

GCE O Level
Edexcel GCE O Level
French (7193)

Summer 2006

Examiners' Report

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information please visit our website at www.edexcel-international.org.

Summer 2006

All the material in this publication is copyright
© Edexcel Ltd 2006

Contents

1.	Examiners' Report 2006	5
----	------------------------	---

French 7193, June 2006

Paper 1 Dictation

The Dictation contained a good range of language from the phonetically very simple: *je suis arrivé; avant de; Pardon; monsieur; je suis; L'école; votre travail ici; et ma valise; ce matin; il est passé; aujourd'hui; une belle promenade* to the phonetically challenging: *sur le quai; j'ai hésité un instant; en disant; jeune homme* (a phrase which defeated at least half of all candidates); *ai-je répondu; il a baissé les yeux*.

Candidates seem to have been well prepared for this test. Suggestions for training for the Dictation can be found in previous Examiners' Reports available on the Internet:

<http://www.edexcel-international.org/quals/olevel/7193/>

Paper 2 Listening and Reading Comprehension

Listening Comprehension

Candidates are now permitted to make notes whilst listening to the reading of the Listening Comprehension Test. This has not made a great deal of difference to the candidates' performances, but could well have had the beneficial effect of lessening candidate anxiety at the time of the test.

Generally candidates were familiar with the vocabulary used in this test: *étrange; petit restaurant parisien; un rêve* (almost universally seen as relating to *dream* as given in questions (b) and (d)); *vacances; près de la mer; juste* (this word was often omitted from candidates' answers) *avant son départ; solitude; absence de vent; mauvais temps; il y a trois semaines; dans deux mois*. This would give an average candidate adequate marks for a good pass. However, the examiners were disappointed at the numbers of average candidates who, through carelessness, did not achieve their full potential:

- (b) Candidates were asked to describe the restaurant. It was both *small* and it was not just *French*, it was *in Paris / Parisian*.
- (f) Raphaëlla was born neither in *1760* nor in *1965* (mercifully both relatively rare answers. A popular answer was: *she was six years old*).
- (i) A wide range of answers was accepted for *docteur vétérinaire* but careless answers from average candidates such as *one and a half months / one year* and various other misinterpretations of *un an et demi* were far too common.
- (o) There was a regrettable lack of knowledge of the English idiom *ago* for *il y a*, and even some average candidates failed to turn *dans (deux mois)* into the English *in*.

Reading Comprehension

Despite a large amount of vocabulary accessible to average candidates, there was still some vocabulary in this test which presented some more challenging items: *le couloir qui mène à l'escalier; pendule en argent; domestique; la moitié; bougie; outil; robinets*. As expected, only the top B Grade and A Grade candidates were able to identify these words.

Again, candidate carelessness accounted for a level of error:

- (a) there is no indication in the text that the Countess spoke *very fast*
- (c) candidates should be able to translate from *cartes* to *cards*.
- (f) the Examiners could not accept the double negative *she was not scared of nothing*
- (o) Candidates would have done well to keep as near to the original text as possible and state their answer as *a considerable sum of money*.

General advice

Those candidates who achieve the highest marks use three successful techniques:

- a) They identify two points for each answer
- b) They answer using as few words as possible. They do not write out the question. This allows them much more time to listen to the text or to think about the meaning of the question.
- c) They express their answer in the English words which correspond as nearly to the French text as possible (see example (o) above).

Paper 3

Question 1 - Translation into English

Neither vocabulary nor tenses posed a great problem to candidates. The two exceptions to this were:

- the inability of many candidates to recognise the need for the English past continuous tense in *il rentrait*;
- the inability to distinguish between *he was sleeping* (which would have been *il dormait*) and *he fell asleep* (*il s'est endormi*).

It was the use of prepositions and idiom which presented the greatest challenge to many:

- *his judo lessons* and *the girls' room* were required to avoid the clumsy use of the preposition *of*;
- It was only better prepared candidates who were well aware that *toujours* has two meanings and that in this context *always* was not relevant, similarly *aussi* was far too frequently translated as *also*;
- The expressions *capable of dancing* was often muddled with *able to dance*;
- The examiners were unable to award a mark for the expression *loosing a leg*;
- It is well known that the average native English speaker pays scant attention to the correct placing of the word *only* in a text. However, as the word *seulement* was placed where the *only* should be correctly placed in the sentence, and as *he only thought of dancing* completely alters the sense of the penultimate phrase, the misplacing of the word *only* was not rewarded.

Question 2a

This was a question popular usually with the weakest candidates. The standard of performance was, therefore, generally low.

It is essential that candidates do not write more than the maximum of 150 words. To achieve a high Communication mark (Grid A), the candidate must relate the whole of the story before the cut off point.

For the sake of ease of counting for the candidates, a "word" is considered as any writing between two spaces (excluding proper nouns). For example *il y a* is three words, *qu'est-ce qu'il y a* is four words and *il est allé à l'Arc de Triomphe* is five.

Below are some examples of essays drawn from Questions 2a, 3a and 3b showing how the new marking grids are implemented.

Un jeune lion a été découvert dans une maison abandonnée de Fontreynaud le dernier lundi. Le pauvre animal était très mal et seulement soixante-dix kilos. Maintenant le jeune lion est au zoo de Vincennes.

Hier je suis arrivée par le zoo où je suis allée pour trouver plus information pour le échappe de *pauvre lion*. Je suis alle à *police* et ils m'a dit, que deux *voleurs* ont pris le petit *animal* le matin de *Lundi* quand un *gardien* a pris le animal aux médecins de zoo.

Ils sont porte dans un *camion* et ils sont parti, ensuite ils ont cherche pour acheters. Heureusement *la police* à trouve *le lion* avant de le acheter.

Maintenant le petit *animal* est tres beau pres de sa mere et *la police* a cherché les deux *voleurs*.

Nous esperons que *la police*, elle trouverai, les des *voleurs* en cette jours avant ils sont partis // (150 words) loin.

This essay was awarded

3 (Grid A Communication)

3 (Grid B Quality of Language)

4 + 4 (Grid C Accuracy)

Total 14

Words in italics are words that the candidate has used from the stimulus.

Grid A Communication 3

The candidate has "wasted" words by recounting the story which has already appear in the stimulus. This leaves the candidate less than 120 words with which to tell his / her part of the story. With a considerable amount of effort, a vague account of the night's events can be gleaned by the reader. As this essay was on the borderline between 2 and 3, the candidate was given the benefit of the doubt.

Grid B Quality of Language 3

At first sight a marker might be tempted to place this candidate in the 1-2 band. However, the candidate clearly has a concept of two tenses (je suis allée; ils ont pris; nous espérons). Vocabulary is a little more than basic as there are attempts at adjectives which are not in the stimulus (dernier; petit), adverbs (heureusement; ensuite), clauses (starting où, quand; que) and object pronouns (m'a dit and an attempt at le in avant de le acheter). A mark of 2 would be too severe, and so the candidate was placed in the "limited" box and at the lower of the two marks.

Grid C Accuracy 4 + 4

The essay clearly cannot go into the 5 - 6 band as there is a very high level of error and more than half of the grammar used is inaccurate. The 1 - 2 band states that there "may be the occasional correct phrase". Excluding all phrases lifted directly from the stimulus, the following accurate work can be noted:

- *hier je suis arrivée* (so from this point on we must assume a female candidate) and *où je suis allée pour trouver* ;
- in the long sentence *il m'a dit que les deux voleurs ont pris le petit animal* there is only one error;
- in the sentence *et le gardien a pris le animal aux médecins* there is only one grammatical error (*le animal*) as *pris* is a Quality of Language error (*emmené* should have been used);
- the sentence *Heureusement la police à trouve le lion avant de le acheter* has already lost marks for Communication (it makes little sense). However, the grammatical structure of the sentence is sound up to *avant de* with the exception of the accent on *à*.
- Towards the end of the essay, errors make up just more than half of all the writing.

For all the reasons given above, it was considered that the essay was accurate enough to gain 4 + 4 marks.

Question 2b Translation into French

This was a popular question. It was attempted by about 80% of the cohort. The candidates had generally been very well trained and had worked carefully. The vast majority were a credit to their teachers.

Tenses were generally well known. Surprisingly, the correct way to write a date was not. Few and far between were the candidates who could write simply *le 6 juin*.

Whilst a large percentage of average candidates correctly translated idiomatically *son amour de la vie* a small group of more advanced candidates had perhaps misread the English text and wrote *l'amour de sa vie*.

Question 3a

This essay title was less popular than the picture essay. It was attempted by some 40% of candidates. Answers ranged from the unintelligible to the fascinating.

Question 3b

This was a more popular essay. Despite the lack of vocabulary (*peindre; plancher; tableau* and *sale*) many candidates managed to convey a clear story and were not unduly disadvantaged for this lack of knowledge.

The examples below will indicate how teachers can best apply the marking grids in order to prepare their candidates for the essay questions.

Question 3a

Hier à sept heures moi et ma classe nous sommes allés à la ville historique, K..... . Nous avons pris l'autobus avec le prof de l'histoire et nous avons chanté des chansons dans l'autobus. Le conducteur de l'autobus riait. Nous sommes arrivés a huit heures. La ville était très petite, il faisait très beau. J'ai pris des photos avec mon camera de la ville de les maisons historique_. La ville était plein des chats. Et il y avait beaucoup des arbres avec des oiseaux. Nous avons pris le déjeuner dans un petit restaurant et après, nous avons visité la musée historique de la ville. En face de la musée il y avait un magasin. J'est y allé et j'a acheté des carte_ postale_. Nous sommes retourné__ a l'école a // (130 words) trois heures // (end of sense group). Je me suis amusé beaucoup.

10 + 5 + 7

Grid A The story is quite clear. There is no ambiguity.

Grid B The language is basic. There are no dependent clauses. Some adjectives but very little in the way of adverbial clauses. One attempt to use an indirect preceding object. The vocabulary is accurate (apart from *camera*) but basic.

Grid C The first three lines are virtually faultless. Accuracy declines thereafter. 7 is an average between 9 at the beginning and 5 toward the end of the piece.

Jeudi matin, nous sommes allées avec nos professeurs au P..... pour « recontre » son historique. Nous sommes arrivés là avec nos bus et nous sommes descendus pour promener à sa destination.

Le soleil brille et tous étaient heureux. Nous sommes montés l'escalier quand un gardier a parlé pour la historique de P..... Nous ne somme pas seulsm mais ils étaient beaucoup de touristes.

Plus tard nos professeurs ont dit que nous pouvons promener pour voir seuls le monument et si nous avons un question nous pouvons demander le gardier. Personne n'avaient demander le gardier, alors nous sommes monté le bus pour aller au restaurant.

Quand une heure a passé, nous sommes descendu au restaurant, nous avons assis et nous avons commenc   manger. Tous   taient tr  s heureux car la jour-l   // (130 words)   tait pass   tr  s belle.

6 + 6 + 7

J'aime beaucoup l'histoire. C'  tait toujours mon plus aim   cours. C'est pourquoi, quand, avec mon classe, on a visite un monument historique j'  tais tr  s satisfi  .

Quand on est arriv   un guide a commenc   expliquer    nous que le monument est tr  s important pour notre r  gion parce que c'  tait la place o   cinq gens   tait morts pour C....., mon r  gion. Chaque ann  e le pr  sident de la C..... va    ce monument avec beaucoup de politics. Ca jour   tait tr  s interessante ! On a   coute avec curiosite le guide et on   tait tr  s satisfi  s. Apr  s on est all  s a une place pr  s    ce monumnet et on a mang  .

L'histoire de ces cinq gens   tait tr  s interessante. J'ai compris trop de choses pour ma r  gion cette jour. (124 words)

7 + 6 + 5

Question 3b

C'  tait un beau jour de printemps quand la famille Duval a decid   de changer leur maison. *Tous les trois sont all  s dans un magasin pour choisir le nouveau table et le nouveau fauteil.* Une semaine plus tard ils se sont mis    painter et nettoyer la maison.

« Notre maison est tr  s jolie, n'est-ce-pas ? » a dit Madame Duval en ayant le sourire aux l  vres.

« Oui, nous devons inviter quelques amis pour la voir » a dit Monsieur Duval. Madame Duval a t  l  phon   aux beaucoup d'amis et elle les a invit  s. Pendant que Madame et Monsieur Duval   taient au supermarch  , leur fils, Pierre, jouait avec le chien. Malheureusement Pierre n'  tait pas prudent et il est entr   dans la maison avec le chien. Tout   tait salle ! Quel dommage ! (125 words excluding names)

4 + 8 + 10

Grid C 10 4 It is evident that the accuracy of this essay is outstanding: one gender error - with correct agreement according to the candidate's assessment of the gender - one minor spelling error and one misuse of   . The examiners had no hesitation in awarding the full 10 marks.

Grid A It will be seen that all the words in italics are irrelevant. In the pictures on the question paper, at no time are Madame and Monsieur absent. There is also some slight ambiguity in the use of the words *changer* and *sale* although this would not, in general, lead to any significant loss of marks. The candidate has conveyed only "a few of the main points of the tasks" and cannot, therefore, be awarded more than 4 marks.

Grid B 8 The range of structures, as underlined in the text, is good, but not wide. The use of reported speech is excellent, but the structure repeated. Apart from *et*, there is only one co-ordination conjunction and one subordinating conjunction. There are no relative pronouns and only one direct object pronoun.

There is good, but not wide use, of adjectives (*nouveau* is used twice), adverbs / adverbial phrases and idiom.

There is relatively very little vocabulary "appropriate to the task". The mark cannot, therefore be higher than 8.

The candidate has scored 22 marks but could perhaps have reached a much higher mark.

L'été était finallement arrivé. Mais cet année, à la place d'aller faire des vacances au sud de la France, la famille Boulanger à decidé de s'occuper de sa maison pour l'améliorer.

Paul ne comprenait pas pourquoi mamman et papa vourraient faire sacrifice de ses vacances, de la sable chaude, de la mer claire et du ciele bleu pour nettoyer la maison.

Il a décidé tout de suite qu'ils pourraient faire tous ce qu'ils vourraient, mais lui, il jouerait tous les vacances avec Bob, son chien et son meilleur ami, sous le soleil.

Pour dire la verité, ses parents étaient vraiment contents que leur petit menace ne serait pas dans la maison pour détruire tout leur travail comme toujours.

Après sept jours infernaux, ils ont finalement fini de peindre les murs // (130 words) et de décorer la maison. // (end of sense group). Ils étaient très contents ... (the essay the continues for a further 105 words)

5 + 8 + 8

Initially this essay gives an excellent impression, apart from a persistent misuse of accents.

Grid A 5 Paragraph 1 can be considered as a good introduction.

The first line and a half of Paragraph 2 conveys opinions and is just relevant, but the final part of the paragraph seems to have no relation to the pictures set and was marked as "irrelevant" given that the candidate must relate the story by writing "between 120 and 130 words and no more".

Paragraph 3 is interesting at first sight but slightly cryptic - has the child literally "destroyed" the parents' house on some previous occasion? Is the child playing with a dog who is his friend, or are the dog and the friend two separate entities? (See comments on Grid B below).

Paragraph 4 resumes the narration of the story, but then the candidate reaches the 130 mark before s/he has finished the narrative.

This essay cannot be awarded more than 4 marks on Grid A as the majority of the task (5-6 Band) has not been completed, there is "a degree of irrelevance" (3 - 4 Band) and there is some ambiguity.

Grid B 8 It is clear from the full essay that the candidate has "a wide range of structures, idiom and vocabulary" at his / her command" (9-10 Band). But within the part of the essay which fell within the 130 words, the examiner must ask the question: Is this range "for the most part appropriate to the task"? The key words which are appropriate to the task have been underlined: there is some relevance but on the whole the vocabulary is quite general: *decider de; s'occuper de; améliorer; comprendre; jouer; content; travail; finir* and then finally, two key words *décorer* and *peindre*.

There are four different tenses as well as correctly used infinitives. This can be considered to be a wide range: *était arrive; à (sic) decide; aller faire; comprenait; jouerait* and several appropriate adverbs and interesting adverbial phrases.

There is only one preceding object pronoun (*l'*) and one "sophisticated" subject pronoun *tous (sic)*.

There are only two true examples of subordination although there is some variety of clauses using connectors *à la place de* (for *au lieu de*); *pourquoi; ils ont decide que; contents que*. The candidate would have earned more marks on Grid B and avoided the danger of writing ambiguously if s/he had written in paragraph 3 *avec son chien qui s'appelle / s'appelait Bob et qui était aussi son meilleur ami*.

The candidate has been only "moderately successful" in his / her use of adjectives as there are only three adjectives which relate directly to the topic of the essay: *meilleur; contents; infernaux*.

There are some interesting attempts to introduce idiom and variety into the writing: *faire sacrifice de; mais lui* (for emphasis); *pour dire la vérité*

As the candidate has elements of all of the top three bands, it was natural to include this candidate in the 7-8 Band. The candidate was adventurous in use of language, so the upper mark of 8 was awarded.

Grid C 8 On closer inspection of the grammar, it is not just the accents which are inaccurate: there are quite a few further grammar errors: verbs: *vourraient*; some minor spelling errors: *finallement; mamman; ciele*; and three gender / number errors *cet année; tous ce qu'ils; tous les vacances*.

Had the candidate made only accent errors and the minor spelling errors the essay could have been awarded 10. The inclusion of either the one serious verb error or the gender / number errors would have brought that mark down to 9. However as the candidate had made four different types of error, it was considered that the mark should be 8.

This candidate did not do well on Q1 (7 = 35%) and 2b (15 = 37.5%) but has been able to do much better on Q3 (in this case 19 = 63%) to give an overall mark of 51 = 45.5%.

It is hoped that the new mark scheme for questions 2a, 3a and 3b will give teachers far more flexibility to encourage their pupils to write for the pleasure of communicating a story rather than just writing them as a grammar exercise.

FRENCH 7193, GRADE BOUNDARIES JUNE 2006

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade (Max =85)	56	46	36	32	26

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