
AP Japanese Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation

		TASK COMPLETION	DELIVERY	LANGUAGE USE
6	EXCELLENT Demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides a very thorough and appropriate response; includes elaboration and detail 	<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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich vocabulary and idioms Excellent use of grammar and syntax, with minimal or no errors
5	VERY GOOD Suggests emerging excellence in interpersonal speaking	<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"> 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"> Variety of vocabulary and idioms, with sporadic errors Appropriate use of grammatical and syntactic structures, with sporadic errors in complex structures
4	GOOD Demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides an appropriate response 	<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"> 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
3	ADEQUATE Suggests emerging competence in interpersonal speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides a basic but appropriate answer 	<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"> Some inappropriate vocabulary and idioms interfere with comprehensibility Errors in grammatical and syntactic structures sometimes interfere with comprehensibility
2	WEAK Suggests lack of competence in interpersonal speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly addresses prompt and provides an appropriate but incomplete answer 	<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"> 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
1	VERY WEAK Demonstrates lack of competence in interpersonal speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses prompt minimally or marginally 	<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"> 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
0	UNACCEPTABLE Contains nothing that earns credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Blank (although recording equipment is functioning) or mere sighs 		

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Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 1

Note: Student 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 Yumi Takagi, a Japanese student, about tutoring in Japanese. To successfully respond to the prompt the students had to (1) respond to the tutor's self-introduction, (2) explain why they are studying Japanese, (3) indicate which Japanese skills they wish to improve, and (4) indicate how many times per week they would like to meet with the tutor.

Sample: A

Score: 6

Transcript of Student Response

はじめまして高木さん。私は[name of candidate]と申します。今回はよろしくお願ひいたします。きっと分からないこともたくさんあって、色々、あー多くの質問すると思ひますけど、けれど、よろしくお願ひいたします。

Commentary

This is a very thorough response which contains detail and natural expression with minimal hesitation. It contains a complex grammatical structure (分からないこともたくさんあって) as well as examples of rich vocabulary (今回;きっと). The register is appropriate to the situation, including the use of keigo (と申します, よろしくお願ひいたします). This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking.

Sample: B

Score: 4

Transcript of Student Response

こんにちは。私のなめいは[name of candidate]です。日本語を勉強します。Um, uh なんでもきいてください。Um 日本語を、は、um 六年は日本語をはな、勉強します。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal communication. It directly addresses the prompt with an appropriate greeting and information about the speaker's experience in Japanese study as well as expressing a willingness to answer questions. It contains some unnatural hesitation (Um) and repetition (日本語を、は、六年は日本語をはな) in addition to an error in pronunciation (なめい should be 名前). The limited control of vocabulary and grammatical structures (六年は日本語をはな、勉強します) do not interfere with comprehensibility. The response would have received a higher score had it contained a greater variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures as well as elaboration and detail.

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Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 1 (continued)

Sample: C

Score: 2

Transcript of Student Response

はじめまして。ぼくは[name of candidate] [name of candidate]とおもります。あのう [long pause] べえきゅう
は、あの、 [long pause] uh . . uh

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt with an appropriate greeting (はじめまして). However, it contains frequent errors in pronunciation (とおもります; べえきゅう) that necessitate listener effort. Limited control of grammar and syntax (あのう [long pause] べえきゅうは、あの、 [long pause] uh . . uh) result in fragmented language and make the response incomplete. The response would have earned a higher score if it had contained a complete greeting and information about the speaker's experience studying Japanese.

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Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 2

Sample: A
Score: 6

Transcript of Student Response

あ、理由ですね。あー、あーなぜなら、私はアニメがたくさん好きですから、あ、日本語を勉強すれば、アニメとか、聞き取りが、あーできからです、できるからです。

Commentary

This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides a thorough response (日本語を勉強すれば、アニメとか、聞き取りが、できるからです。). The flow of expression and pace are natural with only one minor error (勉強すれば should be 勉強すれば). Appropriate register and style are used consistently. The response demonstrates excellent use of grammar (なぜなら、～から、～ば、～からです。) with rich vocabulary (聞き取り).

Sample: B
Score: 4

Transcript of Student Response

私は日本人ですから・・・日本語の勉強をしています。私は・・・日本人、4年生です。わだしのお母さんは日本人ですから、日本語の勉強をしています。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides an appropriate response (私は日本人ですから；私のお母さんは日本人ですから). The grammatical structures are simple but contain no errors. One pronunciation error (わだし should be わたし) does not necessitate special listener effort. The response would have earned a higher score had it included stronger language use and elaboration.

Sample: C
Score: 2

Transcript of Student Response

私は日本語を勉強する、をしたい・・・あー・・・日本の一ぶん、・・・あー

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It addresses the prompt, but it requires constant listener effort to understand. The expression is labored, and the response contains frequent hesitation and fragmented language (e.g., 日本の一ぶん、・・・あー). It would have earned a higher score had it clearly stated a reason.

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 3

Sample: A
Score: 6

Transcript of Student Response

ええと、漢字を書くことはむずかしいですから、それが一上手になったほうがいいなあと思っていますので、えと、どうぞ、よろしくお願いします。

Commentary

This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides a very thorough and appropriate response. It elaborates by giving a reason and a formulaic expression. The delivery is relatively flowing and natural with only slight use of filled pauses (ええと). The use of *なあ* in *それが一上手になったほうがいいなあ* stands out as particularly natural. The pronunciation is easy to understand, and the register is consistent. The response demonstrates the ability to produce a complex sentence with multiple clauses.

Sample: B
Score: 4

Transcript of Student Response

あのう、[long pause] あのう、[long pause] 会話と、あのう、読むの練習と、あー、きくの練習、あー、をした
いです。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt by naming three aspects the student hopes to improve. The slow pace, hesitations, and filled pauses (あのう; ああ) do not interfere with comprehensibility. The response is relatively basic with some grammatical errors (読むの練習; 聞くの練習) but none that interfere with comprehensibility. The response would have earned a higher score had it included elaboration and more complex grammatical structures and had the delivery been more flowing, with fewer pauses.

Sample: C
Score: 2

Transcript of Student Response

あのう [laughter] Uh・・・わたしは、uh、上手じゃない。Uh、とてもへたな一、uh、uh 生徒です。[long pause] Uh
勉強したい。

Commentary

This answer suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It addresses the prompt by referring to the student's lack of proficiency (上手じゃない) and desire to study (勉強したい). The delivery is labored, with multiple pauses filled by the English "uh." The vocabulary and grammar are very basic. This response would have earned a higher score had the delivery been smoother and more explicitly addressed the prompt.

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation 4

Sample: A
Score: 6

Transcript of Student Response

そうですね、僕は特に忙しくないんですから、えーと、週には5、6回ぐらい・・・でもできます。えー、でも、いつか、uh 週末にはよくボランティアとかありますから、週末はよく・・・uh 週末にはできません。出来ないと思います。

Commentary

This response directly addresses the prompt thoroughly and appropriately, including giving a reason why the weekend would not work. The expression flows naturally and is easily understood. Pronunciation is almost error-free with minimal fillers, such as えー. A variety of rich vocabulary is used (e.g., 特に; 週末). The response uses excellent grammar with minor errors (いつか should be ときどき; 週には should be 週に; 5、6回ぐらいでもできます should be 5、6回ぐらいでも会えます). This response demonstrates excellence in interpersonal speaking.

Sample: B
Score: 4

Transcript of Student Response

Uhm,えっと uhh しゅん、しゅに、uh, uhh, 2回 uhh, uh 会った方がいいと思います。uhm・・・uhh・・・火曜日と水曜日の方がいいと思います。

Commentary

This response demonstrates competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt and provides an appropriate response. The strained flow of expression and pauses, such as Uhm, えっと uhh, do not interfere with comprehensibility. The vocabulary is appropriate but limited. The sentence structures are simple, such as 2回 uhh, uh 会った方がいいと思います. This response could have earned a higher score had it included elaboration.

Sample: C
Score: 2

Transcript of Student Response

Uh、私は・・・私は Uh・・・Uhhh, 二つ・・・二つ・・・ふん・・・n がありたい。Uh,私はとっても日本語、とっても・・・興味深い。

Commentary

This response suggests a lack of competence in interpersonal speaking. It directly addresses the prompt but fails to provide a complete answer. Labored expression, such as 二つ・・・二つ, interferes with comprehensibility. Limited control of grammatical structures also frequently interferes with comprehensibility and results in fragmented language such as ふん・・・n がありたい. This response could have earned a higher score had it provided a complete answer with better control of language and smoother delivery.