

FRENCH

Paper 3015/11 Translation and Composition

Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they answer only **two** 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.
- Candidates need to adhere to the rubrics, especially those regarding the word limits for questions.
- Candidates should write what they know to be French and avoid attempting to use language with which they are unfamiliar.
- 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

Overall performance on this paper was extremely good, with a range of achievement including a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range as well as some consistently sound efforts in the middle. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions which used a wide linguistic range, though improvements could still be made in the accuracy of the written French.

The translation into French was once again a very popular choice and many candidates are to be congratulated on the high standard they achieved in this question; they had clearly worked hard to acquire a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures and performance on this question frequently mirrored, or in some cases exceeded, that seen for the essay. In a minority of cases, candidates needed to be more careful in their reading of the English text to ensure that they produced a translation reflecting exactly what was said in the original.

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. Candidates are reminded that any material which does not clearly relate to the content guidelines for any essay as stated in the question will remain as part of the word count but cannot be credited for either Communication or Language.

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 usually 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 *parc, jardin de ville – jardin* on its own was also accepted – *banc, trouver, ramasser, examiner, décider, rapporter, rendre, remettre*. Many knew *appareil (photo)* but *caméra* was very commonly used and, though not strictly accurate, was accepted – though it was generally wrongly taken to be masculine. There were no consistent vocabulary problems. 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 qualify for the award of the five Communication marks. Candidates are reminded that for all **Question 2** essays the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. This is not included in the 150 word count. Some candidates lost marks as they did not do this and instead began by writing a pre-learnt opening.

The majority of candidates dealt with the relevant rubric points in a satisfactory manner. Some rubric points will, of course, invite greater length than others, but a single, clear reference in an acceptable tense is sufficient for the award of a Communication mark. Almost anything relevant was accepted for the nature of the cultural event – e.g. theatre, cinema, museum, tourist sight/monument. Trips to religious festivals and shrines were a popular choice. Candidates 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 owner of the accommodation and the potential client. The conversation was based on the premise of enquiring about holiday accommodation in a *gîte*. The first point concerned the dates required, followed by rooms and facilities needed. The price and what was included followed by questions about local leisure and tourist attractions then concluded the discussion. This conversation was often well executed with clear questions and answers being presented and the language used was usually appropriate and often of high quality.

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, and required candidates to describe what happened on a train journey in the country when the train suddenly stopped. As a result of being given the opening words, most candidates went straight into the description of the breakdown of the train and its consequences.

These tasks were often well handled and the events were frequently described in a lively and graphic fashion, invariably culminating in resolution of the problem and safe continuance of the journey. In some cases, candidates tried to invent or guess at vocabulary items that they did not know, or to write activities and solutions in English; if candidates are uncertain of vocabulary items, it is better to use simple vocabulary that they are sure of and can use accurately.

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 | Not everyone knew how to express age. A significant number of candidates had difficulty with the phrase <i>Most of the pupils</i> . Many did not know <i>abroad</i> . The conditional <i>would leave</i> was sometimes missed and the correct spelling of <i>juillet</i> was not known by many. |
| Paragraph B | This was frequently well done. <i>To take</i> (..to <i>Grenoble</i>) was problematic for some, but many handled the object pronoun <i>les</i> well. <i>Emmener</i> was frequently misspelt, as was <i>beaucoup</i> later in the paragraph. |
| Paragraph C | <i>Vol</i> (flight) was often confused with <i>avion</i> . <i>Could not see</i> was not always successful. In a number of cases, candidates read <i>coach</i> in the American sense of <i>entraîneur</i> which would not have fitted in the context of the text. |
| Paragraph D | This paragraph was largely straightforward in its demands. The main grammatical areas which were found to be problematic to candidates were <i>after choosing</i> ... and the adjectival agreements on <i>magnifiques</i> and <i>élégants</i> . For <i>to meet</i> , most spelt <i>rencontrer</i> correctly or used the alternative <i>(re)joindre</i> . |
| Paragraph E | <i>In the country</i> (<i>à la champagne</i>) was widely misinterpreted as <i>dans le pays</i> . <i>(aller) faire une promenade</i> was poorly known, generally being written as <i>aller pour une promenade</i> . The Pluperfect <i>the visit had been marvellous</i> , was often missed. The Future <i>She will return</i> was not always known with the second “r” often omitted from <i>retournera</i> . |

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FRENCH

Paper 3015/21 Reading and 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

As in previous years candidates were appropriately prepared for this paper and the majority of them tackled it 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 answered incorrectly, with candidates selecting **B**, the picture of a cat, as the correct answer.

Candidates occasionally had difficulty with **Question 4**; some candidates did not appear to understand *neuf heures et quart* and selected **C** or **D** as their answer.

Exercise 2

This exercise was very well done by almost all candidates; just a few answered **Question 10** incorrectly, suggesting that they did not understand *Il enseigne*.

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 were generally answered appropriately.

Question 19

There were many appropriate responses. A few candidates correctly used, '*Sans vélo, c'est impossible*' from the passage.

Question 20

This was generally answered appropriately with just a few candidates saying merely that he wanted a bike, rather than that he had wanted one for some years / a long time.

Questions 21 and 22

These questions posed no problem.

Question 23

This was tackled well by most candidates.

Question 24

Most candidates clearly understood the question and handled it well, although a few clearly did not understand what was being asked and answered '*il ne va pas devoir rouler sur la route*' or similar.

Questions 25

This posed no problem.

Exercise 2

In general, candidates performed well in this exercise and a significant number scored full or almost full marks.

Question 26 (a)

The majority of candidates found this question straightforward.

Question 26 (b)

Whilst almost all candidates stated correctly that elderly people suffered most, some candidates also needed to mention that it was those who lived alone, in order to be credited.

Question 27

This question was tackled well.

Question 28

This question was answered correctly by the majority of candidates.

Question 29 (a)

This question was answered well.

Question 29 (b)

A significant number of candidates answered this question well, but some mentioned wanting help with cleaning/housework rather than wanting the presence of a young person.

Question 30

There were some correct answers here, but a significant number of candidates did not appear to understand the question. They needed to explain how it came about that the older people were able to help, but many tended to reiterate the responses for **Question 29**.

Question 31

Most candidates mentioned help with cleaning here, but then went on to mention spending time with the elderly people, which, as this cannot be deemed a household task, invalidated the response.

Question 32

This proved challenging for a significant number of candidates, who lifted directly from the text, '*Pour vivre chez quelqu'un, le caractère, la personnalité de l'autre doit vous plaire*'. While they had located the relevant information, they had not actually answered the question as required. Candidates are reminded that whilst judicious lifting might provide the correct answer, some rewording may be required to answer questions appropriately.

Questions 33

This question was tackled well.

Question 34 (a)

There were some good responses here, but some candidates just referred to *ses conseils* or *son expérience*. Some mention of Marie-Louise was also needed in order to communicate fully.

Question 34 (b)

This was tackled well by most candidates.

Section 3

There was a variety of performance on this exercise. The majority of candidates performed reasonably well here. A very small number of candidates seemed not to understand what this test required. Some candidates put more than one word in each gap, in spite of the instructions.

Candidates found the following questions in particular problematic:

Question 37

This was sometimes answered with the wrong preposition: some candidates supplied *sur*.

Question 40

Candidates occasionally answered with an incorrect auxiliary i.e. *a* or *avait*

Question 43

Some candidates wrote *pour*.

Question 45

Candidates sometimes wrote *a* or *avait*. Candidates are advised to read the text more closely in order to choose the correct tense/part of the verb to fill the gap.

Question 46

Candidates sometimes provided *à* or *de*.

Question 48

A number of candidates wrote *ont* here.

Question 50

Candidates sometimes supplied *dans* here.

Question 53

Some candidates wrote *après*.

Question 54

Candidates had difficulty with this question, with only a few providing an appropriate response. Incorrect responses included *rencontrer*, *être*, *surprise(e)*.

FRENCH

Paper 3015/22 Reading Comprehension

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

As in previous years, candidates were appropriately prepared for this paper and the majority of them tackled it 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. A few candidates had difficulty with **Question 4**; some candidates did not appear to understand *neuf heures et quart*.

Exercise 2

This exercise was very well done by almost all candidates; just a few answered **Question 9** incorrectly, suggesting that they did not understand *Il enseigne*.

Exercise 3

Again most candidates performed well in this multiple choice exercise.

Section 2

Exercise 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Questions 16, 17, 18 and 19 were generally answered appropriately.

Question 20

A few candidates answered *elle est surprise*, which was not credited.

Question 21

This was answered well by most candidates.

Questions 22

This was tackled well by most candidates with just a few stating that Kristelle wanted a dog, but omitting to mention that she had wanted one for a long time.

Question 23

This question posed no problems.

Question 24

This was clearly understood by most and well-handled.

Questions 25 and 26 posed no problem.

Exercise 2

In general, candidates performed well in this exercise and a significant number scored full or almost full marks.

Question 27

The majority of candidates gave correct answers here, although there were a few who seemed to have guessed the answer and wrote that Sam and Olivier found the subject *facile*, which was not in the text and was not credited. Similarly, some wrote that Damien hated the subject, which was not stated in the text either. Candidates are advised to avoid conjecture, which may be logical, but which may well lead them to provide answers not actually stated in the reading passage.

Questions 28

This was answered correctly by the majority of candidates.

Question 29

A number of candidates said that Damien organised competitions, instead of saying that competitions were organised.

Questions 30

This was answered correctly by some candidates, but a significant number provided an incomplete answer and did not include *pour les jeunes musiciens*.

Question 31

Many candidates replied *Il a/avait besoin d'un chanteur*, which despite demonstrating correct location of the information, did not answer the question, as it made no reference to the job offer.

Question 32

The majority of candidates tackled this well.

Questions 33

This was problematic for some candidates, who answered by lifting a long section of the text, beginning *Il finit par accepter.....* In this exercise, it is possible for candidates to use small amounts of the passage in their answers, but they must do so in a way that demonstrates that they have fully understood the question and the text. Indiscriminate lifting of large chunks of text is unlikely to do this. Other candidates merely wrote *Poussé par ses deux copains*, which could not be credited.

Question 34

A number of candidates explained that the diners were looking forward to the entertainment or that the place had a good reputation or that Damien was a success; such answers could be inferred, but an answer making reference to their coming specifically to being entertained by Damien was needed to get the mark.

Questions 35 and 36 were handled well by the majority of candidates.

Section 3

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Candidates found the following questions in particular problematic:

Question 38

A number of incorrect answers were supplied, most frequently *pas*, *jamaïs* and *beaucoup*.

Question 39

Many candidates wrote *quand* instead of *où*.

Question 44

Candidates sometimes wrote *étaient* instead of *été*.

Question 51

A wide range of adverbs were offered and for the most part were accepted. They included: *puis*, *ensuite*, *alors*, *enfin*, *malheureusement*, *soudain*, *après*.

Question 52

Some candidates did not seem aware that *téléphoner* is followed by *à* and consequently supplied *le* rather than *au* here.

Question 56

Although a significant number of candidates were able to supply *à* here, it appears that many candidates were not familiar with the expression *à temps*.