



GCSE

FRENCH

8658/RF Paper 2 Reading Foundation Tier
Report on the Examination

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General comments

Changes were made to the 2023 papers to reflect the removal of the regulatory requirement to test vocabulary outside of the published vocabulary list.

The students who sat this examination appeared to have prepared very well for the demands of the paper and this was evident in the manner in which the various questions were tackled. There were, as a result, very few un-attempted answers and the majority responded to the questions fully, with a good level of detail. The only comment which would be useful for students to consider is to ensure that they make their answers to multiple choice style questions as clear as possible. Sometimes, a variety of upper case and lowercase letters are used. For clarity's sake, consistent use of uppercase letters would be advantageous both for students and markers.

The paper proved accessible and there were many pleasing scripts, with questions 01, 02 and 04 being particularly well answered by many students. There were also far fewer blank answers for the translation question (Q12). The questions which discriminated most effectively were the crossover questions (06, 09 and 10) and also the translation task (question 12).

Section A

Question 1

This question was very well answered and gave students a positive start to the paper. As would be expected in a low demand question the vocabulary associated with the topic was very well known by the vast majority of students. The only problem was in 1.3 where many had difficulty choosing between *entrée*, *dessert* and *boisson*.

Question 2

Students also did very well on this question, with more than 90% of all students scoring at least two of the three marks available. The main challenge was question 2.2 where many chose French rather than art.

Question 3

This task involved identifying positive/negative opinions and was generally very well answered, with only 3.4 causing some difficulties because of the reference to the short life of the battery. A substantial number of students did achieve the maximum five marks for this question which was pleasing for a question where some elements were targeting a medium level of demand.

Question 4

This was also well answered. The only part which caused difficulty was 4.3 where *œuvre caritative* was not widely known.

Question 5

This is the first question on the paper which proved more challenging for some. 5.1 was generally well done for the disadvantage (no dogs allowed) but the advantage (forget your worries) was rarely answered correctly. In question 5.2, many scored for either the advantage (the kitchen) or

the disadvantage (noisy) but far fewer scored both available marks. The least successful part here was 5.3 where many gave answers which suggested going on holiday with friends rather than making new ones and stated that no activities were possible without the addition of the bad weather preventing this.

Question 6

This was a crossover question, a literary text aimed at the higher grades. As a result, many experienced difficulties with this question, as is to be expected. 6.1 was nearly always correct. 6.3 was the least well answered part. This was because the reference to *deux champs* was not understood and led to many choosing true rather than not in the text. 6.5 also caused issues for many, though the last two sections met with more success.

Question 7

This question was also aimed at the higher grades. 7.1 was nearly always correct, though there were some answers which took *célébrer* to mean a reference to celebrities. The main problem here was caused by 7.2, which was very often wrongly answered. Many spoke of the instrument competition which did take place, rather than the traditional costume contest which did not. 7.3 was more successfully answered, with about half of students gaining a mark.

Section B

Question 8

This low demand question provided a reassuring start to the target language section and was well answered by a majority of students; the main difficulty being caused by *équipe* in 8.2.

Question 9

This was a crossover question, so aimed at the highest grades on this tier, with answers in French. It was pleasing to see that there were fewer answers given in English this year. The recognition of tenses was a key factor in answering the questions correctly. Part 9.1 caused problems, with many writing *apprentissage* rather than *année sabbatique*. Many did not see the imperfect tense in *j'avais l'intention*. 9.2 was far more accurately answered but 9.3 was often incorrect with *apprentissage* used in the answer when she has decided on this route rather than university. The least well answered part was 9.4 where the vast majority wrote *médecin* rather than *professeur*. Once again, tense recognition was vital here.

Question 10

Parts 10.2 and 10.4 of this crossover question based on a literary text were successfully answered by many students. The main stumbling blocks appeared to be in 10.1 where *chômage* was not recognised. Similarly, in 10.3, many failed to note that this was not mentioned in the text.

Question 11

Here there were some inconsistent answers. Part 11.2 was particularly well answered and many were successful in 11.4. In 11.1, *alimentation* was not well known, which made the answer hard to

find. In 11.3, many did not make the link between *promenades* and *randonnées*. In a similar way, *sommeil* was not recognised by the majority in 11.4.

Question 12

The translation task always discriminates well, though fortunately there was less evidence to suggest that some students were short of time at this stage of the paper this year. The main points were as follows:

- The first section *J'ai deux sœurs* was almost always correct.
- The second section, *qui ne sont pas vraiment gentilles* was often incomplete. This was either due to the omission of *vraiment* or the use of 'gentle' for *gentilles*.
- The third section (*elles vont souvent aux magasins*) was generally correct, though some used the singular 'she' here. If this use of 'she' was repeated, it was not penalised during the rest of the student's answer.
- *elles adorent acheter* was very well answered.
- *de nouvelles chaussures* was often correctly translated, though there were references to novels or clothes here rather than shoes.
- The next two sections – *hier soir* and *elles ont refusé de faire leurs devoirs* were often correct, with the past tense correctly rendered in English.
- The use of *elles disent* caused many students problems, possibly because of the plural form of the verb.
- Many failed to score in the final section. *Inutiles* was often recognised but *les bonnes notes* was very often translated as good notes.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.