



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

French

46551F/H

(Specification 4655)

Unit 1: Listening

Report on the Examination

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Foundation Tier

General Comments

Most students attempted all the questions on the paper, though there were some blank spaces found in Questions 16 and 17, which required responses in English. Many students were able to gain some marks for each question, though some key individual vocabulary items caused problems. Negative expressions continue to prove a challenge for many, and there is still a tendency for students to choose an answer quickly because they hear a word they recognise without listening to the whole utterance before making their final choice of answer. Once again, it cannot be stressed too strongly that students should be encouraged to write their answers as clearly and as legibly as possible in the spaces provided in the answer book. A minority of students form letters in multiple choice questions which are difficult to decipher, and some continue to write over an incorrect answer (e.g. they make an F into an E) and it is sometimes impossible to work out the final answer chosen.

Questions 1-3

Question 3 was well done (95% answered correctly), as students were very familiar with the key word (*café*), though Question 1 was the least well answered in this section (80% success rate) with some confusion over the meaning of *des frites*, leading many to answer with 'fruits'. Question 2 was successfully answered by 87% of students.

Questions 4-7

Question 5 was very well done (95% gained a mark), due to recognition of the word *chien*. Question 7 was poorly done (only 44% achieving the mark) since *je fais les courses* was not well known. The other two questions were answered correctly by the majority (79% gained a mark for Question 4 and 88% for Question 6).

Questions 8-9

The vast majority of students achieved at least one of the two marks available for each of these questions (over 90% in each case). However, 70% gained both marks in Question 8 (*la campagne* seemed to cause some difficulty) whereas 82% scored the maximum in Question 9.

Questions 10-12

All three questions caused some degree of difficulty, with the most errors occurring in Question 12 where only 49% scored a mark. In Question 10, 71% were successful and 61% in Question 11. Key words which caused problems here were *d'habitude*, *toujours*, *tous les jours*.

Questions 13-15

Generally, this section proved straightforward with many accurate answers. Nearly all students scored a mark in Question 15 with *une piscine* being very familiar but there were high scores for the other two questions as well.

Questions 16-17

Very few candidates (14%) scored both of the available marks in Question 16, though the two key words were *gentille* and *paresseuse*. The former was often rendered as 'gentle' and the latter was not well known. Question 17 was slightly better done, possibly because there were two alternative answers for the fault (*casse-pieds* and *sérieux*) and the quality was the straightforward *intelligent*.

Questions 18-21

Many students struggled with these questions. Question 18 caused particular problems with only about a third of students being successful. The key expressions *je vais mettre* and *mon look* did not lead to the correct answer of clothes. Questions 19 and 20 were better answered, though a substantial minority did not understand key expressions such as *je reçois plein de cadeaux* and *il est très amusant de passer du temps avec ses amis*.

Questions 22-25

Question 22 proved to be the most challenging on the paper. Very few answered it successfully. Many chose answer A despite the fact the speaker said *je ne suis pas vendeur*. Generally speaking, students find picking out negative expressions demanding. Question 23 was answered far more accurately, since most were able to link *le visage des enfants* to the correct answer of working with children. Question 24 once again highlighted the problems caused by negatives. Only 29% of students answered Question 24 accurately with many choosing B (finds her work easy) whereas the speaker says *ce n'est pas un métier facile*. The best answered question in this section was Question 25 (with a 69% success rate) since here presumably the correct answer was clearer due to the absence of negative expressions. The distractors (the boss and the poor pay) could be eliminated by hearing *mon patron est gentil* and *le salaire est bon*.

Questions 26-28

The acts were easier to identify than the opinions in this section. Nearly all students scored at least one mark for Questions 26 and 28, with Question 28 (the dancing dog) having the highest number scoring both available marks (74%). The question which caused the most difficulty was Question 27 where the word *chanteuse* was not always known, and the negative (*je n'ai pas aimé sa voix*) was not recognised.

Higher Tier

General Comments

There were a number of pleasing, high scoring scripts and students coped more effectively with the later questions, requiring answers in English than in past series. The paper seemed to have been more accessible than previous years, a fact confirmed by the higher mean mark. However, examiners reported that a significant minority of students wrote their answers in a very careless manner and that it was often very difficult for them to work out what had been written.

Questions 1 and 2

These two questions were well answered and so most students made a positive start to the paper.

Questions 3-6

Although Higher Tier students answered these questions more successfully than the Foundation Tier cohort, a similar pattern emerged with Question 3 proving to be particularly challenging since only 38% answered it correctly. Despite the fact that the speaker says *je ne suis pas vendeur*, many chose A as the answer. Question 4 was far better answered and 70% gained a mark for Question 5. The most success was found in Question 6, where over 90% achieved the mark.

Questions 7-10

This section was well done with the most challenging question being Question 9, where the expressions *j'en ai marre* and *je trouve la chimie dure à comprendre* were not as well recognised. This meant that 77% of students scored the mark whereas the other 3 questions all had a higher success rate.

Questions 11 and 12

There was a wide variation between these two questions, with 68% scoring at least one mark on Question 11, while 91% scored at least one mark on Question 12. While 'cold/not hot enough' was recognised by many students for the curry, often the addition of 'spicy' negated the mark. It was indeed spicy but the speaker's *ça m'a plu* was hard to understand. The idea of not enough sugar in the tart was well done, though some thought the tart was too sweet. Most attempted answers about the cooking of the steak and while many got the idea of rare, others went for overdone or burnt. Fewer attempted the idea of fatty and generally did well. However, as in Question 11, the addition of an extra incorrect piece of information negated the mark. As for the dessert, there were very few references to egg with the vast majority going for cream. Generally this part was well done, though perhaps influenced by answers for Question 11, a fair number made an incorrect reference to not enough cream.

Questions 13-16

These questions were well answered by many, particularly Question 16, where 93% gained a mark. Question 13 was the least successfully answered, though 75% did score here.

Questions 17 and 18

The vast majority of students scored at least one mark on Question 17, with the idea of needing wood for heating and cooking being well understood. Question 18 was more of a challenge, although even here nearly 80% of students scored at least one of the available marks. The expression *une famille typique ne peut pas se les payer* was indeed challenging, nonetheless A was often correctly chosen. It was in working out Fadimata's optimism or pessimism that many found challenging.

Questions 19 and 20

These questions discriminated well with students having to use inference to gain the marks. Question 19(i) proved challenging with only a third of students scoring. Questions 19(ii) and 20(i) were far better done. Question 20(ii) led some to choose B as the correct answer whereas Anne-Marie's utterance as a whole meant the answer had to be C.

Questions 21 and 22

Question 21(i) was well done, with three quarters of students realising that her attitude was negative. However, the reason for this was more challenging and only 36% scored in Question 21(ii). Many were confused by the reference to *groupes scolaires* and thought that she wanted to go away on a school trip or even that she wanted to stay at home to do school work. While the idea of not able to sleep or it being noisy was generally the correct answer given, *cela l'empêchait de dormir la nuit* did produce some references to fishing at night. Reference to the weather, where attempted, was generally correct, though *il a plu* was not well known.

In Question 22(i), 'disappointed' was usually the most common correct answer, though there were a fair number of instances where additional incorrect information negated. Many assumed

wrongly that since the daughter did not like the holiday, the father did and this led to wrong information being given also in the second part of the question. There were also contradictory responses eg it was not a good holiday but he enjoyed it. Some answers were non-committal and said the father had mixed feelings.

Question 22(ii) proved demanding for a great many, with a 36% success rate. Only a small minority understood the idea of a more expensive holiday next year. There were many incorrect references to the daughter staying in a hotel now while her father camped, which made this year's holiday more expensive.

Questions 23-25

This section was universally well done and was intentionally placed between two more challenging questions. The vast majority scored at least one of the available marks for each of the three questions, with many scoring both. The main difficulty was in Question 24, where the attitude was not picked out correctly. The information about the dancing dog in Question 25 proved particularly accessible and the recent canine success in a well-known TV talent show will possibly have helped.

Question 26 and 27

In Question 26(i), 40% gained the mark because the key idea of the couple splitting up was conveyed. The reason for the split in Question 26(ii) was more challenging and there was some guessing. Many incorrect answers were concerned with lack of fidelity rather than he being too possessive or getting on her nerves. With four possible answers available in Question 27, most candidates managed to score at least one mark and about a third scored two. The idea of feeling sad or crying was well done. Impact on his studies was often conveyed, though some misunderstood and thought he was now going to devote himself to school work. The idea of regret was reasonably done though quite often negated because of incorrect additional information such as he regrets spending money on her. The idea of him wanting to change led to frequent incorrect additional references to what he wants to change, for instance many thought he wanted to move to a different town.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.