

# FRENCH

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Paper 3015/11  
Translation and Composition

## Key Messages

- Candidates should ensure they **only** answer **two** questions.
- Candidates are reminded that their handwriting must be clearly legible and that they should not write in the margins.
- Candidates should read the instructions carefully before starting their work and make full use of the time allowed in order to check their writing thoroughly.
- Candidates should write **150 words** as required for the essays. They must not exceed this limit.
- Candidates should write what they know to be French and avoid attempting to use language with which they are unfamiliar.

## General comments

Overall there was some excellent work and there were a number of extremely good scripts towards the top of the range, as well as some consistently sound efforts in the middle. There were some excellent answers to the essay questions which used a wide linguistic range, though the writing was often inaccurate. Candidates should be reminded that a broad and fluent command of the material is highly commendable and will be rewarded, but that a high degree of accuracy in writing is essential for full credit to be given.

The translation into French was once again a popular choice and many candidates achieved a high standard in this question; they had clearly worked hard to acquire a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures and there were many very good marks which frequently mirrored, or in some cases exceeded, the marks gained for the essay. Set against this, was the fact that many candidates lost marks by not reading the English carefully and therefore not translating the text accurately. There were also a number of candidates who opted for the translation, although choosing a different task would have been a better option for them.

It was clear that candidates had been well prepared for this examination, but they are encouraged to read the instructions carefully. For each essay question, candidates must not write more than 150 words. A large number of candidates often greatly exceeded this number - some essays having between 200 and 400 words. Candidates are reminded that the rubric must be adhered to, as examiners do not take any writing into account after the 150 word limit, for either Language or Communication. Thus, candidates are reminded to address all the required points within 150 words. In doing so, they should then have the time to check their work as carefully as advised in the Key Messages above.

Each essay question has quite specific guidelines regarding its content – either the pictures for **Question 1** or clearly stated rubric points for the 3 options of **Question 2**. The word count starts at the beginning of the answer for **Question 1** and immediately after the given opening phrase for **Question 2**. Candidates who ignore the instruction to start their essay after the given phrase in question 2, are liable to be penalised. Any material which does not clearly relate to the content guidelines for any essay will remain as part of the word count but will be treated as irrelevant and will gain no marks for either Communication or Accuracy.

Candidates are reminded to read the rubric carefully by answering two questions only on the paper.

The vast majority of scripts were well and neatly presented. There were a few cases where handwriting was unclear, particularly where alterations had been made, and in such cases credit could not be given.

**Communication Marks (Questions 1 and 2 only):** Each essay has a maximum score of 5 marks available for successful communication of relevant points in unambiguous, but not necessarily completely accurate

French. Errors in handling verbs, or not addressing the necessary content within the 150 words allowed, were the most significant factors preventing the award of Communication marks. In order to score 5 marks, candidates must make clear reference to at least five of the pictures in **Question 1** and cover all 5 of the given rubric points in any of the essays in **Question 2**.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Question 1: Picture Story**

This was a popular choice and, in most cases, the story appeared to be clear. The story took place mostly in the countryside. On a fine day, 2 boys were seen riding their bikes on a country road/lane. They stopped at the road side and saw sign giving permission to pick apples. There were 2 girls looking at the trees. The next picture showed one of the boys sitting in the tree and handing apples down to his friend. Unfortunately the boy slipped and fell out of the tree, while the girls looked horrified. The ambulance arrived and one boy was being helped in the ambulance by a nurse/doctor. The other boy was holding both bikes and the girls were just watching. In the final picture the injured boy was sitting on a couch holding his bandaged arm and his friend was giving him a gift of a box full of apples. The boy's mother was watching. These basic ideas were on the whole clearly conveyed and those who kept within the word limit generally had no difficulty scoring the maximum of 5 for Communication.

However, it is recommended that candidates plan roughly what they want to say for each picture before answering the question. This will help to avoid spending too long on the earlier part and then running out of words before the end, resulting in potentially losing Communication points.

The conventional third person narrative approach was usually adopted, although many chose to write in the first person from the standpoint of one of the people depicted. This was, of course, perfectly acceptable.

The quality of the language used was variable but many candidates showed confident use of the necessary vocabulary as well as a variety of appropriate structures. Most candidates knew the basic words required by this set of pictures, for example *faire du vélo/du cyclisme, promenade à vélo/bicyclette, à la campagne, arbre, s'arrêter, grimper, monter, pommes, regarder, donner, tomber, téléphoner, infirmier/docteur/médecin, aider, casser, visiter, offrir, cadeau*. Candidates who did not know the word *pommier*, could still get the message across by using *arbre*. *Piquer* was sometimes confused with *cueillir*, but *ramasser* or *prendre* were acceptable alternatives.

A good range of vocabulary will always score highly as will complex syntax – use of object pronouns, infinitive constructions and present and past participles, for example. However, not all candidates managed tense usage successfully and there was frequent confusion between the Imperfect and the Perfect/Past Historic. The Pluperfect was also not always used correctly. Candidates are reminded that the Present tense is unacceptable as the narrative tense. There were many basic syntactical errors which included inconsistency in the spelling and gender of nouns, missing agreements on adjectives, incorrect use of object pronouns. There were a number of minor common errors such as confusion between *car, comme* and *quand*; between *très* and *trop*, *on* and *ont*, *ce* and *se*, and *ces* and *ses*.

#### **Question 2**

##### **(a) Letter**

This was also a popular choice. Most candidates understood what was required and often covered the required points very well. Candidates are reminded once again of the importance of adhering to the word limit. Five clear points were mentioned in the rubric and all had to be covered by a discrete statement containing a verb to qualify for the award of the five Communication marks. Candidates are reminded that, for all **Question 2** essays, the opening phrase is given and should be copied out before starting the main body of the essay. This is not included in the 150 word count. Candidates who did not do this lost marks. The letter involved writing to a friend to talk about a family move to a different country due to a parent's work transfer. Candidates had to mention the date/period of departure, the destination, problems encountered on arrival, refer to their school and friends and give a simple impression of their new life.

The majority dealt in a satisfactory manner with the points outlined above. Some rubric points will, of course, invite greater length than others, but a single clear reference, in an acceptable tense, is sufficient for the award of a Communication mark. Candidates who started with the given opening, followed immediately by relevant treatment of the rubric points usually covered the material successfully. Some imaginative

responses were offered regarding the problem, such as not being collected from the airport, not having a house to go to, no local currency on arrival, people being unhelpful, or not being able to communicate in the foreign language.

Candidates should again read the rubric carefully and adhere to the word count. The best candidates were able to express their ideas in a range of appropriate and accurate French which gained high marks for Language. Competence in handling verbs is vital for a high score. Correct handling of the other linguistic features mentioned in connection with **Question 1** is equally important as marks for Language are only awarded for accurate usage.

**(b) Dialogue**

This was a slightly less popular question but it was often well handled with some interesting exchanges between the candidate and a friend. The conversation was based on the premise of answering a friend's questions about a family holiday. The candidate had to talk about the destination and the type of holiday, the activities and a mention of a new experience during that time. This had to be followed by a simple impression of the holiday.

This conversation was often well executed with clear questions and answers being presented and the language used was usually appropriate and of high quality. Candidates are advised to follow the stated guidelines to keep the dialogue of high quality and relevance.

It should be noted that only the actual words of the conversation should be written (with an indication, of course, of which person is speaking). Candidates are reminded that they are expected to write the actual words of a conversation, as a narrative introduction or reported speech cannot be credited.

Candidates who started the conversation with the given opening sentence, followed immediately by the relevant treatment of the five rubric points, ensuring that they did not exceed the 150 words limit, were usually successful in answering this question.

**(c) Narrative**

This concerned the candidates' birthday celebrations, organised by parents, in an interesting venue. The destination, the members of the group and the main activity had to be mentioned. The candidates also had to say what they would like to do next time and give their reactions at the end of the celebrations.

The best stories were lively and fluently written, using a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure. Many candidates chose to go to local venues which they knew well and therefore were able to describe in detail. As above, some candidates had problems with the use of tenses, particularly with the Imperfect and Perfect/Past Historic, and unnecessary use of the Pluperfect.

Candidates should avoid inventing or guessing at vocabulary items. It is better to use simple vocabulary that they understand and are sure they can use correctly.

**Question 3: Translation into French**

This was a popular option and often produced work of a high standard. Many candidates coped well with the vocabulary and grammatical structures. Some candidates lost marks for errors rather than a lack of knowledge for example confusing "the" and "a" or "the" and "their", or missing words or phrases out. While the marking principles are identical (ticks are given for correct units of language and errors are ignored), it should be pointed out that this is a rather different exercise from the essay. Candidates are advised to translate exactly what the English says and not to seek to use alternative words as, in most cases, the English will transfer directly into French. Candidates who kept close to the English original usually gained the best marks.

No points proved universally impossible but difficulties were experienced with a number of items:

**Paragraph A**

- A number of candidates did not know how to say "both"
- The imperfect was often missed in the phrase "they liked to relax"
- Translating "in the open air" proved difficult for many candidates
- Using the word "voyage" to translate "outing" happened in a number of cases, but was not correct.

### Paragraph B

- The phrase “*they set off*” proved challenging for a number of candidates.
- Some candidates used the verb “*écouter*” instead of “*entendre*”
- The main error in this section was the use of “*pour*” instead of “*depuis*”

### Paragraph C

- Some candidates used the verb “*to see*” instead of “*to look*”.
- There were a number of errors with the word “*mécanicien*”, which was often spelt in a way resembling English.
- The imperfect was often missed in the phrase “*he had resolved*”.
- The translation of “*delighted*” proved challenging.

### Paragraph D

- One of the challenges in this section was the phrase “*they parked*” which is different from saying “*they stopped*”. We allowed the use of “*stationner*”, “*garer*” and “*parquer*”, so long as the tense was correct.
- Many candidates did not know the words for “*path*” or for “*narrow*”
- The reflexive pronoun was sometimes missing in “*s’asseoir*” as well as in “*se reposer*”

### Paragraph E

- The main challenge in this paragraph came with the phrase “*on the way home*”.
- Candidates sometimes missed the word “à” in the phrase “à quelques kilomètres”

# FRENCH

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Paper 3015/12  
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### Paragraph B

- The phrase “*they set off*” proved challenging for a number of candidates.
- Some candidates used the verb “*écouter*” instead of “*entendre*”
- The main error in this section was the use of “*pour*” instead of “*depuis*”

### Paragraph C

- Some candidates used the verb “*to see*” instead of “*to look*”.
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### Paragraph D

- One of the challenges in this section was the phrase “*they parked*” which is different from saying “*they stopped*”. We allowed the use of “*stationner*”, “*garer*” and “*parquer*”, so long as the tense was correct.
- Many candidates did not know the words for “*path*” or for “*narrow*”.
- The reflexive pronoun was sometimes missing in “*s’asseoir*” as well as in “*se reposer*”

### Paragraph E

- The main challenge in this paragraph came with the phrase “*on the way home*”.
- Candidates sometimes missed the word “à” in the phrase “à quelques kilomètres”

# FRENCH

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Paper 3015/21  
Reading Comprehension

## Key message

### In Section 1

the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

### In Section 2

Exercise 1, the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In Exercise 2 of this Section the candidate is asked to respond to questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

### In Section 3

the close test, which tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom the candidate is required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

## General comments

As in previous years candidates were appropriately prepared for this paper and the greater majority of them tackled it well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and sometimes pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

## Comments on specific questions

This section presented very few problems for candidates.

### Section 1, Exercice 1

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise. In **Question 5** *maquillage* was occasionally unknown as candidates then opted for an incorrect response.

### Exercice 2

Candidates had very few difficulties in this section and the text was generally understood well.

### Exercice 3

Again most candidates performed well in this multiple choice exercise. For **Question 13** some candidates did not understand that the concert took place outside and selected a wrong answer. Occasionally **Question 14** was also wrong.

### Section 2, Exercice 1

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

**Question 25 and Question 26** Some candidates did not understand the **Questions** and lifted irrelevant sentences from the text in response.

### Exercice 2

Many candidates performed well in this Exercise, but on occasions there appeared to be some misunderstanding of the **Questions**. Closer reading is recommended.

### Question 28

Although there were many correct responses, some candidates wrote about whom Lucie was going to meet rather than where she was going.

### Question 29

Again, there were some good answers, but some candidates clearly did not understand what was being asked and lifted from the text, presumably because they had spotted *réussir* in the text.

### Question 30

Some candidates were unable to explain what demonstrated the veracity of Lucie's message.

### Question 31

In some candidates reiterated that Lucie had gone to Los Angeles rather than explaining why she had gone there.

### Question 35

Some candidates lifted the whole sentence from the text rather than identifying the salient point, namely that Lucie had worked in IT for several years.

### Question 36

Not all candidates realized that it was the location of the salon which resulted in a small number of clients and consequently lifted randomly from the text.

### Section 3

As always this exercise was accomplished with varying degrees of success. The majority performed reasonably well. Some candidates seemed to have little or no concept of what was required and their responses were not only incorrect but also seemed to be completely arbitrary. A few candidates put more than one word in each gap, despite the instructions.

Candidates found the following **Questions** in particular problematic:

### Question 39

Many candidates wrote *au* rather than *du*.

### Question 42

Candidates sometimes supplied an incorrect past participle e.g. *été*. Other incorrect responses included *pensait* and *avait*.

### Question 42

Candidates struggled here. Some incorrect answers were *quand* and *que*.

**Question 49**

Some candidates wrote *pendant*, which works grammatically, but suggests a lack of understanding of the text. Candidates are reminded that the word they choose should be both grammatically and contextually appropriate.

**Question 50**

There were a variety of incorrect answers here. Including *sont* and *ils*.

**Question 54**

Some candidates wrote *son* or even *sa* here.

**Question 56**

There were many incorrect answers; candidates did not seem to recognise the need for *fait* here and offered other past participles e.g. *eu* or completely irrelevant words.

**Question 57**

The answers given varied with not many candidates providing *rien*.

**Question 58**

Although some candidates supplied the correct answer, a notable number struggled. A frequent incorrectly answered with *quand*.

# FRENCH

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Paper 3015/22  
Reading Comprehension

## Key message

### **In Section 1**

the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

### **In Section 2**

Exercise 1 the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In Exercise 2 of this Section the candidate is asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some Questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

### **In Section 3**

the close test, which tests awareness of grammar, structure and idiom the candidate is required to supply accurate, one word answers in each case.

## General comments

As in previous years candidates were appropriately prepared for this Paper and the greater majority of them tackled it well. Presentation was reasonable, although handwriting was occasionally very small and sometimes pieces of work crossed out and rewritten, which made some scripts difficult to decipher.

## Comments on specific questions

This section presented very few problems for candidates.

### **Section 1, Exercice 1**

Many candidates did extremely well in this first exercise.

### **Exercice 2**

Candidates had very few difficulties in this section and the text was generally understood well.

### **Exercice 3**

Again most candidates performed very well in this multiple choice exercise.

### **Section 2, Exercice 1**

Many candidates scored full marks on this exercise.

### **Question 23**

Some candidates thought that the brother was *fanatique de l'écologie*.

## Exercice 2

Many candidates performed well in this Exercise, but on occasions there appeared to be some misunderstanding of the **Questions**. Closer reading is recommended.

### Question 27

Some candidate wrote, *sa carrière est terminée* with no mention of football.

### Question 28

A variety of answers were given here: *il est devenu une star*, *il est entraîneur de football*, *il visite des centres de football*. This seems to suggest that candidates did not focus on reading the first paragraph to find their answer or that perhaps they ignored the future tense in *Paul visitera*.

### Question 29

Some of the wrong answers given were *d'entraîner* or *il fera d'entraîner*.

### Question 30

Some candidates wrote *dans un Centre (à Toulouse)*.

### Question 32

In some cases there was at total misunderstanding by candidates who wrote: *elles veulent jouer au foot*, suggesting that they had overlooked the phrase *très peu de filles* in the text.

### Question 34

Sometimes there was no mention of football in the answer, and some candidates just said that 'he would like to see girls as well as boys' which no other information supplied.

### Question 35

Some candidates replied *la discipline*. It seems that they had not understood the phrase *préparation physique* in the question.

### Question 36

Many candidates omitted to include *les enfants qui* or *ceux qui* in their answer and just lifted a phrase from the text.

### Question 37

Some candidates said *Sa carrière s'est terminée* but no mention of football.

### Question 38

There were a number of misunderstandings here. Many answers made mention of not having enough passion and several candidates wrote *Très peu seront sélectionnés* with no mention of *joueur professionnel*.

### Question 39

Many candidates lifted *et avec passion*, which invalidated their answer.

## Section 3

As always this exercise was accomplished with varying degrees of success. The greater majority performed reasonably well. Just a very few candidates seemed to have little or no concept of what was required and their responses were not only incorrect but also seemed to be arbitrary. A few candidates put more than one word in each gap, in spite of the instructions.

Candidates found the following **Questions** in particular problematic:

**Question 43**

Candidates often wrote *avec* instead of *sans*. Although this works grammatically, it is an illogical choice in context. Candidates are reminded that the word chosen should be appropriate both grammatically and logically.

**Question 50**

There were many different incorrect answers here. Sometimes answers were *la somme* or *total*.

**Question 51**

The imperfect was used on a number of occasions i.e. *avaient* instead of *ont*.

**Question 53**

There were many incorrect answers Often *en* or *au* was *supplied*..

**Question 54**

The answers given were often *pendant* or *pour*, instead of *depuis*.

**Question 59**

candidates appeared to find this difficult and answers given were often */es* or */eurs*.