

Paper 2 Question 6

The aim of this question is to test the candidates' ability to write in French. Three stimuli will be provided, each with four or five bullet points which must be addressed by the candidates. Each bullet point need not be addressed in detail, but overall the candidates must write approximately 150 words on the given topic.

Marks will be awarded for Communication and Content (10 marks), Knowledge and Application of Language (5 marks) and Accuracy (5 marks). The mark grids are printed on page 13 of the Specification (Issue 1).

Rubric: **Comment aidez-vous à la maison**

Le magazine « Intérêts » vous pose des questions au sujet du ménage. Répondez à toutes les questions.

- En général, que faites-vous pour aider à la maison ? (Task 1)
- Avez-vous déjà préparé un repas pour votre famille ? (Task 2)
- Quelles sont vos opinions sur le ménage ? (Task 3)
- Allez-vous aider à la maison le week-end prochain ? (Task 4)

The candidate has written 168 words.

Communication and content

Communication

The writer has a chatty, if grammatically inaccurate, style. There is much more than “limited communication” and despite some ambiguity, the essay is not generally “lacking clarity”. The essay rises above Band 3-4.

There is indeed “some ambiguity” (*parce-que sa prépere le diner; je leve à huit heure; le weekend prochain nous somme sont prépare pour ce fête*) particularly as they candidate struggles with time frames. On the whole, however, the answer is “mostly clear”. The essays can be placed in Band 5-6, so its suitability for Band 7-8 must be examined. There does seem to be rather more than just “occasional ambiguity”. This lack of clarity means that the essay does not reach beyond Band 5-6 but can easily be placed at the top of the Band at 6

Content

The candidate has, quite acceptably, started with Task 2. The point has been covered very briefly, but as long as brevity in one task is compensated by development of another task, the candidate will be deemed to have dealt with the task.

What does the candidate do to help at home (Task 1)? S/he tidies away the dinner, walks the dog(s), tidies his or her room. Again, there is not a wide range of facts here, but the point has been covered.

Task 3 is dealt with also rather skimpily and the reason given for liking housework is somewhat cryptic (*parce que ma mère est bon*).

Task 4 is comprehensible to a sympathetic reader – the candidate is going to help prepare a party.

There are no “major omissions” in what the candidate has written, so placing the essay in Band 3-4 would be too harsh. It is evident that the “response addresses most aspects of the task” and so it is appropriate to look immediately at Band 7-8, however, the essay is not always relevant, for the candidate has added irrelevant details rather than developing the points given in the tasks:

j’aime le manger aussi could have been replaced by *je fais la vaisselle*;

mais je déteste sortir la poubelle would have been more relevant than *ma mère regarder la tele* ;

J’aime le ménage parce que ma mère travaille beaucoup à la maison et j’aime aider ma mère would have been more relevant than *parce que ma mère est bon* ;

nous sommes manger le poisson et le pommes de terre should have been replaced by a description of, for example, going to the shops to buy the food, or a description of preparing or cooking the food.

The last full sentence of the essay is irrelevant. This sentence consists of 24 words. The candidate would have done well to omit those 24 words. The essay would still have covered the same tasks, would have included 142 words and been more relevant.

So although the candidate has managed to cover the basic elements of the tasks, albeit in a far from doing so “fully (Band 9-10) there is a very high level of irrelevance which places it firmly in band 5-6 although comfortably at the top of the band.

Overall mark for Communication and content = 6

How to improve the Communication and content mark

Candidates should remember that not only to they have to cover all tasks, but at least some of those tasks should be fully developed. It is not adequate to cover the task and then give unrelated information. Candidates are being tested on their ability to use language, structures which give evidence that they can deal with and develop the theme stated in the bullet points of the rubric.

Knowledge and accuracy of language

The candidate has used no more than two connectives: *parce que* is repeated three times and *car* is used just once. All other sentences are very simply constructed. There are two

simple dependent infinitives and an ambiguous use of an object pronoun (*j'adore aider ma mère et j'aime le manger aussi*).

The candidate has done well to use the verb *ranger* more or less appropriately, but other than that, there is virtually none of the vocabulary normally associated with this topic area. The candidate has failed to prove a sound knowledge of other relatively basic lexical items (*je leve; je promenade; c'est froid dans l'été*) which are found in the core vocabulary for grades F to C.

There is no evidence of a knowledge of idiomatic language: *dans le soir/matin* for *le soir/ le matin*; *dans le compagne* for *à la campagne*; *pour une heur* for *pendant une heure*; *sur samedi* for *samedi (prochain)*; *dans l'ete* for *en été*; *c'est très froid* for *il fait très froid*.

The rubric invites the candidates to use the present tense (Tasks 1 and 3), the past tense (Task 2) and the future tense (Task 4). Although there is no requirement to use the past tense to respond to Task 2 (*En générale je préparé le repas* being acceptable), in this case the candidate would have done well to use a past tense as s/he has given no evidence of being able to use any tense other than the present tense.

The essay must be placed in Band 1-2 but at the higher end of the Band as there are dependent clauses, there is an attempt at an object pronoun and very basic vocabulary is sound: *mère, soir, télé, diner, chein, matin, jardin, personne, aniversaire, poisson, pommes de terre, maison, samedi, dimanche, famille, plage*.

Overall mark for Knowledge and application of language = 2

How to improve the knowledge and application of language mark

Candidates at this level should focus on accuracy and not on producing complex structures.

Accuracy

No accents are taken into consideration other than those indicating a past participle, whether that be an omission on a past participle itself or an stray accent which changes a present tense into a past participle: *je préparé* is considered as an error. There is "very little evidence of correct verb formation" (Band 1-2): *j'adore aider; j'aime (repeated) le manger; parce que est traditionnelle, c'est très froid*. The candidate relies heavily on the infinitive to convey the present tense.

There is minimal correct usage of the possessive pronoun: *ma mère; ma chambre; mon aniversaire ; mes (grande) parents ; ma maison*.

Spelling, gender and agreements are acceptable in the first paragraph, but deteriorate rapidly : *huit heur; le promenadé; deux chien / mes chien; ma mère est bon; le fete; ma jardin ; 150 personne ; aniversaire ; le pommes de terre, grande parents ; traditionnelle*.

Although the formation of tenses is almost non-existent, the candidate is quite a long way from “No rewardable material” (Band 0). It is therefore appropriate to place the essay at the top of Band 1-2.

Overall marks for the question

Communication and content = 6

Knowledge and application of language = 2

Accuracy = 2

Total mark = 10/20