

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

O Level

GCE O Level French 7193

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Paper 1. Dictation.

The dictation contained the following words which candidates found particularly difficult to spell correctly.

Une demi-heure. Le public. Applaudissements. Le lever du rideau.

Musiciens. Succès.

The following words present difficulties.

Finalement (middle 'e'). La meilleure (final 'e') Me plaire (final 'e')

Paper 2. The Listening and Reading comprehensions

Listening comprehension

This was a well-balanced exercise in terms of complexity of understanding and of what was required from the questions; with 44% basic level, 46% exam level targeted, 10% complex.

Points on specific questions:

Q. (i) Both elements [(a) a rolled-up/ scrolled-up...and (b) small/scrap...] are required.

Q. (j) Students should avoid long answers.

Qs. (n) and (o) The word 'bottle' should appear in both the answers.

The Reading comprehension.

About 20% of the questions were answered correctly almost invariably, and 20% of the questions fell into the difficult range.

Confusion arose in questions (j), (k), and (l). Balancing answers gains maximum marks.

Many candidates failed to recognise as key in their answers:

Q. (a) '...l'escalier arrière de la maison..'

Q. (b) '...les devoirs plus ou moins complétés,...

Q. (d) *Polonais*.

Also in Q. (d), students need to know '*distribuer les journaux*'

Q.(l) '*...qu'il a tellement grandi que ses bottes ne lui vont plus...*' proved difficult.

Q.(o) "*Alors, demain, on va chez les Frappier...*" should be 'the next/following day'.

Finally Yves was often mistakenly thought of as a girl's name with 'she' as its pronoun.

Paper 3. Translations and Essays

Question 1. Translation into English.

As is usual with the translation into English, candidates whose first language isn't English are disadvantaged compared with those for whom English is. Overuse of the definite article was frequent:

Box 4, 5 '*explique le racisme aux enfants.*'

Box 28 '*la mentalité des adultes racistes.*'

Box 40 '*dans les écoles.*'

Faux-amis

Boxes 11, 33 and 36. '*sur ce thème*', '*Par contre*', '*arriver à*'

Idioms

Box 12, 13 '*car elle avait du mal à le comprendre.*' Substituting this French idiom for the English proved very problematic.

Box 14 For '*c'est à ce moment-là*' ('it was then', 'it was at that moment (that)..')

Tense

Box 27 '*Leurs réactions, dit-il*' where '*dit-il*' could be both present and past historic.

Other

Box 20 '*à M et à deux de ses amies*'. Here *ses* could refer to his friends.

Question 2a. The guided essay

In this essay it is important to convey:

- A sense of impending danger or doom
- Panic
- Intervention
- Death or injury and /or survival

Question 2b. The translation into French

Areas to watch for:

Line 9. Candidates need to be clear about '*je me souviens de quelque chose*' and '*je me rappelle quelque chose*'.

Line 23. The word 'could' here is in the imperfect tense and not the conditional.

Useful vocabulary

- Surtout line 28
- Enchantés /ravis line 35
- Manquer / rater line 31

Question 3a. The Free Essay

Students should get to the point of the essay as soon as possible, and not spend more than a few words describing getting to the zoo.

Question 3b. The Picture Essay

'Castle', 'wave' and 'sand' are necessary words to know.

'construire', 'lire': their past participles should be known.

'pleuvait' and 'pleurait' are often confused.

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