



Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In French (1FR0) Paper 1F
Listening & Understanding in French



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Introduction

This is the first examination of the revised GCSE and as such there are differences between the new specification and the legacy GCSE. The paper now has 10 questions covering grades 4- 9 and is worth 50 marks, (25% of the overall grade), previously there were 8 questions for grades C to A* worth 40 marks, (20% of the overall grade). The number of open ended tasks in English has increased from one question worth 8 marks to three questions worth 20 marks. Multiple choice questions now also have four options rather than three. There are also two questions in the target language accounting for 10 marks, previously there were no questions in the target language. There are also new topic areas such as the global dimension, voluntary work. Generally candidates were prepared for the new test types and topics but some of the new requirements proved challenging for some candidates and the open ended questions, requiring answers in English, proved daunting for weaker candidates.

Candidates performed well across the paper as a whole and there were some excellent performances. There was evidence of some good listening and exam skills. Many candidates had used the five minutes reading time well (underlining key words in the title, rubric and questions, annotating questions), generally using the time to anticipate what they were about to hear. The questions that were intended to discriminate did so, many candidates understood enough, and felt confident enough, to attempt the whole paper but there were blank answers for the whole or parts of questions 7 and 9 (open ended questions in English). There were some candidates who were unable to cope with the demands of the Higher paper, and the increase in difficulty as they progressed through led some to give up. These candidates would have possibly benefited from taking the Foundation rather than the Higher paper.

Comments on individual questions

Questions 1-5 were targeted at grades 1-2 and required candidates to identify the key points in short extracts. In these test types vocabulary is of key importance and lack of familiarity with the common core vocabulary list can cost candidates marks.

Questions 1 and 2 were well answered. Question 2 (ii) was less well done, this required candidates to recognise a time.

Q3 was also well done but the distracter at the end of the extract, *Jamel: Je découvre de nouveaux groupes et chanteurs. Je ne chatte pas avec mes amis*, was missed by many candidates who incorrectly crossed F, candidates should be trained to recognise the negative in familiar phrases.

Q4 proved difficult, possibly again because of the use of negation or the vocabulary, some of which was related to the environment which is new to the specification.

In Q3 and Q4 there was some evidence of rubric infringements with candidates ticking more than the required three answers. This rubric infringement is penalised.

The majority of candidates scored on Q5 and had the confidence to attempt the answers. Questions (a) and (b) proved the more accessible, although in part (a) some candidates confused *plombier* and *pompier* and the mention of *stage* in, *Je fais mon stage*, led to incorrect answers, such as go on the stage, acting/producing/into films etc. Some misheard *stade* for *stage* which gave rise to answers such as works in a sports stadium/ a leisure centre etc. Again in part (c) the distracter in, *Plus tard, je veux faire un apprentissage, je ne veux pas aller à l'université*, led to incorrect answers such as, he wants to do an apprenticeship at university, he wants to do an apprenticeship and then go to university. In 5(d) *gagner de l'argent* was frequently rendered as win money.

Q6 was well answered with many candidates successfully scoring two of the three marks. This question required candidates to identify what each person **liked** rather than what was mentioned, so candidates needed to listen for *j'aime* and *j'adore* to identify the correct answers. Costumes was a common incorrect answer.

The remaining questions targeted at higher grades required careful listening to the whole and proved difficult for weaker candidates who tend to give answers based on the recognition of single lexical items, usually the first word that they hear and recognise. Candidates should be encouraged not to write when listening to the extract for the first time, but to listen to the whole extract.

Q 7 was generally well answered, the most common incorrect answer given was A, I don't like PE with candidates failing to recognise or understand, *On s'amuse bien en éducation physique*.

Q8, requiring answers in English to open ended questions was slightly less well done than Q5, presumably because the text was heard as a whole rather than as individual statements. Again key items of vocabulary caused problems, in particular in (b) where *pluie* was rendered variously as wind/fog/bad etc. The most common correct answer in (c) was goes to the (national) park, *randonnées* being less well known by candidates.

Questions 9-14 targeted grades 4 and 5. Q9 proved difficult for many candidates, parts 9(iii) and (iv) were the most accessible. Again possibly the subject area made the question less familiar to candidates with some candidates unable to recognise familiar language in unfamiliar contexts. This multiple choice question required careful listening to identify correct and incorrect choices for each part of the question and also the ability to process information eg in part (i), being able to match, *Comme chaque printemps* with answer D, (every) year.

Q11 was similar in this respect and again dealt with a new subject area not previously examined. G was the most commonly correct answer and B the most common incorrect answer, again some candidates failed to recognise the use of negation in the extract, *Ce n'est pas difficile de trouver un travail*.

Q10 and Q12 also required answers in English to open ended questions. The incline of difficulty was clear. In Q10 the majority of candidates

attempted all the questions but quite a few candidates left Q12 blank. This could be due to the type of extract, which was a factual news report. In Q10 there was evidence of snatched listening with candidates honing in on single lexical items and then putting them together, often incorrectly eg in 10(a) the three choices were often confused with answers such as, clean the animals, prepare food for the visitors, they prepare the animals for the visitors, etc. Sometimes candidates picked up individual words and made up answers which were not related to what they heard eg they show the visitors around.

In Q12 whilst some candidates responded well, many failed to recognise familiar vocabulary, eg in part (a), *trois heures de sport par semaine* was often rendered as three times per week, and in part (c) *le Sud-Ouest* was not well known. In part (b), there was surprisingly a lot of stereotypical answers, with information not heard in the extract eg girls don't like football, girls are no good at football, boys play football not girls, etc. There was again evidence of snatched listening with candidates recognising individual items of vocabulary and creating answers around them eg in (d) recognition of the word **sport** led to answers such as there are not many sports available, there should be more options for sport, sport is good for you, etc. Sometimes candidates lost marks through lack of precision eg in (d), *les jeunes ne font pas assez de sport*, was often incorrectly rendered as not enough young people do sport.

Q13 and Q14 were in the target language. In Q13 in particular, some candidates did not understand the questions and wrote answers which were not completely logical. Many were unable to use linguistic clues, eg, that part (a) and part (c) required an adjective as a response. In (c) many candidates incorrectly matched shopping with magasins. Parts (d) and (e) were the most accessible and many candidates have obviously been trained to recognise different time indicators.

Q14 proved challenging for all but the better candidates. This task required candidates to process what they heard and match what they heard with the alternatives eg matching, *Thyméo n'a pas beaucoup d'argent donc c'est idéal pour lui* with (e) *aime le prix*.

For this paper, candidates need to

- carefully read the questions
- be able to understand the questions in French and recognise linguistic clues
- have sound knowledge of core vocabulary
- listen to the whole rather than hone in on individual words
- identify cognates and familiar words in unfamiliar contexts
- recognise the use of negation
- recognise the use of tenses and time indicators
- pay attention to detail
- apply logic

