# FRENCH LANGUAGE

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Paper 8682/01
Speaking
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## Key messages

For teachers/examiners:

- Keep to the timings prescribed for the examination (see below).
- Prompt candidates to ask questions during/at the end of each conversation section, but keep your own answers brief.
- More than one question per section is required for candidates to qualify for full marks under *Seeking Information/Opinions* and examiners should be prepared to prompt candidates for several questions to enable them to have access to the full range of marks.
- Candidates' questions should relate to the topic under discussion. Please see the Mark Scheme.
- Cover a range of topics (not a single topic) in the General Conversation, some in depth, vary questions and topics from one candidate to another, be prepared to identify and follow the interests and passions of the candidate (not your own), and keep your own contributions to a minimum.
- Create as natural a conversation as possible, interact with the candidate and avoid lists of pre-prepared questions, especially those which elicit one-word or purely factual answers.
- Avoid topics of a highly personal or sensitive nature.
- Ask questions at an appropriate level and avoid IGCSE-type questions except as openers to fuller discussion.
- Ask questions clearly and concisely. Elaborate and/or unclear questions tend to confuse and unnerve candidates.
- It is the examiner's responsibility to introduce the candidate at the beginning of the examination, not the candidate's.
- If the candidate's Topic Presentation is not related to a francophone country or society, the mark for Content/Presentation must be halved. Most teacher/examiners are now aware of this.

For candidates:

- Make sure that the presentation is not just factual, but contains ideas and opinions and also allows further discussion in the Topic Conversation.
- Make sure that the Topic Presentation lasts the prescribed 3–3.5 minutes.
- Ask questions of the examiner in both conversation sections and make every effort to ask more than one question on the topic or topics under discussion. Make sure your questions are relevant to the topic under discussion.
- Remember that the Topic Presentation must make clear reference to a francophone culture or society: this must be more than a passing reference, and candidates who live in a francophone country and who speak about an aspect of their own culture must make it clear beyond doubt the country to which they are referring.
- Candidates are advised that it is better not to ask the examiner direct questions during the Topic Presentation, as they disrupt the flow of the Presentation and do not count towards *Seeking Information/Opinions* in the conversation sections.
- It is not in the spirit of the examination that candidates ask their teacher-examiner for key (or indeed *any*) vocabulary.

## General comments

It is important for examiners to remember that this examination is an opportunity for candidates to show what they have learnt and a chance for them to express and develop their own ideas and opinions. Examiners should see their role as providing and facilitating this opportunity.

The way in which an examiner asks a question can make a huge difference to how a candidate is able to respond. Examiners need to be aware that:

- Very long, complex questions tend to unnerve candidates and rarely facilitate discussion.
- Closed questions usually elicit short answers, sometimes just yes or no, and should be avoided unless they are intended to open the way for a deeper discussion.
- Open questions such as *Comment?* or *Pourquoi?* are more likely to allow a candidate the freedom to answer at much greater length and in greater depth.

The examination should be a conversation, which can only be achieved by engaging with and responding to what the candidate says, <u>not by asking a series of entirely unrelated questions with no follow-up</u>. Going through a list of pre-prepared questions rarely results in a natural conversation and is not in the spirit of the examination.

## **Administration**

### Recordings

- Recordings this year were mainly clear, though there are still examples of faulty recording equipment. Examiners must check the equipment before using it and ensure that the microphone favours the candidate without losing the examiner's own contribution. There were a number of centres where the examiner was completely audible and the candidate(s) distant and hard to hear.
- Please choose a room which is quiet and where candidates are not distracted by external noise. There were some centres where there was excessive background noise.
- Only the examiner and the candidate should be present during the Test.
- Centres should keep a copy of the recording(s) in case a second copy is required by the moderator or a broader range of marks is requested.
- Where Centres use digital recording software, each candidate's file must be saved individually, as .mp files, and finalised correctly, so that each candidate's examination can be accessed for moderation. Files should be identified using precise candidate details (see the paragraph below) rather than just 'number 1, 2', etc.
- Centres are reminded that the sample of recordings they submit should represent candidates throughout the range of the entry, from highest to lowest.
- Recordings must be submitted by the specified deadline.

### Submit for Assessment

- The vast majority of centres had no difficulty in successfully uploading paperwork and recordings via the Submit for Assessment platform.
- Some centres save sound files in formats other than .mp files and Working Mark Sheets in formats which cannot be opened.
- Centres must make sure that sound files and Working Mark Sheets are uploaded at the same time.

### Paperwork

- There were a number of clerical errors, either in the addition of marks or in transferring the total mark to Submit for Assessment. These should be checked carefully before submission. For the size of sample needed, please see the details online.
- Centres are reminded that for moderation, in addition to the recordings, they need to submit the Working Mark Sheet and the total mark for each candidate.
- Several centres submitted Working Mark Sheets from previous examination sessions, often alongside the Working Mark Sheets for the current session.

Application of Mark Scheme

- There were a number of irregularities in the application of the Mark Scheme. Several Centres awarded marks out of 10 for *Providing* and/or *Seeking Opinions*, when the maximum is 5; others awarded marks for *Seeking Opinions*, even when the candidate had not asked any questions.
- The Mark Scheme makes no provision for awarding half marks. Half marks should not be awarded under any circumstances.
- Many examiners did not halve the mark for *Presentation/Content* when the candidate's topic was not demonstrably and unequivocally related to a francophone country.
- Where a Centre engages two or more examiners to examine the same syllabus, examiners must standardise marks before submitting them It is not expected that a centre engage more than one examiner for a small number of candidates.

## Format of the examination

There are 3 distinct parts to the Speaking Test:

1   Presentation – (3–3.5 minutes).
2   Topic Conversation – (7–8 minutes).
3   General Conversation – (8–9 minutes).

The Speaking Test should last no more than 20 minutes and no less than 18 minutes in total.

In order to be fair to all candidates across the world, these timings should be observed – where examinations are too short, candidates are not given opportunities to show what they can do, and where conversations are over-extended, an element of fatigue creeps in and candidates sometimes struggle to maintain their concentration and level of language. Both tendencies were evident this session.

Examiners must also remember that the longer they spend on their own contributions, the less time candidates have to develop their ideas. Responses to questions asked by candidates should be kept brief. There were a few examiners who treated the speaking exam as a platform for their own ideas and an opportunity to display their own command of the language.

### *Presentation (3 to 3.5 minutes)*

In this part of the examination, the candidate gives a **single** presentation on a specific topic of his or her choice, taken from one of the topic areas listed in the syllabus booklet. This is the only prepared part of the examination and the only part for which candidates are able to choose what they want to talk about. There were a number of cases this session where candidates spoke on more than one topic. The topic list gives candidates a very wide choice – the most popular this year, at both A and AS Levels, were *La technologie, L'égalité des sexes/des chances, Les médias/réseaux sociaux, Le conflit des générations, Le sport, La famille, Le tourisme, L'environnement, La pollution*. More unusual topics included *Le Guide Michelin, Les dots au Gabon, Les manifestations et le culture, La chirurgie esthétique, La misogynie, L'article L4354 du Code de la Sécurité, La gueurre religieuse à Genève*. Some of the most interesting presentations managed to relate their chosen topic to a whole range of social and political issues. The best topics are usually those the candidate feels most passionate about.

Most candidates did relate their topics to a francophone country. Where this is not the case, candidates will have their mark for *Content/Presentation* halved (see Speaking Test mark scheme) by the examiner.

Since the topic is chosen beforehand, candidates have usually researched quite widely, and have to select and structure their material to fit into 3 to 3.5 minutes – additional material which cannot be included in the actual presentation because of the time constraint may well prove very useful in the topic conversation section. In general, candidates had no problem speaking for the required time and many were able to give full and interesting presentations.

Candidates would be well advised to steer clear of very factual subjects, e.g. *La famille* and *Le sport*. The mark scheme criteria for the *Content/Presentation* element makes it clear that in order to qualify for the full range of marks, the presentation should contain not just factual points, but ideas and opinions. Candidates need to think carefully before making their final choice and consider whether it will be possible to develop and expand their chosen topic. Sport and family, though popular choices, are often the least successful for that reason.

Candidates should only present ONE topic and the Topic Conversation which follows will seek to develop that same topic.

A few candidates this session gave Topic Presentations which were far too short. On the other hand, if a candidate goes over time, it is the examiner's responsibility to draw the Presentation to a close after 3.5 minutes. This did not always happen.

### *Topic Conversation (7 to 8 minutes)*

In this section, candidates have the chance to expand on what they have already said and develop ideas and opinions expressed briefly during the presentation. Examiners need to avoid asking questions which encourage candidates to repeat the material already offered – their aim should be to ask more probing questions in order to give candidates opportunities to expand on their original statements and then respond to what the candidate says. There are not necessarily 'right' answers either here or in the General Conversation section and it is in the nature of a genuine conversation that those taking part may not agree with opinions expressed. However, differences of opinion can create lively debate (if handled sensitively and purposefully by the examiner) and can give candidates the opportunity to defend their point of view.

At both A and AS Level, questions should go beyond the sort of questions appropriate at IGCSE Level. Candidates need to be able to show that they are capable of taking part in a mature conversation. In some cases, candidates were not able to offer much development or sustain the level of language used in their presentation, but others were successful in expressing additional ideas and seeking the opinions of the examiner.

In each conversation section there are **5 marks** available for questions the candidates ask of the examiner: they should ask <u>more than one question</u> in each conversation section and <u>it is the examiner's responsibility to prompt them to do so</u>. Examiners should make sure that they do not spend too long on their own answers to candidates' questions, thereby depriving candidates of valuable time.

There were a significant number of exams this session where the candidate asked no questions in the Topic Conversation and/or was not prompted to by the examiner but did ask questions in the General conversation.

Examiners should note that they must indicate the end of the Topic Conversation and the beginning of the General Conversation.

### *General Conversation (8 to 9 minutes)*

The General Conversation is the most spontaneous section of the examination. Candidates will have prepared their own choice of topic for the Topic Presentation (to be continued in the Topic Conversation), but here they do not know what the examiner will choose to discuss (and it is the examiner who chooses, not the candidate). Clearly the areas of discussion will be those studied during the course, but there seemed to be fewer varied and in-depth discussions this session. In a Centre with a number of candidates, candidates should not all be asked to talk about the same list of subjects – themes should be varied from candidate to candidate and should on no account return to the original subject of the presentation.

This section is intended to be a conversation between examiner and candidate, so it is not appropriate for the examiner to ask a series of unrelated questions, to which the candidate responds with a prepared answer, after which the examiner moves on to the next question on the list! Examiners should display sensitivity in asking questions about topics of a personal nature i.e. religion and personal relationships and should try to keep their questions general rather than moving inappropriately into personal areas. Examiners should not regard the examination as a platform for imposing their own views on the candidates.

Examiners should aim to discuss a minimum of 2 to 3 areas in **depth**, giving candidates opportunities to offer their own opinions and defend them in discussion. Although the section may begin with straightforward questions about family, interests or future plans, which can, in themselves, be developed beyond the purely factual (questions asking 'Why?' or 'How?' are useful here), candidates at both AS and A Level should be prepared for the conversation to move on to current affairs and more abstract topics appropriate to this level of examination.

Candidates should be prompted to ask questions of the examiner in order to give them the opportunity to score marks for this criterion, though examiners should once again be wary of answering at too great a length.

A significant number of examiners only covered one topic in this section. Many examiners asked very basic questions which were not appropriate to this level.

### *Seeking Information and Opinions*

This section is a summary of what has already been noted above, as this component of the Mark Scheme is often misunderstood and/or misapplied.

- Marks are awarded for this component in each conversation section of the Test.

- To qualify for marks in this component candidates must ask the examiner questions.

- If the candidate does not ask questions or asks only one, it is the examiner's responsibility to prompt them.

- If the candidate does not ask questions, no marks can be awarded in this component.

- If the candidate only asks one question, the maximum **mark** possible is **3**.

- Questions must be relevant to the topic under discussion.

### <u>Assessment</u>

- The greatest causes of difference were where marks had been awarded for asking questions where none had actually been asked or where Topic Presentations did not relate to a francophone country, in which case the mark for Content/Presentation must be halved.

- A handful of examiners also found it difficult to establish an acceptable level for *Comprehension/Responsiveness*, *Accuracy* and *Feel for the Language*, while others found it tricky to differentiate between the bands for *Pronunciation/Intonation*.

- In rare cases, examiners misapplied the mark scheme, most frequently by awarding marks out of 10 for those categories like *Pronunciation/Intonation* and *Seeking Opinions* which carry a maximum of 5 marks.

- Examiners at centres with a large entry of able candidates should be aware that marks may be bunched and that it may be impossible to differentiate between candidates to a greater degree than the Mark Scheme allows.

- Where candidates ask questions to elicit clarification or obtain information during the course of conversation, they should clearly be rewarded, but examiners must remember to prompt candidates in both conversation sections – the mark scheme gives the criteria for awarding marks for this element of the examination and these marks should be awarded regardless of whether questions are spontaneous or prompted, provided that they are relevant to the topic under discussion. A significant number of candidates this session had prepared questions which were not relevant.

- Centres are reminded that, except in extenuating circumstances, they should engage only one examiner per syllabus, regardless of the size of the entry. In cases where the engagement of two or more examiners on the same syllabus is unavoidable, the examiners must co-ordinate with each other to establish an agreed standard and submit evidence of standardisation with the Moderation Sample.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

> **Paper 8682/21**
> **Reading and Writing**

## Key messages

* In **Question 1**, the word or words chosen as the answer must be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question. The inclusion of additional words invalidates the answer.
* In **Question 2**, candidates are required to manipulate the sentence grammatically, not to alter its vocabulary or meaning unnecessarily.
* In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not simply 'lift' (copy/cut and paste) items unaltered from the text. They need to manipulate the text in some way, re-phrasing by using different vocabulary or structures.
* In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should **not** begin the answer by writing out the question. Answers beginning with (for example) *Parce que* are quite acceptable.
* In **Question 5**, any material in excess of 150 (total for **parts a** and **b** combined) is ignored. Candidates should not write a general introduction.
* In **Question 5b**, candidates should be encouraged to venture some brief relevant ideas of their own without confining themselves to the material contained in the text.

## General comments

Legibility was occasionally an issue, with poor or quirky handwriting and ambiguous and messy crossings-out and insertions making marking problematic. The practice of writing draft answers in pencil and then writing over them in ink can also play havoc with scanned scripts.

The paper was comparable in overall level of difficulty to previous years and was based on a topic with which candidates in general appeared to be able to engage. The cohort comprised many whose command of the language enabled them to engage fully with the various tasks, but there were a good number of others at the opposite end of the range whose level of linguistic competence and knowledge was very much stretched by what was being asked of them.

There were few signs of undue time pressure, with most candidates managing to attempt all questions, although some answers in **Questions 3 and 4** were unnecessarily lengthy. Most of the questions on this paper could be answered in short sentences containing straightforward grammar and vocabulary, but some candidates tend to neglect the simple answer and attempt structures which they cannot handle, producing unintelligible answers that cannot be rewarded.

Many candidates still feel the need to incorporate the words of the question as an unnecessary preamble to the answer, which not only wastes time for both candidate and marker, but also potentially introduces linguistic errors which can either destroy the answer or detract from the overall impression for the Quality of Language mark – e.g. *Leurs enfants risquent-ils*… **(3b)**; *Les enfants peuvent-ils passer*… **(3c).** Answers beginning with *parce que*, *en* or an infinitive are usually quite in order.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, it is pleasing to note that copying wholesale from the text has diminished in recent series, with more candidates understanding how to 'work' the text to avoid 'lifting', but it remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' items directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks at this level. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. They should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. There is an encouraging trend for the stronger candidates to understand how to do this quite simply, avoiding unnecessary over-complication. Even quite small changes (e.g. transforming nouns into verbs or finding a simple synonym) or extensions to the original can show that

candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Candidates often sensibly substituted verbs for nouns when the question suggested it, although occasionally left the transformation unfinished with *maintenir d'un certain niveau* (from *le maintien d'un certain niveau)* **(3b)**; *oublier de ce qu'il…* (from *l'oubli de ce qu'il)* and *perdre de l'habitude* (from *la perte de…* **(3d)**. This reveals a lack of understanding sufficient to invalidate the answer.

**Question 2**, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary. Candidates should therefore aim to make the minimum changes necessary, whilst retaining as many elements of the original as possible. They need to be aware, however, that alterations made to one part of the sentence are likely to have grammatical implications elsewhere, particularly in matters of agreement. **Candidates should not attempt to cut corners by omitting the prompt at the start of their answers.**

In **Question 1**, candidates nowadays appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the precise 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing.

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both sections, 90 – 100 words for the summary of specific points made in the original texts and 40 – 50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Summary automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response**. Although there has been a marked improvement in this respect in recent sessions, candidates from some centres still write answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin, meaning that many good answers to the **Personal Response** cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. Too often still, candidates start to score marks only three or four lines into their answer, having wasted valuable words of an allowance which is already tight to make ten points on a wordy and unnecessary introduction. From the outset, candidates need to make their points as succinctly as possible and move on. It is a summary/*résumé*/*précis* of specific points from the texts that is required in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay.

Some candidates made the same point several times or went into unnecessary detail.

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore *il y a* is three words, as is *qu'est-ce que c'est?*

The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning and editing their material with the word limit in mind, but other scripts were littered with crossings-out, which often created problems with legibility.


**Comments on specific questions**

**Question 1**

A small number of candidates ignored the rubric which said that the words given as answers had to be taken from the first two paragraphs of the first text.

Candidates may be well advised to narrow down the choice by identifying the part of speech involved, or at least by making sure that a plural is replaced by a plural for example, but they should realise that this in itself may not provide the right answer if meaning is ignored in the process.

In **Item 1(a)** The majority of candidates answered correctly. Of the incorrect answers offered, *ont* at least had the merit of being a third person plural present tense, which could not be said for *bulletins de notes, reçus, alléchantes, fin* or *détente*.

In **Item 1(b)** A fair number went on correctly to identify the feminine singular *alléchante*, although a couple infringed the 'precise footprint principle' above by adding either *perspective* or *de huit*. Others selected the incorrect *agacement, cérébrale, réveils* or *veritable case-tête*.

**Item 1(c)** saw a similar level of success with *par contre*, but it there were also a number of wrong choices: *souffler, commencent, de détente, envisager, se consacrer* or *réveils*.

**Item (d)** followed a similar pattern, with successful candidates realising that *respirer* was likely to need to be replaced by an infinitive, whether they actually understood *souffler* or not. Even if some then made the wrong choice with *laisser, envisager* or *consacrer*, these were more likely than *détente, agacement, réveils, perte, loisirs, activité cérébrale* or *maintien*.

**Item (e)** proved to be quite challenging, with only a relatively small number of candidates choosing *consacrer* – where the need for infinitive was a helpful cue.

**Question 2**

This task proved quite challenging for candidates with an inadequate command of grammatical structures, or for those who did not appreciate that structural changes made to the start of the sentence are likely to have consequences further on.

Some candidates appeared to see this as an exercise in simply re-arranging the order of the words of the original, often resulting in unintelligible sentences: *On reçus été les bulletins. L'enfant comme une punition ont été devoir seront. Seront vus ces devoirs par une punition.*

**Item 2(a)** involving transformation from passive to active, but only a small number of candidates managed *On a reçu… .*

In **Item 2(b),** the transformation to indirect speech required candidates to change *mon fils* to *son fils* and *me* to *lui*. Only a few candidates managed this.

In **Item 2(c**) *Il faut que* needed to be followed by the subjunctive (*je le fasse*). Of the candidates who managed this, some then lost the mark by omitting the *le*.

In **Item 2(d),** relatively few candidates managed to change *d'assumer* to *à assumer*.

In **Item 2(e),** more candidates set about things in the right way, but then some lost the mark either by not producing or attempting a correct future tense of *voir*, changing the verb to *regarder* or ces to *les*.

**Question 3**

There was a tendency among some weaker candidates simply to seize on a word in the question and to write out the sentence from the text which contained it or something similar, in the hope of including the answer somewhere along the way. Questions are usually specifically designed to prevent this.

In **Item 3(a)**, successful candidates often scored the first two marks by using reflexive verbs (*se détendre* and *se réveiller*) before going on to score the third mark with *découvrir de nouvelles perspectives/frontières.*

In **Item 3(b),** using the verbs *maintenir* or *stimuler* and *agacer* or *énerver* again proved successful for the first two marks. Some thought that *cris* meant that people were crying but did not realise that *larmes* did mean just that, resorting to *larmer* or even *pleut*.

In **Item 3(c**), *réviser* was usually used to score the first mark, but fewer found *serein, calme, tranquillle, confiant* etc. to express *sérénité* (often offering *seren(n)e, séréné*).

In **Item 3(d)**, *Ils oublient ce qui a été acquis/appris* often earned the first mark, but some then found *perdre* elusive and struggled to handle *s'ennuyer* for the remaining marks.

**Item 3(e)** again required a verb in answer to the question, and *renforcer* or an appropriate synonym (e.g. *consolider*) was the obvious choice. Some stronger candidates deduced that *passerelle* was a means of enabling a smooth transition from one year to the next (e.g. *assurer/faciliter la progression/le passage/pont*) and went on to suggest that bringing up the previous year's poor results was inadvisable.

**Question 4**

**Item 4(a)** was often well answered by those who used *garantir* or *réussir* for the first mark, *rattraper, récupérer, corriger* or *compenser* for the second, and *(re)démarrer, (re)commencer, (re)partir du bon pied l'année suivante* for the third.

In **Item 4(b)**, the dangers that holiday work will cause a loss of motivation and a drop in marks the following year were successfully identified and expressed as possible consequences of imposing holiday work, avoiding simply 'lifting' *démotivation* and *chute* (e.g. *l'élève sera moins motivé et ses notes seront moins bonnes*).

In **Item 4(c),** successful candidates often used *se fâcher, s'énerver* or other synonyms to indicate that parents sometimes lose their temper and say hurtful things: *blessantes, dénigrantes, dérogatoires, humiliantes* etc. The idea that they feared being accused of not fulfilling their role as good parents was less well understood, with some candidates saying that these parents were afraid of being thought of as abandoning their children.

**Item 4(d)** was generally well handled by candidates who highlighted the need for adults to switch off from work, and for their children to have a similar opportunity to *évacuer/soulager/se débarrasser des tensions/pressions.*

In **Item 4(e),** a good proportion of candidates saw the opportunity to *acquérir d'autres/nouveaux talents/intérêts*, with some going on to make the points that the important thing was for young people to be free to choose which activities to undertake and that these should be things that had nothing to do with school.

In **Item 4(f),** the first mark was scored by those who said that children's health could be put at risk *en les surchargeant.* The meaning of *tirer un trait sur (supprimer, éliminer etc.)* eluded many for the final mark.

**Question 5**

**Question 5(a)** asked candidates to summarise the points made in the text in favour and against *les devoirs de vacances*.

The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points, of which a many candidates managed to identify a good number. The weakest simply copied out verbatim chunks of the text, hoping to chance upon some rewardable material. But for a sizeable proportion of candidates, **Question 5** was the exercise on which they scored most highly.

The points most commonly made in favour included:

* Keeping the brain active.
* Not forgetting what had been learned during the year.
* Geeting the next year off to a flying start.
* Avoiding boredom.

The points most commonly made against included:

* Holidays are needed to unwind.
* Source of family conflicts.
* Turn young people off school/feels like a punishment.
* Harmful for physical and mental health.

There is no specific penalty for 'lifting' in this exercise as far as <u>content</u> is concerned, but excessive reliance on the language contained in the text is liable to be penalised in a significant reduction of the quality of language mark.

The **Personal Response** (**Question 5(b)**) asked candidates whether they would be in favour of shorter holidays in exchange for shorter school days. Opinions were divided, with probably more in favour of keeping longer holidays, usually because they give opportunities for travel and tourism and to switch off completely.

But others saw the appeal of reducing stress and fatigue on a daily basis and of having time to do things after school in term time.

**Quality of Language**

The general quality of language varied from sound to very poor. The weakest struggled with the nuts and bolts of the language, finding it difficult to express their ideas in a readily comprehensible form.

This was particularly in evidence in the agreement (or lack of it) of verbs with their subjects or of adjectives with their nouns (and even the process of making nouns plural). Some of the weakest candidates seemed to be unaware of the need to make any agreements. Some others who did see the need to make agreements made them incorrectly, for example the plural of *il étudie* appearing as *ils études/ils étudients,* or the plural of *très calme* as *très calment*.

Incorrect verb forms were frequent, particularly in the future tense, e.g. *faire (elle faira), avoir (ils avoirons), voir (il vera/va voire), être (j'étérai/je serie))*.

The approach to spelling was in many cases phonetic, e.g. *on/ont, sans/s'en/son/sont, ces/ses/c'est, ce/se, mes/mais/met/m'est, peu/peut, sa/ça/s'a, et/est, qu'en/quand, peu/peut, courts/cours* seemed to be interchangable for many candidates. Even common words were sometimes misspelled: *chauses, maitins, mètre* for *mettre, concecuenses (consequences), a mon a vie, mamant, hôt* and even *dais (des)*. There was a high incidence of words simply being miscopied from the text in some scripts.

Many new words were coined: *basiquement, malagreable, acortation, comparition, passerereller, rattrapager, réussiter, démarrager, disfruter, connuir, impeder* (to impede) appeared in a large number of scripts, as did *balancé* to mean *équilibré* and *rester to mean se reposer.*

Personal pronouns and possessive adjectives in general would repay further study, as would the constructions following some common verbs: *aider, demander, interdire, permettre, obliger* etc.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

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**Paper 8682/22
Reading and Writing**

### Key messages

- In **Question 1**, the word or words chosen as the answer must be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question. Candidates need to find a satisfactory replacement both semantically and grammatically.
- In **Question 2**, candidates are required to manipulate the sentence grammatically, not to alter its vocabulary or meaning.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not simply 'lift' (copy/cut and paste) items unaltered from the text. They need to manipulate the text in some way, re-phrasing by using different vocabulary or structures.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not begin the answer by re-working the question.
- In **Question 5**, any material in excess of the word limit is ignored. Candidates should not write a general introduction.
- In **Question 5b**, candidates should be encouraged to venture some brief relevant ideas of their own without confining themselves to the material contained in the text.

### General comments

Candidates need to be aware that their scripts are scanned and marked on screen and that if they write a pencil version of their answers which they then write over in ink (more or less precisely), scanning does not clearly distinguish the pencil version from the ink one. This can make the script very difficult or indeed impossible to mark on screen.

Legibility in general was sometimes a significant problem, with answers littered with crossings-out and squeezed-in insertions, not to mention poor or quirky handwriting.

There were plenty of very good scripts from able and well-prepared candidates who handled all the tasks with commendable fluency and accuracy. At the other end of the range, there were some whose level of linguistic competence was over-stretched by what was being asked of them.

Some failed to read the questions carefully enough, but where candidates scored consistently poorly, it was often because they copied items unaltered from the texts in **Questions 3 and 4**.

There were no signs of undue time pressure, with most candidates managing to attempt all questions, although quite a lot of answers in **Questions 3 and 4** were unnecessarily lengthy. Some candidates neglect the straightforward answer and give over-complicate ones. The most successful answers are often the most concisely and simply expressed.

Many candidates still feel the need to incorporate the words of the question as an unnecessary preamble to the answer, which not only wastes time for both candidate and marker, but also potentially introduces linguistic errors which can either destroy the answer or detract from the overall impression for the Quality of Language mark – e.g. *Les enfants déplaisent-ils à leurs enfants… (3a); Les adolescents peuvent-ils bénéficier… (3c); Un enfant peut-il être affecté… (4d)*. Answers beginning with *Parce que*, *En* or an infinitive are usually quite in order.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, it is encouraging to note that copying wholesale from the text has diminished significantly in recent sessions, with more candidates understanding how to 'work' the text to avoid 'lifting', but it remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' items directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks. Candidates must show that they can

manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. They should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes (e.g. transforming nouns into verbs or finding a simple synonym) or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Candidates often sensibly substituted verbs for nouns when the question suggested it, although occasionally leaving the transformation unfinished e.g. *adopter de l'identité…* (from *l'adoption de l'identité* **(3b)** ; *capturer de details…* (from *la capture de détails)* **(3d)**; *éroder de la distinction…* (from *l'érosion de la distnction) (4c)*. This indicated a lack of understanding sufficient to invalidate the answer.

In **Question 1**, candidates nowadays appear more aware of the need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing. The inclusion of unnecessary additional words (or the exclusion of necessary ones) invalidates the answer.

Candidates can sometimes help themselves considerably by narrowing down the options to words which are at least the same parts of speech, or by matching (for example) singulars with singulars or feminine adjectives with feminine adjectives.

**Question 2**, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for straightforward vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary. **Candidates should therefore aim to make the minimum changes necessary, whilst retaining as many elements of the original as possible**. They need to be aware, however, that alterations made to one part of the sentence are likely to have grammatical implications elsewhere, particularly in matters of agreement. Candidates should not attempt to cut corners by omitting the prompt at the start of their answers.

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both sections, 90–100 words for the summary of specific points made in the original texts and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Summary automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response**. Although there has been a marked improvement in this respect in recent sessions, candidates from some centres still write answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin, meaning that many good answers to the **Personal Response** cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. The word limit is already quite tight to achieve ten points and, from the very outset, candidates need to make the point as succinctly as possible and move on. It is a summary/*résumé* of specific points from the texts that is required in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay.

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore *il y a* is three words, as is *qu'est-ce que c'est?*

The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning and editing their material with the word limit in mind, but other scripts were littered with crossings-out, which often cause problems with legibility. If candidates wish to cross out preparatory notes, it is important that they do so clearly.

## Comments on specific questions

**Question 1**

Most candidates scored **(a)** (apart from a few who were careless about copying *illimité)*, as well as **(b)**. In **(c)**, *pourtant* was offered almost as frequently as the correct *pleinement*. In **(d)**, most identified that the answer would involve *quotidien* but infringed the 'precise footprint' principle by omitting the necessary *du*, whilst *comprend* appeared frequently instead of *s'accorde* in **(e)**, *adoption* also chosen by some.

**Question 2**

There were some excellent answers to this question from the strongest candidates, but the task proved demanding for candidates with an inadequate command of grammatical structures, or who failed to observe the basic rules of agreement.

In **Item 2(a)**, many set about forming the passive in the right way, but some then forgot to make the agreement of *facilitée*, or wrote *sont*, presumably because the nearest noun (*pressions*) is plural. A few unnecessarily altered *ces jeux* to *les/ses/des jeux*.

In **Item 2(b)**, the most common error involved the lack of the agreements of *faciles* and *leurs,* or *comprises* and *compréhensibles*, although <u>à comprendre</u> also caused problems for some candidates.

In **Item 2(c)**, some candidates recognised the need for a subjunctive although not all of them formed it correctly, and there was frequent omission of at least one element of *nous ne les*.

**Item 2(d)** was probably the most successful handled of all, although there was a tendency to add an *–e, –s, –es, –t* to the end of *réussi,* and to change *ses* to *ces collègues*.

**Item 2(e)** was less well done, with many candidates making mistakes with *pouvoir* and/or missing the agreement on *rappelés*.

**Question 3**

**Item 3(a)** was answered correctly by many with *Les enfants passent trop/tant de temps à jouer aux jeux video* or similar. They often then went on to use either the reflexive <u>s'épanouir</u> or *développement* to earn the second mark.

In **Item 3(b)**, candidates found a number of appropriate verbs for the first two marks: *évacuer* (but not *évaquer* or *évacuater)*, *éliminer, décharger, se débarrasser de*, and then *gérer* (but not *gester* or *gestater). Rétablir/restaurer/reconstruire son amour-propre/estime de soi/confiance* were all accepted for the third mark. Candidates often found the idea of adopting or identifying with a character they would like to be (i.e. a winner) less easy to express for the fourth mark – using *c(h)aractère* rather than *personage* was not acceptable here.

In **Item 3(c**), *comprendre* (not *compréhendre*) and *résoudre* (not *resolver*) were sensibly used by a number of candidates for two of the marks. *Traitement* was sometimes interpreted in a medical context.

In **Item 3(d)**, most candidates saw that using readily conjugated –er verbs (<u>se</u> *concentrer, observer* and *capturer*) was the easiest way to earn all three marks here, although some did not mention that it was <u>speed</u> of assimilating details that was an important element here.

In **Item 3(e)**, it was speed that was asked about for the first two points (in answer to this question relating to paragraph 5), so the frequent references to hand-eye coordination or decision-making were not relevant. The third point was not simply that players play lots of games but that they lose so often that they learn to carry on trying.

**Question 4**

**Item 4(a)** saw a good proportion of candidates scoring the first mark by using *banaliser* (sometimes confused with *bannir)* or *normaliser or présenter la violence comme acceptable/normale,* and then going on to say that that players <u>thought</u> that *les jeux reflètent/copient/imitent/reproduisent la vraie vie*. Not all were successful in finding *détruire* from *destruction* and many did not suggest that illegal behaviour was actively encouraged, rewarded or *valorisé* in the games, preferring to concentrate on not getting caught.

**Item 4(b**) rewarded those who offered *grignoter*, whereas others just thought that *les joueurs prennent du poids*. An inactive lifestyle was correctly identified by some, whilst lack of sleep and personal hygiene often scored the remaining two marks.

In **Item 4(c)**, *coupure du monde* was very often successfully reworked as <u>se couper</u> for the first mark, but fewer managed *rompre* from *rupture*, although <u>briser</u> was often a rewardable alternative. The plight of players unable to distinguish fantasy from reality was well described by those who managed to find an appropriate verb to replace *érosion,* although the omission of *ne* in *Ils différencient plus* caused confusion.

In **Item 4(d)**, the idea of dropping out of school was usually well expressed, as was the idea of an impoverished social life, although some clearly thought it was a question of earning less money by spending too much time in front of the screen.

In **Item 4(e),** the first mark was successfully scored by a large number of candidates who mentioned the buying of <u>extra</u> items as the games progressed. Far fewer interpreted what was wanted for the second mark, which was the notion of parents having to spend sums that they had not anticipated at the outset.

**Question 5(a) (Summary)**

**Question 5(a)** asked candidates to summarise the benefits and dangers of video games as presented in the texts.

The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points, which many candidates handled very successfully. Some wrote unnecessary introductions which often wasted over 20 per cent of the word allowance: *Les jeux vidéo on leurs bon et mauvais cotés. Comme toutes choses on doit surveiller la consommation de jeux vidéo pour les jeunes. Ça a beaucoup de bienfaits comme par exemple… .* Others started making the content points very efficiently with well-structured answers in which the benefits and dangers were clearly presented.

The most commonly identified benefits included:

- Getting rid of stress/handling pressure.
- Restoring self-esteem/adopting a positive image of oneself.
- Training the brain.
- Ability to analyse situations.
- Ability to concentrate and absorb details.
- Speed of reaction/decision-making.

The most commonly identified dangers included:

- Encouraging violence.
- Unhealthy life-style.
- Blurring of the distinction between the virtual and the real.
- Glorifying crime.
- Dropping out of social activity, the family and school.

There is no specific penalty for 'lifting' in this exercise as far as <u>content</u> is concerned, but excessive reliance on the language contained in the text is liable to be penalised in a significant reduction of the quality of language mark.

**Question 5(b) (Personal Response)**

The **Personal Response** asked candidates what rules concerning video games they would establish as parents. Many responses were text-derived, but there were also lots of original ideas, the most common ones being: imposing strict time limits, not allowing video games on school days, before all homework and chores had been done or after bed-time, and never at meal-times. Their confiscation would be automatic if school results were poor or if the children were not spending enough time on other activities (sporting, cultural, social) or with the family. Parents would also want to vet the suitability of the contents and any additional costs.

**Quality of Language**

The quality of language varied from the excellent to the very poor. The strongest candidates wrote fluently and accurately, demonstrating a broad and flexible range of vocabulary and a robust control of structure. At the other end of the scale, some candidates struggled with the rudiments of the language, finding it difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form.

The approach to spelling in some scripts was phonetic: (e.g. *sa/ça/s'a; son/sont/s'ont/sonts; ces/c'est/ses/se/s'est ; se/ce; ceci/ceux-ci/si; ceux-là/cela/sela),* whilst the choice between verb endings such as *–er, –é, – ez* often appeared random. The most common spelling error *was* made in probably the most commonly word used in this paper*: joeurs/joers/jouers/jueurs/joues/jeus/jours*

Possibly the most common source of error concerned the agreement (or lack of it) of verbs with their subjects or of adjectives with their nouns (and even the process of making nouns plural), which appeared largely arbitrary in many scripts.

Often, when attempts <u>were</u> made to make verbs agree with a plural subject, it was simply by putting an *–s* on the end of the singular, so the plural of *il empêche* is *ils empêchent* or *ils empêchents.* On the other hand, when nouns or adjectives required to be made plural it was not uncommon for *il est facile* to emerge as *ils sont facilent.*

Incorrect verb forms were frequent even for common irregular verbs such *as vouloir, devoir, prendre, croire, tenir, venir* and their compounds*.* Constructions with certain verbs were also frequently problematic, e.g. *aider, empêcher, permettre, interdire, plaire, apprendre.*

Many anglicisms were spotted. Verbs: *distincter, depicter, convictionner, restricter, concentrater, érosionner, preventer, appauvrisser, réacter, disturber, destructer, avoider ;* nouns: *la rappelation, la critiquation, la préservérisation, la failure, le détruisement ;* adverbs: *accruement, approfondamment*

English often intruded in other ways too – *balancer* for *équlibrer*, *rester* for *se reposer*, *abilité* or in phrases such as *il faut avoir le famille temps* or *il doit dormir sur temps* or *écrantemps*.

Reflexives caused particular difficulties, with frequent errors over *se concentrer: se couper, se développer, s'épanouir, s'occuper de, se laver, se sentir, s'éloigner*

The incorrect *plus mieux, plus bien, plus meilleur, plus/trop beaucoup* all appeared fairly regularly.

All of which said, the linguistic ability of the large majority of candidates was certainly up to the task of transmitting the required facts and opinions effectively, whilst the strongest candidates wrote very impressive, idiomatic, fluent and commendably accurate French.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

**Paper 8682/23**
**Reading and Writing**

### Key messages

- In **Question 1**, the word or words chosen as the answer must be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question. Additional or missing words invalidate the answer.
- In **Question 2**, candidates are required to manipulate the sentence grammatically, not to alter its vocabulary or meaning.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not simply 'lift' (copy/cut and paste) items unaltered from the text. They need to manipulate the text in some way, re-phrasing by using different vocabulary or structures.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should **not** begin the answer by writing out the question.
- In **Question 5**, any material in excess of 150 (total for **parts a** and **b** combined) is ignored. Candidates should not write a general introduction.
- In **Question 5b**, candidates should be encouraged to venture some brief relevant ideas of their own without confining themselves to the material contained in the text.

### General comments

Legibility was sometimes a significant issue, with tiny or poor handwriting complicating the marking process. The practice of writing draft answers in pencil and then writing over them in ink can also play havoc with scanned scripts.

The paper was broadly comparable in level of difficulty to previous years. There were some highly commendable scripts from candidates whose command of the language equipped them fully to handle the various tasks, but there were others at the opposite end of the range of those whose level of linguistic competence and knowledge was very much stretched by what was being asked of them.

There were no signs of undue time pressure, with most candidates managing to attempt all questions, although some answers in **Questions 3 and 4** were unnecessarily lengthy. Most of the questions on this paper could be answered in short sentences containing straightforward grammar and vocabulary, but some candidates neglected the simple answer and gave over-complicated ones.

Many candidates still feel the need to incorporate the words of the question as an unnecessary preamble to the answer, which not only wastes time for both candidate and Examiner, but also potentially introduces linguistic errors which can either destroy the answer or detract from the overall impression for the Quality of Language mark – e.g. *Les devoirs scolaires servent-ils… (3a); Beaucoup de parents y réagissent-ils… (3b)*. Answers beginning with *parce que*, *en* or an infinitive are usually quite in order.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, it is encouraging to note that copying wholesale from the text has diminished in recent sessions, with more candidates understanding how to 'work' the text to avoid 'lifting' (copying) items from the text, but it remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' items directly from the text, even if they include more-or-less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks at this level. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. They should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes (e.g. transforming nouns into verbs or finding a simple synonym) or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Candidates often sensibly substituted verbs for nouns when the question suggested it, although occasionally left the tranformation unfinished with (for example) *réaliser de la vie privée* (from *la réalisation de leur*

*potential*) **(3a)**; *prolonger de la journée* (from *la prolongation de la journée)* **(4c)**; *améliorer de leur performance* (from *l'amelioration de leur performance)* **(4c)**. This shows a lack of understanding sufficient to invalidate the answer.

In **Question 1**, candidates nowadays appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing.

**Question 2**, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary. Candidates should therefore aim to make the minimum changes necessary, whilst retaining as many elements of the original as possible. They need to be aware, however, that alterations made to one part of the sentence are likely to have grammatical implications elsewhere, particularly in matters of agreement. **Candidates should not attempt to cut corners by omitting the prompt at the start of their answers.**

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both sections, 90 – 100 words for the summary of specific points made in the original texts and 40 – 50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Summary automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response**. Although there has been a marked improvement in this respect in recent sessions, candidates from some centres still write answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin, meaning that many good answers to the **Personal Response** cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. Often candidates start to score marks only three or four lines into their answer, having wasted valuable words of an allowance which is already tight to make ten points on a wordy and unnecessary introduction. From the outset, candidates need to make their points as succinctly as possible and move on. It is a summary/*résumé*/*précis* of specific points from the texts that is required in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay.

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore, *il y a* is three words, as is *qu'est-ce que c'est?*

The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning and editing their material with the word limit in mind, but other scripts were littered with crossings-out, which often caused problems with legibility.

**Comments on specific questions**

**Question 1**

Candidates may be well advised to narrow down the choice by identifying the part of speech involved, or at least by making sure that a plural is replaced by a plural for example, but they should realise that this in itself may not provide the right answer if meaning is ignored in the process.

In **Item (a),** *suscitent was* generally correctly chosen as a present tense third person plural in preference to *considèrent* or *dénoncent,* but the addition of *de* forfeited the mark on the 'precise footprint' principle.

In **Item (b)**, *outils* was often identified as the correct plural noun in preference to the improbable *enseignants* or *supplémentaires*.

In **Item (c***), écrits* or *prouvé* were unlikely choices to replace the feminine plural *ajoutéés; depuis, réalisation* or *interdiction* even more so.

In **Item (d)**, *néanmoins* proved the most elusive replacement for *quand même,* although *mais* was acceptable too; *courante, toujours, prouvé, qui date* and *aussi* were not.

In **Item (e)**, the majority of candidates did well to identify *approbation,* but a number then infringed the 'precise footprint' principle by adding a superfluous *l'.*

## Question 2

The strongest candidates displayed the ability to rework the sentences accurately, but the task proved quite demanding for candidates with an inadequate command of grammatical structures, or who failed to understand or observe the basic rules of agreement.

In **Item 2 (a)**, many did not adjust *peut* to *peuvent* to match the new plural subject or omitted it altogether. Others inserted the wrong pronoun after *chez (ils, leur, leurs).*

In **Item 2 (b)**, adjusting the verb to match the new subject and finding the correct pronoun *elle* eluded many candidates.

**In Item 2 (c)**, an unnecessary change of tense cost some the mark, but more common was the error of matching the verb to the nearest noun *tâches* and making it plural. The additional need to adjust the ending of *prouvée* in the passive made this quite a challenging item.

**Item 2 (d)** was probably the most straightforward, the first hurdle in the transfer to indirect speech being to change *mes* to *ses*, which most managed, but fewer negotiated the change to *lui* rather than the commonly found *se*.

In **Item 2 (e)**, a good number appeared to recognise the need for a subjunctive, but some struggled to form it correctly. A further problem was encountered in having to alter *son* to *leur* when the subject of the verb became plural.

## Question 3

In **Item 3(a),** a good number successfully expressed the conflicting views of the merits or otherwise of homework. A few appeared uncertain as to what was meant by *utilité*.

In **Item 3(b)**, a number assumed that the law of 1956 promoted rather than banned the issuing of homework, or that the ban applied to children of all ages. Most understood the fact that that the ban was widely disregarded with parental approval (*accord, consentement*) but introduced a note of uncertainty with *les parents supportent les professeurs*.

**Item 3(c)** was a good example of the simplest answer (*les plus âgés*) often being the best, but 'lifted' *parcours scolaire* from the text, sometimes going on to earn the mark anyway by explaining what this meant. The gaining of class time, enabling teachers to use lessons more effectively to deliver the syllabus was usually explained, but the appearance of *sauver du temps* and *effectivement* were anglicisms that could not be rewarded.

**Item 3(d)** was probably the most straightforward in this question, requiring candidates to identify <u>what</u> the candidates could use homework for: to memorise (lists) and revise (what they had studied in class). The easiest way to score both marks was the straightforward use of the verbs *mémoriser* and *revise*r.

In **Item 3(e)**, candidates often successfully used *indépendance* and *gérer* to earn the first two marks here. There were occasional mistaken suggestions that it was teachers who needed to learn to respect candidates' right to free time rather than candidates needing to learn to respect deadlines.

In **Item 3(f),** candidates often managed to express the idea that homework gives parents some indication of what their children are studying, but that it is undesirable for parents to do all their children's homework for them.

## Question 4

In **Item 4(a)**, candidates generally communicated the view that it was unreasonable of teachers to *imposer des devoirs à faire à la maison* or *obliger les élèves à se remettre au travail le soir*. Omission of the reflexives cost some the second mark for <u>se</u> *détendre,* <u>se</u> *décompresser or* <u>se</u> *décontracter* etc., as did the use of *rester*.

In **Item 4(b)**, most understood the idea that homework posed a danger to candidates' health by allowing insufficient sleep, although a significant number could not find an adequate verb to replace *suppression (supprimer, éliminer, cesser de donner)* for the second mark.

In **Item 4(c)**, successful candidates usually replaced *prolongation* and *amelioration* with their corresponding verbs, but some found it difficult to do the same with *accroissement*.

In **Item 4(d)**, attempts to find a way of transmitting the idea of *invasion* not always successful. The consequential lack of social activity was sometimes rather awkwardly expressed but usually sufficient to earn the second mark.

In **Item 4(e)**, most candidates found *épuisé/très fatigué* and *confus/ne comprend pas* for the first two marks, with the occasional *confusé* or *confondu*. Many used *grondé* successfully for the third mark, although a number clearly thought that *grondé* meant that Romain was being 'grounded' as punishment.

In **Item 4(f)**, the majority again made sensible use of reflexive verbs (*s'énerver, se disputer*) although some got carried away with *se pleurer*. Most understood what *larmes* involved, but a small number ventured *(se) larmer or crier*.

### Question 5(a) (Summary)

See **General Comments** earlier for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction.

The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points leading to a maximum score of 10. Some candidates simply copied out verbatim chunks of the text, hoping to chance upon some rewardable material. But for a sizeable proportion of candidates, this was the exercise on which they scored most highly.

The most commonly identified positives included:

- Improving candidates' achievement/learning.
- Gain of teaching time in class.
- Encourages candidates to organise their time.
- Encourages candidates to develop good academic habits.
- Parents can see what their child is studying.

The most commonly identified negatives included:

- Candidates working even longer hours.
- Impact on mental and physical well-being.
- Need to have time to relax.
- Impede extra-curricular activities.
- Source of family conflict.

### Question 5(b) (Personal Response)

The **Personal Response** asked candidates whether they would prefer a longer school day in exchange for no homework. Opinions were divided: those in favour would welcome having their teachers being on hand for longer to answer questions, having a clear division between school and home time, and having evenings completely free to do as they want and spend time with their family. Rather more were strongly opposed, often because of the impact it would have on their ability to take part in other activities (sporting, cultural and social), finding the school day already unreasonably long and fearing for the impact on their mental and physical health.

### Quality of Language

The quality of language varied from very good to very poor. The weakest struggled with the basic nuts and bolts of the language, which inevitably limited their ability to transmit the required facts and opinions effectively.

This was particularly in evidence in the agreement (or lack of it) of adjectives with their nouns and verbs with their subjects (and even the process of making words plural). Some of the weakest candidates seemed to be

unaware of the need to make any agreements whatsoever. Some others who did see the need to make agreements did it incorrectly, e.g. the plural of *il empêche* appearing as *ils empêches*/*ils empêchents,* or the plural of *l'élève* as les élèvent.

There were difficulties in conjugating some common irregular verbs: *e.g. pouvoir, devoir, vouloir, tenir,* whilst constructions following other common verbs also caused problems: *aider, empêcher, permettre, obliger, interdire.*

In some cases the approach to spelling was phonetic (e.g. *sa/ça/s'a; son/sont/s'ont/sonts; ces/c'est/ses/se/s'est ; se/ce; ceci/ceux-ci/si),* whilst the choice between verb endings such as *–er, –é, –ez* often appeared random.

All of which said, stronger candidates were usually able to express what they wanted to say in a comprehensible fashion, whilst the best wrote fluently and accurately, demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and idiom and a commendable control of structure.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

> **Paper 8682/31**
> **Essay**

### Key messages

In order to be successful on this paper, candidates need to read all of the questions carefully, highlight the key terms and write a plan. They then need to develop a logical and well-illustrated answer that focuses precisely on the question set. They should use the introduction to their essay to show clearly their understanding of the title and what their approach will be. Paragraphing, with use of appropriate linking words or phrases, is an important element in this type of essay in order to show both clarity of thought and logical progression through the argument. The conclusion should then show a considered final judgement of the issues discussed, not merely repeat what went before. In order to attain high marks for language, candidates should write accurately and idiomatically in language which demonstrates complexity both in structure and vocabulary.

### General comments

Most candidates had understood the rubric for the paper and most essays were of the correct length. Although candidates often managed to introduce the topic in the opening paragraph, arguments were then often confined to general statements with limited development and few examples. Most essays were structured around paragraphs but these were often poorly linked and there were internal contradictions. Most of the candidates did attempt a plan but it was often written in English and was too short, in list form and sketchy in content. There was at times a considerable degree of interference from the candidate's native language which often significantly affected the communication of ideas. Content marks reflect the level of discussion, structure and sophistication of the argument. Some candidates demonstrated little grammatical, structural or idiomatic awareness and their essays revealed difficulties with basic verb endings, agreements and spellings. There were, however, some strong responses which contained a relevant argument and displayed a fair level of accuracy and a range of structures.

Among a number of common errors, the following were seen:

Lack of apostrophe: *parce que ils; il ne est pas; ils ne ont;*

Verbs used without a subject pronoun: *est important de;*

Missing articles: *avec autres personnes; communiquer avec personnes dans autre pays;*

Spelling errors: *Concluir; aujord'hui; nombreaux; réseux/résiaux socielles; becaoup/beacoup; gouverment; interpersonelles, néanmois, environement;*

Accent on *à in the passé composé : à changé; à créé;*

Accent on final 'e' of verbs in the present tense: *elle facilité; ça aidé;*

Incorrect use of negatives: *c'est pas; tu ne besoin pas;*

Incorrect word order: *ils aujourd'hui communiquent; ils souvent font;*

Use of *comment* for *comme; pour* for *par;*

Use of *faire* for *render;*

Use of *grâce à* and *parce que* instead of *à cause de;*

Confusion between *qui* and *que;*

Overuse of *chose/choses; personnes/gens; beaucoup;*

Confusion between: *ces/ses; ce/c'est; nos/nous (il nos aide); bon/bien, mauvais/mal, c'est que/ceux que, ceux qui/ce qui, ou/où, mieux/meilleur, leur/leurs;*

Frequent use of *beaucoup des* with plural noun and *cela* with plural verb;

Confusion between/misuse of : *ces/ses, les/des, place/endroit, bon/bien, mauvais/mal, c'est que/ceux que, ceux qui/ce qui, ou/où, a/à, mieux/meilleur, leur/leurs;*

Use of the wrong preposition after common verbs followed by an infinitive structure, e.g., *aider de, préférer de, sembler de, dépendre sur;*

Confusion between *son/sa/ses* and *leur/leurs: les parents ne comprennent pas ses enfants; l'adolescent et leurs parents.*

**Comments on specific questions**

**Question 1**

*La jalousie existe souvent dans la famille. Pourquoi à votre avis ?*

Candidates who attempted this question often used anecdotal and personal experiences as examples. Several causes for jealousy were mentioned, including sibling rivalry where one brother or sister performs better at school or sport and wins praise, favouritism towards children on the part of parents or grandparents and infidelity within a couple. Candidates felt that jealousy was an inevitable emotion within a close family setting where comparisons were frequently made. It was also a possibility if partners were unfaithful or perceived to be.

**Question 2**

*La nécessité de maintenir l'ordre public s'oppose inévitablement au droit à la liberté d'expression. Discutez.*

Too few candidates chose this question for meaningful comment.

**Question 3**

*Ceux qui ne voyagent pas ne comprennent jamais le monde dans lequel ils vivent. Êtes-vous d'accord ?*

Few candidates chose this question. They mostly disagreed with the statement and felt that a good understanding of the world could be garnered from the internet and books. They also felt that if people did not have the opportunity to travel, they could talk to tourists and foreign visitors to their country and gain information that way. Most did see the value of travelling and living in a different country since real life experiences are more meaningful. Holidays on their own were not thought to be especially revealing of what a country is like since tourists generally stay within hotel complexes and are taken on guided tours.

**Question 4**

*La communication virtuelle a changé négativement nos relations interpersonnelles. Discutez de cette affirmation.*

This was by far the most popular question. Many candidates discussed the pros and cons of the internet rather than its impact on human relationships, but they did include some relevant material and considered both sides of the question. Candidates generally agreed that the internet can have a negative effect on people as it makes them more insular and less willing to form relationships in real life. Within the family, the internet and the use of mobile phones and devices can create tensions and have a damaging effect on the way in which family members relate to each other. It was also felt that physical contact is an essential part of relationships that cannot be achieved online and misunderstandings are more common in online communications than in person. Cyberbullying was often quoted to show how the internet has the power to

change relationships in a toxic way. On the other hand, they recognised the ways in which virtual communication can strengthen relationships in allowing family and friends to stay in touch if they live apart as well as allowing connection to new friends across the world. They concluded that it was necessary to moderate use of the internet and to maintain a balance between virtual communication and real-world communication.

**Question 5**

*Sans accords internationaux sur la pollution, rien ne changera pour le mieux. Êtes-vous d'accord ?*

Too few candidates chose this question for meaningful comment.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

<table>
<tr><td>**Paper 8682/32**<br>**Essay**</td></tr>
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### Key messages

In order to be successful on this paper, candidates need to take the time to read the questions carefully, highlight the key terms and write a plan. They then need to develop a logical and well-illustrated answer that focuses precisely on the question set. Candidates should use the introduction to their essay to show clearly their understanding of the title and what their approach will be. Paragraphing, with use of appropriate linking words or phrases, is an important element in this type of essay in order to show both clarity of thought and logical progression through the argument. The conclusion should then display a considered final judgement of the issues discussed. In order to attain high marks for language, candidates should write accurately and idiomatically in language which demonstrates complexity both in structure and vocabulary.

### General comments

Most candidates managed to communicate their ideas on their chosen question and tried to construct an argument using examples to back up the points being made. Many candidates, however, did not address the precise wording of the question although there were only a few completely irrelevant answers. Candidates in general were able to produce essays that followed a reasonable structure, with work organised into paragraphs and the inclusion of an introduction and conclusion. However, sometimes the introductions did not add anything of particular value to the essay and the first paragraph of the body of many essays was like a new introduction. Many introductions contained superfluous definitions of key words from the topic such as the family and pollution. These introductions lacked relevance and focus and did not show if the candidate had understood the context of the question or had a plan for how they would approach the question set. Some ended with reference to the question in the form of a rhetorical question (often inaccurately expressed), but this often seemed merely tacked on and not related to what had preceded it. Conclusions were often weak and unconvincing, reiterating material that had gone before without proffering a considered judgement on the issues discussed or even being directly related to the terms of the question answered. Answers generally would have benefited from a wider range of clear and targeted examples and only the best candidates wrote the detailed, well-informed and tightly argued response that scored a very high mark for content.

The candidates' work was generally well presented although there were some examples of poor handwriting. Some candidates made excessive numbers of untidy revisions or additions in the text of the essay, which hindered the Examiner's ability to follow an argument.

There were inconsistencies in the use of basic grammar, including prepositions and agreements (masculine/feminine, subject/verb, adjectival) and the use of articles even in some good scripts, but most candidates were able to communicate their ideas and attempted to include variety in their choice of vocabulary and structures. At the top end, candidates displayed an impressive command of the language and confident use of complex vocabulary and structures. At the lower end, candidates resorted to using English words instead of using French equivalents. Phonetic spelling was evident as well as minor slips that could have been avoided by checking.

Planning is a key element when writing a discursive essay, but many candidates appeared to bypass this important phase, writing just a few key words, or nothing at all. It was clear that those candidates who planned their essays carefully, defined the terms of the question in the introduction, wrote a logical and persuasive argument, and arrived at a balanced conclusion, gained the highest marks.

Among a number of common errors, the following were seen:

Incorrect spelling of common words: *problem, dévelopment, government, environment, le stresse, l'impacte, concluire, à fin, activitée, résaux sociaux, l'emploie, néanmois.*

Incomplete negatives: *les adolescents pensent qu'à*

Incorrect use of *beaucoup: beaucoup des gens; beaucoup de l'argent*

Use of *grâce à* instead of *à cause de*

Inappropriate use of *personnes/gens (e.g. certains gens); plusieurs des personnes; nombreux des personnes*

Reference to *personnes* as *ils*

Confusion between: ce/*ces/ses/c'est; ça/sa; son/sont; ce/ceux; voir/voire; on/ont; a/à; et/est*

Misuse of pronouns : *il y en a des jeunes qui; il y existe au travail*

Overuse of *plusieurs, choses, beaucoup*

Anglicisms and anglicised structures: *ils ne sont pas donné, consister de (with noun), résulter dans, définitivement, afforder, en addition*

Incorrect use of plural verb after *cela*: *cela aident*

Incorrect use of preposition after common verbs: *encourager de; préférer de; dépendre sur, écouter à leurs parents*

Incorrect use of linking words such as *néanmoins*, *cependant*, *toutefois*


## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Question 1**

*La vie familiale: source de rires et de larmes. Discutez.*

This was an extremely popular question and candidates of all abilities were able to make pertinent points. Many candidates treated the question as the positives and negatives of being part of a family and the importance of family life for the individual. The best scripts made closer reference to the terms *rires* and *larmes* in the title. They described the joys of welcoming a newborn in the family, family celebrations or simply just time spent together enjoying the company of siblings and family jokes. Candidates in general did not spend as much time on the *rires* as the *larmes*. Their discussion of the situations which might bring sadness and tears to a family included frictions, arguments about homework or clothes but also some more serious issues. Some scripts devoted too much time to defining the family, describing different types of family and showing how the family is the primary educator. The best scripts concluded that the highs and lows of family life mirrored life itself and it was important for families to ensure that the positives outweighed the negatives.

### **Question 2**

*Protéger le public entraîne un risque de violence policière. Discutez.*

Few candidates chose this question. Most dealt extensively with police violence without putting it into the context of protecting the public. It was generally agreed that the police used too much violence and various reasons were given for this, including lack of training, poor discipline within the force, and lax recruiting procedures. Some candidates felt that police officers are fallible human beings and at times they are put under significant pressure and fear for their lives. This can lead to mistakes. Candidates often cited infamous incidents of police violence that made the international press, and many made reference to countries where the police force operates a brutal regime. The best essays also considered the role of the police as protectors of the public in managing difficult situations and dealing with criminals and saw that this role could therefore be extremely challenging. They concluded that to be effective, police officers must be well trained and accountable for their actions.

**Question 3**

*Le tourisme de masse est un mal nécessaire pour certains pays. Qu'en pensez-vous?*

This was a popular question and generated some thoughtful responses. Most candidates could see the positives and negatives of tourism, although many failed to specifically reference the *de masse* idea. It was generally felt that tourism was a good thing for developing countries as it creates jobs, brings in money and investment, a better infrastructure for the local population and allows cultural exchange. Many candidates thought that having a large number of tourists was good as it brought more money. Others felt that too many tourists led to serious environmental issues such as depletion of local resources, accumulation of waste and destruction of environmentally sensitive sites such as coral reefs. The best answers understood that the *mal nécessaire* in the title meant that developing countries often have no choice but to accept and tolerate mass tourism because the consequences of not having it could be catastrophic for the economy. It was felt that the way forward could be ecotourism where travellers are sensitive to the environment and local culture so that they bring in money but have a low impact.

**Question 4**

*Les rencontres face à face sont devenues moins importantes à cause de l'évolution de la communication virtuelle. Discutez de cette affirmation.*

This question was quite popular and attracted candidates across the range of ability. The strongest responses were those that took a balanced and nuanced view and linked the two elements of the title. They pointed out the advantages offered by virtual communication; allowing professional meetings to take place without the necessity for expensive and pollution-causing travel, conversations between families and friends separated by distance and the provision of education for candidates unable to attend school particularly during the pandemic. They did recognise that humans are social animals, and that virtual communication could not ever replace the joy of being close to someone, reacting to body language and sharing experiences. Some responses were less nuanced and merely described the benefits of the internet and social media and felt that these developments far outweighed the need for face-to-face meetings. Their arguments failed to recognise the disadvantages of meeting people online as opposed to face to face or the isolation suffered by people permanently glued to their screens. The best responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the issues in the title, demonstrated a balanced view and used a good range of examples to illustrate their arguments.

**Question 5**

*L'indifférence est le plus grand obstacle à la lutte contre la pollution. Êtes vous d'accord?*

Candidates answering this question mostly wrote about the different types of pollution and the problems it caused. The most nuanced answers pointed out that the attitudes of governments and people were often an obstacle in the fight against pollution. They understood that political solutions are necessary in order to counter the apathy of the general public or the inability of consumers to make the necessary changes such as moving to more eco-friendly forms of transport. Candidates pointed out that governments were not necessarily indifferent to or ignorant of the problems but had considerable immediate issues (e.g. poverty or war) to deal with in their own countries which might take precedence over pollution. Some essays placed the blame firmly on the richer economic countries who had choices they could make, whereas poorer countries were struggling to survive. It was generally agreed that indifference was an obstacle to fighting pollution, but many candidates failed to explore this fully, preferring to stick to their well-prepared discussions of the impact of the various types of pollution.

# FRENCH LANGUAGE

| Paper 8682/33 |
| Essay |

### Key messages

In order to be successful on this paper, candidates need to take the time to read the questions carefully, to highlight the key terms and to write a plan. They then need to develop a logical and well-illustrated answer that focuses precisely on the question set. Candidates should use the introduction to their essay to show clearly their understanding of the title and what their approach will be. Paragraphing, with use of appropriate linking words or phrases, is an important element in this type of essay in order to show both clarity of thought and logical progression through the argument. The conclusion should then show a considered final judgement of the issues discussed. In order to attain high marks for language, candidates should write accurately and idiomatically in language which demonstrates complexity both in structure and vocabulary.

### General comments

The standard of work of this cohort of candidates ranged from the very poor to the good, with many scripts in the adequate band. Overall, candidates made a genuine effort to answer the questions set. Most candidates understood the demands of the paper, both in terms of length, structure and register. They usually presented their arguments logically, structured their responses around paragraphs and included a number of ideas, and, sometimes, examples to illustrate them. Candidates occasionally included material that was not directly relevant to the question set but there were no wholly irrelevant essays. It is particularly important that candidates tackle the precise terms of the question set and not merely write about the overarching topic. This inevitably leads to generic and sometimes pre-learned material being deployed making it very difficult for candidates to access the higher mark bands.

Content marks reflect the level of discussion and sophistication of the argument.

The quality of language varied considerably across the cohort, and there were some essays in the good and very good bands for language. There were also a number of weak scripts with frequent errors in the use of basic grammar e.g., singular/plural, adjectival and subject-verb agreements, articles, and prepositions. Candidates often tried to include some variety in their choice of vocabulary and structures but others included English words which impeded fluency and comprehension (les béhaviours, provide, afford). At the upper end, however, there were some responses which demonstrated a good knowledge of the topic area, focused on the terms of the question and expressed ideas in clear and mostly accurate French, using a range of structures.

Among a number of common errors, the following were seen:

Incorrect spelling of common words: *problem, dévelopment, government, environment, le stresse, l'impacte, concluire, à fin, activitée, résaux sociaux, l'emploie, néanmois ;.*

Incomplete negatives: *les adolescents pensent qu'à ;*

Incorrect use of *beaucoup: beaucoup des gens ; beaucoup de l'argent ;*

Use of *grâce à* instead of *à cause de ;*

Inappropriate use of *personnes/ gens (e.g certains gens) ; plusieurs des personnes ; nombreux des personnes ;*

Reference to *personnes* as *ils*

Confusion between: ce/ces/ses/c'est; ça/sa; son/sont; ce/ceux ; voir/voire ; on/ont ; a/à ; et/est ;

Misuse of pronouns :  il y en a des jeunes qui ; il y existe au travail ;

Overuse of plusieurs, choses, beaucou ;p

Anglicisms and anglicised structures: ils ne sont pas donné, consister de (with noun), résulter dans, définitivement, afforder, en addition ;

Incorrect use of plural verb after cela: cela aident

Incorrect use of preposition after common verbs:  encourager de; préférer de; dépendre sur, écouter à leurs parents ;

Incorrect use of linking words such as néanmoins, cependant, toutefois;

Use of c'est instead of il est:  c'est important que ;

Difficulties with relative pronouns : la façon que … ; la raison pourquoi ;

Internet used with an article.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

*Dans quelles mesures les bonnes relations familiales sont-elles essentielles pour une vie réussie ?*

This was a popular question which elicited some intersting and personal responses. In general, candidates agreed that good family relationships can provide significant advantages in life such as emotional stability and a support network which gives family members more confidence and therefore makes them more successful. A family should be a place where positive attitudes, behaviour and social skills are taught through good relationships between parents and children. Young people will thus be prepared for living in society and for forming positive relationships at work and with their own families. The best scripts also pointed out that one can succeed in life without a happy and supportive family as personal talents, hard work and resilience are also important factors in determining whether one is successful or not. Essays were generally relevant and clearly expressed but sometimes narrow in scope.

### Question 2

*Faut-il protéger la liberté de manifester dans les rues ?*

This was not a very popular question. Those candidates attempting it had strong opinions about the right to demonstrate. They generally felt that as freedom of expression is a human right, the right to march in the streets should be protected. They did, however, note that violence could be a problem and that any demonstrations should be closely controlled. They quoted examples of the demonstrations in France against the retirement reforms and they showed how violence in Paris had had an impact on business and tourism, resulting in loss of income and personal injuries. Many candidates felt that to avoid the possibility of violence, it would be better to conduct campaigns online. This would enable a wider audience to be reached and save police time and major disturbances within public areas. Overall candidates came to the conclusion that whilst the freedom to demonstrate must be protected, violence must be avoided.

### Question 3

*Voyager seul(e) : aventure ou risque ?*

This question was attempted by candidates a large number of candidates. Some discussed the benefits and dangers of travelling in general rather than focusing on being a lone traveller. Most agreed that it can be risky to travel alone as it is easier to be targeted by criminals and to be robbed or subjected to violence or sexual assault. Having no-one to fall back on in an emergency was also seen as a risk, particularly if the traveller did not know the language in the country visited. On the other hand, candidates saw clear benefits for solo travellers such as the freedom to make their own arrangements, to decide their own itinerary and to meet other people and make meaningful relationships. Candidates usually concluded that travelling alone is both

dangerous and an adventure. Some added ways in which dangers can be mitigated, such as learning the local language or choosing one's destination with care. Responses were generally clear and well argued, with good examples.

## Question 4

*Internet est-il en train de changer la nature humaine ?*

Many candidates took this question to mean discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the internet. The best responses attempted to link their arguments to the issue of how and whether the internet affects human nature. Some candidates argued that online anonymity and lack of physical contact encourages cruel behaviour and lack of empathy in communications. Cyberbullying was often quoted. Others felt that with the vast amount of information available on the internet, people are now better informed about local or global problems, which makes them more understanding and compassionate. Some were clear that connections between people are an essential part of human nature and that the internet just allows that connection to be made albeit in a different and sometimes risky way.

## Question 5

*On dit que la pollution touche la ville et la campagne également. Qu'en pensez-vous ?*

A number of candidates spent a long time defining the different types of pollution without close reference to the question. Some ignored the notion of *egalement* in the question and thus did not make comparisons between the town and the country. The best scripts focused on transport and air pollution in the cities and its effect on human health and compared this with soil and water pollution in the countryside which affected crops and farmers' income as well as people's health. Some candidates commented that plastic waste was a kind of pollution that affected all communities across the world. In comparing cities and countryside, candidates argued that both were equally affected but in different ways. In most essays there was a range of examples and most concluded by saying that pollution levels needed to be reduced everywhere in order to prevent damage to the environment and human health.