

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9779/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country where the target language is spoken; this subject should also offer opportunities for candidates to express their opinions
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in natural and spontaneous discussion.

General comments

Many candidates performed well in this year's examination. In general, candidates made effective use of the preparation time and gave thought to issues raised by their chosen article.

There were some instances of candidates attempting to read out written mini-essays by way of the summary: candidates should be reminded that this is not permitted.

It is advisable for candidates to keep to the specified duration of 1 minute for the summary; where candidates give an over-long summary, examiners will interrupt them so that full time is available for the discussion.

Good candidates were able to summarise the content of the article in their own words; weaker candidates tended to read out sentences which they believed to be representative. Candidates need to realise that they should be presenting the main themes and not the illustrative detail on the card. Candidates need to think about the implications of what is mentioned on the card. Candidates responded well when the discussion moved onto the general topic on which they could deal with a variety of questions in appropriate tenses.

Administrative matters

In the majority of cases, all administrative matters were dealt with in a meticulous way. There were just a few administrative issues to note:

Where Centres are unable to manage certain dates, it is important to specify this in advance, in the visit arrangement form, with full details of any dates to be avoided. It is not possible to accommodate late requests for changes to the date of the visit.

Complete batches of topic forms in hard copy should be received by Examiners via first class post at least two weeks before the examination date. In the case of large Centres it is helpful if the topic forms are received as early as possible.

Centres are requested to provide the Examiner on his/her arrival with a working mark sheet which has been completed with name, candidate number etc. It is helpful if the sheet can be completed in the order of examining rather than in candidate number order.

Discussion of Article

The most popular cards proved to be **Cards 1–4**.

Card 1: Work and leisure

This was a popular choice and on the whole candidates were able to give good summaries of the main issues at stake. Many were able to provide anecdotal evidence or examples from the lives of their family and friends to illustrate the issue of “le burn-out professionnel”. Many had less to say when asked about ways this problem could be avoided. Few could explain why patients nowadays were becoming “de plus en plus informés et exigeants”. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Work and Leisure*, topics covered included the following: work/life balance, the impact of emails and mobile phones, changes in retirement age, and to what extent our careers define who we are.

Card 2: Environment

This was also a popular choice, perhaps partly because of recent legislation concerning plastic bags in supermarkets. Many candidates appeared well-informed and able to express their ideas on pollution, the dangers faced by wildlife due to plastic waste and many were able to suggest plausible measures that could be implemented. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Environment*, topics covered included the following: green issues in the candidates’ schools, the impact of low-cost airlines and the balance between environmental and economic imperatives.

Card 3: Health

Some of the candidates who chose this card seemed to lack conviction when expressing their ideas; this may be because they had little direct experience of the issue raised in the text. Few could explain why an older person might need a pet as “un horloge” and in some cases candidates struggled to pinpoint the physical advantages of having a pet as well as the psychological benefits. Candidates responded well, however, to questions about the disadvantages of having a pet, whether a cat or a dog would offer more advantages and issues related to the well-being of the animal. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Health*, topics covered included the following: the extent to which our health is compromised by our modern life-styles, the role of the elderly in our society, how we can help the elderly in poor health.

Card 4: Human relationships

The issues in this text seemed to strike a chord with many candidates and there were lively discussions about the differences between men and women with regard to their differing levels of maturity. However, few had thought why “les unions sont plutôt fragiles”, and explanations of why people are forming relationships later in life were rather cursory. ” In answer to the question “Doit-on être en couple pour être heureux?” there were some thought-provoking and well-illustrated responses. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Human relationships*, topics covered included the following: Marriage or cohabitation? Why has life expectancy increased? What are the causes of the conflict between the generations? What are the implications if we wait before getting married?

Card 5: Food and drink

This card was slightly less popular although it did elicit some interesting reflections on the role of alcohol amongst the candidates’ friendship groups. Candidates were also forthcoming about the traditional role of alcohol in France and there was an impressive degree of knowledge and understanding about gastronomy in France. In the first part of the discussion candidates expressed their views on why more and more girls are drinking nowadays and the role of alcohol in our society. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Food and drink*, topics covered included the following: the changing nature of mealtimes, other gastronomic trends, TV cookery shows and their impact, the rules concerning alcohol in the candidates’ schools and their opinions of those rules.

Card 6: Law and order

Many candidates showed themselves to be both well-informed and well able to express their views on such matters as censorship of video games and TV series, the reasons for the increase in juvenile delinquency, measures that could be taken to prevent it and the role of CCTV. Many expressed strong views about the need to intervene and control but few were able to give a clear explanation of “Mieux vaut prévenir que guérir”. In the more general discussion of the wider heading *Law and order*, topics covered included the following: the role of prison in rehabilitation, the value of curfews, the alternatives to imprisonment, and the value of forbidding alcohol in certain parts of town.

Topics

It should be noted that the introduction should not exceed 1 minute and that if it does, candidates should expect to be interrupted.

All candidates had prepared their chosen topic thoroughly and had a wealth of factual information on which to draw. They varied in their ability to respond to questions on their subheadings when these questions were not worded in an expected way.

Some candidates had disadvantaged themselves by choosing a subject which was too vast, too general or not French enough. Some subjects were broad philosophical and social issues hardly specific to France or the francophone world. The risk of choosing such a broad issue is that it's hard for the candidate to truly demonstrate deep knowledge and opinions, because discussion remains at too superficial a level. Candidates need to strike a balance between broad issues and narrow ones by picking a particular angle to address a larger issue. There were some very good candidates who had chosen to present artists, musicians or historical figures whose lives had some controversial dimension which could be discussed and about which opinions could be expressed. The choice of a monument may not always give candidates the best chance to express opinions.

Examples of the wide range of topics chosen in this series are given below.

Sport: Le Tour de France; Michel Platini.

History: Napoleon; La Régence; Les Années Folles; les Cathares.

Art: Manet; Elisabeth Vigée; Le Brun; Le Corbusier.

Literature: Candide; Les Fleurs du Mal.

Music: Messiaen; Fauré; Serge Gainsbourg; Debussy.

Social issues: L'Immigration; La Laïcité; le Cannabis.

Monuments: Notre Dame; La Tour Eiffel; le pont de l'Île de Ré

Fashion: YSL; Coco Chanel

Language

There were a significant number of students who demonstrated very good knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary and syntax and a commendable level of accuracy. However, in general, accuracy was an area for improvement. Particular areas of weakness included: subject-verb agreement (especially of modal verbs, for example the 3rd person plural of *devoir*), preposition and article combinations (*de les* and *à les* plus noun were frequently given), and adjectival concordances. Many errors were due to the use of the passive instead of the active voice with verbs such as *donner*, *montrer*. The wrong gender of nouns was often given (*la plastique*, *la problème*, *le caméra*). By and large, pronunciation was good, as was intonation. However, as in previous series, a large number of candidates did not pronounce *alcool* and *pays* correctly. Additionally there was frequently confusion in the pronunciation of *l'amour/la mort*. In the topic discussion the pronunciation and intonation was often less authentic than in the discussion of the article; due to the prepared nature of this part of the exam some of the language produced resembled “de l'écrit oralisé”.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9779/02 Reading and Listening</p>
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Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- pay particular attention to conveying the required information to the examiner in unambiguous language

General comments

Performances spanned the whole of the ability range. In the strongest scripts, candidates made a good attempt to express themselves in their own words, and their answers were concise and to the point. In weaker scripts there was sometimes a tendency to write over-long responses, copying substantial chunks of text from the question paper. In some cases, candidates provided various alternative answers or they incorporated surplus, contradictory information that invalidated correct information given elsewhere.

Reading

Texte à lire 1

- 1 This proved to be an appropriately straightforward introductory question for the large majority of candidates who wrote that Mekhissi's father came from either the Maghreb or from North Africa. Just a handful failed to target the question set by simply copying out what they saw printed on the page in front of them (*il est maghrébin*) and there were also a number of answers that were either too vague or too specific (*d'Afrique, de l'étranger, du Maroc* etc.).
- 2 This question was generally done well- Mekhissi's achievement is that he has won 2 Olympic medals. Just a few candidates gave as their answer that he was proud because of the mark he had left in the French sporting world, having failed to register that the text says that *il va certainement laisser une trace*....and not that he has already done so.
- 3 The main shortfall here was not targeting the question. All that was needed was to deduce from the final sentence of the second paragraph that *il se sentait défavorisé/marginalisé/exclu/inférieur aux petits Français*. Too many answers simply consisted of a statement that he had to work harder than the French pupils because he was an immigrant.
- 4 This question proved challenging for some. *Désœuvré* was known by a fair number of candidates but too frequently, *il traînait* was taken to mean *il s'entraînait*. Candidates who simply wrote *Rien* or *Très peu* scored an easy mark.
- 5 The answer to this question, that was quite well answered, was to be found in Mekhissi's statement that without athletics, he would have ended up taking the wrong path: the 3 words *le bon chemin* qualified for the mark as did the slightly longer *une façon d'éviter le mauvais chemin*.
- 6 Mekhissi reproaches young people for not knowing the value of things. A good number of answers were accurate but, equally, there were a fair number which simply read *On leur donne tout* or *Ils sont donnés tout*. Just a few candidates had completely misunderstood and offered answers such as *D'apprendre la valeur des choses*.

- 7 This question requiring candidates to explain in their own words how Mekhissi benefits from *une vie sans confort* elicited a good response. However, there were a significant number of answers in which either problems of self-expression let candidates down or which were rooted more in common sense than in what had been read in the text or both, e.g. *il est plus facile de trainer sans les distractions d'une vie avec confort* and *Une vie sans confort donne un sentiment d'appréciation des choses qui (sic) on a dans la vie.*
- 8 This proved to be one of the least well done questions of the exercise. A lot of candidates based their answer not on what they had read in the final sentence of the fourth paragraph where the *agitation* referred to in the question is mentioned but rather solely on the previous sentence and gave untargeted answers such as *Il veut être dans les mêmes conditions que les Africains.*
- 9 The simple answer *battre les Kényans* hit the target. Too many simply reproduced what they had read in the text, notably that *il croit que les Kényans ne sont pas imbattables*, thereby failing to answer the question posed.
- 10 Most candidates had understood that it was a question of Mekhissi's increased maturity, though a certain number experienced problems of expressing this such as *il a décroché la maturité jusqu'à ces Jeux olympiques.* Some clearly misunderstood the last paragraph responding with *Si tout va bien il veut gagner la médaille d'or au Brésil parce qu'il est loin de maturité.*

Texte à lire 2

- 11 *Caserne* was correctly given as *barracks/military base* by about half of the candidates. Quite a lot of candidates who had presumably not understood took their answer from the phrase *vivent en internat* and gave as their answer *an old boarding school.*
- 12 Quite a common wrong answer here was *1 in 6 is illiterate.* The message is clear: when a text involves numbers, even numbers as simple as *dix*, candidates need to double check that they have read correctly.
- 13 The idea *mal partie* was not well understood, the most common answers being *badly behaved* and *badly brought up.*
- 14 Too many candidates simply gave a literal rendering of the M.Fouré's words *...ne peut pas laisser sa jeunesse au bord de la route*, writing *cannot leave its youth at the side of the road.* Such an answer does not demonstrate clear comprehension of the fact that he sees the country's duty as being to help young people.
- 15 This proved to be a very accessible question: any of the 2 pieces of information given, notably that he got into mischief/messed around or that he moved from one town to another earned the mark. Candidates who correctly rendered *il a...erré d'une ville à l'autre* but whose attempt at rendering *déconné* was clearly guesswork were not penalised.
- 16 Again, either one of the 2 pieces of information given earned the point: Xavier was fed up with the problems he was having or he told himself that he had to do something before things went very wrong. In a few cases *avant que ça finisse mal* was misinterpreted as referring to the possibility of falling ill or dying.
- 17 Very few answers failed to score here and a large proportion qualified for both marks. Where a mark was dropped, it was usually because the candidate failed to demonstrate full comprehension of the phrase *acteur de la société* offering such answers as *to become a part of society/to become a member of society.*
- 18 This question was generally well done, most candidates having understood that it was a question of getting young people ready to return to the world of work. There were, however, a small number who fell into the trap of transliterating the phrase *les rendre aptes à – make them apt to return to the world of work.*

- 19 The final question of the exercise proved to be challenging. Where a candidate failed to score, it was invariably because he/she failed to heed the wording which required an adjective as the answer: *unrealistic/unachievable/unrealisable/over-ambitious*. *Some young people wanted to be archaeologists but did not have the qualifications* is a correct statement but it is not an answer to the question asked.

Texte à lire 3

- 20 Marks in this exercise spanned the whole range. In quite a number of scripts, words that were to be found in the second reading passage were not spotted or were reproduced in mangled form, principal among these being *banlieues*, *émeutes*, *compétences sociales* and *permis de conduire*. Concordances caused problems, notably in the rendering of such items as *French suburbs, have been affected, indicate that* (plural subject followed by singular verb or vice versa), *broken dreams and their ambitions*. Other items that quite frequently caused candidates to stumble included *Several (Plusiers, Quelque(s))*, *the difficulty in finding (la difficulté en trouvant)*, *has not improved (n'a pas amélioré)*, *Are teenagers condemned (Sont les adolescents condamnés)* and *Perhaps they need (Peut-être ils ont besoin)*.

Listening

Texte à écouter 1

- 21 The 2 pieces of information required to answer this question proved to be very accessible. Where candidates dropped a mark, it was either because they simply transcribed what they had heard – *leur usage compuslif* – without specifying to what the *leur* refers or because their transcriptions of *leur usage* were flawed, e.g. *le rusage*.
- 22 This question was rather less well done. Quite a few candidates failed to pick up on the pertinent piece of information, notably that the specialists *étaient peu distraits de leurs tâches* or that *il n'y avait pas d'ordinateurs qui s'interposaient entre eux et leurs patients*. A fairly common answer that failed to target the question was a direct transcription from the text of *ils se focalisaient sur leurs patients* (sometimes given as *passion*), *collectant directement les informations les concernant*. Flawed transcriptions of *distraits* were also fairly common currency, e.g. *distrés*.
- 23 A large number of answers contained only 1 detail (*ils font du shopping*) rather than the 2 that were asked for. All that was needed to qualify for the second mark was *ils travaillent* or *ils regardent des dossiers médicaux*.
- 24 This proved to be straightforward for the vast majority of candidates. However, 72% was occasionally given as 62% and occasionally as 72 (t.c.)
- 25 Most candidates were successful in communicating Professor Rischmann's point about the value of mobile phones in emergencies. However, there were a few distorted transcriptions of *régler* which figured as *réguler*.
- 26 The recommendation that there be a code of conduct was correctly given in most scripts. Where the mark could not be awarded, it was either because of flawed transcriptions of *code* which was given as *corde* or because candidates had understood that the recommendation was that people should not use a mobile phone *pendant la conduite*.
- 27 The final question proved to be the most challenging one in the exercise. *Comporte de nombreux temps morts* was not understood by quite a lot of candidates, despite the circumstantial detail provided about the times during an operation when anaesthetists are busy, and resulted in responses of operating theatres littered with dead bodies.

Texte à écouter 2

- 28 Both parts of the question were fairly well done, though *mis au point* caused problems for some who made such suggestions as *they emphasised*, *they exploded* and *they put to the point*. In the second part, *un programme de construction de centrales nucléaires* was sometimes understood to mean two nuclear power stations, and there was also a certain sprinkling of *central nuclear plants* and *nuclear centres*.

- 29 Most candidates had understood that nuclear technology is vital for France's defence/national security, and a good number qualified for both marks by correctly stating that it enables the nation not to have to rely on oil imports for the production of electricity. However, a few candidates incorrectly responded to the second part of the question, stating *nuclear power plants do not have gas emissions/don't contribute to global warming*.
- 30 Both of the pertinent pieces of information, notably the need to import uranium and the fact that the last uranium mine closed in 2011, were correctly given in the majority of scripts. Occasionally, *uranium* failed to register properly, which resulted in such suggestions as *radium*, *aluminium* and *ammonia*.
- 31 *Sources d'énergie renouvelables* presented very few problems – a very small number of candidates who wrote *renouvelable energy sources*.
- 32 Again, many scripts contained both pieces of information, notably that the increased demand for energy from emerging countries has resulted in price increases and that France will suffer the consequences if it continues to buy energy on the world market. There were a few candidates who did not read the question carefully enough and who gave as their answer i) *La Chine* ii) *Le Brésil*.
- 33 Again, there were few problems of understanding here, though the direct transliteration, which was fortunately not common, of the French phrase *habitudes de consommation* as *habits of consummation/consommation* could not be credited.

Texte à écouter 3

The summary exercise was, in many cases, the least well done of the 3 listening exercises, a key factor very often being the failure, despite the warnings given in all previous subject reports, to respect the word limit. Many candidates wrote well in excess of 100 words, some of them adopting the practice of giving a fictitious word count at the end of their work. In extreme cases, the details given of both Julia's and Thomas's educational records had to be completely discounted because the candidates in question had already reached the 100 word limit in their summaries of the material relating to the first 2 bullet points.

Good candidates covered all of the ground within the permitted number of words and scored highly, the best among them qualifying for full marks. Candidates do need to be careful that they do not distort the key details of what they hear. In the first bullet point, for example, examples that recurred were *il faut avoir au moins vingt ans* (candidates must be under 20) and *il faut avoir plus de 23 ans* (candidates must be 23). Another pitfall that many candidates fell into was giving the direct English equivalent for words they had heard, which again often resulted in distortion, e.g. *60% passent l'examen* – *60% pass the exam*; *licence en droit* – *law licence*; *à la fin du collège* – *at the end of college*; *reprendre ses études* – *to retake*.

Other items contained in the passage for summary that caused a significant number to stumble were *il faut...avoir interrompu ses études depuis 2 ans* for which a number wrote *you must have studied for 2 years*, *dont la moitié réussit* where candidates needed to make it clear that it was half of those who took the exam who passed and not half of the whole student body, and *il a raté son bac* where, despite the context, quite a few chose the wrong meaning of *rater* and wrote *he missed his bac*.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9779/03 Writing and Usage</p>
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Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title on which they have something valuable to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses.

General comments

The Writing and Usage paper (Paper 3) is designed to test candidates' ability by means of a number of different exercises. They have to write a discursive essay on a general topic that has been studied over the two years of the Pre-U course, know the correct verb form to use in a particular construction, manipulate language and demonstrate comprehension of the content of a current affairs article by filling in gaps with the appropriate word or phrase chosen from a selection of four options. The paper is designed to give candidates across the whole range the chance to perform according to ability.

The selection of essay topics in this summer's paper covered separate education for boys and girls, the ups and downs of family life, the inevitability of war, the future of democracy and the value of travel. The usage section of the paper tested knowledge of verb forms in **Exercise 1** including use of past tenses, the imperative, future tense in certain constructions, subjunctive usage and preceding direct object. **Exercise 2** tested the candidates' ability to manipulate language and included rendering direct into indirect speech, use of a negative form, use of passive voice, subjunctive structure and inversion after *à peine*. **Exercise 3** was a passage about the threat to the olive harvest in Europe. Candidates were given a grid of possible words and phrases to fill in the gaps in the text. For the Discursive Essay question 24 marks were awarded for language and 16 for content, Exercises 1 and 2 were worth 5 marks each and Exercise 3 was worth 10 marks.

Candidates, overall, demonstrated a clear understanding of the requirements of the paper and most adhered closely to the rubric. There were, however, a considerable number of very long essays, up to 1500 words in length. In some cases this proved counterproductive for candidates since they tend to self-penalise when they do not write concisely. Often these candidates do not use paragraphing appropriately or appear to have worked out an overall structure to their essays. Language errors accumulate and arguments can become repetitive and rambling. The advice on word number is clearly stated in the rubric for the essay and candidates should be told to think carefully about the planning and construction of their essay in order to keep within the word limit.

There were some very good essays at the upper end which showed maturity of thought as well as idiomatic and accurate language usage. The candidates concerned had strongly held views on the topics and were able to deploy a large range of structures and vocabulary in support of their arguments which were mature and balanced.

Most candidates were able to write relevant, if at times superficial, answers to the essay questions set and it was clear that topic areas had been studied, appropriate vocabulary learned and opinions formed. There were, however, a significant number of candidates who struggled to convey their thoughts as they did not have the knowledge and control of grammatical structures and idiom in order to express themselves. In these cases, arguments were often unclear and long explanations in poor French were given to describe situations or to make very minor points. In essays of this type, candidates displayed poor linguistic

awareness, clumsy expression and even a tendency to use English or Spanish words when the French word was not known.

It must be said that candidates, whatever their ability, once again demonstrated clearly by their use of illustrations that they had been exposed to French media and they had ideas to offer on a range of challenging contemporary concerns.

Common errors in the essay section involved:

- incorrect genders of common words such as *paix, monde, terrorisme, fin, menace, sexe, âge, avantage, public, manque, problème, service, effet, thème, rôle, type, programme, aspect*
- overuse of *le taux*, often incorrectly used for *le nombre*
- misspellings such as, *example, personnellement, , traditionnel, gouvernement, significant, cases (for cas)*
- numerous accent errors such as *religion, société, admettre, existé, créés (past participle)*
- anglicisms such as *espace (place), change (changement), stage (étape), définitivement, pessimistique, partout le monde*
- incorrect use of a past participle agreement such as *ils ont menés*
- use of *mieux* for *meilleur*, *mal* for *mauvais*, *bien* for *bon*
- failure to discriminate between the forms of *leur* and *leurs* such as *leur enfants, leurs donner* and use of *leur* for *eux*
- phonetic spellings such as *ce* for *c'est* or *ceux*, *ses* for *ces* and vice versa
- inability to form reflexive verbs correctly particularly in *nous* form such as *nous devons s'occuper de la planète*
- paragraphs starting with inappropriate link words such as *aussi, ensuite, alors*
- confusion of *penser à* and *de*
- incorrect preposition use with *permettre*

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive Essay

The essay question gives candidates the opportunity to discuss their chosen title in any way that they wish and there is no correct answer or viewpoint. Their argument should be convincing and with a degree of balance. If a candidate argues for one side of the argument very strongly, there should be at least some recognition that there is another view. Planning is clearly an important part of the art of essay writing.

Many candidates wrote a brief plan in English and then translated the ideas with limited success. Others wrote very long plans or even a complete first draft of their essay and then struggled to complete copying it out. Some candidates understood planning to mean writing down as many discursive essay type phrases as possible in a list and then trying to incorporate them all in their essay. These phrases, designed to provide a framework to a serious discursive essay, were often used to pad rather short and often weak sentences where candidates struggled to express their own ideas. The consequent contrast in styles is very apparent to the reader and does the candidate no favours. An example of this strategy which often includes forced use of the subjunctive: *à ceci s'ajoute apprendre comment parler à l'autre sexe, sinon, quand ils vont à l'université, ils n'auraient pas la puissance de trouver une petite copine afin qu'ils puissent se marier*. There is a generally held belief that essays must be replete with subjunctives to be successful. The resulting structures can seem laboured and often a simpler structure may well be more appropriate.

Candidates appeared to have understood the major implications of the questions set and having acquired a good knowledge from their reading of French texts and articles were able to offer some genuine personal insights into the topics. In general, candidates need to consider carefully their opening paragraph as it is this which sets the tone and parameters of the argument. A definition of the terms involved in the question helps to set the essay off in the right direction. It is, however, important that candidates do not make extravagant claims about their essay in their introduction which they cannot then fulfil. Most candidates did adhere to the rubric about the suggested number of words but a significant number, as already stated, were unable to contain their enthusiasm for the topic and ended up writing in excess of 1000 words.

1 (a) « Il vaut mieux éduquer séparément les filles et les garçons. » Discutez de cette affirmation.

This was a very popular question and was, on the whole, well answered. Candidates held a range of strong views about the merits and disadvantages of teaching boys and girls separately. Many candidates quoted research which proved that boys did better with girls in the class while girls did better when taught in a single sex environment. Various reasons were put forward as to why this might be the case. It was felt that boys were somewhat neutralised by having girls in class and more likely to knuckle down and work. Another possible reason could be their need to dominate and therefore work harder to show off their mental prowess. It was felt that girls might do worse in a mixed sex school because they might feel intimidated in class and also maybe not have the same opportunity to study traditionally male subjects such as mathematics, physics and computing as they would be encouraged to follow an arts and humanities route. Others mentioned the distraction caused by sexual attraction. Most candidates did not merely comment about academic results and performance. They were keen to point out that school is about more than studying, it is a place where socialisation takes place. They clearly felt that being educated separately leads to problems in later life. They pointed to boys' inability to relate to the opposite sex and referred to boarding school syndrome which could lead to seriously bad behaviour at university with inappropriate sexual behaviour and generally boorish antics. Most candidates wrote balanced answers where they weighed up the pros and cons of each approach and came to a conclusion, often dependent on their own schooling.

(b) « La famille nous apporte autant de peine que de joie. » Partagez-vous ce point de vue?

This was answered by a relatively small number of candidates. There were several different viewpoints and it was clear that personal experience informed many answers. There was a general view that the closeness of family ties can bring about an entire panoply of emotions. Candidates wrote about the intense pain caused by divorce and death in the family and described, in particular, the effects on young people. They also considered some of the torments experienced in everyday family life such as arguments, parental pressure alongside expectation, and lack of freedom. In contrast, they explained that family also means marriage and children- both of which can bring about true happiness. They talked of the support offered by siblings and parents in times of stress such as the breakup of relationships or examination periods. Some talked of parental expectation as a positive force encouraging young people to do their best and make the best of their opportunities. The question was well answered with all candidates presenting a range of balanced arguments.

(c) « Un monde sans guerre est inconcevable. » Dans quelle mesure est-ce que vous partagez ce jugement?

This was a very popular question and there was, therefore, a wide range of ability demonstrated across the essays from the very superficial to the very sophisticated. The title gave candidates of all levels the chance to explore their views about the role of war in the modern world and in the future. It was clearly a topic that both interested and concerned many candidates. They were generally in agreement that man is by nature competitive and to some extent aggressive. Groups holding different views will always fight to uphold their views whether this be peacefully through discussion or aggressively through combat and war. Candidates made particular mention in their answers of the current situation in Syria and Iraq and the rise of terrorism. Other answers seemed to suggest that getting rid of racism and terrorism was the easy answer to getting rid of war in the world while others felt that if more talks and diplomacy took place, then wars could be eradicated. Most candidates felt, however, that no amount of talking could prevent hard line regimes or religious groups from trying to impose their will. Some candidates felt that nuclear weapons were useful in creating some stability as they acted as a deterrent, other felt that the internet was a force

for reconciliation and information while others felt it was a vehicle for expressing and communicating and expanding terrorist activity. Many candidates made reference to the great strides made in Europe and the world since the World Wars and stressed the importance of such organisations as the UN, NATO and the EU. Candidates had a range of interesting and well-illustrated observations to make on the topic and gave a personal response according to their ability.

(d) « L'avenir de la démocratie est incertain. » Qu'en pensez-vous ?

This was the third most popular question and elicited some mature and intelligent answers as well as some less focused and rather confused answers. Many candidates did not choose to define or give any context for democracy and launched into a discussion of the role of terrorism and the ability of the internet to create radical groups. Some, however, had thought carefully about the role of democracy in the modern world and were able to question both its place in current political thinking and consider how it might operate in the future. It was generally felt that democracy was still a good thing but that there were limits to its effectiveness. Candidates writing just in advance of the EU referendum were keen to point out that democracy can sometimes work for the good of the country and sometimes not so. They felt that having the vote was still an important part of a free society and that it should be extended to all countries. It was clear to candidates, however, that democracy is not necessarily a panacea and they pointed to examples where the people were misled as elections were rigged and/or their leaders were corrupt. Some felt it was obviously better to have a benevolent dictator than a rotten democratic structure. It was felt by some that capitalism and inequality harm democracy with barriers being created between the rich and the poor. Others felt that the internet had created a new form of democracy where all people had the chance to express their views. They felt that this was the democracy of the future. Some candidates truly did try to assess the value of democracy today and to consider whether it has a future across the world.

(e) « On ne peut pas apprécier le monde sans avoir voyagé. » Discutez de cette affirmation.

This was the least popular question but was still attempted by a reasonable number of candidates across the ability range. Many of them took the view that travelling does expand one's knowledge and experience of the world. They talked of trips to far off tourist destinations where the food, language and culture are significantly different and also trips to areas of the world where there are wars, diseases and famine. They felt that both of these kinds of travel experience could inform the everyday life of travellers. They felt that it was essential to experience the sensual thrill of new tastes, sounds, smells and landscapes rather than merely watch TV documentaries or read internet travelogues. They also felt that it was a valuable experience for young people to do volunteer work in areas where wars, disease and poverty were prevalent as it would give them a view of the world beyond their own cosy existence. Other candidates felt that there were many reasons why people might not be able to travel because of lack of money, illness or disability and that for these people the TV and the internet were an excellent source of information about the world. Some candidates went so far as to say that, considering the environmental cost of travel, it was better for the planet if we all stayed at home and experienced the world through the media. There were some interesting and thought-provoking answers which showed mature reflection. All candidates seemed to have well-developed ideas on the topic which were expressed according to ability.

Part II: Usage

Exercise 1

This exercise was generally well understood by candidates with most achieving 3 or 4 out of 5 marks. Incorrect answers were distributed across all questions. Examples of incorrect answers given included:

- Q2** *irions, sommes allés*
- Q3** *Restez, Restes*
- Q4** *est arrivé*
- Q5** *ditiez, dirigez, dissiez, dites*
- Q6** *avait trouvées, a trouvées, ait pas trouvées*

Exercise 2

This exercise tested a range of grammatical points. Few candidates achieved full marks but many achieved 3 or 4 out of 5. Incorrect answers seen included the following:

- Q7 *de qu'est-ce avais passé*
- Q8 *prend que, prenne qu'*
- Q9 *nous seront, nous avons été accompagné*
- Q10 *qu'elle parte, qu'elles partiront*
- Q11 *de qu'il finisse*

Exercise 3

Candidates of all abilities achieved good marks on this exercise, showing that they had understood both the content and grammatical structure of the passage. **Questions 19, 21, 24** and **30** were some of the clearer discriminators although incorrect answers were distributed across the whole exercise.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9779/04 Topics and Texts</p>

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the question with care and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close attention to the question
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid simply retelling the story.

General comments

Candidates should plan their essays before setting pen to paper. A well-structured essay will be sensibly paragraphed, and the discussion will lead from an introduction to a conclusion.

In responding to the question on a literary text, candidates should reflect on the whole question, not just focus on one specific word.

For both parts of this paper, a good level of understanding and knowledge of the texts and films is required, expressed in well-argued responses with relevant illustration. The topics section invites the acquisition of a broad cultural knowledge of the topic studied through the material chosen. For answers in French, candidates should strive to achieve a high level of accuracy and determine to use a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns; a sense of idiom would be an advantage.

In both parts of the paper, candidates should:

- read the question carefully
- plan their response keeping the question in mind throughout
- define the terms of the question in the introduction
- support any assertions with close references to the text and/or film
- make sure quotations, if used, support the argument
- make sure all quotations are accurate
- use paraphrasing and allusion as an alternative to overly long quotations
- make sure to include analysis and argument, and avoid a narrative approach
- demonstrate knowledge by using it as supporting evidence for the argument
- exclude information that is irrelevant to the question.

Part I: Cultural Topics

Candidates should:

- make sure that they learn the necessary vocabulary to write about their topic, when preparing for this part
- remember that the rubric requires reference to only two of the works. Writing about all three may lead to a lack of in-depth analysis
- try to demonstrate their knowledge of underlying themes, and mention comparisons as well as links between the two works
- proofread carefully after writing, paying special attention to verb forms and agreements.

Part II: Literary Texts

In context questions candidates should:

- make sure they analyse the extract showing how its content is related to the rest of the work
- avoid using the passage as a springboard for a general essay
- be careful to analyse, rather than re-tell the story of the extract.

Comments on specific questions

The examiners continue to be impressed by the candidates' preparation for and engagement with the paper. The quality of answers indicates that teachers and candidates have established a good grasp of the requirements of the syllabus, and more particularly, the demands of this paper. It is pleasing to note that newer centres have successfully integrated this syllabus into their teaching. The candidates' scripts confirm that the aim of the syllabus to raise cultural awareness and to develop critical faculties is being fulfilled, often impressively so. In general, both candidates and teachers are to be congratulated on the hard work and the effectiveness of preparation for the examination.

The majority of candidates planned their answers before starting their essays, and the benefit was reflected in the accurate targeting of the question. Many candidates chose to write freely, and at length, knowing that the word limit is advisory. The quality of answers in both languages is testimony to candidates' desire and ability to communicate a variety of good ideas in structured paragraphs and cogently argued prose, and anchor their assertions with close reference to the text or film. The success of their enterprise was generally good or very good, with some exceptional answers which demonstrated an impressive acuity of insight. Examiners also noted some very concise essays of closely argued and thoughtful analysis which scored highly.

There were answers on all the topics. The examiners felt that there was an overall improvement in the structuring and effectiveness of essays. The answers on cultural topics indicated a good knowledge of the source material and that the narrative approach was less in evidence. All candidates answered the questions in the correct language. However, not all scripts bore the correct question number,

The vast majority of answers engaged well with the terms of the questions, with the best answers revealing detailed knowledge of the texts and films used as supporting evidence in a cogent and coherent line of argument. The level of language was, in the main, of a satisfactory to good standard in the use of both vocabulary and syntax, indicating that candidates had built up the requisite vocabulary and were comfortable in writing extensively in the target language. The overwhelming majority of candidates managed to strike a good balance when approaching two texts and/or films and also showed the ability to draw considered comparisons between the two works according to the terms of the question.

The strongest answers to the second part of the paper, Texts, showed an excellent ability to organise material in direct reference to the terms of the question. These responses also showed great command of detail of the text studied and evidenced cogent and considered arguments. Most candidates were well practised in structuring their answers, notably in defining the terms of the question with a clear introduction and conclusion. All scripts showed a good acquaintance with textual detail.

The commentary option was a popular choice, with approximately 28% of candidates electing to analyse a passage. It was clear from answers that most candidates had been trained successfully to attempt this question type. Commentary essays this year generally showed good analytical ability and candidates were able to refer the extract to its context and then to analyse specific elements within it. A few candidates made use of the line numbers to facilitate detailed discussion.

Responses to the remaining essays were at least satisfactory and often good or very good. A pleasing number of candidates had learnt quotations from their particular text and often used them tellingly when combined with analysis. Indeed, there was a general improvement in the usage of close reference to the text to substantiate points made.

Part I: Cultural Topics

- 1 (a) This was a popular choice, and answers showed engagement with the topic. The question generated a good range of points of view and the arguments put forward were generally well supported by references to the sources. More impressive essays were able to discuss in detail implicit or inferred criticisms of the behaviour and actions of the French population and give telling examples to back up their assertions. Where the illustrations offered were not the most convincing or apposite, this left the reader wanting more. Thus, in some scripts the references in Nemirovsky's novel to illustrate egoism or the supercilious attitude of the bourgeois pointed often to children not sharing their food, whereas episodes in the behaviour of some of the adults could have been more telling. Similarly, in the discussion about the film, the valour and commitment of the Aubrac couple were universally mentioned, but other features and characters were brought into more convincing essays to argue that the film was not just to be taken on the same terms as the novel, but should be interpreted as a eulogy to the Resistance movement. More perceptive answers demonstrated that the heroic behaviour of the Aubracs was offset by more mundane human reactions and temptations, for example, betrayal, black market selling, a lack of patriotism, to give a more complex picture.
- (b) The theme of hope attracted a variety of answers, some concluding that, on balance, hope was in short supply in the two texts, but that the film, which set out to romanticise the actions of the Aubrac couple, showed how the Resistance movement could outwit the occupying army and lay the foundations of eventual victory. More convincing answers did not approach the discussion in binary terms, but offered greater nuance in seeing optimism in the traits and positive actions of a few characters in *Tempête en juin*- for example, les Michaud, which offset the chaos of war and the widespread greed and selfishness in the novel. There was good discussion, too, of Dutourd's novel, where the satirical elements and black humour gave much scope for candidates to take issue with the initial statement.
- 2 (a) The responses to this question found the title straightforward and was one that candidates handled well with reference to Chraïbi's novel and the film. They discussed stereotypes, masculine and feminine roles and changes in those roles in the film and novel, usually 'discretely' rather than finding points of similarity or difference that would have permitted more sophisticated discussion of comparative issues. Typically, however, the concluding paragraphs sought to find common ground between the works and summarised that the patriarchal figures in each were forced to change their views; that the Canadian Catholic mother in the film had freedom from the beginning, but the Moroccan Muslim mother in the novel had to win hers, gradually, through education; or that the fathers slowly came to accept the son in the film and the mother in the novel.
- (b) Essays tended to focus on the social elements, with some references to the role of family. There was a tendency to discuss the two works in isolation; however, more thoughtful comparisons were sometimes made with the introduction of the second title. All essays featured good introductions and concluding paragraphs comparing 'C.R.A.Z.Y.' with 'La Civilisation, ma mère'. Some found 'liberation' as common ground for comparison and others, 'patriarchy'. From time to time, differences as well as similarities formed part of the discussion of comparative issues. The clearest articulation of this was: "Où Zac essaie de changer pour s'adapter à la société, la mère essaie de changer la société...".

- 3 (a)** Candidates had clearly enjoyed engaging with this topic and were able to demonstrate, for the most part, thoughtful and sensitive analysis of the protagonists' reactions to their situation. Some answers dwelt more on the causes of the problems rather than using this information to inform discussion about how the various characters reacted. Discussion of *La Haine* was generally wide-ranging and suitably illustrated, with appropriate attention to the frustration of daily existence. In addition to characters seeking outlets in violent or threatening behaviour, actions and comments imparting a rather different moral compass and attitudes to authority than that of the bourgeois, but the characters could also show a sense of dignity, companionship and humour. There was also some very thoughtful consideration of *La Désintégration*, with most answers analysing not only Ali, but considering the other members of the family, the opportunities offered by education and work and the role played by religion and identity. Those answers which focused exclusively on Ali missed some of the complexity of the plot. The answers on Begag's novel were generally satisfactory, but illustrations could be rather limited in their range. Whilst some obvious points were mentioned, for example, his experiences at school - fewer candidates used the point to develop a picture of Béni's determination in his quest for integration. Good answers looked not only at his family background and his desire to leave his Algerian identity behind, but went on to examine his reaction to the xenophobia encountered throughout the novel, the link between appearance and identity, and to discuss his relationship with France, his aptly named girlfriend.
- (b)** This was another popular question, with many candidates taking the opportunity to use the three elements of the question, the three French ideals, to structure their essays effectively. A number of essays focused on the three main characters on the estate to posit a lack of freedom and equality but to point out that fraternity existed between the inhabitants of the cité. More wide-ranging discussions compared life in the cité with that of central Paris and were more nuanced in analysing the relative degrees of freedom that exist, but that equality and fraternity, as national ideals, were deliberately presented as non-existent by the director. Many candidates enjoyed engaging with this theme in discussing Faucon's film and did not limit themselves to analysing Ali's frustration and anger, but examined the attitudes and behaviour of other members of the family, the role of the educational institute and the Islamic community. A few perceptive answers considered the contrast between the genuine fraternity promoted by the local imam, with the instrumentalisation of Ali by Jamel for his own ends. Discussion of Begag's novel also showed empathy with the text. A few essays were a little brief on analysis, showing that France was a country of inequalities; many contrasted the attitude of the family at the beginning of the novel and racist attitudes in school and in life with Béni's desire for acceptance and integration. Examples given sometimes focused on just the beginning and end of the novel, whereas more effective responses could point to evidence throughout the book. There were some excellent answers from candidates who had clearly studied the films and texts in detail and who had researched the background to this topic.
- 4 (a)** There was good engagement with the question, with conclusions on the nature of future societies ranging from pessimism to outright optimism. Most discussions saw a degree of nuance, with positive elements offsetting the rather more obvious pessimistic features. Better essays began by summarising the dystopia in both films, not dwelling for too long on pessimistic images. Many, however, did feel the need to establish the lack of optimism in one work and then the other. Although more thoughtful comparisons began with the introduction of the second title, including similarities such as characters' fear leaving them aspiring to survival rather than change, but signs that all was not so pessimistic, such as love overcoming desperation, and differences such as there being more humour in 'Alphaville' than in 'Delicatessen'. Poetry in 'Alphaville' tended to be mentioned more readily than music in 'Delicatessen', but this usually did get a mention before the end of the conclusion. A few scripts argued that the lack of emotion and of creativity in Alphaville and the technological benefits of *La Ville Radieuse* made for a positive and desirable world, though they felt that the role of women in both was a negative counterpoint.
- (b)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.

- 5 (a) Answers on the significance of journeys were enterprising and well-informed. Whilst elements of compulsion and freedom in undertaking journeys could have been developed further, answers gave shape to the open-ended nature of the film, pointing out that the meaning of journeys was sometimes hard to discern, (or indeed, some maintained that there was no meaning), but that social and political elements did emerge from the complexity of interchanges. Consideration of Van Cauwelaert's novel focused on the contrasting journeys of Aziz and Jean-Pierre and how these characters developed. Good answers pointed out that the journeys were both physical and mental; many went on to connect the journey to questions of love, identity and belonging, themes which could be linked to the film. Candidates typically referred to emotional voyages of self-discovery and of physical journeys unleashing psychological ones.
- (b) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- 6 (a) There was no problem in setting the passage in context, nor in discussing how Aricie's role at this point is to try to preserve Hippolyte's reputation and life. Those candidates who quoted the line number of words and phrases referred to, differentiated much more clearly between references to the passage, and references to other parts of the text. Candidates discussed what light the passage shed on the characters involved well. Some scripts did not mention the 'horribles discours' at all, some explained it in general terms and, among the rest, some referred to it as C enone's treacherous gossip which they could illustrate with a wealth of references in the passage. Others said that it referred to Th es e's calling down the wrath of Neptune on his son. There was proper close analysis of vocabulary, especially images and thematic references to love and fate. Not all candidates identified Aricie's rhetorical questions and their value in highlighting the flaws in Th es e's judgement. Analysis of Th es e's speech could have brought out his stubbornness, credulity and lack of insight; many answers did not make the link between the 'horribles discours' of the opening line and Th es e's response. Good essays went on to show the importance of the scene in preparing for the climax of the tragedy.
- (b) All candidates responding to this question discussed both compassion and 'terreur', although all gave preference to one above the other, usually to compassion, sympathy or respect, but in one case to terror/horror/'disgust'. Some related the quotation to the elements of tragedy, of pity and fear. Occasionally, more time was given to an explanation for our compassion for Ph edre than might have been expected, but almost all essays began with relevant, all-encompassing introductions and ended with clear conclusions.
- (c) The most successful way to frame this essay was shown to be: (i) to set the scene of the spectator's sympathy (e.g. 'the tragedy that takes place is a result of an accumulation of mistakes, from Ph edre's passions to Hippolyte's virtue preventing him from telling Th es e the truth...'), and lack of it, for Ph edre. (ii) to summarise the different ways in which that sympathy was maintained (of which one was the role of C enone, and some candidates also mentioned Ph edre's own role, or Racine's presentation of it, foreshadowing and dramatic irony/relating to the play as a tragedy, Ph edre's heredity, and the role of Venus/the gods, some of whom made thoughtful comparisons between their relative influence over Ph edre and over Hippolyte). (iii) to analyse the extent to which the role of C enone maintained the spectator's sympathy for Ph edre. Some drew conclusions about the extent to which the spectator's sympathy for Ph edre is maintained, but without the focus *by the role of C enone*. Some candidates used the question to write a response about who was most deserving of the spectator's sympathy: Ph edre or C enone.

- 7 (a) Candidates clearly enjoyed analysing one of the best known extracts from the play and had no difficulty in placing it in context. Answers were, on the whole, very effective at demonstrating the role and function of the two characters and at going through the extract in a methodical way. Whilst scripts demonstrated a good understanding of the play and its background, perceptive candidates were able to discuss the comic effects and their significance, including reference to the stage directions. There was some thoughtful discussion of the use of language, and occasionally some misreadings, for example, Tartuffe's use of imperatives, the meaning of 'discipline' and 'haire', and about the extent of Dorine's décolleté. More perceptive answers briefly mentioned the two contrasting views of Tartuffe presented in Acts 1 and 2 before analysing the impact of Tartuffe's appearance and then his response to seeing Dorine. The best candidates said why Dorine was there (lines 34-5) but without linking these lines to 'Vous dire' in line 10. Some candidates spent much too much time on lines 16-27 to the exclusion of all else. Some saw comedy in Dorine's role as a cheeky servant and not in the language used or the dramatic aspects of her encounter with Tartuffe. Most candidates who attempted the commentary had been properly prepared. Overall, there was far less of a tendency to use the passage as an excuse for discussing the play, rather than as an opportunity for close textual analysis.
- (b) There were a variety of approaches to the question: some candidates gave a personal reaction to Orgon's behaviour and attitude and evidenced a good understanding of the plot. Amongst these, a good number found Orgon's blindness or tyranny simply comic, when a variety of reactions to different aspects of his behaviour could have been explored. Others took a more comprehensive line and examined not only Orgon's infatuation for Tartuffe and the exaggerated lack of concern for his own family, but went on to consider the function and method of the comic spring in the play in connection with Orgon's obsession. Many pointed to Molière's maxim, 'Le devoir de la comédie est de corriger les hommes en les divertissant', and demonstrated how Orgon fitted that role. A number answered the question 'how does Orgon behave' without mentioning the consequences for him and his family or paying much attention to their own reaction. Overall, candidates had clearly enjoyed studying the play, and a number made reference to productions they had seen.
- (c) The question on the structure of the play was less popular than the previous essay theme. Nevertheless, answers were generally thoughtful and it was interesting to note the variety of stances taken. There were some robust arguments which focused on the elements which the final act had in common with the rest of the play, namely the comic thread. There were also useful discussions about the play's history and the rewriting of act five to enable the king to be viewed as a far-sighted and sagacious dispenser of justice, and, of course, to enable the play to be performed. The question of realism was considered, and whilst Orgon has painted himself into a corner from which only an external agent can extricate him, an unlikely but fortuitous event, Orgon's exaggerated affection for and dedication to Tartuffe also strain credulity. Perceptive answers considered the subject as a multi-faceted discussion, with proper consideration of thematic and structural themes.
- 8 (a) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (b) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (c) Answers here were generally detailed and incisive, demonstrating a good understanding of the requirements of the question. Occasionally the focus of an answer dwelt too closely on the mass of detailed descriptions at the cost of analysis and argument, but generally candidates were adept at linking the function of narrative detail to inform social and historical forces. All candidates were able to discuss how money, social status and social advancement were key features of the novel.
- 9 (a) There were some good answers which placed the extract in context and explained briefly the reason for the contrasting views of Mme Walter and Walter, commenting perceptively on the drama of their conflict. Details of language were noted, such as the repetition of 'Jamais, jamais' and the use of 'la lui donner' to show how Walter regards his daughter as an object. The other features considered important were the portrait given of Duroy in his absence and the increasing vehemence of Mme Walter's replies.

- (b) Candidates showed a good understanding of Duroy's relationships and success in society. Many candidates interpreted the question rather narrowly. This meant, for example, that they discussed how shallow Duroy's feelings are, particularly for the women he seduces, without considering that Duroy does have a limited range of deep emotions, especially pride, ambition, envy, shame. Nonetheless, these candidates did make a number of relevant points about Duroy's use of women in pursuit of his ambition and did show that for some women he does have genuine feelings. Some remarked that he has no sense of guilt in pursuing his ambition.
- (c) Answers showed a good knowledge of the numerous characters in the novel and a sophisticated understanding of the stages in Duroy's rise in society. Candidates adopted different approaches to the question. Some answers focused on whether women are exploited, concluding generally that they are to varying degrees, and devoted less time to considering the extent to which they are innocent victims. Those for whom the question meant: 'Given that women are exploited in the novel, it does not follow that they are innocent victims' placed more emphasis on the second part of the question and produced better answers. They concluded, in general, that Suzanne is the only woman who is truly innocent, and that Mme Forestier is the least innocent and most self-absorbed. Madeleine was seen as the most independent of Duroy's conquests. Mme de Marelle, in love but needy and selfish, and Mme Walter, easily charmed, were given an intermediate position. Rachel, a prostitute, was considered by definition not to be an innocent victim even though she had some tender feelings for Duroy and regarded him unwisely as a lover rather than a client.
- 10 (a) The second part of the question about which attitude is more persuasive would make more sense if candidates focussed in the first part on Hémon's attitude of 'civil disobedience' for a good cause and Créon's attitude of insistence on the letter of the law. Answers comfortably commented on Hémon's love for Antigone, but not so much on the crumbling relationship between father and son in this scene as Hémon's idealised view of his heroic father was reduced to nothing. Although Créon was standing for a principle, he was reduced practically to saying, 'Grow up/get over it'. Some candidates simply said that Créon's attitude was more persuasive, some recognised the contemporary implications for Anouilh, but couldn't necessarily take one side or the other. Hémon's attitude was less often seen as more persuasive.
- (b) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (c) Candidates approached this question in different ways, some opting either for 'heroine' or 'obstinate adolescent' at the outset and devoting the essay to that view, others presenting evidence from the text for and against each description. Reference to the Chorus, or that there could be 'no heroes in tragedies', brought a weight of conviction to the discussion, and the most persuasive responses from some argued that neither description was entirely appropriate. Other candidates took an 'evidence for one description then the other' approach. When considering 'obstinate adolescent', most emphasised 'obstinate', though some dwelt instead on 'adolescent' and/or focussed on the childlike appearance and behaviour of Antigone and on the idea that she readily accepted death to flee from her fear of the future. Perceptive essays would present evidence of Antigone's heroic attributes and illustrate aspects of her as a child incapable of growing up, before coming to a conclusion.
- 11 (a) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (b) Candidates generally engaged well with the question, though answers varied in effectiveness in defining Catherine's importance in the life of Laurence and, indirectly, that of Dominique. The best candidates recalled the deep questions asked by the adolescent Catherine and her friendship with Brigitte which provokes a crisis in her parents' relationship. They showed that Laurence is determined to set her daughter free from the role into which she was forced as a woman, and that her husband's intention to provide conventional treatment for Catherine (holiday, psychiatrist) must be resisted. Candidates seemed to take to heart the social and psychological questions raised in this novel.
- (c) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.

- 12 (a)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (b)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (c)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- 13 (a)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.
- (b)** This was a straightforward question which was answered well. Most candidates stated that fear was part of life for Mme Rosa as well as having some specific causes. Some of these included fear of dying and fear of being hospitalised. Many candidates included lengthy references to Gary's fears and suicide; like Mme Rosa he was afraid of aging. Momo was seen as afraid of being left alone on the death of Mme Rosa; his umbrella served as a bulwark against this fear. Candidates added that Mme Rosa and Momo help to assuage each other's distress and that love, given to Momo by Nadine, and support given by neighbours are the only means to drive out fear. Fear in the life of M Hamil, by contrast, was rarely mentioned.
- (c)** There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment.