

FRENCH

<p>Paper 3015/11 Translation and Composition</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates should ensure they only answer two questions.
- Candidates are reminded to use clear, legible handwriting and they should not write in the margins.
- Candidates should read the instructions carefully before starting their work and make full use of the time allowed in order to check their writing thoroughly. Rough work should be crossed out.
- Candidates should write no more than **150 words** for the essays.
- Candidates should write what they know to be French and avoid attempting to use language with which they are unfamiliar.

General comments

Overall there was some excellent work and there were a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range, as well as some consistently sound efforts in the middle. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions which used a wide linguistic range, though frequently the writing was inaccurate. Candidates should be reminded that a broad and fluent command of the material is highly commendable and will be rewarded, but that a high degree of accuracy in writing is essential for full credit to be given.

The translation into French was once again a popular choice. Some candidates achieved a high standard in this question; they had clearly worked hard to acquire a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures and there were some very good marks. Set against this, was the fact that many candidates lost marks by not reading the English carefully and therefore not translating the text accurately. This mainly happened after the first paragraph. There were a number of candidates who opted for the translation, when choosing a different task would have been a better option for them.

It was clear that many candidates had been well prepared for this Examination. However, they must always read the instructions carefully. For each essay question, candidates must not write more than 150 words. A large number of candidates often greatly exceeded this number – some essays having between 200 and 400 words. Candidates are reminded that the rubric must be adhered to, as Examiners do not take any writing into account after the 150 word limit, for either Language or Communication. Thus, candidates are reminded to address all the required points within 150 words. In doing so, they should then have the time to check their work as carefully as advised in the Key Messages above.

Each essay question has quite specific guidelines regarding its content – either the pictures for **Question 1** or clearly stated rubric points for the 3 options of **Question 2**. The word count starts at the beginning of the answer for **Question 1** and immediately after the given opening phrase for **Question 2**. Candidates who ignore the instruction to start their essay after the given phrase in **Question 2**, are liable to be penalised. Any material which does not clearly relate to the content guidelines for any essay will remain as part of the word count but will be treated as irrelevant and will gain no marks for either Communication or Accuracy.

Candidates are reminded to read the rubric carefully by answering two questions only on the paper.

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

Communication Marks (Questions 1 and 2 only): Each essay has a maximum score of 5 marks available for successful communication of relevant points in unambiguous, but not necessarily completely accurate

French. Errors in handling verbs, or not addressing the necessary content within the 150 words allowed, were the most significant factors preventing the award of Communication marks. In order to score 5 marks, candidates must make clear reference to at least five of the pictures in **Question 1** and cover all 5 of the given rubric points in any of the essays in **Question 2**.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Picture Story

This was a popular choice and, in most cases, the story appeared to be clear. The story was based on a visit to the zoo. In the first picture we see 2 children and 2 adults in a car on the way to the zoo. On arrival, they visit the animals and later they have a picnic lunch. A large bird takes the girl's sandwich in its beak and flies away. As the little girl is upset, the adult male buys ice creams for the whole family. These basic ideas were on the whole clearly conveyed and those who kept within the word limit generally had no difficulty scoring the maximum of 5 for Communication.

However, it is recommended that candidates plan roughly what they want to say for each picture before answering the question. This will help to avoid spending too long on the earlier part and then running out of words before the end, resulting in potentially losing Communication points. Pacing the response is important.

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

The quality of the language used was variable but many candidates showed confident use of the necessary vocabulary as well as a variety of appropriate structures. Most candidates knew the basic words required by this set of pictures, for example *aller au zoo, un éléphant, des singes, un lion, faire un pique-nique, manger, un oiseau, voler le sandwich, acheter des glaces*. Candidates who did not know the verb *voler*, could still get the message across by using *prendre* or *attraper*. *Pleurer* was sometimes confused with *pleuvoir*. *Visiter* was often used when expressing 'to visit the elephant' but as this was the wrong use of the verb *visiter*, candidates did not get a mark for this. *Girafe* was often misspelt.

A good range of vocabulary will always score highly as will complex syntax – use of object pronouns, infinitive constructions and present and past participles, for example. However, not all candidates managed tense usage successfully and there was frequent confusion between the Imperfect and the Perfect/Past Historic. The Pluperfect was also not always used correctly. Candidates are reminded that the Present tense is unacceptable as the narrative tense. There were many basic syntactical errors which included inconsistency in the spelling and gender of nouns, missing agreements on adjectives, incorrect use of object pronouns. There were a number of minor common errors such as confusion between *car, comme* and *quand*; between *très* and *trop*, *son* and *sa*, *ce* and *se*, *du* and *de la*, and *à la* and *au*.

The best writing avoided repetition of vocabulary such as *ma soeur, mon père* etc. and used adjectives and adverbs to make their work more interesting.

Question 2

(a) Letter

This was also a popular choice. Most candidates understood what was required and often covered the required points very well. Candidates are reminded once again of the importance of adhering to the word limit. Five clear points were mentioned in the rubric and all had to be covered by a discrete statement containing a verb to qualify for the award of the five Communication marks. Candidates are reminded that, for all **Question 2** essays, the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. This is not included in the 150 word count. The letter involved writing to an aunt to thank her for the gift of a large sum of money. Candidates had to state how part of the money was spent and why and what they were planning to do with the rest of the money. They also had to mention a recent family activity and give their opinion of it.

The majority dealt in a satisfactory manner with the points outlined above. Some rubric points will, of course, invite greater length than others, but a single clear reference, in an acceptable tense, is sufficient for the award of a Communication mark. Candidates who started with the given opening, followed immediately by relevant treatment of the rubric points usually covered the material successfully. Some imaginative

responses were offered regarding the use of the money, such as giving part of it to charity or saving it for their future studies.

Candidates should again read the rubric carefully and adhere to the word count. The best candidates were able to express their ideas in a range of appropriate and accurate French which gained high marks for Language. Competence in handling verbs is vital for a high score. Correct handling of the other linguistic features mentioned in connection with **Question 1** is equally important as marks for Language are only awarded for accurate usage.

(b) Dialogue

This was also a popular question which was handled well by candidates who followed the instructions and covered the 5 rubric points within the 150 words limit. The conversation was based on the premise of meeting an ex-teacher and having a conversation about their previous School experience, what they were doing now in their life and what their ambitions were. They also had to ask the teacher what he/she was doing at present.

This conversation was often well executed with clear questions and answers being presented and the language used was usually appropriate and of high quality. Candidates are advised to follow the stated guidelines to keep the dialogue of high quality and relevance.

It should be noted that only the actual words of the conversation should be written (with an indication, of course, of which person is speaking). Using a narrative introduction or using the rubric points as part of their conversation without making any alterations to the content, cannot be credited.

Candidates who started the conversation with the given opening sentence, followed immediately by the relevant treatment of the five rubric points, ensuring that they did not exceed the 150 words limit, were usually successful in answering this question.

(c) Narrative

This was less popular than the other 2 options. It concerned an incident on the motorway on the way to the airport at the end of a holiday. Candidates had to state what the incident was and what was done to solve the problem. They also had to mention the continuation of the journey, their arrival at the airport and their reaction when the plane took off.

The best stories were lively and fluently written, using a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure. Some candidates wrote about how they solved the problem or were rescued, in an imaginative and interesting way.

However a number of candidates omitted to cover the third point of the rubric or spent too long setting the scene and describing the original incident and consequently did not manage to cover all 5 rubric points within the word limit.

Question 3: Translation into French

This was a popular option but generally candidates did not score as high with this question as with the other two options. Most candidates coped well with the vocabulary and grammatical structures in the first paragraph, but were less accurate afterwards and often lost marks for errors rather than a lack of knowledge, for example confusing 'the' and 'a' or missing words or phrases out. While the marking principles are identical (ticks are given for correct units of language and errors are ignored), it should be pointed out that this is a rather different exercise from the essay. Candidates are advised to translate exactly what the English says and not to seek to use alternative words as, in most cases, the English will transfer directly into French. Candidates who kept close to the English original text usually gained the best marks.

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

Paragraph A

- A number of candidates did not know words such as: *ville, rue, soir*.
- There were many errors in understanding the difference between : *aller, sortir* and *partir*.
- The plural pronoun *leurs* presented difficulties.

Paragraph B

- The main error in this section was the lack of *à* in the phrase *téléphona à son ami*.
- There were many errors in understanding the difference between : *voir* and *regarder*.
- Some candidates used the verb '*apporter*' instead of '*amener*'
- The word *leur* was often used instead of *les* in the phrase *de les accompagner*

Paragraph C

- Writing 'the time' accurately proved challenging for some candidates and a variety of inaccurate translations were given.
- The following words were not well-known: *la place*, *le comptoir* or *le bar*.
- A large number of candidates used the word *après-midi* instead of *le soir*.
- *Debout* was often written as the made-up verb *debouter*.

Paragraph D

- *Le café* was used instead of *les cafés*.
- The verb *commander* was not well-known and *ordonner* was often used instead.
- 'After paying' proved to be a difficult phrase for candidates to translate.
- 'They went to buy' was often translated by *ils allèrent pour acheter*

Paragraph E

- The phrase *le weekend prochain* caused problems, as candidates tried to avoid using the word *weekend*. Instead they often used *la semaine* which, unfortunately, was wrong.
- 'Does that idea interest you?' was challenging, as candidates often used *tu* instead of *vous*.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 3015/12</p> <p>Translation and Composition</p>

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Paragraph E

- The phrase *le weekend prochain* caused problems, as candidates tried to avoid using the word *weekend*. Instead they often used *la semaine* which, unfortunately, was wrong.
- 'Does that idea interest you?' was challenging, as candidates often used *tu* instead of *vous*.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 3015/21 Reading Comprehension</p>
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Key message

In **Section 1** the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

In **Section 2 Exercise 1** the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In **Exercise 2** of this Section the candidate is asked to respond to **Questions** requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some Questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

In **Section 3** the cloze test, which tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom the candidate is required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

General comments

Candidates had prepared well for this paper and the greater majority of them tackled it well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and sometimes pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

Comments on specific questions

This section presented very few problems for candidates.

Section 1, Exercise 1

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise. In **Question 5** *rollers* was occasionally unknown as candidates then opted for an incorrect response.

Exercise 2

Candidates had very few difficulties in this section and the text was generally understood well.

Exercise 3

Most candidates performed well in this multiple choice exercise.

Section 2, Exercise 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

Question 27 Some candidates appeared not have understood the interrogative *comment* and so answered *une tente et un sac de couchage*.

Exercise 2

Some of the candidates performed well in this Exercise, but on occasions there appeared to be misunderstanding of the **Questions**. Others frequently wrote answers, which did not answer the **Question**. Candidates are reminded to read the passages closely and carefully. Indiscriminate lifting should be avoided.

Question 29: There were some good answers, but some candidates lifted or rendered the response in such a way that it did not convey that Charles feared being made fun of.

Question 32: Some candidates did not understand that the good music was the motivating factor.

No pattern was discernible for any other incorrect responses in this Exercise.

Section 3

As seen in most years, the answers in this Exercise were varied in their accuracy. The majority performed reasonably well. A minority of candidates, however, had little or no concept whatsoever of what was required and their responses were not only incorrect, but also seemed to be completely arbitrary. A few candidates put more than one word in each gap, despite the instructions.

Common incorrect responses were:

Question 40 dans, en

Question 42 une

Question 45 dans

Question 47 du, dû, a

Question 50 a, à

Question 52 le, la

Question 58 était, était, de

FRENCH

<p>Paper 3015/22 Reading Comprehension</p>
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Key message

In **Section 1** the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

In **Section 2 Exercise 1** the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be clear and not rely on the examiner interpreting the meaning. In **Exercise 2** of this **Section** the candidate is asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some Questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

In **Section 3** the cloze test, which tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom, the candidate is required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

General comments

Candidates were appropriately prepared for this Paper and the great majority of them applied themselves well. Candidates are reminded to present their work neatly; handwriting was occasionally very small and sometimes pieces of work were crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher. Candidates should ensure any work they would like to be marked is clear, and to cross out work they do not wish to present as their response.

Comments on specific questions

This section presented very few problems for candidates.

Section 1, Exercise 1

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise.

Question 3 was sometimes incorrect as some candidates confused quarter to and quarter past the hour.

Exercise 2

Candidates had very few difficulties in this section and the text was generally understood well.

Exercise 3

Again most candidates performed very well in this multiple choice exercise.

For **Question 11** candidates sometimes thought that Monique was in a café.

Question 14 was sometimes wrong, but there was no pattern of replacement answer.

Section 2, Exercise 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise. Some good candidates lost marks through trying to paraphrase unnecessarily, and choosing incorrect vocabulary which rendered the answer incorrect.

Question 16: some missed out *avril*, just stating that the visit was during the holidays.

Question 19: some only put one element.

Question 24: some mistook *temps* as referring to time and picked up the 2 o'clock time given in the text.

Question 26: some understood what it referred to, but did not realise that an opinion was looked for.

Exercise 2

Many candidates performed well in this Exercise, but on occasions there appeared to be some misunderstanding of the **Questions**. Closer reading is recommended.

Unselective lifting was a general reason for losing marks, leaving words such as *donc* or *alors* in the sentence.

Question 28: Some seemed to think that Mali was a town in France.

Question 30: Most either said they were members of the society, or missed out the part about 'coming from far off countries'.

Question 32: This was often rendered in such a way to suggest that Aminata's family was missing her rather than vice versa.

Question 36: information was again sometimes presented in such a way that it was not clear who was introduced to whom.

Question 39: There was frequent misunderstanding (or looseness of expression) as to who was in and/or had taken the photo.

Section 3

This exercise was accomplished with varying degrees of success, as seen in most years. The greater majority performed reasonably well. A very small number of candidates seemed to have little or no concept of what was required and their responses were not only incorrect but also seemed to be arbitrary. A few candidates put more than one word in each gap, in spite of the instructions. Incorrect or missing accents cost some marks.

Common incorrect answers are listed below:

Question 42 à

Question 45 en

Question 46 ont, avaient

Question 47 après

Question 48 que, qu'

Question 51 est

Question 54 les, leurs

Question 55 decides, obliges, dû

Question 56 pendant

Question 57 vu, prit,

Question 58 lui, leur, les