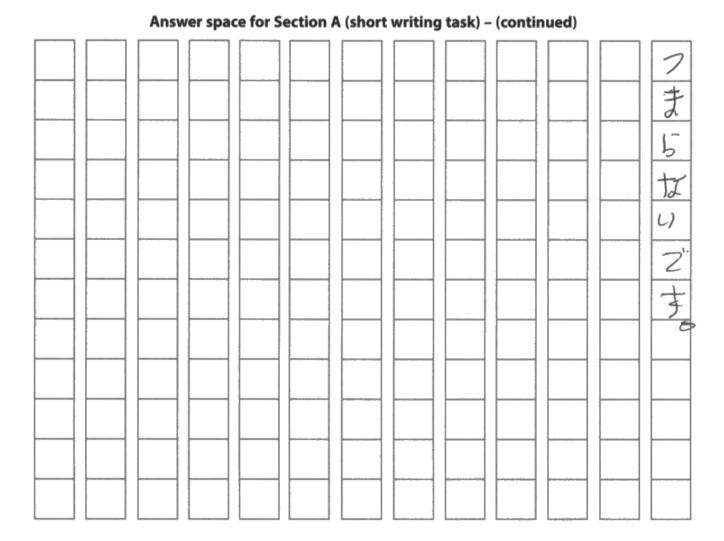


This piece was given 8 for communication and content as there is description and opinion. To score higher, perhaps the candidate could have invented a simple story about something s/he did with the host family and narrated that. The inclusion of the word and phrase "hanabi" and "kawa de oyogu" were creative and interesting, although one does rather get the impression that these were only there to facilitate the inclusion of more complicated grammatical structures. The knowledge and application of language was given 9, as there were correct usages of complex grammatical structures such as to omoimasu, tari tari and koto ga dekimasu.



Learn to write some basic kanji, such as those for family members and the word "Japan".

This candidate used their knowledge about sport to cover the "activities you enjoyed" part of the question, which is absolutely fine.



Answer space for Section A (short writing task)

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This pieces was given 3 for communication and content, as one of the bullet points (why you enjoyed your homestay) has not been addressed, meaning that there is a major omission.

The knowledge and application of language was given 4, as the sentences are predominantly short, with many mistakes.



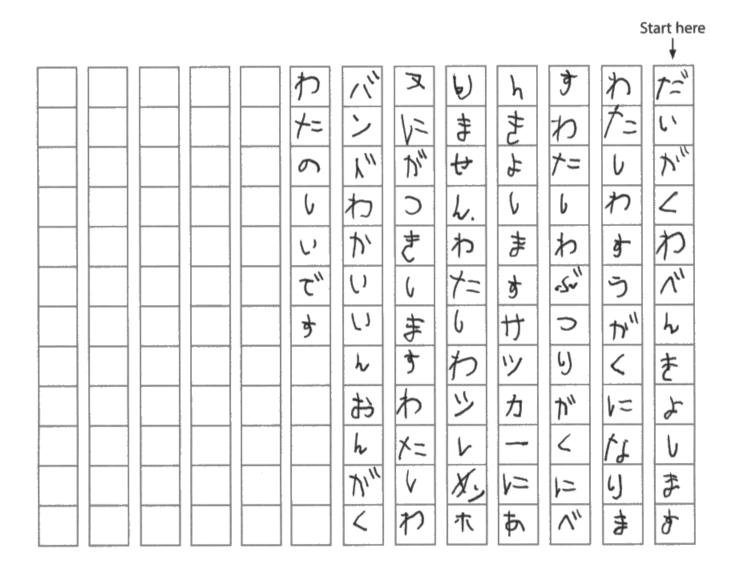
Make sure you address all the bullet points given in the question.

Question 1 (c)

This question was not chosen by many candidates. Those who did best made a clear distinction between the first bullet point about the courses they wished to study and the second bullet point about extra-curricular activities.

This is the work of a weak candidate, although credit was given for the fact that they tried hard and wrote a few lines.

Answer space for Section A (short writing task)





The communication and content was given 3, as there is some basic information about the subjects you will study at university (maths and physics), and some basic information about the extra curricular activities (band, music, football?).

The knowledge and application of language was given 2, as there are no error free sentences.

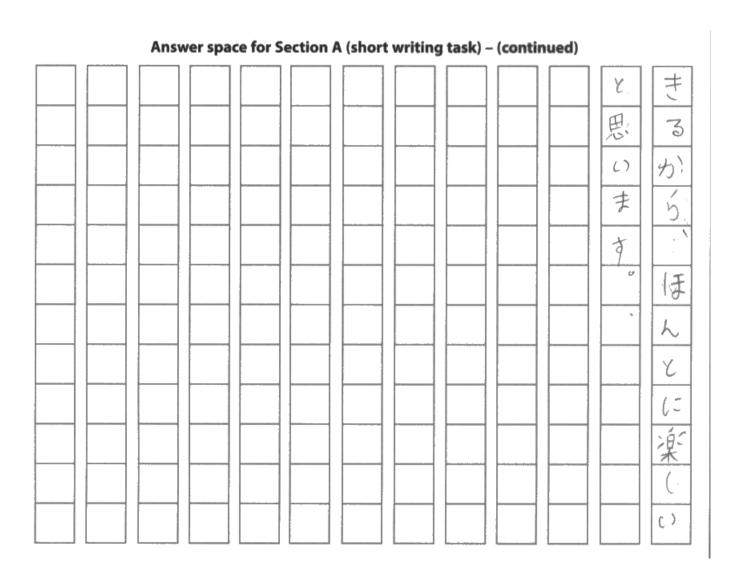


Use full stops.
Be careful when copying out words from the dictionary - some characters need to be written small, and the line for the long vowel in katakana goes down when you are writing down.

Question 1 (d)

Again this question was not very popular. The candidates who tackled it were generally able to give some details about the proposed festival, but were weaker on saying why local Japanese families should attend the festival.

This is a candidate who is clearly reasonably comfortable and confident in writing Japanese, but has not scored the very highest marks for the content, as far more detailed information could have been given.



Answer space for Section A (short writing task)





The knowledge and application of language was given 9, as there are complicated structures such as koto mo dekimasu and to omoimasu.

The communication and content was given 7, as although the bullet points have been addressed, the piece could not be described as 'very detailed and fully relevant.'

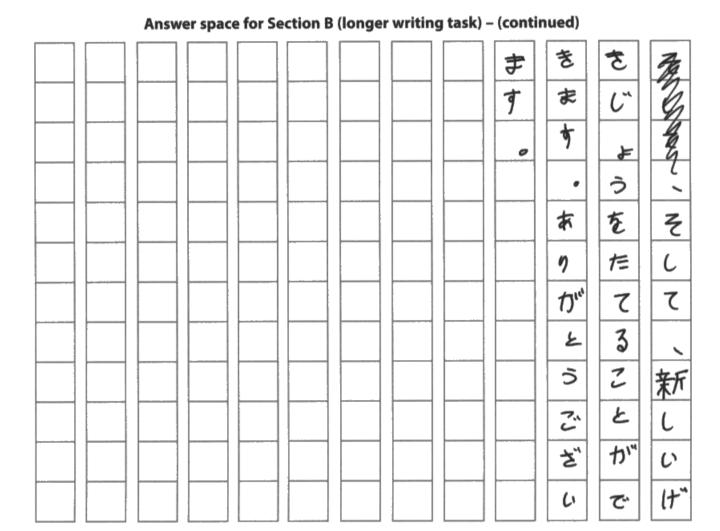


Make sure you write as much as you can - try to include details, examples and opinions.

Question 2 (a)

This question was not very popular. The biggest problem for the candidates who tackled it was to clearly address the three different aspects required in the three bullet points. The content was often presented as one continuous thought, making it hard for the examiners (and presumably the candidate too) to know whether each of the aspects had been clearly addressed.

This piece is a case in point.



Answer space for Section B (longer writing task) – (continued)

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	見たいですから、たく	見たいですから、たく	見たいですから、たくくなんの人がこのツョ	見たいですから、たくとなんの人がこのツョ	見たしてするなぜから、たくとなんの人がこのツョ	見たしてするなぜから、たくとなんの人がこのからです。なぜからでするを有気をあるからです	見たいでするながら、たくとさんの人がこの物語はこの町でするながらなった。ながらでするを有くなった。ながらなった。ながらなった。	見たいでするながないですから、たくとです。なぜんらんの人がこのからですがなったがでいるがったがら、この町ののからです。	見たいでするるがこのから、たくさんの人がこのが語ばこのから、この町のからでする。なぜなら、この町のがおこのからでする。	見たいでするながにいたてものりました。ながはいっても有くながら、たくさんの人がこのがおけこの町のがおけるのから、たくさんの人がこのがよってもののようながら、たくさんの人がこのがら、たくさんの人がこのがら、たくさんの人がこのがある。	見たしても高いですから、たくさんの人がこのが行けたいですがないですから、いつもののが記げこの町のから、この町のするもののする。



Answer space for Section B (longer writing task)





The candidate has given reasonable details about the show, and in particular the idea that the show is about the history of the town is a clever twist. However, the description of the old hall (it's old and there is no electricity in the entrance area) is presented together with the reasons why it is important for the community to have a modern theatre, meaning that neither bullet point is covered as fully as it could have been. For example, the candidate could have added that the school and Scout groups want to put on shows and don't have a suitable space, or you could start up a youth drama group if you had a new hall.

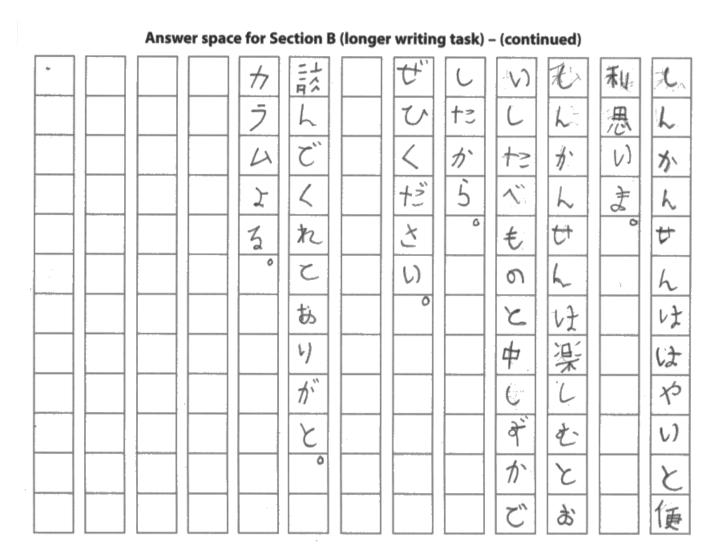


It's okay to cover two bullet points together, but if you do this, make sure that there is sufficient detail to cover both aspects.

Question 2 (b)

This question was extremely popular, although the number of candidates who did not know the word "shinkansen" and wrote "buretto densha" or "buretto torein" was surprising.

This is an example of a candidate who has done extremely well on communication and content by making sure that they covered all the bullet points, even though the quality of their language and accuracy is relatively basic.



Answer space for Section B (longer writing task)





The communication and content was given 10. By making sure each of the bullet points has been addressed, the candidate has given evidence of description, opinion and expansion.



Remember to indent one square for a new paragraph. You don't need to leave complete blank lines between paragraphs.

This is the work of a strong candidate.



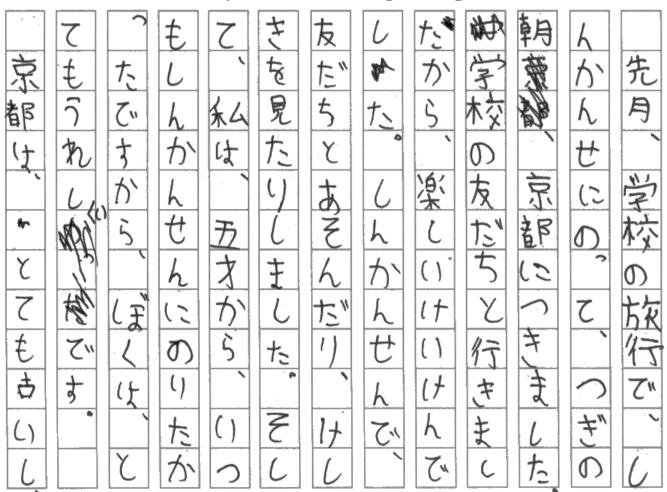
TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS TOTAL FOR PAPER = 50 MARKS

Answer space for Section B (longer writing task) – (continued)

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Start here

Answer space for Section B (longer writing task)





The quality of language and accuracy are both very good. The content was excellent on the first two pages, but on the third page the candidate has slightly gone off on a tangent and is giving their opinion about the school trip as a whole rather than their first trip on a bullet train, which was a shame.

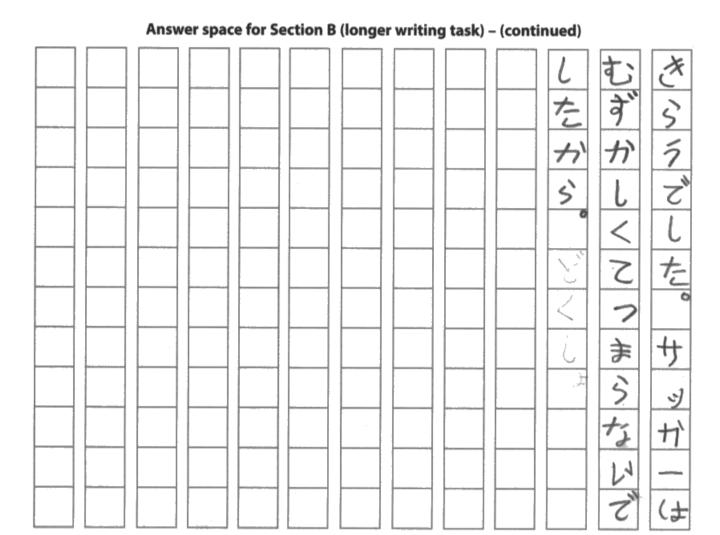


Make sure you don't accidentally slip into writing things that are not quite relevant to what was asked: keep a focus on the precise nature of the question throughout the exam.

Question 2 (c)

Those who chose this question on the whole did very well with it. Perhaps they had some pre-learnt material from their oral or classwork about previous work experience working with children.

The bullet points have been covered, but the whole piece is quite short. The candidate would have scored more both on communication and content, and knowledge and application of language, had they written more.



Answer space for Section B (longer writing task)

Start here





The candidate has made an attempt to say something about each of the bullet points, although it is not clear whether the opinions are about the children and the tennis, or about the work experience overall (which was what was required by the question). A candidate who has this level of language should have been able to develop the content more fully. They may benefit from being encouraged to produce an essay plan outlining all their ideas before starting to write.

Although the candidate has made some attempt at using more complicated grammar, they have not written at sufficient length and with sufficient variety to score in the top mark band for knowledge and application of language. The accuracy was given 4.

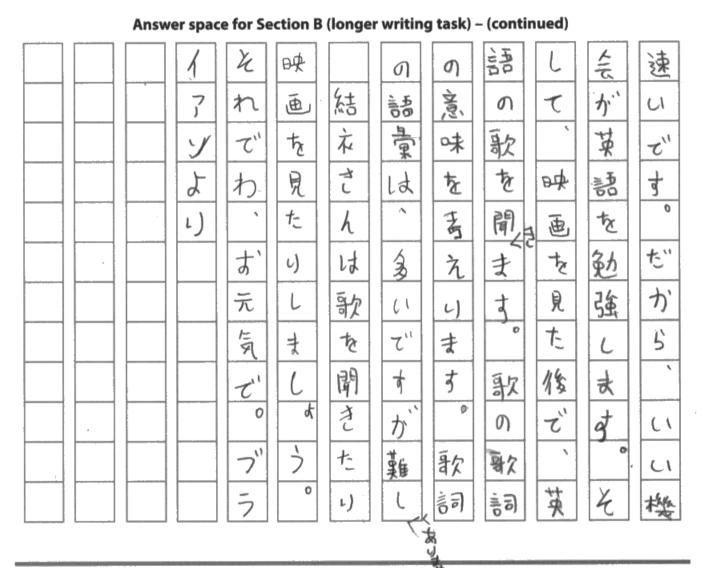


Make sure you keep an eye on the time in the exam so that you have enough time even to finish the last bullet point on the last question.

Question 2 (d)

The candidates who chose this question were generally able to write about the importance of learning English and good jobs you could do using your English, but were weaker at including practical, creative ideas of how to study English.

This is the work of a strong candidate.



TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS

Answer space for Section B (longer writing task) – (continued)

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Answer space for Section B (longer writing task)





The communication and content was given 14, as the candidate has covered all 3 bullet points and given good details for each. The knowledge and application of language was given 9 as there are some complex vocabulary and structures used. The piece is generally accurate so was given an accuracy mark of 4.



This candidate has used many difficult kanji compounds - whether they were learnt or copied out of the dictionary, the range and difficulty of the kanji used are impressive.

This is the work of a weak candidate, who is over-relying on the dictionary.





Quite why the candidate is writing about Turkish rather than English is a mystery. The middle section is very hard to understand as the candidate has simply copied out words from the dictionary and has not used them in any way in a grammatical sentence.



Learn some basic sentence patterns (eg Watashi wa ** ga suki desu, ** wa omoshiroi desu) from memory, so that you have some language at your finger-tips to answer the exam questions, and you don't have to keep turning to the dictionary for every word.

Paper Summary

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

- · Keep an eye on grammatical structure, vocabulary and kanji writing
- Write in logical paragraphs
- Write using logical connectives
- Pay close attention to the bullet points in the questions
- Address each bullet point accurately and concisely
- Pay close attention to time in the exam
- When writing essays, have a plan in mind

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