
GCSE

FRENCH

8658/RH: Reading Higher
Report on the Examination

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General comments

The majority of students found the paper to be accessible and the rubrics were followed in an exemplary fashion. Many were able to gain at least some marks for each question, though the more challenging questions aimed at the highest grades inevitably proved demanding for some students. Nevertheless, there were few unattempted questions which was pleasing and students' handwriting was generally clear.

Care should be taken to ensure that the final answer is obvious to examiners, especially in the questions requiring a single letter for an answer. It may be unclear to the examiner, for example, if a student simply writes a letter above another one when changing their answer. The original answer should be crossed out and the new and final answer placed as near as possible to the box.

Section A

Question 1

There were many high scoring answers in this overlap question with a success rate of around 90%, as one would expect at Higher tier. The question allowed students to make a very positive start to the paper.

Question 2

The majority of students answered 2.1 incorrectly, and there was much confusion between *cheveux* and *chevaux* which led to many answers such as 'see a hairdressing contest'. The word *guerre* was frequently understood in 2.2 and led to many successful answers. Unfortunately the phrase *d'une manière abusive* in relation to the increase in hotel prices in 2.3 led many students to think that the owners or staff were rude or unfriendly.

Question 3

This was answered well on the whole, especially 3.2 and 3.5, although 3.1 was frequently incorrect since *paisible* was not picked out. The use of the word *filie* led some to answer 3.3 inaccurately while in 3.4, *en plein air* was not always understood.

Question 4

This question was well answered with around 81% achieving at least two marks. Some did not score a mark because *nous pouvons nourrir tout le monde si on ne mange pas de viande* was taken to be Arthur's view, whereas his subsequent remark, *Pourtant, je n'en suis pas persuade*, negates this.

Question 5

All parts were well answered with the exception of 5.4, where more than half of students failed to score. It appeared that the phrase *Ça valait la peine de me lever de bonne heure* was taken to mean that getting up early was inconvenient. The correct answer was *nous avons quitté l'hôtel trop tôt*. This was to be found in Bruno's comments, but it was not observed.

Question 6

Students started this section confidently but the last three answers proved challenging, particularly 6.4 where the phrase *j'apprends à conduire un véhicule lourd* together with the future tense in *je chercherai* led many students to select the wrong answer.

Question 7

7.1 caused a lot of confusion for some students. Though around 64% scored at least one mark, there were some vague answers about the general advantages of boarding and there were frequent incorrect references to the internet. Many understood the point about Lea's ability to do her chosen subject, though fewer were able to convey the idea of having a shorter journey to school.

7.2 was very well answered, though some wrote incorrectly that she did not get on well with her fellow students rather than that she did not know them.

Question 8

This was very well answered by almost all students, especially part 8.2. However, many did not score the mark in 8.1 because they did not understand *géné et mal à l'aise*. In 8.3, *plein de gens* was not well known and there was confusion caused by the use of the word *majorité*, since the negative was not spotted.

Section B**Question 9**

Apart from 9.4, this question was successfully answered. It was important to notice the use of *à l'avenir* in the question so that *ne s'est pas améliorée* could be eliminated as a possible answer.

Question 10

There were many pleasing answers in this section, though 10.3 caused some problems due to the use of the word *illettrée*.

Question 11

This question proved to be demanding and many students did not score as highly as expected, with fewer than half of all students scoring more than two marks.

The question was challenging since all the possible answers were past participles, so students did not have the additional support of being able to eliminate some options due to grammatical knowledge. Both *accueilli* and *attristé* proved impossible for most students to work out, though communication strategies should have helped students to arrive at the meaning. The two verbs *gagné* and *couru* were better known and this allowed many to score two of the four marks available.

Question 12

This proved to be a straightforward exercise for many, with a pleasing number of high scoring answers and over 90% of students gaining two or more marks.

Question 13

The translation question discriminated well with the whole range of marks applied. Very few students failed to score at all and around 70% scored at least four of the available marks. However, students need to understand that precision is required here, for example, incorrect use of tenses and the omission of key words, such as *plus*, will prevent students scoring. Pronouns also need to be rendered accurately and paraphrasing should be avoided.

Section 1:

Je voudrais sortir plus souvent was well answered.

Section 2:

Most students successfully translated *il n'y a rien à faire*, but 'there's not much to do' was not credited. Unfortunately, it was often the use of 'village' rather than town or city which meant the mark was not awarded.

Section 3:

The imperfect tense caused difficulties here, with many using the present.

Section 4:

'Always' was allowed for *toujours* and was widely used, although 'still' would have been a better answer. The present tense was often ignored.

Section 5:

On rencontre was not always correctly rendered, with 'we see' used and *souvent* often omitted. *Sans-abris* was not known by many and there were frequent references to 'rubbish'.

Section 6:

The sentence *J'ai décidé de partir* was often correctly translated, though 'I have decided to take part' was sometimes seen.

Section 7:

Many translated *après avoir fini mes études* correctly.

Section 8:

This section and section 9 were by far the most challenging with *il me faudra* causing problems here, both in terms of meaning and tense. Even when *il faudra* was correctly translated, some students then went on to lose the mark by saying something like 'to buy a car'.

Section 9:

Travailler à l'étranger was often translated as 'travel with a stranger', or 'travel to strange lands'. The correct rendition of *je pense*, which should be 'I'm thinking of', was often absent.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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