

GCE French – 6FR04

Research-based Essay Guide

Exemplar 1 – Aspects de la société francophone contemporaine

Summer 2014

PREFACE

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Please note that:

- Some items may have been removed, such as references to individuals and places. Please refer to the commentaries by the Principal Examiner for specific references.
- In order to maintain the authenticity of the writing, some errors and mistakes have been reproduced from the original candidate's response.

Question 3 (c) - Aspects de la société francophone contemporaine

Décrivez et commentez un aspect social ou politique de la société francophone contemporaine.

L'aspect social que j'ai décidé d'étudier est l'émancipation des homosexuels en France, mais concrètement l'aspect politique qui concerne leur récent droit au mariage après avoir mis en œuvre la loi du Mariage par Tous le 17 mai 2013.

Tout va commencer en 1980, quand l'homosexualité est dépenalisée par la loi française, et en 1982, L'OMS ne la considère plus comme une maladie mentale. Après, en 1990, les PACS (pactes civil de solidarité) étaient établis, et avec le concubinage, ces deux mesures permettaient aux homosexuels et aux membres de la communauté LGBT (Lesbiennes, Gays, Bisexuels et Transgenres) d'être reconnus comme un couple ; encore que cela n'offre pas les mêmes garanties juridiques que le mariage civil.

La France avait besoin d'un changement de la loi pour plusieurs raisons : selon l'INSEE, il y a plus de 40000 enfants qui habitent dans une famille homoparentale, et leurs parents n'étaient pas reconnus comme un couple marié par la loi, les homosexuels représentent un 10% de la population française alors un sur dix citoyens souffrent de l'homophobie, de la répression, de l'exclusion à l'embauche.

La population française s'est organisée pour créer des associations comme la LGBT, SOS homophobie, Act up Paris afin de pousser les politiques à instaurer une nouvelle loi. C'est évident qu'il existe aussi des autres organisations contre cette loi, comme par exemple le collectif de la Manif pour Tous, dirigée par Virginie Barlot, ou l'association Civitas, constituée par des religieux et des conservateurs de droites.

Finalement, le 17 mai 2013, la loi qui permet le mariage entre deux personnes du même sexe était promulguée, parce que la France est la terre de la liberté, égalité, fraternité, n'est-ce pas ?

(245 words)

Commentary on Exemplar - Aspects de la société francophone contemporaine

The candidate has chosen a suitable aspect of contemporary French society to describe and evaluate. Contemporary society is defined as relating to roughly the last twenty years. Some of the candidate's subject matter refers to times before this but since this material is designed to put more current developments into context, it can be considered relevant, although it could be argued that the historical explanation is too substantial to the detriment of a fuller consideration of more recent developments. The recently passed legislation concerning gay marriage is certainly contemporary and is a suitable aspect of society to research and study.

The essay is of an appropriate length. The candidate obviously appreciates the need to both describe and evaluate, as required by the terms of the question. A good amount of precise, factual detail is given, showing that the candidate has researched the area well and has a good understanding of the topic. The historical context is explained in a knowledgeable way. Detail of the present situation includes a description of pressure groups which were formed and their role in bringing about a change in attitudes and the law, all of which enhances the convincing nature of the essay.

The paragraph beginning *La France avait besoin d'un changement* is a good example of the candidate's ability to debate. The claim that there was a need for change is made and then three succinct arguments are put forward to illustrate why this change was necessary. There could be a little more analysis, for example of the results and effects of the latest initiatives in the chosen field. The considerable opposition to recent moves is mentioned only fleetingly and this would have provided fertile material for research and would have given the essay greater balance. Examiners do not have a preconceived idea of what should be said in any essay but the failure to discuss the protests of those in France opposed to gay marriage does seem to be a significant omission. For Reading, Research and Understanding, however, the essay can safely be awarded a mark in the range 19-24.

The introduction sets out clearly what is to be done without merely repeating the terms of the question. A logical, clear progression is made from historical background to the contemporary scene, although, as has been already said, perhaps a little too much emphasis is placed on the former. The middle sections proceed in a logical fashion and the paragraphs have a certain internal logic which makes them easy to follow. The rather weak conclusion ends on a somewhat puzzling note. Overall, however, the essay progresses well, is clear to the reader and gives a clear exposé of what is required and for Organisation and Development the piece can be placed in the range 7-8.

The language suffers a little from several careless errors but the candidate produces more demanding features accurately and communicates the desired message with no ambiguity. For example the construction with the verb *permettre* is handled properly, as are several uses of the passive. There are some quite impressive vocabulary items and phrases which help to give an overall impression of abstract analysis such as *est dépenalisé*, *ne la considère plus* and *cela n'offre pas les mêmes garanties juridiques*. For Quality of Language the essay deserves a mark within the range of 5-6.