

IGCSE

Edexcel IGCSE

French (4365)

November 2006

Examiners' Report

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Paper 1

Questions 1 - 5

These questions were well within the grasp of all candidates.

Question 6

The vast majority of candidates scored full marks on this question. There was no consistent pattern to errors made by candidates, therefore such errors must be put down to carelessness or to the fact that the candidates had been incorrectly entered for the examination.

Question 7

Parts (i), (ii), (iii) and (v) caused very little difficulty to the majority of candidates. Candidates who made errors in part (iv) seemed to have chosen at random as a wide range of incorrect answers were offered. Part (vii) showed that some candidates had reached a limit of their understanding of the French as the answers A and D were more consistently offered.

Questions 8 - 13 General comments

Many candidates are still leaving blank spaces instead of writing an answer. Teachers must ensure that they train their students to write something that they have heard - even if it is merely the candidate's best attempt and which later proves to be incorrect.

Questions 8 - 10

Question 8 (a) and (b) The majority of candidates did well on this question, with a few making the obvious mistake of writing *7heures* for the answer to (b).

Question 9 (a) - (c) The major error made by candidates was the inability to spot that Jérôme listened specifically to (*des émissions / des programmes*) de musique.

Question 10 (a) and (b) The spelling of *dessin(s) animé(s)* was the biggest stumbling block for candidates. This expression features in the minimum core vocabulary list (Teacher's Guide Appendix 1) and should therefore have been known to all candidates.

Question 11

The vast majority of candidates did well on this question. Those who did not were those who ticked either two or four of the boxes. Teachers are encouraged to use past papers from the Summer 2006 and Winter 2006 series as practice to ensure that candidates are very familiar with the type of question being set.

Question 12 (a) - (c)

Most candidates did well on this question and had listened carefully although a few of the weaker candidates resorted to making up irrelevant answers: *ils faisaient vacances; on travaillaient* or *ils lisaient*.

Question 13 (a)

Candidates had to listen carefully to distinguish between Rwanda, Canada and Montreal. It is to the candidates' credit that so many of them successfully and succinctly wrote *(le) Canada*.

Question 13 (b)

Some weaker candidates had difficulty interpreting the question, as evinced by answers such as *il l'attache la langue Rwanda*. Although candidates are not penalised for incorrect grammar, what the candidates write must, of course, be intelligible. The example quoted above could not be accepted.

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Paper 2: Reading and Writing

All candidates were appropriately entered for the examination, resulting in a significant number of excellent responses across all elements of the paper.

Section A Part One

This element of the paper was extremely well answered, in virtually all instances, with candidates adhering closely to the rubric. Whereas a significant number of candidates secured full marks on this entire section of the paper, the most notable exception related to item 3(e), where reference to the future tense within the stimulus meant that certain candidates incorrectly chose “quarante” rather than “trente-neuf”.

Section A Part Two

It is again pleasing to comment on the efforts of candidates and their teachers, given the thorough and purposeful approach evident in most responses. By respecting the proposed word limit and adhering to the actual question, most candidates were able to access scores in the top mark bands. Most responses incorporated a most pleasing element of originality. The material tended to be presented in a coherent and organized way, with only a few cases of ambiguity. The most able candidates displayed a significant range of ambitious structures. Lapses in accuracy were generally unobtrusive.

Section B

Question 5

Candidates were able to employ a range of strategies, to secure maximum marks or at least most marks. This included visibly “ruling out” responses which clearly contradicted the stimulus. Other candidates chose to seek out synonyms between the stimulus and the responses. There was clear evidence that candidates had been well advised not to respond too hastily to this type of question, but to seek secondary reasons for choosing certain responses.

Question 6

Some candidates seemed to be more familiar with this style of question than did others. In other instances, it would seem that careful practice of this style of question remains a priority.

For this question, marks are awarded in two categories. The first relates to marks awarded in comprehension of a passage of relatively complex language. The five remaining marks award the candidate’s ability to express the answers in relatively simple but accurate French. In certain instances, the French can be virtually lifted from the stimulus. Whereas complete sentences are not essential, the language used must be applicable to the given context.

Most candidates made successful attempts at questions (a) and (b), but often struggled to coherently express a response to question (c), often unable to

comprehend the verb "se passer". The first part of question (d) was a good example of where a one word answer was sometimes better than an extended response; "déçus" was accepted but "Nous avons été déçus" was an incorrect response. Candidates who attempted the second element of question (d) by using their own words were more likely to convey the correct message than those who adhered too closely to the stimulus. This equally applied to question (e)

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 practised 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.

In the case of question (f), a small proportion of candidates succeeded in conveying the notion of temperature required. Those who had an excellent breadth of expression were in an excellent position to secure both of these marks. This was the most challenging question on the entire paper.

In question (g), most candidates seemed to understand the use of "manteau" and "adequate", but were sometimes reticent in expressing the message in their own words. Those who considered the expression more globally, were much more likely to score both marks, so long as they adhered to the context.

It must be borne in mind that the last few comprehension questions in Question 6 are designed to test the knowledge of candidates who are aspiring to the higher grades. Weaker candidates should attempt all 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. It may be useful to remind candidates that maximum marks can be achieved by producing 150 words of French. Excessively long answers tend to be self-penalising, as candidates then often struggle to maintain a consistent level of accuracy. It also leaves little time for the careful checking of one's responses.

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. It is equally vital that the question is not misinterpreted. For example, option 7(a) refers to a past holiday. 7(b) must relate principally to a previous visit to a restaurant.

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

Specific Observations:

7(a) This was the most popular of the three options available. Candidates seemed well versed in recounting their diverse holiday experiences. The use of specific detail was very welcome. E.g. Where candidates were willing to express why they liked/disliked a certain aspect of the holiday. There were only very few instances where candidates misinterpreted part of the stimulus. Tenses tended to be very secure indeed. It should be noted that "voyage" in the context of the stimulus was a reference to the main journey, rather than to the holiday overall.

7(b) A small minority of candidates attempted this question. Those who chose this option tended to offer very original and interesting accounts, with a significant range of idiomatic language and a high degree of accuracy. This accuracy generally extended to quite complex linguistic concepts, not necessarily expected at this level.

7(c) Notwithstanding some minor ambiguity, most candidates attempted this option very successfully, attempting to at least address all five bullet points. The stimulus provided an excellent opportunity to be discursive across a range of issues and most candidates responded well to this challenge, rather than being too descriptive.

Paper 03(Optional Speaking)

Section A It is a pleasure to report that all candidates successfully expanded upon the initial picture stimulus, by attempting to engage in an authentic discussion, with often impressive results. In all cases, the visual stimulus provided by candidates permitted them sufficient opportunity to deploy a suitable range of structures and vocabulary. Without exception, interviewers asked candidates questions which were a natural extension of their initial presentation, thus facilitating access to higher marks. This excellent examining technique is to be applauded.

Section B Centres used the specimen questions as intended, opting to avoid reference to very specific questions from the list. Candidates tended to perform better where interviewers pursued this natural progression of questions, individually tailored to elicit the best possible outcome. 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. Interviewers were generally careful to avoid the use of closed questions.

Conduct of Examination It is pleasing to report that centres tended to make every effort to adhere to the correct timings of the three components. This is crucial, as 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. Interviewers are thanked for having made every effort to place candidates at their ease.

Administrative Matters

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

The vast majority of tapes and other important materials were correctly presented and clearly labelled.

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 NOVEMBER 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.

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