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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In French (5FR03)

Paper 3F: Reading and Understanding in
French

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GCSE French
Unit 3F: Reading
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Candidates performed well across the paper as a whole and there were some good performances. Most were well prepared for the different test types although questions with a greater choice of answers and questions which required answers in English remain a challenge for less able candidates.

Question 1

Question 1 targeted at G grade students and requiring the candidates to recognise single lexical items was answered well although individual items of vocabulary did cause problems. Many candidates achieved full marks on this question. The most frequently unknown item of vocabulary was *l'EPS*, closely followed by *le dessin*.

Question 2

Question 2 which was targeted at F grade students was well done and many candidates achieved full marks on this question. Some candidates struggled to link *je n'ai pas d'argent* with *I can't afford it* and *des devoirs* was unknown by some. A good knowledge of basic vocabulary items is required together with the ability to recognise these items when presented in simple sentences and draw simple conclusions. It is important to stress to candidates that any vocabulary item in the minimum core vocabulary can appear in the examination.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in parts i), iii) and iv) of question 3 which was targeted at D grade candidates. A number of candidates failed to associate the phrase *Je suis pour l'uniforme* in C as being in favour of school uniform, choosing instead statement E in which uniform is also mentioned. This type of task requires candidates to do more than simply find a French term and its equivalent in English, as some of the answers included references to material in more than one of the texts and candidates need to look for more precise details. Centres are advised to teach students to learn to understand full statements rather than vocabulary items in isolation in order to perform well in such tasks.

Question 4

This question was targeted at C grade candidates and a number achieved full marks. 4ii) was the most challenging part of the question and well over half of candidates failed to score on this part of the question. The answer to 4ii) appears right at the very end of the text and candidates would need to fully understand the text in order to arrive at this answer. A surprising number of candidates struggled with 4iii) selecting the incorrect answer D which also

appeared in the passage in connection with her brother. 4i) was the part of the question which was answered most successfully. Well over half of the candidates failed to answer 4iv) successfully however. Success in this part of the question required careful reading and full comprehension of the whole text. In questions of this nature, candidates require the ability to understand sections of text and centres are advised to prepare candidates for this by using similar material with a degree of complexity at the learning stage in order to help them develop the necessary skills.

Question 5

In question 5 aimed at E grade candidates, the word *gateaux* presented some difficulty and candidates were unable to recognise that this meant *sweet food*. Most fared better in linking *physical exercise* in iv) with *sport* in D. Questions such as this require candidates to recognise vocabulary items from the list as well as to draw simple conclusions to help them to arrive at the correct answer and practice of similar exercises in the learning environment should help them to develop this skill.

Question 6

Most candidates scored well in this question targeted at F grade. 6i) and 6iv) presented the most problems to candidates with some unable to link *un stade* with sports facilities, even when provided with additional vocabulary *une piscine*. A number failed to link *un grand camping* with accommodation. The skills required for this question were similar to question 2 but the vocabulary items in this question proved slightly more problematic to candidates.

Question 7

This question, written using a range of tenses was targeted at C grade candidates and required them to understand time frames. 7ii) was not well answered with over three quarters of candidates at this level choosing an incorrect response. Well over half of candidates failed to answer 7i) correctly, choosing instead one of the distractors, both of which were mentioned in the text. Candidates fared better with 7iii) and 7iv) with over half of candidates selecting correct responses. The multiple choice questions required candidates to demonstrate the ability to extract detailed information from the text which also contains references to distractors and is one of the more complex tasks demanded of them at this level. The more able candidates were able to do this successfully.

Question 8

Most parts of this question aimed at D grade candidates were tackled well. A surprising number of entrants did not recognise *un petit travail* and so failed to answer (i) correctly. Tasks such as this required a good knowledge of basic

vocabulary items and centres should prepare candidates by undertaking exercises which develop this skill as part of the learning process.

Question 9

This G grade question which required candidates to match single lexical items with pictures of weather conditions was not well done by candidates across the board. *Brouillard* was most frequently mistaken for C and perhaps candidates may have thought it meant *boiling*. Surprisingly, over a third of candidates were unable to recognise *il neige*, *il pleut* and *il y a du vent*. As in question 1, revision of vocabulary in themed sections helps to prepare candidates for tasks of this nature.

Question 10

This question which should have been accessible to E grade candidates was not always well done with some candidates scoring zero or one mark. The vast majority of candidates were unfamiliar with the word *Pâques*, therefore scoring 0 for (d). There was also widespread confusion about the sports actually available **at** the campsite with almost half mentioning the incorrect *swimming pool*, which was to be found in the village.

A few candidates wrote some answers in French and centres should be sure to stress to students that if questions are written in English, then the responses must also be in English. It is also important that candidates give precise answers and are not misled by extraneous material which may invalidate a correct response.

The performance of better candidates was characterised by:

- Careful reading of the questions
- Sound knowledge of core vocabulary
- Identifying cognates and familiar words in unfamiliar contexts
- Attention to detail
- Applying logic

