

# **GCSE French (2024): Unpacking the Writing Exam**

Examiner  
Commentaries

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## Foundation Tier Question 1

Response to stimulus (AO2): 7 out of 8 marks		
(a)	Relevant information has been clearly communicated in a sentence.	<b>2 marks</b>
(b)	Despite inaccuracies (i.e. wrong gender and missing accent of ' <i>la pere</i> ' in the second sentence), communication of a relevant aspect of the image is achieved.	<b>2 marks</b>
(c)	There is repetition of sentence structure which is acceptable. Despite small errors in accuracy (e.g. missing accents), the response clearly communicates relevant information about the image.	<b>2 marks</b>
(d)	The missing ' <i>a</i> ' after ' <i>il y</i> ' together with the misspelling of ' <i>soeurs</i> ' means that there is ambiguity and relevant information is only partially communicated.	<b>1 mark</b>



## Foundation Tier Question 2

Total marks: 8 out of 14	
AO2: Response to stimulus Marks: 5 out of 9	AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy Marks: 3 out of 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two or more bullet points are <b>addressed</b>. The third bullet point is not clearly addressed because of the language used, which sounds like they are talking about a weekend in the past rather than the future. For coverage, the response can be placed in the 4–6 mark band.</li> <li>There is limited <b>development</b> of ideas which are relevant in the context. Some appropriate detail is given about the phone (it's big and green with too many apps) and opinions of it are developed by including additional adjectives (it's interesting and important). The final bullet point is not developed as it simply states how the student will use the phone (to play with friends) but no additional detail is given. For development, a score in the 4–6 mark band is fitting.</li> <li>The first two bullet points are <b>comprehensible</b> (although the use of '<i>trop (apps)</i>' is a little confusing). However the confusion of timeframes ('<i>pour le weekend je suis alle</i>') makes the final section unclear; it is uncertain whether the student is talking about what they will do at the weekend or what they did at the weekend. It also takes a while to understand that the student is trying to express that they are going to play with their friends in the phrase '<i>tu joue avec mes amis</i>'. For overall comprehensibility, the response is placed in the 4–6 mark band.</li> </ul> <p>The best-fit approach means that a mark of 5 is appropriate for Response to stimulus. All three aspects reach the 4–6 mark band, which means the middle mark is appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response contains a limited variety of <b>vocabulary and phrases</b>. The section from '<i>Mon portable il est grande</i>' to '<i>important pour moi</i>' is quite good from the point of view of vocabulary. A series of adjectives help give a sound description of the phone e.g. '<i>cher</i>', '<i>grande</i>', '<i>vert</i>'. '<i>Tout compte fait</i>' is a useful phrase for which the student receives equal (but not extra) credit, since it is outside of the vocabulary list. For vocabulary, the piece merits a mark at the top of the 3–4 mark band.</li> <li><b>Grammatical structures</b> are quite simple and limited but there are some linked sentences using the simple conjunction '<i>et</i>' and phrases such as '<i>pour commence</i>' and '<i>Pour le weekend</i>'. For variety of grammatical structures, the response is placed in the 3–4 mark band.</li> <li>For most of the piece there is limited <b>accurate</b> language with mostly minor errors such as missing accents. There is an incorrect choice of word in '<i>commence</i>' which causes a delay in understanding. The major error in timeframes at the end is accounted for under Response to stimulus. For accuracy, the response is placed in the 3–4 mark band.</li> </ul> <p>The best-fit approach means that for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy, the response achieves a mark of 3. This is because the variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, as well as overall accuracy fits clearly within the description of 'limited' and is closer to the lower band descriptors rather than the band above.</p>



# Foundation Tier Question 3/ Higher Tier

## Question 1

Total marks: 15 out of 18	
AO2: Response to stimulus Marks: 10 out of 13	AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy Marks: 5 out of 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three out of the four bullet points have been <b>addressed</b>. The student has not answered them in order of the question but this is perfectly acceptable. They have mentioned some different shops, what they have recently bought and where they are next going shopping. However, the candidate has not given an opinion on one particular shop but rather on shopping in general, so unfortunately this bullet point is not addressed. For coverage, the response is placed in the 8–10 mark band, since the response to the task is not complete.</li> <li>There is frequent <b>development</b> of relevant ideas. Local shopping possibilities are well developed, along with personal opinions and feelings and thoughts about shopping, e.g. <i>'je suis tellement excitée'</i>. A little detail is given about a recent purchase. Since one of the bullet points is not addressed there is no opportunity to develop that particular point, but for the amount of development overall in the other points the 11–13 mark band is fitting.</li> <li>The response is <b>generally comprehensible</b> and clear, but some sentences cause a delay in understanding. The inclusion of the English word <i>'types'</i> is not correct in this context but does not impact clarity of the message. The response falls in the 8–10 mark band for comprehensibility.</li> </ul> <p>The best fit approach leads to a score of 10 for Response to stimulus. Since for two out of the three aspects the response fits the 8–10 mark band, and one aspect falls in the 11–13 mark band, a mark at the top of the 8–10 mark band is appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate uses some <b>variety</b> of appropriate <b>vocabulary and grammatical structures</b> with some extended sentences which flow naturally, as in the opening remarks. Words outside of the vocabulary list are given equal (but not extra) credit for variety e.g. <i>'se déstresser'</i> and <i>'tellement excitée'</i>. There is some <b>complex language</b> e.g. <i>'donc j'y vais fréquemment'</i>. There are also some good linkages such as, <i>'donc'</i>, <i>'A mon avis'</i>, <i>'Récemment'</i>, and <i>'par exemple'</i> (note that accuracy of spelling and accents is covered under the accuracy of language aspect). For vocabulary and structures the piece merits being placed in mark band 5.</li> <li>Use of <b>timeframes</b> is generally successful, with examples of past, present and future timeframes. To convey the future, the candidate uses a present tense, which in the context is sufficient. For timeframes, the response can be placed in mark band 5.</li> <li>The language displayed in this response is very <b>accurate</b>. Errors are mostly minor ones and misspellings which don't impact on understanding e.g. <i>'fair'</i>, <i>'facon'</i>, <i>'exemple'</i> etc. For accuracy, the response is best placed in mark band 5.</li> </ul> <p>The best-fit approach means that the candidate is awarded a mark of 5 for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy, since there is no justification of placing it in a lower mark band.</p>





## Higher Tier Question 2 – AO2

Total marks: 16 out of 22

AO2: Response to stimulus

Marks: 13 out of 17

- All four bullet points are **addressed**. The student gives clear information for each point. For coverage, the response could fall into either the 11–13 or 14–17 band, depending on how the response meets the other two aspects.
- There is frequent **development** of ideas. Some sensible, varied thoughts are put forward for an ideal school. It is established that there is a lot of competition in a single-sex school, and it is stated that this causes stress. Some straightforward detail is given about a past event. Future plans are discussed with some foreboding with development about what this might entail. For development, the response falls into the 11–13 mark band.
- The response is **comprehensible** with most messages coming across, though some words and expressions make the occasional message difficult to follow immediately. In the first paragraph the reference to modern amenities is not immediately understandable (*'J'imaginerai un école avec les technologiques modernes'*). Although we understand that competitiveness is stressful, there is some lack of clarity in the phrase *'pas bon pour la mentale'* (the student possibly meant to say *mentalité*). The last two paragraphs are easy to comprehend with the exception of the final comment *'c'est un peu inquiète que c'est l'année prochaine'* which is a little jarring because of the use of *'inquiète'*, which is accounted for under AO3. For comprehensibility the piece falls into the 11–13 mark band.

The best-fit approach results in this essay being placed at the top of the 11–13 mark band for Response to stimulus with a mark of 13. There is the occasional message which is not immediately clear and the third paragraph could have been a bit better developed. However, the coverage and development are generally sound.



## Higher Tier Question 2 – AO3

Total marks: 16 out of 22

AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy

Marks: 3 out of 5

- There is a wide **variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures** which is appropriate for the school context, such as '*profs*', '*élèves*', '*salles de classe*', etc. Some more general lexis is also well deployed, such as '*endroits verts*', '*uniquement*', and '*théâtre*'. Words outside of the vocabulary list such as '*stressant*' are given equal (but not extra) credit. There are some good linkages in '*A mon avis*', '*La semaine dernière*', '*A l'avenir*', and '*Cependant*'. There are some extended sentences with subordination and some complex language appropriate to higher tier. The use of '*depuis*' plus a time expression with the present tense, which is entirely apt in the context, is particularly impressive, as is the intention to use a construction with '*après ... avoir*'. '*J'espère*' is also well used. For variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, the piece is placed in the 4–5 mark band.
- For use of **timeframes**, there is general success with timeframes. The present timeframe is quite well used to describe an ideal school and to suggest pros and cons, although the future tense in the first paragraph is out of place. Success in using the past timeframe is evident in the use of '*nous sommes allés*' and '*on a vu*'. The success is not quite consistent enough to reach the 4–5 mark band, and as such, the most appropriate band is the 2–3 mark band for this aspect.
- The language is generally **accurate** but there are quite a few errors, both major and minor e.g. '*inquiète*', along with other misspellings and missing accents e.g. '*théatre*'. Several genders and agreements are incorrect. Verb forms are mostly accurate but are spoilt in a couple of cases by the use of an infinitive instead of a past participle e.g. '*j'ai faire*', '*après ... avoir finir*' and in one case a verb is omitted '*qui peuvent très égoïstes*'. The future and conditional tenses are well formed and the agreement of the past participle after a verb conjugated with '*être*' is particularly noteworthy. The 2–3 mark band is most appropriate for accuracy of language.

The best-fit approach results in the response achieving a mark of 3 for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy. This is because for two out of the three aspects the response falls into the 2–3 mark band. The variety of language used pulls the mark up to the top of the band.



## Foundation Tier Translation Question 4

Total marks: 7 out of 10	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 4 out of 6 marks	Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 3 out of 4 marks
The meaning of some parts of the original language is appropriately transferred but sometimes the message breaks down due to untranslated parts. We see this in (d), where 'every evening' is not translated, and (e) where the meaning breaks down (i.e. 'se bon travail....un bien').	Grammatical structures and vocabulary are sometimes accurate, but become increasingly less accurate as the demand increases. Examples of major errors include the incorrect verb form in 'j'apprendre', and the use of 'je' instead of j'ai in (d). There are some minor errors such as misspellings or missing accents (e.g. 'ecole', 'beacoup'). Untranslated parts of the response are accounted for under the Response to stimulus (AO2) mark.





## Higher Tier Translation Question 3

Total marks: 6 out of 10 marks	
Response to stimulus (AO2): 4 out of 6 marks	Linguistic knowledge and accuracy (AO3): 2 out of 4 marks
The meaning of most parts of the original language is appropriately transferred. Unfortunately, parts of the last sentence have been left untranslated such as ' <i>in future</i> ', and the phrase ' <i>car c'est musique ... et mois</i> ' results in some lack of clarity.	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are sometimes accurate. Errors include both minor errors such as incorrect accents and misspellings e.g. ' <i>le mois derniere</i> ', ' <i>en villé</i> ' etc., and more major errors such as the incorrect verb followed by a missing article in the phrase ' <i>je voudrais joue instrument</i> '.