
AP[®] Japanese Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Interpersonal Speaking—Conversation

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Question 3: Conversation

6 points

General Scoring Note

When applying the scoring guidelines, the response does not need to meet every single criterion in a column. You should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence.

	1 Very weak	2 Weak	3 Adequate	4 Good	5 Very good	6 Excellent
	Demonstrates lack of competence in interpersonal speaking	Suggests lack of competence in interpersonal speaking	Suggests emerging competence in interpersonal speaking	Demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking	Suggests emerging excellence in interpersonal speaking	Demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking
TASK COMPLETION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses prompt minimally or marginally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides an appropriate but incomplete answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides a basic but appropriate answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides an appropriate response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides a thorough and appropriate response; may include elaboration and detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides a very thorough and appropriate response; includes elaboration and detail
DELIVERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labored expression constantly interferes with comprehensibility Constant hesitation or repetition Frequent errors in pronunciation necessitate intense listener effort Constant use of register and style inappropriate to situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labored expression frequently interferes with comprehensibility Frequent hesitation or repetition Frequent errors in pronunciation necessitate constant listener effort Frequent use of register and style inappropriate to situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strained or unnatural flow of expression sometimes interferes with comprehensibility Inconsistent pace marked by some hesitation or repetition Errors in pronunciation sometimes necessitate special listener effort Use of register and style appropriate to situation is inconsistent or includes many errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strained or unnatural flow of expression does not interfere with comprehensibility Generally consistent pace with some unnatural hesitation or repetition Errors in pronunciation do not necessitate special listener effort May include several lapses in otherwise consistent use of register and style appropriate to situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally exhibits ease of expression Smooth pace with occasional hesitation or repetition, which does not distract from the message Infrequent or insignificant errors in pronunciation Consistent use of register and style appropriate to situation except for occasional lapses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural, easily flowing expression Natural pace with minimal hesitation or repetition Pronunciation virtually error free Consistent use of register and style appropriate to situation
LANGUAGE USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient, inappropriate vocabulary and idioms constantly interfere with comprehensibility Limited control of grammatical and syntactic structures significantly interferes with comprehensibility or results in very fragmented language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient, inappropriate vocabulary and idioms frequently interfere with comprehensibility Limited control of grammatical and syntactic structures frequently interferes with comprehensibility or results in fragmented language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some inappropriate vocabulary and idioms interfere with comprehensibility Errors in grammatical and syntactic structures sometimes interfere with comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate but limited vocabulary and idioms Appropriate use of grammatical and syntactic structures, but with several errors in complex structures or limited to simple structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of vocabulary and idioms, with sporadic errors Appropriate use of grammatical and syntactic structures, with sporadic errors in complex structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich vocabulary and idioms Excellent use of grammar and syntax, with minimal or no errors

Score of 0: UNACCEPTABLE-Contains nothing that earns credit

- Mere restatement of the prompt
- Clearly does not respond to the prompt
- “I don’t understand,” “Please repeat,” or equivalent in Japanese
- Not in Japanese

NR (No Response): BLANK (no response although recording equipment is functioning) or mere sighs

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 1

Note: Students' responses are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors. In the transcripts of students' speech quoted in the commentaries, a three-dot ellipsis indicates that the sample has been excerpted. Two dots indicate that the student paused while speaking.

Overview

This task evaluates speaking skills in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students respond as part of a simulated conversation. It comprises a statement in English that identifies an interlocutor and conversation topic, followed by a series of four related prompts in Japanese. After each prompt, students have 20 seconds to respond.

On this year's exam students participated in a conversation with Daisuke Yamamoto, director of an after-school program at a Japanese elementary school, about volunteering in the program. To successfully respond to the prompt the students had to (1) respond to the director's greeting and question about weather, (2) explain why they wanted to volunteer at an elementary school, (3) express their preference for a grade level or levels, and (4) indicate a time they could visit the following week to observe the program.

Sample: A

Score: 5

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

こんにちは。こちらの天気はすごくいいです。えっと、カリフォルニアが、夏に、えっと、なるつもりですか、だから、えっと、天気がすごく、暑くて、えっと、いいだと思います。

Commentary

This response suggests emerging excellence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt, providing an appropriate response and elaborating by mentioning summer weather (えっと、カリフォルニアが、夏に、えっと、なるつもりですか、だから、えっと、天気がすごく、暑くて、えっと、いいだと思います). Although the response includes frequent hesitation (夏に、えっと、なるつもりですか、ですから、えっと、天気がすごく、暑くて、えっと), this does not significantly distract from the message. The register is consistent and appropriate to the situation. The response includes a variety of vocabulary with sporadic errors (なるつもりでだから; いいだと思います) that do not distract from the message (なるつもりだから should be なるので). The response includes complex grammatical structures (カリフォルニアが、夏に、えっと、なるつもりですか、だから、えっと、天気がすごく、暑くて、えっと、いいだと思います), although there is one error in vocabulary (なるつもり, which can be understood as なるはず). This response could have earned a higher score had it included additional elaboration and one or more examples of rich vocabulary, and had the delivery included fewer hesitations.

Sample: B

Score: 4

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

こっちの、uh こんにちは。私の名前は [name of candidate]です。こっちの、天気は、いいです。今、uhh . . . に、今、uh, 雨、じゃないなんです、から、uhh, 今、暑いなんです。

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 1 (continued)

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides an appropriate response by explaining the overall weather and specific details about the weather (こっこの、天気は、いいです。今、uhh・・・に、今、uh、雨、じゃないなんです、から、uhh、今、暑いなんです). The somewhat strained flow of expression does not interfere with comprehensibility (今、雨、じゃないなんです、から、uhh、今、暑いなんです). The pace is generally consistent, but with some unnatural hesitation and repetition (こっこの、uh こんにちは; こっこの、天気は、いいです; 今、uhh・・・に、今、uh、雨、じゃないなんです、から、uhh、今、暑いなんです). The response includes a complex structure (雨、じゃないなんです、から、uhh、今、暑いなんです) with a grammatical error (暑いなんです). This response could have earned a higher score had it been delivered with a smoother pace and with fewer grammatical errors (暑いなんです) and more complex structures.

Sample: C

Score: 2

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

あー、そちら、天気です、わー、いい、・・・いいです。・・・えっと、すみません。

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. The response attempts to address the prompt but produces an inappropriate utterance that does not respond completely to the question (そちら、天気です、わー、いい、・・・いいです). The expression is labored, and the response contains frequent hesitation and repetition (あー、そちら、天気です、わー、いい、・・・いいです。・・・えっと、すみません). Because the prompt asks about the weather where the student lives, the response's inappropriate vocabulary (そちら) interferes with comprehensibility. The limited control of grammatical and syntactic structures frequently interferes with comprehensibility and results in fragmented language (そちら、天気です、わー、いい、・・・いいです). This response could have earned a higher score had it directly addressed the weather where the student lives and exhibited better control of grammatical structures.

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 2

Sample: A

Score: 6

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

え、えと、子供、ころから、毎日、と、ボランティア、をしています、から、えっと、と、今回も、えっと、も
っと、続き、たいです。えと、ボランティアは、えと、子供と一緒に遊ぶこともできるし、うれ、いいと思いま
す。

Commentary

This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking. It provides a very thorough and appropriate response, giving more than one reason to volunteer. It contains some use of filled pauses (えと), but there is minimal hesitation with no repetition. The pronunciation is excellent, and the use of register is consistent and appropriate (続き、たいです; いいと思えます). Grammar usage is also excellent, with only minor errors (子供、ころから; 続き、たいです).

Sample: B

Score: 4

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

ボランティアが一、したい、あ、です。Umm, community、を、手伝います。手伝いたい。 uhh, そして、子供
が、好きです。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides an appropriate response. The pace is generally consistent, with some English filled pauses (Umm; Uh). There is one lapse in register (手伝いたい). Some pronunciation errors (“volunteer” and “community”) necessitate close listening. The grammatical constructions used are simple or contain errors (手伝います。手伝
いたい instead of 手伝いたいです). This response could have earned a higher score had it included more detail and more complex grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Sample: C

Score: 2

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

がっこうのときに、私は、アフ、アフタースクールのプログラムが、したいです。um そして、私は、子供は
あげます。したい、です。

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt by attempting to explain the speaker's wish to help/give to children, but this is not fully explained (私は、子供はあ
げます). Insufficient vocabulary (アフ、アフタースクールのプログラム) and grammar (私は、子供はあげま
す。したい、です) interfere with comprehensibility. The delivery is very slow, with frequent hesitations. This response could have earned a higher score had it demonstrated a stronger control of vocabulary and grammar and given a clearer and more complete answer.

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 3

Sample: A

Score: 5

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

あの、三年生の方がいいだと思いまーす。このさいが、あー、やさしいだと思えます。若いす、あの、一年生は若いすぎるだと思えますけど、それも、いい。何でもいいですよ。

Commentary

This response suggests emerging excellence in interpersonal speaking. It addresses the prompt thoroughly and directly by stating a preference (三年生の方がいい) and providing an explanation for the choice (このさいが、あー、やさしいだと思えます). In addition, the response explains a reason for reluctance to work with younger children (一年生は若いすぎるだと思えますけど) as well as stating a willingness to work with this group or any other grade level (それもいい。何でもいいですよ). It contains complex grammatical structures (一年生は若いすぎるだと思えますけど) with minor errors (このさい, 若いすぎる, いいだと思えます) that do not interfere with comprehensibility. The response demonstrates general ease of expression and contains only a single lapse in register (それも、いい). The response could have earned a higher score had it contained more complex grammatical structures and a greater variety of vocabulary.

Sample: B

Score: 3

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

あー、何年、ねん、つす、すつ、せいですか。いいですね。あー、・・・一年生、が、いいですね。

Commentary

This response suggests emerging competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides a basic but appropriate answer by stating a preference (一年生、が、いいですね). The flow is strained (あー、何年、ねん、つす、すつ、ですか。いいですね), and the frequent repetition suggests limited vocabulary. The response would have earned a higher score had it responded to the prompt more directly and demonstrated smoother delivery and a greater control of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Sample: C

Score: 1

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

umm, さん、uh 年生、か、・・・高校、三年生、ですー。uhh, い、一年生。

Commentary

This response demonstrates a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It addresses the prompt minimally with a mention of what is likely the grade level of the respondent (高校、三年生、です), followed by a mention of a school grade level (一年生) with no indication of making the choice that is requested in the prompt. Insufficient vocabulary constantly interferes with comprehensibility. The limited control of grammatical structures results in very fragmented language (さん、uh、年生、か、・・・高校、三年生、です). The response could have earned a higher score had it more directly addressed the prompt.

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 4

Sample: A

Score: 6

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

じゃあ、月曜日、の、5時ごろはどうですか。学校の後なので、すぐ来られます。4時でもいいですよ。でも一、えーっと、4時か、5時で、お願いします。

Commentary

This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking. It provides a very thorough and appropriate response with elaboration and detail by providing a specific date and time (月曜日、の、5時ごろ), stating a reason (学校の後なので、すぐ来られます), and also offering an alternate time (4時か、5時). It contains complex grammar (来られます。; 4時でもいいですよ。; 4時か、5時で、お願いします) and the expression is natural and flowing, with minimal fillers (えーっと) and virtually error-free pronunciation.

Sample: B

Score: 4

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

えっとー、らいしゅー、うーん、うん、きんよーびー、・・・えっとー、午後10時、に、来ます。えっとー、・・・うーん、楽しみにしている。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides an appropriate response (きんよーびー; 午後10時、に、来ます). The pace is generally consistent, with some unnatural hesitation (うーん、えっとー). The strained flow of expression does not interfere with comprehensibility. The use of register is generally consistent, with one lapse (楽しみにしている). The response could have earned a higher score had it provided elaboration and detail and included more complex grammatical structures.

Sample: C

Score: 2

Transcript of Student's Response(s)

うん、はい、いつです。えー、これは、いいと思います。[long pause] 来週はいい。

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It addresses the prompt minimally by mentioning "next week" (来週はいい), but the response is incomplete since it does not specify a day or time. Insufficient vocabulary interferes with comprehensibility (はい、いつです; これは、いいと思います). The response could have earned a higher score had it more directly addressed the prompt.