



GCSE

FRENCH

8658/RF Reading Foundation tier
Report on the Examination

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General comments

The paper proved to be accessible for the vast majority of students. Many were able to gain some marks for each question, though negative expressions, as always, continue to prove challenging. There were very few questions, apart from question 13, which were not attempted by nearly all students; this may suggest that some did not leave sufficient time to complete Section B, having been advised perhaps to start on Section C. Students' answers were generally clear, though some were difficult to read due to untidy handwriting.

Section A

Question 1

Question 01.1 was the least successfully answered in this section (64.4% correct), with *les chansons* not always known. Question 01.2 was correctly answered by the majority of students (76.2%). Question 01.3 was by far the most successfully answered part (88.7% correct), with *animé* and *jeunes* recognised.

Question 2

Questions 02.1 – 02.3 were very well done by the majority of students, though many struggled with question 02.4 where *des promenades* was not recognised and led to some guessing.

Question 3

The vast majority of students (88.6%) gained the two marks available in question 03.1. Most scored at least one mark in question 03.2, though many incorrectly chose B because the negative was not noticed.

Question 4

All parts of this question were answered well except for 04.4 where once again many failed to see the negative verb in *mes parents ne me donnent pas assez de liberté*.

Question 5

Here the advantage part of 05.1 (to reduce stress) was well done, although some guesses such as “keeps you healthy” did appear. In the risk column the reference to intense exercise was sometimes omitted. In 05.2, there were some vague answers such as “it’s good meeting friends” which failed to score. Here the risk section was better answered, with many correct references to neglecting studies or schoolwork.

Question 6

In 06.1, many students failed to score the two marks on offer by writing “young” and also a frequent answer was “gentle” rather than “kind”, though many understood *égoïste*. A correct rendition of *habile* was rarely seen. Because of the *ne...que* construction in 06.2, a minority felt that the mother had no ambitions. Otherwise, there were many correct answers here. The pronoun *lui* was often seen as a person in 06.3, leading to answers such as “she didn’t want to marry Lui”. Otherwise this was very well answered, with many students (65.7%) scoring both marks. In 06.4,

s'entendait bien was not widely recognised and led to answers about Marc being good with Chiffon; but most gained a mark for Marc's interest in photography. A final point on this question: those who were worried about the use of literary texts will be pleased to learn that there were some high scores on this question, with the vast majority of students gaining some credit.

Question 7

Pleasingly, the vast majority of students scored at least two marks in this three-mark question, with just over 60% gaining all of the marks available.

Question 8

Parts 08.1 and 08.2 were answered well, but fewer students gained marks for 08.3 where *pas pendant les vacances scolaires* was not picked up. In a similar way, C was sometimes chosen in 08.4 because *quarante* appears in the text but *dans de petits groupes* was not taken into account.

Section B

Question 9

There was a very good success rate in this section with 09.3 slightly less well done because a small number of students did not link *pain* to *boulangerie*.

Question 10

10.1 was very well answered (82% correct). 10.2 was less successfully answered (just under 50% correct), though *utilisent leur vrai nom* could have been linked to *utilisent leur vraie identité* in the passage. Many students struggled in 10.3 where A (*très peu d'amis*) was often wrongly chosen suggesting the vocabulary here is not well known.

Question 11

Pleasingly, all parts of this section were answered very well.

Question 12

Unlike the literary text in section A, where there were many successful answers, students clearly had more difficulty with this text. In 12.1 *aîné* was not understood, leading to many wrong answers (only 30% of students gained the mark). 12.2 was better answered (51.4% correct). The phrase in 12.3 about *deux frères* confused some students, with many thinking this was true. The least well answered part was 12.4 (25.6% correct) where the past tense was not noted (*Julien a déjà trouvé un nouveau poste*). *Il voudrait chercher un nouveau poste* implies he has not yet found a new job, whereas many took this to be true.

Question 13

13.1 was generally not well answered (only 33.8% correct) and many students (15.7%) did not attempt the question, which may have something to do with time management. A frequent wrong answer was *réutilisables*. 13.2 was poorly answered since it was often interpreted as a need to list different means of public transport. 13.3% of students did manage to come up with the correct response. 13.3 was generally well done with many accurate answers (64% correct). In 13.4, *nos activités de jardinage* was often seen with no reference to collecting rain water. *Il pleut* is widely

recognised, but not *la pluie*. The correct answer was only very rarely seen (less than 6% of students), and many students (15.4%) made no attempt.

Section C – Translation

This question discriminated very well. The nine sections of the translation demonstrated a wide range of answers; pleasingly, more than 60% of students scored at least four marks out of the nine available. It should be stressed, however, that precision is necessary in successfully completing these tasks. Details such as tenses and pronouns must be conveyed fully in English.

Paraphrasing is to be avoided and students should follow the original text closely. For example, in the sentence *je suis allé aux magasins où j'ai acheté un cadeau*, the past tenses, the connective *où* and the plural form *magasins* must all be translated. An answer such as “I went to the shop and I bought a present” would gain no marks.

Section 1:

Je déteste was nearly always correctly translated.

Section 2:

Many students failed to translate *nouveau* and therefore failed to gain the mark.

Section 3:

The past tense was needed here and *compris* was often taken to mean compromise.

Section 4:

alors was often omitted and *fâché* was not well known. Many instances of guesses were evident here.

Section 5:

Après l'école was well translated though there were some who wrote “before school”.

Section 6:

The perfect tense was not always conveyed here.

Section 7:

Cadeau was not well known and led to many guesses, including candle, cardigan and cake.

Section 8:

Samedi prochain was translated well, though some students thought it was Sunday.

Section 9:

This led to some bizarre answers such as “Next Saturday my mother was 40”. The number was sometimes translated wrongly, with 14 being seen regularly.

The best advice to students is to tell them to re-read what they have written to check it makes sense. It is not likely that your mother is about to celebrate her fourteenth birthday. Close attention to the original text, in order to pick out connecting words and the correct tense of the verb, is essential for success.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.