

Examiners' Report June 2018

GCSE French 1FR0 3F

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Introduction

GCSE French paper 1FR0 3F is assessed by means of a forty-five minute examination. During this time, candidates are assessed on their understanding of written French across a range of different types of texts. The paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all of the themes.

The assessment consists of 10 questions and the total mark for the paper is 50 marks.

Section A has six questions set in English, two of which are questions based on literary extracts.

Section B contains three questions set in French.

Section C contains one translation passage from French into English.

Texts for individual questions within the assessment use high frequency language and vary in length, including both short and longer written passages. Texts include authentic sources that introduce more complex language and unfamiliar materials. Literary texts consist of short extracts from texts that may have been adapted and abridged from authentic sources to be appropriate to this level.

This is the first examination under the new 2016 specification and although the general syllabus content is similar to the previous specification, there are some new content areas, notably the following: role models, languages outside the classroom; the global dimension and volunteering. Candidates were faced with some familiar test types but others which represented a significant change from the previous specification, including the testing of literary texts, the introduction of translation into English and four questions posed in French, where formerly all questions on the paper at Foundation Tier were posed in English.

Most entrants at this level achieved some success on questions with English prompts which required the recall of familiar vocabulary items from the list provided in the specification and many candidates were able to gain at least some marks on the new translation into English task. However, the weaker candidates were less successful on questions which required processing or interpreting meaning and although the literary texts and questions with rubrics in French proved accessible to those achieving higher scores on the paper they were more problematic for less able candidates.

One of the crossover questions on this paper (Q8) was a multiple choice question with the options written in French. This question required understanding of time frames, recall of common vocabulary included in the specification and the ability to recognise synonyms in French. Some candidates found this question type particularly challenging and many scored very poorly on it.

Question 1 (a)

This part of the question required candidates to recognise a single lexical item "la cuisine" within a sentence and the vast majority of candidates entered were successful in doing so. If candidates had not recognised this item, a further opportunity to identify the phrase containing cognates "je prépare le dîner" may have contributed to the huge success achieved on this part of the question.

Question 1 (b)

This part of the question required candidates to recognise a single lexical item "tennis" within a sentence and the vast majority of those entered were successful in linking this with sport.

Question 1 (c)

This part of the question required candidates to recognise a single lexical item "la lecture" within a sentence and linking this with reading and the vast majority were successful.

Question 1 (d)

This part of the question required candidates to pick out from the phrase "**J'aime** jouer au tennis et **aller au cinéma**" that Adèle enjoys films. Most candidates succeeded with this task, perhaps by focusing upon the single lexical item "cinéma".

Question 1 (e)

This part of the question was tackled well by three quarters of candidates who were able to deduce that "Je joue de la batterie dans un groupe" meant that Jules loves music. As this required a degree of deduction, some candidates may not have worked this out. The lexical item "la batterie" does appear in the vocabulary list but is not an instrument which is a cognate as many are. Familiarity with the vocabulary list contained in the specification is essential for success at questions of this nature which require recall.

Question 1 (f)

This question required candidates to recognise the common item of vocabulary "le chien" and to conclude that this was a pet. All but a very few were familiar with this word and able to make this link.

Question 2 (a)

Well under half of the cohort selected the correct answer (bath) for this part of the question. As the topic was the environment, candidates may have drawn a logical conclusion that the writer would state that she preferred to take a shower and this was the most commonly selected incorrect response. Centres are advised to stress to candidates that it is important to read the text alongside the gap-fill items to succeed at questions of this type.

Question 2 (b)

This part of the question required candidates to deduce that "Ma mère éteint l'ordinateur quand elle quitte le salon" (My mother turns off the computer when she leaves the room), means that his mother is keen to save electricity. As this requires some processing, candidates were slightly less successful with this gapfill than some others with only around three quarters of the cohort achieving a correct answer. Practise with questions which require this type of processing should help candidates to succeed.

Question 2 (c)

This part of the question was very well done, as it involved candidates recognising a single lexical item and almost all of the cohort selected the correct answer (bottles).

Question 2 (d)

This part of the question required candidates to process information to deduce that "il utilise toujours la voiture" means that his father drives to work. Candidates need to understand the full sentence which states that "Son bureau est près de la maison" which indicates that he is travelling to his office. More than three quarters of candidates selected the correct response for this question, although there were a number of candidates who selected the incorrect "cycles", perhaps because the text stated "mon père **recycle**".

Question 2 (e)

The majority of candidates in the cohort were successful with this question which required them to recognise the sentence "**je vais au collège en vélo**" (I go to school by bike).

Question 3

This question was well answered by around one third of candidates, who achieved four of the possible five points available. Those achieving lower grades typically scored one or two points only.

Q3 (a) (i) proved surprisingly problematic for candidates with only a small number able to correctly identify the word "quatrième" and to determine that it indicated that the flat was on the fourth floor. There were a range of alternative answers including fourteenth, fortieth and four hundredth! It is important that candidates are also familiar with ordinal numbers as indicated in the vocabulary list in the specification.

Q3 (a) (ii) One of the sub-themes in the Local area, Holiday and Travel theme is "dealing with problems" and this part of the question is testing this area. Success required candidates to recognise the sentence "**L'ascenseur** tombe souvent en panne". (The lift often breaks down). Candidates who simply wrote "the lift" as an answer were awarded a mark. There were a range of incorrect responses including some from candidates who thought that the block of flats was built on the site of some tombs or that living in the flats was a pain.

Q3 (a) (iii) This part of the question required candidates to understand the sentence "Prendre l'escalier m'aide à être en forme" (Taking the stairs helps me to stay fit). Many candidates were unfamiliar with the word "l'escalier" and "taking the escalator" was a very common incorrect response, as was reference to doing a lot of shopping.

Q3 (b) (i) Many candidates succeeded in determining the views of Madeleine's father about living on a farm as a child by identifying the word "ennuyeux" (boring) in the text. Some however, were unfamiliar with the word and guessed that it meant "annoying". This once again highlights the importance of familiarity with items on the vocabulary list in the specification.

Q3 (b) (ii) There were a number of acceptable correct responses for this part of the question and these included the following:

the views; recognisable English interpretations of the word "pittoresque", so for example "picturesk" was accepted but not "picturistic"; mountain biking (cycling or biking were also acceptable, but not the French VTT); walking in nature/outdoors; (nature without the idea of walking in nature was not accepted).

Question 5

Just under half of candidates scored one point of the three available for this crossover question which also appeared in the Higher Tier paper. In questions of this nature, candidates are required to understand sections of text which may contain distractors and to identify the overall message as well as key points, details and opinions. Centres are advised to prepare candidates for this by using similar materials with a degree of complexity at the learning stage in order to prepare them for this.

Q5 (a) A number of weather conditions were mentioned in the passage ("C'était la saison des pluies ... il a fait chaud et un temps ensoleillé **presque tous les jours, sauf** le dernier jour, quand il y a eu une pluie torrentielle.) This part of the question required candidates to recognise the time phrase "presque tous les jours" and to determine that this was referring to most of the holiday. Understanding of the phrase "sauf le dernier jour" (except the last day) would also further clarify the correct answer. Acceptable responses included simple one word responses such as "hot", "sunny" or "fine" or more extended answers such as "despite the fact that it was the rainy season, it was hot and sunny almost every day, except the last day when there was torrential rain". It is important that candidates understand that it is not necessary to write a lengthy answer however and that sometimes lengthy answers can be contradictory and cause candidates to lose marks.

Q5 (b) This part of the question was not well answered and a minority achieved the correct answer "sailing". In order to achieve success in this question, candidates needed not only to recall the meaning of the word "voile" but also to eliminate other sports mentioned by understanding time frames. "Skiing" was an extremely common incorrect answer, particularly by candidates who had answered the first part of this question incorrectly, assuming that "chaud" meant "cold".

Q5 (c) This part of the question required candidates to read a larger portion of the text to identify that the most memorable part of the holiday was the boat trip in the national park, where he saw waterfalls. A range of brief answers were acceptable such as "the boat trip" "the national park" or "the waterfalls". A minority of candidates included all of this information in their response but it was not necessary to do so. Typical incorrect answers included reference to visiting the volcano or tropical forest, where candidates had referred to the incorrect portion of the text to obtain their answers. Other misconceptions were that he went souvenir shopping; he bought a souvenir on the boat or he visited a castle.

Question 6

This literary text was a crossover question requiring answers in English which appeared in both Foundation and Higher Tier papers. Over half of candidates at Foundation Tier did not score any points on this question which required them to recognise and respond to key information and ideas in a more extended authentic text, deducing meaning and drawing inferences. The importance of fully reading the question set cannot be over-emphasised in this question.

This candidate has scored three of the four points available for this question.

6 Read the extract from the novel.

Pierre, a French teenager, is in an English lesson at school and Victoria is a new English girl in the class.

Soudain, le professeur me demande de lire la question de l'exercice 3 et d'essayer d'y répondre.

Ah, il faut que ça tombe sur moi ! Je suis inquiet. Victoria me regarde... C'est la première fois qu'elle va m'entendre parler anglais. Que va-t-elle penser de moi ?

Je me lance avec courage et je lis deux ou trois mots avec difficulté. Les autres commencent à sourire en m'entendant. Je continue puis j'hésite... Le prof est obligé de m'aider. Puis, quand j'entends des élèves rire, je m'arrête définitivement et le prof donne la question à quelqu'un d'autre.

J'ai senti les yeux de Victoria sur moi mais elle ne riait pas.

(Source: 'Je suis nul en anglais' © Marc Thil, 1st Edition, 2014 CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform)

Answer the following questions **in English**. You do not need to write in full sentences.

(a) Why is Pierre worried about answering the question?

(1)

Because of ~~to~~ what Victoria might think of him

(b) What is the **initial** reaction of his classmates?

(1)

They laugh.

(c) What happens when Pierre stops speaking?

(1)

Ask someone else the question.

(d) How do we know that Victoria feels sorry for Pierre?

(1)

She doesn't laugh.

In Q6 (a) the candidate has written a very good answer as it shows understanding that Pierre is concerned about what Victoria might be thinking about him. The candidate has understood the phrase "Que va-t-elle penser de moi?". Candidates who were unsuccessful with this part of the question may have written answers such as "it is the first time he is speaking in English" without qualifying this by mentioning the fact that Victoria is watching him and that is what is worrying him most. Other unsuccessful candidates may have written answers such as "the class is watching", without specifically mentioning his concern about being watched by Victoria.

In this script the for Q6 (b), in common with many others at Foundation Tier, this candidate did not fully read the question and take on board the fact that the word **initial** was emboldened in the question. Therefore, although the candidate clearly understands the phrase "j'entends des élèves **rire**" and draws the conclusion that his classmates are laughing at him, this is not their first reaction, mentioned earlier in the passage, which is to smile. (Les autres commencent à **sourire** en m'entendant.)

Q6 (c) has been well answered by this candidate. Candidates who answered this question incorrectly may have written answers such as "the teacher had to help him". Careful reading of the passage indicates that although the teacher helps him, this is when he hesitates and not when he stops speaking. If candidates had written an answer such as "his teacher helped him **by asking the question to someone else**", this answer was acceptable, since the candidate had qualified the statement by adding further detail which included the answer.

For Q6 (d) this candidate has written an appropriate response and this part of the question was most likely to be correctly answered. Longer responses such as "she looked at him but didn't laugh" were also acceptable. There were many answers which suggested that Victoria was crying or "looking at him with sad eyes" where candidate had attempted to guess at a correct answer.

Question 7 (a)

One third of candidates succeeded in responding correctly to this question which involved processing and interpreting meaning as the gapfill text was also set in French. This involved candidates identifying that the carnival takes place in January and February, recognising the word "hiver" in the box of possible answers. Where candidates were unsuccessful, a small number wrote "été" which would have been the only grammatically correct possibility. Others wrote any of the other words, indicating a complete inability to understand the text or the gapfill.

Question 7 (b)

Just over one third of candidates succeeded at this part of the question which involved understanding the word "conours", recognising the cognate "compétition", and linking the word "chiens" with "animaux". This involves complex processing skills and only the more able candidates appeared to succeed with this part of the question.

Question 7 (c)

This part of the question was answered successfully by over half of entrants for this paper. Success involved processing a lengthy sentence to pick out the required information. Many of the candidates who wrote incorrect responses wrote "chiens" as their answer to this question. Whilst grammatically possible, they undoubtedly arrived at this response as the text stated "il ya un concours **spécial** pour les chiens" and were influenced by the word "spécial" . It is vital to stress the importance of fully reading the text and not jumping to conclusions. Where candidates wrote other answers, with the exception of "touristes" which was grammatically plausible, other answers were most likely random guesses. Candidates need to recognise where plurals are required in a gapfill to give them a greater chance of success when there is doubt about the meaning of words.

Question 7 (d)

Q7(d) required candidates to recognise the link between "patinoire" and "patinage". Well under half of entrants did not do this although some did write the logical answer "toboggan" which is the only other response which would have fitted this gapfill. In other instances, candidates had been unable to see any grammatical links and wrote any of the other words.

Question 7 (e)

Q7(e) required candidates to recognise the link between "sculpteur" and "artiste". Just under half of candidates did not do this although some wrote singular nouns (both masculine and feminine) in this gapfill, indicating that they recognised grammatically this is what was needed here. Candidates need to recognise where singulars or plurals are needed in the gapfill questions as this will give them a greater chance of success if they are unsure of meanings.

Question 9 (a)

Q9 (a) required candidates to identify which one of three texts related to having worked outdoors. Under one third of candidates were successful as they processed and interpreted meaning in this crossover question, which appeared on both the Foundation and Hier Tier papers. There were several clues for candidates who selected the correct answer of Christophe. He says that he does not like working indoors; he mentions that his father is a bricklayer and gave him work experience (this is an outdoor job); he says it is a heavy job outdoors. By assimilating all of this information, successful students would deduce that the correct answer is Christophe. Some candidates wrote Damien as the answer to this question but he states that he would hate to work outdoors. Some candidates may have chosen this option as Damien mentions "à l'extérieur" which appears in the gapfill.

Question 9 (b)

A little over one third of candidates succeeded at Q9(b). Success involved recognition of the vocabulary "la mairie" and finding the synonym "l'hôtel de ville". In order to succeed at questions of this type, candidates are advised to complete exercises involving synonyms included in the vocabulary list at the learning stage.

Question 9 (c)

Just over a quarter of candidates succeeded at Q9(c). Success involved recognition of the adjective "fatigant" and finding the synonym to describe how he felt "épuisé". In order to succeed at questions of this type, centres are advised to complete exercises involving synonyms included in the vocabulary list at the learning stage.

Question 9 (d)

This part of the question was answered successfully by almost half of the candidates who were clearly able to link the word "collègues" with "le directeur and la réceptionniste" mentioned by Damien.

Question 9 (e)

This part of the question was answered successfully by around one quarter of candidates. It involved understanding the gapfill text (did not have their first choice of placement) and then reading, understanding, processing and drawing conclusions that the correct answer was Anouk. There were several clues to assist candidates with this. She states that she wanted to do a placement in a tourist information centre but that others had the same idea (implying that this was not possible for her). She then states that she found a placement in a shopping centre (indicating that this was not her first choice).

Question 10

Candidates were prepared well for this new question type which involved translating a short passage of French into English. The passage contains sentences which are all set within the same theme and include a range of tenses, structures and vocabulary assessed at Foundation Tier. Candidates are expected to demonstrate an ability to transfer meaning accurately into English. Many candidates scored well on this question and some had not completed the questions written in French but had fully completed the translation task. Many of those achieving higher grades gained four or more of the seven marks available for this question.

10 Translate this passage into English.

J'apprends l'italien à l'université. Mon frère ne veut pas rester au collège. Il va faire un apprentissage. Je suis allé en Espagne pour pratiquer mon espagnol. Si on parle une autre langue, on peut travailler dans un pays différent.

I learn Italian at university. My ~~bro~~ brother does not want to stay in school. He will do an apprenticeship. I went to Spain to practice my Spanish. If you speak another language, you can work in a different country.



This script is one of numerous examples which scored the full seven marks. The candidate has carefully looked at verb tenses and translated these accurately. Key vocabulary in the text is all translated accurately and the word "on", which can be awkward for some, has been well translated as "you", making it read well in English.



In a translation task, candidates need to remember there will always be a range of tenses of regular and irregular verbs included which cover those encountered at Foundation Tier. (Present, perfect, imperfect, future (or the future idea with "aller" + infinitive, conditional: vouloir and aimer) as well as impersonal verbs such as il faut and reflexive verbs. All persons of the verb can be expected, both singular and plural. It is advisable for candidates to be able to recognise the full range of tenses within the passage and be sure not to write the whole translation in one tense. As well as unknown vocabulary items, the inability to translate tenses accurately caused many candidates to lose marks on this question.

10 Translate this passage into English.

J'apprends l'italien à l'université. Mon frère ne veut pas rester au collège. Il va faire un apprentissage. Je suis allé en Espagne pour pratiquer mon espagnol. Si on parle une autre langue, on peut travailler dans un pays différent.

I attend to an ~~italie~~ Italian University. My brother does not stay at school. He will do ~~app~~ ~~an~~ an apprenticeship. ~~I am going~~ I went to Spain to to practise my Spanish. We do lots of languages, We do jobs from different places.



This translation is an example of one which scored 3 marks out of the 7 available. Analysing each sentence individually, the first one has a correct tense, but the verb is incorrect and there is a misunderstanding that the university is in Italy. This sentence contains errors which greatly hinder clarity. The second sentence is partially communicated as the time frame is correct and there is a negative, but the idea of wanting is not communicated. The third sentence is fully communicated and the time frame is correct, as is the fourth sentence. There is partial communication of the final sentence in that the candidate has identified some words such as language, jobs (instead of work) and the word different. Cumulatively, this piece has two fully correct sentences and partial communication of other parts. The passage therefore falls comfortably in the 1-3 band and is at the top end of the band as all criteria of the band are met. However, it is not of an appropriate standard to be worthy of the 4-6 band.



Candidatea are advised to attempt all sentences or phrases as marks can be gained from partial completion of sentences as is the case with this script.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- The questions are set based upon vocabulary included in the specification. It is important to be fully familiar with all vocabulary listed under Foundation Tier.
- Some of the questions require processing of information and the drawing of conclusions, and it will be necessary to identify synonyms for vocabulary from the specification. Practise of these skills are recommended at the learning stage.
- When questions on the paper are posed in English, it is essential that answers are written in English and when questions are posed in French, the responses should be written in French. In both cases, full sentence answers are not needed. No credit will be given for responses in the incorrect language.
- In the case of gapfill exercises in English, it is crucial to read the text in conjunction with the gapfill sentences rather than simply inserting a word which appears to be logical in the context.
- When completing gapfill sentences in French, an understanding of grammar will be of supreme importance and will enable candidates to eliminate some of the responses immediately. Practise of this skill is to be recommended during the learning phase.
- For the translation task, candidates should be reminded that it will include the full range of tenses encountered at Foundation Tier and to look carefully at verbs to ensure that they do not lose marks for translating the tense incorrectly.

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