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FRENCH

Paper 0520/12
Listening (Multiple Choice)

Question Number	Key
1	C
2	B
3	B
4	A
5	D
6	A
7	C
8	A

Question Number	Key
9	B
10	A
11	D
12	C
13	B
14	C

Question Number	Key
15	B
16	F
17	E
18	A
19	C

Question Number	Key
20	B
21	B
22	A
23	A
24	C
25	B
26	C
27	B
28	A

Question Number	Key
29	B
30	D
31	B
32	A
33	A
34	C

Question Number	Key
35	B / E
36	C / D
37	B / D

General comments

The March 2022 Listening paper consisted of 37 multiple-choice questions. Overall, the candidature performed well and most candidates attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only for **Questions 1** to **34**, and **two** letters for **Questions 35** to **37**.

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The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity. They featured simple transactional exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts. The paper differentiated well.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

Overall candidates performed very well in this exercise. The extracts were straightforward and short. For **Question 1**, some candidates did not understand *quinze*. For **Question 3**, some candidates did not know *lait* and answered **D** instead. For **Question 4**, some candidates did not know *salle de bains*; **B** and **C** were the most frequent errors. Some candidates did not recognise *poisson* in **Question 5** and chose **C** (*poulet*). Nearly a fifth of candidates did not know *équitation* in **Question 7** and often chose **B** instead. For **Question 8**, some candidates did not know *pantalon* and answered **D**.

Questions 9–14

In this exercise, candidates heard a longer extract which featured information about Saint Bertrand, a French town. Candidates performed well in this exercise.

For **Question 9**, many candidates understood *cathédrale*, with **C** being the most common error. Over three quarters of candidates identified *notre camping* in **Question 10** and many candidates recognised *marché* in **Question 11**. There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers. **Question 12** was attempted well; option **A** tended to be the most frequent error. Nearly a fifth of candidates did not hear *un petit train touristique* in **Question 13**, and often chose **A** instead.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between Léon and his friend about the weather. Overall candidates performed well in this exercise.

Question 15 was attempted well, and many candidates selected the correct answer **B**. Similar numbers answered **Questions 17**, **18** and **19** correctly. There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers for these questions. **Question 16** was the most challenging. Over a quarter of candidates did not match *promenades* with *randonnées* and often selected option **D** instead, perhaps assuming it would be the best type of weather for a game of football.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts with Gabrielle, a young French woman who owns a pharmacy. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

For **Question 20**, over half the candidates understood the time phrases (*au début / après un an*) and correctly chose option **B**. **Question 21** was attempted well; most of those who answered incorrectly heard *bien payé* and chose distractor **A**. For **Question 22**, just under two thirds of candidates correctly chose option **A**, with distractor **B** being the most common error. Candidates needed to listen carefully as *utile* in the extract referred to the studies, not the job. For **Question 23**, candidates needed to identify time phrases (*la première chose / après ça*) and nearly three quarters of candidates correctly selected option **A**. The most common error was distractor **B**. Similar numbers successfully answered **Question 24**. Those who answered incorrectly missed *l'essentiel pour moi* and chose distractor **B**.

For **Question 25**, over half the candidates chose the correct option **B**, with distractor **C** being the most common error. **Question 26** was the most successfully answered question in this exercise. When they answered incorrectly, candidates usually missed the negative (*je ne vais jamais*) and chose **A**. **Question 27** was the most challenging; under half the candidates understood *plutôt que* and correctly chose option **B**. Most candidates chose distractor **C**. A slightly higher number of candidates answered **Question 28** successfully; most of those who answered incorrectly heard *rentrer directement chez moi* and chose distractor **B**.

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Questions 29–34

Candidates heard an interview with Sonia, an Olympic swimming champion. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

Over a third of candidates chose the correct option **B** for **Question 29**. Many heard *compétitions en Tunisie* and chose distractor **A**. For **Question 30**, under half the candidates correctly chose option **D**, with distractors **B** and **C** being the most common errors. **Question 31** was the most challenging in this exercise and just under a third of candidates chose the correct option **B**. Distractor **A** was the most common error and candidates needed to listen carefully as the time, *six heures tous les matins,* referred to her training, not work. Just over half the candidates identified ***surtout*** *les encouragements de mes copines* and correctly selected option **A** in **Question 32**. **Question 33** was the most successfully answered in this exercise. Those who answered incorrectly usually missed *avant la course* in the question and chose distractor **B**. **Question 34** was attempted well. Over half the candidates chose the correct option **C**. Those who answered incorrectly often missed the negative, *pas de montagne*, and selected distractor **A**.

Questions 35–37

Candidates heard an interview with Vincent discussing his work experience, working with animals in Africa. For each question, candidates had to identify **two** correct statements from a choice of five. This was an appropriately demanding and challenging exercise at this stage of the paper.

Question 35 was attempted well with over half the candidates correctly choosing option **B**; similar numbers correctly chose option **E**. **Question 36** was the most challenging question in this exercise. Under a fifth of the candidates successfully selected option **C**. Candidates needed to listen carefully to the whole sentence which included two emotions, *ravi mais à la fois appréhensif.* Many chose distractor **A** which wrongly suggested that contacting a wildlife park in Africa was Vincent's idea. Nearly half the candidates correctly chose option **D**. Those who answered incorrectly often selected option **E** and missed ***plus de*** *huit heures* in the extract. **Question 37** was the most successfully answered in this exercise; nearly half the candidates chose option **B** and nearly three quarters option **D**.

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Paper 0520/22
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- avoid answering in full sentences when it is not required.
- bear in mind that answers in the first person in **Questions 4** and **6** are unlikely to be correct.
- avoid leaving blanks in multiple-choice questions.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. Where candidates change their mind about an answer, it is important that they make it clear which answer is to be regarded as their final answer. If a tick is erased in a multiple-choice question, it must be fully erased.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates performed well on this question, but some candidates did not know *chaussettes* in **1(b)**.

Question 2

Full marks were common on this question. Some candidates answered **B** for **2(a)**, and answers for **2(d)** and **2(e)** were often reversed.

Question 3

Candidates performed well on this question. For **3(e)**, incorrect answers were evenly split between **B** and **C**.

Question 4

For this question, candidates were required to read a more extended text in which Claire wrote about her new friend from Croatia. Candidates did not need to write many words to answer the questions, but many candidates attempted to answer every question with a full sentence and introduced errors.

In **4(a)**, *il y a trois mois* is all that was required to answer the question. In **4(c)**, some candidates missed *bien* in their answer (*elle ne parlait pas **bien** le français*) and thus invalidated their answer. In **4(k)**, some candidates answered ***sa** famille parle trois langues* which referred to the wrong person. Other candidates did not understand *qu'est-ce qui* in the question and thought it referred to a person.

Candidates should remember that there will always be some questions that require a minor manipulation from the text, such as a straightforward verb or a possessive adjective.

Question 5

In this exercise, candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from five people looking for a restaurant. This exercise is aimed at the higher grades and the texts need to be read more closely to find the option that suits best.

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Each person's statement gave quite specific requirements for the sort of restaurant that they were looking for, and these details excluded all answers except the correct one. The details included the day of the week, mobility issues, the type of cooking and the ambiance. Candidates need to ensure they consider all the information given as this is not a gist comprehension question.

Description **8** was a frequent incorrect answer for **5(e)**.

Question 6

This final exercise about a lost boy was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half the questions can be answered with a careful lift from the text and the others need a small manipulation of the text to answer the question. Very few candidates achieved full marks, and the questions seem to have discriminated appropriately.

Although verbs do not necessarily have to be correct to score a mark, the tense usually must be appropriate to the question.

For **6(b)**, many candidates understood that Ronald could not find his father anymore but introduced *étonnant* in the second part of the answer, writing responses such as *son père n'était pas étonnant.* For **6(d)**, a few candidates misunderstood that Ronald had forgotten his mobile phone. For **6(e)**, candidates sometimes added extra material which invalidated their answer, e.g. *dans son portable dans sa poche*. With **6(f)**, some candidates did not find the correct part of the text for the question. For **6(g)**, some candidates did not realise that a manipulation was needed to answer the question correctly. Candidates tended to write too much for **6(h)** and introduced mistakes, and many candidates did not understand **6(i)**, with a majority copying the first sentence of the last paragraph: *Jean-Yves était très heureux de voir Ronald sourire.*

Some candidates thought that Jean-Yves was a girl, despite being referred to as *il* in the text.

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Paper 0520/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the Speaking test.
- Role plays were conducted well by most examiners.
- In the topics section, some centres need to make greater use of extension questions to elicit fuller answers from candidates. Sometimes, the topic conversations were very short.
- Most examiners understood the need to adhere **precisely** to the script in the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners and not to rephrase any questions.
- Most examiners also understood the need to ask **no more than two further questions** of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- Centres are reminded to use the alternative questions provided in the topic conversations if a candidate does not understand the first version (and repetition) of the question.
- The randomisation grid in the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners was usually followed correctly.
- Clerical work was usually very good in centres.
- The quality of recordings was usually very good and centres were quick to upload their work.
- Centres are reminded to include candidates at the very top and the very bottom of the mark range in the sample.

General comments

In this second year of the new style Speaking test it was apparent that many examiners are now more familiar with the format of the test. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of **spontaneous** communicative ability. A wide range of performance was evident across the candidature and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Most centres had usually prepared candidates well for the format of the test and examiners were usually aware of how to conduct the test efficiently and correctly. Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all examiners read the scenario for the role plays as instructed in French. Most centres correctly followed the instructions concerning the randomisation grid and understood the need to test candidates according to the prescribed order of the cards and conversation topics. Centres are reminded that the cards should be distributed according to the grid provided on pages 14–15 in the Instructions, with Card One given to the first candidate who takes the test and so on.

Role plays were generally conducted well. Centres are reminded that questions can be repeated (but not rephrased) once if the candidate does not answer a question or gives an ambiguous response. It is important for examiners to read the role play tasks **exactly** as printed to ensure that they are not changing the nature and level of difficulty of the tasks. It is useful to note that the role plays are not timed.

For the **topic conversations**, timings were not always appropriate. These were often too short and, in a few cases, too long. Some examiners needed to ask more **extension questions** (e.g. *Donne-moi plus de détails* or *Peux-tu me dire autre chose à ce sujet ?*) to give candidates the opportunity to develop their answers and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which do not communicate clearly. Candidates need to understand the wordings of these extension questions, so that they know when they need to give more detail. When asking extension questions, examiners can only use vocabulary provided in the printed question or vocabulary already used by the candidate. Examiners must not provide vocabulary or new ideas to the candidate.

If a candidate does not understand the first set question on **Questions 3**, **4** or **5** in the topic conversations, the examiner should repeat this first set question. If the candidate still does not understand, the examiner must then go on to ask the **alternative question**. These alternative questions give candidates another

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opportunity to understand the task by using easier language to test the same points. Some examiners asked the alternative questions when the candidate had already answered the first question clearly or used the alternative questions as extension questions. This should be avoided as it can be confusing for candidates.

When there was a PAUSE between two questions in the script, most examiners gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one.

Centres are reminded that if a topic conversation lasts 3½ minutes or less, even after asking extension questions, the examiner must ask **up to two further** questions of his/her choice on the **same** topic as the other questions to make sure that the conversation lasts 4 minutes. If the topic conversation still lasts 3½ minutes or less, the examiner must stop the conversation.

Most examiners remembered to introduce the topic area in French at the start of each topic conversation.

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had usually been completed very efficiently and centres are thanked for this. It is essential that all clerical work is checked very carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. Centres generally made very efficient use of the new Submit for Assessment portal and were able to submit their samples very speedily. Centres generally understood the requirements of the sample size and samples were nearly always correct. It should also be noted that the sample size changed this year. Centres are reminded to consult the Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples before they submit their sample. In the very few cases when extra or replacement recordings were required, centres were quick to respond. Please always remember to include the work of candidates at the top and bottom of the mark range and to upload the cover sheet for the sample together with the centre working mark sheet(s).

Recording quality

A high proportion of the recordings received were of a very good quality. Please check all recording equipment prior to the live tests and check the recordings before submitting the sample. Please also try to ensure reasonably quiet conditions for recording to avoid background noise. Please position the recording equipment to favour the candidate and not the examiner. The examiner, and **not** the candidate, must introduce the candidate by name and number. The recording for each candidate must be on a separate file and saved as .mp3. Each recorded file in the sample must be clearly and correctly named using the following convention: centre number_candidate number_syllabus number_component number.

Application of the mark scheme

In the **role plays**, marks can only be awarded for the **set tasks**. To score 2 marks, an answer may be brief, but the language should be appropriate to the task, **in an appropriate time frame, substantially accurate and not be ambiguous in terms of the message being communicated**. If the meaning of the required message is made ambiguous through poor pronunciation of a key word, an incorrect time frame or an inappropriate form of a verb (if used), then a mark of 1 should be awarded. Over generous marking usually resulted from some examiners awarding full marks on a task when an inappropriate time frame was used by the candidate. There were also cases of 2 marks being awarded for answers which did not address the set tasks. In such cases, a mark of 0 was appropriate.

In the **topic conversations**, most centres awarded the marks for **Communication** consistently but a little generously. It was necessary to think carefully about how well the answers gave the **required information** and how consistently this could be done across the two topics. Performances where answers convey most of the required information but are brief, sometimes irrelevant and with little development, would fall into the Satisfactory category. To score high marks for Communication, candidates need to be able to offer **consistently** relevant information and to show that they can develop their ideas and opinions, adding relevant detail where necessary. The ability to justify and explain is also a feature of performance of the Very Good mark band. It should be noted that if conversations are short, candidates can be disadvantaged as they may not have the opportunity to develop their material in a spontaneous way.

In most centres, marks for **Quality of Language** also tended to be a little generous. The key descriptors considered here are the ability to use a range of structures as listed in the syllabus, and the ability to use a range of appropriate vocabulary. Pronunciation is also a key descriptor. To score high marks for Quality of Language, candidates need to show control of a **wide range** of accurately used language and structures and pronounce well. The ability to use appropriate time frames and correctly conjugated verbs is assessed here as part of the range of structures.

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Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Examiners generally read the scenario as instructed. The nine role plays were accessible to candidates and were set at an equal level of difficulty. They were all set in situations in which candidates could find themselves with a speaker of French and were transactional in nature. Contexts such as arranging outings with friends, obtaining goods or services and discussing travel details featured on the cards. Most candidates approached the role plays well with many scoring good marks. The weakest candidates also showed that they could score marks for partial communication on some tasks.

The first two tasks on each card were of a very factual nature and gave candidates the opportunity to answer briefly. They did not require longer and more developed answers. Candidates mostly answered these two opening questions well. It was essential for candidates to be familiar with questioning formulations such as *À quelle heure ? Combien ? Quand ? Où ? Quel ? Comment ?* Weaker candidates did not always understand these well and consequently gave irrelevant information which did not answer the set task. The last three tasks gave candidates more opportunity to develop responses. The vocabulary used in the role play questions was straightforward and usually notions of time and place were quite well understood.

On each card, the last three tasks were more challenging and gave candidates the opportunity to show that they could use past and future time frames correctly and develop their answers with opinions and simple explanations. A useful technique for candidates to adopt in the 10-minute preparation time is to think very carefully about useful vocabulary and structures which could occur in their given role play scenario. They should also think about the person with whom they are talking, the country they are in and the role that they are playing. Many candidates understood the key question *Pourquoi ?* and were usually able to give simple relevant reasons and opinions. In each role play, weaker candidates experienced some difficulty in answering in the time frame of the question and this made their responses ambiguous. The best responses heard were ones in which the time frame matched the time frame of the question as this meant the message was relevant and communicated unambiguously. Candidates also need to be aware that sometimes the form of register heard in questions is different according to the nature of the interaction and whether it is informal with a friend, or formal with a stranger when purchasing goods or obtaining services. On cards using the more formal *vous* form of address, candidates heard conjugations of verbs which they sometimes repeated inappropriately and did not conjugate the verb correctly in their answer, e.g. a question such as *Qu'est-ce que vous allez faire aujourd'hui ?* was sometimes answered as *j'allais/j'aller* which led to some ambiguity of time frame and prevented a mark of 2 from being scored.

Card 1 was found to be accessible, but many were unable to pronounce *tennis* correctly. The day and time for playing posed few problems and could be answered briefly. On **Task 3**, nearly all could say whether they wanted to play inside or outside with stronger candidates saying it was too hot to play outside or more pleasant to be inside. Sometimes, weaker candidates could not express *il fait chaud* accurately. On **Task 4**, the correct time frame was difficult for weaker candidates but virtually all candidates understood *avec qui* and were successful. The last task was well done by the stronger candidates who recognised the verb *essayer.*

Card 2 was approached well by candidates. Weaker candidates sometimes found it difficult to express where they had a pain and could not conjugate the verb *avoir.* **Task 2** required candidates to understand *depuis* and give a relevant number. Most were able to score at least one mark for partial communication here. Many correctly identified the need to use a perfect tense in **Task 3** and were able to say what they had eaten and drunk, but the pronunciation of *jus* and *eau* was difficult for some. **Task 4** was done well. On the last task, some did not understand the word *région* or had not taken into consideration that they were in France and being asked about the region in France. Some ambiguous responses which used the *notre* heard in the question were heard in the first part of the response but the last part was usually well done.

Card 3 was found to be accessible. Nearly all were able to identify a day and could say which drinks they wanted to buy. Pronunciation of *jus* and *eau* let some candidates down. On **Task 3**, the correct time frame was challenging for some although most had some success saying where they had had the picnic. The last task was usually well done with many able to state why they preferred having picnics or eating in a restaurant. The very best candidates gave good comparisons using *meilleur* or answers such as *la nourriture est délicieuse au restaurant / j'adore manger en plein air.*

Card 4 provided questions on a very accessible subject. On the first two tasks, most were able to say where their school was and how many teachers there were. **Task 3** was usually well done. In **Task 4**, weaker candidates sometimes confused the time frame and did not register the significance of *hier.* On **Task 5**, many heard *demain* and gave one or two appropriate activities in a future time frame.

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Card 5 was very straightforward, but many candidates mistook *cours* as *courses.* This led to confusion and ambiguity. Clear pronunciation is crucial to successful completion of task in cases such as this. **Task 2** was better done but on **Task 3** weaker candidates sometimes thought the question was asking when the yoga class was rather than when they had started doing yoga. **Task 4** was approached more confidently. **Task 5** was also usually well done with most opting to eat out or go to a film.

Candidates made a good start to **Card 6**. On the first task, nearly all identified with whom they were going and made good attempts saying how they would get there. The word *comment* was better understood this session than in the last session. On **Task 3**, some could not identify the correct time frame but were able to identify appropriate clothing to wear. Candidates seemed familiar with the idea of fireworks and cited various reasons for liking them or going to see them. Straightforward answers such as *c'est amusant / c'est intéressant* were heard and the more able could develop their answers and say that they enjoyed the atmosphere and going or celebrating festivals with friends and family. Most could say when they had last seen fireworks and where on the last task.

On **Card 7**, **Task 1** was done well but some candidates did not understand *parfum* in **Task 2**. Most were able to score at least one mark on **Task 3** but only the stronger candidates gave appropriate and accurate responses in the perfect tense. Reasons for liking France were numerous on **Task 4** with many citing good food, pleasant weather and the *Tour Eiffel*. Most were able to say what they would like to visit during their holiday, but weaker candidates experienced some difficulty in using a correct infinitive after *je voudrais.*

On **Card 8**, weaker candidates often needed the first task repeating and did not immediately understand that a price was required. Any number and currency were acceptable here. **Task 2** which required the comprehension of *comment* was quite well done but mispronunciations of *voiture, bus* and *pied* were often evident. Some good attempts were heard on **Task 3** by stronger candidates. Weaker candidates need to make sure that they recognise time indicator phrases such as *la dernière fois* and irregular past participles in cues such as *vu.* **Task 4** was attempted well. Any activity in a correct future time frame was acceptable on **Task 5** and stronger candidates stated in an appropriate time frame that they were going to go shopping, go to the cinema or a theme park.

A good start was made to **Card 9** with most candidates able to understand *Où se trouve...?* On **Task 2**, *Combien coûte* was not always well recognised and frequently needed repeating. There were some good attempts made on the next task which required candidates to talk about why a mobile phone was important to them. Clearly this is a very familiar and important item for candidates and some very good attempts were made here citing the need to stay in touch with friends and family, do lessons online, shop or play games. **Task 4** required the recognition of a future time frame and **Task 5** the recognition of past time frames. The stronger candidates could give clear answers in appropriate time frames and use relevant vocabulary in a shopping context.

Topic conversations

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area in French just before the start of each conversation. The first three topics were based on one of the sub-topics of Areas A and B as listed in the syllabus. The last four topics were taken from one of the sub-topics in Areas C, D or E of the syllabus. All these sub-topics were familiar to candidates and a full range of performance was heard with each conversation having its easier and more challenging questions. The first two questions on each conversation were closed and straightforward in nature and were set at an easier level to start off the conversation. They could be answered briefly and with factual language, although stronger candidates took the opportunity to give more developed responses containing relevant details. The time frame used in the first two questions was the present. The final three questions on each card were more open and required candidates to communicate relevantly in past and future time frames. Each topic conversation also gave candidates the opportunity to develop their ideas, express opinions and give their reasons for their opinions.

Topic 1, ***les voyages et les transports,*** was a familiar topic for most candidates. Candidates answered **Question 1** well. On **Question 2**, some misunderstood the question and instead of saying when they took public transport, they listed the different forms of public transport and gave irrelevant answers. Better attempts were made on **Question 3** with most making a choice and giving a valid reason such as it being comfortable, fast or cheap. The stronger candidates could make valid comparisons here. Weaker candidates often mispronounced *bus.* On **Question 4**, the stronger candidates gave an account of a long trip making it clear where they had gone, when and how they had travelled. Such candidates were able to add in extra detail in a spontaneous way. On **Question 5**, only the stronger candidates understood and could pronounce the verb *améliorer* and weaker candidates often had to make use of the alternative question to understand. The strongest candidates talked about improving public transport and reducing pollution or using a bike.

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Topic 2, ***moi, ma famille et mes amis,*** was found to be accessible and was approached well by candidates on most questions. The first two questions were answered well with all able to name their best friend and say where s/he lived. On **Question 3**, candidates needed to use appropriate time frames to say how they had spent a relaxing weekend with friends. Stronger candidates could use a range of verbs in the perfect tense and develop their answers. They could also use the subject pronouns *on* or *nous* and go beyond describing in the first person singular. Attempts at **Question 4** were less confident with only the very best able to use the reflexive verb correctly *je m'entends bien avec…*and say why. There were some good explanations from more able candidates such as liking the same things or how the person described helped the candidate. On **Question 5**, some did not understand the significance about having a large family in the future and instead described their own family now which made their answers irrelevant.

Topic 3, ***moi et mes*** **amis**, was also found to be accessible. The first three questions concentrated on the candidate. **Question 1** required the candidate to identify eye colour. Many did not know the common noun or mispronounced *yeux* and found it difficult to conjugate the verb *avoir.* Those who answered briefly with just a colour were more successful. This was also the case for **Question 2**. **Question 3** asked for details about the candidate's character. Here, the stronger candidates were able to develop their answers and give a good list of adjectives to describe their own character and say what they also liked or disliked doing. On **Question 4** many misunderstood the time frame being used in the question and instead of talking about their best friend when they were little and why they got on well with them then, they instead described their present best friend and why they get on together now. This made large parts of their answers irrelevant to the set questions. Here, some examiners repeated the question and then made use of the alternative question which sometimes helped candidates to switch their answers into a correct time frame. **Question 5** was answered much more successfully by candidates with many being able to finish the topic in a confident way and give more than very brief answers in future time frames.

On **Topic 4**, ***les lieux***, a good start was made by candidates with nearly all able to give their nationality. For **Question 2** some were unsure about the meaning of *depuis.* Repetition of the question was frequently needed but most candidates were able to give an appropriate number of years. On **Question 3**, the common word *région* was initially misunderstood by some weaker candidates. Such candidates frequently just gave a brief description of their town or village. The stronger candidates described their town or village and gave details about the wider region. The strongest also described what the landscape was like and gave details such as rural or industrial. The second part of the question required candidates to talk about the advantages of living there. Weaker candidates often needed the alternative question. **Question 4** required candidates to think about the changes they would like to see in their area. Many said less pollution and concentrated on environmental issues. On the last question, candidates needed to be able to relate events using past time frames and this was generally approached better by candidates who could often give details of sporting, tourist or leisure activities.

Topic 5, ***les bâtiments et les services,*** was approached well by candidates. On **Question 1**, most could give simple brief answers such as the supermarket or the market. The second question required them to say when during the week they shopped. Answers such as *le matin* or *après l'école* were equally as valid as *le samedi matin.* **Question 3** was answered confidently by candidates and many were able to recount a visit they had made to a shopping centre and felt familiar with the necessary structures and vocabulary. Weaker candidates found it difficult to express actions in the perfect tense and often resorted to using *je* with an infinitive which did not communicate clearly. On **Question 4**, weaker candidates did not recognise *le bâtiment.* Most however were able to describe a building such as a shopping centre, a religious building, a school or civic amenity. The last question was done better and even weaker candidates, especially if they made use of the alternative question with the wording *voudrais vivre,* made fair attempts to say something relevant and give a simple reason why they did or did not want to live in a town.

Topic 6, ***l'éducation et le travail,*** was a familiar topic and most candidates were able to answer **Question 1** and **Question 2** very well. **Question 3** was a little more challenging with successful candidates able to talk about the positive points of a holiday job. Weaker candidates often needed the alternative question and often found it hard to express their ideas clearly. Some did not have the vocabulary such as *gagner de l'argent* but stronger candidates related ideas such as gaining experience and doing something useful with their time. **Question 4** was not always understood as a whole concept. Some only understood what they had learnt or done at school and did not relate it clearly to the world of work. The best candidates used *j'ai appris* rather than *j'ai pris* and went on to list a variety of things such as having learnt a language, working with others, or learning a subject which would be necessary in their future career. **Question 5** was better understood and most candidates said they would prefer to work in a team. The very best candidates could pronounce *préfér**er**ais* correctly but many mispronounced this as an imperfect tense which affected the time frame and clarity of the message.

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Topic 7, ***les fêtes***, was a familiar topic. Candidates answered the first two questions well and showed that they were familiar with the interrogative adverbs *combien* and *quelle*. **Question 3** required candidates to talk about a meal which would typically be eaten during a festival. The best candidates used the present tense here and realised that they were talking in general terms. Some local dishes were described in detail by the best candidates who could also make use of appropriate food and drink vocabulary. On **Question 4**, candidates needed to listen carefully to the whole question as some missed the link with the celebration and the end of the school year. The best answers featured descriptions of a group outing to the cinema, restaurant or theme park or a celebration in school. Most could say why they had enjoyed this celebration. **Question 5** was answered well by most candidates who clearly knew the necessary vocabulary relating to birthdays and presents.

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FRENCH

Paper 0520/42
Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- respond to all parts of **Question 2**
- use linking words in **Question 2**, for example when giving opinions/explanations
- choose the option in **Question 3** which allows them to show what they know
- expand on the basic details of their responses to **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible
- edit and review work carefully to avoid removing important information: the word count is there for guidance and is not mandatory
- present all work legibly and not to write in ink over a draft in pencil.

General comments

Candidates must remember to frame their answers in the tense used in each individual task. In both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, many candidates responded in a different tense from the one indicated in the rubric, and this had a significant impact on the marks for *Task completion*.

The rubrics provide candidates with a structure and some useful vocabulary. Candidates must make good use of these. In answers to **Question 2**, *vacances* was often misspelt: *les vacances* is a feminine plural noun. Candidates used the verb *préférer* but they were not always secure with the spelling, sometimes rendering it as *je prefer.* Candidates should also be able to distinguish between the verb *préférer* and the adjective *préféré*, both of which feature frequently in questions and answers. In **Question 3(b)**, candidates who understood *vous avez rencontré* often changed the spelling of *rencontré* which compromised their answers.

Sometimes, candidates were not clear about certain items of vocabulary and the resulting confusions and errors restricted the marks for *Task completion,* e.g.

- The verb *travailler* (to work) was used when *voyager* (to travel) was required.
- The verb *rester* means 'to stay' and not 'to relax'. The three verbs commonly used to convey the idea of relaxing are all reflexive: *se détendre, se relaxer, se reposer*.
- Candidates regularly wrote *cliquer des photos* instead of *prendre des photos* or *faire des photos.*
- Candidates often wrote *trop de* when *beaucoup de* was appropriate. Wrongly used, *trop de* distorts the meaning.

Some candidates crossed out important details in order to meet the recommended word count. Rash editing can significantly reduce marks. The aim should be to respond within the recommended word count, but if an answer is longer, the whole piece will still be considered. However, overlong answers risk being less accurate. Short answers will not display the expected range of detail and linguistic variety.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Excursion en ville

Candidates answered this question well. For each task, there was a range of possible answers, using familiar items of vocabulary. Some candidates chose to use less-common words for which they did not know the spelling.

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In **Task 1**, candidates were mostly able to provide a month. In **Task 2**, some candidates did not understand *lieu du rendez-vous* and answered with a country (e.g. *Inde*, *France*), which was not clear enough for a specific place to meet. Candidates answered **Task 3** and **Task 4** well. Some candidates did not understand **Task 5**: any item which might be needed on a visit was accepted (e.g. clothes, food/drink, documents).

Question 2: Les vacances scolaires

Candidates were familiar with this topic.

Task 1 invited candidates to give details about what they do during the main school holiday. Information referring to activities, visits to family and destinations home and abroad were all considered appropriate. Candidates who wrote in the past tense only achieved partial completion.

Most candidates were able to state a preference for a particular kind of holiday in **Task 2**, either by mentioning a season, e.g. *en été*, *en hiver*, or by referring to a destination such as *au bord de la mer*, *chez mes grands-parents*. Some suggested *des vacances sportives*. Successful explanations for these choices often followed the pattern *j'aime nager dans la mer*, *j'aime passer du temps avec mes grands-parents.* Some responses were compromised by the incorrect spelling of *parce que.*

In **Task 3**, many candidates focused on what work they do during the holiday but forgot to mention the reason. Candidates who wrote in the past tense did not fulfil the task. A few candidates misunderstood the verb *travailler.*

Task 4 required a future verb. Candidates usually answered well, using one of the acceptable patterns, e.g. *je vais aller en France*, *j'irai au Japon.*

Candidates across the ability range used simple conjunctions and adverbial phrases to link their ideas.

Question 3 (a): Bonne Année !

This was the most popular option. There were some coherent and well organised responses.

Task completion

Task 1 invited details in the present tense about how people celebrate the new year. Candidates usually mentioned *on regarde des feux d'artifice*, *on mange un grand repas.* Many responded using a past tense and a few candidates did not know how to adapt the rubric, e.g. *les gens célèbrent-ils en famille.*

Candidates needed to use a perfect tense in **Task 2** to state what they did to prepare for new year, e.g. *j'ai acheté des cadeaux*, *j'ai préparé un gâteau au chocolat.* Candidates often misspelt the words *cadeaux, gâteaux*.

In **Task 3**, most candidates understood that they needed to provide a brief outline of a problem, in a past tense, e.g. *j'ai oublié le cadeau pour mon ami, j'ai brûlé le gâteau, mon oncle était malade.*

Task 4 asked candidates to give details of their best memory of this celebration, e.g. *j'ai parlé avec mes amis*, *nous avons dansé toute la nuit*, *j'ai pu voir mes grands-parents.* Some candidates misunderstood *souvenir* and thought it referred to a present they received. However, as this could justifiably have been a key element of the celebration, such ideas were rewarded.

In **Task 5**, candidates were required to say what they would like to do next time. A conditional tense was expected to complete the task, e.g. *je voudrais aller en France*, *j'aimerais manger au restaurant.*

Range

Candidates attempted to use some extended sentences, most frequently with simple conjunctions. There was a heavy reliance on *car* and *parce que* when giving reasons and explanations. To progress beyond the 3–4 band, candidates must be able to demonstrate correct use of these connectors: *parce que* was often misspelt (e.g. *pace que*, *parce ce que*, *pas que*). To achieve high marks for *Range*, candidates must show control of a greater variety of structure, e.g. comparisons, object pronouns and conjunctions.

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Accuracy

Achieving a high mark depends on some consistent control of a range of linguistic elements: correct spelling and gender, the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision, and the correct subject verb accord in the required tenses.

Question 3 (b): Une personne célèbre que j'admire

Some candidates answered this question very well, but many did not have the knowledge and control to produce a coherent account.

Task completion

Task 1 invited candidates to state how they met this famous person. Candidates were free to choose the circumstances and there was a variety of ideas, e.g. *je suis allé à son concert*, *je l'ai vu dans un supermarché*, *je l'ai rencontrée dans la rue.*

In **Task 2**, most candidates were able to use a present tense to say what this person does, e.g. *elle chante*, *il est acteur*. Some candidates used the English word *actor* or misspelt common words such as *chanteur* (e.g. *chanseur)*.

Most candidates were able to explain why they admire this person in **Task 3**, e.g. *elle est très gentille*, *il aide les pauvres, elle écrit ses propres chansons.* A few candidates gave extended answers with multiple details about character, work and charitable activities.

Task 4 was the most challenging and some candidates used English words to describe the disadvantage of being famous.

For **Task 5**, candidates needed to suggest how they would live if they were famous, e.g. *je voudrais acheter une grande maison*, *j'irais habiter aux États-Unis.* Some candidates thought that the answer required a description of the lifestyle of the famous person previously mentioned.

Range

Most candidates were able to use some extended sentences with some evidence of linkage. Many relied on the repetition of *parce que* or *car* as their main connectors. They used simple structures and there was little evidence of complex structures. To achieve high marks for *Range*, candidates must show control of a greater variety of structure, e.g. comparisons, object pronouns and conjunctions.

Accuracy

Achieving a high mark depends on some consistent control of a range of linguistic elements: correct spelling and gender, the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision, and the correct subject verb accord in the required tenses. Consistency is vital: some candidates referred to the same person as *il* in one sentence and *elle* in another.

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