2020 Japanese (continuers) Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2020 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

The folio must contain 3–5 tasks and must include one of each of the following:

* Interaction
* Text Analysis
* Text Production.

Interaction

The Interaction is to be between 5–7 mins in length. The choice of topics is determined by the teacher.

The more successful responses commonly:

* allowed students to express and give opinions
* allowed students to discuss topics in depth
* were maintained in polite form
* included a range of complex grammatical structures
* were fluent and spontaneous
* responded accurately using the correct tense and with correct use of particles
* used a variety of communication strategies to maintain conversation
* showed flexibility and spontaneity in responding to questions
* demonstrated engagement in the interaction by actively offering additional details
* used a wide range of cohesive devices effectively to elaborate their responses.

The less successful responses commonly:

* included closed questions that did not allow for depth in the response
* followed a specific set of questions rather than following the natural flow of the conversation or the interest of the student, which did not encourage spontaneous discussion
* included long periods to process questions and formulate answers
* began with a self-introduction, which was not an interaction.

Text Production

The text production is a written text in Japanese. The text type, topic and length of the text production are chosen by the teacher. The text can be handwritten or typed.

The more successful responses commonly:

* allowed students to explore the topic in depth
* allowed students to be creative
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* demonstrated accuracy in the use of grammatical structures
* clearly demonstrated the purpose and audience (which was also made clear through the task design).

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth in ideas
* included only basic grammatical structures
* included many grammatical errors, including tense, spelling and particle errors
* did not include kanji characters prescribed in the SACE kanji list
* did not use connective devices to link ideas but instead used a number of simple sentences
* relied heavily on google translate/dictionary and meaning was unclear due to incorrect word choice
* did not include prescribed SACE grammar structures, but instead used difficult words and simple sentences to convey meaning.

Text Analysis

Students analyse a text in Japanese. This could be a written or spoken text. Questions relating to interpretation as well as language analysis must be included.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included responses to language analysis questions where students were able to discuss text types, purpose of the text, style of language used in the text etc.
* used language examples to support their findings
* demonstrated depth and breadth in their interpretation of meaning in texts.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not include analysis of language in texts (questions to address this assessment design criteria may not have been included)
* used evidence from the text as examples to support their findings
* included only responses to questions from past examinations papers (interpretation questions only)
* were marked on a number scheme, rather than assessed using the performance standards.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

The In-depth Study must include:

* Oral presentation in Japanese
* Written response in Japanese
* English reflection.

Each task must differ in context, purpose and audience. Common topics in 2020 included anime, sumo, Japanese food, tourist attractions, and geisha.

Oral Presentation in Japanese

The Oral Presentation is 3–5 minutes long.

The more successful responses commonly:

* discussed in depth the chosen topic, using current statistics and information related to the topic
* discussed current issues associated with the topic
* demonstrated a deep understanding of the researched topic
* were well structured in their presentation of the topic
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* were presented fluently, with very good pronunciation and intonation
* included a range of complex grammatical structures from the prescribed SACE list
* demonstrated clear and accurate pronunciation of more sophisticated vocabulary specific to the topic.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided basic and well-known information on the chosen topic
* presented with pronunciation and intonation errors which impeded meaning
* had imbedded voice into a series of Power Points — and the presentation was not sustained for 3–5 minutes
* included many errors with pronunciation and intonation, due to the number of difficult words used, without students understanding their meaning.

Written Response in Japanese

The Written Response in Japanese has a maximum character count of 600 characters. The text can be hand written or typed.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included in-depth information on their chosen topic in the written response
* included an extensive range of complex grammatical structures
* used a range of cohesive devices to link ideas
* wrote with excellent control of language
* wrote in diary form and expressed feelings about their experiences after the event
* explored the chosen IDS topic in a different context and used a different text type so that information could be shared differently to the Oral Presentation
* included interesting information and depth of ideas about the chosen topic
* adhered to the text type. (e.g. diary — was written in diary form and set up as a diary).

The less successful responses commonly:

* included little information relevant to the chosen topic
* did not write with accuracy
* did not include a variety of grammatical structures
* did not include a variety of cohesive structures to link ideas
* Were very similar or in some cases the same in content and context to the Oral Presentation in Japanese
* expressed information about their chosen IDS topic in a very simple way and lacked in depth
* did not follow a clearly designed structures or text type conventions.

English Reflection

The English Reflection is a maximum of 600 words in written form or an oral presentation of 5–7 minutes.

The more successful responses commonly:

* reflected critically on how cultures, values, and beliefs were represented in texts
* made connections between their own values and practices and with what they had explored through texts
* critically analysed texts and drew comparisons or differences between cultures.

The less successful responses commonly:

* based their reflection on the content of what they had learnt through the chosen topic
* described their own values, without making connections with those represented in texts
* discussed content researched about their chosen topic rather than reflected on cultures and values within their chosen topic
* reflected mainly on their own learning and the research process rather than on cultures and values.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Examination

Oral Examination

218 students attended the Japanese Continuers Oral Examination, which is nearly a twenty percent increase from the previous year. Overall, students demonstrated good conversation and discussion skills, with approximately 29% achieving an A grade.

Part 1: Conversation

The more successful students commonly:

* listened to the examiners carefully and comprehended questions thoroughly
* gave relevant responses in their own words
* did not reply with memorised answers
* comfortably went beyond the minimum answers by giving an appropriate amount of detail and information
* presented well-thought opinions and ideas with reasons
* expressed complex ideas accurately and effectively
* handled less-expected questions well
* demonstrated good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar
* spoke in complete sentences
* sought help/clarification effectively when needed
* spoke clearly with appropriate pace and voice volume
* maintained the natural flow of conversation e.g. by using fillers, confirming the question, and thanking the examiner when receiving help
* understood and used the formal register appropriately. e.g. お名前 vs. 名前, ご家族 vs. 家族, お兄さん vs. 兄, すみません、もういちどおねがいします vs. もういちど？

The less successful students commonly:

* demonstrated insufficient knowledge of Stage 2 level vocabulary and grammar
* did not fully understand the questions and gave irrelevant answers
* unsuccessfully tried to guess the meaning of a question instead of asking for clarification or help
* were unable to engage in natural/genuine conversation in Japanese (suggesting lack of preparation)
* relied on the question list from the SACE Board website and on rehearsed answers
* gave excessive answers through the recitation of long prepared answers
* did not have strategies to deal with unexpected questions
* could answer simple questions only
* gave short and minimum responses with little or no information/content
* spoke hesitantly with many unnatural pauses
* made frequent grammatical errors that impeded meaning. e.g. tense and particles
* did not understand when the same questions were asked in different ways. e.g. どのくらい/何回/何時間, 何で/どうやって, なぜ/どうして, ほうかご/じゅぎょうが終わってから, 学校で何を勉強して/学校のかもく
* Markers noted that several students were chewing gum during their oral examination, which was not appropriate.

Part 2: Discussion

The more successful students commonly:

* had chosen a suitable (i.e. manageable and sufficiently challenging) topic for their In-depth study
* demonstrated good understanding of own topic
* provided solid evidence of research. e.g. clear interpretation of books/websites used, not just the titles
* made use of appropriate and authoritative sources for research
* presented careful and insightful reflection on Japanese and own cultures, values, and practices
* effectively presented reflection on their own learning
* presented their main points of study accurately and effectively in the outline form. e.g. more specific and concise than general and broad
* thoroughly comprehended examiners’ questions and gave relevant answers in their own words and effectively responded to questions for which they had not rehearsed answers
* took part in genuine discussion without presenting a ‘speech’ on what they had learnt
* displayed a good understanding of subject-specific vocabulary
* used a wide range of expressions, both simple and complex, accurately, and effectively
* spoke in their own words rather than reciting memorised texts written by someone else
* engaged the audience (examiners) well using effective body language, eye contact, and intonation.

The less successful students commonly:

* did not fully understand the examination procedures and requirements. e.g. outline form, one-minute (not assessed) talk option
* had chosen a topic that was too difficult to handle for their language level
* had chosen a topic that was too broad or too simple to go into depth in discussion
* were unprepared/underprepared to talk about their main points on the outline form
* were unable to display sufficient knowledge of their topic
* did not provide good evidence of research. e.g. could not explain about books/websites used
* did not listen to entire questions, picked out key words (often from their dot points) and gave irrelevant responses
* did not understand basic expressions for IDS discussion. e.g. どうやって, どうして, 学びました, しらべました, 分かりました, 変わりました, 多い, 少ない, 文化, かんけい, いみ,ちがい/ちがう etc.
* did not understand or handle harder and/or less-expected questions
* relied heavily on memorised answers, which were too often long and irrelevant to the questions asked
* provided limited answers to reflection questions. e.g. おもしろかった、むずかしかった without being able to say what, why and/or how.

Written Examination

217 students sat the 2020 Japanese Continuers Written Examination. Students’ scores were spread over a wide range, with all questions discriminating students’ levels well. Overall results show the students’ sound knowledge and understanding of basic Japanese language at the SACE continuers level.

Question 3 in the Listening section was handled particularly well, followed by Questions 10 and 11 in the Writing section. Questions that proved to be the most challenging to many students were Questions 6 and 7, both in Reading and Responding B.

Section 1: Listening and Responding

Generally, there was a good understanding of the texts and the questions posed. Most students were able to identify basic information, but at times were unable to pick up and include finer and deeper detail from the texts. It is also advised that students read their answers to ensure that they are coherent and ‘make sense’.

Question 1

The more successful responses commonly:

* correctly identified that Chika was making the phone call as she thought she had lost the book that she had borrowed
* fully identified the instructions given by the man with accurate details.

The less successful responses commonly:

* stated that the book was merely overdue, not lost or misplaced
* wrote that Chika was enquiring about borrowing a book, or that she had ordered a book which had not yet arrived
* made errors with the monetary amount she would be required to pay of the book was not found.

Question 2

The more successful responses commonly:

* Displayed comprehensive understanding of who is likely to come to the audition.

The less successful responses commonly:

* contained incorrect information (e.g. must speak English rather than Japanese, must be able to drive (perhaps mistakingうんどう forうんてん)
* did not give all necessary details.

Question 3

The more successful responses commonly:

* correctly identified the two challenges that Robyn faced when she entered this school
* displayed comprehensive understanding of how Robyn’s visit to the school’s cultural festival opened opportunities in her life — made friends though the calligraphy club, became interested in Japanese and studied it hard, able to study at a Japanese university, now lives and works in Japan as an adult.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not include all necessary details.
* contained incorrect information (e.g. Robyn attended Judo, tea ceremony or newspaper club. She wants to enter a university to study and work in Japan in the future.)
* included relevant Japanese expressions from the text but not explain them in English (e.g. shodoubu in Romaji).

Question 4

The more successful responses commonly:

* displayed comprehensive understanding of what need to be included in the announcement.

The less successful responses commonly:

* misunderstood the context (e.g. advice for a tour, what to pack, where to meet)
* provided incorrect information (e.g. むすこ as the name of the child, red shoes/backpack)
* did not give specific information (e.g. ‘lost person’ without any description of the lost boy)
* omitted necessary information (e.g. If they see the boy, they need to contact the information centre.)
* contained Japanese expressions without English translation.

Question 5

The more successful responses commonly:

* provided perceptive comparison of Minako’s lifestyle with Yosuke’s lifestyle with all relevant details.

The less successful responses commonly:

* included inaccurate information (e.g. Yosuke works at a zoo, ‘inaka’ as a town name, Minako as a university student, Minako lives in London, Minako works at the train station, ‘pretty’ water rather than clean water)
* lacked comprehensive information.

Section 2: Reading and Responding (Part A)

This section proved the most challenging to many students. Students were asked to analyse and interpret two written texts which were related. For both Question 6 and Question 7, students appeared to either have a clear understanding of the texts or significantly miss the content.

Question 6

The more successful responses commonly:

* displayed comprehensive understanding of Michael’s culture shock in Japan
* displayed comprehensive understanding of why Michael ends his blog with ちょっとへんだと思う(it feels strange), noting the two phenomena that had seemed contradictory to him (i.e. Japanese people being environmentally conscious and having strict rules for recycling and yet consuming a lot of paper/plastic for wrapping).

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided inaccurate details (e.g. confused the idea of wrapping with availability of merchandise and/or the concept of recycling)
* only partially identified relevant information.

Question 7

The more successful responses commonly:

* identified and provided comprehensive explanation of two examples of Japan’s ‘wrapping culture’ in the text
* fully explained the meaning of the kanji 包 according to the text
* displayed comprehensive understanding of why the American friend was wrong when thinking よりラッピングのほうが (the wrapping was more important than the content).

The less successful responses commonly:

* displayed incorrect or partial understanding of the text
* demonstrated misunderstanding of the A よりB structure
* only partially explained the meaning of the kanji.

Section 2: Reading and Responding (Part B)

Students’ marks were spread broadly. The stimulus text was relatively simple to interpret, hence student’s responding skills largely contributed to their marks. Key points to respond to included: identifying the four proposed changes to school life outlined in the original email, acknowledging the classmate’s opinion on the proposed changes, and giving own opinion, and supporting your opinion with reasons.

Question 8

The more successful responses commonly:

* displayed accurate understanding of the question (e.g. context, audience, and purpose)
* identified and responded to relevant points in the stimulus text
* created the desired interest by elaborating ideas beyond the obvious
* included a wide range of effective expression with high degrees of accuracy (e.g. V なければならない、～と思う、V ことができる、V-potential form, ～すぎる、V たい、～そう、～かもしれない、A より B のほうが, ～よ／ね)
* displayed effective use of cohesive devices (e.g. でも、だから、から/ので、それから、つぎに、最後に、たとえば、たら、ても)
* observed the text type conventions and the word limit.

The less successful responses commonly:

* displayed only superficial understanding of the stimulus text (e.g. neglecting the context, purpose, audience, signing off the email with own name or けいちゃん with ちゃん)
* failed to identify the main responding points in the stimulus text
* conveyed only basic information in simple or fragmented sentences
* contained irrelevant content and went over the word limit
* contained frequent grammatical and spelling errors (e.g. basic verb/adjective conjugation)
* heavily relied on expressions from a dictionary.

Section 3: Writing in Japanese

Question 9

Question 9 was the most popular question chosen by 69% of the students. However, overall this question was handled least successfully amongst the three question options in this section.

The more successful responses commonly:

* described their experience of their fun day out in detail
* highlighted how they enjoyed the day without spending any money
* effectively established the context (e.g. why/how they did not have/spend money)
* applied a range of grammar effectively and accurately
* created a good flow and cohesion by using more sophisticated conjunctions (e.g. それに、じつは、しかも).

The less successful responses commonly:

* only described how they spend their day and not a fun day out
* demonstrated partial understanding of the text type without observing the diary entry conventions
* contained inconsistent use of register (e.g. mixed use of the plain form and the polite form)
* generally lacked detail and depth; stating what happened but no opinion or emotion was expressed
* contained many basic grammatical and spelling errors that impeded meaning (e.g. tense, particles, plain form)
* used expressions without considering the relevance or appropriateness (e.g. writing sentences for the sake of using particular grammar)
* were too short or incomplete.

Question 10

Only ten percent of the students chose this question, but most of the responses were very successful. Most students were able to articulate why it is important to help others using their own experience.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated clear understanding of the purpose of the text and the kind of writing
* focused on the importance of helping others, including positive effects on both the helper and the person/s being helped
* described their personal experience accurately
* used their personal experience effectively to support the message that they wanted to convey
* were structured well, and information and ideas were presented logically
* conveyed more complex ideas effectively within the word limit
* applied a range of grammar effectively and accurately.

The less successful responses commonly:

* displayed partial understanding of the question
* were limited to a description of personal experience, failing to convey the message about the importance of helping others
* generally lacked detail and depth
* contained a limited range of expressions
* contained many incorrect selections of words from the dictionary.

Question 11

About twenty percent of the students chose Question 11. Overall this question was handled well.

The more successful responses commonly:

* created the desired impact to encourage readers of the Japanese newspaper to visit your local area
* contained detailed and interesting description of the chosen area (e.g. what to do, why worth a visit, what is unique to the area)
* conveyed more complex ideas effectively within the word limit
* applied a range of grammar effectively and accurately.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not observe the text type conventions of an article (e.g. no title)
* lacked detail and depth, and did not engage the reader
* wrote about a specific local thing without telling what it was (e.g マイヤーがあります vs マイヤーというデパートがあります)
* contained a limited range of grammar (e.g. repetitive use of たり、たりします)
* contained many grammatical and spelling errors that impeded meaning
* heavily relied on expression from a dictionary.