

# FRENCH

Paper 3015/11  
Translation and Composition

## Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they only answer **two** questions
- Candidates are reminded their handwriting must be clearly legible
- Candidates should make full use of the time allowed in order to plan and check their work thoroughly
- Candidates should write 150 words as required for the essays and avoid exceeding this limit
- Candidates should write what they know to be French and avoid attempting to use language with which they are unfamiliar.

## General comments

Overall there was some excellent work and there were a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range, as well as some consistently sound efforts in the middle. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions which used a wide linguistic range though frequently the writing was inaccurate. Candidates should be reminded that a broad and fluent command of the material is highly commendable and will be rewarded, but that a high degree of accuracy in writing is essential for full credit to be given.

The translation into French was once again a very popular choice and many candidates achieved a high standard in this question; they had clearly worked hard to acquire a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures and there were many very good marks which frequently mirrored, or in some cases exceeded, the marks gained for the essay. Set against this was the fact that many candidates lost marks by not reading the English carefully and translate exactly what was there.

It was clear that candidates had been well prepared for this Examination, but they are encouraged to always carefully read the instructions. For each essay question, candidates must not write more than 150 words. Large numbers of candidates often greatly exceeded this number- it was common to find essays between 200 and 500 words. Candidates are reminded that the rubric must be adhered to as Examiners do not take any writing into account after the 150 word limit for either Language or Communication. Thus, candidates are reminded to address the required points within 150 words. In doing so, candidates should then have the time to check their work as carefully as advised in the Key Messages above.

Each essay question has quite specific guidelines regarding its content – either the pictures for **Question 1** or clearly stated rubric points for the 3 options of **Question 2**. The word count starts at the beginning of the answer for **Question 1** and immediately after the given opening phrase for **Question 2**. Candidates who ignore the instruction to start their essay after the given phrase are liable to be penalised. Any material which does not clearly relate to the content guidelines for any essay will remain as part of the word count but will be treated as irrelevant and will gain no marks for either Communication or Accuracy.

Candidates are reminded to read the rubric carefully by answering two questions only on the paper.

The vast majority of scripts were well and neatly presented. There were a few cases where handwriting was unclear, particularly where alterations had been made, and in such cases credit could not be given.

**Communication Marks (Questions 1 and 2 only):** Each essay has a maximum score of 5 available for successful communication of relevant points in unambiguous, but not necessarily completely accurate French. Errors in handling verbs were the most significant factor preventing the award of Communication marks. In order to score 5 marks, candidates must make clear reference to at least five of the pictures in **Question 1** and to all the given rubric points in any **Question 2** essay.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1: Picture Story

This was a popular choice and, in most cases, the story appeared to be clear. The setting was a holiday area by the sea with a camp site and beach. A car with a boat on the roof and family inside was seen driving out of the camp site heading for a beach-side car park where the family unloaded it. The next picture showed them heading for the beach with father and son carrying the boat while mother and daughter followed with the picnic requisites. The mother was then seen sitting on the beach and eating her lunch while the father and the children amused themselves with the boat in the sea. The sunny weather was now threatening to break and this had happened in the next picture where torrential rain could be seen to be falling as the family hastily carried all their property back to the car. The final picture had them arriving at their tent on a soaked camp site with large puddles on the ground. These basic ideas were on the whole clearly conveyed and those who kept within the word limit generally had no difficulty scoring the maximum of 5 for Communication.

However, it is recommended that candidates plan roughly what they want to say for each picture before answering the question. This will help to avoid spending too long on the earlier part and then running out of words before the end, resulting in potentially losing Communication points.

The conventional third person narrative approach was usually adopted, but many chose to write in the first person from the standpoint of one of the people depicted. This was, of course, perfectly acceptable.

The quality of the language used was variable but many candidates showed confident use of the necessary vocabulary as well as a variety of appropriate structures. Most candidates knew the basic words required by this set of pictures, for example *faire du camping, terrain, tente, arriver, partir/se mettre en route, porter, panier, pique-nique, bateau, canot, pleuvoir* (sometimes confused with *pleurer*), *mouillé/trempé*. There were no consistent vocabulary problems. A good range of vocabulary will always score highly as will complex syntax – use of object pronouns, infinitive constructions and present and past participles, for example. However, not all candidates managed tense usage successfully and there was frequent confusion between the Imperfect and the Perfect/Past Historic. The Pluperfect was also not always used correctly. Candidates are reminded that the Present tense is unacceptable as the narrative tense. There were many basic syntactical errors which included inconsistency in the spelling and gender of nouns, missing agreements on adjectives, incorrect use of object pronouns. There were a number of minor common errors such as confusion between *car, comme* and *quand*; between *très* and *trop, on* and *ont, ce* and *se*, and *ces* and *ses*.

## Question 2

### (a) Letter

This was a popular choice. Most candidates understood what was required and often covered the required points very well. Candidates are reminded once again of the importance of adhering to the word limit. Five clear points were mentioned in the rubric and all had to be covered by a discrete statement containing a verb to qualify for the award of the five Communication marks. Candidates are reminded that, for all **Question 2** essays, the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. This is not included in the 150 word count. Candidates who did not do this lost marks. The letter involved writing to a friend to describe your recent birthday celebrations, including where you had been, what you did, the preferred activity, a problem that arose and a brief impression of the day.

The majority dealt in a satisfactory manner with the points outlined above. Some rubric points will, of course, invite greater length than others, but a single, clear reference in an acceptable tense is sufficient for the award of a Communication mark. Almost anything relevant was accepted for the destination and the activities, including the one stated to be the favourite one. Some imaginative responses were offered regarding the problem – minor or major accidents, running out of money, getting lost and losing a phone. Candidates who started with the given opening followed immediately by relevant treatment of the rubric points usually covered the material successfully.

Candidates should again read the rubric carefully to adhere to the word count. The rubric also indicates that that a past occasion is being discussed. Some candidates therefore lost marks writing about a future event. The best candidates were able to express their ideas in a range of appropriate and accurate French which gained high marks for Language. Competence in handling verbs is vital for a high score. Correct handling of the other linguistic features mentioned in connection with **Question 1** is equally important as marks for Language are only awarded for accurate usage.

### (b) Dialogue

Fewer candidates answered this question but it was often well handled with some interesting and mature exchanges between candidate and parents. The conversation was based on the premise of explaining to parents why the candidate was returning very late from an afternoon spent with friends. The first point concerned where they had been, followed by the activity and an explanation of why they were late. Appropriate apologies and parents' reactions then concluded the conversation.

This conversation was often well executed with clear questions and answers being presented and the language used was usually appropriate and of high quality. Candidates are advised to follow the stated guidelines to keep the dialogue of high quality and relevance.

It should be noted that only the actual words of the conversation should be written (with an indication, of course, of which person is speaking). Candidates are reminded that they are expected to write the actual words of a conversation, as a narrative introduction or reported speech cannot be credited.

### (c) Narrative

This concerned the first day for the candidate in an unspecified temporary holiday job. It required candidates to describe their arrival at the place of work, say whom they met, what they did and what they felt they learned from the day. Finally, they were asked for their impressions. As a result of being given the opening words, most candidates started with the description of the arrival at work.

The arrival was generally followed by meeting immediate colleagues, including the manager. They were shown round, had their duties explained to them and learnt about working with others. Some learnt about office systems or how important computers were in the modern working environment. Most enjoyed the experience and some were looking forward to joining the world of work as a real employee. Candidates should be careful to avoid inventing or guessing at vocabulary items. It is better to use simple vocabulary that they understand and are sure they can use correctly.

The best stories were lively and fluently written, using a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure. As above, some candidates had problems with the use of tenses, particularly with the Imperfect and Perfect/Past Historic, and unnecessary use of the Pluperfect.

### Question 3: Translation into French

This was the most popular of all the options and often produced work of a high standard. Many candidates coped well with the vocabulary and grammatical structures. Some candidates lost marks for errors rather than a lack of knowledge for example confusing “the” and “a”, or missing words out. While the marking principles are identical (ticks are given for correct units of language and errors are ignored), it should be pointed out that this is a rather different exercise from the essay. Candidates are advised to translate exactly what the English says and not to seek to use alternative words as, in most cases, the English will transfer directly into French. Candidates who kept close to the English original usually gained the best marks.

No points proved universally impossible but difficulties were experienced with a number of items:

#### Paragraph A

- The Imperfect was often missed with *lived*
- A significant number found the phrase *while running* a challenge.
- Candidates are advised to check thoroughly where a double adjective is required: *little grey rabbit*

#### Paragraph B

- *Ramasser* and *porter* were not often recognised and the pronoun *lui* proved difficult.
- Many candidates changed *de l'eau* to *un peu d'eau* which was accepted but is not encouraged.
- The phrase *what had happened* was slightly more testing but should be accessible to candidates.
- With the phrase ‘*You must try to find*’ omitting the word “*try*” lost candidates a mark. For *the owner* both *le propriétaire* and *le maître* were accepted.

#### Paragraph C

- This paragraph was largely straightforward although some problems were experienced with *personne n'avait perdu* and *it must belong to someone*.

#### Paragraph D

- Again, there were few problems in this paragraph although *cage* proved challenging.
- The main difficulties came with the use of tenses and pronoun in *A friend had told him that the family had found it*.

#### Paragraph E

- The main challenge in this paragraph came with the verb *promised to buy*
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# FRENCH

Paper 3015/12  
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#### Paragraph C

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#### Paragraph D

- Again, there were few problems in this paragraph although *cage* proved challenging.
- The main difficulties came with the use of tenses and pronoun in *A friend had told him that the family had found it*.

#### Paragraph E

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# FRENCH

Paper 3015/21  
Reading Comprehension

## Key message

**Section 1** requires candidates to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

**Section 2 Exercise 1** requires candidates to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In **Exercise 2** of this Section, candidates are asked to respond to questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Selective lifting is acceptable for some questions, but more than mere location and transcription is required in order to gain high marks.

**Section 3**, the close test, tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom and candidates are required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

## General comments

As in previous years, candidates were appropriately prepared for this Paper and the greater majority of them tackled it well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and there were frequent pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1, Exercise 1**

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise.

**Question 5** was occasionally incorrect with some candidates not understanding *rond-point*.

### **Exercise 2**

This exercise was very well done by almost all candidates.

### **Exercise 3**

Again, most candidates performed well in this multiple-choice exercise.

### **Section 2, Exercise 1**

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

**Questions 16, 17 and 18** were generally answered appropriately.

**Question 19** produced many appropriate responses, but some candidates merely stated *le (grand) frère* and it was not clear whose brother this was, so the response could not be credited.

**Question 20** was tackled well by the majority of candidates.

**Question 21** showed some candidates did not understand that they were being asked about a specific past event and said that the sisters chattered all the time, rather than referencing the fact they took Sébastien's iPod the previous week without asking him.

**Question 22** and **23** were answered well by most candidates.

**Question 24** Almost all candidates responded correctly.

**Questions 25** Many candidates did not seem to understand the question and lifted responses from the text, predominantly *C'est pratique parce qu'elles peuvent faire le trajet ensemble (...)*.

**Question 26** was answered well by most candidates.

## Exercise 2

Candidates performed reasonably well in this exercise with some candidates scoring full or almost full marks. Candidates are advised to always read the **Questions** carefully.

**Question 27** The majority of candidates found this **Question** straightforward and provided correct answers.

**Question 28** Some candidates lifted from the text or merely said that Micheline was talented rather than saying what she was advised to do. Neither was credited.

**Question 29** A significant number of candidates wrote that the parents would (also) become a maths teacher rather than stating the parents' profession.

**Question 30** There were some correct answers here, but some candidates wrote that fewer girls than boys studied the subject, which did not answer the specific **Question**.

**Question 31** Although many candidates offered appropriate responses, some explained that Micheline was sad because her friend had been unable to take the exams.

**Question 32** This proved challenging for a significant number of candidates, who suggested that Micheline wanted to make faster progress in her research. Candidates are encouraged to avoid lifting material.

**Questions 33** and **34** were tackled well by most candidates.

**Questions 35** Many candidates coped well here, although some less able candidates omitted the **Question** or did not provide a relevant response.

**Questions 36** Although many candidates coped well here, some responses such as *Ils a commencé la médecin* could not be credited.

## Section 3

This exercise was approached with varying degrees of success with a number performing reasonably well here. A small number of candidates appeared not to understand the requirements of this section. Some candidates used more than one word in each gap, in spite of the instructions.

**Question 37** was generally answered appropriately.

**Question 38** was sometimes answered with the wrong preposition: some candidates supplied *dans (la)/ à (la)*.

**Question 39** Some candidates wrote *était* rather than the required *faisait*.

**Question 40** Many did not realise that *se* was needed here and wrote *ils*.

**Question 41** Some candidates wrote *pour*.

**Question 42** Candidates were challenged by this task and sometimes wrote *et, de* and *qui*.

**Question 43** Incorrect responses here included *y* and *les*.

**Question 44** Most candidates answered correctly.

- Question 45** This question was generally answered appropriately.
- Question 46** Candidates are encourage to read the text closely to avoid writing *plus*.
- Question 47** Candidates were sometimes challenged by this question and some wrote *était*.
- Question 48** Responses varied here. Some incorrect answers included *de* and *à*.
- Question 49** Most candidates understood a preposition was required here, although *sur* was *incorrect*.
- Question 50** Candidates sometimes responded with an incorrect auxiliary here i.e. *s'*.
- Question 51** Candidates sometimes wrote *les* instead of *des*.
- Question 52** Incorrect responses included *que*.
- Question 53** In some cases the verb was singular: *a*.
- Question 54** Candidates' responses varied here. Candidates needed to understand that this word was the start of a sentence, and so, for example, could not be *et* (lower case).
- Question 55** Many candidates correctly wrote *chez* here, although *avec* was an incorrect response.
- Question 56** The greater majority answered correctly here.

# FRENCH

Paper 3015/22  
Reading Comprehension

## Key message

**Section 1** the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

**Section 2 Exercise 1** requires candidates to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In **Exercise 2** of this Section the candidate is asked to respond to questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some questions, candidates are required to provide more than mere location and transcription.

**Section 3**, the cloze test, tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom. Candidates are required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

## General comments

As in previous years candidates were appropriately prepared for this paper and the greater majority of them tackled it well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and there were frequent pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1**

#### **Exercise 1**

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise. A few candidates had difficulty with **Question 4** and did not appear to understand *dos*, or *virage* in **Question 5**.

#### **Exercise 2**

This exercise was very well done by almost all candidates.

#### **Exercise 3**

Again, most candidates performed well in this multiple-choice exercise.

### **Section 2**

#### **Exercise 1**

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

### Question 17

Some candidates did not score here, as they mentioned the beds, but did not say precisely what the... was.

### Question 25

Some candidates stated that Patrick wanted to become a professional in the sport, and this answer was not credited.

### Exercice 2

Many candidates performed well in this exercise, but on occasions there appeared to be some misunderstanding of the questions.

### Question 26

The interrogative *quand* was not always understood by candidates.

### Question 27

In a number of cases candidates understood that there was a prize, but did not say that the programme won it, as the question required, and so their answer could not be credited.

### Question 28

Some candidates thought that Patrick had difficulties in producing or broadcasting the programme. In number of cases it was clear that candidates had not fully understood the text and did not register therefore what distinguished Bruno's programmes from others of the genre. e.g. for **28 (a)** *les pays (étrangers)* was sometimes offered as a response.

### Question 29

This question proved challenging. For **29(a)**, some said '*les vacances où on ne rencontre jamais les habitants*', which in fact answered **29(b)**. For **29(a)** some responses suggested that Bruno did not enjoy coach travel, but failed to recognise that it was the organised trips, which he disliked rather than the specific mode of transport.

### Question 30

Most candidates dealt well with this question.

### Question 31

Some candidates only gave partial answers. The response *une famille indienne* could not be credited as it did not explain that Bruno lived with this family for a period of time. It may be that there was a misunderstanding of the question with candidates understanding 'who allowed...?' rather than 'what allowed...?'.  
allowed... ?'.

**Questions 32** proved unproblematic.

### Question 33

Many candidates answered well here, but a significant number lifted from the text so their response was not credited.

### Question 34

Responses were not always clear here and the fact that Bruno liked being followed around by the children was often missed.

### Question 35

A number of candidates used a lift in their answer, which did not answer the question so it was not correct. e.g. Some wrote: *Le téléphone n'arrêtait de sonner*. The word *réagi* of the question may not have been understood by some.

Questions 36 was tackled well by the majority of candidates.

### Section 3

As always this exercise was accomplished with varying degrees of success. The greater majority performed reasonably well. A very small number of candidates did not understand what this test required. Some placed more than one word in each gap, in spite of the instructions.

Candidates found the following questions in particular problematic:

### Question 37

Some candidates used an incorrect auxiliary and wrote *a*.

### Question 38

A number of incorrect answers were supplied, most frequently *a* instead of *à* or the incorrect preposition namely *de*.

### Question 39

Many candidates wrote *de*.

### Question 40

Some candidates used an incorrect preposition e.g. *dans*.

### Question 41

Some candidates wrote *ces* or *les*.

### Question 42

*Des* was often given instead of *de*.

### Question 43

Some wrote *le* instead of *lui*.

Questions 44, 45 and 46 were tackled well by most candidates.

### Question 47

Many candidates wrote *a* rather than the required *avait*.

### Question 48

Relatively few candidates supplied the correct pronoun. Some wrote *y*.

### Question 49

Candidates were challenged by this item, and some incorrect answers were supplied.

### Question 50

*Le* was often given here.

**Question 51**

*Ver* was supplied instead of *vers* in a number of cases.

**Question 52**

Candidates sometimes supplied *prit* rather than *pris* here.

**Question 53**

The majority of candidates supplied the correct response here.

**Question 54**

Although many answered correctly, certain candidates supplied *sans* or *avec* here.

**Question 55**

The most frequent incorrect preposition was *à* instead of *de*.

**Question 56**

Most candidates attempted the correct response, but there was some difficulty with spellings namely *trés* and *tres*.