

French

Course Code: FRN315114

Oral Examination

Once again, French students across the state clearly demonstrated how much they enjoy studying the language through their enthusiastic performances. Teachers had well-prepared their students and there were very few candidates who appeared anxious during the oral exam. The standard was, as usual, very high and teachers are to be congratulated for all the hard work they do during the year. Very few candidates asked for questions to be repeated or gave the dreaded one word answer. Questions about everyday activities were answered well and, in many cases, students were able to develop their responses to include less rehearsed language. This generation of language students seems to have truly embraced the communicative approach and enjoy a good chat which is very pleasing to see and hear.

Examiners remarked that students struggled with the conjugation of nous and vous forms of verbs and that they could have easily remedied this by using on. Feminine forms of adjectives caused some students grief and some perennial words were once again confused e.g. chevaux for cheveux, corps for cours and matière for métier. Some candidates had difficulty using the correct preposition with geographical terms and modes of transport/months of the year.

Overall, this years' group of students were of a very good standard.

Written Examination Paper

Listening and Responding

All candidates did well in this section and had obviously worked hard on their basic, everyday vocabulary. Once again this section's marker commented on the pleasing standard of students.

Spoken Text 1 – Question 1

Many students did not know the words manteau, manche and foncé and no one understood the term sans peine.

- (a) She wants to buy(1/2) a new(1/2) Winter(1/2)coat(1/2) as she's been wearing (1/2) the old one for 5 years(1/2) and it's no longer fashionable(1)
- (b) Dark(1) green (1/2) & black(1/2)
- (c) The sleeves(1) are too(1/2) long(1/2)
- (d) There's no problem/ easily fixed (1) we can make a small(1/2) alteration(1/2)
- (e) 183 euros (1)
- (f) Credit card (1)

Spoken text 2 – Question 2

Students had little problem with this passage. Some students struggled with numbers and a variety of terms were used and accepted for roman policier.

- (a) Optimistic (1) 21 years old (1) he really likes dancing(1)
- (b) A woman who also likes to dance (1) and who will accompany him (1) to his dance classes/lessons(1)
- (c) Going to (1/2) the cinema (1/2) theatre (1/2) concerts (1/2) he's interested in Spanish (1/2) cooking/cuisine/food (1/2) & doing car (1/2) trips (1/2). He likes reading(1/2) detective/police stories (1/2)
- (d) 0238629445(1)

Spoken text 3 – Question 3

This passage was well understood by students. The use of assez to mean “quite” was problematic. Students also struggled with the word cuir and the qualifier clair as in gris clair.

- (a) His back-pack (1)
- (b) In the Metro/ subway /underground train (1) line 7 (1) near (1/2) the Opera (1/2)
- (c) Light (1/2) grey (1/2), fairly/quite (1/2) old (1/2) but nevertheless/ even so (1) good (1/2) quality (1/2)
- (d) Leather (1/2) wallet (1/2) with about (1/2) 14 euros in it (1/2), his computer (1), 2 (1/2) DVDs (1/2) of his favourite star/singer(1/2) and an apple (1/2)
- (e) Phone (1/2) at the end of (1/2) next (1/2) week (1/2)

Spoken text 4 – Question 4

Students found this passage challenging. The following words were misunderstood or not known by some candidates: to get a cold, during, finger, cut, German and bread (!) The word basket was literally translated as basket and not runners/trainers/sport shoes.

- (a) She had caught a cold (1) at the weekend (1)
- (b) She cut (1/2) her finger (1/2) with the big (1/4) bread (1/4) knife (1/2)
- (c) Her joggers/ sports shoes/basketball shoes (1) and her history (1/2) book (1/2)
- (d) Go back home (1)
- (e) It had a flat (1) tyre (1)
- (f) Her German (1/2) teacher (1/2) was cross and the lesson had already started (1/2) and she interrupted him/ it (1/2)

Spoken text 5 – Question 5

This passage seemed to be the most difficult for students as they confused what were advantages and disadvantages. Words that caused problems were bills, wisely and (mutual) respect.

(a)

Advantages	Disadvantages
Solidarity (1/2)	Conflict over (1/2) Monthly (1/2) rent payments(1/2)
Conviviality (1/2)	Who does what (1/2) in regard to household (1/2) tasks/ chores/jobs (1/2)
Shared(1/2) bills (1/2) & rent (1/2)	Who cooks? (1/2)

- (b) Choose (1/2) your flat- mates/ co-renters carefully (1/2) & organise rules (1/2) right from the start (1/2)
- (c)
 1. mutual (1/2) respect (1/2)
 2. a certain dose/ amount (1/2) of tolerance (1/2)
 3. good (1/2) communication (1/2)

Reading and Responding

The marking examiner of this section commented that students who wrote in pencil should take great care to make sure that their writing is not so faint as to be unable to be read. The overall standard of this section was very good with most students understanding the passages well enough to provide strong sets of answers.

Question 6

- (a) To introduce/ present (1) Rio's Olympic mascot (1)
- (b) One of the most (1/2) famous(1/2) Brazilian (1/2) writers(1/2) of the 20th century(1)
- (c) It marked the explosion of joy(1/2) when it was announced (1/2) that Rio would host/welcome(1/2) the 2016 Olympic Games(1/2)

- (d) He has the agility(1/2) of a cat(1/2), the balance(1/2) of a monkey(1/2) & the grace (1/2) of a bird(1/2)
- (e) Like all children(1/2) he lives his life(1/2) playing(1/2) jumping(1/2) running(1/2) & smiling(1/2)
- (f) He can run(1/2) faster(1/2), jump (1/2) higher(1/2) and prove to be/ show himself to be(1/2) stronger(1/2)
- (g) He can imitate (1/2) the voice/sound (1/2) of any (1/2) animal (1/2) at all.
- (h) Goals are- to spread his joy of living (1/2) across the planet/world(1/2) & to celebrate (1/2) friendship (1/2)

Question 7

- (a) The darling/favourite/pet (1) of the stars(1)
- (b) Nearly (1/2) 7,000 years(1/2)
- (c) A multi-coloured (1/2) plant (1/2) from the same family as spinach (1). Rich in (1/2) protein (1/2), amino-acids (1/2) & vitamins (1/2). No gluten/gluten free (1). The golden grain (1) any of these to make up 5.
- (d) When white flour(1/2) appeared on the markets (1/2) people began to eat French style bread(1/2), American hamburgers(1/2) & despised this food for indigenous /native people(1)
- (e) Millions of Westerners (1/2) discovered they were allergic to gluten (1/2). Stars adopted(1/2) a gluten-free attitude(1/2)
- (f) Production has gone up (1) Prices have gone up too (1) In January 2013, quinoa reached 2,450 euros a tonne (1) Prices tripled in 6 years (1). Any of these to make up 3.
- (g) Women (1/2) in Ecuador/ on the Equator are re-using (1/2) the recipes (1/2) of their ancestors (1/2). A program relaunched the production of forgotten grains (1). Any of these to make up 2.
- (h) Local craft(1) & rural tourism(1)

Question 8

- (a) Un concours(1) culinaire(1/2) télévisé (1/2)
- (b) Les enfants qui ont moins de(1) 16 ans (1)
- (c) Préparer un repas(1) de trois plats(1)
- (d) Il croit que sa fille aurait dû gagner le concours(1) Les juges sont aveugles(1) Ils ne se sont pas aperçus des talents de Joséphine (1) Joséphine a perdu toute confiance en elle (1) Any of these 3, but the last one cannot be repeated in (e)
- (e) Either : Elle a pleuré(1) Or : Elle a perdu toute confiance en elle. (1)
- (f) Dans la vie/ le monde réel (1) il y a des gagnants et des perdants(1)
- (g) Marc
- (h) Françoise
- (i) C'est la popularité du programme qui en a sans doute guidé le contenu
- (j) Optimiste

Writing in French

	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
Number of candidates attempting the question	9	24	14	14	6

This year there was a definite preference among candidates for essay topic 10 which means the topic was one that the students clearly felt comfortable answering. Question 13 was a problem because the few students who attempted it did not write a conversation using the appropriate format. The matter of writing according to the structure required by the genre as indicated by the essay question was a problem this year. In general, many students did not use paragraphs at all and it was difficult in some cases to work out whether it was a journal entry or an email. If an email is required, students should include somewhere an email address (...@...), date and subject with an appropriate ending. Journals should start with cher journal.

This year there was a slight increase in the number of students who wrote under the word limit and who struggled to use a more developed vocabulary. Examiners wondered whether this was due to an increase in the number of candidates who had only started the language in year 11 or who had been in a mixed level 2/3 class- a difficult reality that many hard working teachers find themselves in. A very small number of candidates had copied

sentences straight from the dictionary which included verbs used in the past historic tense (one we no longer teach at this level!) which left examiners in a difficult position. Candidates were not penalised for doing this but teachers should stress the dangers of over reliance on dictionaries in an exam. There were also a number of scripts that were too short and literal translation seems to back in vogue e.g. je vraiment veux tu... (!).

The same challenges that all teachers could predict were evident in this year's crop of essays. In general students managed to make themselves understood and stronger candidates' scripts were a pure delight to read, displaying creativity and great senses of humour. The list below highlights the more frequent errors across the written papers:

Basic word order- French VS English

Position of direct and indirect object pronouns

Beaucoup de

En+ country and à + city – omission of article before countries.e.g. Tasmanie..France..

Depuis plus present tense

Pronouns, especially direct and indirect pronouns, were misplaced or simply absent.

Articles –omission or wrong gender

Position of negatives e.g. il y a ne personne

Ne...pas de

Teachers should take heart that lists such as the one above should be seen as a positive means to improve student performance in the future. Our French students are very well served by an outstanding community of French teachers and all oral and marking examiners agree that it is an absolute pleasure to be part of a process that acknowledges the tireless effort of teachers to promote French language and culture to a group of enlightened students who choose to study French at this level.