
GCSE FRENCH

Unit 1 Listening
Report on the Examination

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Foundation Tier

General Comments

The paper proved to be reasonably accessible for the vast majority of students. Many were able to gain some marks for each question, though once again, as in previous series, negative expressions continue to prove challenging. It should once again be stressed that students need to write their answers clearly in the spaces provided, since there were many examples of students writing two alternative answers. This, of course, does not gain any credit.

Questions 1-4

All four questions caused some difficulties for students, especially Question 3, where there was some evidence of guess work and the use of the word *sympathetic*, which was not allowed. In question 4, *sportive* was often used, and not rewarded as French words are not credited.

Questions 5-7

This section was very successfully answered by almost all students.

Questions 8-11

This matching task proved less accessible, apart from Question 9, which was well answered. The main items of vocabulary which caused difficulties were *des jeux*, *des chansons* and the distractor in question 10 of *photos*.

Questions 12-16

Here, Questions 14 and 15 were answered reasonably well. However, the other three questions caused severe difficulties for many. In Question 12, *il y a deux mois* was not spotted. In Question 13, the negatives confused many. *Mes copines ne me comprennent pas* and *je regrette de ne pas manger de poulet* led them to choose the wrong answer. In a similar way, *pas pour des raison de santé* led to many incorrect responses in question 16.

Questions 17-19

This section was universally very successfully answered, with the only difficulty, perhaps surprisingly, the word *gâteau* in Question 19.

Questions 20-22

There were variations in performance in this section, with the most successfully answered question being Question 20, where *douche* was well understood. However, in Question 21, some chose the wrong item to be recycled, opting for glass or plastic rather than paper, and in Question 22, some key items of vocabulary such as *en verre* and *bouteilles* were not always recognised.

Questions 23-24

This section discriminated well and caused some problems for the less able students. With two ideas available to score marks for the advantage in Question 23, this was very well done though the French spelling *confortable* was often used but students could pick up the mark for *fast*. The disadvantage proved much harder, since *coûter* was not well known, which led to guesses such as references to construction being noisy, disruptive or too long. Question 24 proved even more difficult. The advantage was done more successfully than the disadvantage. 'People are polite' was frequently seen as a wrong answer. The disadvantage proved very challenging. While *places* was recognised by some students, this was not always linked to the idea of seats and *m'asseoir* was frequently misunderstood and confused with *soir* and even with *sœur*.

Questions 25-29

Questions 25, 26 and 29 were generally well answered, with many students identifying the correct opinion. Question 27 proved especially demanding, since students did not pick up the short holidays being *une mauvaise idée*. In Question 28, the word *bâtiments* was not well known, leading to many incorrect answers.

Questions 30-31

Question 30 led to very few students scoring the maximum two marks, though many managed to gain one of the two marks on offer. This was mainly due to lack of comprehension of *je ne gagne pas beaucoup d'argent*, where some chose the pay as the thing the speaker liked about the job. Question 31 was far more successfully answered, with the vast majority gaining one mark and well over half scoring two, though *en retard* was not always well known.

Higher Tier**General Comments**

The paper proved to be quite accessible for the vast majority of students, though the questions aimed at the higher grades inevitably proved challenging, especially those requiring an answer in English. There were fewer blanks answers this year. It should once again be stressed to students that they need to commit themselves to a specific answer, since there were many examples of students writing two alternatives, which cannot gain any credit.

Questions 1-2

Question 1 was one of the most successfully answered on the paper, with many correct responses. However, question 2 proved more stretching since many did not pick out *logement* and *dorment dans les rues*, therefore leading them not to choose homelessness as an answer.

Questions 3-7

This section, which also appeared on the foundation paper, was very successfully answered by many, except for Question 7 where reference to the environment was not picked out, perhaps because it concerned conserving water supplies, rather than references to pollution.

Questions 8-9

This section was also an overlap question and, as might be expected, was more successfully answered than on the foundation paper. Nonetheless, the disadvantage parts also caused problems for higher tier students. The advantage in Question 8 was almost universally understood, though the cost was not always mentioned in regard to construction in the disadvantage part. Question 9 was even less well done, since *lire* and *dormir* were not always recognised and the use of the verb *m'asseoir* led many to mention evenings or sisters.

Questions 10-13

Here, Questions 10 and 12 were answered well. However, the other two questions caused difficulties for many. In Question 11, the idea of receiving the same gift twice was not understood. In Question 13, the negatives *je ne m'entends pas avec eux et mon père non plus* confused many.

Questions 14-15

Question 14 was very successfully answered, with the only difficulty being caused by the word *lendemain*. In question 15 *à bas prix* led to many not gaining the maximum of two marks.

Questions 16-18

There were variations in performance in this section, with the most successfully answered questions being 17(i) and 18(ii), where the parents' reaction and how the people of Mali see the future were well understood. However, in Question 16, *il y a bien longtemps* was not picked out and *renoncer à mon salaire* was not understood. In 17(ii), the distractor *eau courante* led some to choose lack of electricity as an answer and the negative in *on ne mange pas de légumes pendant des mois* resulted in many choosing the wrong alternative. The use of the word *manger* in 18(i) caused many to opt for the wrong answer.

Questions 19-21

This section discriminated well and caused problems for less able students. The idea of smoking a lot or spending money on cigarettes was well done in Question 19 and proved the easiest to score on. The idea of refusing to work was slightly less well done, with many answers about unemployment not conveying the idea that the husband was reluctant to look for a job. The third possibility did produce some rather unexpected answers about the husband buying handbags.

Nonetheless, pleasingly, quite a few students showed full understanding of all three ideas. Question 20 was less successfully done even though there were four ways to gain two marks. Where students scored just one mark, it tended to be for the idea of hard to find work or there being lots of unemployment due to the recession. Those who went on to score two marks tended to understand that Delphine was not happy or was lying. The least well done and most confused response was the idea of taking money from the bag or spending all his money on bags. The wrong number of euros also led to incorrect responses.

In Question 21 the idea of talking to each other was quite often omitted, with responses about the need for marriage guidance. Among other wrong answers were references to money or smoking. The second idea, thinking about the children, was quite well done though there were often responses such as 'having children to save the marriage'.

Questions 22-25

Question 24 was generally well answered, with many students identifying the correct idea about deforestation. The other questions proved especially challenging since students did not appear to recognise the key vocabulary items of *inondation*, *incendies* and *embouteillages*. *Le prix de l'essence* also proved difficult.

Questions 26-30

This section was very well answered overall. The main stumbling block, as in foundation tier, was the idea of short holidays being a negative in Question 28.

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