

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE French (5FR03) Paper 3F

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Question 1

This was aimed at Grade G. Candidates coped well with the task of matching subjects from a timetable with visuals. Revising vocabulary in themed sections helps students to prepare for this type of exercise.

Question 2

This was aimed at Grade F. Candidates were required to identify where individuals could obtain particular services from information given on a display board. Again candidates scored very well, with a large number gaining full marks. A mastery of basic vocabulary items and a degree of deductive reasoning are required in such tasks.

Question 3

This was aimed at Grade E. Candidates had to select four correct statements from eight possible answers based on a text about a family; and the majority scored at least three out of four marks. An ability to extract information accurately from a short text was being tested; a task that occurs often in the learning situation.

Question 4

This was aimed at Grade D. A short text rather more complex in nature than that in Question 3 was presented to candidates who had to identify four items mentioned. Most scored at least 2 out of 4. As most of the eight possible answers made reference to material in the text, but only four of them were accurate, candidates had to demonstrate an ability to appreciate ideas rather than simple knowledge of items of vocabulary.

Question 5

This was aimed at Grade C. Candidates were required to read a longer text made up of six responses to a discussion of personal problems on the Internet and to select the name of which individuals had particular problems. This task was found to be more complex than those aimed at the lower grades, but many candidates still managed to score 2 or 3 out of 4. Practice with similar Internet material develops the skills needed to perform well in this type of exercise.

Question 6

This was aimed at Grade G. Here individual vocabulary items were tested in the context of which headings on a town's web-site should be clicked on in certain circumstances. This enabled candidates to apply basic knowledge obtained when studying more than one of the topic areas. The vast majority scored 3 or 4 out of 4. The same sort of preparation as for Question 1 is appropriate for this task.

Question 7

This was aimed at Grade F. Statements concerning individuals' dislikes were presented with candidates needing to identify which person had commented on a particular theme. The majority of candidates scored at least 3 out of 4. In this exercise students need to use the same skills as in Question 2.

Question 8

This was aimed at Grade D. Candidates had to read a short text about events being organised during the summer holiday for young people and select four correct statements from eight possible answers. Most scored 2 or 3 out of 4. The skills needed were similar to those tested in Question 4.

Question 9

This was aimed at Grade C and was based on a longer text, an extract from a letter. Candidates had to demonstrate their comprehension of ideas in the text by selecting the correct completion of sentences from three possibilities. This was found to be more difficult than the previous questions. Practice at reading short authentic texts for gist helps students to develop their ability to cope well with such tasks.

Question 10

This was aimed at Grade E. Candidates were required to read a notice prepared by a young person looking for a part-time job and answer questions with a few words in English. Most managed to score at least 2 out of 4, but a surprising number were unable to recognise simple vocabulary items such as days of the week. Work to develop students' abilities to extract information from a complete text rather than isolated sentences helps them to gain good marks in exercises of this type.

Grade Boundaries

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

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