



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In French (1FR0)

Paper 3H: Reading and Understanding in French

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2025

Publications Code 1FR0_3H_2506_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

Introduction

The Higher Tier French Reading Unit was worth a total of 50 marks and consisted of three sections: A, B, and C. Section A (Questions 1–6) was set in English and required candidates to respond in English to demonstrate their understanding of French texts. Section B (Questions 7–9) was set in French, requiring responses in French. Section C (Question 10) involved a translation of approximately 50 words from French into English. Candidates had one hour to complete the paper.

The questions were designed to assess a wide range of reading skills, including comprehension of authentic and adapted texts, recognition of key vocabulary and structures, inference, and the ability to identify and manipulate relevant information. The demand increased progressively through the paper, with later questions targeting the highest grades (up to grade 9). A secure knowledge of vocabulary from the full specification, particularly the Higher Tier word list, was essential for success.

In particular, candidates needed to demonstrate the ability to:

- Understand a variety of text types, including literary and non-fiction.
- Accurately extract key information and respond clearly in English or French.
- Identify synonyms, grammatical structures, and contextual clues.
- Translate accurately with attention to tense, meaning, and natural English phrasing.

Question 1

Target grade: 4

Candidates were asked to respond in English to three questions based on a short text about school rules. Full sentence responses were not required.

Part (a) was generally well answered, with “respect teachers” being a common and valid response. Answers such as “homework” were not credited unless accompanied by a suitable verb (e.g. “do” or “complete homework”).

Part (b) required recognition of the words “bijoux” or “maquillage” and was generally well handled. However, candidates who wrote specific examples (e.g. “earrings,” “mascara”) were not credited. Some candidates relied on their own school context, offering incorrect answers such as “hoodies,” “headphones,” or “short skirts.”

Part (c) was less well answered, with many responses limited to the single word “uniform.” A successful answer required the use of a verb, such as “wear uniform.” The word “moche” was frequently misunderstood, which led to lost marks.

A secure knowledge of core vocabulary was essential for success in this question.

Question 2

Target grades: 5–6 Candidates read a short literary passage and answered four comprehension questions in English. Full sentence responses were not required. This question proved challenging for many, with a significant number of candidates scoring few or no marks. Some correctly identified that “Mahmed protected Tahar from a group of horrible boys” but then invalidated their response by adding inaccurate details such as “in school.”

In Part (b), confusion arose between Mahmed’s and Tahar’s locations, with responses such as “in the north of the town” or “near the sea” referring incorrectly to Tahar.

In Part (c), most candidates did not recognise the word “goûter.” Acceptable responses such as “tea” or “snack” were rare.

Part (d) required use of the past tense. Acceptable answers included “The bread came

from a Spanish bakery" or "His mother's bread was not as good." Incorrect tenses or misinterpretation of the phrase resulted in lost marks.

Question 3

Target grades: 5–6

Candidates read a magazine article about a training course for cyclists and answered comprehension questions in English. Full sentence answers were not required.

In Parts (a) and (e), confusion between "temps" as "time" or "weather" and "temperature" led to incorrect answers.

Part (b) was less well answered, as it required a very specific response. In Part (c), some candidates confused "repairing a bike" with "riding a bike," possibly due to associating the task with a PE teacher.

Part (d) was mostly answered well, although some responses such as "two weeks" or "twice a week" did not address the correct question ("how often"). Others misinterpreted the timing by answering "March and April."

Most candidates handled Part (e) well, though there were still instances of guesswork. This question highlighted the importance of reading the question carefully and providing precise answers.

Question 4

Target grades: 6–7

Candidates read a short literary text set in a dance school and selected correct responses from four multiple-choice options for each of five questions.

This question was generally well answered by candidates working at the appropriate level. Parts (i) to (iii) were tackled with confidence, though some misinterpreted "il a plu" and chose the wrong type of weather for Part (i).

Parts (iv) and (v) were more challenging. In Part (iv), many candidates selected option A ("is sitting down") after recognising the word "chaise," without considering the full context of the sentence.

Vocabulary and inference skills were key to high performance in this question.

Question 5

Target grades: 6–7

Candidates read an article about helping others. Parts (a) to (d) required them to select the correct person from four options (multiple-choice format). Parts (e) and (f) required short answers in English.

This question was generally well handled. Many candidates achieved full marks for the multiple-choice section. This format tends to favour more secure candidates.

Part (e), targeting the phrase "ils ont dû annuler la vente," was poorly answered by many. Common incorrect responses included "it was a success," sometimes repeated in Part (f). The failure to recognise the use of "annuler" cost candidates' marks.

In Part (f), many struggled with the word "quinze." Some candidates attempted to work it out by writing out French numbers beneath their answers but often mistranslated it. There was also confusion between "gens" and "jeunes."

Only candidates who provided the precise answers listed in the mark scheme were

awarded marks. Thorough knowledge of Higher Tier vocabulary and precise comprehension were essential.

Question 6

Target grade: 9

Candidates read an article about French towns. In Part (i), they identified the three correct statements from a list of seven. Parts (ii) and (iii) required written responses in English. Full sentences were not required.

The multiple-choice section in Part (i) was completed successfully by many candidates. However, Parts (ii) and (iii) were more demanding and required a detailed understanding of the text. Only candidates performing at the top end of the grade range were able to access full marks on these questions.

Question 7

Target grade: 4

Candidates read a blog about a birthday and answered five multiple-choice questions. This question was accessible to most candidates. Stronger candidates were able to use their knowledge of synonyms (e.g., "chez moi" and "à sa maison"), time phrases, and logical deduction to eliminate distractors and choose correct answers.

Part (iv) posed a challenge for some candidates, particularly those who did not recognise the connection between "bijoux," "une bague," and "un collier."

Question 8

Target grade: 5

Candidates read four short texts about ambitions and completed French gap-fill sentences using the name of the correct person.

This question proved demanding for many candidates, particularly those working at the lower end of the Higher Tier.

Successful candidates demonstrated the ability to draw inferences and identify synonymous expressions, such as linking "aime les vacances d'hiver" with "adore faire du ski."

Precise reading and inference skills were key to achieving marks.

Question 9

Target grades: 8–9

This question was based on an adapted authentic text about a keen Canadian linguist. Candidates were asked to write short answers in French. Full sentences were not required.

Many candidates demonstrated a strong ability to either reword responses or produce accurate targeted lifts from the text.

- Part (a) was generally well answered, although omission of key details such as "YouTube" or "online" resulted in lost marks.
- In Part (b), candidates who could not recall "son" still offered creative paraphrasing, e.g., "il dit 'mon rêve est d'avoir une carrière internationale.'"
- Part (c) was widely successful, with most identifying that his grandparents and father

spoke German.

- Part (d) was also well answered through a straightforward lift: "il a gagné un concours mondial en Chine."
- In Part (e), many candidates successfully lifted the final sentence of the text for full marks.

Question 10

Translation Task Target grades: 5-9

In this task, candidates translated a 50-word French passage into English.

Only the highest-performing candidates achieved full marks. A small number left this question blank or attempted only partial translations.

The verb "se reposer" and the adverb "plutôt" were widely misunderstood, with the latter leading to issues with both meaning and tense.

Sentence 2 was generally well translated, with "l'année prochaine" understood by most. However, "formation de journaliste" was frequently mistranslated as "become a journalist" or "do journalism," and "rêver" was often incorrectly interpreted as "used to want to." The final sentence was mostly well handled, although some candidates used an incorrect tense or misinterpreted "plutôt."

Careful checking, especially of tense and overall sense, was essential. Candidates should be taught to read their translations through to ensure they are both grammatically correct and idiomatic in English.

Strong candidate performance was characterised by:

- Careful reading of rubrics and questions
- Secure knowledge of vocabulary, including from the Higher Tier list
- Awareness of negation and a range of grammatical structures
- Strong command of English, aiding comprehension and synonym recognition
- Attention to detail, particularly in written responses
- Accurate and unambiguous answers directly linked to the text
- Logical inference from implied meaning
- Proofreading and self-correction of responses

