

May 2013 subject reports

Japanese B

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 25	26 - 43	44 - 57	58 - 72	73 - 86	87 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 23	24 - 41	42 - 56	57 - 72	73 - 87	88 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

It was great to see that all centres uploaded their IA recordings electronically this year. However, some centres were still using the old 2/BIA forms. Please ensure that you download a fresh copy each year as forms are subject to change.

Although most centres followed the appropriate IA procedures, a handful still followed the IA specifications from the old curriculum, including the Part 3 general discussion, which is no longer part of the IA. Please also note that photographs must always be accompanied by a caption, and that the Part 2 discussions must at least begin with questions that probe further into the presentation and the topic under discussion.

The time allocation is 10 minutes in total, but some recordings were allowed to go on for over 15 minutes. Teachers should remain aware of the timing during the recording, and bring the examination to a close once the maximum time of 10 minutes has lapsed.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Productive skills. Most candidates spoke fluently with authenticity in pronunciation, intonation and register, albeit with a few errors. There was a noticeable amount of tension or of being nervous in some candidates' presentations, perhaps due to the unseen element of Part 1. Some of these candidates' productive skills became more fluid and expressive in Part 2, where the interaction with their teachers enhanced their production skills and output.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills. Most candidates were able to articulate complex ideas with regards to the topic and their teachers' questions or comments, through richer variety of vocabulary words and expressions. However, some of the candidates with less confidence needed some questions to be repeated or rephrased by the teacher and required more prompting, limiting their input and output to simple ideas. The level of 'complex' ideas seen reflected the degree of depth and extent of understand that the candidates had of the topic, as well as their ability to make connections with other relevant ideas and knowledge.

It was observed that some of the teachers spoke too much in Part 2 of the oral examinations, giving their opinions or explaining something for too long before they came to ask the candidates questions. It would serve the candidates better if teachers could make a brief comment only and then move the conversation on since time is limited.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Please encourage candidates to focus on Japanese culture from various aspects.
- Please encourage candidates to use a more formal register (desu/masu form), with full sentences, and not abbreviated or inverted forms.
- Please see SL Internal Assessment section for further recommendations.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

A wide range of work was submitted, from the very weak to the excellent. At the very weak end, please make sure that your main aim is to keep the candidate talking, not to prove to the moderator

how weak the candidate is. So if a candidate is struggling with questions of average difficulty, please feel free to simplify the questions to a level where they can respond and participate in the conversation.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Productive skills. Candidates were generally able to speak using a range of vocabulary. Sometimes the grammatical structures they used were quite repetitive and simple, and they would have benefitted from having been trained to use a wider variety of structures. Intonation and pronunciation were rarely a problem.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills. Candidates generally had a range of simple ideas which they were keen to present, and they did so clearly and coherently. Some of the best candidates did not stretch to more complex ideas, which was a shame as this did not allow them to score in the 9 / 10 band. Candidates were generally eager to participate in the conversation, which therefore flowed well. Most candidates had a range of strategies for when they did not quite understand what the teacher was asking.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Please do not feel that every candidate needs to be asked a broadly similar range of questions. It is perfectly acceptable to ask much harder, searching questions, which ask for them to justify opinions etc. of the strongest candidates, whilst asking much more basic questions about, for example, the content of the photograph to the weaker candidates. The most important thing is that the candidate does a good amount of talking (that is to say, there are few or no significantly long silent gaps on the recording) at a level in which they are "showing off" the best language they are capable of producing.
- Please read the Guide, and make sure that you are following the new Guide, not the old Guide (last examinations November 2012). In particular, please note that there is no longer a 3-part structure, but only a 2-part structure, and that the discussion in Part 2 is based on the presentation that the candidate has given. It is not a "general conversation" as used to happen in Part 3 of the individual oral in the old Guide.
- Please encourage candidates to speak using a wide variety of sentence patterns. They could usefully have practiced 2 or 3 different grammatical structures for giving their opinions.
- The photographs were generally well chosen by the teachers, and not only reflected Japanese culture but gave plenty of scope for discussion. However, more careful thought should be given to the caption. The caption needs to be in language which is accessible to the candidate (so no very difficult kanji) and give the candidate some sort of starting point around which to frame their presentation. Please note that although the same photograph may be used with up to 5 candidates, the captions for each candidate should be different.
- Please make sure that electronic files are saved and uploaded in one of the formats specified by the IB.
- Please make sure that the timings for the individual oral, given in the Guide, are adhered to.

- Please make sure that the candidate's name and candidate number are clearly recorded onto the sound file at the beginning of the oral. This is particularly important when the name the candidate uses is not the one given on the form. You, as the class teacher, will know that the candidate down on the register as "Jessica Brown" has always been called "Naomi san", but this is not at all obvious to the moderator.

Higher level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The work submitted by centres was generally suitable for the written assignment, with some authors and pieces appearing time and again due to their accessibility. The range of work was also good, with most candidates falling in the medium to top range; few candidates fell in the bottom range, which was pleasing.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language Candidates were generally able to write using a good range of vocabulary and grammar. Sometimes their style slipped between formal and informal, and they need to make sure that they write in a consistent style.

Criterion B: Content Candidates need to be aware that they should use the literary text in some way - a mere retelling of the story does not suffice. At the other extreme, candidates also need to be careful that their writing includes sufficient details from, or references to, the original piece of literature, particularly for example when they are writing an alternative ending. A piece of purely creative writing, perhaps in which just the protagonist is the same and all other details have been changed, will not score high marks either.

Criterion C: Format Candidates were generally able to choose a text type and stick with it. However, the text type chosen sometimes did not seem to be the most appropriate for the content (task) that the candidate set out to achieve. In other words, some pieces of work read as though the candidate had thought "I will write a letter", and then proceeded to write a letter (quite competently, with appropriate format etc.), without giving consideration as to whether the letter format would be the most appropriate for the ideas they wanted to explore.

Criterion D: Rationale Many candidates found it difficult to write a good rationale, and this is the one area in which teachers could give candidates a lot more guidance and preparation (as general class work, not specific individual help) before they carry out their assignment. Candidates often failed to appreciate what they had to include in their rationale, and sometimes seemed to be unclear as to why they were being asked to write a rationale at all.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Please make candidates aware that a mere re-telling of the story in their own words is not what is expected, nor will it score high marks.
- Please give candidates guidance on the most suitable format to choose for their piece of writing. While candidates seemed able to produce the correct format for, for example, a diary or a letter once they had chosen the format, sometimes the format chosen did not seem to be the most suitable for the content of what they were writing.
- Please give candidates guidance on how to write a good rationale. The maximum mark of 3 was very rarely awarded on this criterion. In particular, the "how the aim was achieved" is not interpreted as "I think I achieved the aim quite well, but next time I would improve it by doing XXX differently" (as was the case in the old A2). The "how" is interpreted as "I achieved the aim by selecting a particularly poignant moment in the XXX scene, and making explicit the character's thoughts in a diary, so that the main character begins to be more aware of the hidden motivations at work inside them" etc.
- **Please note that this is not official IB guidance**, but the Japanese examiners found it difficult to access some of the pieces of literature. Therefore, if the candidate has chosen a modern short story not easily available online (for e.g. Aozora bunko), it would be very helpful if teachers could photocopy the literary work and send it to the examiner together with the assignment. Of course this would not be expected of long novels (which are also generally known by the examiners), and if the text in question is on the internet, a web address will suffice. However, if it is a short piece of around 10 - 15 pages from a short story collection by a modern author, it would be very helpful to have the literary work attached for marking purposes.

Standard level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a reasonable range of work submitted, although it was noticeable that a lot of the work was on the theme of the environment, presumably because there is a large amount of material at a suitable level of Japanese easily accessible to teachers to choose as source texts.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language Candidates generally wrote well, using a reasonable range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and kanji. On the whole their quality of language felt slightly poorer than that

produced in paper 2, but perhaps this is because they were concentrating on reading sources and using the sources at the same time.

Criterion B: Content Many candidates failed to score well on this criterion, as they did not use the sources. Sometimes this was because the sources were just far too difficult for the candidates to read, and sometimes this was because the candidates did not understand the nature of the task.

Criterion C: Format Most candidates were able to write in a recognizable format. The most common text types chosen by candidates were text types used to persuade the audience, for example a speech, a newspaper article, a pamphlet etc.

Criterion D: Rationale Hardly any candidates were given the full 3 marks on this criterion. Please see fourth bullet point of recommendations below on what candidates should include in their Rationale.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Please make sure that the sources are suitable for B SL candidates, particularly in terms of kanji and grammar. Many centres had simply taken web pages with no cutting of difficult passages, or glossing of kanji, and it was clear to the markers that the candidates were unable to access the content on these pages. This meant that they scored a low mark on Criterion B. As a general guideline, the level of difficulty of the three source texts chosen by the teacher should be around the same level of difficulty as the texts that appear in Paper 1. Almost any text taken from a "real" source will need editing in terms of kanji and grammar. Kanji not included in the Japanese B Kanji list or are particularly difficult may be glossed or re-written in hiragana as the teacher chooses. Please note that it is highly inadvisable to simply download a webpage, or photocopy a newspaper article and give it to your candidates, unless those publications are intended for language learners – they are likely to be put at a huge disadvantage by doing so.
- Please make sure that candidates understand that their writing must be based on the sources. It is not an imaginative writing exercise on the theme of the sources.
- When you choose the sources, please make sure that there are good links between them, and that you can imagine several different written assignments that could arise from these sources, in which all three sources are used. Too often it was difficult for the markers to imagine how the candidates could possibly have used the sources in combination that they had been given by the teacher.
- The Rationale should include: What the candidate is going to write (i.e. a text type), Why they chose this theme and text type (i.e. the aim of the assignment) and How they achieved the aim (i.e. an explanation of how they used the sources). Please note that "How they achieved the aim" at B SL is not interpreted as a reflection on what they have done after they have written the assignment (i.e. "I enjoyed writing this assignment, but if I were doing it again I would strengthen the arguments against the building of the new dam), but rather how the sources were used (i.e. "I used the newspaper article to pick up some figures about power generation in Japan, the letter from the local school to understand the effect of the generating plant on the local population, and the website to check on local transport arrangements around the power station). Please see page 33 of the Guide.

- Please encourage candidates to use all 3 sources. Using only 1 source text, for example, will not score high marks in Criterion B.
- Candidates need to be taught phrases for paraphrasing and using information from the sources eg "ある若者向けのウェブサイトによると...." etc.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 15	16 - 26	27 - 35	36 - 43	44 - 52	53 - 60

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates failed to finish the paper or attempt every question. It seemed that getting through the required amount of reading material was demanding for many. Text B also appeared challenging for some candidates.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

On the whole, candidates appeared well prepared for all texts and question types with no obvious areas of weakness.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Passage A was about the 'Gohan de egao' project. Candidates generally did well on questions 1 - 3 (short answer questions). Questions 4 - 7 required candidates to select appropriate words from a range of options in order to complete the summary of the text, and they also did well here. Multiple choice questions 8 - 11 posed no problems.

Passage B was about unemployment rate of young people. Question 16 required candidates to choose 4 correct statements from a bank of statements. Many chose J instead of I. Questions 17 - 20 were multiple choice questions, with question 19 being the most demanding - many candidates chose option D instead of C.

Passage C was about using computer graphics to reproduce history. Questions 21 - 24 asked candidates to find words in the text to match the given definitions. Some candidates were not able to answer question 23 correctly, opting for words with a slightly different meaning. Questions 25 - 28 were short answer questions. In answering questions 25 and 26, some copied out large sections of the text in the hope of getting the mark (the 'scattergun' principle). However, this does not

demonstrate sufficient understanding of the text and/or the questions and therefore often they lost the mark. In question 27, some candidates did not pick up the name of the location in the past from the text, although they seemed to have understood that the question asked about the reasons for the venue.

Passage D was the literary text. Questions 33 - 37 were of the "true / false with justification" type. Here, some candidates wrote lengthy justifications, some failed to tick the correct box but provided the correct brief justification and some vice versa. Question 43 - 45 were short answer questions, of which questions 43 and 44 seemed the most challenging.

Passage E was about artificial intelligence. For short answer questions 46 - 49, candidates generally answered question 46 well. For question 47, some candidates wrote various expressions from the text that were not correct and therefore lost the mark. Conversely, for question 48, many candidates wrote various reasons using their own words, but in most cases the meaning conveyed was the same and therefore in such cases the mark was awarded. Questions 54 - 57 tested overall comprehension of the passage, and some candidates appeared to be challenged by these questions.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need to build up their vocabulary. Further exposure to a variety of texts in Japanese, as well as focused exercising on using synonyms, matching words to definitions, paraphrasing, summarising would be of benefit. Asking candidates to create their own questions on a particular text may also be a productive activity.
- Please continue to encourage candidates to read a wide variety of texts in Japanese in a limited time frame as there are now 5 texts to handle during the examination.
- Please discourage candidates from copying out long sections of the text when answering short answer questions. This does not help the candidates to gain the mark.
- Please make candidates aware that on the "true / false / justify" questions, they need to both indicate true / false and give a justification to get the mark. Often one half or the other was missing.
- Please remind candidates to write clearly especially in questions where a letter is required. Among ambiguous answers were C/G, E/F and A/D. As scripts are now scanned, clarity of handwriting becomes a more important issue.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 23	24 - 32	33 - 40	41 - 45

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates found getting through the required amount of reading material a challenge, and the weaker candidates did not finish the paper. Candidates found the question type "find the vocabulary from definitions given" challenging.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates appeared well prepared on all topics. They handled most question types competently. Short answer questions were handled particularly well.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Passage A was about tall buildings. Most candidates were able to answer the multiple choice questions 1 - 4, with 1 and 4 being the easiest. Most candidates attempted the short answer questions 5 - 7, which was pleasing. Quite a few candidates offered "Kingdom Tower" as an incorrect answer for question 5. Question 8 required candidates to choose 3 correct statements from a bank of statements and most candidates managed this well.

Passage B introduced various websites which had competitions on them. Questions 9 - 11 were short answer questions, with 11 being the easiest and 10 being the hardest. There was a tendency for candidates to copy out long chunks of the text, whether it was relevant or not. Questions 12 - 15 required candidates to fill in the gaps in a summary; this was generally well done, except that many candidates wrote "kenko" instead of "kankyo" for number 15. Questions 16 - 19 were of the "true / false with justification" type. Many candidates lost marks because they did not do both ticking the box and writing a justification. Please drill candidates in this type of question, as it is a great shame to see them losing marks on answering technique, when they appear to have understood the Japanese.

Passage C was about some students making a local food called "zundamochi". Questions 20 - 23 required candidates to match summary statements to paragraphs. Most candidates attempted these questions, with 20 proving to be the easiest. Questions 24 - 27 required candidates to find words in the passage from the definitions given. Candidates found this exercise extremely challenging, and many of the weaker candidates just left this section blank. Even the strongest candidates found "uemashita", to plant, difficult. The multiple choice questions 28 - 31 were tackled by most candidates, but found to be challenging. Question 29 seemed to be particularly difficult, perhaps because candidates did not know the word "kanko".

Passage D was about a gentleman who performs "kamishibai" for children. Questions 32 - 35 required the two halves of sentences to be matched: many candidates struggled to differentiate between "kikimasu" and "kikoemasu". Questions 36 - 39 were short answer questions; success on these was mixed, with candidates beginning to show indications of running out of time. "From 15 years ago" was often given as an incorrect answer to question 37. Perhaps because they were rushing, some candidates gave totally unreasonable answers - for example a place name in response to the question "when" - and it would be useful to make sure that they are all 100% secure on question words. Something was written in answer to the multiple choice questions 40 - 43 by most

candidates, but the weaker candidates seemed to be guessing, perhaps because they had run out of time.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Please train candidates to read quickly, and to develop the skills of skimming and scanning. If candidates are unlikely to finish the examination in the time available, examination strategies should be discussed with the teacher beforehand.
- Please continue to give candidates plenty of practice on vocabulary questions. They may benefit from producing lists of synonyms and antonyms, as well as practicing defining new words they are learning in Japanese.
- Please discourage candidates from copying out long sections of the text when answering short answer questions. They should look for the specific answer, rather than copying out what they think may be where the answer is, and hoping that the answer is in there somewhere.
- Please make candidates aware that on the "true / false / justify" questions, they need to both indicate true / false and give a justification to get the mark. Often one half or the other was missing.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 20	21 - 26	27 - 33	34 - 39	40 - 45

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates found the new Section B of the examination very difficult. It was very noticeable that many of the weakest candidates just missed out this section, and even the strongest candidates, who had scored very well in Section A, scored much lower marks in this part.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates generally appeared well prepared for Section A - candidates appeared comfortable writing on all topics and in all different text types.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1 required candidates to write a school newspaper article introducing the chance to go to a sister school in Japan. This question was reasonably popular. The candidates generally covered basic ideas about going to school in Japan, visiting famous tourist places and so on. They were also able to use appropriate language to make the opportunity sound attractive, and to appeal to younger pupils to participate in the programme. It was disappointing that the quality of ideas presented was often routine and not very creative or exciting.

Question 2 required candidates to write a letter to a Japanese family, introducing a traditional local event such as a festival. Many candidates wrote detailed letters with interesting details, clearly thinking the task through from the perspective of the Japanese person who does not know anything about the tradition. Sometimes candidates focussed on only one aspect (for example the food, the manners, the history of the festival etc.) and could have covered more aspects to produce a more rounded piece.

Question 3 required candidates to write a speech warning other students about the dangers of smoking and drinking. This was a highly popular question. Most candidates were able to make one or two points (for example cost, or health dangers), but some wrote exclusively about one point, and could have expanded their writing to include a range of arguments. Sometimes the language varied between formal and informal, and there was no consistency in the register.

Question 4 required candidates to write a pamphlet introducing a club / society at their school. Most candidates did one or the other half of the question - either wrote in detail about the hobby, or extolled the virtues of joining the club - but did not cover both halves of the question.

Question 5 imagined that a friend was seriously ill or injured, and asked for a diary entry dealing with your own feelings about your friend's situation and dreams of medicines or living aids which could be developed. On the whole this question was poorly tackled in terms of ideas, in that many candidates added very little to what had been given in the question.

Section B required candidates to respond to the statement "Knowledge is not only gained from books, but from interacting with others.", in any chosen text type. Firstly, far too many of the answers were not in any particular text type. While there are no marks available for text types, candidates are still strongly encouraged to write using a definite text type as it should help them to structure and deliver their ideas and arguments in a coherent way. Secondly, many of the answers were very brief and along the lines of "I agree with the statement". Please encourage candidates to look at the marking criteria, particularly criterion B, and to make sure that their piece of writing matches up to the top descriptors (ideas very well expressed, ideas engaging etc.). One of the memorable responses to this question was a diary entry by a student on the day of their high school graduation, reflecting on learning over the last 3 years both from textbooks and from friends and teachers. This sort of imaginative perspective and engagement is expected if candidates wish to score top marks.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers and candidates need to pay much more attention to preparing for Section B. Please note that this part accounts for 20 / 45 marks on this paper. It is not a trivial afterthought which does not matter too much.
- Candidates must answer Section B. Far too many lost 20 marks straight off, as they failed to write anything at all for this part.
- Candidates must use appropriate kanji. Some candidates were writing even simple words like "gakko" in hiragana, which is unacceptable at this level. They lost marks under Criterion A: Language, if their use of kanji was too basic.
- Please encourage the top candidates to produce interesting, creative, original ideas. Far too often they were satisfied with the routine, and so a mark of 7 / 8 (supporting details are appropriate) rather than 9 / 10 (relevant and effective ideas: thorough, highly appropriate supporting details) was given in Criterion B: Message.
- Not every piece of writing needs to start with a title and name on the genko yoshi. For example, if candidates are writing a speech, they may begin by "mina san, ohayo gozaimasu" (or whatever other opening they choose).
- Candidates would benefit from more practice on the "pamphlet" text type. Perhaps because of writing on genko yoshi (which admittedly is not ideal for a pamphlet), they seemed hesitant to use sub-headings, direct appeals to the reader etc.
- The candidates' use of language (grammatical structures, range of vocabulary etc.) was generally very good. Please keep teaching in the same way.
- Candidates also used paragraphing and cohesive devices very well to structure their writing appropriately (Criterion C: format). Please continue teaching in the same way.
- Please assume that the IB genko yoshi will remain the same for the foreseeable future, and get candidates used to how many squares there are on the genko yoshi etc. There was too much evidence that candidates were wasting time counting squares.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

No particular area of the programme appeared difficult for candidates in terms of producing their own pieces of writing. They could have been better at taking care to read the full detail of the questions given in the paper, and making sure they responded fully to the question.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates appeared well prepared across all text types and all topics. Candidates wrote using a very good range of vocabulary, kanji and grammatical structures, thus generally scoring well in criterion A (Language).

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Question 1 asked candidates to write a school newspaper article about cultural differences when people of different countries study together. Many candidates wrote very general pieces about the differences between their own schools and Japanese schools, including for example aspects like uniform, club activities and school lunches. Many thus failed to focus specifically on studying together, which is what the question had asked for. Candidates were generally good at writing a school newspaper article.

Question 2 asked candidates to write a restaurant review of a new restaurant, which cooks traditional food but with a new twist. Candidates were extremely good at setting out the restaurant review in the correct format and being "audience aware" in the body of the piece. They had some creative ideas about describing not only the food, but also the decor of the restaurant, and including some customer comments and feedback. Sometimes they lost marks on criterion B (Message) because they did not address the "traditional" but "with a new twist" aspects of the question.

Question 3 asked for a speech to classmates in a school assembly about the benefits of doing sport. Some candidates had interesting ideas, but failed to organise them logically and coherently. Some candidates said "It's good for your health" but found it difficult to expand on this idea, or to come up with any other ideas. Some candidates wrote about a healthy lifestyle in general, rather than focussing on sports. Generally speaking, candidates were also weaker at the conventions for a speech (addressing the audience, use of questions to hold their attention, appropriate conclusion) than they were at other text types.

Question 4 asked candidates to write their diary, reflecting on a day at an amusement park which their younger sister had been unable to enjoy. Many candidates struggled to imagine and write enough details of the activities of the day, or how and why their younger sister failed to enjoy the day. The diary format was generally well done.

Question 5 asked candidates to write a letter to an editor, explaining their views on building a hydroelectric plant. This question was not very popular amongst candidates, but those who tackled it generally did well. They were able to explain a range of views (positive and negative) and draw out their own conclusions. Sometimes their understanding of the format was weaker, and they wrote in the style of an informal personal letter.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Please train candidates to read the full detail of the question and respond appropriately. They are unlikely to write an appropriate answer and score high marks on any question if they simply re-use material from a piece of writing they have previously done in class.
- Please train candidates in the correct use of genko yoshi, and familiarise them with the new IB genko yoshi if they intend to use it in the exam (please note that it is not compulsory for them to do so.) They should know how many squares there are on the IB genko yoshi, so that they do not waste time in the exam counting squares.
- Generally candidates are writing with a good range of kanji, vocabulary and grammar, so please keep teaching this aspect as you are.
- Candidates are generally good at formatting their writing appropriately and using cohesive devices, but please keep reminding them that their work should be set out in paragraphs.
- Candidates would benefit from more practice on the formats of speeches, and letters to editors.