CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Cambridge
Pre-U

Example Candidate Responses
(Standards Booklet)

Cambridge Pre-U
French – Paper 1 (Speaking)
9779

CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Contents

Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge Pre-U, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

Cambridge Pre-U is reported in three bands (Distinction, Merit and Pass) each divided into three grades (D1, D2, D3; M1, M2, M3; P1, P2, P3).

In this booklet a range of candidate responses has been chosen to illustrate each band. The examples selected are at D3, M3 and P3. Each response is accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answers.

For ease of reference the following format for both parts of Paper 1 has been adopted:

Part I/II information

↓

Mark scheme

↓

Selected card/topic

↓
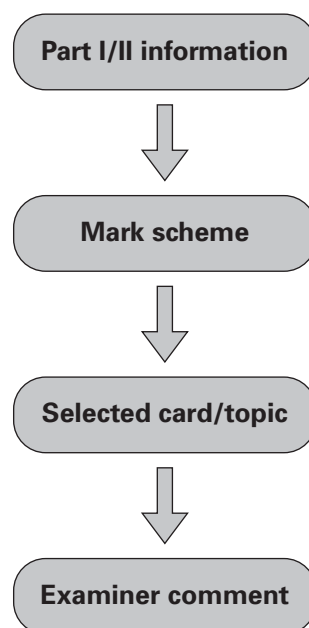
Examiner comment

Information about each part is followed by an extract from the mark scheme used by examiners. This, in turn, is followed by the card or topic that the candidate has selected to talk about, each with an examiner comment on performance. Comments are given to indicate where and why marks were awarded, and how additional marks could have been obtained. In this way, it is possible to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they still have to do to improve their grades. The candidate recording that accompanies each examiner commentary is available to download from Teacher Support at http://teachers.cie.org.uk

Past papers, Examiner Reports and other teacher support materials are available on Teacher Support at http://teachers.cie.org.uk

Components at a glance

Component	Name	Duration	Weighting (%)	Type of assessment
1	Speaking	c. 16 minutes	25	Externally assessed oral
2	Reading and Listening	2 hours 15 minutes	25	Externally set and marked written paper
3	Writing and Usage	2 hours 15 minutes	25	Externally set and marked written paper
4	Topics and Texts	2 hours 30 minutes	25	Externally set and marked written paper

This booklet contains examiner comments for a selection of example candidate responses (recordings) for Paper 1 (Speaking). An Example Candidate Responses Booklet for Papers 2, 3 and 4 can be found at Teacher Support http://teachers.cie.org.uk

Overview of Paper 1

30 marks – overview of article for up to 1 minute, discussion for up to 3 minutes, broadening of the discussion for up to 4 minutes

30 marks – prepared topic discussion (about 8 minutes)

Teachers are reminded that a full syllabus and other teacher support materials are available at www.cie.org.uk

Part I: Newspaper article and related themes

Discussion of an article and related themes (about 8 minutes)

Twenty minutes before the start of their oral, candidates will choose a newspaper article with a title in the target language and a general topic heading in English (maximum length 200 words) from a choice of four. Each article and heading will relate to one of the topic areas in the syllabus. Candidates will present an overview of the article to the Visiting Examiner for up to one minute. Then, in a discussion with the Examiner lasting for up to 3 minutes, candidates will put forward their opinions on the text and the issues arising from it. It is intended that the article will be a springboard for discussion, so a detailed analysis will not be required. The Examiner will broaden the discussion according to the general heading on the card (4 minutes). Dictionaries are not allowed. Candidates may make notes during the preparation time and use these as a prompt during the task. They must not read out prepared material. Mark grids will assess comprehension and discussion as well as linguistic competence.

Mark scheme

Comprehension and Discussion (14 marks)	Range and Accuracy (10 marks)	Pronunciation and intonation (6 marks)
13–14 Excellent Excellent understanding of article and response to examiner's prompts. Shows initiative in developing discussion.	**9–10 Excellent** Excellent level of accuracy. Confident and effective use of wide range of structures.	**6 Excellent** Authentic pronunciation and intonation.
11–12 Very good Very good understanding of article and response to examiner's prompts. Responds readily without undue hesitation.	**7–8 Very Good** Very good level of accuracy, over range of structures. Tenses and agreements generally reliable, but some lapses in more complex areas.	**5 Very good** Very good pronunciation and intonation.
9–10 Good Good understanding of article and response to examiner's prompts. Reasonably forthcoming but tends to follow examiner's lead.	**5–6 Good** Good level of accuracy, with some inconsistency. Some complex language attempted. Errors do not impair communication.	**4 Good** Generally good pronunciation and intonation.
7–8 Satisfactory Adequate understanding of article and response to most of examiner's prompts. Has difficulty with more complicated ideas.	**3–4 Satisfactory** Gaps in knowledge of grammar. Communication impaired by errors.	**3 Satisfactory** Satisfactory pronunciation and intonation.
4–6 Weak Limited understanding of article and very limited responses, with marked hesitation.	**1–2 Weak** Little evidence of grammatical awareness. Accuracy only in simple forms.	**2 Weak** Many sounds mispronounced.
1–3 Poor Minimal understanding of article and response to examiner's prompts.		**1 Poor** Native language heavily influences pronunciation and intonation, impeding communication.
0 No significant understanding of article and response to examiner's prompts.	**0** No rewardable language.	**0** Wholly inauthentic pronunciation and intonation.

Example candidate response – grade D3

Card 3

Theme: Health and fitness

Alerte, la France grossit

La population française grossit à un rythme effrayant d'environ 6 % par an. Actuellement, 1 Français sur 10 est obèse et 1 sur 3 présente un surpoids.

15 % des enfants sont touchés et risquent de développer, surtout à l'âge adulte, un diabète grave, des complications cardio-vasculaires ou mécaniques. Chez les plus de 65 ans, l'augmentation de l'obésité est également nette, et particulièrement inquiétante.

Les causes de cette épidémie galopante sont-elles d'ordre alimentaire ou culturel ? La première réponse est apportée par une étude récente qui révèle une amélioration de l'équilibre nutritionnel des Français âgés de 45 à 60 ans. Mais la nourriture n'est pas le seul facteur. La forte progression de l'obésité chez les personnes âgées et les enfants s'explique essentiellement par le nombre d'heures passées devant la télévision ou l'ordinateur. Alors qu'il suffirait de marcher 45 minutes par jour pour réduire de moitié la tendance à grossir.

Il faut bouger ! Dans cette perspective, les autorités ont aussi un rôle à jouer. Les enfants doivent sortir de leur chambre mais, il faut les y inciter en développant les pistes cyclables, en sécurisant les terrains de jeu et en permettant à tous de pratiquer un sport. Aux parents ensuite de donner le bon exemple...

Recording: 9779_12_French_ECR_Part1_D3.mp3

Examiner comment – grade D3

Comprehension and discussion

The candidate demonstrates very good understanding of the article and, although she has to ask for a couple of the questions to be repeated, she generally responds well and without undue hesitation. She shows herself able to develop and explain ideas and to express points of view, with some justification.

Mark awarded = 11 out of 14

Range and accuracy

Despite a number of errors which are sometimes of a serious nature (e.g. *beaucoup des*, *les donner* for *leur donner*, *de les gens*, *on ne va changer*, *jusqu'à le moment*), the language used is generally accurate, demonstrating a sound grasp of Pre-U structures. Tenses are, for the most part, accurate, concordances a little less so, and, despite the intrusion of a sprinkling of anglicisms, there is a positive attempt to introduce a range of vocabulary and structures.

Mark awarded = 7 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

The candidate's pronunciation has a slight Hispanic 'twang' to it. Some silent final consonants are occasionally pronounced, there is confusion between the pronunciation of *jeunes* and *gens* and nasal sounds cause a few problems. These aside, the candidate's pronunciation and intonation are generally good.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 22 out of 30

Example candidate response – grade M3

Card 3

Theme: Health and fitness

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La population française grossit à un rythme effrayant d'environ 6 % par an. Actuellement, 1 Français sur 10 est obèse et 1 sur 3 présente un surpoids.

15 % des enfants sont touchés et risquent de développer, surtout à l'âge adulte, un diabète grave, des complications cardio-vasculaires ou mécaniques. Chez les plus de 65 ans, l'augmentation de l'obésité est également nette, et particulièrement inquiétante.

Les causes de cette épidémie galopante sont-elles d'ordre alimentaire ou culturel ? La première réponse est apportée par une étude récente qui révèle une amélioration de l'équilibre nutritionnel des Français âgés de 45 à 60 ans. Mais la nourriture n'est pas le seul facteur. La forte progression de l'obésité chez les personnes âgées et les enfants s'explique essentiellement par le nombre d'heures passées devant la télévision ou l'ordinateur. Alors qu'il suffirait de marcher 45 minutes par jour pour réduire de moitié la tendance à grossir.

Il faut bouger ! Dans cette perspective, les autorités ont aussi un rôle à jouer. Les enfants doivent sortir de leur chambre mais, il faut les y inciter en développant les pistes cyclables, en sécurisant les terrains de jeu et en permettant à tous de pratiquer un sport. Aux parents ensuite de donner le bon exemple...

Recording**:** 9779_12_French_ECR_Part1_M3.mp3

Examiner comment – grade M3

Comprehension and discussion

Despite some imprecision in her summary of the article, in the discussion that follows, the candidate demonstrates some ability to develop and explain ideas and to express opinions. There is some repetition in what she says but she manages to sustain the momentum. Overall, the candidate demonstrates an understanding of the article that is better than adequate and she is reasonably forthcoming in her responses. She has, therefore, been awarded a mark at the lower end of the 'good' band.

Mark awarded = 9 out of 14

Range and accuracy

The candidate makes use of a rather restricted range of vocabulary and structures and her discourse contains a number of anglicisms and quite frequent errors of an elementary kind, highlighting gaps in her knowledge of basic grammar. Examples of these are: *les jeunes doit, moins gras, de les encourage de, obsessés avec, les jeunes personnes sont responsables pour sa propre santé, si ses parents ne donnent un bon exemple, habiter une vie, plus difficile de devient, buvent d'alcool, un bon façon à avoir un bon temps, à les cigarettes, ils n'entend pas à la publicité, il sera un bon idée à, de les drogues légales, aller à le médecin.*

Overall, the candidate shows sufficient evidence of grammatical awareness to be placed in the 'satisfactory' band. The candidate's communication is sometimes impaired by errors, but much of what she says can be understood. She has, therefore, been placed at the higher end of the band.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

The candidate persistently pronounces the final 's' of *ils* and *elles* and there are a number of other errors of pronunciation, e.g. *obèses*, *adultes*, *effets*. However, generally speaking, pronunciation and intonation can be said to be good.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 17 out of 30

Example candidate response – grade P3

Card 2

Theme: Environment

La révolution écologique de Nicolas Sarkozy

Nicolas Sarkozy propose une « révolution écologique » touchant nombre de domaines de la vie quotidienne. Voici quelques-uns des points forts :

Il promet des « investissements massifs » dans les transports écologiques avec notamment « 2 000 km de lignes de TGV nouvelles ». De même, il compte augmenter le fret ferroviaire et fluvial de manière à avoir trois millions de camions en moins sur les routes françaises en 2020. Autre mesure en matière de transport : la possibilité pour les villes d'expérimenter des péages urbains.

Le chef de l'État a adopté une position médiane sur le nucléaire : « Même si je ne veux pas créer de nouveaux sites nucléaires, je sais que nous ne devons pas renoncer à cette énergie », explique-t-il, en ajoutant qu'il envisage de lancer un plan de développement des énergies renouvelables.

Autre sujet épineux, celui des organismes génétiquement modifiés (OGM). Le chef de l'État suspend l'utilisation de pesticides ayant recours aux OGM, mais pas de toutes les cultures transgéniques. En même temps, il défend le droit à des cultures expérimentales.

Le Président a également souligné que le bâtiment est « un enjeu majeur ». « Avant 2012, tous les bâtiments seront construits à la norme *basse consommation d'énergie* », ce qui permettra une baisse de 40 % de la facture énergétique des ménages d'ici 2020.

Recording**:** 9779_12_French_ECR_Part1_P3.mp3

Examiner comment – grade P3

Comprehension and discussion

The candidate does not always understand the questions asked by the examiner and he shows considerable hesitation. Many of his responses are limited and occasionally it is not clear what he is trying to say. For example, towards the end of the test, when the examiner asked him if shops waste energy, he replies *je pense parce que les lunettes dans le magasin souvent dans les magasins à nuit*.

Mark awarded = 6 out of 14

Range and accuracy

Occasionally, the candidate is able to produce the necessary vocabulary and structures to convey his thoughts but there are clearly major gaps in knowledge of both grammar and lexis to the extent that he frequently struggles to express himself and communication is impaired in a number of places.

Mark awarded = 3 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

The candidate mispronounces many sounds, to such an extent that, on a number of occasions, what he is trying to say is not readily intelligible.

Mark awarded = 2 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 11 out of 30

Part II: Prepared oral topic

Prepared topic discussion (about 8 minutes)

Candidates will research a topic related to the history, current affairs or culture (including art, cinema, literature and traditions) of an area of the world where the target language is spoken. They will identify 5 to 8 headings within their topic, and submit these to Cambridge two weeks before the oral examination on the form provided. In the examination, candidates will be allowed to present their research for up to 1 minute (identifying interesting/contentious points in their topic, and reasons for choosing it) before discussion of the headings starts. Candidates can bring the headings into the examination to act as a prompt. They may also bring up to three pieces of visual material. Mark grids will assess knowledge as well as linguistic competence.

Mark scheme

Factual knowledge and opinions (14 marks)	Range and Accuracy (10 marks)	Pronunciation and intonation (6 marks)
13–14 Excellent Excellent factual knowledge of subject, understanding, illustration and opinion. Excellent preparation and discussion.	**9–10 Excellent** Excellent level of accuracy. Confident and effective use of wide range of structures.	**6 Excellent** Authentic pronunciation and intonation.
11–12 Very good Comprehensive knowledge of the subject, demonstrating clear understanding and using appropriate illustration. Range of relevant opinion, confidently discussed.	**7–8 Very Good** Very good level of accuracy, over range of structures. Tenses and agreements generally reliable, but some lapses in more complex areas.	**5 Very good** Very good pronunciation and intonation.
9–10 Good A good range of knowledge, generally well used. Relevant opinions. Ideas discussed well.	**5–6 Good** Good level of accuracy, with some inconsistency. Some complex language attempted. Errors do not impair communication.	**4 Good** Generally good pronunciation and intonation.
7–8 Satisfactory Solid base of knowledge, but insecure in some areas. Opinion adequate. Not always able to develop discussion.	**3–4 Satisfactory** Gaps in knowledge of grammar. Communication impaired by errors.	**3 Satisfactory** Satisfactory pronunciation and intonation.
4–6 Weak Limited knowledge, with obvious gaps. Some irrelevance and repetition. Opinions limited. Discussion pedestrian and/or hesitant.	**1–2 Weak** Little evidence of grammatical awareness. Accuracy only in simple forms.	**2 Weak** Many sounds mispronounced.
1–3 Poor Very limited knowledge. Material very thin and vague. Very hesitant discussion.		**1 Poor** Native language heavily influences pronunciation and intonation, impeding communication.
0 No knowledge shown of topic.	**0** No rewardable language.	**0** Wholly inauthentic pronunciation and intonation.

Example candidate response – grade D3

Chosen topic: *La 'Révolution Manet'*

Recording**:** 9779_12_French_ECR_Part2_D3.mp3

Examiner comment

Factual knowledge and opinions

The candidate has prepared well and demonstrates very good understanding of the place occupied by Manet in the development of 19th century French painting. The candidate has chosen just two paintings, brought in copies of them and is well prepared to discuss them. Perhaps this choice is a little restrictive. Nonetheless, in the discussion she successfully puts forward relevant opinions that are discussed with a degree of confidence. She is, however, not always able to respond well when faced with an unexpected question from the examiner, for example, when asked her opinion as to what domain Manet was most successful in.

Mark awarded = 11 out of 14

Range and accuracy

There is a sprinkling of errors of a more basic nature (e.g. *ont venu, qu'est-ce qui* for *ce qui, beaucoup des*) and a few problems with genders and concordances, but accuracy can, nonetheless, be said to be very good. The candidate is able to use the vocabulary and structures necessary to be able to discuss her chosen topic with confidence.

Mark awarded = 7 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

Some silent final consonants are sounded (e.g. *arts*, *Paris*, *client*). There are a few problems with nasal and other sounds (e.g. *Olympia*, *importe*, *excuse*, *texture*, *peinture*) but, these aside, pronunciation and intonation can be described as good.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 22 out of 30

Example candidate response – grade M3

Chosen topic: *Pourquoi Marie Curie était-elle une scientifique influente à son époque et encore de nos jours?*

Recording**:** 9779_12_French_ECR_Part2_M3.mp3

Examiner comment

Factual knowledge and opinions

The candidate has prepared quite well and has a solid base of information that she has clearly thought about. She does not always target the question she is asked but, when she does, she shows some ability to develop and explain her ideas.

Mark awarded = 9 out of 14

Range and accuracy

The quality of language is inconsistent but, despite some errors (e.g. *elle s'a appelé; sont éléments qui n'ont pas un grand significance utile*), generally speaking, the candidate is able to use the vocabulary and structures necessary to describe and put forward some ideas on the achievements of Marie Curie. Complex structures are sometimes attempted, e.g. *après avoir fini l'université; elle a découvert ces elements en séparant une autre compose*.

Mark awarded = 5 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

The candidate persistently pronounces the final 's' of *ils/elles* and there are a number of other errors of pronunciation, e.g. *rayons* and *temps*. However, overall, pronunciation and intonation can be described as good.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 18 out of 30

Example candidate response – grade P3

Chosen topic: *'Père Goriot', de Balzac*

Recording**:** 9779_12_French_ECR_Part2_P3.mp3

Examiner comment

Factual knowledge and opinions

The candidate has chosen quite an ambitious literary topic. He clearly has some knowledge of his chosen text but he often struggles to express himself intelligibly and the examiner has to work hard to help him exploit the material he has prepared. Although he has some ideas, he is not always able to develop them because of linguistic constraints. Nevertheless, with prompts from the examiner, he is able to demonstrate a sufficient base of knowledge and offer adequate opinions to be awarded a mark in the 'satisfactory' band.

Mark awarded = 7 out of 14

Range and accuracy

The candidate often does not have the lexical means to express himself intelligibly, with the result that he is unable to present his material at all clearly. Overall, however, he demonstrates sufficient evidence of grammatical awareness to be awarded a mark at the higher end of the 'satisfactory' band.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 10

Pronunciation and intonation

Both the candidate's pronunciation and intonation are quite heavily anglicised and many sounds are mispronounced (e.g. 'simboles' for *symboles*; final 'p' sounded in *beaucoup;* 'Palace' *de Versailles* for *Palais de Versailles*, etc.).

Mark awarded = 2 out of 6

Total mark awarded = 13 out of 30