

GCSE



# Chief Examiner's Report French

Summer Series 2018





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in French for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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## GCSE FRENCH

### Chief Examiner's Report

Very few centres entered candidates for the new specification examinations in the summer of 2018. The papers in the new format were accessible to a wide range of candidates and it was encouraging to see some very good responses.

### Assessment Unit 3 Reading

#### Foundation Level

- Q1** Most candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- Q2** This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. Some answered Part (a) incorrectly, neglecting the importance of 'every day'.
- Q3** Most candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- Q4** Parts (a) and (d) were straightforward and were answered accurately. In Part (b) it was evident some candidates did not deal successfully with 'demain'. In Part (c) some chose C (enjoyable) possibly due to the presence of the smiley emoji at the end of the first line of the text. Candidates should be encouraged to answer each part question in line with the development of the text and paragraph divisions.
- Q5** This question was generally well done. Candidates coped well with the variety of vocabulary.
- Q6** This was a more challenging question. Candidates dealt better with the first paragraph and last line than the two middle sections. The superlatives 'les mois les plus chauds' and 'les mois les plus froids', the preposition 'en dessous de' and the negative '... ni ... ni ...' were misunderstood by some in paragraph 2. The vocabulary in paragraph 3 also caused difficulty [particularly 'saison parfaite', 'peut briller très fort', 'ciel est ... couvert' and 'imperméable'. That said, it was pleasing that many candidates ticked Parts (a) and (i) as correct statements.
- Q7** Very few candidates achieved full marks in this question. 'Jouets' and 'Electroménager' were not widely recognised. A number of candidates were unsuccessful in responding accurately to Parts (a), (b), (e) and (f).
- Q8** Candidates had mixed success here. Some displayed very accurate understanding and translated well while others resorted to guessing based on knowledge of a single word. In Part (a) 'jeune' was not well known. In Part (b) a number of candidates did not know 'il s'entend bien'. In Part (c) 'de bonne humeur' proved challenging. In Part (d) the possessive adjective 'ses' was often given as 'the' and 'vraiment' was frequently not addressed. Candidates who performed best realised that the four sentences together make up a description of the teacher.
- Q9** Good grammar knowledge and awareness of syntax helped able candidates to achieve high marks in this question. Parts (a) and (d) were more accessible than Parts (b) and (c). In Part (b) the most common error was to insert 'laisser courir' instead of 'courir' thereby exposing misunderstanding of the function of 'laisser'. In this question type candidates should be encouraged to identify the single key word required to complete the sentence. Extraction of phrases containing the key word frequently renders the completed sentence incoherent.

- Q10** This question posed difficulties for many candidates. It was pleasing, however, that some did manage to score well, demonstrating good understanding of the text and displaying mature technique in identifying the correct statements. Common errors were identifying Part (c) and (i) as correct statements possibly highlighting ‘... a lieu ...’ as a difficult structure and a lack of focus on the negative structure ‘On ne peut pas acheter ....’ Statements (m) and (l) also proved problematic particularly ‘... sont priés de s’asseoir avant le commencement ...’. There was also evidence of loose understanding of ‘une heure avant le début du soirée’ in the text.
- Q11** Most candidates answered Part (a) correctly. Many inserted ‘décoré’ for Part (b). A general lack of awareness of the functions of ‘bon’ and ‘bien’ was evident in many scripts. Some selected ‘dort’ instead of ‘sort’ for Part (d). Parts (e) and (f) were handled more successfully.
- Q12** This question was handled well by many candidates indicating clear understanding of vocabulary.

### Higher Level

- Q1** The majority of candidates answered both parts of this question correctly.
- Q2** Some candidates did not know ‘remplir’ and wrote ‘do the dishes’ for Part (a). Similarly, ‘nettoie’ was not widely known in Part (b).
- Q3** This question was handled well by a large proportion of candidates. Many achieved three marks out of four. In Part (b) however, some thought the onions needed to be chopped. Part (d) was the most common incorrect response with many alternatives offered for ‘... éviter un goût sec.’
- Q4** This question was very accessible and was answered well.
- Q5** Precise understanding was required to gain the marks in this question. While most candidates understood that Riner was a judo champion, reference was needed to ‘neuf titres’ to secure the mark in Part (a). Only a few managed to convey understanding of ‘porte-drapeau’ in Part (b). In Part (c) ‘... n’a subi que deux défaites ...’ was challenging in terms of vocabulary and the negative structure. Clear and accurate wording was required to secure the marks available.
- Q6** This question was successful in terms of differentiation. Top candidates had the opportunity to shine, demonstrating a good level of understanding of the text, mature awareness of the concept of volunteering and good examination technique. Some worked sensibly within the context. Weaker candidates often struggled offering basic responses, mistranslating and/or leaving blank spaces. Candidates should identify the three sub-sections of the stimulus and then look for answers in chronological order. In general terms Part (b) was handled much less well than Parts (a) and (c).
- Q7** Clear syntax and common vocabulary ought to have produced better performances in a large proportion of the scripts. Among the words causing most difficulty were ‘jeune’, ‘humeur’, ‘ses’ and ‘vraiment’. Candidates are to be encouraged to avoid loose translations that do not capture the essence of the sentence.
- Q8** Many candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- Q9** This question proved challenging with a significant number of candidates finding the short texts difficult to translate accurately. Awareness of sentence patterns including conjunctions and prepositional phrases, immediate verb/tense recognition and knowledge of higher level vocabulary were all essential in this question. In Part (a) many simply relied on ‘explosion’ alone in choosing Option C. Only the best candidates knew ‘cambriolages’. Part (b) was answered well by a pleasing number.

In Part (c) many simply opted for option B due to the presence of the adjective 'alarmante'. Knowledge and/or recognition of 'dorment' may have led to more successful outcomes. Similarly, in Part (d), it appeared that many opted for the recognisable recycling symbol in option C without really focusing appropriately on key words such as 'déchets' and 'poubelle'.

- Q10** This question was tackled well by candidates who adopted a grammar-focused approach rather than gist understanding or guesswork. It must be pointed out that some responses did expose deficiencies in language awareness e.g. '... tout le monde ...' followed by an adjective or preposition. Common errors occurred in Parts (b), (c) and (d). The verb 'dort' was occasionally offered for Part (d) without any reference to sleeping in the stimulus text. Parts (a), (e) and (f) were generally more accessible.
- Q11** In Part (a) a pleasing number recognised 'combien' and answered accurately with no superfluous material. Part (b) was not well handled. Many candidates wrote ... 'presqu'autant de femmes que d'hommes jouent.' This is a statement of fact and does not contain any reference to gaming being a worrying development. Part (c) was generally well done, although some answered irrelevantly possibly due to not knowing 'lieux'. Part (d) was answered incorrectly by many candidates, in spite of the support provided by the bracketed statistics. Able candidates knew the meaning of 'moitié' in the final sentence of the text in Part (e) but this word was not widely known across the cohort.
- Q12** The layout of this question enabled many candidates to focus attention on specific language rather than extracting longer phrases and sentences in the hope of acquiring a mark. Question forms were generally well identified and many candidates answered relevantly and sensibly. In Part (a) some candidates answered 2008 instead of 1993. Part (b) was done well, albeit with some extra but unnecessary words added. In cases where superfluous material is included, it must not compromise the clarity of the response or cloud understanding. Part (c) was accessible with many candidates correctly identifying two of the three options available. Parts (d), (e) and (f) were challenging. The phrase 'avant tout' was ignored by many in Part (d). In Part (e) many thought that members' main responsibility was to welcome, offer explanation and advise rather than promoting the game. Only a few candidates managed to secure both marks in Part (f).

## Assessment Unit 4 Writing

### Foundation Level

- Q1** (a) Some candidates had difficulty spelling classroom objects correctly.  
 (b) A number of candidates did not appear to understand 'pièce', 'derrière', or 'aider'.

- Q2** (d) Was not understood by some.

The instruction, "Write a full sentence for each answer" indicates that a verb ought to be included; whereas answers such as 'deux frères et une sœur' or 'le trois juillet', or 'un chien' make sense and might sound very natural, they do not equate to a correctly written sentence and cannot be awarded full marks.

- Q3** This question was rarely answered well. Candidates would benefit from frequent practice of this style of exercise in preparation for the examination. In awarding marks, examiners looked for evidence of knowledge of a range of vocabulary and accuracy in the use of verbs and other basic grammar, as appropriate to GCSE Foundation level.

- Q4** Context 3 was the most frequently chosen option. As has been the case in recent years in the Controlled Assessment Writing component, candidates are advised to structure their answer according to the five bullet points in the question and to write a fairly even answer for each of these bullet points. Centres are directed to CCEA information regarding word count in this question. At times, there was little control of verbs and tenses or other aspects of grammar and there was a lack of idiomatic language used in this question.

### Higher Level

- Q1** This question is identical to Question 2 in Foundation Writing. Some answers were well structured and answered in a straightforward but accurate manner. However, it was evident that a number of candidates did not understand the meaning of questions such as ‘Comment es-tu physiquement?’.
- Q2** Sections (b), (c), and (d) were very often misunderstood. In this question, a wider range of tenses is examined, and candidates should be take care with the time frame required in each section.
- Q3** (a) ‘Travailleur’ was often used for ‘travailler’. The word for ‘your’ was not handled well on occasions.
- (b) This section was answered more successfully.
- (c) Present tense + ‘depuis’ was successfully used by a few candidates.
- (d) The use of the perfect tense was inconsistent. Centres are advised to direct candidates to look for and identify the tenses used in questions and to write their answers accordingly.
- (e) ‘Propre’ was not well known.
- Q4** The Context 3 question was by far the most popular, though there were some good attempts at the other two context questions by candidates.

The same general comments apply as for Foundation Level Question 4.

In Question 4 (c) candidates often did not pay attention to the singular terms in the bullets points referring to ‘teacher’ and ‘an extra-curricular activity’ and therefore described multiple teachers and activities rather than concentrating on one and developing those points. The last bullet point was not always successfully addressed, as many candidates misread the question and described an activity they already do. This resulted in incorrect tense usage which consequently produced lower marks for grammar and structures.

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