



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In French (9FR0)

Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation

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Introduction

Paper 1 tests learners' comprehension of spoken and written material in French. The stimulus texts are based on the four main themes of the Specification:

- *Les changements dans la société française*
- *La culture politique et artistique dans les pays francophones*
- *L'immigration et la société multiculturelle française*
- *L'Occupation et la Résistance.*

Learners are required answer open-response questions and questions in a multiple choice format. They are also required to show the ability to summarise spoken material and to translate a passage from French into English. In total, there are 80 marks available for this paper.

There are five extracts of spoken material and five reading passages in all. Learners are required to answer all questions on the paper and there are no optional questions. The level of challenge varies across each question.

In Section A, learners listen to the audio extracts and respond to the questions in French. Q1 offers questions in a multiple-choice format while Q2, Q3 and Q4(a) require the learner to answer open-response questions in French. Learners should manipulate the language, to show their comprehension and answer the question successfully; they should not attempt to simply transcribe what they hear. In this paper, there are no marks awarded explicitly for grammatical accuracy. However, responses which are too inaccurate to successfully communicate the message will not score. Learners should aim to offer concise, accurate answers which convey the correct notion.

In Q4(b)(i) and Q4(b)(ii), learners are required to summarise two passages of spoken French, giving the information required in the bullet points. Learners should signpost their answers by using bullet points or three clear separate sentences. In this question, learners should remember that the purpose is to summarise and so they should keep the answers as short as possible with each bullet point containing one idea or element. Learners should avoid attempting to transcribe material from the recording; any direct lift from the recording is unlikely to score as there will have been little or no attempt to summarise. Learners should answer in the space provided on the question paper; learners who use supplementary sheets invariably give answers that are too long and are therefore likely not to be successful.

The second section of the paper tests the learners' comprehension of the written word; Q5 and Q6 offer questions in a multiple-choice format while Q7, Q8 and Q9 require the learner to answer open-response questions in French.

In the multiple-choice questions, learners must make their choice of answer clear and, in Q6, only four sentences must be chosen or learners will lose marks on a pro rata basis.

In the open-response questions, learners are once again reminded of the instruction in the rubric not to copy out whole sections. Many learners understand that they must often manipulate the

language to score the mark. However, there is still a minority of learners who offer answers which are directly lifted from the text, and these cannot be credited unless targeted. Learners must be aware of the need to change the language from the text in order to give the answer and that some questions will require learners to use inference to arrive at the correct idea. Answers that contain more ideas than marks also run the risk of not scoring. In a 1-mark question, the examiner can only consider the first idea given and so, if the correct answer is offered as an additional idea, say as the second idea, it cannot score.

Question 1

Examiners intend the first listening question, a multiple-choice question worth 4 marks, to be a relatively straightforward start to the paper. This proved to be the case in at least three of its parts. The Q1 mean mark was 0.85 or higher in (i), (ii) and (iii). In (iv), the mean mark was 0.59 so rather lower than in the other parts. It may be that a) is a plausible activity for a charity organisation and is selected by learners who were not sure of what they heard. In the vast majority of cases, all learners attempted all parts.

Question 2

In this first short verb listening question, 4 marks are available, and the mean mark of nearly 3 is encouragingly high. Many learners demonstrate understanding that in (a), the notions of *étudier* and *travailler* are sought. Where some learners are not awarded marks if they focus on the idea of STO workers having stopped work, rather than focusing on the imperfect tense *qu'ils faisaient*. As can be seen in the general guidance and conclusion of this report, past tense discrimination is key. In (b), many learners successfully convey the notion of the former STO workers being treated with distrust and are avoided, but the more differentiating element is the fact of the former STO workers being asked questions. Specific questions if manipulated, earn credit, but restating in several ways that French people distrusted former STO workers can only score once. As is advised below, lifts are not likely to be successful, and the questions asked of the former STO workers in (b) need to be manipulated so they can earn the second mark. In (c), learners need to pay attention to the angle from which the question is asked: it is not that the former STO workers felt themselves to be collaborators, but they are treated as such, and therefore that they are *trahis* or *traités comme des collaborateurs* or similar, are awarded. Responding from the wrong angle and not manipulating information from the passage are the most common causes of not gaining credit.

Question 3

This is a longer listening passage but the fact that Q3 is divided into many parts appears to have helped learners of all abilities such that the mean mark is nearly 6 of the 9 marks on offer. Lifting from the passage in (a) is once again not successful and needs to be complemented by

the notion of protester or manifester, which could be a nominalisation such as protestation. Les thèmes politiques on its own, is not unfortunately sufficient as it does not address à quoi sert.

b) was successfully answered by many learners, but it is important to remember that responses should be written in French and communicate in the target language. Therefore 90s or 1990 rather than les années 90s are examples of responses in the wrong language or in too specific a year respectively. Many learners understood that these students felt themselves to be forgotten but as indicated in the general guidance, a good knowledge of the passive voice is useful, and the difference between ils oubliés and ils se sentaient oubliés, is key. There are quite a lot of faulty attempts at the passé composé here, too. (d) needs to target Les quartiers populaires, so references to the capital city as a whole cannot be awarded in showing where zouglou has caught on. (e) earns credit for many learners especially with the notion of trente ans and the fact that many ways of expressing the international dimension are acceptable: international, au de la de la Côte d'Ivoire. Where learners indicate that zouglou is popular at the borders, the response is rejected: aux frontières de la Côte d'Ivoire. (f) focuses on the fact of normalising immigrants' right to stay in France and responses which did not refer to France do not score. In (g), the reaction needs to target the fact that the African artists mock or ridicule the difficulties which potential immigrants to France face. Anglicised verbs in (f) and (g) regulariser and ridiculer respectively do not communicate. (h) is an example where a succinct lift can score, although manipulation is always welcome where opposite. In the singular le droit is an ambiguous French concept and cannot be awarded and learners would usefully check their responses (especially to listening) to ensure that they are comprehensible, both for grammar and spelling.

Question 4

This listening comprehension question parts are quite successful for a number of learners and the mean mark is approximately 8.43, which indicates sound comprehension and summary skills overall. In (a)(i), elle e nest marre is a quite frequent cause of ineffective communication, but in (a)(i), many learners retrieve the notion that Léna is tired and tearful. (ii) also provides credit for many learners, and where they do not differentiate between who is sleeping poorly and who is being insolent, 1 mark can still be earned. More successful learners are able to indicate who is behaving in which way and earn both marks. In (a)(iii), there seemed to be some confusion between vie, vit and ville, and examiners are as flexible as possible when it comes to comprehension of these responses, the right information being that the father leads an enviably quiet life. In (a)(iv), quite a lot of learners seem to have some comprehension of the passage, but not all are able to express it felicitously. The key information needed is that the boys want to test their mother to see whether she comes good and stands by them. Without the notion of ils veulent or similar, responses such as tester on its own, where is not the notion of an explanation, are rejected.

In the summary parts of Q4, many learners earn some credit and there is an encouragingly large number who score 5 or 6 marks. Very succinct responses could score fully in (b)(i), and the most common loss of credit is due to démissionner being confused with renvoyer, or it being

treated as an active verb: l'employeur veut le démissionner. In (b)(ii), the idea of financial worries is frequently retrieved, and to some extent the desire to treat the boys to outings and gifts is successful. The third element proves to be the most elusive, in that many learners think that the mother cannot pay for little treats which improve life. She can, but only guiltily.

Question 5

Now looking at the reading section, once again the multiple-choice question provides strong scores for many learners with all parts having a mean mark of over 50% and with three parts being successful for over 2/3 of the Riviera candidature. The last question perhaps due to its more difficult verb formulation in the options is the least successful and in (b)(iii), there seems to be the frequent choice of option C: it is worth taking a moment to consider that un soldat and un homme des forces occupantes are synonyms, and therefore the detail of the options is worthy of careful consideration because the distractors and the correct response are often quite finally variegated.

Question 6

Where learners are required to select the four correct options, in this question, examiners observe the greatest success of the whole paper, and the mean mark is around 3.5 where 4 marks are available. F and G are the least frequently chosen correct options, with an E providing a distractor to F, diriger and s'orienter as potentially confusable verbs; and the mention of CV in H perhaps distracting learners from formation in G.

Question 7

In this first verbal response of the listening section, 6 marks are available and most learners accessed a majority of the marks. In (a), so that scores of 1, as well as 0 or 2 are possible, if learners convey either of the halves of the contrast they can score so musique animée by itself scores 1 mark, without reference to gens tristes. A number of learners provided very succinct but effective responses: musique animée, gens tristes. (b) has a number of routes to reach the 2 marks on offer and general inferences could also score: il est généreux. One or more types of treat scored once only and references to the grandfather's smile are frequent. barbe and barbe à papa caused some loss of credit because it is the smell of candy floss not of the grandfather's beard, which is the memory which Marie has. In (c) there are some ineffective lifts from the passage mentioning repos en paix, and the verb se reposer, with its reflexive suffices to earn 1 mark on its own. Equally, in (d), the last line with references to kissing the coffin, are rejected because a more general wish that the grandfather has fun again with its reflective is the correct response. A lift is regarded as oblique, and the infinitive s'amuser is sufficient to communicate felicitously.

Question 8

This question is a quite demanding discriminator, though some parts yield quite straightforward credit. While the topic of employment is very clearly in the specification, some learners do not find it easy to be specific enough in their answers. It is true that there needs to be equality, but this equality needs to target salaries to score in (a). Similarly, equal opportunities on its own to earn the second element is too vague because the passage targets equal employment opportunities. In (b), the long-term entrenched attitudes are comprehended by many learners and where the response is rejected, information from the first part is often been proffered erroneously: women don't have the same salary as men. In (c), the focus on *imposer la loi* is too specific and the correct information is that the state must act or change. In (d) again, *imposer la loi* is mentioned but the important fact is that is that Yvette Roudy is going to use televised advertisement to promulgate her message. (e) is a very successful part, supported by the fact that there are three possible answers to earn the 2 marks. Refusing a job or promotion or training all now being outlawed, are frequently offered successfully. In (f), many learners retrieve the correct information but omitted parts such as mentioning the requirement that the report is *publié* and *chaque année*, key requirements of the new legislation.

Question 9

This question, too, provides differentiation with the most able learner scoring strongly and also less able learners finding some credit in many cases. The notion of the parents as Résistants in (a) is frequently understood and conveyed, but less frequently, the detail that the husband was in the Résistance. A common erroneous understanding is that Cécile's husband participating in the liberation of Paris is a reason why Cécile joins the Résistance. A more careful reading reveals that she became a resistant in the 1930s, some years before her motivation could have been spurred by the liberation of Paris. In (b) again there are quite straightforward marks on offer for mentioning that Cécile is an agent de liaison and a third element available for the two marks referring to helping to produce an underground newspaper, is frequently offered. Any one weapon being transported is enough for another route to the mark, not all need to be listed. In (c), there is generally less careful manipulation or targeting and the question focuses on what people are required to do in August 1944. As *s'insurger* is not the most straightforward cognate of insurrection and therefore this non-existent verb as is quite frequent and cannot be awarded. Notions of having to type the order or receive the dictated order are untargeted lifts: *taper l'ordre dicté*. In (d), there are many ways in which Cécile's recognition can be conveyed but the untargeted lift *témoigné sa fidélité* does not respond directly to the question, and needs *pendant toute sa vie* to score. Rejected answers most frequently included the notion that she had led the women symbolically in the fight against the Vichy government and the Nazis. *Elle a soutenu le communisme* is sufficient to score. In the last part, learners need to show that the women won the vote *not de Gaulle*, and references to *de Gaulle* on his own cannot score, e.g. *de Gaulle a donné le droit de vote aux femmes*.

Question 10

This question over a number of series has a generally increasing mean mark, and this session's mean is around 12 marks. The last three boxes tend to offer credit for learners of all abilities and, along with box 2 and box 13, mean that even the least able learners are often able to earn some credit in the unseen translation. The topic material and the turn of phrase of many learners seems to be conducive to reasonable scores and attention to idioms and tenses, enhance scores.

In box 1, the present tense is needed and this contrasts with box 16 where a perfect tense formed with the auxiliary of être needs to be conveyed in the past tense in English. Both these tense matters are not infrequent cause of lost credit. In box 3, *du paysage médiatique* is generally quite well-handled but box 5 *se laissent tenter* is more challenging for many learners. Box 6 contains *depuis* and requires a past tense in box 5 which is not frequently forthcoming. In box 7, examiners do not insist on the newspaper being daily and which meant a lot of learners were able to score. The year 2000 is too specific in box 9, and in the 2000s is the correct notion. In box 10, *craindre* seems unknown to quite a number of learners, and in box 11 the related expletive *ne* has been erroneously taken by many to be a negative. *Une partie de leurs lecteurs*, a part of their readers, rather than a part of their leadership is rejected since it does not get over the idea of a non-physical collection of readers. Adverbial and other small details are also worth learner notice such as in box 12 *bien* and box 23 *puis*. Omission of these notions in a translation exercise unfortunately may lead to lost credit. Clearly the mark grids cannot be exhaustive and examiners credit alternatives which convey the same notions as those indicated. Care needs to be taken and checking is worthwhile to ensure the spellings are in English and as accurate as possible. Thus in box 1, *presse* and in box 18 *victime* are French spellings, so sadly cannot score. Examiners try to be lenient if possible thus *metro stations* did not need to be translated into *tube stations* and French, lower case, is accepted.

Conclusion

This 9FR0 01 paper is consistent with the demand of previous series and represents an appropriate level of challenge to learners at Advanced Level. It has been pleasing to see Centres and learners responding to the advice given in previous years' reports. Learners should seek to answer the questions clearly and without ambiguity, thus in as grammatically accurate French as possible, so that the message is conveyed effectively. A-Level learners should be able to manipulate the language, when responding to spoken and written passages, using their own words, as far as is practicable. Areas of language on which learners can always profitably focus include tenses, especially the choice of past tenses and their formation, direct and indirect object pronouns, emphatic and demonstrative pronouns, possessive pronouns and adjectives, the difference in meaning and use of the definite article and the partitive article (*les /des*), the understanding of questioning words and recognition of the passive voice. In addition, learners need to recognise the value learning synonyms to support them express their answers in their own words rather than leaning too heavily on the original text. It is pleasing to see that the learners' performance in many cases on this paper continues to improve thanks to the hard work of teachers and learners. Some learners demonstrate impressive reading and aural

comprehension skills on a range of question types and they are able to translate from French into English. Moreover, they are able to cope with a range of written texts taken from different source types and a variety of audio material, all covering the range of sub-themes from this Specification, responding often adroitly in sophisticated language.

Based on learners' performance this session, we offer the following advice:

- give clear, unambiguous answers
- ensure that the language used is as accurate as possible, so as not to impede the message
- avoid transcribing from the audio or lifting from the written text to answer questions
- offer one idea only for each mark available
- in Q4(b), use bullet points and offer one idea only for each bullet point
- have a secure knowledge of regular and common irregular verbs in all tenses
- learn to use possessive adjectives pronouns
- understand the correct use of emphatic and demonstrative pronouns
- be able to recognise the passive voice
- read widely in the Francophone context, including literary texts and newspaper articles.