

# 2012 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre – Japanese Background Speakers

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## Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Japanese Background Speakers. It contains comments on candidate responses to the 2012 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2012 Higher School Certificate examination, the marking guidelines and other support documents developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Japanese Background Speakers.

## General comments

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course.

Candidates need to be aware that the marks allocated to the question and the answer space (where this is provided on the examination paper) are guides to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Writing far beyond the indicated space may reduce the time available for answering other questions.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Board’s [Glossary of Key Words](#), which contains some terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with or contain one of the key words from the glossary. Questions such as ‘how?’, ‘why?’ or ‘to what extent?’ may be asked, or verbs that are not included in the glossary may be used, such as ‘design’, ‘translate’ or ‘list’.

## Section I – Listening and Responding

### Part A

#### Question 1

### General comments

Candidates are advised to read the questions in both Japanese and English as this may clarify the intent of the question.

Candidates are reminded to answer the questions fully and to include all relevant information. Opinions should be justified with references to the text. References to the text should be in English or an English translation should be given when quoting in Japanese.

## Specific comments

- a. Most candidates identified the relationship between the two speakers.
- b. In better responses, candidates identified how the female speaker's attitude changed by making reference to the text.
- c. In better responses, candidates justified their opinions about why the female speaker was successful in her business with detailed reference to the text.

## Part B

### Question 2

Candidates are reminded that they must refer to both texts in their response. Candidates are reminded that they are not only assessed on how well they summarise the texts, but also on their ability to present their ideas and opinions effectively using appropriate language structures and vocabulary.

In better responses, candidates added their own ideas and reasons to support their opinions, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the issue.

## Section II – Reading and Responding

### Part A

#### General comments

Candidates are advised to read both the Japanese and English questions carefully to gain a comprehensive understanding of the requirements of the task.

#### Question 3

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the main characters, their situations and the issues explored in the poem.

- a. Most candidates explained why the voice was considered to be *fushigi*.
- b. In better responses, candidates demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the situation.
- c. Most candidates explained the use of *hiwa* in the title of the poem.
- d. In better responses, candidates demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the language features and devices used by the author and their intended effects on the audience. They made specific reference to examples from the text.

In weaker responses, candidates demonstrated a limited understanding of the language features and devices used, such as the repetition of *umashimenkana* for emphasis, and so were not able to describe their effect on the audience.

- e. In better responses, candidates demonstrated a thorough analysis of the messages and emotions conveyed in the expression *umashimenkana*, with reference to the historical background and people present.

In weaker responses, candidates demonstrated a limited understanding of messages and emotions. Some candidates only included information related to the historical background.

#### **Question 4**

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the distinction between *jiritsu* and *koritsu*, and described how the author had influenced them.

In weaker responses, candidates demonstrated limited understanding of distinction between *jiritsu* and *koritsu*, and some candidates did not state how the author had influenced their opinion.

#### **Part B**

#### **Question 5**

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the issues raised in the article and formulated an effective argument with reference to the text. They also included a solution to the issues raised.

In weaker responses, candidates did not include the main points of the text and did not address their writing to the specified audience.

### **Section III – Writing in Japanese**

#### **General comments**

In better responses, candidates presented and developed a coherent argument, providing an in-depth treatment of the relevant information and supporting evidence while relating these to a specific audience, purpose and context as appropriate for each question. These responses were well structured with an introduction and a convincing conclusion. In order to present a coherent argument, candidates are reminded to use sophisticated vocabulary and appropriate *kanji*.

#### **Question 6**

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of advancements in technology and linked these to changes in the quality and content of education. They presented their ideas coherently and supported them with examples.

In weaker responses, candidates demonstrated some understanding of recent advancements in technology, but did not successfully describe their effect on education.

#### **Question 7**

In most responses, candidates explained the effect of the low birth rate and aging population on Japanese youth. They presented their ideas coherently and supported them with examples.

In weaker responses, candidates mentioned the low birth rate and the ageing population, but did not successfully describe their effects on Japanese youth.