



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students attempted all sections of the 2010 French written examination. It was evident that students were familiar with the examination format and this meant that they used full sentences when required, correct language in the appropriate sections of listening and reading texts, and showcased their understanding of text types and writing styles.

If students use material from a published source or any work that is not their own, they should acknowledge the source in order to avoid plagiarism.

Students must ensure that they read all instructions carefully. The amount of space given to answer a particular question is a good indication of the length of the expected response. Students should always check to see if the question requires them to present their answer in point form or in full sentences. The sections of the examination that require students to respond in French carry a mark for language and students are expected to write in full sentences in order to demonstrate linguistic accuracy and sequencing of ideas in French.

In order to be understood and to receive the maximum marks available, answers must be coherent and legible. This is also the case for responses in English. Emphasis must be given to the teaching of grammar in order to improve students' ability to write in French with accuracy and fluency.

Areas of concern included:

- poor use of the present tense in common and important verbs like *faire*, *avoir* and *apprendre*
- confused understanding of possessive pronouns before vowels (*m'aventure* and *t'arrivé* rather than *mon aventure* or *ton arrivée*)
- use of *sur* with days of the week
- poor use of prepositions (*sur la télé*)
- lack of elisions after *que* or *de* before *il* or *elle*
- lack of agreement between article, adjective and noun (*ils bon amies*) or subject and verb (*nous l'aime*)
- preposition and country (*en les Etats-Unis*)
- spelling of homonyms (*cour/court/cours*)
- poor word order, which often affected meaning
- inability to use the reflexive form of *s'intéresser* with *à* + indirect object, or the verb with a direct object pronoun *cela l'intéresse*
- inappropriate use of the subjunctive mood (notably after *espérer*)
- poor use of dictionaries, especially relating to the spelling of words in French and English, and to the gender of nouns. A notable example of this was in Text 1 when students were asked to list who would be attending the birthday celebration at the restaurant. One of the possible answers was 'Serge's/His fiancée'. Variations like 'fiancee' without the accent were accepted, but 'fiancé' was not accepted because the English meaning of the word thus spelt is different. Students, if unsure, could have used other family members or written 'the woman he is engaged to' to gain marks, but otherwise had to use the English spelling.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students responded well to most questions in the first section of the examination. They were generally very competent in finding the main points required and could find reasonable English equivalents for their answers. Students demonstrated that their global understanding was sound, as was their ability to discern the specific information needed for individual questions. Although students did not need to use 'Lily of the Valley' in their responses to the Text 2 questions, it was gratifying that many students were able to transcribe and find *le muguet* from the listening passage. The word *brin* was not understood as well, with many students writing about 'brown' flowers.

Students should practise their listening comprehension skills by selecting key points from a variety of different sources during their examination preparation. In the examination reading time students should read the listening section

2010 Assessment Report



questions carefully to identify the type of interactions they will be hearing and the sort of information that may be required. They should take notes during the playings of the texts, and in the pause between playings they should read the questions again to determine the importance of what they have heard and use their dictionary to check the meanings of significant words. After the second reading of the text, students have time to confirm their earlier information and compose an appropriate answer for each question.

Text 1

Question 1a.

A birthday

Question 1b.

Gift bought	Silk tie
Reasons the son dislikes his mother's first suggestion for dinner	Both of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doesn't like/hates the restaurant • doesn't know how to use chopsticks.
Type of cuisine chosen	Italian (restaurant)
Time of reservation	8.00 pm/20.00 hours (not simply 'eight o'clock')
People attending	Any two of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serge/the son • his fiancée/the girl he is engaged to • Mum • Dad • parents (two marks).

Text 2

Question 2a.

Any of:

- May Day
- 1st of May
- Labor Day
- Workers' Day (festival was acceptable but Work Festival or Celebration of Work was not)
- Lily of the Valley Day.

There was a large variety in answers to this question.

Question 2b.

Any of:

- a holiday
- public holiday
- day off
- bank holiday.

Question 2c.

Either of:

- good luck
- happiness.

Question 2d.

Both of:

- usually flowers on the 15th of May (not the 1st, flowers later, or few on May 1)
- flowers hidden (beneath the leaves).

Question 2e.

Both of:

- gave/brought/took some flowers to her mother/grandmother/sick relative/family (not buy flowers)
- left some (sprigs of) Lily of the Valley/flowers in the woods for others to find/have good luck.



Part B – Answer in French

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand aspects of an aural French text by responding in French. Ten marks were awarded for the comprehension of the text and five for conveying information accurately and appropriately in French.

In Part B, specific marks are not indicated for each question. Students should be guided by the requirements of each question and the number of lines provided. Students should be reminded to always give full answers in this section. While an answer such as *Ils se trouvent à l'extérieur de la ville. On peut y aller en bus* was correct, students missed out on marks by not exploring all of the information in the text.

Most students showed a good understanding of the text, although many students did not understand all the aspects of the interaction.

Students are penalised for not responding in complete sentences as requested, although this was well handled this year. Some students used the subject-verb inversion from the question in their answer, which affected their language mark adversely.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Any two of:

- *meilleur(e)s en France*
- *choix de centres*
- *bon marché/pas cher*
- *magasins d'usine*
- *beaucoup/choix de marques, articles, vêtements* (not *choix* alone)
- *un grand choix/une grande variété.*

Question 3b.

Five of:

- *extérieur de la ville*
- *en bus/car*
- *bus part de la gare/depuis la gare/en partant de la gare*
- *au même endroit*
- *dans la zone industrielle*
- *sur la route de Dijon.*

Question 3c.

All of:

- *visiter la ville/cathédrale*
- *(Déguster) le champagne/les vins du pays/de la région/le vin* (NOT *vin/du vin/visiter les vignobles*)
- *toutourisme/elle a un animal domestique/ils acceptent les animaux de compagnie dans les hôtels.*

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

This section of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of a written text. Most students were able to draw the appropriate information from the text. Part A of Section 2 was based on one text and worth 20 marks. A number of questions related directly to the content of the text, while others required students to infer information from what was written. In this passage the information was not presented in a chronological order and some questions required a response that related to the text as a whole.

The spaces provided for the responses generally indicated the length of the anticipated answer. Students who restated the question in their responses often ran out of space and did not provide full answers. Question 4f. was a particularly good example of this. Students were asked for a global understanding of the text and although many managed well with some sophisticated understanding of text construction and the purpose of this text in particular, many simply translated the final line in different ways.

2010 Assessment Report



In order to prepare for this section of the examination students should read extensively in French, including a wide range of texts in different text types. They should also practise identifying, rephrasing and summarising the main points and ideas in texts.

Before attempting the questions in this section, students should read the text a few times. It is not necessary to know the meaning of all words; students should try to understand the gist of the passage and find the information required to answer the questions. Students are also reminded that all answers must be based on the information provided in the text and not on prior knowledge.

Text 4

Question 4a.

Any eight of the ten possibilities were acceptable for full marks.

Dates/period	Events
1900	First line opened
(mid-)1930s/1935(plus or minus 1 year)	Extension (towards the east) to Château de Vincennes station
1990s	Line 14 was created/built/finished/opened (not terminated)
June 2008	Record of 725 000 people per day
2008	213 million travellers that year/Line 1 used most that year
2012	First fully automated line (not automatic)

Question 4b.

The drivers will work on another (traditional) line or be retrained because the lines will be automated/drivers are not needed/not required/redundant (not 'no more drivers' and 'conductors').

Question 4c.

Both of:

- more efficient/increased effectiveness
- less congested/less saturated travel (not less traffic).

Question 4d.

All of:

- new doors (not height of doors)
- height of platforms
- new control centre/check point (or equivalent).

Question 4e.

One of:

- population growth
- greater use of public transport
- more technology, improvements in technology.

Question 4f.

Any three of:

- to promote the Métro/laud its history/praise the Métro/ongoing nature of development
- it throws a different light on the text, for example, persuasive versus informative
- acts as a conclusion/sums up/provides a personal opinion
- evidence of how or why it is a marvel and continues to be so
- provide a positive ending/lighten the tone after so much information
- give instances of successes/advancements of the Métro.

The following is an example of an excellent answer.

The last sentence affirms that the article is praising the new changes to the metro, as well as the previous ones. It says that it constantly amazes us, implying that it has always been modern. Thus, in relation to the next, the final sentence tells us that all these changes to the metro lines have been positive and continue to amaze us.



Part B – Answer in French

This part of the examination assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text and their capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately in French. The task required students to convey which conference sessions Bertrand would be likely to attend and include an appropriate reason. Students who listed his interests and then the names of the sessions were not awarded any marks.

In Part B students were required to answer in French in full sentences and this was clearly stated in the instructions for this section of the examination. No text type in which to couch the answer was suggested, but most students produced work that conveyed all the necessary information and many did it in a variety of grammatically correct and interesting ways. If students used a formulaic response such as *Il choisirait... parce qu'il s'intéresse à...* for each option, and it was done correctly, they would have received partial marks for language. Students who scored highly presented the information in ways that displayed an excellent range of language, often in the conditional tense, and with a variety of verbs and sentence subjects.

A number of students copied information directly from the text and replied in point form. This did not allow students to demonstrate their ability to process information and write effectively in French. The more capable students manipulated language authentically and creatively and organised information and ideas well in French in order to meet the requirements of the task.

Text 5

Question 5

Acceptable answers included (but were not limited to):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>La salle de class virtuelle</i> • <i>Technologie au lycée</i> • <i>La survie des baleines</i> • <i>L'éducation sans le sport</i> 	<i>Veut devenir professeur de biologie</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transports en commun</i> • <i>La survie des baleines</i> 	<i>Solutions aux problèmes écologiques</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>La salle de classe virtuelle</i> • <i>Logiciels: en essor</i> • <i>Surveillance électronique</i> • <i>Technologie au lycée</i> 	<i>Dangers de l'internet</i>

Each of the five sessions selected as well as an appropriate justification provided was worth one mark.

Section 3 – Writing in French

This section assessed the students' ability to express ideas through the creation of original text in French using the following criteria. Each criterion was worth five marks.

- relevance, breadth and depth
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Students were required to write 200–300 words in French in response to one of the five questions. Each question represented a different text type and kind of writing. It should be noted that the text types marked with an asterisk in the *VCE French Study Design* are those which students may be expected to produce in the examination. The majority of students chose the personal letter (Question 9). The persuasive article (Question 8) was also a popular choice. Most students displayed a good knowledge of the different characteristics of the text types and styles of writing they chose. In contrast, many responses demonstrated a lack of depth in the treatment of the task, often because students did not read the questions thoroughly and seemed intent on providing rote-learned material (topics used for their oral examinations, an exchange to France or from their Detailed Studies). It was not always handled well and students often just topped and tailed their material with a cursory reference to the topic and the requirements of the text type. There was often also a superficial and predictable development of ideas/opinions.

When selecting a topic, students should choose one that is familiar or of interest to them and that requires the kind of writing and text type that best suits them. The selected topic should be one for which students have a good range of vocabulary and one in which they are able to express themselves in French with accuracy.



Students must establish the tone and register of the task from the outset and must always keep in mind the audience for whom they are writing. Ideas should be developed coherently and grouped into separate paragraphs with effective links between and within them. It is therefore essential that students set aside time to plan their response and time to proofread it at the end. Plans for the essay are an excellent way to ensure that enough references are included, that the relationship within and between paragraphs is considered, and that grammatical points are appropriately included throughout the essay.

For Criterion 2 this year, out of five possible points, two were allocated for text-type, one for style and two for structure.

Question 6

This question required students to write an evaluative film review for a cinema website of a new action film. Although this question was not a very popular choice it was usually completed with great success. The responses produced were well shaped, contained excellent vocabulary and a compelling rendition of the text type. Most students 'created' their own film to discuss and this provided an excellent basis for them to display some excellent French writing.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

www.cinemaparis.com.fr

Un grand succès! Brilliant!

CRITIQUES

BILLETS

SEANCES

<<LA GUERRE DE ROBOTS>> de Jean Héroult avec Jacques Blanc

Durée: 2h30

Aurolé d'un énorme succès de son dernier film, réalisateur de films d'action, Jean Héroult réussit encore une fois à nous offrir un chef d'oeuvre brillant, truffé de tout ce dont on a besoin d'un tel film.

Quoi que l'intrigue ne sorte pas de l'ordinaire – c'est une histoire qu'on connaît: la Terre est vaincue par des robots – et que parfois il y ait un manqué du rythme, le film est rempli d'autres choses de bonnes. Personne ne s'ennuyera. [IMAGE captionnée 'Une scène du film']

D'abord, on retient son haleine grâce aux effets spéciaux. Héroult utilise les techniques les plus modernes pour créer des robots qui semblent d'être en face de l'audience. Donc, l'action est plus vraisemblable qu'on puisse imaginer! En fait, c'est si incroyable que même ceux qui détestent l'action s'y convertissent après l'avoir vue. En plus, on ne peut qu'être choqué par les talents des cascadeurs au fil du film.

Bien que le film soit fait de ces éléments d'action, il ne faut pas oublier les acteurs qui incarnent parfaitement leurs personnages. Ils nous font vivre leurs émotions de peur, leurs poussées d'adrénaline avec eux. En plus, les femmes seraient reconnaissantes à voir Jacques Blanc qui est, indubitablement, un plaisir aux yeux!

Finalement, il faut qu'on applaudisse le compositeur de la musique. Généralement, on tend à l'ignorer dans un film d'action comme ça et pourtant, ici, elle est un vrai clou qui intensifie l'émotion du film tout en étant un régal aux oreilles.

En bref, c'est un film à voir sans aucun doute. Donc, si vous avez envie de voir quelque chose de palpitante, allez tout de suite, réserver des billets pour que vous ne les ratiez pas!

Question 7

In a script for a radio program (*discours* in French) students were to write an informative piece on the topic: 'Housework: do women do more than men?' This question was attempted by a small number of students. 'Script' and 'Discours' are not the same, and students who produced scripts of dialogue were as accepted as those who wrote a single piece of writing to deliver as a speech. Students who did attempt this question generally handled the informative nature of the topic well and produced statistics and information that was well suited to the topic. Some evaluation or opinion was accepted and students managed the text type and style well.

Question 8

This article in a school magazine was to persuade students of the important role of languages in developing cross-cultural relationships. This question was another popular choice, but very few students read past 'the role of languages' to the centre of the topic, which was about developing cross-cultural relationships. Thus many wrote pieces that lacked depth and attention to the nuance of the question. Many students were not able to demonstrate their skills in creating this text type. Students need to be aware of register and persuasive language in a written form.



The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

LES LANGUES SONT LE PASSEPORT POUR LE MONDE!

Essayez de vous imaginer un monde où tout le monde parle la même langue. Moi, je déteste l'idée de perdre toutes les belles langues à cause de la mondialisation! C'est la raison pour laquelle il est importante qu'on continue à étudier les langues étrangères. Ainsi, il sera possible de développer des rapprochements interculturels, ce qui est tellement important pour nous, habitant en Europe. Mais quels sont ces avantages dont je parle?

Prenons comme point de départ la situation de la France. Etant donné que la France fait partie du continent européen, on devrait en profiter. En apprenant l'italien, l'allemand ou l'espagnol, il devient possible d'y voyager ou d'y travailler sans difficulté. Il est moins facile de faire la même chose pour les Australiens et les Américains qui sont assez isolés. Donc, voyageons librement, parlons plusieurs langues et profitons au maximum de notre situation heureuse.

Comme vous le savez bien, le collègue Jules Verne promeut bien les langues parce qu'il, comme moi, croit que les langues nous permettent de communiquer avec d'autres peuples et de découvrir d'autres cultures qui sont énormément différentes de la nôtre. En étudiant une langue étrangère, on ouvre la voie aux améliorations entre deux cultures diverses tandis qu'en même temps, on augmente sa compréhension d'un mode de vie, ce qui sera très utile à l'avenir pour ceux qui veulent élargir leurs horizons.

Quant aux occasions qui sont rendues possibles grâce à la compréhension d'une autre langue, notre collègue offre des échanges culturels et linguistiques en Italie et en Angleterre. Ainsi, il est nécessaire que vous y pensiez quand vous êtes en train de choisir vos matières pour l'année prochaine. Si vous choisissez d'y participer, vous n'en serez pas malheureux et vous rencontrerez beaucoup de personnes intéressantes.

Il est difficile de nier que les langues soient toujours de nos jours importantes. Elles vous permettront de mieux comprendre le monde.

Question 9

This question required students to write a personal letter to a friend about a recent trip that had a big impact on them, in response to the quote, 'Travel broadens the mind'. This question was very popular; however, it was the most poorly done. Some students concentrated only on activities done on a recent holiday, thus limiting the breadth of their response. These students tended to include pre-learned material that did not relate directly to the task. A poor range of vocabulary and understanding of language structures contributed to the poor expression of insights they tried to convey.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

mardi, le 7 septembre 2010

Chère Simone,

Comment ça va? J'espère que ton voyage en Irlande était fantastique.

Je suis revenue d'Italie il y a une semaine. Je sais qu'avant de partir je m'en plaignais beaucoup, mais maintenant j'ai honte d'avoir parlé comme ça. Le séjour m'a beaucoup changé.

Comment tu sais, je suis resté chez ma grand-mère en Italie – au début de l'été je ne voulais pas y aller à cause de la région où la maison de ma grand-mère se trouve. Elle habite à la campagne, mais je ne pouvais pas la supporter – il n'y a pas de magasins à la campagne! De plus, je ne parle pas italien. Quelle situation horrible – être seule avec ma grand-mère qui ne parle qu'italien!

Ma grand-mère m'a retrouvée à l'aéroport. En conduisant à la maison elle a essayé de me parler en français, mais je ne lui ai pas répondu. Nous n'avons pas parlé l'une à l'autre jusqu'au jour où elle m'a montré la tombe de mon grand-père. Je t'ai déjà dit que mon grand-père est mort quand j'étais très petite, donc je ne me souviens pas de lui. Mais après avoir vu le visage de ma grand-mère en regardant la tombe je suis rendue compte que ma grand-mère, c'est une femme qui se sent seule.

A partir de cet instant, j'ai commencé à apprendre l'italien pour que je puisse lui parler.

Nous avons discuté beaucoup de choses, et elle m'a montré les beaux paysages de l'Italie. Je n'ai pas eu envie de faire du shopping une seule fois!

J'étais triste quand je suis partie de l'Italie, mais maintenant j'écris à ma grand-mère chaque semaine. Je ne suis plus la fille égoïste que j'étais avant – depuis mon séjour en Italie, je suis une fille très différente.

2010 Assessment Report



Ça fait deux mois que je ne t'ai pas vue, Simone – tu me manques. J'espère qu'on se verra bientôt.

Bisous

Camille

Question 10

Students were asked to write an imaginative short story for the newspaper *France Soir* about what happened during the night of a power failure. This question was generally answered well by the more capable students. These students used the devices of storytelling to good effect – they created an appropriate time, place and atmosphere and their ideas were often well organised in sentences and paragraphs that linked well. However, most responses were predictable and lacking in creativity and originality. Some students demonstrated a lack of imagination, little development of plot and poor descriptions of setting and characters. Some students used 'it was only a dream' as an ending to their story. Students who choose to tackle an imaginative piece of writing are expected to provide a more sophisticated attempt in an examination at this level. A few students traded on the current popularity of vampires to create a blood-curdling effect.

The following is an example of a high-scoring student response.

France Soir

LA FOLIE

Tout était détruit. Notre maison, notre voiture, vraiment notre vie entière. C'était le soir fatidique de l'homme fou qui a semé la pagaille et la doute dans tous les citoyens de notre petite ville.

Tout s'est mis à un jour, où cet homme a réussi à tuer un citoyen et s'est fui sans être attrapé. Le maire a tenu une assemblée pour tous les gens de la ville. Cet homme fou a instantanément fait les citoyens avoir peur. Cette assemblée était une discussion vivante, où tout le monde a montré la crainte à propos du meurtre. Tout d'un coup, les lumières ont été éteintes et une voix haute a commencé à parler. C'était l'assassin. Les gens de la ville, soit très jeune ou soit adulte, avaient peur. L'assassin a dit, <<Au revoir tout le monde. Exprès j'ai créé une panne d'électricité. Vous n'allez pas survivre. Personne!>>

Tout le monde s'est mis à paniquer. Personne n'a su ce qu'il faut faire. La police est arrivée et elle a commencé à être à la recherche de l'homme fou. C'était trop difficile de voir n'importe quoi, comme il n'y avait pas de lumières. Pendant quelques heures, rien n'a changé. Personne ne pouvait trouver l'assassin. Soudainement, j'ai vu une ombre et un fusil.

J'ai pensé, <<Ça doit être l'assassin>>. Lentement, je me suis rapproché à l'assassin, mais une bombe a sauté!

Toutes les rues ont été complètement détruites, mais l'assassin a laissé tomber son fusil. <<Il faut que je t'arrête!>> ai-je pensé.

Rapidement, j'ai cueilli le fusil et c'était la fin de l'assassin. J'ai téléphoné à la police pour l'arrêter et il a été interrogé. Malgré mes efforts, personne ne pouvait arrêter la bombe et notre ville a été enlevée. Heureusement, nous avons toujours la vie.

Par Pierre Delahousse