

# ASSESSMENT REPORT 2020

FRN315114 – FRENCH

## ORAL ASSESSMENT

In a year of social disruption, where means and methods of learning needed to be adjusted rapidly to fit a shifting educational landscape, it seems that French teachers and students met all challenges splendidly. Whilst the oral exam was reduced to between 7-10 minutes in an effort to recognise the new learning conditions, the standard of student performance was just as high as in previous years.

Once again, a large part of this year's cohort scored in the B-A range. This generation loves to communicate, and they are focused on making meaningful connections with the language repertoire they have at their disposal. Teachers have done an excellent job of coaching students on how to manage and participate in an undirected conversation where spontaneous responses are required.

Examiners commented on how much they enjoyed conversing with the students and were very impressed with the general flow of the French the students used. They mentioned how well certain candidates used a spread of French tenses and demonstrated good mastery of basic forms. They said students had good accents and were mostly very clear when they spoke.

This said, the same challenges as in previous year seemed to cause some students to struggle with making themselves understood. Problem areas included the use of the passé composé and reflexive verbs in all their manifestations. The incorrect gender of some very common words was surprising to hear, and a few candidates continue to pronounce the "s" in the word "ans" as in "j'ai 17 ans". Another word which was commonly mispronounced, was "examen" with the final nasal not being correct.

However, overall the examiners were very impressed with this year's candidates and offer their congratulations to both the students and their teachers.

# WRITTEN EXAMINATION PAPER

## Part I: Listening and Responding

The marking examiner for the listening section found that the vast majority of students performed very well. There was a good spread of grades and the Marker commented that the level of student comprehension seems to be improving each year.

### Spoken text 1 - Question 1

Students did not find this passage problematic. However, some candidates did not know that it was taking place at a hairdresser's and translated "rousse" as pink. The word "shampooing" was also not understood.

#### Answers:

- (a) Where does this dialogue take place?  
At the hairdresser's *1 mark*
- (b) At what time is the appointment?  
3:45pm *1 mark*
- (c) What does the woman want?  
To change her hairstyle *1 mark*
- (d) What length does she want?  
Down to the shoulders *1 mark*
- (e) What will she keep?  
Her fringe *1 mark*
- (f) On what side will she keep it?  
The left *1 mark*
- (g) Which colour does she choose?  
Red (head) *1 mark*
- (h) With what procedure will the man start?  
Shampooing *1 mark*

*8 marks total*

### Spoken text 2 - Question 2

This question was handled well but there were a few surprising challenges for students. Students heard 50 and 60 instead of 5 and 6 and they had trouble with the word for centimetres and grammes. One of the other French icons that was added to the list in the last question by one student was... sheep!

#### Answers:

- (a) In which two French-speaking regions is the baguette called "French bread"?  
Quebec (1) and Belgium (1) *2 marks*

- (b) Why is it popular in S.E Asia?  
It is also typical of Vietnam (½) and Cambodia (½) which were former (½) French (½) colonies (½) *2.5 marks*
- (c) What do we learn about the dimensions and weight of the baguette?  
5-6 cm wide (1) and weighs about 250 grammes (1) *2 marks*
- (d) How are the exterior and interior of the baguette described in the passage?  
The crust (½) is crunchy (½) and golden (½) while the interior (½) is white (½) and soft (½) *3 marks*
- (e) Which other French icons are mentioned?  
Wine (½) berets (½) and cheese (½) *1.5 marks*

*11 marks total*

### Spoken text 3 - Question 3

This passage had mainly issues where vocabulary was concerned. Students struggled to translate “équitation” and “les arts martiaux”. In the last question, some students translated “apprécier” in various ways, but the majority of students had no trouble with the concept of the phrase.

#### Answers:

- (a) Approximately how much time per week do the French devote to leisure activities?  
16 (½) hours (½) *1 mark*
- (b) Which two factors are mentioned as being necessary to take part in leisure activities?  
Time for oneself (1) and enough money (1) *2 marks*
- (c) (i) Which percentages indicate the popularity of multi-media leisure time?  
43 % (½) and 54 % (½) *1 mark*
- (ii) Name the multi-media activities mentioned.  
Social networks (½) and play video games (½) *1 mark*
- (d) Which are the next two most popular leisure activities?  
Music (½) and reading (½) *1 mark*
- (e) Which three activities/sports are most popular for women and men? *3 marks*
- | Women            | Men               |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Dancing (½)      | Weightlifting (½) |
| Swimming (½)     | Ball sports (½)   |
| Horse-riding (½) | Martial Arts (½)  |
- (f) What activities do older French people enjoy most?  
Cycling (½) and walking (½) *1 mark*
- (g) What remains the most popular pastime for all generations?  
Cooking (½) and appreciating a good meal (½) with family (½) or friends (½) *2 marks*

*12 marks total*

## Spoken text 4 - Question 4

This passage brought up an issue that was both linguistic and cultural. Many students translated “Les Terminales” as Sixth Form as opposed to final year students or year 12 students. This was probably because most of the French-English dictionaries used by students are English publications in which the term Sixth Form would have been given. As this was the translation given in certain dictionaries, it was counted as a correct answer. Another recurring issue is the student tendency to omit small words like “already” or “around”. In this passage, many candidates did not mention “seule” which was worth a full mark.

### Answers:

(a) **To whom is Chlo   talking?**  
Final year students/grade 12 students *1 mark*

(b) **Why is she talking to them?**  
To suggest some good reasons ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) why they should study abroad ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) or at least go to Uni ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) in a different region ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) *2 marks*

(c) **How does she describe the three types of accommodation she had?** *5 marks*

Type of Accommodation	Details Given
University college/residence (1)	Shared kitchen and bathroom (1)
Apartment ( $\frac{1}{2}$ )	Sharing with other students (1)
Studio ( $\frac{1}{2}$ )	By herself/alone (1)

(d) **List the ways she says she became more independent.**  
- She became more independent (1) and learned to pay bills (1) and organise a budget (1).  
- She learned to cooperate with others (1) and to be responsible for her environment (1).  
- Undertake household tasks (1) (any 5 to be accepted) *5 marks*

(e) **How does she feel now, as a result of her decision?**  
More balanced, more open and more confident (any 2 to be accepted) *1 mark*

*14 marks total*

## PART 2 - READING AND RESPONDING

The vast majority of students had little problem with this section. This may have been because they had more time to complete the readings, as there were only two and not three to complete. Only one student ticked more than one box in a multiple-choice question, which was unfortunate. One candidate wrote their paper using a coloured pen, which did not affect his/her grade but was very difficult to read at times.

### Question 5:

This question caused a few students to miss completely or answer incorrectly the first question because they had not read the first bolded line, which served as a title to the passage. In the second question, other students missed the word “professional” for which they lost marks, as pianist alone was not considered a full answer by Markers. In question (f) the word “pont” proved to be a big problem and was translated in different ways. As long as the word used captured the sense of the phrase, full marks were still awarded but there were cases where this was not possible. Another interesting problem with this question was that many students translated “therapy” instead of “therapist” but it was decided to not deduct marks in this case as the meaning of the phrase was still clear. The verb “exprimer” was translated in some very interesting ways and the phrase “confiance en soi” was problematic for some.

### Answers

- (a) For how long has Amélie been following her profession?  
Five (½) years (½) *1 mark*
- (b) What was Amélie's dream?  
To become a professional (½) pianist (½) *1 mark*
- (c) Why did she give up her dream?  
She did not want to live in a world of stress *1 mark*
- (d) Explain why she entered her current profession?  
She wanted to combine (1) two passions (1) *2 marks*
- (e) Name three ways in which music helps patients in trouble?  
Patients can express their emotions (1) find personal balance (1) and develop self-confidence (1) *3 marks*
- (f) How does Amélie describe music?  
A bridge (½) between (½) the therapist (½) and the patient (½) *2 marks*
- (g) Which magic moment does she describe?  
As she was playing the piano one day (1), a troubled patient got up (1)  
looked her in the eyes (1) came towards her (1) and put his hands on the piano (1) *5 marks*
- (h) What do patients say that shows their attitude often changes during therapy?  
They talk of going to "music" (1) instead of therapy (1) *2 marks*
- (i) Which adjectives does Amélie use to describe music in the final paragraph?  
Non-verbal (½) creative (½). *1 mark*
- (j) The author feels Amélie is:  
Helping disadvantaged youth *2 marks*

*20 marks total*

### Question 6:

Once again students did well understanding this passage. However, a number of students missed full marks due to the multiple-choice question. They opted for "people who prepare meals at Christmas" which was not accepted by markers as examiners said that it was that food wastage and its effect on the environment that was more important than the meal itself, which was used to support the main point of the article. Measurement in French was again an issue as a few students confused kilos with kilometres.

### Answers

- (a) This article deals with which global problem?  
Food (1) wastage (1) *2 marks*
- (b) In the first paragraph, how do people justify their habits?  
It is other people's fault (1) not ours (1) that food is wasted *2 marks*

- (c) What is the importance of the following numbers according to the article?  
 - 29 kilos of edible food is thrown out (1) by each person every year (1)  
 - 50 % of fruit and vegetables are thrown out (1)  
 - 30% of food thrown out (1) has not even been unwrapped (1)  
 - 17% of Christmas food ends up in rubbish bins (1) 5 marks
- (d) What is one problem encountered by hosts?  
 It is not easy to anticipate/work out (1) how much guests will eat (1) 2 marks
- (e) According to the article, what is one consequence of over-eating?  
 Indigestion 1 mark
- (f) Explain why this problem can be worse in France than in Australia?  
 Christmas in France is in winter (1) so guests do not feel like exercising outside (1) when it is minus 2 degrees (1) 3 marks
- (g) Describe the “disco-soup” initiative.  
 They get people to make use of wilted/ not top-quality vegetables (1) by combining them into share plates (½) in public places (½) 2 marks
- (h) Name two of the groups mentioned in the final paragraph, which are trying to remedy the problem?  
 Supermarkets, businesses/entrepreneurs, and administrations (any two) 1 mark
- (i) Who is the most probable target audience for this article?  
 People who are concerned about the environment 2 marks

20 marks total

## PART 3- WRITING IN FRENCH

	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
Number and percentage of candidates attempting the question	13 (25%)	10 (19%)	13(25%)	4 (8%)	12 (23%)

This year saw a greater spread in the choice of topics students chose to undertake. Just like the previous year’s cohort, this group of students produced some beautiful texts and creative pieces of writing. It is so pleasing to see students using their French in a way that goes beyond the basic functional level. In their essays, it was clear that some students were trying to extend their range of meaning through cautiously manipulating the French they knew. The result in some cases was outstanding, with a large group of students scoring very well. Naturally, they could not have done this without the help of their teachers and it is even more impressive considering what an unusual year this one has been.

Unfortunately, there were cases where students wrote well under the word limit and left Markers with a sample, which was really too small to assess accurately. The same list of grammatical errors as in previous years were back again in 2020, with some students particularly struggling to use French tenses correctly in their writing. Teaching grammar is a thankless task and my heart goes out to every teacher as I know how much you tend to feel personally responsible for your students’ mastery of grammar. This said, please remember that your students scored very well in this section and so you are all doing a wonderful job. I would also like to end by acknowledging the wonderful work of the setting examiner and critics. They do a tremendous job each year to make sure students sit a series of papers, which are relevant, engaging and challenging.