
AS LEVEL **FRENCH**

7651/2 Writing
Report on the Examination

7651
June 2022

Version: 1.0

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Section A Question 1

In handling the translation of sentences into French, many students showed a lack of understanding of some fundamental differences between how English and French “behave” as languages. A suggested strategy to improve this understanding and awareness is to set French texts from past AS papers as French to English translation exercises initially, and then to take a line by line, element by element parallel text approach to analysing differences between the two languages. This would help to address key areas such as (in French) the need for articles with nouns and (in English) the omission of these; or (in French) the need to make adjectives agree and (in English) having no agreement rules. These were the areas where mistakes were made and marks lost most frequently. This suggested strategy would help to train students to look at the source text not just for individual vocabulary items but for what else needs to be lifted with them.

Following the comments on each sentence below, the grid shows the percentage of students scoring 3, 2 1 or 0 marks for that sentence.

Sentence 1

Many students scored the mark for box 1 (according to) and box 3 (facial recognition) – the main error here being the omission of the definite article; the rest of this sentence was not well-handled. There was a lack of familiarity with the future tense (*sera*) ; the gender of *menace* was often incorrect as was that of *liberté*, and few successfully spelt *personnelle*, common mis-spellings being *personelle*, *personal*, *personalle*. Where *liberté* was treated as a masculine noun, *personnel* was accepted as a consequential error and so the mark was awarded.

3	2	1	0
25%	47%	27%	1%

Sentence 2

Box 1 was accurately translated but the clue of *artificielle* (feminine ending) was not picked up as a signal to make an agreement with *utilisée* in box 2; *pour surveillance* occurred frequently and there were many cases of more and more being translated as *plus et plus* or, where this was accurately translated, many missed including *de* after it. Plural *nos* was known by only a few students; box 6 was generally well handled.

3	2	1	0
23%	42%	34%	1%

Sentence 3

Beaucoup des was a common error in box 1; box 2 was often either omitted completely or conveyed as *français*; the pronoun *y* was generally not known and/or placed in the wrong position in relation to the verb; most students scored the mark for *ont* but not for *réagi*, and most scored for *très négativement* as the omission of accents was not penalised.

3	2	1	0
15%	49%	32%	4%

Sentence 4

In terms of structures, this was probably the most complex of the sentences. However, many students scored better on this sentence than on others. Common errors were *plus des gens*, and *devraient* or *voudraient* instead of *pourraient*. Many students conveyed the last element as *l'accepteraient peut-être*, and scored the marks.

3	2	1	0
33%	48%	18%	1%

Sentence 5

La plus part occurred frequently as did *nous devons* as a translation of we need, which was not accepted. *sont d'accord* proved too challenging for many and *le numéro* or *le chiffre* was often used to translate the number.

3	2	1	0
20%	48%	26%	6%

Sections B and C

Given the lower entry for this specification this year (484 students), not all texts were covered in student responses and therefore there is not a comment for the following optional questions:

Question 2 Le Tartuffe

Question 3 Candide

Question 7 Elise ou la vraie vie

The most popular of the literary texts was *No et moi* (13 responses) with the remaining texts attracting just a handful of students each. Therefore, out of the total entry, the vast majority by far (448) answered a question on a film option and, of the films, *La Haine* was the most popular (204), with *Au revoir les enfants* coming a close second (153), then *Entre les murs* (50), *Les 400 coups* (28), *Un long dimanche de fiançailles* (11) and finally *L'auberge espagnole* (2).

At the top end of the range there were some very high-quality responses both in terms of content (AO4) and language (AO3). These were characterised by a clear and sustained focus on the question, including the suggested bullet-point structure, and a sound handling of the written language. There were some good essays, too, where students used their knowledge of the work they had studied to address the bullet-points in the question, but where there was perhaps not quite so much detailed evidence to support points made. Less successful in scoring marks were those students who wrote a lot about the work they had studied but much of what they wrote was not relevant to the question they had opted to do; trying to make a previously written response (and one that had been memorised) fit a new or different question was rarely an effective strategy. It would have been much better for those students to spend time planning their answer by looking at the specifics of the question set on the paper and selecting material from their knowledge that would have made for a relevant answer.

Assessment Objective 4 – work by work commentary**Question 4 Boule de Suif et autres contes de la guerre**

This question was well-handled with some good knowledge demonstrated of the changing attitudes towards Boule de Suif before, during and after the episode in Tôtes. Students opting for the second question chose good examples to illustrate how Maupassant shows sympathy for ordinary people.

Question 5 L'étranger

Again, both questions allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge of the work and of the characters involved. Those who opted for this question played safe and kept to the bullet points provided and this proved to be a good strategy.

Question 6 Bonjour Tristesse

This was not a popular choice of text but knowledge demonstrated was sound.

Question 8 Un sac de billes

Students opting for this question showed reasonable knowledge of the text and of the importance of the theme of family. Likewise, the role of female characters produced some reasonable to good answers.

Question 9 Kiffe Kiffe demain

9.1. was the more popular option and most students gave a reasonable response to examining how Doria reacts to the different characters who try to help her, with one or two students showing very good knowledge of the text. All students who responded to this expressed a real empathy for the situation of Doria.

Question 10 Un secret

The family question (10.1.) was the more popular and students dealt generally well with this theme.

Question 11 No et moi

There was very good and good knowledge demonstrated by a number of students of the characters of Lou and No and of their differences. Likewise, question 11.2. allowed students to demonstrate detailed knowledge of the character and circumstances of Lou's mother.

Question 12 Les 400 coups

Much sympathy was shown towards the difficult childhood that Antoine Doinel experiences and a number of students offered *le revers de la médaille* and wrote about the happier moments in the character's life. Those opting to examine the consequences of Antoine's impulsive behaviour made good reference to the excuse he gave for missing school, the theft of the type-writer, and his escape from the detention centre.

Question 13 Au revoir les enfants

13.1. was the more popular option and produced some very good and good answers at the top end of the range with a clear documentation of how Julien himself matures in the course of the film through the changes in his relationships with, primarily, Jean Bonnet but also with Joseph. Much was made of the scene with his mother at the station at the start of the film and the contrast when he arrives back at school.

Question 14 La Haine

This and question 13 presented the widest range of responses in terms of the quality of the content. The best examples, for both 14.1. and 14.2., were from students who carefully selected

their material and proceeded to outline a clear and logical response to the question, using appropriate and accurate evidence to support the points made. At the other end of the range were the responses where students had a “set piece” answer which they tried to adapt to the question so that, for example, a ready-made answer about techniques became “Kassovitz explores the theme of authority using certain techniques” or “Kassovitz shows the negative aspects of life in the suburbs using certain techniques”. This was then followed by the “techniques essay” with no further reference to the question being answered. Such essays will be assessed to be, at best, reasonable, but in most cases limited and will therefore not achieve a high score for AO4.

Question 15 L’auberge espagnole

Responses to questions on this film were generally good.

Question 16 Un long dimanche de fiançailles

Question 16.2. provided the opportunity for students to demonstrate very good knowledge of the film and to use this well to support their points.

Question 17 Entre les murs

These questions produced a range of responses from limited to very good. There was evidence here too of the approach outlined in respect of Question 14 above.

Assessment Objective 3 – overall comments

The high quality scripts were characterised by a wide range of relevant, work-related vocabulary, a sophistication in the level and range of structures manipulated and a generally high degree of accuracy, though still with some errors. At the opposite extreme, though there was evidence of some vocabulary acquired that was relevant to the work under study, written expression was heavily influenced by English and often statements became little more than literal translations of English idiom. Confused language and expression means the content point cannot be understood and therefore cannot be credited. That said, there was plenty of evidence that many students had mastered a sound working knowledge of the language which enabled them to express and support their views and opinions.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.