Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In French (5FR03)
Paper 3H: Reading and Understanding
in French

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**GCSE French
Unit 3H: Reading
Examiner Report**

Candidates performed well across the paper as a whole and there were some excellent performances.

Question 1
This overlap question was targeted at C grade candidates and a number achieved full marks. Most candidates around C grade fared well with this question although part (iii) was sometimes not correctly answered with many candidates selecting E (chatting online). In this instance, they then also selected an incorrect answer for (i). In questions of this nature, candidates require the ability to understand sections of text and pick out detailed information.Centres are advised to prepare candidates for this by using similar material with a degree of complexity at the learning stage in order to help them develop the necessary skills.

Question 2
Most candidates at higher tier tackled this question, targeted at D grade candidates very well. Part (ii) was sometimes incorrectly answered with candidates spotting the vocabulary item *uniforme scolaire* but not understanding the full sentence.
This type of task requires candidates to do more than simply find a French term and its equivalent in English, as some of the answers included references to material in more than one of the texts and candidates need to look for more precise details and consider negative and positive statements.   Centres are advised to teach students to learn to understand full statements rather than vocabulary items in isolation in order to perform well in such tasks.

Question 3
Many candidates scored 2 out of 4 on this question which was targeted at B grade candidates. Parts i) and iv) of this question proved to be the most challenging with some candidates apparently guessing the answers to these or identifying distractor phrases incorrectly such as *J'ai une famille nombreuse* assuming that this meant that some family members had moved out and i) Access to similar texts in the learning phase should help candidates to acquire the skills needed to answer questions like this one which careful reading and interpretation of meaning.

Question 4
This question was targeted at Grade A candidates and candidates of a lower ability found many parts of the question quite challenging. Comprehension of an authentic text containing a range of tenses and structures was tested by questions in English. Very few candidates made the mistake of answering this question in French, although some wrote the odd French expression eg *des vélos-taxis* where they were unsure of the English, even though in this case, cycle-taxis had been provided as a translation in the questions. No marks are awarded for this. Answers for the questions could be found sequentially in the text and centres need to ensure that candidates are aware that this is usually the case. The importance of expressing oneself clearly in English also needs to be stressed to candidates as answers need to be understood clearly in order to

be worthy of marks. Candidates need to have access to materials containing some quite complicated structures in order to develop their ability to perform well in an exercise at this level.

4a) was not well done at all. Most candidates failed to recognise the French word *essence* as petrol. There were some very creative answers for this part of the question such as *the essence of Paris was missing* or *Paris had lost its atmosphere.* Many pupils also commented that people preferred cycle-taxis to cars or vice versa. Others failed to understand *Deuxième Guerre Mondiale*, even though it was mentioned in the question.

4b) Candidates had a high level of success in answering this part of the question correctly, with many able to say Lyon was the first city to reintroduce taxis. Some candidates however thought that Lyon manufactured the cycle taxis or was the first town to send the taxis to other towns. A number of candidates mentioned a *team* or a *team of service* showing they knew the word for team but did not could not correctly translate the phrase *la première à s'équiper de ce service.* Many pupils misunderstood the verb *être* in the perfect tense for the season *summer* but they were still credited a mark if they said that Lyon was the first city to reintroduce taxis in (the summer of) 2003.

4c) Candidates often scored only one of the two possible marks for this question due to understanding that it was part time work, or done in their free time. However a large number of them did not understand the *ne…..que* and a very common incorrect answer was that student taxi drivers did **not** work two or three days per week.

Likewise the small trips for 10 euros had a huge number of different interpretations with the small sometimes relating to the wages rather than the journey, and a general misunderstanding of *courses*, which was sometimes left as courses or noted as *tips.* Reference was also made to *shopping trips* by a few candidates. Some didn't understand *attendre* but recognised the negative and *long* and incorrectly stated that drivers did not undertake long journeys.

4d) Many candidates understood the price was raised for tourists. Unfortunately, a large number also gave answers which failed to refer to the drivers as being the ones putting the price up. A number of candidates assumed *proposer* was a cognate and suggested that the tourists were proposing marriage in front of the Eiffel Tower. Misreading of the word *voient* as *violent* led to a range of answers suggesting that passengers sometimes attacked cycle-taxi drivers.

4e) Many candidates understood cycle-taxis to be a greener means of transport in what should have been a straightforward question to answer at this level. Some still managed to get confused and assumed *vert* was referring to the scenery or the colour of the cycle taxi.

4f) This two mark question was often not answered with two separate elements and many candidates wrote answers which elaborated upon a single idea. For example *they are slow and don't travel more than 15km per hour.* Such answers

would be awarded one mark only. Almost all candidates achieved only one mark for this question with only the best candidates recognising *ceintures de sécurité.* There were some answers suggesting that the taxis were unsafe or insecure but this was not sufficient as an answer.

Question 5

Most parts of this question aimed at D grade candidates were tackled well by candidates at this level. A small number of candidates failed to choose the correct statement for (iv), selecting A rather than C as the word *samedi* appears in both options. Questions such as this require candidates to read the French and English statements very carefully to help them to arrive at the correct answer and practice of similar exercises in the learning environment should help them to develop this skill.

Question 6

This question, written using a range of tenses was targeted at C grade candidates and required them to understand different time frames, which most were able to do successfully. The question was fairly well done by candidates across the ability range, although the weakest candidates scored either 0 or 1 out of a possible 4 marks. The question required candidates to demonstrate the ability to extract detailed information from the text and to eliminate distractors, all of which also appear in the text.

Question 7

Under half of the candidates managed to gain at least 3 out of 4 marks in this question, an authentic text, adapted for the purpose and aimed at B grade candidates, involving the identification of correct statements from eight possibilities. A common incorrect assumption was C (The Rivetoile shopping centre is the biggest one in the country). The importance of careful reading of the text is highlighted particularly here as it clearly states *le plus grand centre commercial de l'**est** du pays.*

A small minority of candidates identified more than four statements which led to the first four marked being considered as intended answers. Some candidates also failed to identify four points, instead simply putting two or three crosses. Practice at reading short authentic texts helps candidates to develop their ability to cope well with such tasks.

Question 8

This question was aimed at Grade A* and was adapted from an authentic text. The passage contained some complicated material and structures, as is appropriate for a question at this level. Candidates gaining the lower grades for which this paper is designed found this question very demanding but the majority of candidates did attempt it, perhaps guessing their responses.

Candidates at C grade typically scored 3 or 4 marks in this question. Many candidates found 8ii), 8iv) and 8vi) and 8vii) the most difficult and 8i) and 8viii) the most accessible. There were a few instances of candidates not turning over the final page and losing a mark for 8viii)

The performance of better candidates was characterised by:
- careful reading of the rubric and questions
- good knowledge of vocabulary
- recognising the use of negation
- a good command of English giving them the ability to recognise synonyms
- attention to detail, giving full rather than partial answers in the question which required written answers in English
- expressing themselves clearly and unambiguously when writing in English and relating their answers to facts in the text
- drawing logical conclusions
- reading over and correcting their answers.