

IGCSE

Edexcel IGCSE

French (4365)

Summer 2006

Examiners' Report

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IGCSE French Listening

Unit/Paper 4365/01

May 2006 Examination

Candidates' Responses to Specific Questions.

Section A

Questions 1-5

Successfully attempted by the vast majority of candidates.

Questions 6-7

Successfully attempted by the vast majority of candidates, with very few problems arising. No pattern of error to indicate.

Questions 8-10

Stronger candidates tended to score full marks. Where errors did occur, the most common were:

mange for prépare,
aime for déteste,
fatigante for reposante

Section B

Questions 11-13

A significant majority of candidates secured full marks. However, error patterns included *BCC* and *CCC* in a number of instances.

Question 14

It was pleasing to note that candidates tended to convey at least one correct item. In many instances, bateau and excursion were poorly spelt. A small minority of candidates offered baignade in their response.

Question 15

Stronger candidates were able to convert the appropriate information into a coherent response, whereas others merely lifted words/phrases from the recording. There were equally numerous references to the English spelling risks.

Question 16

A number of candidates were able to deal with both elements. Candidates who clearly understood the question correctly avoided offering faire les courses in their response. L'occasion was sometimes interpreted as location, tending to give rise to discussion of the region in question. Stronger candidates avoided tense confusion, especially in respect of the future tense of faire.

Questions 17-19

A degree of language manipulation was needed, in order to extract the correct messages in this section. Some candidates were clearly very aware of environmental terminology, but often tended to transcribe a few words they had grasped from the recording.

Question 17

Whereas it was pleasing to note that many candidates were familiar with more extended vocabulary, such as *embouteillages*, many omitted key details from their responses:

eg taxe sur les voitures + en ville
voyager à deux + en voiture

Taxe was often interpreted as taxi.

Question 18

There were a high number of "near misses" where candidates made a determined effort to answer the question. For example, the reference to enthousiasme was often left unqualified. References to recyclage tended to be general, rather than relevant to the answer.

Question 19

Some stronger candidates offered excellent, coherent responses. Some found it difficult to distinguish between construction/constriction, verts/verres/vers and espaces/spaces.

Administrative Matters

Centres are to be commended for the excellent standard of administration during this first series.

4365 IGCSE French

Unit/Paper 4365/01

Summer 2006

Paper 2: Reading and Writing

The vast majority of candidates were correctly entered for this examination and were able to show what they knew and could do.

Section A Part One

Candidates dealt extremely well with this part of the paper. All rubrics were followed carefully and candidates were rewarded with high marks.

Section A Part Two

Candidates, and their teachers who prepared them for the examination, are to be congratulated on the way in which this question was answered. Candidates did not exceed unduly the 50-word limit, kept to the theme stated and wrote interesting answers. The following essay was awarded 8 marks: 4 for Communication and content and 4 for Knowledge and application of language.

A l'école il y'a beaucoup de choses: les classes, les professeurs, les activités, les matiers et les copains. En effect l'école n'est pas superbe. J'aime beaucoup mes amis, car on passe tout le temps ensemble, et ils m'aide avec les mattiers difficiles. Je n'aime pas le professeurs de maths car il est ennuiet et il nous donne plein de devoirs.

Communication : Overall the essay conveys the correct message and the candidate has done well not to copy the ideas stated by the pupils in Question 3. The first sentence, however, is vague and unnecessary as it deals neither with liking or disliking. The comment *L'école n'est pas superbe* is ambiguous: is this a form of understatement meaning the school is dreadful, or does it mean that the candidate would not go as far as stating that the school was superb, but it was nevertheless, in his/her eyes, extremely good? Some slight ambiguity arises with the misspelling of *matiers* and *ennuiet* which could be misinterpreted as the third person plural of the verb *ennuyer*. So this candidate does not quite reach the 5 mark but has written a sound essay.

Knowledge: The candidate is credited with not slavishly copying the vocabulary and phrases (underlined in the essay) from Question 3. There is a good basic range of vocabulary and the candidate is able to adapt the use of *car* to his/her own purposes to create a dependent clause. This essay corresponds almost exactly to the descriptor for 4 marks in the mark scheme.

Section B

Question 5

The majority of candidates scored full marks on this question, the most common error being a transposition of answers (iv) and (v). Answer (iv) G relies on the candidates knowing that *chez nous* refers not only to a personal home, but to a home country (France, in this case) as well.

Question 6

This type of question was unfamiliar to many candidates. It is hoped that teachers will be able to practice this type of question with their candidates to help the candidates to improve their marks.

This question aims to test candidates in two ways. Firstly it tests comprehension of a complex text in French. Secondly, it tests the candidates' ability to express their answer in relatively simple but accurate French. The teacher's task is to train the candidates to write short answers, some of which can be "lifts" from the original text, but to write those answers in grammatical French. The French need not always be in complete sentences, but it must always make sense in context.

Generally questions (a) - (c) were answered correctly, but question (d) proved to be a huge stumbling block. Candidates seemed to have understood the phrase *l'humour est present tout au long du film* but were at a loss to put it into the simple words (see mark scheme) that could explain it.

This type of question, requiring a paraphrase of a sentence/phrase from the text, will be a permanent feature of the examination and is one that can be easily practiced in class in isolation from a complete text. For example, if there are a few moments at the end of a class, teachers can take any phrase used in that class and ask the pupils to paraphrase it.

Question (e) could have been answered by a simple lift from the text (*pour son role dans H*) but (f) could not as *se moquant des medecins* is not grammatically complete.

Question (g) presented the greatest challenge to candidates for two reasons. Firstly, for (g) (i) candidates had to realise that the answer had to relate to Serge personally, so the answer *il faut avoir vécu longtemps en France* does not answer the question, whereas *Serge / il n'a pas vécu longtemps en France* did. For the second part of (g) there was no danger of that kind of misunderstanding. The answer *ils ont dû m'expliquer* is clearly not correct. Some candidates understood the requirement of the question to change from the first to the third person pronoun, but in writing *il ont dû s'expliquer* revealed their relatively poor grasp of French.

It must be borne in mind that this examination is graded in difficulty. The last few comprehension questions in Question 6 are designed to test the knowledge of candidates who are aspiring to Grades A and A*. Weaker candidates should attempt all of the parts of Question 6 but should not spend too long over them. It is important that such candidates go on to Question 7 and spend their valuable time writing a sound essay.

Question 7

All candidates should ensure that they leave enough time to write and check a full essay. Even the weakest candidates should be able to earn valuable marks on this question.

Candidates must ensure that they adhere strictly to the bullet points of the essay. Any omission is likely to reduce the Communication mark to a maximum of 3. Candidates need not, however, write an equal amount of words on each bullet point. A candidate who writes *Mon ami a les cheveux longs et les yeux bleus* has fulfilled the requirement for bullet point 2 for Topic (a) and need say no more on that point. The candidate would then have to expand on probably at least two of the other points to reach a reasonable Communication mark.

The converse is, of course, not true. Even if the candidate expands in detail upon points 1,3,4 and 5, if point 2 is omitted altogether, the Communication point will probably not be higher than 3.

In all cases, the rubric guides the candidates toward using the three key verb tenses: past, present and future.

It is recommended that candidates are explicit about making each point. Examples of how to do this are given below.

Topic (a) was by far the most popular. Candidates were often quite touching in their praise of their best friend. Physical description was, or should have been, well within the capabilities of the average candidate, and the plans for the weekend were relatively straightforward. There were two main stumbling blocks:

- the verb *rencontrer* - the examiners had used the simple form of the very straightforward *vous avez rencontré* in the hope the candidates would simply say *j'ai rencontré*. However, one group of candidates attempted to use, often unsuccessfully, the reflexive form of the verb. Such an error would have no effect on the candidate's Communication mark, but would be taken into consideration for Accuracy. A second, weaker, group confused *rencontrer* with *raconter*. This error would be reflected in a lower mark for both Knowledge and, possibly, Accuracy;
- the concept of *une dispute* - although it is not required that the candidates explicitly mention *une dispute* or state *je me dispute / je me suis disputé* it is advised that they do so. Some candidates attempted to convey their idea without explicit reference, and thus, with their limited command of French, their meaning became ambiguous. This ambiguity was, of necessity, reflected in a lowered mark for Communication.

The following essay was awarded:

5 marks for Communication and content;

5 marks for Knowledge and application of language

4 marks for Accuracy

Les amis sont nécessaires dans la vie. L'amitié, c'est partager avec nos amis les moments stricts et joyeux. Pour moi, j'ai pleine d'amis, mais j'ai une copine qui est comme un seour.

J'ai rencontrée mon amie à l'école depuis dix ans, elle est aussi ma voisine. Ma meilleure amie s'appelle S... , elle est de taille moyenne, elle est blonde, elle a les cheveux blondes, courts et frises, elle a les yeux verts, elle porte des lunettes. Je l'aime beaucoup car elle est très aimable et sociable. En plus on est très commune et ça vraiment amusant !

Heuresment, on aime les mêmes activités, alors qu n'y a pas beaucoup des disputes entre nous, mais car elle pend beaucoup de temps (elle adore la maquillage) on manque plusieurs activités, mais ça ne fait rien car je suis patiente et j'essaie l'accepter comme ça.

Le weekend prochain, on va finir les examens finals, donc on a décidé d'aller à la piscine pour nager et puis on va aller au centre commercial pour faire du shopping !! J'espère vraiment que S... reste ma meilleure amie. [183 words]

The essay above is a little too long. It is of A or A* quality. Teachers will see that there is much in the essay that could have been written by average or even weak candidates.

The essay below was awarded:

3 marks for Communication and content;

3 marks for Knowledge and application of language

2 marks for Accuracy

Mon meilleur amie s'appelle N... . J'ai rencontre N... le premier fois a l'école. N... est de taille moyenne. Elle a les yeux noir, Ellea les cheveux noir et court, elle a brune et elle porte des lunettes.

N... est très gentille, hõnnête et fidelle. Elle est très sociable et patiente aussi. J'aime N... car elle conseiller moi dans mes problems et on a ensemble dans les moments joyeux et difficiles. Elle est une bon amie.

N... aide moi dans toutes les moments difficiles, elle aide moi aussi comment je vais patiente, surtout dans mes probléms.

Nous vont aller au club le week-end prochain et faire le shopping pour acheter les vêtements et la faux bijou et faire les devoirs ensemble aussi. [117 words excluding names]

Grid A

Despite being less than 150 words, the candidate had attempted all the bullet points. There is some repetition (*aider avec les moments difficiles*) and at times the candidate's ideas are difficult to follow (*comment je vais patiente*). The mark must therefore be in band 3.

Grid B

The candidate has an adequate range of vocabulary relevant to this topic. She has used a correct dependent clause and attempted to use personal pronouns. Tenses tend to be weak. The candidate was borderline between Band 2 and Band 3 and so was given the benefit of the doubt and placed in Band 3.

Grid C

Accuracy was generally weak - more than half of the forms were inaccurate, but there was considerably more than "isolated examples of correct language" (Band 1) so the candidate was placed in Band 2.

Topic (b) was well done by a small group of candidates who had studied the topic of the environment in class. There was good use of a range of appropriate vocabulary and the topic gave candidates a chance to express their opinion: *je pense que; à mon avis*. Most candidates saw the requirement to use the past tense for *Vos expériences* although not all took the chance of using the future tense to talk about *Une sortie que vous allez faire en vélo*.

Topic (c) was attempted by a very small minority of candidates. Unfortunately several of those had misinterpreted *journée* for the English *journey*. This lost them many marks for Communication and a few for Knowledge as the vocabulary would not have been relevant to the topic as stated.

General comments

The examiners feel that the examination is one which is attractive both to candidates and their teachers. The mark scheme is robust and it is hoped that teachers will feel that their candidates have achieved the marks which are appropriate to their candidates' level of French.

IGCSE French Speaking

Unit/Paper 4365/03

May 2006 Examination

Section A It was pleasing to note that many candidates were able to expand upon the initial picture stimulus, by engaging in an authentic discussion. The majority of pictures provided candidates with the opportunity to use a suitable range of structures and vocabulary. Where candidates were asked questions which were a natural extension of their initial presentation, they had the opportunity to access higher marks. However, during the discussion, certain candidates were asked questions which merely elicited information they had already provided.

Section B Most centres used the specimen questions as intended, whereas a few tended to adhere too closely to specific questions from the list. Candidates tended to perform better where interviewers pursued a natural progression of questions, individually tailored to elicit the best possible outcome. A clear majority of interviewers provided ample opportunities for candidates to employ a range of tenses and structures, creating access to the full range of marks. Where interviewers allowed candidates ample time to extend answers, performance was enhanced. In some instances, the use of closed questions elicited only minimal responses.

Conduct of Examination Whereas most centres observed the correct timings of the three components, a number of elements were either too short or too long. If the first element was too long, interviewers sometimes curtailed the other conversations. Marks cannot be awarded for responses offered beyond the specified time limits. Where timings are too short, candidates are unlikely to achieve their potential. All centres successfully divided the test into the three required elements.

Administrative Matters

Centres are to be commended for the overall excellent standard of administration during this first series.

There were however a few instances of poor labelling of tapes, where the inlay template had not been used.

Whereas most recordings were very clear, some were not clearly audible. The microphone should favour the candidate rather than the interviewer. Obtrusive background noise occasionally hindered audibility.

4365 FRENCH, GRADE BOUNDARIES JUNE 2006

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Lowest mark for award of Subject Grade (all candidates) (max 100)	87	78	69	60	50	40	31	22
Lowest mark for award of Grade for Spoken French (optional) (max 60)	51	45	39	33	26	19	13	7

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from series to series and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question papers.