

FRENCH

Paper 3015/11 Translation and Composition

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they answer only **two** questions.
- Candidates need to adhere to the rubrics especially those regarding the word limits for questions.
- Candidates need to ensure that their work is legible and logically presented.
- Candidates should plan their use of time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work.
- A broad and fluent command of the material is highly commendable but accuracy in writing is essential for full credit to be given.

General comments

A relatively small number of candidates took this paper but, in spite of this, there was a wide range of achievement with a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions which used a wide linguistic range, although their essays still contained some inaccuracies. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of accuracy in their writing in order to gain full credit. The translation into French was a popular choice and many candidates achieved a high standard in this question.

Candidates were generally well prepared for the examination, but a considerable number exceeded the word limit by a large margin. Since nothing is taken into account after the 150 word limit, candidates writing at great length lost Communication marks. Some candidates also included irrelevant material which could not be credited.

The vast majority of scripts were well presented. There were a few cases where handwriting was unclear, particularly where alterations had been made and in such cases credit could not be given.

Communication Marks (Questions 1 and 2 only): Each essay has a maximum score of 5 available for successful communication of relevant points in unambiguous, but not necessarily completely accurate French. Errors in spelling and grammatical accuracy did not prevent candidates gaining communication marks unless such errors made the meaning unclear. Difficulty in handling verbs was by far the most significant factor preventing the award of Communication marks. In order to score 5 marks, candidates must make clear reference to at least five of the pictures in **Question 1** and to all the given rubric points in **Question 2**. Candidates who wrote lengthy essays often did not cover all the required points and therefore lost marks accordingly.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Picture Story

This was a popular choice and, in most cases, candidates provided a clear account of the events in the pictures. The narrative was frequently competently executed, but some candidates dwelt at too great a length on the earlier part of the story which led to loss of the later Communication points. Candidates can avoid such a pitfall by creating a rough plan of what they want to say for each picture before starting the narrative. Those who kept within the word limit generally had no difficulty scoring the maximum of 5 for Communication.

The conventional third person narrative approach was often adopted, but some chose to write in the first person from the standpoint of one of the people depicted. This was, of course, perfectly acceptable.

The quality of the language used was variable but many candidates showed confident use of the necessary vocabulary as well as a variety of appropriate structures. Most candidates knew the basic words required by this set of pictures and there did not appear to be any particular difficulties with vocabulary. Stronger answers featured a good range of vocabulary and complex syntax – use of infinitive constructions and present and past participles, for example.

Not all candidates were able to use tenses successfully and there was frequent confusion between the Imperfect and the Perfect/Past Historic. The Pluperfect was also not always handled correctly. Candidates are reminded that the Present is unacceptable as the narrative tense. There were many basic syntactical errors. These included inconsistency in the spelling and gender of nouns; missing agreements on adjectives; incorrect use of object pronouns. Closer attention by candidates to such points would have improved their performance. There were also a number of minor common errors, such as confusion between *car*, *comme* and *quand*; between *très* and *trop*, *on* and *ont*, *ce* and *se* and *ces* and *ses*.

Question 2

(a): Letter

The theme of a letter to parents from a holiday location was presumably a familiar one and most candidates understood what was required and often covered the required points very well. Five clear points were mentioned in the rubric and all had to be covered by a discrete statement containing a verb to qualify for the award of the five Communication marks. For all **Question 2** essays the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. Some candidates lost marks as they did not do this and instead began by writing a pre-learned opening. Candidates were required for the first point to refer to the new friends they had made in the “*colonie de vacances*” and to talk about activities and meals. They were then asked for a statement in the Future about their plans for the following day to be followed by their opinion of the stay.

Candidates should be careful not to spend too long on any particular point, as this can use up the word count. The best candidates were able to express their ideas in a range of appropriate and accurate French which gained high marks for Language. Not all candidates were able to handle verbs competently, and correct handling of the other linguistic features mentioned in connection with **Question 1** is equally important.

(b): Dialogue

Although fewer candidates answered the dialogue question, it was often well handled when it was chosen, with some lively and interesting conversations between candidate and Police Officer. The theme was the loss of a wallet abroad and the first point involved explaining to a policeman at the police station where it had been lost and in what circumstances. Candidates were then asked to describe the contents, the problems caused by the loss and their reactions.

Candidates should be reminded that only the actual words of the conversation should be written, without a narrative introduction or the inclusion of reported speech.

(c): Narrative

The theme of a favourite singer at a pop concert elicited some imaginative responses. Candidates were asked to describe where it took place, their arrival and to mention the songs they heard. They were then asked to imagine a request for an autograph which was granted and to give their reaction – in all cases huge delight. The best stories were lively and fluently written, using a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure. Some candidates again had problems with the use of tenses.

Question 3: Translation into French

This was tackled by many of the candidates and produced a range of answers, some of them of a high standard. Many candidates demonstrated that they had the required range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, though some of the structures proved to be challenging. A number of candidates lost marks as a result of errors such as confusing “the” and “a”, or from missing out words altogether. The linguistic demands for the translation are very precise and, in most cases, the English will transfer directly into French. Candidates who kept close to the English original usually gained the best marks.

No points proved universally impossible but difficulties were experienced with a number of items:

- Paragraph A This was generally straightforward but the tense of *inviter* and the infinitive structure following it proved difficult for some.
- Paragraph B Difficulties were encountered with the pronoun in "*I greeted them*". The verb *se diriger* was not generally known.
- Paragraph C Much of the material was well handled, but the phrase "*in a good mood*" and the word for "*a crowd*" were not generally known.
- Paragraph D Difficulties were experienced with the following:
"*it was pouring with rain*"
The agreement on *agréables*
The last sentence: "*as we were not enjoying ourselves*"
- Paragraph E There was much that was accessible to candidates with a good basic knowledge but the following proved testing:
"*soaked to the skin*"
"*we decided to go*"
"*on getting home*".

FRENCH

Paper 3015/12 Translation and Composition

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they answer only **two** questions.
- Candidates need to adhere to the rubrics especially those regarding the word limits for questions.
- Candidates need to ensure that their work is legible and logically presented.
- Candidates should plan their use of time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work.
- A broad and fluent command of the material is highly commendable but accuracy in writing is essential for full credit to be given.

General comments

There was a wide range of achievement with a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions in which candidates used a wide linguistic range, although their essays still contained some inaccuracies. The translation into French was a very popular choice and many candidates achieved a high standard in this question. They demonstrated a wide range of vocabulary and good command of grammatical structures and the marks for this question frequently mirrored, or in some cases exceeded, the marks gained for the essay.

Candidates were generally well prepared for the examination, but a considerable number exceeded the word limit by a large margin. Since nothing is taken into account after the 150 word limit, candidates writing at great length lost Communication marks. Some candidates also included irrelevant material which could not be credited.

The vast majority of scripts were well presented. There were a few cases where handwriting was unclear, particularly where alterations had been made and in such cases credit could not be given.

Communication Marks (Questions 1 and 2 only): Each essay has a maximum score of 5 available for successful communication of relevant points in unambiguous, but not necessarily completely accurate French. Errors in spelling and grammatical accuracy did not prevent candidates gaining communication marks unless such errors made the meaning unclear. Difficulty in handling verbs was by far the most significant factor preventing the award of Communication marks. In order to score 5 marks, candidates must make clear reference to at least five of the pictures in **Question 1** and to all the given rubric points in **Question 2**. Candidates who wrote lengthy essays often did not cover all the required points and therefore lost marks accordingly.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Picture Story

This was a popular choice and, in most cases, candidates provided a clear account of the events in the pictures. The narrative was frequently competently executed, but some candidates dwelt at too great a length on the earlier part of the story which led to loss of the later Communication points. Candidates can avoid such a pitfall by creating a rough plan of what they want to say for each picture before starting the narrative. Those who kept within the word limit generally had no difficulty scoring the maximum of 5 for Communication.

The conventional third person narrative approach was often adopted, but many chose to write in the first person from the standpoint of one of the people depicted. This was, of course, perfectly acceptable.

The quality of the language used was variable but many candidates showed confident use of the necessary vocabulary as well as a variety of appropriate structures. Most candidates knew the basic words required by this set of pictures, (for example *attendre, monter, partir, voyager, descendre, campagne, bois, forêt, suivre, bavarder, se rendre compte, se perdre, s'égarer, chercher, crier, trouver, soulagé*), and there did not appear to be any particular difficulties with vocabulary. Stronger answers featured a good range of vocabulary and complex syntax – use of infinitive constructions and present and past participles, for example.

Not all candidates were able to use tenses successfully and there was frequent confusion between the Imperfect and the Perfect/Past Historic. The Pluperfect was also not always handled correctly. Candidates are reminded that the Present is unacceptable as the narrative tense. There were many basic syntactical errors. These included inconsistency in the spelling and gender of nouns; missing agreements on adjectives; incorrect use of object pronouns. Closer attention by candidates to such points would have improved their performance. There were also a number of minor common errors, such as confusion between *car, comme* and *quand*; between *très* and *trop*, *on* and *ont*, *ce* and *se* and *ces* and *ses*.

Question 2

(a): Letter

Most candidates understood what was required and often covered the required points very well. Candidates should once again be reminded that they must adhere to the stated word limit. Five clear points were mentioned in the rubric and all had to be covered by a discrete statement containing a verb to be awarded the five Communication marks. For all **Question 2** essays the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. Some candidates lost marks as they did not do this and instead began by writing a pre-learnt opening. Those who started with the given opening followed immediately by relevant treatment of the rubric points usually covered the material appropriately.

Candidates should be careful not to spend too long on any particular point (adding details of each member of the group, for example), as this can use up the word count. The best candidates were able to express their ideas in a range of appropriate and accurate French which gained high marks for Language. Not all candidates were able to handle verbs competently, and correct handling of the other linguistic features mentioned in connection with **Question 1** is equally important.

(b): Dialogue

Although fewer candidates answered the dialogue question, it was often well handled when it was chosen with some lively and mature exchanges between the customer and the shop assistant. The conversation was based on the premise of returning faulty goods to the shop where they were purchased. The first point concerned the nature of the problem with the item. Common complaints were that it did not work properly, there was something missing or there was material damage. The assistant made a response to this and the customer was then to ask for a replacement. This was refused and generally justified as being contrary to the shop's policy. The customer's reaction was the final point and was invariably quite negative, involving threats to resort to higher authority.

Candidates should be reminded that only the actual words of the conversation should be written, without a narrative introduction or the inclusion of reported speech.

(c): Narrative

This was the most popular of all the **Question 2** essays, the topic of a celebration at the end of term being relevant to candidates' own experience. As a result of being given the opening words, most candidates started straight into the description of the party and fewer produced material that was irrelevant.

In general, candidates coped well with the tasks. In a few cases, candidates used English words for activities or refreshments, where French should have been used.

The best stories were lively and fluently written, using a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure. Some candidates again had problems with the use of tenses, particularly with regards to the differences between the Imperfect and Perfect/Past Historic, and unnecessary use of the Pluperfect.

Question 3: Translation into French

This was again the most popular of all the options and often produced work of a high standard. Many candidates demonstrated that they had the required range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, though some of the structures proved to be challenging. A number of candidates lost marks as a result of errors such as confusing “the” and “a”, or from missing out words altogether. The linguistic demands for the translation are very precise and, in most cases, the English will transfer directly into French. Candidates who kept close to the English original usually gained the best marks.

No points proved universally impossible but difficulties were experienced with a number of items:

- Paragraph A The first sentence was straightforward for those with a reasonable basic knowledge of the language but opened with a Pluperfect which was often missed. *Emmener* was frequently misspelled as *enmener*. *Châteaux* was also often spelled incorrectly.
- Paragraph B Adjectival agreement was not always well handled: *ville intéressante / attractions différentes*. The four Present tense verbs at the end – *bavardent*, *boivent*, *écoutent* and *jouent* were frequently incorrect.
- Paragraph C Much of the material was well handled but *suburbs* and *headed for* proved difficult.
- Paragraph D There were a number of more testing points here – *after travelling...*, *they had to stop...*, *a traffic jam*, *they were able to read...*
Adjectival agreement was sometimes missed on *agréables*.
- Paragraph E There were plenty of good responses in this paragraph but few candidates knew the French for *spring* or the correct preposition to use.

FRENCH

Paper 3015/21 Reading Comprehension
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Key message

Section 1 requires candidates to understand simple messages, signs, advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

Section 2 Exercise 1 requires candidates to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In Exercise 2 of this Section, candidates are asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Selective lifting of answers from the text is acceptable for some Questions, but in order to gain high marks, candidates are required to provide more than mere location and transcription.

Section 3, the cloze test, tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom and candidates are required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

General comments

The majority of candidates tackled the paper well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and there were frequent pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise.

Exercise 2

This exercise was very well done by most candidates; just a few chose **B**, the sunscreen rather than **C** the bathing costume as the answer to **Question 6**.

Exercise 3

Most candidates performed well in this multiple choice exercise.

Section 2

Exercise 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Questions 16, 17 and 18

These questions were generally answered appropriately. For **Question 17** some candidates failed to mention that the planned hike was to take place in the mountains and merely referred to *une randonnée*.

Questions 19 - 22

These questions were handled well.

Question 23

Some candidates did not seem to understand the question and wrote that they were setting off on 15 July rather than mentioning the duration of the activity.

Question 24

This question posed no problems.

Question 25

Most candidates handled this well; just a few gave *sa guitare* as one of the items.

Exercise 2

Candidates performed well on the whole in this exercise and a significant number scored full or almost full marks.

Question 26

This was generally answered appropriately, although a few candidates suggested that his reason was because *c'est loin des villes et de grande beauté*, which was not credited.

Question 27

This was generally answered correctly, but some candidates provided the answer *en pleine forêt*.

Questions 28 - 30

These questions were answered correctly by the majority of candidates.

Question 31

This was generally unproblematic, although some candidates lifted the text inaccurately and wrote *de protéger les sauvages du monde*, which could not be credited.

Question 32

This was generally tackled well, except that in **Question 32b** some candidates correctly located the reference to the project, but were not specific and wrote *un projet environnement-nature* rather than *le meilleur projet environnement-nature*.

Question 33

Many responses were correct, but some candidates lifted a long passage (*On y voit un jeune qui voyage à la découverte des paysages les plus beaux et les plus sauvages du monde*, which did not show precise understanding and so could not be credited.

Questions 34

This was answered correctly by most candidates, but some wrote *il a toutes ces qualités*, which was not credited.

Section 3

There was a variety of performance on this exercise. The majority of candidates performed well here. A very small number of candidates seemed not to understand what this test required.

Candidates found the following questions in particular problematic:

Question 37

This was sometimes answered with *est*.

Question 41

This was frequently answered with an incorrect preposition e.g. *sur* or *de*.

Question 42

This question seemed particularly problematic for some: answers included, *tout* and *le*.

Question 43

Some candidates supplied *il* or *et*.

Question 44

Many candidates wrote *les* rather than *des*.

Question 45

Some candidates wrote an incorrect preposition, most frequently *sur*.

Question 48

Candidates sometimes wrote *les* rather than *leur*.

Question 49

Candidates sometimes provided a singular verb: *a* rather than *ont*.

Question 54

Only one or two candidates were able to supply *hors* here.

FRENCH

Paper 3015/22 Reading Comprehension
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Key message

Section 1 requires candidates to understand simple messages, signs, advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

Section 2 Exercise 1 requires candidates to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In Exercise 2 of this Section, candidates are asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Selective lifting of answers from the text is acceptable for some Questions, but in order to gain high marks, candidates are required to provide more than mere location and transcription.

Section 3, the cloze test, tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom and candidates are required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

General comments

The majority of candidates tackled the paper well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and there were frequent pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise. Very occasionally **Question 3** was wrong; some candidates did not understand *chapeaux*.

Exercise 2

This exercise was very well done by most candidates; a few answered **Question 10** incorrectly, suggesting that they did not understand *randonnée*.

Exercise 3

Most candidates performed well in this multiple choice exercise.

Section 2

Exercise 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Questions 16, 17 and 18

These questions were generally answered appropriately. For **Question 18** some made reference only to the boxes on the floor and so failed to score a mark here.

Question 19

Some candidates seemed to have misunderstood either the text or the question here, writing that Nancy had previously lived in a bigger house.

Questions 20- 23

These questions were handled well.

Question 24

This question posed no problems.

Question 25

Most candidates handled this well; just a few gave the answer *je me sens un peu perdue*, which was not credited. A few candidates stated that Nancy was going to spend her holiday/two weeks with 'her', making no reference to Marjorie /her friend, which was ambiguous and could not be credited either.

Exercise 2

Candidates generally performed well in this exercise and a significant number scored full or almost full marks.

Question 26

This question was generally answered appropriately, although a few candidates omitted to mention the *régions polaires*.

Question 27 - 29

These questions were answered correctly by the majority of candidates.

Questions 30

This was answered correctly by some candidates, but a significant number wrote *les égouts et les ruisseaux* for which they were not credited.

Question 31

This question was generally unproblematic, although some candidates lifted a relatively lengthy piece of text, beginning *Et ce sont les jeunes qui seront responsables...*, which did not show full understanding of the question.

Question 32

This question was tackled well by some, but some candidates did not appear to understand the question fully, as they lifted *les oiseaux, habitués à trouver sur les plages brosse à dents, morceaux de plastique, jambe de poupées*.

Questions 33 and 34

These questions were generally answered well.

Question 35

This was answered correctly by many candidates, although some had clearly misunderstood the question as they wrote that they did not want to increase pollution.

Section 3

There was a variety of performance on this exercise. The majority of candidates performed well here. A very small number of candidates seemed not to understand what this test required.

Some candidates found the following questions problematic:

Question 36

Some candidates wrote *sont* or *étaient* and so had not understood the text as a whole.

Question 38

This was sometimes answered with *ont*.

Question 41

An incorrect verb was common here, e.g. *voyagé*.

Question 44

Many candidates wrote *près*.

Question 48

Candidates sometimes wrote *de* instead of *à*.

Question 49

Candidates sometimes provided *à* rather than *de*.

Question 53

A significant number of candidates wrote *fait* here.

Question 54

Candidates sometimes supplied *pas* instead of *sans*.