

AP[®] JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AP[®]

About the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®])

The Advanced Placement Program[®] enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies — with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both — while still in high school. AP Exams are given each year in May. Students who earn a qualifying score on an AP Exam are typically eligible, in college, to receive credit, placement into advanced courses, or both. Every aspect of AP course and exam development is the result of collaboration between AP teachers and college faculty. They work together to develop AP courses and exams, set scoring standards, and score the exams. College faculty review every AP teacher's course syllabus.

AP World Languages and Cultures Program

The AP World Languages and Cultures program features eight courses and exams and includes the following languages: Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish (both language and literature).

In today's global community, competence in more than one language is an essential part of communication and cultural understanding. Study of another language not only provides individuals with the ability to express thoughts and ideas for their own purposes, but also provides them with access to perspectives and knowledge that is only available through the language and culture. The proficiencies acquired through the study of languages and literatures endow language learners with cognitive, analytical, and communication skills that carry over into many other areas of their academic studies. The three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational), defined in the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* and described in more detail in the *ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners*, are foundational to the AP World Languages and Cultures courses.

AP Japanese Language and Culture Course Overview

The AP Japanese Language and Culture course emphasizes communication (understanding and being understood by others) by applying interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational skills in real-life situations. This includes vocabulary usage, language control, communication strategies, and cultural awareness. The AP Japanese Language and Culture course strives not to emphasize grammatical accuracy at the expense of communication. To best facilitate the study of language and culture, the course is taught almost exclusively in Japanese.

The AP Japanese Language and Culture course engages students in an exploration of culture in both contemporary and historical contexts. The course develops students' awareness and appreciation of social, political, and educational issues (e.g., the role of religion in society, traditional versus modern gender roles), as well as more traditional topics (e.g., arts, customs, festivals, geography, and history). Throughout the course, students develop interpersonal skills that enable them to request and confirm the receipt of information, ask for and provide directions, and issue and respond to invitations. They also develop more cognitively challenging functional language skills, including the ability to compare phenomena, express opinions and preferences, and discuss life experiences. Additionally, students develop a command of a significant number of the most prevalent kanji characters used in Japanese writing.

RECOMMENDED PREREQUISITES

Students are typically in their fourth year of high-school-level Japanese language study. In the case of native or heritage speakers, there may be a different course of study leading to this course.

World Languages and Cultures Learning Objectives

AP Japanese Language and Culture provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency at the Intermediate-Low to Intermediate-Mid range in each of the three modes of communication described in the *ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners*.

Students are expected to

- Engage in spoken interpersonal communication;
- Engage in written interpersonal communication;
- Synthesize information from a variety of authentic audio, visual, and audiovisual resources;
- Synthesize information from a variety of authentic written and print resources;
- Plan, produce, and present spoken presentational communications; and
- Plan and produce written presentational communications.

AP Japanese Language and Culture Exam Structure

AP JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EXAM:
2 HOURS 15 MINUTES

Assessment Overview

The exam assesses students' interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication skills in Japanese, as well as knowledge of Japanese culture. The exam is administered on a computer. The student reads on the screen, listens through headphones, types using the keyboard, and speaks into a microphone. Exam questions are based on the six learning objectives and assess various themes.

All Japanese text displayed on the screen is in kanji characters. Students must use Microsoft IME for typing Japanese text.

Format of Assessment

Section I: Multiple Choice | ~70 Questions | ~90 Minutes | 50% of Exam Score

Part A: (30–35 questions)

- Interpretive Communication: Listening

Part B: (35–40 questions)

- Interpretive Communication: Reading
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Section II: Free Response | 4 Tasks | ~45 minutes | 50% of Exam Score

- Interpersonal Writing: Text-Chat (6 prompts)
- Presentational Writing: Compare and Contrast Article (1 prompt)
- Interpersonal Speaking: Simulated Conversation (4 prompts)
- Presentational Speaking: Cultural Perspective Presentation (1 prompt)

EXAM COMPONENTS

Multiple-Choice Section

Part A:

Listening: Interpretive Communication of Audio Resources

Assesses interpretive communication skills by requiring students to answer questions about different types of listening stimuli. Students respond to questions based on a variety of audio materials, including:

- Conversation
- Announcements
- Debate
- Instructions
- Message
- Presentation

Part B:

Reading: Interpretive Communication of Written and Print Resources

Assesses interpretive communication skills by requiring students to read a variety of documents and answer questions about them. Students respond to questions based on a variety of print texts, including:

- Email
- Instructions
- Letters
- News article
- Short story

Free-Response Section

Interpersonal Writing: Text Chat (10 minutes)

Students read and respond to six text-chat prompts.

Presentational Writing: Compare and Contrast Article (20 minutes)

Students write a compare and contrast article in Japanese for a specific purpose and for a specific audience.

Interpersonal Speaking: Simulated Conversation (3 minutes)

Students participate in a conversation by responding to four prompts.

Presentational Speaking: Cultural Perspective Presentation (9 minutes: 7 minutes to prepare and 2 minutes to present)

Students prepare and deliver a presentation to respond to a prompt about the significance of a Japanese cultural practice or product.