

FRENCH 2

1. GENERAL COMMENTS

The level of difficulty of the paper, the standard (language especially) and the rubrics all conform to previous standards. Candidates on the whole performed better than last year. Cases of deviation went down. On the whole, performance was above average.

2. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

Candidates stuck to the outline provided and were able to produce well organised essays. I observed improvement in candidates' ability to express date and time in French. Content mark was high even in cases where candidates scored zero in grammar. This showed that candidates did not lack ideas. It also showed their understanding of the guide question.

3. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

1. Low range of vocabulary leading to the use of coined words from English or English words.
2. Spelling errors. Common words like 'matin', 'ami', 'cousin' were wrongly spelt. A lot of candidates wrote 'martin', 'aime' and 'cuisine' for the above.
3. Copying of guide questions and giving one word answers. This is evidence of candidates' inability to construct sentences of their own.
4. Inability to conjugate common irregular verbs like 'faire' and even regular -er verbs.
5. Reproduction of essays learnt by heart leading to same essay from one centre with slight changes.
6. Meaningless essays, evidence of weak level of French.

4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

1. Contact with the french language can be improved if each candidate has a text book or manual and an easy reader.
2. Reading and oral/written comprehension exercises must be done regularly.
3. Composition should be part of regular exercises.

4. Grammar should be taught in context and a lot of structure exercises should be done to ensure firm grasp of grammatical points taught.

5. DETAILED COMMENTS

Question 1

“Write a composition in French narrating how you celebrate your birthday”.

Candidates were required to narrate how they celebrate their birthday. The question presupposes that the celebration is a regular event, so candidates were not expected to talk about a particular birthday celebration.

Guided questions (a) to (d)

- (a) - *Quel est votre nom?*
- (b) - *Quelle est la date de naissance?*
- (c) - *Quel jour de la semaine êtes-vous né(e)?*
- (d) - *Où est-ce que vous êtes né(e)?*

served as introduction and most candidates succeeded in giving their names, date and place of birth and day of the week on which they were born. Quite a large number left out (d) (i.e. place of birth). Some had difficulty in spelling the day of the week (especially ‘dimanche’ and ‘lundi’).

Quite a sizeable number did not understand (e) - *Que faites-vous quand votre anniversaire s’approche* (i.e. preparations made as the day draws close). I guess they did not understand the verb “s’approche”.

With regard to activities organised for the occasion most of them did not have the French vocabulary and were compelled to use English words like ‘dancing competition’, ‘musical chairs’ etc.

In the conclusion candidates were able to say that they were happy that day. While some were able to say why, others could not find the expression to explain the source of their joy. On the whole the essay was handled quite well.

Question 2

- A. (i) **Où est Madame Appiah?**
(ii) **Qu’est-ce qu’elle veut faire?**
- B. (i) **Où va-t-elle maintenant?**
(ii) **Qui est-ce qu’elle rencontre?**
- C. (i) **Que font les deux femmes?**
(ii) **Où est-ce que Madame Appiah met son panier?**

- D. (i) Qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans son panier?**
(ii) Quel animal est derrière Madame Appiah?
- E. (i) Combien de femmes y-a-t-il dans cette image?**
(ii) Que fait l'animal?
- F. (i) Quelle est la réaction de Madame Appiah?**

A picture description showing the misfortune of a woman (Madam Appiah) whose fish is stolen by a cat as she engages in a conversation with two other women.

The major headache of the candidate who handled this question was the understanding of the word 'malheur'. This was reflected in the way some used it in the essay. Candidates who attempted the question got the French word 'plage' and this is commendable at their level. Madame Appiah's meeting with another woman on her way home, their conversation, the cat hovering around and which later comes to steal the fish are events nicely captured by pictures B, C, D, E.

The concluding question 'Quelle est la réaction de Madame Appiah?' was a bit difficult for some candidates. They well understood but could not find the French word for 'shock', 'surprise', 'anger' etc.

The number of candidates who attempted this picture essay was encouraging and their performance was generally good. The weak ones simply copied the questions and added one or two word answers.