

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
in French (5FR01/1H)  
Paper 1H: Listening and  
Understanding in French

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**GCSE French**  
**Unit 1 Listening and Understanding**  
**Examiner Report**

**Paper 1H Higher Tier**

Candidates performed well across the paper as a whole and there were some excellent performances. The questions that were intended to discriminate did so, but the majority of candidates understood enough, and felt confident enough, to attempt the whole paper and there were very few blank answers, even on question 4 requiring answers in English. There was evidence of some good listening and exam skills.

Many candidates had used the five minutes reading time well (underlining key words in the title, rubric and questions and annotating questions) generally using the time to anticipate what they were about to hear. The performance of weaker candidates was characterised by lack of attention to detail, poor reading of the questions, "snatched" listening based on the identification of single words rather than listening to the extract as a whole, mishearing and imagination.

There were some candidates who were unable to cope with the demands of the Higher paper, and for whom the experience must have been demoralising. These candidates would have possibly benefited from taking the Foundation rather than the Higher paper or from having greater practice of the various test types particularly those used for questions targeted at grade B and above.

The performance on the overlap questions (questions 1, 2, 5 and 6) was generally better than at Foundation level. However, the performance of weaker candidates was similar to that of Foundation level candidates on these questions (see Foundation level report). As at Foundation level, question 1 and question 6 proved the most demanding and only C grade candidates and above scored well on these.

The questions that were intended to discriminate did so and weaker candidates found the questions targeted at grades B and above challenging.

Question 7 was one of the more accessible questions and many candidates scored well on this question. Question 3 which involved some paraphrasing was also generally well done by better candidates, parts (i) and (ii) were more accessible but only the better candidates matched '*Mon rêve est d'acheter une maison.....et d'y passer mes vacances*' with answer F, '*in his own holiday home*' in part (iv). In part (iii) candidates possibly did not understand the use of the expression, '*ça ne me dit rien*'.

Question 8 was generally well done with better candidates scoring highmarks on this question. Candidates seem well trained in this question type and are able to listen to the whole and distinguish between correct and incorrect statements. In part (b) answer F was a common incorrect answer and indicates that some candidates did not pick up the tense implication in '*J'aimerais jouer dans un orchestre un jour*.'

As always, the open-ended questions requiring answers in English were a good discriminator (question 4). There were some excellent performances from better candidates on these questions but they proved difficult for weaker candidates. This year, however, there were fewer blanks and candidates' responses indicated they had understood the gist of the extract although lack of attention to detail cost weaker candidates marks. Only the better candidates were able to supply the detail and accuracy required at this level.

Some candidates failed to recognise familiar vocabulary in an unfamiliar context. Weaker candidates tended to answer using their experience rather than what was heard, for example, there were many references in part (b) to 'have good marks/ have good uniform/ good attendance/good attitude/good homework record/good health although none of these are mentioned at all. In parts (b), (f), and (g) there were lots of references to being confident/ being able to speak in front of others/ good at public speaking, none of which were mentioned in the extract. Often answers lacked detail, for example in part (g) where candidates recognised how to present ideas to teachers but omitted the reference to '*pour qu'ils écoutent*'.

Some answers were too vague, for example, in part (d) raise money for charity/organise a charity event/ a fund raiser, without any reference to how ie the art exhibition. This lack of attention to detail loses marks. The accurate understanding of key basic items of vocabulary and structures is also important, and weaker candidates do not have this, for example in part (f) many rendered, '*présenter nos opinions aux profs*' as '*present the opinions **of** the teacher*', in part (b) '*avoir de bonnes idées pour des projets à faire*' was rendered as '*have ideas for **the** project*', in part (e) '*nous avons acheté de nouveaux ballons de volley*' was rendered as '*bought **a** new volley ball*'.

Many weaker candidates focus on single items of vocabulary and build answers around the recognition of single word, for example, in part (a) the word *réunion* gave rise to answers such as *organise a class reunion*, in part (d) the word *dessin* gave rise to answers such as *organise art sessions/ art classes for the pupils, go on an art trip* etc. In part (e) the reference to '*volley*' gave rise to answers such as *buy new volley ball nets, build a volley ball court, create a volley ball team*. In part (g) '*si on n'est pas content, il faut expliquer pourquoi*', gave rise to answers such as the teachers are not happy/ the teachers want to know why.

There was also evidence of mishearing with the word *volley* in part (e) being heard as *vole*, and hence references to stopping theft and even *vélo* with answers referring to buying bikes/ a bike shed. The word '*exposition*' in part (d) was heard by many as *expedition* and there were many incorrect answers referring to going on expeditions/ art expeditions. In part (f) '*plaintes*' was heard as *plans*, with answers such as, tell the teacher their plans. There were a surprising number of candidates who rendered '*professeur*' as *professor* despite the context of the extract. On the whole the performance of the better candidates on the paper was characterised by:

- careful reading of the rubric
- listening to the whole rather than honing in on individual items of vocabulary
- recognising the use of negation
- attention to detail, giving full rather than partial answers
- good knowledge of vocabulary
- expressing themselves clearly and unambiguously when writing in English and relating their answers to facts in the extract
- applying logic
- reading over and correcting their answers.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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