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Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE Japanese 6JA02 01

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Introduction

The new A2 examination is similar in style to the old A2, and therefore candidates seem to know exactly what to expect and be very well prepared by their teachers. Once again, there were some essays of exceptionally high standard for the topics and texts, and the amount of preparation and work that must have been put in by both teachers and candidates was evident.

Most candidates, including the very weakest, attempted all parts of the paper. Even the weakest candidates are making a reasonable attempt to understand the first passage and answer the questions, which is pleasing. The translation is the hardest section for candidates: they should be encouraged to write in simple, clear sentences, and learn the skills of paraphrasing / "talking around" any unknown vocabulary items.

Question 1

As already mentioned, most candidates attempted all the questions in this section. The easiest questions were (i) and (j) - so a note to future candidates to keep trying all the way through: the easiest questions are not necessarily all at the beginning.

Most candidates attempted, and correctly answered, the definition question in (a), which was pleasing.

(g) was difficult, with some candidates erroneously answering はい、ずっと続けてきました。

(k) proved very problematic, with many candidates failing to recognize that this was an "or" question. Candidates need further practice in identifying the different types of question and answering them appropriately.

Question 2

As mentioned above, most candidates made an attempt at the translation, although with varying degrees of success. Perhaps the fact that it was set out as bullet points and they could tackle each sentence in isolation encouraged them. It is important that candidates practice the skill of "talking around" a word they do not know - for example, many used 使える if they did not know 実用的 for "practical".

It was surprising to the examiners that so few candidates knew the word for "police" or "nurse". "Drugs" was also largely unknown, and whilst it is accepted that this is a more difficult lexical item, the topic is on the specification.

A sensible middle ground needs to be struck on the use of katakana for any unknown words. It is accepted as a possible strategy where there are a very small number of key words that the candidate does not know: however, if every other word has just been transcribed into katakana, the candidate is not going to score a high mark.

This is a typical response form an average candidate.

Please note that the translation is marked sentence by sentence; on the principle of 1 mark for fully (or nearly fully) correct, half marks for getting the main point across but with significant loss of information or grammatical errors, and 0 marks for anything below that.

目的な
いけんごの生活のワークショップが、バスの地域の三か学校
においた。学校で、三百六十年生たちをたした。

活動は：

- 大学校の最初年のお金について簡単に分かる話し合い。
- 楽しみになるたいそうのれんしゅう。
- ポリス・サービスのアラン・ティディマスさんによってドラッグについて話し合い。
- セクスの学習事について、ナースによって大抵ででんりがせつめいがある。
- 国内リハビリ者のアレクス・マクさんによって歩いてけんご目的な味食をりょうりする。
- 速くていじわりがドジボールのすめる。

この出来事のつがはしてもよからたので、将来年にもするた
らう。



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Examiner Comments

The passage has been attempted all the way through, and the basic structure of the sentences, together with the particles, are generally correct, which makes the passage comprehensible.

There is perhaps a slight over-use of katakana for unknown words.

The first sentence was given half marks although it is very close to a 1, and if the candidate had written 地方 rather than 地球 and perhaps 三つ rather than 三 it would have achieved 1 mark. The second sentence was given 0, as it would be incomprehensible to a native speaker of Japanese.

The 活動は was given half marks as the sentence did not finish.

All the bullet points were given half marks, as they correctly convey the basic idea, but have information missing, or have words in katakana which should have been known in Japanese etc. The only exception is the second bullet point 楽しみに成るたいそうのれんしゅう, which is not at all what the original said.

The last sentence was also given half marks, since the nuance of the sentence has been considerably simplified.

This gives a total mark of 4.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should concentrate on the subject and the verb, and try to get the main message across, even if they have to simplify quite a lot of the details. They should keep going all the way through, right to the end. They will invariably pick up valuable marks.

This is typical of a very good candidate.

シックスフォーム生活を、けんこうを「選ぶ」

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ けんこうてきな生活のための「7-ステップ」が
バスエリアの三校で「開かれました」。学校一つにつき、三百人
ほどのシックスフォー~~ーム~~~~ーム~~が「出席しました」。

した事の中には、このような「もの」がありました:

- ・大学の一年目に ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ お金をどう使えば「いいか」についての
簡単な話し。
- ・リラックスするためのシンプルな運動のデモンストレーション。
- ・~~警察~~ 警察官のアラウンドシステムがまとめた健康~~学~~物についての
の「議論」。
- ・お医者さんによる、大切に「~~実際~~」に役に立つ「~~健康~~」事をまとめた
中学生教育。
- ・~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 近くに住む ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ シェアアパルトメント
マズによる、体に良くて、かつ安い食事の ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 料理方法
のデモンストレーション。
- ・投げ、取る、そしてもちろ、よけるゲーム、 ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ホール ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
イントロダクション。

イベントは、大勢こうで、~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 人気があったから、来年か
らも開かれることになりそうです。



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Examiner Comments

The only major error is the お医者さん instead of "nurse", although it would have been nice if the candidate had come up with 紹介 instead of インタロダクション - it was presumed that they would know this word from their study of topics and texts. The second half of the last sentence is also subtly different from the original text.
The piece was given a mark of 9 overall.

Question 3 (a)

Please note that most comments apply to all topics and texts. Therefore this report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and / or comments, for a selection of questions. These questions will mainly be those which were more popular, as well as those for which there is evidence that they are actually being taught.

Q3(a) was very popular. Many candidates were able to give a detailed introduction to their chosen region, as well as a comprehensive introduction to famous places to visit.

This is typical of a response by a very strong candidate.

Answer space for your FIRST essay question

Start here
↓

阪	造	の	の	子	五	す	成		い	を	
の	で	人	ら	爆	年	る	っ	第	と	勉	私
ら	は	ら	ら	弾	ハ	に	た	二	思	強	は
国	な	長	崎	を	月	め	。	次	う	し	九
内	い	崎	を	長	九	に	三	世		に	州
線	の	訪	訪	崎	日	米	菱	界		ら	地
に	ご	れ	れ	市	に	国	造	大			方
乗		は	る	に	二	人	船	戦			
る	東	国	。	落	番	は	を	後		紹	特
事	京	際	外	と	目	一	は	有		介	に
に	や	空	国	多	の	九	は	名		し	長
成	大	国	多	く	原	四	い	に		に	崎

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

年	り	三	化	催	七	の		地	る	ぽ	有	る
に	の	四	財	と	日	諏	長	と	と	ん	名	。
一	一	年	に	れ	ひ	訪	崎	し	い	や	で	長
度	つ	に	指	る	ら	神	お	こ	い	皿	美	崎
'	だ	始	定	。	九	社	く	知	い	う	味	に
当	。	め	い	国	日	の	ん	ら	。	ど	し	行
番	セ	ら	こ	の	ま	祭	ち	れ	。	ん	い	っ
に	つ	れ	い	無	ご	礼	は	こ	。	を	い	た
成	の	に	家	形	の	だ	'	い	。	食	長	ら
っ	町	三	祭	民	三	。	長	る	。	べ	崎	'
こ	が	大	六	族	回	十	崎	。	。	て	ち	特
'	セ	祭	六	文	間	月	市			め	ゃ	に

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

人	ラ	コ		い	ご	め	る	ト	見	市	山	そ
と	バ	ツ	モ	経	と	女	。	バ	こ	の	車	の
子	ー	ト	し	験	な	の	男	せ	い	中	を	町
ど	に	ラ	こ	た	い	人	の	な	る	を	神	の
も	よ	ン	'	。	。	が	出	ど	人	引	前	決
の	っ	ド	ケ		ぜ	山	し	の	が	い	に	ン
た	こ	の	ラ		ひ	車	物	が	ホ	こ	モ	ボ
め	日	ト	バ		こ	を	が	あ	ー	踊	な	ル
に	本	マ	ー		こ	引	る	る	ラ	り	え	ご
建	人	ス	邱		も	く	た	。	ー	ま	る	も
こ	奥	。	は		楽	事		又	工	わ	。	あ
ら	と	グ	ス		し	は			ヤ	る	又	る

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

こ	所	味		一	宅	中	オ	ニ	ミ	に	と	れ
め	が	深	以	人	が	で	ペ	の	れ	ミ	庭	た
こ	あ	い	の	ら	見	は	ラ	ち	に	ふ	は	。
下	る	エ	上	の	れ	長	の	よ	。	ミ	三	一
た	の	ニ	う	の	る	崎	元	う	彼	れ	菱	九
ミ	ご	し	に	円	。	ご	と	ち	ら	こ	重	五
い	'	ク	'	だ	入	最	成	よ	の	'	工	七
。	せ	な	長	そ	場	古	。	天	話	市	に	年
	ひ	行	崎	う	料	の	に	人	は	民	上	に
	経	事	ご	だ	は	洋	。	と	フ	に	。	こ
	験	や	は	。	大	の	庭	言	ツ	公	こ	の
	し	名	興		人	住	の	う	子	開	市	家



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Examiner Comments

Note the use of kanji and vocabulary which must have been specifically learnt for this topic - eg 無形民族文化財, as well as the names of specific temples, foods, and dates. The consistent and correct use of plain form is also impressive, although by no means expected at A level.

The piece has been organised into coherent paragraphs, with clear introductory and concluding paragraphs.

The mark awarded was 12 (excellent) for content, 10 for organisation and development and 4 for quality of language. The quality of language is very nearly a 5, but there are some small errors particularly towards the end (the 600 for example should have been written in kanji).



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should take inspiration from this response - they should make a big effort to learn specific facts, lots of kanji and complicated sentences when preparing for their "topics and texts" essays.

Question 3 (b)

Q3(b) was not very popular with candidates. There were a few candidates who had clearly prepared well to write about the economic development of their region, but on the whole candidates who tackled this question produced poor quality answers, lacking in knowledge of specific facts and initiatives to stimulate development.

Question 4 (a)

Q4(a), about the ageing Japanese society, was a very popular choice with native speaker candidates. However, as mentioned above, many of the responses were of very poor quality. Candidates are urged to put proper effort into preparing for this part of the examination.

This is included as an example of a candidate who has not prepared for this examination and therefore has scored poorly.

Answer space for your FIRST essay question

Start here



高	、	人	い	二	る	レ	う	題	可	、	世	こ
齡	自	人	ま	ゆ	人	と	な	に	。高	界	こ	
化	分	達	可	に	と	う	テ	な	。実	に	数	
社	の	の	。	別	、	か	×	、	際	化	年	
会	の	方	ま	り	定	？	リ	こ	二	社	、	
に	意	か	ず	こ	年	今	ッ	い	こ	会	日	
は	見	う	。	証	退	回	ト	ま	い	か	本	
関	て	考	定	し	職	は	が	す	ス	進	は	
係	が	え	年	た	し	働	あ	か	な	ん	出	
な	、	ま	退	い	た	い	る	び	と	で	生	
い	特	す	職	こ	人	こ	日	の	で	い	率	
こ	に	が	し	思	の	い	て	よ	話	ま	が	



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Examiner Comments

Most of this first page is introductory: ie the candidate has written one quarter of the required amount and not yet said anything which is going to get them any marks. The last two lines 自分の意見ですが, giving their own opinion rather than factual knowledge, and the claim 特に高齢化社会には関係ない, basically not accepting the question as posed in the examination paper, do not bode well for the rest of the answer.

Note also the total lack of paragraphs and the commas at the top of lines - candidates taking an A level should be able to set their work out correctly.

The mark given was 5 for content, 6 for organisation and development and 5 for quality of language.

Question 4 (b)

Q4(b), asking about 国民の祝日 was not a very popular choice with candidates. Detailed knowledge of at least two of the national holidays was expected, although it was accepted that, due to the constraint of word counts, candidates could not cover all of the national holidays and still give sufficient details. A detailed explanation of two or three of the holidays would have scored higher marks than a superficial run through all of them.

Question 5 (a)

Many candidates found it hard to structure their answer to Q5(a). The most successful candidates gave a brief description of both 子供の日 and 七五三, before writing one paragraph on the similarities and one paragraph on the differences.

Question 5 (b)

Q5(b) was popular with native speaker candidates. There were problems namely that candidates wrote about the 文化祭 in their own (Japanese) school and how much they enjoyed the experience, rather than demonstrating objective knowledge about the society of Japan.

Question 6 (a)

Q6(a) was a very popular question. Most candidates were able to give an outline of the story as well as providing at least one good point about the chosen story (typically 鼻). Candidates are reminded of the importance of reading the question carefully, and addressing the specific question given in the examination paper.

This would be typical of a candidate at the weaker end of the middle band. The fact that four legible pages have been written means it is not the work of one of the weakest candidates.

Answer space for your FIRST essay question

Start here
↓

こ	め	た。	う	は	下	目	は	セ	は	の	み	
い	に		イ	自	使	の	鼻	ッ	長	寺	ま	私
ま	'	内	ド	尊	で	理	が	子	い	の	し	は
し	い	供	に	ん	し	由	大	ぐ	鼻	内	た	芥
た。	3	の	き	で	た。	は	嫌	5	が	供	こ	川
	い	自	ず	し		長	ひ	じ	あ	ん	の	龍
あ	3	鼻	っ	た。	2	い	で	で	り	っ	こ	龍
る	事	短	け		っ	鼻	し	し	ま	い	の	行
日	を	く	れ	内	目	を	た。	た。	し	て	話	の
、	し	す	ま	供	の	と			た。		は	鼻
内	こ	る	まし	の	理	こ	一	内	内	内	池	を
供	み	た	し	の	由	も	っ	供	供	供	の	読
				つ					は	尾	屋	

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

の	人	が	と	内	で	な	短	ま	供	そ	は	の
に	達	わ	笑	内	も	っ	く	し	は	の	方	野
作	は	か	笑	供	、	こ	な	た	短	方	法	は
者	2	り	じ	の	池	、	り	結	く	法	を	京
々	っ	ま	ま	か	の	嬉	ま	果	す	は	聞	都
述	の	せ	し	あ	屋	く	し	は	方	簡	い	に
べ	金	ん	た	を	の	な	た	内	法	単	て	行
て	持	。	内	見	人	り	。	供	を	で	い	っ
い	ち	池	供	こ	達	ま	白	の	し	し	ま	こ
ま	が	の	は	、	は	し	界	鼻	た	。	し	、
し	あ	尾	理	も	。	た	は	は	。	内	た	医
た	る	の	由	っ	。	。	短	み	内	。	。	者

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

う	ま	し	次	の	嫌	た	て	気	嬉	思	尾	内
人	し	た	の	鼻	じ	。	、	持	く	い	の	供
は	た	。	鼻	は	で	結	内	ち	な	ま	人	は
い	。	内	は	か	し	局	供	が	る	し	達	困
な	内	供	昔	り	た	は	が	あ	。	た	は	っ
い	供	は	の	く	。	内	キ	り	。	。	。	こ
た	は	本	鼻	。	あ	供	ら	ま	で	も	か	い
る	も	当	が	。	る	は	な	し	も	、	わ	る
う	5	嬉	も	。	夜	。	。	た	、	内	い	。
一	僅	く	ど	。	、	鼻	。	。	内	供	そ	。
と	も	な	り	。	内	力	。	。	は	は	5	と
小	笑	り	ま	。	供	。	。	。	。	。	と	の

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

り	す		気	気	し	場	る	き	く	ち		さ
性		ま	持	持	た	場	く	ま	に	か	り	な
格	理由	た	ち	ち		物	こ	し	嫌	嫌	は	声
が	理由		が	も	の	の	読	た	な	嫌	人	と
あ	理由	こ	わ		の	気	み		気	わ	言	
る	内	の	か	内	尾	持	か	嫌	持	か	聞	い
か	供	話	り	供	の	ち	す	の	ち	り	の	ま
5	は	は	ま	の	人	が	い	話	嫌	ま	ん	し
で	嫌	少	し	自	達	わ	で	は	嫌	し	の	た
す	た	し	た	尊	嫌 が	か	し	お	嫌 し	た	中	
	い	悲		ん	笑	り	た	も	こ		気	
	へ	こ		の	5	ま		し	書	と	持	



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Examiner Comments

Three out of the four pages are essentially a re-telling of the story. The candidate has addressed the question about good points and bad points of the story on the last page; however, the candidate has not left themselves enough space to justify their opinions. For this reason it was given a mark of 6 for content. The essay does flow reasonably logically, and there are some paragraphs, so a 7 was given for organisation and development. The quality of language was given a 3, since although it is reasonably accurate, there is a tendency to shorter, simpler sentences, and not that much A2 level grammar.



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Examiner Tip

It's fine to include an outline of the story candidates are discussing, but they should keep it down to a reasonable length, to leave themselves enough room to fully discuss the question that is asked.

Question 6 (b)

Q6(b) was not a popular choice with candidates. Most were able to come up with one or two factors on both sides of the argument, but few were able to put all their arguments into a coherent essay, which built up a logical case overall.

Question 7 (a)

Q7(a) led to a very wide range of interesting responses. Any perspective was accepted, so long as the candidate had argued their case from the text and gave convincing supporting arguments. Quite often the candidate missed out the last part of the question which required them to give their own opinion.

Question 7 (b)

Q7(b) was tackled reasonably well by the candidates who attempted it. Many of them put their own essay into a wider context by saying their favourite scene was the final scene, and pointing out how Hoshi's works often have a twist at the end.

Question 8 (a)

デューク is clearly a popular choice with both candidates and teachers. Most candidates were able to write about the lady and the experiences she had on the day of the story, but found it harder to reflect on what she may have learnt from her experiences that day.

Question 8 (b)

Q8(b) was reasonably popular with candidates, but the responses were, on the whole, quite poor. Candidates tended either to write an event by event account of her day with comments like "this made her a little happier", or tended to write something along the lines of "in the beginning she was sad but at the end she was happier". Few were able to give a fuller, better justified response.

This was one of the stronger responses to this question.

Answer space for your FIRST essay (continued)

う	少	ま	僕	年	し	少	時	あ	持	け	か	犬
た	年	く	も	は	た	女	間	る	ち	い	ら	坊
と	は	た	愛			は	を	少	の	れ	消	は
言			し	少	最		過	年	ま	ず	え	じ
う	実	こ	こ	女	後	も	ぶ	と	ま		こ	じ
事	は	の	い	に	の	う	す	出	で	と	し	い
が		行	た	キ	場	泣	事	会	し	こ	ま	た
変	テ	動	よ	ス	面	ま	に	い	た	も		犬
が	ユ			を	で	ま	よ			悲	た	が
	一	少	と	く	は	せ		一	し	し	事	こ
た	ワ	女	言			ん	こ	緒	か	い	を	の
の	だ	は	い	「	少	で		に	し	気	受	世



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This is only page 3 of the essay, but note how the candidate has gone beyond just re-telling the story, and is really trying to explain his own thoughts about how the young lady's feelings had changed. He has justified his points from the text, and so this was given the top band (excellent) for content.

Paper Summary

To score high marks, candidates should:

- (1) Prepare thoroughly for their topics and texts. Detailed and specific knowledge of the topic or text is expected. This includes native speakers of Japanese. A candidate who walks into the examination with no preparation and writes an essay on 日本の高齢化社会 based on their grandmother's personal experience is not going to score high marks. Please remember that the A level is a serious academic qualification, allowing candidates to gain access to university.
- (2) Write a specific answer in response to the topics / texts question, and not just recite a pre-learnt "multi-purpose" essay.
- (3) Attempt the translation, being aware that they may need to re-write the passage in simple English as a first step.
- (4) Read the comprehension questions very carefully. They should be careful to identify the different kinds of questions (yes / no, "or" and information seeking) and answer appropriately.
- (5) Learn the correct use of 原稿用紙.

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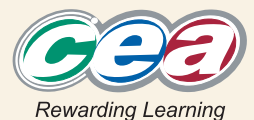
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