

Examiners' Report January 2007

GCE O'Level

GCE O'Level French 7193

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Paper 1 - Dictation

Teachers are reminded of the need for very careful preparation. Candidates cannot be compensated for errors in their texts which have been caused, evidently, by the fault of the reader.

Apart from the usual grammatical complexities such as agreement of the past participle (*sont restés*), expressions which caused difficulties were: *apprécie*; *vieilles traditions*; *dans son quartier*; *elle ne reçoit pas* and, rather surprisingly, *de visteur(s)*. Many candidates were evidently unaware of the distinction between *-eur* and *-er*.

Paper 2 - Listening and Reading comprehension

The standard of English caused a problem for some candidates, sometimes answers given by candidates were not sufficiently clearly expressed in English for the examiners to be able to award the marks.

Listening Comprehension

Weak command of English was evident in the use of *birday*; *anniversary* and *thirteens* for thirteenth in Question (a) and an astounding range of spellings for *July* in Question (j). The examiners took a lenient view as to candidates' attempts to paraphrase the ideas *photographe aérien* and *à l'étranger* in Question (n).

Reading comprehension

Candidates are expected to be more precise in their answers to the Reading comprehension test than in the Listening test. Many candidates failed to answer fully questions (d) *he chose to accept the prize*, (i) *to put the cheque in the bank*, (m) *at least once a year* - indeed very many candidates carelessly misread *moins* and wrote that the meetings were *once a month* and Question (o) in which the prize was *over 115 million euros*.

Paper 3 - Translation

Question 1 Translation into English

Again, the low level of English caused marks to be lower than they should have been given the accessible nature of the text. The simple ability to state a date in English was beyond many candidates. There was widespread confusion between *I got up* and *I woke up*. The majority of candidates opted, incorrectly, for the second version. Generally candidates were familiar with idiomatic expressions such as *avoir faim*; *avoir peur* and *à la main*, although *avant de* became *after saying* on far too many scripts. Tenses were well handled: *I was not able*; *I was leaving*; *the taxi arrived*. As expected the pluperfect *I had been invited* was correctly used by only the stronger candidates. *Je me suis retourné* was rarely distinguished from *je suis retourné*, so the translation was usually *I went back*.

Question 2a - Guided essay

Candidates who chose this option often relied too heavily on the stimulus and were thus unable to reach high marks. Candidates should only attempt this question if they have been trained in the technique by their teacher in advance of the examination.

Question 2b

Candidates are to be congratulated on having worked carefully and systematically through the text.

The expression *100 euro note* seemed to be an unknown concept to the majority of candidates as did *jeu* whereas it was pleasing to see that virtually no candidate failed to provide the word *ordinateur*. On the other hand, interest in domestic affairs was much weaker. The correct form of *machine à laver* appeared rarely in scripts.

Most candidates were able to deal at a basic level with past, present and future tenses.

Question 3

The examiners were pleased to see that candidates kept very near to the recommended number of words, thus choosing quality rather than quantity.

Question 3a

This was the preferred option. Just under two thirds of all candidates chose to talk about a new classmate. Some candidates lost marks for Communication as they gave very little information about the *help* they gave to the new arrival. The type of vocabulary needed, as it was school based, was well within the range of correctly entered candidates who were able to do well as far as Quality of Language was concerned. Accuracy, as expected, was very variable.

Question 3b

The picture essay caught out those candidates who had difficulty expressing dates. There was considerable evidence of low levels of vocabulary relating to clothes and medicine. However, the story was straightforward and most candidates were able to construct a coherent essay.

7193 Grade Boundaries

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Marks	57	47	38	34	29

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