

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE French (5FR03) Paper 3F

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Question 1

Candidates were required to match clothing items with pictures, in the context of the prices charged by a hotel's cleaning service. The majority scored well, though the number gaining full marks was slightly lower than expected. Revision of vocabulary in themed sections helps students to prepare effectively for such tasks.

Question 2

Candidates needed to identify where in a shopping centre individuals could carry out various tasks. Most scored at least 3 out of 4. A good knowledge of basic vocabulary items is necessary to perform well in such an exercise, together with an element of deductive reasoning.

Question 3

Candidates had to read a text about Martin's school life and indicate four correct statements from eight possibilities. Most scored 2 or 3 out of 4. As some of the suggested answers included references to material contained in the text but in an incorrect context, the exercise required more than simply pairing French items and English equivalents. Candidates needed to be able to appreciate the sense of the statements as a whole.

Question 4

The ability to read a short text and to identify which statement reflected each character's attitude was being tested. All parts were generally well answered. The ability to understand sections of text is required in such questions.

Question 5

Candidates were required to read a longer text in the form of an email about Jean-Yves' life, and to identify four correct statements from eight alternatives to demonstrate their comprehension. This task was inevitably found to be more complex than the previous ones. Gaining familiarity with texts of a similar complexity in the learning environment helps students to develop the skills needed to perform well in such exercises.

Question 6

Here individual vocabulary items were being tested in the context of a website about Paris. Most candidates gained at least three marks out of four. As in Question 1, revision of vocabulary in themed sections helps to prepare students for such tasks.

Question 7

Statements concerning actions considered to be good or bad for health were presented, with candidates needing to identify which person commented on a particular subject. In this question students need to display the same types of skills as in Question 2.

Question 8

The question took the form of a letter about the problems a couple encountered during a stay at a hotel, with candidates being required to identify correct statements from three possibilities. The exercise was inevitably found more demanding than the previous two. Most scored 2 or 3 out of 4. Practice at reading short authentic texts for gist helps students to develop their ability to cope well with such tasks.

Question 9

Candidates had to read an email about life in Quebec based on an authentic model and identify the four topics mentioned in the text. Most scored at least 2 out of 4. The skills needed are similar to those tested in Question 5.

Question 10

Candidates were required to read an extract from a magazine's problem page and answer questions in English to demonstrate comprehension. Some answers, particularly to section (a), were based on guesses rather than any material contained within the text. Work to develop students' abilities to extract information from a complete text rather than single sentences enables them to perform well in such tasks.

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