

PEAK Sample Interview Questions

Here are some example questions for each of the possible topic areas that you may be asked about during the PEAK interview:

For students applying to Japan in East Asia

Students applying to the Japan in East Asia may be asked questions at the interview in the following subject areas:

- 1) Society
- 2) Economics / Business
- 3) Literature
- 4) History
- 5) International Affairs

In your application, you will be asked to select three of these subject areas and you may potentially be asked questions on any of the three topics you select.

For each subject area, we provide two example questions based on questions asked in previous years.

1) Society

- There are several ways to achieve social and political change, such as revolution, reform, military coup d'état or externally imposed constitutional revision. Which one would you advocate and why?
- Describe some of the ways in which social institutions sustain gender norms.

2) Economics / Business

- A typical conclusion of standard microeconomic theory is that the economy is led by an “invisible hand”, and thus the role of government should be minimized. Do you think this also applies to environmental policy issues? Why or why not?
- Publishers often release new books from popular novelists in a hardback edition and, a year or more later, in a cheaper paperback edition. Explain their pricing strategy.

3) Literature

- Do you think that there are timeless, universal criteria for judging a piece of literature? Illustrate your answer with one or two examples.
- What is the role of the author in literature? Select one or two examples to defend your position.

4) History

- Political movements are often inspired by reclaiming a past moment (such as “Make America Great Again”). Explain how political slogans like this are similar to the practice of writing history.
- It is often said that those who don’t learn history are destined to repeat it. Using specific historical examples, agree or disagree with this statement.

5) International Affairs

- There is a theory that claims that democracy brings peace. Do you agree or disagree?
- What are some causes of a refugee crisis? What might be the international consequences and how should it be solved? Answer the question using an example.

For students applying to Environmental Sciences

In addition to the mathematics test, you will be asked questions in the interview about science subjects you have studied at school. These may include the following subjects, for which we provide two example questions for each subject based on questions asked in previous years:

1) Physics

- The highest mountain on the earth is Mt. Everest (or Qomolangma, Zhumulangma) in the Himalayas and its height is about 9000 meters above sea level. Why can’t mountains become too high, say 100,000 meters above sea level?
- You have a 50W light bulb and a 100W light bulb and a 100V power line. a. You connect the bulbs to the power line in parallel. Which bulb glows brighter? b. You connect the bulbs to the power line in series. Which bulb glows brighter?

2) Chemistry

- From a chemical point of view, tell us as much as you can about water.
- Applying a flame to a balloon filled with hydrogen and oxygen results in an explosion and the production of water, but water never spontaneously separates into hydrogen and oxygen. Why is this the case?

3) Biology

- What are the characteristics that define an organism? Describe the cellular structural differences between prokaryotes and eukaryotes.
- Blood glucose levels are regulated by negative feedback to keep the body in homeostasis. Describe the mechanisms of blood glucose regulation. Describe how insulin resistance affects these mechanisms.

4) Economics / Business

- A typical conclusion of standard microeconomic theory is that the economy is led by an “invisible hand”, and thus the role of government should be minimized. Do you think this also applies to environmental policy issues? Why or why not?
- Publishers often release new books from popular novelists in a hardback edition and, a year or more later, in a cheaper paperback edition. Explain their pricing strategy.