



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International A Level

In French (WFR04)

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Again, this year, most candidates were familiar with the topic areas covered and were able to attempt all parts of the paper. Whilst many fared well with the comprehension questions in Sections A and B, Question 8 (Grammar manipulation) and Section C provided more of a challenge for some. However, it is pleasing to see again this year that a larger number of candidates produced essays that were more in line with the expectations of the task. There were many essays that were of very high standards.

Section A – Listening

Questions 1 and 2: Multiple Choice

Candidates were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the sub-topic of *the environment* and Question 2 from *family life*

In question 1, (1 a) appeared to be more of a challenge for the candidates, with many failing to choose B as their answer. A careful listening of *Mon patron se rend au travail à vélo une ou deux fois par semaine* should have helped the candidates decide on the correct answer, excluding A(une) and D (deux)

In question 2, (2d) proved to be the most challenging for a good number of the candidates who failed to identify the answer *ouverts d'esprit* from the transcript *Mes enfants adolescents sont toujours prêts à partager ce qu'ils possèdent et à aider les autres.*

Advice to candidates:

It is vital that candidates do not rush into committing themselves to an answer. At this level, they should listen for the gist of the whole passage; a word which is mentioned in the recording does not necessarily lead them to the answer in the question paper. It is important that the listen carefully to each sentence to exclude the wrong answers.

Question 3: Summary completion.

Candidates were required to complete a summary, choosing from a list of eight words or phrases. There was a mixture of word types. Question 3 was taken from the topic of society and customs, and candidates listened to a text about the Lemon festival in Menton, in the South of France.

This question was generally well answered with (3b) providing the most challenge for candidates, failing to choose answering *hivernale* to describe the festival, from of *Cette fête a-t-elle lieu en été ? Non, au contraire !*

Question 4: Short Answer in French.

This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the topic of *Music*.

In this section, as in section B, listening skills and reading skills only are assessed, which means that sentences that contain grammatical and spelling errors can score, as long as the error does not lead to ambiguity. Responses to Questions 4, 6 and 7 are only marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language.

Advice to candidates:

Here, as in Section B, targeted lifts are sometimes possible. It is important for candidates to know that they can re-use the language they hear but at this level direct lifts will usually not enable candidates to score. Candidates need to manipulate the language they hear or read. Candidates should try to use their own words as much as possible to render the meaning. However, while it is possible to convey the meaning by using their own words when the information is very technical or specific, candidates should manipulate the language they hear instead of writing incoherent circumlocutions.

Performance in question 4

4a; it was essential to convey the meaning of telling people/ encouraging people to score. Only mentioning that he was talking of his previous '*échecs*' was not enough.

4d; candidates were required to mention that the people were happy because they hadn't seen Tiken Jah in concert for a long time.

Advice to candidates:

Some candidates were tempted to write far too much in their answers. Reference to the published mark scheme will show the essence of each answer. Longer answers can often miss the point or may start with a wrong detail before eventually giving the correct answer which is therefore negated by what has come first.

When two answers are required, candidates must ensure that the two answers are different.

It is also important that candidates check that their answers meet the requirements of the questions. Candidates need to ask themselves if the answers work with the questions or whether there is some ambiguity.

Section B – Reading and Grammar

Question 5: Multiple Choice Questions

Candidates were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the topic of *Jobs and Unemployment*.

5a and 5c proved to be the most challenging whilst **5b** and **5b** were generally well answered.

Question 6: Short Answer in French

Question 6 was taken from the sub-topic of *Lifestyle, health and fitness*.

Candidates were not penalised for using the wrong pronoun when referring to Stéphane.

Question **6c** appeared to be a challenge for many candidates who didn't manipulate the text *Avant de se lancer dans le « Défi fast-food », certains amis avaient prévenu David que **ce défi lui couperait l'envie d'essayer de nouveaux plats sains**. En outre, les mêmes amis avaient même osé lui suggérer que **sa qualité de sommeil serait moins prononcée** une fois qu'il aurait arrêté de manger du fast-food. Quelle idée ! David leur a annoncé, après avoir totalement arrêté de manger du fast-food pendant seulement quelques jours, **qu'ils avaient eu complètement tort dans leurs prédictions**.*

The two answers were to be worked out from the sections in bold, with the last one being essential. Candidates were to convey the opposite messages. Unfortunately, many failed to manipulate successfully the text.

Question 7: Short Answer in French

Question 7 was taken from the sub-topic of Technology

Specific and detailed understanding of the text was necessary to gain the marks.

In **7a** it was important to say that Dina was proud because her country was the first one in the world to have a 3D printed school. Writing that her country had created a 3D printed school was not enough. Candidates didn't score either if they wrote '*cette innovation*'.

In **7b** candidates were expected to write that her country was stable, having manipulated *il ne leur était pas question de choisir un pays qui ait un régime politique instable*.

Advice to candidates:

When answering question 4,6 and 7, simple language structures tended to be the most successful.

Ensure that the response meets the demands of the question.

Question 8: Sentence transformations:

Candidates were required to manipulate the sentences given to them using the information in brackets. It is essential that candidates refer to the texts from which the language has been taken as the manipulated sentences **need to make sense and be grammatically correct** back in their original context. Therefore, tenses are a crucial aspect to bear in mind when manipulating verbs.

It is to be noted that in this question, spelling mistakes are ignored as long as they do not cause ambiguity and they do not interfere with the required grammar manipulations. Please refer to the published mark scheme to see the grammar focus of each sentence. Examiners focus on the grammar focus being tested and disregard any 'surrounding' spelling mistakes. For instance in **8a** *fatigantes* was the expected answer, requiring the candidates to produce a feminine plural adjective; *fatigantes* was also accepted. Similarly, in **8j**, *débarasser/ debarasser* were also accepted for *débarrasser*.

It is also crucial that candidates manipulate the given words. Sentences are written to test a particular grammar point and for fairness to all, only the words used in the sentence are expected to be manipulated. For instance, in **8e**, the verb *situer* was to be changed, *from est située to se situe*.

Advice to candidates:

The manipulated sentences need to make sense and be grammatically correct if put back in the original texts.

Section C

It is crucial that candidates understand the nature of what is expected in the final essay. Since marks are awarded for Content and Communication (out of 15) and Critical analysis, Organisation and Development (out of 20) as well as for Quality of Language (out of 5), it is vital that some examination time is spent planning the response to the **specific** question asked.

Many candidates who wrote fluent essays in French of a very high quality often scored highly for Quality of Language, but scored low marks for the other two categories because **their response lacked relevance or were simply a regurgitated version of everything they knew** about the topic or work. It is essential that candidates select carefully what information they are going to use to answer the question. Not everything they know about the historic period they have studied, the geographical area, the film or the book will be needed to answer the question. Evidence needs to be **relevant**.

Most importantly, candidates should realise that the thrust of the questions is **mostly in the second part**. To access the higher mark bands, they must engage in **an analysis** of the issues. Essays which relied too much on description and less on evaluation scored poorly.

Centres must also be reminded that the geographical area and the historic period must be in a **French-speaking country**. In line with GCE and with other languages at International A Level, such essays could not be credited with any marks and unfortunately scored 0. Unfortunately, again this year, handful of essays scored 0.

Advice to candidates:

Candidates must carefully select the information they are going to use to answer the question. Not everything they know will be needed to answer the question.

Candidates should realise that the thrust of the questions set is mostly in the second part of the question, inviting them to produce an analytical response.

History and Geography essays must be rooted in the French-speaking world.

Questions 9(a),(b) and 10 (a),(b)

The History questions were answered by about 20 % of the candidates with **9a and 10a** being the most popular. **10a** was the most popular question in Section C.

The predominant areas of study were *la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, la Révolution française et Mai 68*. Many of the essays were full of relevant information and managed to present facts to support general ideas. However, a number of essays tended to rely on vague generalisations rather than providing detailed evidence and candidates regurgitated all they knew about the Second World War / the French Revolution.

Advice to candidates:

Candidates need to know that it is not necessary to introduce the essay with a long preamble about the period/ the area or with general information about the genesis of the work. Better candidates provided an opening paragraph which identified the issues to be addressed in the essay with direct reference to the essay question set.

Literature and film- Questions 11- 20

The most common text studied was *Kiffe kiffe demain*, being the second most popular question in Section C.

The most common film was by far *Monsieur Lazhar*.

As for the History and Geography essays, it is essential that the candidates focus on ~~the~~ analysis and refrain from retelling the story. The least successful essays tended again to contain a great deal of irrelevant material or were simply a regurgitated version of everything candidates knew about the book or the film. It is essential that candidates select carefully what information they are going to use to answer the question. Also, as the candidates write their answers, they must ask themselves whether the information they are providing is answering the question. It was indeed, often, impossible from reading the essays to know what the essay question was, as candidates tended to lose focus and use too much irrelevant information.

However, it was pleasing to see that again this year that a greater number of candidates were able to produce essays with better analysis, focusing on the second part of the question, scoring very high marks.

Advice to candidates:

The best essays were in clear paragraph form with a main sentence to introduce the paragraph, followed by several examples. A final evaluative sentence then often referred back to the essay title in some way.

