



2011

Languages: French GA 3: Examination

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, students were well prepared for the format and time allocation of the 2011 French examination.

Strong students displayed their control of the language well. Most students finished the paper; however, some did not complete Section 3. There was less confusion between the use of *tu* and *vous* this year than in previous years. Student responses showed good use of linking words and a wider range of tenses such as conditional/imperfect and present/future.

Students made a conscious effort to use the subjunctive and expressions to display their knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary; however, this was not always successful. Some students seemed to be using material memorised from their Detailed Study, which usually had little relevance to the question or was adapted to the new situation inadequately. This was particularly obvious in Section 3, Question 9.

Areas of concern included:

- position of adjectives and adverbs
- agreements (with preceding direct object pronouns, especially in relative clauses)
- genders
- verb endings
- unnecessary capital letters for months of the year
- syntax (*aussi* at the beginning of a sentence)
- *Ces/ses, a/à, et/est*
- poor use of verbs, such as *manquer, regarder à*
- expressions of quantity followed by *des/de la/du* instead of *de: beaucoup des, trop du bruit*.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

This section assessed students' capacity to understand general and specific texts. Generally, the order of the questions corresponded to the order in which information was presented in the texts, but some questions could relate to the passage as a whole and some information may have been found in different parts of the texts.

Students generally performed well in this section.

Text 1

Question 1a.

One of:

- two weeks/a fortnight
- 15 days.

Although the expected answer was two weeks/a fortnight, it was considered that the text could mean 15 days. Very few students answered incorrectly, but some gave responses such as in a few days, in five days or on the 15th of June.

Question 1b.

Jacqueline's brother

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Question 1c.

During his visit, Marc prefers not to:	During the day, Jacqueline plans to take Marc to:
Both of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spend all his time/stay stuck in Jacqueline's flat (not 'rest') • visit (popular) tourist sights. 	Any two of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visit the non-tourist spots • walk down busy/local/small/lively/city/suburban/Paris streets • see historic sites/places/spots • picnic (in 'hidden' parks).

Question 1d.

One of:

- an authentic Parisian pub/'brasserie'
- in the cosmopolitan restaurants (in the Latin quarter) (not trendy)
- an authentic French restaurant.

Text 2

Students were unsure of the differences between importing and exporting and there were some unusual suggestions as to why salt was valuable to the king of France.

Question 2a.

Disadvantages	Benefits
Any two of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hypertension • heart attack/cardiac problems • other health problems/bad for one's health. 	Both of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gets rid of/melts ice snow when put on roads/footpaths (not prevent) • preserves food/meat.

Question 2b.

All of:

- evaporation (in salt pans) (not just 'from the sea')
- mining extracting/underground
- importing (from Spain and other countries) or take/accept exports from Spain or elsewhere, (not export from Spain) trading.

Question 2c.

The kings of France received taxes/the *gabelle* (from peasants) on salt.

Part B – Answer in French

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand a text spoken in French by responding in French. Ten marks were given for the comprehension of the text and five marks for conveying information accurately and appropriately in French. Answers in dot-point format were not appropriate. Students must respond in full sentences in order to show their ability to write in correct French.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Three of:

- *l'internet*
- *journal*
- *agence*
- *par téléphone.*

Question 3b.

Any five of:

- *s'y prendre tôt/acheter le journal tôt*
- *téléphoner tout de suite*
- *éviter les agences*
- *penser à la cohabitation avec un senior*

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- *trouver un logement avec quelqu'un/un autre étudiant*
- *colocation*
- *résidences universitaires*
- *cite universitaire*
- *une chambre gratuite/un loyer peu élevé*
- *ne pas aller à une résidence haut de gamme/des plus chères*
- *d'autres possibilités.*

Question 3c.

Any two of:

- *Studio/appartement*
- *(Chambre individuelle dans une) résidence universitaire*
- *Résidences privées/logement à Paris.*

Section 2 – Reading and responding

In order to prepare for this section students are advised to:

- read as widely as possible in French
- learn to identify the main points and ideas in passages
- familiarise themselves with the use of their dictionary
- avoid excessive use of dictionaries
- learn to rephrase
- read a whole passage to try to get the general gist before looking up words.

Part A – Answer in English

Students were asked to show their understanding of general and specific aspects of the texts. The subject was familiar to the students. Responses, however, needed to be based on the text only, as was stipulated in the instructions. Some students were confused about 'added value'.

Text 4

Question 4a.

April coincides with choice of stream/pathway or establishment/institution and students going into Year 11 or senior secondary school or *lycee*.

Question 4b.

All of:

- social background
- age
- sex
- previous performance of students/capabilities of students.

Question 4c.

Mr Durand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bac(calauréat)/Year 12/final/VCE/results</i>
Education ministry spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>value added by school (not values)</i>
Director of Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>not necessary to have 100% success rate</i> • <i>success rate in examinations/VCE/Bac(calauréat)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>type of education/support/framework</i> • <i>supervision that parents wish for child (not training)</i>



Question 4d.

Used by	Purpose
Newspapers/journalists	Ranking (including exams)
Public: education minister/government officials/government/union officials/researchers/parents	Gain information about schools and their performances/results
Students	Guide them in their choice of schools
Principals	Set goals for their schools/guide

Question 4e.

Four of:

- the data is too simplistic
- the complex reality can only be grasped through combining the full range of data
- the public's prejudices are reinforced
- reputations of schools are strengthened (good or bad)
- students' selections of schools are influenced
- schools can eliminate weak students.

Part B – Answer in French

In this section students were asked to show their capacity to:

- understand general and specific aspects of the text
- convey information accurately appropriately in French

Text 5

This section was well understood by students. Students must remember to answer in full sentences to show their ability to express themselves in French. They also needed to change verbs from the first person to the third person, and to contrast Jerome's expectations with what he encountered.

Students are advised that *beau temps* is not (having) a good time.

Question 5

All of:

- *S'attendait à un réveillon calme – mais en fait très animé/feux d'artifice*
- *S'attendait à beaucoup de circulation – mais encore plus qu'il ne l'avait imaginé*
- *Repas épicé vs citron vert, coriandre, ail...*
- *Beau temps vs pluie (PAS chaud)*
- *Faire le(s) marché(s) n'est pas une activité reposante.*

Section 3 – Writing in French

In this section students were asked to show their ability to write an original text in French on one of the five topics and were assessed according to the following criteria:

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

Some students used material from their Detailed Study but often did not connect it enough to the topic they chose. Most students were able to sequence their writing successfully, but some missed out on marks by not including clearly identifiable characteristics of the nominated text type. Guidelines for these characteristic can be found on page 58 of the *VCE French Study Design*.

Question 6

Students were asked to write a formal letter to the principal of their school to persuade him/her to invite Gérard Dépardieu to visit their school to enhance the film studies and French classes. This was a popular topic; students were obviously familiar with the text type and could provide valid arguments. There was still some confusion between *tu* and *vous*.

Question 7

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Students were asked to write an article evaluating public transport. This was also a popular topic. Some students' wrote persuasively, although it was clearly stated in the topic that an evaluative article was required.

Question 8

This question asked students to write a speech, informing their fellow students about the dangers of working at night.

Question 9

Quite a few students chose this imaginative topic; however, many seemed to be relying on their Detailed Study without connecting with *les oiseaux*. Few students remembered to include appropriate text type features, such as a title or the fictitious name of the author.

Question 10

This topic required students to write a profile. Although 'profile' is included in the study design as a text type students are expected to be familiar with, few knew how to write a profile and instead wrote a letter. The main features of the text type were often omitted and some did not give a name. However, there were good responses to this question.