

## **FRENCH 2**

### **1. GENERAL COMMENTS**

The standard of the paper compared favourably with those of previous years. It is an undeniable fact that students generally have difficulty in learning French as a second foreign language but from all indications this year's performance saw an improvement over the previous years. This means that the pupils are gradually picking up. It is also a mark of redoubling of effort on the part of the teachers and students. General performance was average.

### **2. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS**

In spite of the generally average performance, there were a few candidates who excelled. Such good candidates understood the questions and followed the rubrics as expected.

In question one for instance, the good candidates did not write any irrelevant material. They simply answered the guided questions to the essay correctly devoid of grammatical mistakes. Consequently, they scored high marks in content and some went to the extent of scoring all the content mark of twenty (20). It is also worth mentioning that most of the candidates were able to produce an essay of not less than sixty words as required and as such their essays were not marked on prorata.

Question two was on picture description. Most candidates who tackled that question understood what the pictures were about even though they struggled to give the answers to the guided questions accompanying them. The fact that some answered the picture questions correctly in French and others in English depicting the chronological events of the story is a clear manifestation of their understanding.

To avoid being marked on prorata, most candidates wrote up to the recommended number of words and even beyond. The only unfortunate thing was that some of the voluminous essays were without substance.

### **3. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES**

Candidates were supposed to write in French throughout but some wrote in English; a sign that they lacked the vocabulary and expressions in the French language.

Again, some of the who understood had problems in subject/verb agreements.

Interestingly, some candidates did not attempt any of the questions at all leaving the answer sheets blank. There were instances where partial answers were given to the guided questions and some of the essays were also very sketchy and the candidates involved failed woefully.

#### 4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

- Teachers should adequately prepare their students for the exams using modern methodology in teaching. Available materials can be obtained from the Regional Centres for the Teaching of French (CREF). The students before they enter for the paper should be psyched up and made to understand that writing in English is a failure in advance.
- It is advisable for schools to procure some of the past questions from WAEC and use that as a guide regarding the nature of the paper.
- Again, teachers should move away from the traditional method of emphatic teaching of conjugation and make their lessons more interesting by using teaching aids.
- Students have an erroneous impression that French is a difficult subject and this should be debunked.

#### 5. DETAILED COMMENTS

There were two questions in all. A candidate was supposed to answer one of the questions for forty marks.

##### **Question 1**

**Write a composition in French about the game you like playing at school during break time.**

Candidates were required to write about the game they like playing at school during break time. The following guided questions were provided in for candidates to make use of.

- (a) Le nom de votre école
- (b) Le lieu de votre école
- (c) L'heure où les cours commencent
- (d) L'heure de la récréation
- (e) Ce que font les élèves pendant la récréation
- (f) Les jeux différents que les élèves aiment jouer
- (g) Le jeu que vous préférez
- (h) Avec qui vous jouez ce jeu
- (i) Ce que vous faites pendant ce jeu
- (j) Dites pour quoi vous aimez participer à ce jeu

Each item carried 2 marks.

In (a) the candidate was expected to give the name of his school in a complete sentence for a full content mark of 2. Almost all the candidates were able to give the right answer.

Question (b) was about the place where the school is located. The responses here were generally good.

Question (c) sought to find out when the lessons begins at school. Most students understood the question but could not answer it fully because they lacked vocabulary to express themselves.

In question (d), candidates were expected to mention the time for recreation in their schools. It was generally answered well.

Question (e) required what the students do during the recreation. Pupils were able to answer the question generally. In question (f), the pupils needed to state the different games that they like playing. A good number of candidates could not do this appropriately.

Question (g) wanted to know the game the pupils prefer during break. This was well done.

In question (h), pupils were expected to indicate whom they play with during break and this was also well answered.

The guided question (i) sought to find out what the candidate does in the games played during break. Most candidates were able to provide the answers as expected.

Finally, question (j) demanded why the candidate likes participating in this game. A lot of candidates were unable to answer it appropriately.

## **Question 2**

This question was basically a picture description on a traditional festival. Here too, there were the following guided questions for the candidates to develop into an essay:

- (a) (i) **C'est quelle fête?**  
(ii) **Qu'est-ce que les jeunes filles portent?**
- (b) (i) **Qui est dans le palanquin?**  
(ii) **Combien de personnes portent le palanquin?**  
(iii) **Où vont-ils?**
- (c) **Pourquoi est-ce que l'homme tient le parasol?**
- (d) **Qu'est-ce que le prêtre traditionnel fait?**
- (e) (i) **Qui est-ce qui fait le discours?**  
(ii) **Qui est derrière lui?**
- (f) (i) **Maintenant il est vers midi, que font les habitants?**  
(ii) **Est-ce qu'ils sont contents? Pourquoi?**

It has been observed over the years that most candidates dread this area. Funny enough, the handful of candidates who tackle this boldly do well. This year in particular almost all the students dodged the question two. More emphasis is needed by teachers to demystify the thinking that picture description is difficult.

In conclusion, teachers are faced with a daunting task of whipping the zeal and enthusiasm in students to take picture description seriously.

