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# FOREIGN LANGUAGE FRENCH

Paper 0520/01

Listening

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## General comments

The Paper was of a very similar standard to last year's Paper and overall the standard of candidate response was sound. As last year, the majority of candidates scored at least half marks and displayed pleasing levels of competence in their understanding of specific and general comprehension tasks. Candidates were usually well prepared for the variety of question types on the Paper and usually understood examination rubrics well. Questions requiring written answers in French were marked for communication of message. Accuracy was only considered if the clarity of the message was in doubt. Answers written in languages other than French were ignored.

The extracts heard featured both formal and informal language in a variety of topics and settings as set out in the syllabus. Questions in **Section 1** were based on the Defined Content Areas A, B and C and associated vocabulary.

As last year, the vast majority of candidates chose to answer questions on all three sections of the Paper. For some this was far too demanding. If candidates find it difficult to score moderately well on the first two sections of the Paper they will find it difficult to perform competently on the final section as the Paper increases in difficulty through the three sections.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1**

#### *Exercise 1*

#### **Questions 1 - 8**

This exercise tested the comprehension of short conversations. The question type was multiple choice. Candidates generally did well on this section, often scoring at least 5 marks and many scored full marks. Questions done best were **Questions 2, 3 and 5**. On **Question 1** some candidates failed to pick up *en face de la sortie*. On **Question 6** some candidates failed to recognise *le coq au vin*. The only other question which proved troublesome was **Question 8** where candidates mistook *rayon sport* as the key to the answer and chose **C** instead of **D**.

#### *Exercise 2*

#### **Questions 9 - 16**

Candidates generally did very well on this exercise and the inclusion of four questions tested by visuals – **Questions 9, 10, 15 and 16** made the exercise very accessible to even the weakest candidates. The exercise tested the comprehension of factual information concerning tourist activities in Brussels. All candidates did well on **Questions 9, 10, 15 and 16**. On **Question 11** errors of understanding of *dix-sept heures trente* were quite frequent, many offering '10.30'. The numbers in **Question 12** were not quite as well answered as expected. **Question 13** was usually correct though surprising numbers wrote *glace*. On **Question 14** some candidates wrote *aujourd'hui* or *mardi* instead of the correct *lundi*.

### **Section 2**

#### *Exercise 1*

#### **Question 17**

Candidates heard four young people talking about pocket money. Candidates were clearly told to tick only 6 boxes, but a few candidates tried to tick 2 per person or 1 box per person – thus disadvantaging themselves. This exercise type is frequently used so it is well worth making sure that candidates are familiar with the rubric. Good numbers of candidates scored 5 or 6 marks. Questions best answered were **(a)**, **(c)** and **(i)**

## Exercise 2

### Questions 18 - 26

As last year, this exercise was targeted at the more able Core candidates and weaker candidates found it more demanding. Candidates were required to answer in French, but answers in complete sentences were not required and, frequently, short responses were more than adequate. Generally, candidates coped well on the exercise, but weaker candidates found the last questions difficult. The extract heard was about a typical French Christmas and involved candidates understanding an account which featured both past and future tenses. On **Question 18**, reference needed to be made to Hélène having family in France or the fact that her mother was French. The answer *pour passer Noël* was not adequate for the mark as it did not explain the *souvent* in the question. On **Question 19 (a)**, *arbre* was not always well known and on **Question 19 (b)** some candidates just wrote *aider son père* without explaining how they helped. Some candidates also rendered *courses* as *cours* which could not gain the mark as a different meaning was suggested. On **Question 20**, *bouche* was sometimes offered, but providing *gâteau de chocolat* was added this did not result in candidates losing the mark. *Bûche de Noël*, however, was quite well known. **Question 21** was frequently answered as *frites de mer* – *fruits de mer* was not well known. Few gave *ambiance* on **Question 22**, but the answer of *champagne* was quite acceptable. Despite poor renderings of *surveiller* and the incorrect auxiliary with *rester*, most scored the mark on **Question 23**. *Sous* and *sur* were frequently confused on **Question 24**, but the answer *dans les bottes* was also accepted. On **Question 25** some reference to *promenade* was needed and on **Question 26** reference to dancing was needed. The English response 'dance' was not tolerated.

## Section 3

### Exercise 1

### Questions 27 - 32

Despite the fact that this was a multiple-choice exercise and did not require candidates to respond in written French, this was found to be the most testing exercise on the Paper. It was intended to test Extended candidates so inappropriately entered candidates found it very demanding, often only scoring the odd mark. Generally, candidates found the last three questions easier than the first three. The exercise featured an interview with a young French boy recounting his travels. It required the skill of following events, the understanding of adverbial time phrases and the understanding of future plans.

### Exercise 2

### Questions 33 - 40

This was a testing and appropriate exercise at this level and it discriminated well among the best candidates. Candidates heard a young person talking about life and studies in Luxembourg. On **Question 33**, answers featuring either/or countries/languages were acceptable and many answered correctly. Incorrect answers featured *belge* or *anglais*. Candidates frequently picked up *trilingue* on **Question 34** and also picked up the concept of *langue maternelle* on **Question 35**. On **Question 36**, which was a good test of listening skills, the idea that all subjects were taught in French was only understood by better candidates. Some just answered that French was a new subject which invalidated the answer. Answers including *métier(s)* instead of *matières* did not gain the mark. On **Question 37**, the answer *pour la faculté/l'université* was not full enough – candidates had **either** to show they understood that young people wanting to go to university had to go to Germany, Belgium or France **or** that there was not a university in Luxembourg. On **Question 38**, confusion between *2 heures* and *2 ans de retard* was common, but good candidates were able to convey the idea of *redoubler une année* with responses such as *répéter l'année scolaire*. On **Question 39**, reference to watching TV or foreign language programmes was needed to gain the mark. **Question 40** proved fairly accessible. *Le commerce* was adequate for **Question 40(a)**, but quite a few wrote *le marketing* or *la publicité*. Many candidates identified successfully *par communiquer* on **Question 40 (b)**, but answers spelt 'communicate' did not gain the mark.

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<b>Paper 0520/02</b> <b>Reading and Directed Writing</b>
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### General comments

The overall performance was of an encouragingly high standard. The spread of marks was very appropriate with perhaps fewer very low marks and more high scores than last year. Both the reading comprehension texts and the writing tasks seemed to appeal to the candidates. There was very little misinterpretation of the **Section 2** writing task and nearly all candidates were able to write something appropriate.

It was clear that most candidates were familiar with the different test types used on the Question Paper and they paid close attention to the rubrics. Examiners commented on the how well candidates had been prepared for this examination.

### Comments on specific questions

#### **Section 1**

##### *Exercise 1*

#### **Questions 1 - 6**

These questions (testing defined content vocabulary) were perhaps not as well answered as they have been in previous years. To score full marks on this exercise was the exception rather than the rule: 4 or 5 out of 6 were the commonest scores. **Questions 1, 2 and 3** were generally found harder than **4, 5 and 6**. Some words, e.g. *repassage*, *assiettes* and *sales*, were clearly unfamiliar to candidates.

##### *Exercise 2*

#### **Questions 7 - 13**

Nearly all candidates scored very highly (at least 5 out of 7). **Questions 11 and 12** were sometimes answered incorrectly as *Faux* and **Question 13** was sometimes thought to be *Vrai*.

##### *Exercise 3*

#### **Questions 14 - 20**

This exercise did not cause much difficulty. Full marks were scored by the majority of candidates.

##### *Exercise 4*

#### **Question 21**

Many candidates were confident with the subject matter and managed to communicate the required points sufficiently clearly to score full marks. The rendering of a comment about *taille* caused difficulties for some candidates and was sometimes totally omitted. Some candidates wrote about their favourite hobbies rather than describing their *caractère*, as was required.

Adjective agreements were often inconsistent, but did not impede communication.

#### **Section 2**

##### *Exercise 1*

#### **Questions 22 - 32**

The text and the questions were handled confidently by the majority of candidates. The only question to cause any particular difficulty was **Question 25**: *le groupe le plus avancé* was often given as an answer. *La préparation aux compétitions* scored the mark.

## Exercise 2

### Question 33

Most candidates found the topic of the writing task extremely accessible and scores for communication were very good on the whole. There was sometimes misunderstanding of *pièce* in task (b) and a minority of candidates either did not understand the subject at all or did not have the language to complete it. Some candidates thought they had to give a description of their dream house.

Although the majority of candidates respected the word limit, some very good candidates got carried away by the subject and responses to task (c) and even, occasionally, to task (b) sometimes came after the 95 word limit. Where this happened, candidates could not score for these two tasks.

Many candidates were able to write interesting descriptions which were a pleasure to read, though there were answers that took the form of a list and which were therefore rather repetitive.

Grammatical accuracy was variable. It was disappointing that sometimes the spelling and gender of common vocabulary for this topic was insecure (e.g. *chambre*, *salle à manger*, *salle de bains*, *cuisine*, *jardin*).

## Section 3

### Exercise 1

#### Questions 34 - 40

This exercise proved to be a good discriminator. Candidates should be reminded that they only need to re-write statements they have identified as *Faux*. There were candidates who re-wrote statements they had identified as *Vrai*. They were not penalised for this, but the time it took could have been better spent.

The questions candidates found most difficult were:

**Question 35** – quite often answered with *Plus de 3 millions de personnes*. Candidates were required to refer to the 337 towns/villages/*communes* that participated in the picnic or to the fact that the whole of France had participated.

**Question 36** – candidates often thought each participant **did** have to bring his/her own table-cloth.

### Exercise 2

#### Questions 41 - 46

Most candidates who attempted this exercise understood the text quite well and answered the questions sufficiently well to score at least half marks on this exercise.

**Questions 41, 43, 44(i) and 46** were usually correctly answered.

**Question 41** – A proportion of candidates answered *Parce qu'il ne retrouve pas ses parents*. Correct answers were along the lines of *Des soldats entrent dans son village/des soldats ont mis le feu à sa maison/pour fuir les soldats*.

**Question 43** – Most candidates could render *Il parlait bien français* and scored the mark, but many struggled to put *mes parents m'avaient dit* into the 3rd person. *Ses parents l'avaient dit* was accepted as was *La vie est facile en France*.

**Question 44 (ii)** – some candidates selected *sans ressources* from the text, which was not the reason the French police noticed Zahdig.

### Exercise 3

#### Questions 47 - 66

A challenging exercise which will not appear on the Paper in 2003 and thereafter. Although many candidates found it difficult – high marks were rare and scores of less than half marks were common –, a few candidates did manage to score 8 or 9 marks.

The most accessible questions proved to be: **47, 51, 52, 54, 59, 60**. The questions candidates had most problems with were: **48, 49, 55, 56, 58, 63, 64, 65, 66**.

<p><b>Paper 0520/03</b> <b>Speaking</b></p>
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#### General comments

This Paper was common to all candidates whether they had studied a Core or Extended curriculum course. The full range of marks was available to all candidates and, as last year, a wide range of performance was heard by Moderators.

Overall, the Moderators were pleased with the general level of performance heard by these candidates. Well over half the candidates scored over half marks and were able to communicate well in the foreign language at this stage of their education. The general standard heard was very similar to that heard last year and, when examined appropriately, many candidates were given the opportunity to show what they knew and could do. Overall, standards heard were very similar to those heard last year.

#### **Conduct of the examination**

It is, however, regrettable to report this year an increase in the number of Centres in which the examination was conducted inappropriately. These were not all new Centres. Several Moderators reported a sizeable number of Centres where candidates had been disadvantaged by poor preparation on the part of the Examiner which had led to inappropriate examining techniques. This, in turn, led to some candidates being denied the opportunity to complete role play tasks and/or to show the use of tenses in the Topic/Discussion and General Conversation sections. Moderators also reported an increase in the numbers of Centres not adhering to the recommended times of 5 minutes each for the Topic/Discussion **and** the General Conversation sections. Some Centres missed out one of these two sections **completely**, resulting in large differences between marks awarded in Centres and those awarded by Moderators, and, therefore, large adjustments to marks.

The purpose of Moderation is to bring the marking of all Centres in line with the agreed standard. It is clearly extremely difficult to carry out this task if Centres do not examine candidates appropriately. Perhaps, most importantly of all, it is extremely unfair on candidates and puts them at a great disadvantage if sections of the examination are missed out. This is obviously also the case if Examiners are unaware of the essential assessment criteria which are contained in the mark scheme, such as the use of tenses. It is essential that Examiners are thoroughly familiar with the mark scheme and know exactly where/how marks can be gained. If this is not the case, inappropriate examining can take place. Examiners are reminded that the materials for use in the examinations should be studied by the Examiner in the four day preparation period prior to the speaking test. These materials are confidential in nature and their contents must not in any way be revealed to candidates.

All Centres are reminded that candidates should attempt:

- 1 Section A role play
- 1 Section B role play
- Topic/Discussion (5 minutes)
- General Conversation (5 minutes).



Centres are also reminded of the following:

- All clerical work should be checked carefully and additions/transcriptions should be checked. It is the Centre's responsibility to check that all candidates have the correct Moderators, regrettably, noted far more clerical errors this year than in the past.
- Do not record samples on the same tape for different exams e.g. IGCSE French + HIGCSE French as the work for different examinations is submitted to different Moderators.
- Please check recording equipment carefully before recording.
- Please ensure a standard tape recorder is used, not a Dictaphone or mini-cassette.
- Do **not** let candidates identify themselves on the tape. The Examiner should do this.
- Check that all candidates have the correct examination/candidate number before the examination.
- Adhere to timings. Each candidate's speaking test should consist of 2 role plays, a Topic/Discussion section lasting 5 minutes, and a **separate** 5 minute General Conversation.
- Do not pause a tape between different sections of a candidate's test.

### Examining technique

- Ensure that candidates complete all role play tasks by checking that the correct cues are given. Do not change the tasks, and do not take away a candidate's opportunity to complete a task by giving an incorrect cue, e.g. *Vous voulez quelle sorte de billet?* (correct), but **not** *Vous voulez un aller-simple ou un aller-retour?* which prevents candidates from producing the correct phrase themselves. Many Moderators reported that Examiners did not always ensure that candidates had the opportunity to attempt all the role play tasks. Please do not miss tasks out – tasks not attempted cannot gain marks!
- In the Topic/Discussion, please do not allow the candidate to make an initial presentation of their material uninterrupted for more than a minute. A 3-4 minute monologue is not appropriate and will not score high marks however able the candidate is, as the conversation element indicated in the mark scheme has not been fulfilled. Questions enabling the use of tenses should be asked. Do not question solely in the present tense.
- In the General Conversation, aim to cover at least 2 or 3 topics different from what was discussed in the Topic/Discussion section. School, Family, Holidays, Home Life, Geographical Surroundings, Career Plans are all suitable topics. Other more ambitious topics such as Aids, Politics, Pollution etc. can be appropriate, provided that the candidate has the linguistic and personal maturity to cope with the topic. It must be remembered, however, that they must be marked in accordance with the IGCSE mark scheme – do not expect more or less from a candidate purely because they choose a more difficult topic. It is the skills shown in handling a topic of conversation which count.
- Candidates should not choose the topic *Moi-même* for the Topic/Discussion as it pre-empts much General Conversation work.
- Do not encourage all candidates to choose the same topic for their presentations in the Topic/Discussion section. This part of the test aims to encourage candidates to prepare on an individual basis.

### Application of the mark scheme

It was encouraging that so many Centres needed no, or only small, adjustments made to their marks – but there were, regrettably, incidents of larger adjustments being made, mainly when sections of the examination were missing.

- In the role plays, if tasks are omitted, no marks should be awarded for that task. If a task has 2 elements (e.g. time and place), both should be completed for a mark of 2 or 3 to be awarded. Inaccurate language such as a tense error will often mean a maximum mark of 2 should be awarded.
- In the Presentation section in category (a), remember that candidates are required to answer questions of both an expected/predictable and unexpected (i.e. spontaneous) nature to score at the upper end of the mark range.

- In both the Topic/Discussion and General Conversation sections, work will **not** score marks on category (b) (linguistic content) if past, present **and** future meaning is not communicated. Please remind candidates to use a variety of tenses where possible in the Topic/Discussion and the General Conversation.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### ***Role plays***

The 'A' role plays were perceived to be of equal difficulty and of a level of difficulty comparable to last year. They were intentionally easier than the B role plays and were set using vocabulary and topics from the Defined Content Areas A, B and C. Generally, candidates found them accessible and performed well on them. Even the weakest candidates were usually able to score one or two marks per task.

On the whole, the cards worked well and provided candidates with a fair opportunity to use familiar language. However, some candidates forgot to include tasks such as greetings, thanks and apologies.

#### **Role plays: A**

##### *At the campsite*

Generally this role play was well done, but many could not spell their names correctly. Also, some did not say they would write to confirm the reservation. Nearly all managed to ask a pertinent question about the campsite.

##### *At the restaurant*

Again, this was approached well but those who chose to use a conjugation of *s'asseoir* or a phrase such as *je voudrais m'asseoir* often made mistakes. Brief answers such as *à l'intérieur* or *à la terrasse* were also appropriate in response. Other tasks were well done despite some confusion between *entrée* and *plat principal*.

##### *At the railway station*

Tasks 1 and 2 were well done but some could not complete the third task as the cue was incorrectly given by Examiners. Most managed to ask an appropriate question re the time of arrival in Valence.

#### **Role plays: B**

The B role plays deliberately demanded more from candidates in terms of tense usage, giving explanations and responses to questions.

##### *At the police station*

Weaker candidates found it difficult to change *prend* from the introduction to *quelqu'un a pris mon sac*. Other tasks were well attempted, but some Examiners insisted on 2 details of description for the bag plus 2 details of description for the contents – 2 in total were adequate.

##### *Arranging a visit to France*

Not all candidates could say why they were phoning and found a future tense in Task 2 difficult. Other tasks were attempted well – nearly all could give 2 desired activities and name their favourite food.

##### *Phoning a flat owner*

Most were able to explain that they had lost the keys, but some candidates failed to apologise. Some did not offer to reimburse the owner for his/her expense. Most coped well with giving a place and time to meet.



### *Topic/Discussion*

(See General comments)

This produced a wide range of performance. Most candidates had prepared well and were familiar with the vocabulary and structures they needed to do themselves justice. Many candidates chose topics such as holidays, my country, my school. There were also interesting variations such as art, and my ambitions. Candidates had generally prepared their presentation well.

A wide range of performance was heard. The best performances were those in which the candidate was put at ease by the Examiner and could answer not just factual questions on the subject, but could go beyond and give explanations, opinions and justifications. Many candidates and Examiners deserved praise for the way in which they communicated spontaneously. There were, however, some cases of uninterrupted monologues which went totally against the spirit of this section of the test. There were also cases where this section was very brief, with no discussion of the topic taking place. In such cases candidates were disadvantaged.

### *General conversation*

In many Centres there were good performances which showed good grounding in class oral work. Many candidates sounded relaxed and responded well to both the expected and the more unexpected questions.

The general level of performance in this section was pleasing and there were some very good performances resulting from sympathetic examining. The best work was heard from candidates of all abilities in Centres where Examiners pitched the questions at a level appropriate to the candidate's ability. A good variety of conversation topics was usually heard – please ensure that candidates do not all cover the same questions.

Most Examiners did ensure in this section of the test that questions in past and future tenses were put and therefore gave their candidates every chance to perform to the best of their ability. As ever, Moderators commented on the interesting content of the candidates' conversations and the truly international flavour of this contact with candidates.

**Paper 0520/04**

**Continuous Writing**

### **General comments**

Performances in free composition continue to improve. Candidates were usually well prepared for the requirements of this Paper and there were few inappropriate entries. Again, Examiners commend the enthusiasm and originality of ideas which were a feature of the work received from many Centres.

The quality of written French was encouraging and some excellent scripts were presented. Even the less gifted linguistically were usually able to write compositions of the necessary length which addressed the required elements of the Rubric in appropriate language. The best candidates displayed an ability to write often complex and idiomatic French with only minimal incidence of error. Their work contained a wide range of verb uses and tenses, good use of object and relative pronouns, conjunctions and adverbs and a rich and varied vocabulary. Importantly, they were careful to observe the detail of the Rubric and to address each task fully and appropriately, thereby scoring maximum Communication marks.

Less successful were those who seemed not to check their work for basic errors. Carelessness with spelling was regrettably quite common and a number of scripts showed a disregard for agreements and punctuation. Elements of the Rubric were ignored and this was reflected in the marks for Communication.

Examiners were pleased to note the less frequent use of correcting fluid, but presentation still leaves much to be desired. No credit can be given when handwriting is illegible.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

#### (a) *School holidays*

This was more popular than **(b)**, which was perhaps predictable as its interest to the candidate seems more immediate and the subject matter more concrete. It is also a topic on which all candidates are likely to have a view.

The stimulus invited the use of the Present Tense and Examiners rewarded this practice. Those who wrote only about past holidays or future plans were not given the full reward for their answers. Some gave very detailed accounts of when all their school holidays occur and how long they last. A minority began with the title *les vacances scolaires – trop longues?* and overlooked this first task. The commonest errors were to make *vacances* singular or to misspell it (*vancances*). Other frequent slips were *moins* for *mois de vacances*, *ane* for *année* and the assumption that *durée* must be a verb. All agreed that holidays were very important, but not all remembered to make the agreement on *les vacances sont importantes*. The greatest difficulty was over the necessity to rest and relax after a long term. A surprisingly high number used *rester* for *se reposer* or *relaxer* for *se relaxer* and the concept of 'needing' inspired *ils besoin* and *ils nécessitent* on weaker scripts.

A minority of serious minded candidates wrote of the need to do school work in the holiday, but most enjoyed sport and foreign travel and especially spending time with their families. Obviously, many thought longer holidays were a good idea, but the reasons were not always well expressed. More interesting articles discussed the reallocation of holidays, involving shorter but more frequent breaks from school. Ten or eleven weeks seemed excessive and unsurprisingly some found they had forgotten much of their studies during the long summer break. Others just wanted longer holidays to go out more and have fun. Those who wrote very long answers often lost Communication marks by not including the last two elements (*dites...* and *pourquoi?*) in the first 140 words.

#### (b) This question seemed to inspire the better answers and candidates wrote detailed accounts of their plans for the future. The best scripts contained a variety of methods of expressing future intentions including future and, when appropriate, conditional tenses and a range of verbs with infinitives such as *vouloir*, *aimer*, *espérer* and *compter*. More limited answers relied on the repetition of identical phrases such as *je voudrais* or *j'aimerais*. Some carefully addressed each element of the Rubric, continued study, travel and employment while others wrote exclusively about their intended careers. Provided the whole answer was relevant to future plans and reasons, any sensible interpretation was accepted.

Most candidates were able to say they would continue their studies (which was nearly always the case) and to state the career they hoped to pursue. Some had ambitions to be lawyers, diplomats, accountants or teachers, but the majority were bent on becoming doctors, expressing the wish to cure the sick in poor areas of the world. Many wrote about years of training and sacrifice but were cheerfully prepared to commit themselves to their chosen cause.

World travel was the hope of many, but usually to be undertaken in the pursuit of a career. They would spend school holidays studying, unlike the hedonists who answered **(a)**, and *un emploi* was interpreted as a part time job which might help to finance their university course. There was a moral earnestness about many responses and only a minority wrote about aims to be professional athletes. Having a family and setting up home seemed to come a poor second to professional ambitions and was mentioned, if at all, as an afterthought.

The best candidates gave a considered list of future plans and were careful to supply good reasons for each. Weaker scripts often offered only ambitions without justification.

## Question 2

Although most fared rather less well on the narrative, the best candidates threw themselves enthusiastically into their story and lively anecdotes relating domestic calamities ensued. Weaker candidates found difficulty in sustaining a sequence of events in the past and their stories lacked cohesion and clarity.

The arrival of the parents and their reactions varied. Some were proud of their resourceful elder child. More often the narrator was punished together with or even instead of the naughty little brother. Protestations at perceived injustice were common and, in some cases, nicely handled with deliberate irony. Others complained earnestly at being asked to babysit in the first place as it was not only inconvenient and unfair, the parents being at a party or a restaurant, but also dangerous and irresponsible to leave a minor alone with small child.

A number of candidates failed to observe the detail of the Rubric and were penalised for inappropriate content. They wrote about trouble free evenings or even weekends spent happily with brother when the Rubric clearly indicates a *soirée difficile*. There were a few candidates who did not understand *soirée* and took it to mean a party or even a sister.

Many began the story by lifting verbatim from the stimulus, which is not to be encouraged as such material is not rewarded for language. Candidates usually included enough events to score the relevant Communication marks but not all were able to express the reactions of the narrator. Better candidates could write about their dismay, surprise, anger or other emotions. Others were unaware of grammatical pitfalls and made such errors as *j'étais peur* or failed to make consistent agreements with the first person, *j'étais furieux* being followed by *je suis allée*. Again, the excessively long answers lost Communication marks by not including the parents' reactions in the first 140 words.

As always, highest marks were gained by those who were able to write fluent, accurate French, containing a wide variety of structure and vocabulary. Above all, they handled perfect and imperfect tenses correctly. Weaker candidates lost out mainly for verb errors. Perfect and imperfect were used randomly, present tenses impinged inappropriately, verb endings were faulty and wrong auxiliaries were employed. Centres might advise their candidates to pay particular attention to the formation and use of past tenses in their revision for this Paper. As in past years, candidates often had difficulty in attempting 'to hear' (frequently *écouter*), 'to go up or down stairs', 'to go in or out of rooms', 'to sit down', 'to go to sleep', 'to telephone', 'to be surprised' and 'to be punished'. Negative forms and word order were also regular sources of error and might be given a higher priority during revision.

## Conclusion

Despite the shortcomings alluded to above, Examiners were left with a very favourable impression of the work they marked and, once again, most Centres can feel that their candidates have prepared well and done themselves justice.