

JAPANESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0519/02
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- read all instructions, questions and texts very carefully;
- keep to the required length for writing tasks;
- answer comprehension questions with brief but focused answers;
- allocate time to check their work;
- ensure that all questions have been answered;
- make any alterations to answers clear, leaving the Examiner in no doubt as to what is the final answer

General comments

All candidates managed to attempt all sections of the question paper, and a good performance was seen overall. Candidates seemed well-prepared, particularly for the writing section. Many candidates showed that they had a good understanding of the reading passages and were able to answer the questions well. It is not always necessary for candidates to formulate their answers in their own words at this level. Candidates are reminded to answer in the spaces provided on the question paper. Candidates can take a cue as to how much they are expected to write from the size of the space given. Often a brief answer is sufficient.

This year, a number of mistakes were seen in the use of hiragana letters:

ま / も

- まつり→もつり
- のりもの→まりまの
- おもしろい→おもしろい

さ / ち

- ともだち→ともださ

Candidates should be reminded of the need to learn the correct spelling of hiragana words, particularly as a wrong spelling may change the meaning of what they were intending to write.

Candidates should be reminded to read the questions carefully before they begin, and to check their answers thoroughly after they have finished this examination.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

The vast majority of candidates acquitted themselves very well in this section, with many achieving full or nearly full marks in each exercise.

Exercise 1 Questions 1 – 5

The majority of candidates answered these multiple choice questions confidently. **Questions 2 and 3** proved to be the most difficult amongst candidates.

(Total 5)

Exercise 2 Questions 6 - 10

The majority of candidates handled this exercise very well. Most candidates were able to identify the correct answer to **Question 7** whilst several candidates had difficulty with **Question 8**, with many choosing A instead of E. Candidates are reminded that each picture matches only one sentence and therefore the same picture cannot be used more than once.

Exercise 3

Questions 11 - 15

Overall, candidates coped well with this short passage about a marathon. Not all candidates seemed familiar with the question words *what*, *when*, *where* etc. Candidates are not required to respond with a complete sentence, and it is usually better to keep answers short in this section in order to maintain accuracy in responses.

The majority of candidates managed to answer **Question 11** and **Question 12** correctly. Candidates who did not receive a mark for **Question 12** most commonly answered 子どもコースとマラソンコースがある。 In **Question 14** the most common mistake made by candidates was to say that people have to run at nine o'clock. In **Question 15**, most candidates managed to provide a correct response, despite of a few errors such as あなたの名前とどちらのコースか書いておくる。

Exercise 4

Question 16

Most candidates were well prepared for this short writing exercise, with some showing fluent communication skills in the target language.

In order to be awarded marks for Communication, candidates were required to address the bullet points given in the question.

Once again, some candidates this year mixed up the polite form and the plain form, which is inappropriate in Japanese. Some candidates did not manage to create grammatically correct past structures with i-adjectives or could not form the simple past tense accurately.

A few candidates did not attempt this section.

Section 2

This part of the examination was handled well by the majority of candidates again this year. In **Exercise 1**, many candidates managed to show their understanding of the passage by responding well to the comprehension questions asked. Candidates are reminded to be careful when a question requires two answers, presented as **(i)** and **(ii)**; they should write one answer on each line. Candidates will be credited if they write both correct answers on line one, but if they write both correct answers on line one, and an incorrect answer on line two, only one mark can be awarded.

In **Exercise 2**, many candidates created very imaginative compositions, showing excellent grammatical knowledge.

Exercise 1

Questions 17 - 24

The vast majority of candidates managed to locate the answers in the passage, and responded to the questions successfully. Some excellent answers were seen in this section. Candidates should be aware that they are allowed to extract text from the passage and use it in their answers, which means that they do not have to write in their own words for this exercise.

Question 17

All candidates handled this question very well.

Question 18

A few candidates seemed unfamiliar with the word きょうだい.

Question 19

Most candidates correctly answered that Hiroki's father is a pilot. A few candidates said that Hiroki's father goes to different countries, which was also accepted.

Question 20

Many candidates correctly identified that Hiroki's mother "works in an office or company". Some common incorrect answers were "company" "pilot" or "she works from early morning to late night".

Question 21

Most candidates handled this question well. Candidates who did not receive the mark for this question either just said "he goes to his grandmothers house" or "because Hiroki is busy".

Question 22

In this question, two points are required, and so two separate answer lines are provided. Most candidates managed to write answers using both lines, but some wrote both answers on one line, and then wrote something irrelevant on the other answer line.

Question 23

Candidates did not need to mention both school friends and teachers to get the mark, either was accepted.

Question 24

Many candidates responded well to this question. Examples of incorrect answers are:

いろいろなことをしたい / おばあさんの家事をてつだいたい / おばあさんのためにしたい (no object)
etc.

Exercise 2

Question 25

Most candidates attempted this writing exercise, and showed that they were capable of producing a competent piece of writing in Japanese. There were a number of candidates who did not include a response to the last bullet point in their composition. Candidates should be reminded that they cannot be awarded the full 10 marks for Communication unless they cover all the points asked in the question.

There are up to 5 marks for Accuracy. It is important to write about 200 characters to complete this question. Many candidates manipulated different verb forms and included a variety of correctly written adjectives and tenses. However, it was noticeable that candidates mixed up the polite and informal forms in their writing this year, which should not be used together in their writing at any time.

It was noticeable this year that fewer kanji were used in responses. Errors were seen in the formulation of the past tense and in connecting adjectives. Many candidates showed familiarity with using げんこうようし whilst others could improve by filling in each box appropriately and neatly.

For the mark scheme, please refer to the 0519 Japanese syllabus booklet.

Section 3

In these comprehension exercises, candidates need to demonstrate their understanding of the two reading passages and to answer **in Japanese**. They therefore need to read the passages and the questions carefully. Many candidates showed a high level of comprehension and successfully showed their ability in the target language.

Exercise 1

Questions 26 – 33

Overall, many candidates were able to perform to a high level in this exercise about Makoto's favourite mode of transport. Candidates are reminded that all answers must be drawn from information given in the passages. No credit can be given to answers written from the candidate's own knowledge, and candidates are not required to express their own opinions in their answers. It is important to read the questions carefully.

Question 26

Many candidates responded to this question correctly. Incorrect answers included how long Makoto has liked bikes.

Question 27

This question was found to be challenging. Incorrect answers included たんじょうびにバイクをもらった, 17さいのとき／のりたかった and so on.

Question 28

Most candidates managed to answer this question well.

Question 29

Several candidates provided answers to this question which were not found in the reading passage. Candidates are reminded that only answers conveying information given in the text can be credited.

Question 30

This question was found to be challenging by some.

Question 31

Most candidates responded to this question very well. Only a few candidates did not manage to answer correctly, offering answers such as 50さいのたんじょうびだった.

Question 32

Most candidates responded without any difficulties. Some candidates had tried hard to use their own words to answer the question, and unfortunately introduced some incorrect information into their response which invalidated the answer, e.g. ほっかいどうのでんとうてきな食べ物を食べておいしいと思う / 北海道に行って楽しい.

Question 33

Almost every candidate answered this question correctly.

Exercise 2

Questions 34 – 40

Many candidates attempted this exercise and managed extremely well. Some candidates managed to write answers in their own words. Candidates are reminded that they must write in Japanese. Some answers were given in English, which could not be given any credit.

Question 34

Most candidates answered this first question well. A few candidates had difficulty, saying
高校生があつまる。 / 何もなかった / ぶんかをする。

Question 35

This question was answered well by most candidates. Some common mistakes were いつもしずかだ /
町の人たちは いつもしずかだ or 町はいつもしずかだ。

Question 36

Many candidates responded well.

Question 37

A common mistake in this question was for candidates to answer: “watched a play in Chinese” instead of
“they did a play in Chinese”. More careful reading of the question could have prevented this mistake.

Question 38

Candidates found this question challenging.

Question 39

This question was not well-answered by candidates. The most common mistake was that they thought it was
“great that they can modern dance” or just simply said “the dance was great” which was not the appropriate
answer.

Question 40

A lot of candidates managed to respond to this question well. However, there were various incorrect answers
given such as “festivals are important” or “it is important to know this festival” or “to meet sixth formers from
various countries”.

JAPANESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0519/03

Speaking

Key messages

- Careful preparation by Examiners is essential.
- All task elements must be communicated, but one word or a short response may be sufficient.
- Examiners should advise candidates on their choice of topic.
- Examiners should make a clear distinction between Test 2 and Test 3.
- Failure to adhere closely to the set timing may disadvantage candidates.
- Examiners should vary the topics covered and should not ask all candidates the same series of questions.
- Candidates should be asked both expected and unexpected questions.
- To achieve the highest possible mark candidates do not have to be of native speaker standard.

General comments

A high level of performance was seen this year in both the Role-play and conversation sections, and candidates were clearly well-prepared for the requirements of the Speaking Test. In most Centres, the Speaking Test was conducted extremely well, with Examiners using skilful and sensitive questioning techniques to allow the candidates to show their ability in the target language. In many cases, it was evident that a wide variety of questions had been prepared, but Examiners must be careful to ensure their questions are appropriate for the ability of the candidate; if questions are too simple they may not give candidates the opportunity to give an extended response in which they can use more complex structures or tenses. Centres are also reminded that only Japanese should be spoken for the duration of the Speaking Test.

Most Centres adhered to the timings stipulated in the syllabus and the Teachers' notes booklet, but some Centres this year once again went over or under the prescribed timings for the Topic presentation/conversation and/or the General conversation test. Where conversations are short or missing, candidates will be disadvantaged.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

The vast majority of candidates had clearly practised for this exercise, and as a result they managed to show their communication skills well in each Role-play scenario. It should be remembered that whilst it is preferable for candidates' answers to relate to the pictures provided in the Role-play booklets, alternative answers can be given if they are appropriate in the context.

In order to give candidates the best possible chance of succeeding in this part of the test, Examiners should speak clearly and at an appropriate pace; in some cases this year, Examiners delivered their part of the Role-play very quickly, which made it difficult for candidates to understand them, and thus to respond.

Examiners should introduce the Role-plays in Japanese in order to make sure candidates are clear about the role they are going to assume.

Examiners generally prompted candidates when this was necessary, but there are still cases of Examiners not prompting when candidates miss out tasks – candidates should be encouraged to attempt all parts of each task.

A Role plays

Shopping at the supermarket

This role play was generally completed well.

Most candidates were able to say what they wanted to eat that evening as a main dish, but some had difficulty with Task 2, which asked them what they would like to eat with the main dish, despite a picture of a bowl of rice being given as a hint. Many candidates were also able to name all the desserts shown in Task 3.

Talking to a stranger

The majority of candidates performed well in this Role-play.

Candidates showed that they were able to cope with the tasks set, giving details of times, days of the week, as well as different activities.

Lost younger sister

Almost all candidates completed the Role-play tasks successfully.

B Role plays

These Role-plays were designed to be more challenging than the A Role-plays.

Meeting a friend

Candidates found aspects of this Role-play challenging. Some were not able to form a past-tense adjective in Task 1, and in Task 2, 'in front of' was not widely known. Tasks 3 and 5 were completed well by most.

Talking about a book

Most candidates carried out the specific tasks well. Task 4 proved to be the most challenging, as this required a more creative response.

Talking about a trip to Japan

The majority of candidates communicated all of the information required in this role play.

Task 4: most candidates managed to use adjectives well in this task.

Topic presentation and conversation

It was clear that candidates had prepared well for their presentations, with many candidates presenting very interesting topics. There was a good variety of topics this year and most candidates chose a topic appropriate to their level of Japanese, which enabled them to present it confidently. Centres are reminded to encourage candidates to include their own opinions and ideas in the presentation, as this will enable the Examiner to develop an interesting conversation that stretches the candidate.

Examiners are reminded to follow up the presentation with specific questions on the topics chosen by candidates, and to ask candidates to provide opinions and justifications and to use a variety of tenses in order to extend the candidates as far as possible. Examiners must remember the requirement for candidates to demonstrate that they can use past and future time-frames accurately in each conversation section. They should ask appropriate questions in order to give candidates every opportunity to fulfil this requirement.

General conversation

The Examiner should make a clear distinction between the Topic Presentation/Conversation and the General Conversation, so that candidates know what is expected of them.

Most Centres understood that this section of the test should focus on two or three of the examination topics listed in the syllabus. Examiners are reminded that a good questioning technique is to ask a series of linked questions in order to explore the topics in greater depth and to encourage better candidates to develop their answers and introduce more complex structures. Examiners must try to extend candidates as far as possible by giving them the opportunity to provide opinions and justifications and use a variety of tenses.

In some Centres, Examiners showed very sympathetic examining by asking less confident candidates some simple warm-up questions on more familiar topics before expanding into a more interesting and in-depth discussion.

Overall, Examiners generally succeeded in creating a relaxed atmosphere for candidates which helped to put them at their ease and perform to the best of their abilities.

JAPANESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0519/04
Continuous Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should follow the rubric closely.
- Candidates should make full use of the time allowed.
- Candidates should write the stipulated number of characters.
- Candidates should write what they know to be Japanese and avoid attempting to use language with which they are unfamiliar.
- Handwriting must be clearly legible

General Comments

The majority of candidates this year attempted both questions, and showed that they could successfully communicate in written Japanese. Candidates seemed well-prepared and familiar with the requirements of the examination. Most candidates managed to write the required numbers of characters, and responded to the questions. Candidates must remember that they need to address the tasks given in the bullet points in order to be awarded marks for communication; they should not simply write their own response to the overarching topic area. Taking a few minutes to plan before starting the composition would help in this respect, and also help to avoid repetition in responses.

It was noticeable this year that only a limited amount of kanji was used in the written responses, and knowledge of the kanji required for IGCSE was incomplete. The list of kanji required at this level is given in the syllabus, and candidates should be familiar with this, and aim to use these kanji in their writing.

Common mistakes made by candidates this year included apparent confusion in the use of から and ので in the same sentence, for example, 私は友だちになりたかったですからエマさんはやさしいです。

Improvements could also be made in connecting い adjectives and in forming the past tense of い adjectives.

Candidates should avoid using slang or colloquial words in their writing such as ちょう好き / めっちゃ大きい.

Greater familiarity with genkouyoushi, and the conventions for paragraphs and spaces would be beneficial to candidates. Candidates must be careful when they write small つ、や、ゆ、よ. Candidates should also use either the polite form or the plain form throughout each question, and not a mixture of both.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This question asked candidates to write about modes of transport, and the majority of candidates were familiar enough with the topic vocabulary to write a response. It is important for candidates to remember to address all of the bullet points. In order to do this, candidates must know a variety of question words; several candidates this year did not seem to understand どんなとき

The majority of candidates were able to talk about how they get to school, despite some grammatical mistakes in the use of particles, e.g. をのります instead of にのります. Many candidates were also able to give reasons as to why they think it is good to travel. Lots included the idea of travelling in Japan, which gave them the opportunity to talk about bullet trains.

The last bullet point asked candidates to think about what types of transport we might use in the future, and many candidates found this more imaginative task quite challenging. Some gave responses discussing the type of car they would like to drive in the future. However, stronger candidates gave a range of interesting examples, including flying cars and environmentally friendly cars.

Exercise 2

There was a range of performance seen in response to this exercise, which asked candidates to write about how they made a new friend last week. Candidates were expected to write in the past tense, and not all candidates managed this successfully. Some candidates mixed the past and present tenses, which made the narrative difficult to follow.

Many candidates used their imagination freely and managed to organise their ideas to create a story in the target language using appropriate vocabulary and advanced grammatical structures.

A common theme described by many candidates was for the encounter with the new friend to have taken place in a park and this was done well for the most part. Some candidates, rather than describing how they felt when they met their new friend for the first time, described the characteristics of their new friend in detail, such as their age, interests etc. Careful reading of the stimulus points would help to avoid the inclusion of such extraneous details, which use up valuable character space.

Most candidates also managed to write about why they wanted to be friends with their new acquaintance.

In terms of the language used, a common mistake was made in using *うれしい* for describing someone's personality, as in *友だちはたのしくてやさしくてうれしいです*