

## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2017 AP<sup>®</sup> Japanese Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers	39			
<b>Total Group</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	2,429			
• Score Distribution		Exam Score	N	%At
		5	1,096	45.1
		4	267	11.0
		3	506	20.8
		2	200	8.2
		1	360	14.8
• Global Mean	3.63			
<b>Standard Group*</b>				
• Number of Students Scored	1,308			
• Score Distribution		Exam Score	N	%At
		5	234	17.9
		4	167	12.8
		3	392	30.0
		2	177	13.5
		1	338	25.8
• Global Mean	2.83			

\* Standard students generally receive most of their foreign language training in U.S. schools. They did not indicate on their answer sheet that they regularly speak or hear the foreign language of the exam, or that they have lived for one month or more in a country where the language is spoken.

The following comments on the 2017 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> Japanese Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Motoko Tabuse of Eastern Michigan University. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

## Question #1

**Task:** Interpersonal Writing — Text Chat

**Max. Points:** 36

**Total Group Mean Score:** 22.63

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 19.28

### ***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

Text Chat 1–6 evaluates writing skills in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students respond as part of a simulated exchange of text-chat messages. The prompt comprises a statement in English identifying an interlocutor and conversation topic, and a series of six brief messages to which students respond. Each message consists of a chat entry in Japanese and a brief direction in English that provides guidance on what is expected in the response. Students have 90 seconds to read the message and respond at each turn in the text-chat exchange. Each of the six responses receives a holistic score based on how well it accomplishes the assigned task, and all six scores count equally in calculating the total score.

On this year’s exam, students participated in a text chat with Takeo Yamada, a student at their sister school, on the topic of pet ownership. To successfully respond to the prompt, students needed to (1) respond to an initial inquiry, (2) discuss what pets are popular among their friends, (3) discuss the benefits of pet ownership, (4) give advice to convince the interlocutor’s mother to allow a pet, (5) give their opinion about Japanese pet cafes, and (6) ask one or more questions about pets in Japan.

### ***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

#### **Text Chat 1 Prompt: Respond.** ちょっとペットについて聞いてもいい？

- For the most part, students did well on this prompt. The majority were able to respond appropriately and encourage the interlocutor to continue. Some students included a self-introduction, even though the context did not require that. Other students immediately launched into a discussion of pets (typically explaining about their own pets) without responding directly to the prompt.

#### **Text Chat 2 Prompt: Give at least two examples.** 友達の間では、どんなペットが人気あるの？

- In general, students did well on this prompt. The topic of pets seemed to be easily accessible to students, and they generally were able to write about one or more aspects of popular pets. Most students were able to mention at least two types of pets that were popular. Some students seemed not to have read the English instruction to give at least two examples, and discussed only one type of popular pet.

#### **Text Chat 3 Prompt: Explain.** ペットが家にいると、どんな事がいいと思う？

- It was not uncommon for students to misinterpret this prompt. Those who understood the question correctly tended to perform well. Even those who failed to interpret the question correctly, however, mostly responded to the English instruction “explain” by doing their best to produce some sort of explanation.

#### **Text Chat 4 Prompt: Give advice.** ペットがほしいんだけど、お母さんがペットきらいなんだよ。どうしたらいいと思う？

- This prompt required students to offer advice to a peer in response to a conflict with his mother over whether or not he could have a pet. Many students were able to meet and exceed the requirements for basic task completion by offering appropriate advice to Yamada though others fell short of task completion and/or received lower scores due to syntax errors, inadequate vocabulary, lack of control over more complex grammatical forms, or orthographic issues that impeded readability or comprehension.

- At higher levels of ability, responses often narrated the writer’s own responses to a similar problem with a parent, but stopped short of suggesting explicitly that Yamada emulate the writer’s actions for himself. At lower levels, writers offered a series of empathetic statements such as 大変ですね but did not suggest any advice.

**Text Chat 5 Prompt: Give your opinion.** ところで、今、日本では、ペットと遊べる カフェがたくさんあるんだけど、どう思う？

- In this section of the test, many responses were successful in discussing student opinions about pet cafes in Japan. Students interpreted “pet cafe” in various ways, including cafes where pets lived and could be visited by customers, restaurants or cafes which catered exclusively to pets, or cafes where you could take your pet to eat with you, etc.
  - Many responses discussed the hygiene concerns of having pets in eating establishments, and some of these went on to recommend shed-free dog breeds, etc. out of an apparent concern for fur and dander getting into food and drinks. This resulted in many references to things like ちゃんと掃除したらいい etc.
  - Many responses discussed their own experiences with pet cafes, or their general knowledge about pet cafes, without providing any apparent opinion concerning them. Some answers listed various types of pet cafes, but did not provide an opinion on any of them.

**Text Chat 6 Prompt: Ask a specific question.** 最後に、日本のペットについて、何か知りたいことある？

- Responses to this prompt were generally successful in asking a specific question about pets in Japan. Lower-scoring examples tended to fall into two general types: either they failed to ask a question, regardless of delivery and language use, or they asked a personal question of Yamada that was related to pets but not actually about pets in Japan, as the prompt directs.

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?**

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<b>General misconceptions and gaps in knowledge : Text Chat 1-6</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orthographic Errors: Some students were unable to type correctly in Japanese and convert <i>kana</i> to <i>kanji</i> (e.g., ペト, ペント for pet; 岡三 for お母さん; 買う for 飼う)。</li> <li>• Responses that contained nothing but <i>hiragana</i> or romanization were difficult to read.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong responses used an appropriate mix of <i>kana</i> and <i>kanji</i>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Katakana</i> words, such as the names of particular breeds of dog, were difficult for some students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students were able to correctly write the names of particular breeds (e.g., ダックスフンド, チワワ, トイプードル, ゴールデンレトリバー)。</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses did not use the correct counter for animals. For example, some responses used 一つ for a dog.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other students were able to use the counter mostly ひき appropriately.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses used and/or typed particles incorrectly, such as わ instead of は or お instead of を.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses used and/or typed correct particles.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many responses contained inappropriate verbs to refer to pet ownership, such as 買う, 持っている, and あります.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students producing more advanced responses were more likely to correctly use the verb 飼う.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syntax in some responses was limited to very basic structures (A は B です and A があります).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses incorporated a variety of structures such as a relative clause (人気のあるペット), structure denoting reasons (~だから), structure appropriate for advice (~した方がいい), etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses did not include any transitional elements (and, but, on the other hand, more over).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students were able to use transitional elements that made clear the structure of their responses (e.g., そして, ほかに, あと, つぎに, なぜなら).</li> </ul>
<b>Text Chat 1</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students did not respond to, and may not have understood, the basic question: 聞いてもいい? For example, some interpreted the prompt as asking for a definition of “pet.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strong answer directly responded to the prompt by encouraging the interlocutor to continue. Many strong answers also contained some sort of elaboration. For example, explaining that the student liked pets and thus was looking forward to the exchange.</li> </ul>
<b>Text Chat 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students discussed only their own pets and did not mention friends’ pets and/or did not explicitly address what pets are popular. These students may not have understood the question: 友達の間では and/or the word 人気 may have been difficult for some students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strongest responses in terms of task completion explicitly mentioned two or more types of pets popular among the student’s friends, although they also sometimes elaborated by mentioning the student’s own pets, or the student’s preference in pets.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary in some responses was limited to very basic words (友達, 猫, 犬, かわいい).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who performed well were able to produce a variety of rich vocabulary in their responses.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students used the verb ある / あります for animals instead of the verb appropriate for animate subjects, いる / います.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses used the more appropriate いる / います, and many students were even able to use 飼っている / 飼っています.</li> </ul>

<b>Text Chat 3</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instead of discussing the benefits of pet ownership, many students instead discussed how to properly care for pets. Other students interpreted the question as asking whether pets should live inside or not.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strongest responses demonstrated that the student had correctly understood the question and focused on the benefit of pet ownership.</li> </ul>
<b>Text Chat 4</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many responses lacked knowledge of the basic syntax structures used to offer advice to another person. Many students replaced clear advice-giving structures such as ～たらどうですか with forms such as ～てください or even ～なさい. At score levels 3 and lower, students often resorted to simple verbs as a way to render their advice to Yamada in sentence such as ペットを かいます or お母さんに話します.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses that demonstrated understanding were able to apply the correct use of advice sentence structures. Examples of such responses appear below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• お母さんに可愛いペットの写真をたくさん見せたらどうですか。</li> <li>• 自分の部屋をちゃんとそうじしたほうがいいと思う。</li> <li>• 自分でペットの世話できることをちゃんとお母さんに見せる etc.</li> <li>• お母さんに話したらいい。</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students narrated their own experiences with their own mothers in conflicts over pets: 私の母もペットきらいです。私は母に話して、大丈夫と言って、ペットもらった。In these cases, advice was often not offered, as the student instead explained what he or she did and did not extend that suggestion to Yamada’s case explicitly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses that demonstrated adequate student understanding managed to offer clear advice to Yamada and avoided a focus on the writer’s own experiences at the expense of suggesting a course of action to Yamada. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 多分、小さいペットのほうがいいと思います。たとえば、魚があって、よく育てて、お母さんの気持ちはペットにあたたくかくなると思います。</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word “responsibility” was often transposed into <i>katakana</i> or <i>katakana/hiragana</i> combinations, such as レスポンシビリチ, by students who didn’t know better Japanese terms like 責任, 面倒をみる, 世話をする.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers which instead employed appropriate Japanese vocabulary (責任 instead of レスポンシビリチ, for example) scored higher.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many students wanted to attribute Yamada’s mother’s aversion to pets to an allergy issue, but very few could produce the word アレルギー—in <i>katakana</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Correct use of the <i>katakana</i> word アレルギー was typical of higher-scoring responses of this type.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 多分お母さんはアレルギーがあるからペットが嫌っていますねえ。そして、毛の皮があまりないタイプを飼ったらいいと思う。例えば、魚とか蛇はどうですか。</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of phrases such as 仕方がない or 何もできません stopped short of offering advice (even if that advice was for Yamada to give up his campaign for a pet), insofar as they didn't suggest any specific action for him to take. Students who did suggest a specific action in this vein scored higher.</li> </ul>	<p>Responses that showed understanding needed to suggest a specific action that Yamada could take to remedy his problem as shown in the examples below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>あきらめた方がいいと思う。</li> <li>お母さんともっと相談してください。</li> <li>ペットが飼っている友達の犬と遊んだらどうですか。</li> </ul>
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### Text Chat 5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students did not understand the phrase ペットと遊べるカフェ and various understandings of this phrase became apparent among the responses. It appears that many students mistook 遊べる for 食べる as a result of this tendency in the responses. Responses which made this error were likely to discuss refreshments that pets could enjoy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses that completed the task and demonstrated understanding of the prompt were able to express something that was identifiable as a personal opinion or value judgment, as seen in the following examples:</li> <li>ペットと遊べるカフェが楽しそうなあ。私も行ってみたいと思う。可愛いねこや犬と一緒に遊んだり、美味しいものをたべたりして、すごくいいと思う。</li> <li>ペットカフェはすばらしい愛ディ。そういうカフェに本当に行きたいです。</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses seemed to be still responding to earlier text chat prompts (particularly prompt 4). These answers generally only earned credit when they suggested that Yamada visit a pet cafe, possibly with his mother, as a way to convince her to allow him to have a pet, in addition to expressing an opinion about pet cafes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses that contained a recommendation for Yamada but still scored well for this response also contained a clear expression of a personal opinion, as in the following:</li> <li>ペットカフェはいいところとおもう。もしお母さんと一緒にカフェに行ったら、ペットを好きになるかも。</li> </ul>

### Text Chat 6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statements not in a question format did not satisfy the conditions for task completion and scored on the lower end of the scoring guidelines.</li> <li>私はペットが公園に行く。</li> <li>日本の一番有名な犬は柴犬ですね。柴犬はすごくかわいいから僕も柴犬が大好きです。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses that demonstrated understanding of this prompt included clear questions and were not limited to statements alone. Examples of successful responses are:</li> <li>どんなペットが人気がありますか？</li> <li>日本ではどんなペットが一番人気がありますか。そして、日本のアパートでペットがあつてはだめだと聞きました。だから日本でペットがあるひとがおおいですか。</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses just talked about specific kinds of pets and their qualities and did not ask a question.</li> <li>• たくさん日本のペットがあるでも、私は猫を日本に買いたいです。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses which demonstrated understanding might discuss specific breeds or types of pets, but they also posed a specific question.</li> <li>• 秋田犬は日本では有名な種類と聞きましたが、それは本当なの？</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some responses posed personal questions to Yamada and did not satisfy the task insofar as they did not ask a specific question about 日本のペット. Some questions, such as 犬のほうがねこより好きですか?, seemed to be directed to Yamada and were often considered to be off-topic if they constituted the entire response.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses which demonstrated understanding asked a specific question whose focus was clearly on pets in Japan generally. It was possible for the entire response to do that, thus completing the task, and still contain an additional question or questions directed toward Yamada. This was not an issue in terms of task completion.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers which simply stated that they did not have any questions for Yamada fell short of task completion.</li> <li>• 日本に何回も行った事があるので質問はありません。日本は二年に一回は行っているので、もう良くいろいろな事を知っています。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses that demonstrated understanding avoided this pattern and asked a clear question about pets in Japan.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Some students spent time on an unnecessary self-introduction. Teachers may want to remind students that a self-introduction is not always necessary at the beginning of a text or conversation prompt. If one is not needed, omitting the self-introduction will give students more time to elaborate after they have directly addressed the prompt.
- Teachers should impress upon students the importance of carefully reading the English instructions to see what is requested by each prompt on the test, and the importance of following those instructions.
- Teachers should remind students of the importance of responding directly and explicitly to the prompt.
- Students will benefit from learning how to produce typed Japanese responses from an early stage of study, and from having many opportunities to practice (word-processing skills), so that they can type fluently and efficiently by the time they take the test. This not only makes their answers more readable, it also gives them more time to produce the elaboration that is expected of a strong response.
- Providing additional training on *katakana* loanwords and vocabulary-building exercises would help to diminish the impact on the orthographical issues discussed above.
- Teachers should focus on helping students use transitional elements to improve language flow and to utilize embedded questions and noun modifying phrases to construct more sophisticated responses.
- Students should be coached on the distinction between personal and general questions and advised how best to address these appropriately.

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?***

- Use and apply the Scoring Guidelines throughout the AP year in and in years leading up to the AP experience so that students are familiar with how their response will be scored.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Use examples of student performance to provide concrete examples of strong, good, and fair performance and have students apply the scoring guidelines so they can improve their performance.
- Refer to the exam information page for additional text chats from previous years.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Begin by having students respond to text chats early in their language-learning experience so they become familiar with the task. Also, begin to integrate more sophisticated language, such as transitional phrases and cohesive devices, well before the beginning of the AP experience.
- Complete the AP World Languages and Cultures online module on interpersonal writing.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>



**Question #2****Task:** Presentational Writing — Compare and Contrast Article**Max. Points:** 6**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.71**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.18***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question***

This task assesses writing skills in the presentational communicative mode by having students write an article for the student newspaper of a school in Japan. It comprises a single prompt in English, which identifies two opposing sides of a single topic and details how they should be compared in the article. Student must also state their preference for one of the sides and provide a reason for it. Students are given 20 minutes to write an article of 300 to 400 characters or longer. The article receives a single holistic score based on how well it accomplishes the assigned tasks.

On this year's exam, students were asked to compare and contrast group projects and individual projects. To successfully respond to the prompt, students had to describe at least three aspects of each type of project, to state which type they preferred, and to give reasons for their preference.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

- Overall, the responses demonstrated the ability to describe aspects of the two different types of projects and they highlighted similarities and differences. The discussion most commonly focused on the positives and negatives of each type of project, based on the student's individual experience.
- On the word or concept level of execution, many students, especially those who were less proficient, had difficulty writing "individual project" and "group project" as loanwords. More advanced students used a variety of terms to express these two concepts, and with greater accuracy.
- Judging from the amount that students were able to write, including those responses from the lowest score levels, this prompt seems to have been a topic that was relatively easy for students to write about.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many responses did not convert <i>kana</i> to <i>kanji</i> correctly (忍 for 人 ; 最小 for 最初 ; 週九台 for 宿題).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrated the correct spelling of words, including long versus short vowels, so that such conversion errors are less likely to arise.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Particle errors: Students must remember that object and topic markers take special <i>kana</i>, を and は, and not お and わ. In addition, は must not be converted to 葉.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct <i>kana</i> are used to express the particles, and did not undergo <i>kanji</i> conversion.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many responses demonstrated lack of knowledge of the word for “individual” (個人). They used loanword インディビジュアル, with a variety of misspellings, for “individual (project).” Other terms that appeared included 一人 and ソーロー (‘solo’). The loanword “group” (グループ) also showed a variety of misspellings. Some students used terms such as 集団, 団体, and 複数人数 for “group.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses used the Japanese term 個人, as well as the correct spelling of グループ.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students did not know the formal vocabulary for “similarity” and for “difference.” Consequently, they used a variety of terms and locutions that were not quite as tight in organizing the discourse as the formal terms could have been (e.g., 違うところ, 同じところ, 似ている点, 違っている点).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students used the terms 相違点, 類似点, and 共通点 effectively in structuring their articles.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students, especially those at the higher score levels, provided a summary of the comparison as a conclusion. This is not desired in essay writing in Japan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student omitted provision of a summary at the end, and instead simply concluded with the statement of preference and reason. Some students also followed with an invitation to the reader to think about whether or not they agreed with the writer, and what their preference would be.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most students supplied transitional elements, but some used them incorrectly or with errors. For example, in a series of two differences and one similarity, it is strange to say 一つ目の相違点, 二つ目の相違点, and then 一つ目の類似点 when there are no more examples of similarities. An example of mistaken rendering is 一つの目.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct use would be 一つ目の相違点, 二つ目の相違点 and 同じことは (or something similar).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitional elements and cohesive devices linking or contrasting thoughts at the sentence level were less commonly used than those used as paragraph headers. This results in the simple listing of points, which is more demanding of the reader’s work in comprehension.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More use of transitional conjunctions that illustrate the flow of thought (e.g., 強いて言えば, つまり, その代わりに, したがって) can be effective in facilitating comprehension.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- This year, there were quite a few mechanical errors at all response score levels. For example, some responses employed *wakachigaki*, or ‘spacing between words,’ which is not used in writing Japanese. In other cases, some responses sporadically neglected to insert periods to indicate the end of a sentence. While not an error, many responses did not organize their essay into paragraphs despite the fact that transitional elements that would commonly appear as paragraph headers were used. Responses that are properly organized into paragraphs are easier to read. It is recommended that teachers devote one segment or session to target the mechanics of presentational writing in order to address these types of errors.

- Judging from the omission of the expression of preference and reason from quite a few of the responses, it is recommended that teachers present a prompt in class, and make certain that students respond to all aspects of the prompt. It may be helpful if students take three or four minutes to map out an outline of their article before beginning to write. Finally, to give the students a firm idea of the quality of writing and the level of detail expected at each level, students should be provided with sample responses from each of the score levels 4, 5, and 6 as stipulated in the scoring guidelines, and have them discuss the differences between levels.
- Basic evaluative terms such as 楽しい [tanoshii], いい [ii], 好き [suki], are remembered by most and are easy to use, but hard to elaborate on. Students should expand their range of descriptive terms. In addition, class work on how to elaborate a description or opinion would be useful.
- Finally, typing and character conversion practice is important. There may still be issues with respect to daily work on Mac computers, versus the conversion mechanism on PC-based computers in the testing environment.

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?***

- Use and apply the Scoring Guidelines throughout the AP year in and in years leading up to the AP experience so that students are familiar with how their response will be scored.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Use examples of student performance to provide concrete examples of strong, good, and fair performance and have students apply the scoring guidelines so they can improve their performance.
- Refer to the exam information page for additional compare and contrast articles from previous years.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Begin having students write compare and contrast articles early in their language-learning experience so they become familiar with the task. Also, begin to integrate more sophisticated language well before the beginning of the AP experience.
- Complete the AP World Languages and Cultures online module on presentational writing.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>

**Question #3****Task:** Interpersonal Speaking — Conversation**Max. Points:** 24**Total Group Mean Score:** 16.24**Standard Group Mean Score:** 13.54***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

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 and a series of four related utterances in Japanese. Students have 20 seconds to speak at each turn in the conversation. Each of the four responses receives a holistic score based on how well it accomplishes the assigned task, and all four scores count equally in calculating the total score.

On this year's exam, students participated in a conversation with Hiroko Kikuchi, the president of an environmental club, about global warming. To successfully respond to the prompt, students had to (1) respond to the initial inquiry appropriately, (2) state their preference for gasoline-powered cars versus electric cars, (3) explain that preference, and (4) state a preferred day for a follow-up conversation.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?*****Conversation 1 Prompt:** 地球温暖化についてお聞きしたいんですが、よろしくお願ひします。

- Most students were able to reply by using a natural formulaic response (よろしくお願ひします), followed by a self-introduction. Even students who seemed unable to produce elaborate greetings managed the response by using simpler structures. Most responses contained consistent use of register and style appropriate to the situation. Some students included rich vocabulary and idioms. However, many students did not understand that the prompt was about global warming, and instead talked about the environment or environmental issues (e.g. recycling).

**Conversation 2 Prompt:** まず、車ですが、ガソリンを使う車と電気を使う車と、どちらがいいと思ひますか。

- Most students were able to state their opinions about which type of vehicle they preferred (electric or gasoline-powered cars). Even students who did not elaborate on their opinions were able to address the prompt. Some students managed to use science and technology related expressions such as エコ (ecological) and 地球のためにいい (good for the earth).

**Conversation 3 Prompt:** どうしてそう思ひのですか。

- A wide range of responses was observed for this prompt. Some students successfully gave reasons by comparing the pros and cons of electric and gasoline-powered cars. However, a surprising number of students received little or no credit for this prompt because they found it difficult to find a way to explain their preference and how it related to global warming, so apparently they gave up.

**Conversation 4 Prompt:** そうですか。面白いですね。もっと話したいんですが、来週はいつがいいですか。

- Many responses provided a specific date and/or available time, and thus successfully completed the task. High scoring responses included details about their schedule with good control of language. Some students provided negative responses, such as 来週は会いたくないです "I don't want to see you next week," and 来週は忙しいです "I will be busy next week," which were acceptable responses. Some responses provided alternative date(s) and time, which earned a higher score. Some responses responded in a question, such as 週末はいいですか "Is weekend okay?" which were also acceptable.

**What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?**

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	Responses that Demonstrate Understanding
<b>Conversation 1</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students were not able to use appropriate responses and responded only minimally: はい.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses included appropriate response, such as よろしくお願ひします or こちらこそ、よろしくお願ひします.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students misunderstood their role in the conversation and ended by saying お聞きたいんです.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses included a positive reply できるだけあなたの質問に答えます.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students did not know the Japanese word for “global warming” and used globe 地球 or environment 環境.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong students used a word “Global warming” 地球温暖化.</li> </ul>
<b>Conversation 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students merely stated how they went to school without stating their preference.</li> <li>僕はバスで行きました。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses included a clear statement addressing the prompt with elaboration.</li> <li>ガソリンを作るを、を使う車より、電気を使う車がいいと思います。地球温、温暖化のことを考えれば電気を使う車は、環境にいいと思います。あーえーっと、ガソリンを使わないですから。</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students responded using simple sentences without elaboration:</li> <li>電気を、使います、けど・・・いいです、と思います。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses included a solid cause-and-effect relationship between the use of gasoline and global warming.</li> <li>なぜなら、ガソリンを使う車は、え、地球温暖化の大きな原因の一つとなっているからです。</li> </ul>
<b>Conversation 3</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students misunderstood どうして as “how” and responded inappropriately (e.g., 電車でいきます).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students producing strong responses correctly understood どうして as having the same meaning as なぜ.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students used English words (CO<sub>2</sub> を emit します). In some cases, inappropriate vocabulary interfered with comprehensibility (作る vs. 使う) (電気 vs. 電池 or 天気).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strongest responses incorporated a variety of rich vocabulary: 二酸化炭素, 排気ガス, 排出する. Some students were able to correctly express the reason for global warming: 排気ガスを排出するので、地球に影響を与えます.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of students gave characteristics of gasoline-powered and/or electric cars that were not related to global warming: ガソリンは高いです。電気は安いですが、便利じゃないです。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strongest responses in terms of task completion explicitly compared the pros and cons of using electric and gasoline-powered cars.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conversation 4</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses partially addressed the prompt, such as はい, 来週はいいです, suggesting that some students did not fully understand the prompt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses in terms of task completion explicitly mentioned a specific date(s) and time such as “next Monday will be fine (来週は月曜日がいいです), including elaboration on the preferred date and time. These types of responses received a higher score.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students responded to the first half of the prompt: “I think it’s interesting (おもしろいですよ)” and “I also want to talk (私も話したいです).”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses answered the question “When are you available next week (来週はいつがいいですか)?”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students had difficulty expressing “any day/time will be fine (毎日がいい, なんの時間もいい).”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses used ~でも appropriately (いつでもいいです; 何曜日でもいいです).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common grammatical errors included those with particles, inappropriate insertion or omission of the copula as in ~だと思えます, and the <i>te</i>-form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses used particles, copula in a subordinate clause, and <i>te</i>-form (おもしろくて) appropriately.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Students will benefit from learning to directly address the prompt and provide relevant information first. Students must be encouraged to carefully listen to the English instructions to understand the situation and pay attention to what is requested by each prompt. Even fluent and detailed responses will not receive a strong score if they have not successfully completed the task required by the prompt or have provided irrelevant information.
- A considerable number of students had already given reasons in previous prompt(s) and expressed awkwardness with a statement such as “さっきも言いましたけど.” Teachers may want to remind their students that each prompt will be rated separately and that they do not need to spend time referring to an earlier prompt, but should instead simply respond to the new prompt fully.
- Many students seemed to have difficulty saying “Any day/time will work for me,” and there were many variations of inaccurate forms. Since this expression is useful in everyday conversation, students will benefit from learning how to use でも as in いつでも, 何曜日でも, 何時でも and from having many opportunities to practice.
- Once students have mastered basic vocabulary and structures, they should be encouraged to continue to practice to express themselves in communicative situations.

***What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?***

- Use and apply the Scoring Guidelines throughout the AP year in and in years leading up to the AP experience so that students are familiar with how their response will be scored.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Use examples of student performance to provide concrete examples of strong, good, and fair performance and have students apply the scoring guidelines so they can improve their performance.
- Refer to the exam information page for additional text chats from previous years.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Work with students so they become familiar with how long 20 seconds is so they can become more comfortable about how long their responses can be.
- Complete the AP World Languages and Cultures online module on interpersonal speaking.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>

**Question #4****Task:** Presentational Speaking — Cultural Perspective Presentation**Max. Points:** 6      **Total Group Mean Score:** 4.39**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.72***What were responses expected to demonstrate in their response to this question?***

This task assesses speaking skills in the presentational communicative mode by having students give a presentation on a cultural topic to a Japanese class. It consists of a single prompt in English, which identifies a cultural topic and details how it should be discussed in the presentation. Students are given 4 minutes to prepare the presentation and 2 minutes for its delivery. The presentation receives a single holistic score based on how well it accomplishes the assigned task. In addition to language skills, the score reflects the level of cultural knowledge exhibited in the presentation.

On this year's exam students were asked to make an oral presentation on the topic of Japanese geography. To respond successfully to the prompt, students had to discuss at least five aspects or examples of Japanese geography. They had to begin with an appropriate introduction, give details, explain their own view or perspective, and end with a concluding remark.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?***

Students were able to approach the topic of geography from multiple perspectives. Topics included geographical characteristics of Japan, famous mountains and rivers of Japan, the population issues, city planning, hot springs, and earthquakes. Many students addressed most aspects of the prompt including explanation of view or perspective though they often lacked detail or elaboration. The cultural information provided was generally correct, but simple. Vocabulary and expressions were appropriate but limited. The grammar and syntax were appropriate, with several errors in complex structures.

***What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?***

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' limited grasp of geographic knowledge triggered a reliance on basic vocabulary and expressions not specifically related to the prompt. For example, 日本の地理はいいです。; ジオグラフィーはおもしろいです。</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students demonstrated geographic knowledge of Japan. 日本の地理について話します。日本は...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weaker responses were often very short, with long pauses. This resulted in presentations containing very little content. The overuse of fillers such as ええと or あのう was also common in this type of response.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students producing the strongest responses responded fully and at a natural pace, without significant pauses and fillers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some responses were stronger at the beginning, but then broke down. Some began with a weak start, but then became stronger.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The best responses exhibited a more constant production of coherent speech.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students spoke very quickly, making the content of their presentations difficult to understand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students seemed to be familiar with how to give presentations and spoke at an appropriate pace.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many students did not know the Japanese words for key terms and used the direct translation expressions from English, such as <i>Fujiyama</i>, 天気があつい, 天気が寒い, and 東京市.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong responses demonstrated the ability to use a wide range of appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students used English for place name, landmarks and concepts they did not know how to say in Japanese (Atlantic Ocean, Sea of Japan, etc.). Many students simply used English words with Japanese pronunciation such as アイランド, パシフィックオーシャン.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses were limited to Japanese word, phrases, and place names.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students providing explanations began sentences appropriately with なぜなら, but then ended the sentences with ~です.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger responses produced the appropriate structure: なぜなら, ~からです.</li> </ul>

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?**

- Find ways to continue to integrate concepts, vocabulary, and contents related to Japanese area studies, including Japanese geography. Provide opportunities for students to learn about a wide range of topics.
- Give students opportunities to talk about relative locations and directions by providing appropriate expressions and vocabulary, and increase the area from a room to a country. For example, 日本は中国の東にあります, 日本は海に囲まれています.
- Expose students to ample examples of authentic essays and presentations on Japanese culture that are at or slightly higher than the intermediate-mid range of proficiency level, so they can strive toward smooth speeches using appropriate transition words and cohesive devices.
- Coach students to speak at a consistent pace and not to rush.
- Teach students to try not to use English. Instead teach how to use circumlocution.

**What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?**

- Use and apply the Scoring Guidelines throughout the AP year in and in years leading up to the AP experience so that students are familiar with how their response will be scored.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Use examples of student performance to provide concrete examples of strong, good, and fair performance and have students apply the scoring guidelines so they can improve their performance.
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<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-japanese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>
- Begin having students prepare presentations early in their language-learning experience so they become familiar with the task. Also begin to integrate more sophisticated language well before the beginning of the AP experience.
- Complete the AP World Languages and Cultures online module on presentational speaking.  
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules?course=ap-japanese-language-and-culture>