



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in French Reading Foundation Tier (1FR03F)

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Introduction

The unit was worth 50 marks and was divided into three sections, A, B and C. The first six questions comprising Section A were set in English. Questions 7 to 9 (Section B) were set in French. Section C was a 40-word translation from French into English. Candidates had 45 minutes in which to complete their answers.

Question 1

In this question, candidates were asked to read five short statements and then decide which person had written the six statements below the statements by writing the person's name on a line.

The question, targeted at grade 1 and required candidates to recognise single words/short phrases. There were no obvious distractors. The vast majority of candidates performed well on this question. Familiarity with vocabulary from the list in the specification was essential for success on this task.

Question 2

This question, aimed at grade 2 required candidates to recognise single words/short phrases in an advert for a new restaurant and place them in a gap-fill sentence in English, choosing from 11 words (6 distractors) in a box. Most candidates succeeded well with this task. However, a small number of candidates filled in multiple answers for some parts in which instance, the first answer written was the one taken. There were also some examples of candidates who filled in their own words rather than selecting from those provided. It is important that candidates are familiar with the task type to succeed at this question.

Question 3

This question targeted candidates at grades 2 and 3. Candidates were required to read a report about voluntary work and answer questions in English. Full sentences were not required.

The two parts of this question targeting grade 2 were 3 (a) (i) and 3 (b) (i). 3(a) (i) which required candidates to recognise "dix-huit mois" was surprisingly badly tackled with just over half of candidates producing the correct response. There were a variety of other answers, common incorrect ones being since he was 18, 18 years and a range of other numbers instead of 18.

"Pendant les vacances" (3aii) was also not widely known with many candidates failing to obtain a mark for this part of the question.

Very few candidates knew "de bonne humeur", although many gained the mark by the other possible answer "intelligent".

3 (b) (i) was well done by most but 3 (b) (ii) proved inaccessible to all but the best performers in this paper. Many were fooled by "la nourriture", assuming this to be the correct answer rather than reading the sentence carefully.

Knowledge of basic numbers and vocabulary contained in the list meant that many candidates lost marks on this question.

Question 4

In this question, Candidates had to read a short extract from a literary text set in a school and then to select the correct response from four possible responses for the five questions about the text.

The vast majority of candidates performed well on part (i) of this question. The remaining parts of the question were accessible to around 60% of entrants. Once again, lack of familiarity with basic vocabulary such as days of the week, times of day and basic nouns and adjectives lost candidates marks.

Question 5

This question was targeted at grade 4 candidates. Candidates were asked to answer three questions in English about Grandfathers' day. Full sentences were not required.

Only one third of candidates were able to answer part (a) successfully, providing the full answer of "the first Sunday in October". Others gave answers which were less specific (e.g. Sunday in October) and failed to gain the mark. Candidates fared marginally better on (b) with the word fête often mistranslated in this context as party or fair. Part (c) was generally well done with candidates often giving both possible correct answers (to advertise the event/to show the importance of family). There was, however, some misinterpretation with answers such as "his family is important to him" scoring zero.

Knowledge of basic vocabulary from the list in the specification was important for success on this question.

Question 6

For this question, candidates had to read a short extract from a literary text and answer four questions about it in English. Full sentences were not required.

Part (a) of this question was well done with around 60% of candidates able to provide the correct answer "beach". A similar number were successful in part (b), although there was sometimes confusion about who spoke which language and answers such as "the children spoke her language" or "they spoke the same language" were given zero. Part (c) required candidates to provide the answer "Oriane is/was shy" Alternative pronouns accepted were she/he. "They were too shy" was not accepted because of potential ambiguity (this answer could mean that the children were too shy). Only around half of candidates were successful with part (c). For part (d), the required answer was "twins", targeting the word "jumelles". This was not widely known and was very often mistranslated "cousins".

Question 7

This question, which was targeted at grades 3-5 required candidates to read an advert about an interesting event and complete five gap-fill sentences in French, selecting five words from eleven in a box.

Candidates always find this question type very difficult and many wrote answers which were simply guesses. Others copied words from the text to fill the gaps in the sentences rather than using the ones provided in the box. Lack of practice of this test type may have been a factor in the very poor performance of some candidates. It is important for candidates to be taught skills such as recognising where a plural might be needed in a gap-fill sentence to enable them to eliminate some of the possible words.

Question 8

Candidates were asked to read an article about a young footballer. All five parts (i) to (v) required candidates to select the correct response from four possible answers.

This question which was aimed at grade 4 was not well tackled by candidates with part (iv) the only part which many found to be accessible. The skills required in this question included the ability to recognise synonyms (eg "une région agricole/à la campagne) and time frames as well as to infer meaning. Candidates found part (ii) the most challenging, perhaps because of the inability to recognise the synonyms "ados" and "jeunes".

Question 9

This question aimed at grade 5 was generally well tackled by candidates at Foundation Tier. Candidates were asked to read four short texts about ambitions and complete gap-fill sentences in French with the name of the correct person.

Part (b) of the question was unknown to many as it involved candidates reading and understanding two consecutive sentences to draw the conclusion that Claudine "..... a change d'avis sur son futur emploi". Most candidates who scored higher marks on the paper fared well in the other four parts of the question.

Question 10

In this question, candidates needed to translate a continuous piece of text 40 words in length from French into English.

Very few candidates, apart from the best performers on this paper, achieved the full 7 marks available in the translation. There were some candidates who did not attempt the translation.

On the whole, the first sentence of the translation aimed at grade 1 was translated accurately. In the second sentence, a surprisingly large number of candidates were unfamiliar with the word "frère", translating it as "father". The word "d'habitude" in sentence 3, also presented problems for many, with a common incorrect translation being "Where I live", perhaps linking the word with "habiter".

The third sentence aimed at grade 3 was generally quite accurately translated although a few candidates did not know the words "cependant" or "vélo".

Some candidates recognised the past tense in the fourth sentence aimed at grade 4, but a good number did not succeed at all in translating the final sentence accurately. "Économiser de l'argent" proved very challenging for all but the highest performers on this paper with some inventive translations such as "my parents are economy agents".

Candidates should be taught to carefully check their translations, particularly looking at tenses as many lost marks because of attention to detail. Lack of knowledge of vocabulary from the Foundation Tier vocabulary list in the specification meant that some candidates lost marks.

The performance of better candidates was characterised by:

- careful reading of the rubric and questions
- good knowledge of vocabulary from the list in the specification
- recognising the use of negation
- a good command of English giving them the ability to recognise synonyms
- attention to detail, giving full rather than partial answers in the questions requiring written answers in English
- expressing themselves clearly and unambiguously when writing in English and relating their answers to facts in the text
- drawing logical conclusions from inferred statements
- reading over and correcting their answers