AQA

GCSE
FRENCH

8658/RH Paper 3 Reading
Report on the Examination

8658
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General Introduction to the November Series

This has been an unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts while taking into account the unusual circumstances and limited evidence available.

Overview of Entry

The majority of students found the paper accessible. Many gained pleasing marks for each question, though some students had difficulties in some of the more challenging questions, aimed at the highest grades. There were very few un-attempted questions and students' handwriting was generally clear and easy to read.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

Question 1

There were many high scoring answers in this matching question (with a 90% success rate) and the question allowed the majority of students to make a very positive start to the paper.

Question 2

Two thirds of students gained all four available marks and there were no zero scores. The most common error was selecting option E despite the phrase *ce n'est pas toujours le cas* rendering this answer invalid.

Question 3

This question, based on a literary text, was also well answered, as is to be expected on a crossover question aimed at grades 4 and 5. The least successfully answered component was 3.4, where some did not understand the significance of *un peu mécontents*.

Question 4

4.2 was successfully answered with many maximum marks evident but the second mark proved elusive for many in parts 4.1 and 4.3. In 4.1, many failed to give sufficient detail about the boy's video gaining a better audience than the TV news with vague answers such as *she wants to get a good audience.* In 4.3, many did not understand the word *logiciel* which led to some guessing, with answers such as *she compared two things.*

Question 5

All parts were well answered with the exception of 5.1 where many chose to select positive and negative as the response. Apparently, the phrase *critiqués* was taken as a negative comment as the significance of *à tort* was not taken into consideration.

Question 6

Students answered this in an effective manner though 6.4 was slightly less well done. It was clear from the text that Alice stayed with a family but *Je m'entendais assez bien avec mes hôtes et leurs deux enfants* led some to select the wrong answer since the inference here was not noticed.

Question 7

This question, which was also on the foundation paper, caused few problems as is to be expected at this tier. The only area which caused any difficulty was 7.3 where a few struggled to express the idea of the lack of effectiveness of traditional treatments.

Section B

Question 8

This multiple choice-question, which was also set at foundation tier, was very well answered by almost all students.

Question 9

Apart from part 9.4, this was successfully answered. Some failed to realise that the answer required a reference to Achraf's future plans about going on similar trips rather than his use of new technologies

Question 10

There were many pleasing answers in this literary text question, though 10.4 caused some problems. The amount of time the girls spent in the forest is not mentioned but the phrase *à quatre heures* led some to select false as the answer.

Question 11

This style of question usually causes great difficulties for students but the majority handled it very well indeed with just over half of all students gaining full marks. Errors tended to occur in the second gap where the phrase *à partir de* was not always recognised

Question 12

The translation question discriminated well, as is usually the case. Very few failed to score at all and most (almost two thirds of the entry) scored at least 7 of the available marks. As always, precision is required here. There are penalties for the incorrect use of tenses and the omission of key words such as *car* and *plus*. Pronouns also need to be translated accurately.

Section 1:
Je me dispute souvent avec mes parents was well answered, though some omitted *souvent* in their answer.

Section 2:
The vast majority understood *à cause de mes copains*.

Section 3:
The phrase *selon mon père* caused difficulties here with some incorrect paraphrasing being used.

Section 4:
Occasionally the wrong day of the week was given.

Section 5:
Une manifestation was not always correctly rendered and some used the future tense for *j'ai participé.*

Section 6:
Some used a present tense verb here and others failed to convey the pronoun *leur* correctly.

Section 7:
The future rather than the conditional tense was often seen here.

Section 8:
Pour protéger l'environnement was nearly always correctly translated.

Section 9:
This proved to be the most challenging section of the passage. The pronoun *me* was sometimes absent, *semble* was omitted and *ce qui* was not always correctly conveyed.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.