

# FRENCH

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**Paper 8682/01**  
**Speaking**

## **Key messages**

For candidates:

- In the Presentation, it is important that candidates make reference to the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a French speaking country.
- Candidates should make every effort to express ideas and opinions in their presentation, as well as facts.
- Candidates should remember to ask questions of the Examiner in both the topic conversation and the general conversation sections.

For examiners:

- Examiners should try to keep to the timing recommended for each section of the examination.
- They should mark the change from topic conversation to general conversation.
- They should prompt candidates to ask questions in both the topic and the general conversation sections, and should remember to keep their own answers brief.
- Examiners should make sure they are familiar with the format of the examinations and the mark scheme.

## **General comments**

### **Recording and administration**

For this session, many examinations were submitted on CD; these tended to be very clear, though in fact there were few problems of audibility, whatever the format used. It would be very helpful to Moderators if Centres made sure that their CDs and cassettes were labelled with the details of the Centre and the syllabus, as well as listing the candidate details (names and numbers) in the order in which they are recorded – this helps to locate the required recordings. There are still occasions when Moderators receive unlabelled recordings and spend considerable time finding specific candidates on them .

When selecting the sample to be sent, please try to make sure that the range of marks is covered as evenly as possible – where two candidates at the top, or at the bottom of the range, have the same mark, it is preferable to send one of each of them, and choose others to represent what may be a large number of candidates in the 60 to 70 range, for example.

The paperwork submitted by Centres is generally very good, but Examiners should make sure that the addition of marks is carefully checked, together with the transfer of these marks to the final mark sheets before these are submitted.

### **Conduct of the examination: timing and format**

It is important that before beginning the examination Examiners make sure that they know the format and timings of the various sections of the examination. For each candidate, the examination should last approximately 20 minutes and should consist of

3 to 3½ minutes for the candidate to speak uninterrupted on the topic s/he has chosen for the Presentation;

7 to 8 minutes for the Topic Conversation, during which the Examiner and candidate discuss the topic of the Presentation – the candidate's questions to the Examiner should be included in this time allowance;

8 to 9 minutes of General Conversation – the candidate's questions to the Examiner should also be included in the time allowed here.

Although there are clearly 3 sections to the examination, the recording should be started at the beginning of each candidate's examination and should continue without stopping to the end for that particular candidate – the recording must not be stopped and restarted after each section.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### ***Presentation***

Candidates chose a very wide range of topics, clearly reflecting their own interests. There were fewer concerned with ecology and pollution than in previous years, and many which showed clear local connections. When choosing their topic, candidates need to remember that they are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a country where French is spoken – this does not mean that they should embark on a very general topic, such as *Les jeunes*, or *Le tourisme* and then briefly say *...et c'est la même chose en France...* They should take care to make clear they are using francophone sources, or make clear comparisons between circumstances in their own country and in France, or Canada, or Senegal. Many candidates did this very successfully, dealing with, for example, juvenile delinquency in Belgium, or French media, or sport, with particular reference to football in France, or *le tour de France*. The most popular areas this session seemed to be those concerned with social issues – the family, marriage, divorce – and technology, both in general, and with particular regard to the Internet and French versions of social networking sites.

Many candidates chose very mature subject areas and developed them well, but it is important to think about the relative “weight” of the subjects they are choosing – a number of candidates chose to deal with the topic area of food and drink, but this is often rather limited as a topic of discussion, because it tends to be rather descriptive. Candidates chose to describe the food and drink of a particular francophone area (the cheeses of France, for example, or food in the Congo) but it is not easy to make opportunities to express ideas and opinions – necessary, for a high mark for content/presentation – nor to develop any depth of conversation in the next section.

The same thing might apply to a topic such *Mes vacances en France*, where the presentation could be limited to a list of the places visited – but a candidate might go far beyond this, into a comparison of life styles in France and his/her own country and could deal with a wide range of interesting aspects. Very factual presentations are often less successful, purely because it is difficult to express ideas and opinions – it is often difficult for a candidate to develop the history of the Louvre, for example, or Marie Antoinette, past the actual dates and factual details, and it is equally difficult for Examiners to ask appropriate questions for this level of examination, where we are less concerned about factual details, and more concerned with discovering what candidates think, and whether they can express those thoughts in appropriate language.

Where candidates show signs of continuing with their presentation for longer than 3½ minutes, Examiners should interrupt and begin asking questions.

#### ***Topic Conversation***

Both this section and the next are intended to be spontaneous, unprepared conversation. The Topic Conversation should continue on the same subject as that chosen by the candidate for the first section, and should aim to develop it and discuss it, giving the candidate opportunities to give opinions and defend his or her own point of view. Questions should **not** just ask for a repetition of the same material already offered in the presentation – this has already been rewarded under the mark scheme criteria for the content/presentation – but should be asking for additional information (not necessarily factual) and using open questions rather than questions which allow a candidate to answer with yes/no.

Candidates generally had sufficient knowledge of vocabulary, given that this was conversation on a topic area they had chosen and prepared for. Examiners should be prepared to interact with candidates and react to what they say – in order for candidates to score 9 or 10 for comprehension and responsiveness, candidates must show that they are able to respond to unexpected questions – where a candidate “relies heavily on prepared responses”, the mark for comprehension and responsiveness is likely to fall in the “satisfactory” band (5 – 6). Sometimes, examinations which have been practised too often can sound very

stilted and unnatural – it is clear that candidates are well aware of the questions they will be asked, and answers have a very rehearsed quality.

This section should last some 7 to 8 minutes, and should include opportunities for candidates to ask questions of the Examiner. Examiners must prompt them to do so – there are 5 marks available in each section for the questions they ask, and to be awarded 4 marks or more, they must show that they are able to ask **more than one question**. Examiners must remember to keep their own answers to the candidate's questions short, in order to allow the candidate the maximum possible amount of time.

At the end of this section, Examiners should let the candidate know that they are now moving from the topic conversation section to the general conversation.

### **General Conversation**

The general conversation section should try to explore in some depth perhaps 3 or 4 of the topic areas of interest to the candidate, though these should be different from that chosen for the presentation. Conversation should move quickly beyond the basic level of “what do you do in your free time?” and personal or individual family details – conversation which does not go beyond this sort of topic is not appropriate to this level of examination, though clearly, candidates will not necessarily know all the vocabulary and structures they need for this sort of spontaneous conversation. Where there are a number of candidates in a Centre, Examiners should take care to vary the topics they use for general conversation, and the order in which they ask questions – candidates should not all be asked the same predictable series of questions – general conversation should depend to some extent on the interests of the candidates and their ability to maintain a conversation at a sufficiently mature level for this examination. The aim is a conversation about these topics, rather than a series of unconnected questions, where the candidate provides an answer and the Examiner moves on to something different. The Examiner must engage with the candidate and give him or her opportunities to expand and develop his/her ideas – the Examiner is not looking here for right or wrong answers, more for the candidate's ability and willingness to try to express him/herself in another language.

Once again, there are 5 marks available for the questions the candidate asks of the Examiner, so Examiners must be prepared to prompt for them and give candidates the chance to work for the marks.

### **Assessment**

Assessment was often very close to the agreed standard and for many Centres there was either no change to their marks, or a (small) adjustment across only part of the range: Examiners are to be congratulated for the attention they pay to the mark scheme and the thoughtful way in which it is generally applied.

Overall, it is impressive how well Centres and candidates from all over the world have managed to carry out the requirements of the examination.

# FRENCH

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Paper 8682/21  
Reading and Writing

## Key Messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) that fit(s) **perfectly** in the place of the one from the text/question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate the answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **b** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text).
- **Language:** when preparing for the exam make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

## General Comments

This year's paper on the theme of air pollution and the use of the horse as an environmentally friendly way of transport was of a similar standard to that of previous years and included exercises of a broad scale of difficulty to cater for the full range of candidate ability.

It was particularly pleasing to see that many candidates had time to write a plan or a rough draft for **Question 5**. These candidates had been well prepared in the techniques and requirements of the examination, as well as coached on how to manage effectively the time at their disposal. The word limit recommendation in **Question 5** was also respected better this year on the whole but some candidates still ignored the specific brief thus losing some marks.

In **Question 3 and 4**, there was still a tendency for some candidates to write unnecessarily lengthy answers, which did not always address the questions or rephrased the same points again and again. This added to the incidence of language mistakes and sometimes led the candidates to actually forget to include the correct answer. Please note that the best answers are the short, straight-to-the-point ones listing all elements of the answer within one or two phrases.

For example: **Question 3 (a):** *L'espérance de vie sera réduite (A) et le nombre de décès augmentera (B). Le manque de respect des lois (C) et la réduction de l'argent accordé aux groupes de contrôle de l'air (D) ont aggravé la situation actuelle.*

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold (specific details and examples are listed in the next section). The number of marks allocated to each question serves as a clear indicator of how many separate ideas need to be included in the answer in order to gain full marks. Candidates must also stay within the paragraph indicated in the question, even if they feel another point can be made from further down the text.

The quality of language varied greatly from some almost entirely mistake-free papers to some phonetically spelled answers with total disregard for any grammatical rules.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word within the paragraph(s) indicated in the brief, which is completely interchangeable with the words listed from (a) to (e). Consequently, nouns and adjectives will have the same gender, and the verbs will be conjugated in the same form. The question asked for *le mot*, therefore answers with a group of words lost their marks.

On the whole, this question well answered by candidates.

- (a) *Préoccupe* was found by most candidates.
- (b) This question was well answered by most candidates.
- (c) *Attribuée* was the correct answer. Some candidates selected *respectée* because they were seeking a feminine past participle used as an adjective without focusing on the meaning of the sentence.
- (d) *Moyens* was generally found with ease by many candidates. Some candidates left the question blank.
- (e) *Excessive* was also a successful answer for most candidates.

### Question 2

Candidates should remember that their answer **must** begin with the words in the bracket. They must also include all the words from the original statement, whilst manipulating the sentence to fit its new beginning, but retaining the **same** meaning. Some candidates “imported” some extra words (mostly without any reason) and changed the meaning as well as the grammar.

- (a) The main mistake was the omission of the feminine plural agreement on *accordées*. Some candidates avoided the passive voice and used the reflexive form of *préoccuper*, which was a totally acceptable alternative, as long as it was followed by *de cette situation*, and not *par cette situation*, which was needed in the passive phrase option.
- (b) The main errors resulted either from failing to see the need for a subjunctive verb or from using the wrong word order and writing a sentence meaning ‘life expectancy reduces pollution’ (*...l'espérance de vie réduit la pollution*). It was possible to continue the sentence with *espérance de vie* but a passive form had to be used to continue the sentence in order to respect the meaning: *...soit réduite de neuf mois*. Many candidates kept *réduirait* as it was in the prompt.
- (c) The beginning of the sentence demanded the use of an infinitive, which most candidates managed well. Some candidates kept *être* in the answer and a few placed the *à* in front of *une forte augmentation des décès* thereby giving rise to a sentence meaning that pollution was due to a high raise in the number of deaths!
- (d) Similarly to (a) the challenge here was to make the agreement between *affectés* and *les jeunes* when the passive form was chosen by candidates. However, some candidates avoided the passive by continuing the sentence with *que la pollution affecte*. *Atmosphérique* had to be included to respect the original meaning of the question. Some candidates stated that young people affect pollution which was not the meaning intended in the question.
- (e) In order to correspond to the sentence of the question, the answer had to include *devraient*, to echo *il faudrait*. The most common mistakes were its omission or using *devoir* in the present tense.

**Note:** some candidates added unnecessary complications in their sentences such as *on peut dire que (c)*. Candidates are advised to rephrase the sentences as closely as possible to the original given their new beginning.

### Question 3

To show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that the candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in **their own words** as stipulated in the rubric of **Question 3** and **4**. Yet many candidates (even when perfectly capable of producing such an answer) still copied the text word for word (called a **lift**), thereby losing the mark. The easiest technique to achieve marks and avoid a lift is to ask oneself if the noun has a corresponding verb or vice versa: examples will be quoted below. However, it is still essential to formulate an answer that makes sense. Some candidates can go too far in changing the vocabulary and end up with sentences that make no sense.

Where a paragraph is clearly stated, it is essential that the candidates confine their answers to it.

- (a) Four pieces of information were required for the full mark here. Most candidates managed at least one correct answer, generally point A (the reduction of life expectancy) but many candidates managed to explain all four points and avoid lifting from the text, with the use of *réduction* (from *réduirait*), *augmenter les décès* (not *augmentation*), *respecter les lois* and *diminue* (not *réduit*) to quote but a few. Occasionally candidates seem to have read the text too quickly or misunderstood, as they expressed that the state gave no money at all to the organisations, whereas the text clearly states that financial support had been reduced.
- (b) Almost all candidates found 'the use of diesel or too many car/lorries', etc. easy to spot to gain a mark for (A). However, many found expressing *combustions industrielles* quite challenging for point (B). Some candidates managed it well with answers such as *les fumées qui viennent de l'industrie* or *la pollution de l'air causée quand les industries brûlent des trucs.*(sic) To gain the final point, candidates had to express that we use too many chemicals. Most candidates managed to answer in their own words, but some missed the idea of *excessive* in the text and did not score the point.
- (c) This question was well answered in the majority of cases, and candidates often added a phrase concerning *des problèmes respiratoires*, which was another way to score (A).
- (d) Finding the answers in the text for (A) (the level of exposure / where people live: country vs town), and (C) (the age of people), presented little difficulty for most candidates. Some candidates unfortunately repeated the text unaltered and didn't score the mark. A number of candidates found the third reason (point B: *vulnérabilité naturelle*) difficult to understand. They either quoted the two words unchanged or they attributed the change simply to pollen. To gain the mark, candidates had to state that people already suffering from an existing allergy or health problem would see their problems increase. As one candidate wrote: *si on a déjà une allergie, elle sera pire*. A simple but very effective answer.
- (e) This question was seemed to be quite challenging for many candidates. Many candidates lost marks because they did not understand that there were two distinct points in the text: the more general fact that their recommendations were not followed/considered, or that the measures that followed their recommendations were too weak (A) and the more specific point that there was a motive to protect the interest of industry or that the measures controlling gas and transport emissions were not severe enough (B).

Point (C) was more successfully handled and lots of candidates used their own words to express the idea clearly.

### Questions 4

Candidates generally found this text slightly more challenging than the previous text and the incidence of lifts was higher. Candidates who had received a solid preparation for this type of exercise and knew how to distance their answers from the words used in the text did really well as opposed to candidates who just copied entire phrases of the text.

- (a) This was a very straight forward question, mostly well understood. It was pleasing to see one better candidate write *les chevaux transportent les touristes en calèche pour visiter la ville* (A). *Collecter* became *ramasser* as a good indicator of understanding and the candidate who knew *tondre* managed to say *les chevaux aident de (sic) tondre l'herbe*. Despite their physical impossibilities, phrases like *les chevaux collectent les déchets/ ramassent les ordures* or *tirent les*

*tondeuses* were awarded the points as they were seen as efforts to express the ideas in the candidates' own words.

- (b) To answer this question successfully candidates needed to understand that a study had to be carried out to establish if the project could be technically possible. One excellent answer was: *il faut savoir si le projet est possible au niveau technique* (A). The majority of candidates understood the second point and explained that the level of risk for the children has to be defined. Again it was a pity to see some candidates with strong linguistic ability copy the phrase from the text when they could have written: *on doit trouver les dangers potentiels pour les enfants* (B). The third item was the most challenging with *circuit* often misunderstood as a shift for the horse to work.
- (c) This question represented a high level of correct answers with more attempts to rephrase and the two points clearly made. A common error was that the *équibus* had given people some transport from village to village.
- (d) Candidates found points (A) and (D) most easily, although some expressed more carbon being released rather than less. Points (B) and (C) were often lifted from the text, even though it could have been avoided with two phrases such as *les chevaux coûtent moins cher* (B) and *les chevaux sont préservés* (C).
- (e) This question was answered well by most candidates, a fair amount of lifting was also evident. Using *le transport* (A) et *le ramassage* (B) were good choices to avoid a lift.

### Question 5

- (a) The mark scheme lists 16 points which could score points (7 causes and advantages and 9 benefits of using a horse). The majority of candidates identified at least 5, with many finding 8, 9 or 10. Candidates are reminded that they need to state 10 clear points and that no extra marks are gained for providing multiple details about the same idea or reformulating it in several ways.
- (b) Candidates had clearly studied the environmental issues in class and many interesting ideas were expressed such as *il faut planter plus d'arbres pour avoir meilleur oxygène* or *on doit construire les industries quand il y a moins de densité de la population (sic)*. Many candidates would like to see more taxes for the culprits of pollution and one candidate even wrote *je veux interdire toutes les industries!*

### Quality of language

Top candidates used excellent vocabulary, a wide range of verbs and tenses and impressive sentence structures. At the lower end of the scale in some cases basic plural agreements were missing and often sentences were unintelligible as candidates were struggling with limits of their French knowledge.

The most common mistakes were:

- Negatives in one part only: *la pollution affete pas*
- Misspelling of words issued from the text: *les cheveux, les cheveaux*
- Incorrect or absent agreement: *les lois ne sont pas repecté*
- Verb endings: *on utilsent, ils souffres, les chevaux collects*
- Many « anglicismes »: *dépend sur, transportation, les infants, l'ashma, un project, on doit save les animaux*
- Wrong connective word: *accepte à changer*
- Gender confusions: *une problème, un solution*

# FRENCH

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### Question 5

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- (b) Candidates had clearly studied the environmental issues in class and many interesting ideas were expressed such as *il faut planter plus d'arbres pour avoir meilleur oxygène* or *on doit construire les industries quand il y a moins de densité de la population (sic)*. Many candidates would like to see more taxes for the culprits of pollution and one candidate even wrote *je veux interdire toutes les industries!*

### Quality of language

Top candidates used excellent vocabulary, a wide range of verbs and tenses and impressive sentence structures. At the lower end of the scale in some cases basic plural agreements were missing and often sentences were unintelligible as candidates were struggling with limits of their French knowledge.

The most common mistakes were:

- Negatives in one part only: *la pollution affete pas*
- Misspelling of words issued from the text: *les cheveux, les cheveaux*
- Incorrect or absent agreement: *les lois ne sont pas repecté*
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- Many « anglicismes »: *dépend sur, transportation, les infants, l'ashma, un project, on doit save les animaux*
- Wrong connective word: *accepte à changer*
- Gender confusions: *une problème, un solution*

# FRENCH

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Paper 8682/23  
Reading and Writing

## Key Messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) that fit(s) **perfectly** in the place of the one from the text/question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate the answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **b** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text).
- **Language:** when preparing for the exam make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

## General Comments

This year's paper on the theme of air pollution and the use of the horse as an environmentally friendly way of transport was of a similar standard to that of previous years and included exercises of a broad scale of difficulty to cater for the full range of candidate ability.

It was particularly pleasing to see that many candidates had time to write a plan or a rough draft for **Question 5**. These candidates had been well prepared in the techniques and requirements of the examination, as well as coached on how to manage effectively the time at their disposal. The word limit recommendation in **Question 5** was also respected better this year on the whole but some candidates still ignored the specific brief thus losing some marks.

In **Question 3 and 4**, there was still a tendency for some candidates to write unnecessarily lengthy answers, which did not always address the questions or rephrased the same points again and again. This added to the incidence of language mistakes and sometimes led the candidates to actually forget to include the correct answer. Please note that the best answers are the short, straight-to-the-point ones listing all elements of the answer within one or two phrases.

For example: **Question 3 (a):** *L'espérance de vie sera réduite (A) et le nombre de décès augmentera (B). Le manque de respect des lois (C) et la réduction de l'argent accordé aux groupes de contrôle de l'air (D) ont aggravé la situation actuelle.*

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold (specific details and examples are listed in the next section). The number of marks allocated to each question serves as a clear indicator of how many separate ideas need to be included in the answer in order to gain full marks. Candidates must also stay within the paragraph indicated in the question, even if they feel another point can be made from further down the text.

The quality of language varied greatly from some almost entirely mistake-free papers to some phonetically spelled answers with total disregard for any grammatical rules.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word within the paragraph(s) indicated in the brief, which is completely interchangeable with the words listed from (a) to (e). Consequently, nouns and adjectives will have the same gender, and the verbs will be conjugated in the same form. The question asked for **le mot**, therefore answers with a group of words lost their marks.

On the whole, this question well answered by candidates.

- (a) *Préoccupe* was found by most candidates.
- (b) This question was well answered by most candidates.
- (c) *Attribuée* was the correct answer. Some candidates selected *respectée* because they were seeking a feminine past participle used as an adjective without focusing on the meaning of the sentence.
- (d) *Moyens* was generally found with ease by many candidates. Some candidates left the question blank.
- (e) *Excessive* was also a successful answer for most candidates.

### Question 2

Candidates should remember that their answer **must** begin with the words in the bracket. They must also include all the words from the original statement, whilst manipulating the sentence to fit its new beginning, but retaining the **same** meaning. Some candidates “imported” some extra words (mostly without any reason) and changed the meaning as well as the grammar.

- (a) The main mistake was the omission of the feminine plural agreement on *accordées*. Some candidates avoided the passive voice and used the reflexive form of *préoccuper*, which was a totally acceptable alternative, as long as it was followed by *de cette situation*, and not *par cette situation*, which was needed in the passive phrase option.
- (b) The main errors resulted either from failing to see the need for a subjunctive verb or from using the wrong word order and writing a sentence meaning ‘life expectancy reduces pollution’ (*...l'espérance de vie réduit la pollution*). It was possible to continue the sentence with *espérance de vie* but a passive form had to be used to continue the sentence in order to respect the meaning: *...soit réduite de neuf mois*. Many candidates kept *réduirait* as it was in the prompt.
- (c) The beginning of the sentence demanded the use of an infinitive, which most candidates managed well. Some candidates kept *être* in the answer and a few placed the *à* in front of *une forte augmentation des décès* thereby giving rise to a sentence meaning that pollution was due to a high raise in the number of deaths!
- (d) Similarly to (a) the challenge here was to make the agreement between *affectés* and *les jeunes* when the passive form was chosen by candidates. However, some candidates avoided the passive by continuing the sentence with *que la pollution affecte*. *Atmosphérique* had to be included to respect the original meaning of the question. Some candidates stated that young people affect pollution which was not the meaning intended in the question.
- (e) In order to correspond to the sentence of the question, the answer had to include *devraient*, to echo *il faudrait*. The most common mistakes were its omission or using *devoir* in the present tense.

**Note:** some candidates added unnecessary complications in their sentences such as *on peut dire que (c)*. Candidates are advised to rephrase the sentences as closely as possible to the original given their new beginning.

### Question 3

To show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that the candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in **their own words** as stipulated in the rubric of **Question 3** and **4**. Yet many candidates (even when perfectly capable of producing such an answer) still copied the text word for word (called a **lift**), thereby losing the mark. The easiest technique to achieve marks and avoid a lift is to ask oneself if the noun has a corresponding verb or vice versa: examples will be quoted below. However, it is still essential to formulate an answer that makes sense. Some candidates can go too far in changing the vocabulary and end up with sentences that make no sense.

Where a paragraph is clearly stated, it is essential that the candidates confine their answers to it.

- (a) Four pieces of information were required for the full mark here. Most candidates managed at least one correct answer, generally point A (the reduction of life expectancy) but many candidates managed to explain all four points and avoid lifting from the text, with the use of *réduction* (from *réduirait*), *augmenter les décès* (not *augmentation*), *respecter les lois* and *diminue* (not *réduit*) to quote but a few. Occasionally candidates seem to have read the text too quickly or misunderstood, as they expressed that the state gave no money at all to the organisations, whereas the text clearly states that financial support had been reduced.
- (b) Almost all candidates found 'the use of diesel or too many car/lorries', etc. easy to spot to gain a mark for (A). However, many found expressing *combustions industrielles* quite challenging for point (B). Some candidates managed it well with answers such as *les fumées qui viennent de l'industrie* or *la pollution de l'air causée quand les industries brûlent des trucs.*(sic) To gain the final point, candidates had to express that we use too many chemicals. Most candidates managed to answer in their own words, but some missed the idea of *excessive* in the text and did not score the point.
- (c) This question was well answered in the majority of cases, and candidates often added a phrase concerning *des problèmes respiratoires*, which was another way to score (A).
- (d) Finding the answers in the text for (A) (the level of exposure / where people live: country vs town), and (C) (the age of people), presented little difficulty for most candidates. Some candidates unfortunately repeated the text unaltered and didn't score the mark. A number of candidates found the third reason (point B: *vulnérabilité naturelle*) difficult to understand. They either quoted the two words unchanged or they attributed the change simply to pollen. To gain the mark, candidates had to state that people already suffering from an existing allergy or health problem would see their problems increase. As one candidate wrote: *si on a déjà une allergie, elle sera pire*. A simple but very effective answer.
- (e) This question was seemed to be quite challenging for many candidates. Many candidates lost marks because they did not understand that there were two distinct points in the text: the more general fact that their recommendations were not followed/considered, or that the measures that followed their recommendations were too weak (A) and the more specific point that there was a motive to protect the interest of industry or that the measures controlling gas and transport emissions were not severe enough (B).

Point (C) was more successfully handled and lots of candidates used their own words to express the idea clearly.

### Questions 4

Candidates generally found this text slightly more challenging than the previous text and the incidence of lifts was higher. Candidates who had received a solid preparation for this type of exercise and knew how to distance their answers from the words used in the text did really well as opposed to candidates who just copied entire phrases of the text.

- (a) This was a very straight forward question, mostly well understood. It was pleasing to see one better candidate write *les chevaux transportent les touristes en calèche pour visiter la ville* (A). *Collecter* became *ramasser* as a good indicator of understanding and the candidate who knew *tondre* managed to say *les chevaux aident de (sic) tondre l'herbe*. Despite their physical impossibilities, phrases like *les chevaux collectent les déchets/ ramassent les ordures* or *tirent les*

*tondeuses* were awarded the points as they were seen as efforts to express the ideas in the candidates' own words.

- (b) To answer this question successfully candidates needed to understand that a study had to be carried out to establish if the project could be technically possible. One excellent answer was: *il faut savoir si le projet est possible au niveau technique* (A). The majority of candidates understood the second point and explained that the level of risk for the children has to be defined. Again it was a pity to see some candidates with strong linguistic ability copy the phrase from the text when they could have written: *on doit trouver les dangers potentiels pour les enfants* (B). The third item was the most challenging with *circuit* often misunderstood as a shift for the horse to work.
- (c) This question represented a high level of correct answers with more attempts to rephrase and the two points clearly made. A common error was that the *équibus* had given people some transport from village to village.
- (d) Candidates found points (A) and (D) most easily, although some expressed more carbon being released rather than less. Points (B) and (C) were often lifted from the text, even though it could have been avoided with two phrases such as *les chevaux coûtent moins cher* (B) and *les chevaux sont préservés* (C).
- (e) This question was answered well by most candidates, a fair amount of lifting was also evident. Using *le transport* (A) et *le ramassage* (B) were good choices to avoid a lift.

### Question 5

- (a) The mark scheme lists 16 points which could score points (7 causes and advantages and 9 benefits of using a horse). The majority of candidates identified at least 5, with many finding 8, 9 or 10. Candidates are reminded that they need to state 10 clear points and that no extra marks are gained for providing multiple details about the same idea or reformulating it in several ways.
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The most common mistakes were:

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# FRENCH

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Paper 8682/31

Essay

## Key Messages

In order to perform well on this paper, candidates need to select a title with which they feel comfortable and write a response that is clearly relevant, well illustrated and coherently structured. The use of French should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. Sentence patterns should show some evidence of complexity and the style should be easy to follow.

## General Comments

The paper followed the usual pattern: candidates were given a choice of 5 titles, 24 of the 40 marks available being awarded for quality of language and 16 for content. Though fewer in number than in previous years, the best essays were well constructed and fluently argued, they put forward a balanced viewpoint with a range of points in support of both sides of the argument, they were at pains to provide exemplification and there was a conclusion commensurate with the material adduced in the body of the piece. In less good work, there remains a tendency for opening paragraphs to reel through memorised generic definition-centred material which adds little or nothing to the discussion. Candidates would be better advised, after due analysis and planning, to plunge straight into the salient issue or issues highlighted in the title. Many candidates seem to have difficulty in honing a satisfactory concluding paragraph that synthesises the various strands of their essay. In a fair number of cases, concluding remarks are absent and the essay comes to an abrupt halt, while in others the conclusion either fails to target the title set or the candidate simply repeats, often using exactly the same words, what he/she has already said. Candidates would do well to give more thought to the need to provide a succinct and well-targeted conclusion that avoids these pitfalls.

The best essays were characterised by a very sound grasp of grammar, a wide and precise vocabulary and the use of complex sentence patterns. In spite of quite a few lapses, a significant proportion of the work submitted read quite well and there was a conscious attempt to deploy a variety of vocabulary and structures which was rewarded. Less good essays tended to be simple, awkward or laboured: in particular, there was a tendency to use the same noun repeatedly in close proximity when it would have made for far better reading to use pronouns and synonyms. Lack of care in the matter of concordances also proved costly in quite a lot of essays, pointing to the importance of systematic checking. In weaker scripts, many of the linguistic errors highlighted in recent reports were endemic. Other recurrent linguistic features noted included:

- errors in sequence of tenses, especially with *si* clauses
- the use of *cela* in place of a gender-specific pronoun
- the overuse of *personnes/individus* where *gens* is more natural
- *faire* used for *rendre*
- use of the subjunctive instead of an infinitive when the subject is the same in both clauses, e.g. *ils travaillent afin qu'ils puissent gagner de l'argent*
- confusion between the past participle and the infinitive, especially in the case of *-er* verbs
- confusion between words where a discriminating accent changes the meaning, e.g. *ou/où, a/à*
- slips in register, e.g. *pas mal de, plein de, mec, télé, truc, nul (= sans intérêt)*
- *plusieurs* used instead of *nombreux/beaucoup de*
- use of *auparavant* for *autrefois*, *quelque part* for *jusqu'à un certain point*, *sans doute* for *certainement/sans aucun doute*
- use of *à travers* for *au moyen de*, e.g. *se faire de l'argent à travers le sport*
- use of *penser si/réfléchir si/s'interroger si* for *se demander si*
- overuse of *avec* to introduce a phrase before a main clause, e.g. *Avec la technologie moderne, cela encourage les gens à être paresseux.*



## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

This proved to be a popular choice and, in terms of quality, the essays submitted spanned the whole range. The need for perspective here was paramount. The more mediocre and weak scripts confined themselves to a list of the various sorts of family and what often read like a pre-prepared section on the role of the family in society, thus neglecting the prime focus of the title, namely the prospect of marrying, having children and anticipating and shouldering the burden of new responsibilities. A certain number of scripts showed misunderstanding of the word *entreprise* and consequently expanded on the problems of reconciling work and family life. Vocabulary presented few problems, apart from the use of *grandir un enfant* for *élever un enfant*. Additionally, *le couple* was frequently followed by a plural verb form. The best scripts outlined the various pitfalls involved in setting up a family both in material and interpersonal terms and a whole raft of points was made. The starting point for many was the impossibility of knowing one's prospective partner so well as to be able to predict with absolute certainty how he/she will behave once married: how many have got married only to discover that they are living with an alcoholic, a drug addict, a philanderer or a person with a predisposition to violence? Moreover, before taking the decision to get married and start a family, the prospective husband and wife would do well to ponder on the ever-increasing divorce rate and the reasons why that rate is so high. They need to understand and accept from the outset that marriage and family life will not always be easy and that they will need to be able to draw on reserves of understanding, tolerance, self-sacrifice and determination if the enterprise into which they are about to launch themselves is going to succeed. Family life implies responsibilities which restrict the freedom of parents to do as they please. In particular, they must refrain from the sorts of behaviour that would set a bad example to children, e.g. smoking, taking drugs, excessive alcohol consumption. Parenthood carries with it too heavy financial responsibilities: parents need to be able to supply the means to provide the family with somewhere to live, to ensure that the home is properly heated, to provide food and clothing, to pay for their children's educational and recreational needs. This will often require a certain amount of self-sacrifice on their part, and they must also bear in mind that there is no certainty that they will not fall victim to the sort of compulsory redundancies that have become an increasingly common feature of the world of work. In deciding to have children, parents must also be prepared to assume a vital educational role. The educational process begins in the home and it is their job to inculcate moral and civic values in their offspring. Not least, we live in a world where the dangers that lie in wait for young people – drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual predators, sexually transmitted diseases – are such that parents need to exercise not only great vigilance but also tact and circumspection in educating and arming their children against such scourges. Parents are faced too with the very considerable problem of making themselves sufficiently available to their children. This is a particular headache in the large proportion of families where it is necessary that both parents work in order to ensure an income sufficient to provide for the family needs. The dangers implicit in inadequate parental attention and guidance are plain for all to see: delinquency, psychological problems, failure at school, drug and alcohol addiction. Nor should it be forgotten that family life generates conflict – brothers and sisters have different tastes, one's choice is not that of his/her sibling(s), one thinks that he/she is being unfairly treated etc. etc. – and great patience and tact are needed on the part of parents to try to ensure that fair and equitable decisions are arrived at and that harmony wins through. However, notwithstanding all of the sweat and tears involved, many concluded that the satisfaction derived by parents when they see their offspring succeed first at school, then at university and then in their working and their own family lives makes it all worth it.

### Question 2

Not many candidates opted for this title. A number had difficulty in distinguishing between the law and the agents of law enforcement, *l'ordre public* being taken to mean the police or the army, whereas the concept of individual freedom was more felicitously explained and illustrated with reference to current affairs. Reconciling the two proved to be the major stumbling block but there were some successful attempts. Some essays began by pointing out that if everyone had the right to act as they wish with no laws, then society would descend into chaos and anarchy. Rules and laws enforced by the police and the judiciary keep individuals and society in order. Civil liberties groups complain about Big Brother tactics – CCTV cameras, ID checks, the application of stop and search restrictions during public demonstrations and marches. However, the recent riots in the UK and those that shook France a few years ago illustrated what can happen when public order breaks down and individuals come together into groups to indulge in violent and criminal behaviour, demonstrating that if one wishes to live peacefully in an orderly society one must accept some limitations of personal liberty. In a democratic society, the guiding principle of government and law-makers legislating on matters of public order must always be the greater good of the majority which will perforce mean the curtailment of the freedoms of some for the good of all. A number of candidates pointed out that we do enjoy certain freedoms in democratic societies, e.g. freedom of speech, but that there must

always be caveats designed to protect social harmony: homophobic, anti-semitic and racist remarks and remarks calculated to inspire hatred are all outlawed. We can express our disapproval by marching or demonstrating but the law will intervene if a certain line is crossed and the march or demonstration is in danger of becoming a riot. Nor is it necessarily the maintenance of order itself that clashes with individual freedom but more the methods used. It sometimes happens, for example, that individual freedom is curtailed by the over-zealous maintenance of law and order or suppression of dissent, e.g. kettling and other tactics employed by the riot police. Another pertinent observation made was that the balance between the protection of individual liberties and the maintenance of order is especially difficult during times of crisis, e.g. in the face of terrorist threats, war and even, as has been demonstrated in recent times in certain Eurozone countries, national economic disaster. Fear of such threats and of crime and civil unrest sometimes leads people readily to accept restrictions; the greater the fear, the greater the readiness to accept curtailments of liberties. By way of a conclusion, a few essays stressed the need to strike a balance between individual freedom on the one hand and a society that functions smoothly on the other. Such a balance is achieved more or less well in a number of democratic countries (e.g. the Scandinavian countries, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Mauritius) where individual citizens feel, as they need to, that they enjoy some measure of control. Hence the importance of such things as democratic elections, consultations on all matters of local and national importance, laws allowing demonstrations and marches within reason and also freedom of the press which enables people to put forward opposing and even anarchic viewpoints and to express anti-establishment sentiments without fear of prosecution.

### Question 3

This was another very popular choice. Many candidates were able to make the distinction between sport in its amateur manifestation and professional sport. Too many, however, were sidetracked into listing the health benefits of sport to the detriment of a discussion of the arguably pernicious role of money in professional sport. The best scripts presented a broad range of considerations and many reached reasoned and measured conclusions. In many of the essays submitted, there was no lack of pertinent exemplification and this often made for very good essays indeed. Vocabulary again presented few problems, though two items that featured widely were *fixer un match* and *pratiquer le sport*. Many began with a rehearsal of the time-honoured values of sport that have been held aloft by sportsmen of all creeds and colours down the generations – fair play, self-discipline, mutual respect, loyalty and solidarity. These, it was posited, are being increasingly eroded, and the principal culprit is money. For sport has become highly commercialised. For commercial reasons, industrial and other corporate concerns provide sponsorship to clubs and individuals alike, and this puts great pressure on the clubs and individuals concerned to perform at a level which will win the approval and thereby the continued backing of their corporate partners, not infrequently resulting in the use of tactics that go completely against the sporting ethos: cases of violence on the pitch and of the detection of illicit substances in the blood of athletes are reported by the media with alarming frequency. The lure of personal financial gain also engenders corruption in sport. Bribes are paid to people in high office in the sporting world to ensure that a major sporting event is held in one country rather than in any of the other postulant venues. Fuelled by the scourge of betting, cases of match fixing in sports ranging from football to boxing to cricket to tennis occur with increasing regularity and, despite their condemnation and the disciplinary measures taken when a scandal makes the headlines, the sporting regulatory bodies concerned fail to take the concerted action necessary to eradicate the corrupt practices exposed. The intervention of multi-millionaires and even billionaires, particularly as far as football is concerned, means that, metaphorically speaking, the playing field is no longer level. Such individuals buy football clubs and then use their money to enable the clubs in question to offer transfer fees and contracts which ensure that they have a monopoly of the top players. Many of their rivals competing in the same league and who do not enjoy such backing do not stand a chance against such competition: fair play has been ousted by the power of money. However, the picture is not entirely negative. The very substantial influx of money into the domain of sport in recent years has ensured a dramatic improvement in the standard of sporting infrastructures – cities and towns all over the world can boast new stadiums, swimming pools, gymnasiums and other sporting facilities thanks to this money – which in turn has led to a much greater level of spectator interest as well as greater individual participation in the sports that have benefited. On another tack, in days prior to the advent of sponsorship in the world of sport, most sportsmen had to support themselves and their families by taking jobs in other domains. However, sponsorship means that they do not have to do this and, as a result, are able to channel all their energies into improving their performance. Moreover, they have at their disposal all manner of facilities that would have previously been unthinkable, witness expensive training apparatus and equipment, physiotherapists and even specialised sporting psychologists. Money is a great motivating factor for sportsmen to excel and thereby win the coveted prizes. It was suggested that it is the two factors combined – the advent of sponsorship and the lure of the very substantial monetary prizes on offer – which go a long way to explain the large number of new sporting prodigies who have emerged in recent times. Commercialisation and the construction of new infrastructures have engendered much greater spectator interest as well as individual participation in sport, which in turn have given a great boost to the economy at

both local and national levels. The sporting industry has created new jobs and wealth: the construction industry, manufacturing industry, the service sector and media concerns have all benefited. Major sporting events are a great opportunity too for the local economy: the thousands of people who are attracted to such events spend money on food and transportation and often on tourist and other recreational activities. Money, moreover, may fuel such scourges as the use of illicit substances amongst sportsmen but it has also been a major factor in efforts to eradicate that and other ills afflicting the world of sport. Scientists have, for example, been given the resources to develop sophisticated technological devices that can detect even the smallest traces of a drug present in an athlete's body. Highly sophisticated camera systems have been developed and installed at major sporting venues to help with the task of crowd control and give a boost to the fight against hooliganism. Thanks to the means put at their disposal, they have also been able to develop ways of ensuring fair play in cases where referees and umpires may have made errors of judgement, witness the "Hawk Eye" system in place at Wimbledon and similar systems that are in the process of being installed at major football venues to be used when, as in the famous incident during the 2010 World Cup, there is a dispute as to whether a goal has really been scored. The conclusion of many was that we need to ensure that money is at the service of sport and that it is not allowed to become its guiding principle since, when that does happen, the whole sporting ethos is seen to crumble.

#### Question 4

This title came in fourth place based on the number of candidates who opted for it. A good number of those who did had a clear understanding of recent moves in many countries to raise the retirement age in the light of increased life expectancy and the current financial crises. Equally, many showed a commendable ability not only to consider the prospect from their own point of view but also to project themselves into the mind-set of those some decades older than themselves. As a result, pertinent reference was made to a wide range of considerations. The starting point for many was the fact that, thanks to a whole raft of factors, people live longer and, as a corollary, want to be active for longer: continuing to work not only helps them stay fit and mentally alert but it also makes them feel useful and wards off the sort of feelings of social exclusion that induce depression and that, in some cases, might even contribute to propelling them to an early grave. Moreover, many people who arrive at the age of 65 are still very fit and active and, in the absence of adequate pension provision, need to continue to work to be able to fund the lifestyle that will enable them to remain fit and active. Too many elderly people who have, for whatever reason, to stop working find that they do not have sufficient means to eat as well as they did when they were earning, to provide themselves with the level of heating and other comforts that they had previously enjoyed and to indulge in the leisure activities that have hitherto been their passion and source of stimulation. Quite a serious blow is thereby often dealt within a relatively short space of time to both their physical and mental state. It needs also to be borne in mind that it helps the state and thereby hard-pressed taxpayers if large numbers of old people are able to continue to work and support themselves rather than rely on state-funded pensions and other benefits such as help with their heating bills and free transportation. Also beneficial to the state is the fact that, by continuing to work and thereby remaining fit and mentally alert, elderly people will be less prone to illnesses requiring medical treatment. Elderly people, moreover, have a mine of experience gleaned in the course of their working lives, and their continued presence in the workplace will mean that they will be able to share that experience with younger members of the workforce, making thereby for greater efficiency. Notwithstanding, there are a significant number of factors which support the counter view, notably that people should not work beyond the age of 60 or, at maximum, 65. Not least, many people have long looked forward to the moment when they can stop working and start to enjoy all the benefits that retirement brings with it, e.g. more time for leisure activities and less stress. Suddenly to force them to work longer will be a serious blow to many which could have more or less serious consequences for their mental state and, as a result, affect their performance in the workplace. It is also generally accepted that, notwithstanding many people's desire to continue working and thereby – as they see it – remain fit and mentally alert, the longer a person works and is subject to the physical demands and/or the stress of the workplace, the shorter his/her life expectancy. Equally pertinent is the fact that beyond a certain age, many people's physical and mental capacities begin to decline and they also tend to be less adaptable and less open to new ideas. This might well pose problems in the workplace if they were still working and, what's more, would mean that when they did finally retire, they would not be in a position to derive as much enjoyment from many of the benefits usually associated with retirement (e.g. travel, family outings, more time for leisure activities) as if they had retired earlier. A consideration that was to the fore in many essays was the fact that the longer one allows elderly people to continue working, the less openings for the younger generation. Unemployment among young people is already at record highs in both developed and developing countries and delaying the retirement age will only make matters worse, increasing the incidence of despondency and often despair that prevails among cohorts of young people unable to find jobs and who feel that all their hard work at school and university have been in vain. Many essays arrived at the conclusion that people should have choice and that there should be no statutory retirement age. A pension should be available to anyone who has reached the age of 60 and who wishes to retire but, equally, those who wish to carry on working should be free to do

so, though subject to certain conditions designed to protect both employee and employer and, not least, the young. Given the urgent need to provide a stimulus to youth employment, there needs to be a cap on the number of hours they are allowed to work.

### Question 5

This was the third most popular question. Unfortunately, many candidates saw it as an excuse to unveil everything they knew or thought about either technology or indeed, specifically, the television, the car, the mobile phone and the computer (listed in the title, incidentally, for the purpose of exemplification). Only the better scripts showed an understanding of WHY a person might wish to adopt a lifestyle unfettered by technology, and of the advantages AS WELL AS the disadvantages of so doing. Some introductions went straight to the heart of the matter: their authors took an objective stance, and pointed out that though not tempted by the same extreme reaction, many people do feel a certain solidarity with and even possibly a certain sneaking, tacit admiration for the lifestyle advocated and observed by the ever-increasing number of environmental activists passionately concerned about the damage being wrought by man's thoughtless and selfish disregard for the ecological problems that beset the world. They eschew all the paraphernalia and gadgets of modern technology, deeming quite correctly that their manufacture is a source of pollution, their usage is a source of yet further pollution and their disposal, when they have reached the end of their life, presents even more serious problems of pollution. Such a way of life, moreover, would have very tangible economic advantages. Not only would there be no initial capital outlay to purchase a car, a television, a computer, a mobile phone or whatever, but a further considerable saving would be made on fuel, insurance, taxation and repair costs in the case of a car, on electricity and software costs in the case of a television and a computer, and on call costs in the case of a mobile phone. There would also be obvious benefits for health. Cycling or walking are far healthier options than the use of motorised transportation, likewise engaging in less sedentary activities as opposed to watching television and sitting at a computer. Moreover, someone doing without a mobile phone would be far less exposed to the dangerous rays that have been repeatedly linked by experts with various types of cancer. Social advantages would also accrue. Not only young people but also adults tend to spend excessive amounts of time watching television and sitting at their computers. Doing away with such gadgets would make for more cohesive bonds within the family: there would be more communication between parents and children who would be free to spend much more time together and to engage in pursuits which bring them together rather than isolate them as computers do. Equally, children would not fall into the snares laid by video games and social networking sites and would, as a result, have the opportunity to develop social skills and self-confidence which are stifled in their computer-addicted counterparts. The risks run and, in an increasing number of cases, the actual harm done, especially to children but also to adults, as a result of exposure to certain television programmes and certain computer games and Internet sites, would be obviated. Children would not be exposed to the violence and pornography that are a major scourge of the audio-visual media and they would not run the risk of encountering sexual predators masquerading under a fictitious identity on social networking sites. Nor would their parents risk being ensnared in one of the myriad of scams operating via the Internet. Notwithstanding, however convincing such a *plaidoyer* may sound, the drawbacks are clear for all to see and, indeed, many weaker candidates listed only the drawbacks. At the most basic level, to eschew the fruits of technology would be to deprive oneself of the time and labour saving devices that are generally accepted as raising living standards, not least by making it possible for an individual to spend more time pursuing passions and activities that he/she finds stimulating and enriching. Similarly, to turn one's back on all the various forms of transportation that are responsible for atmospheric pollution has highly restrictive implications at several levels. Not least, one's choice of work is restricted to what is on offer within walking or cycling distance of home and, moreover, the job must not involve any long-distance travel (or, presumably, for that matter, working with computers). Moreover, overseas holidays or even holidays in not so far-flung destinations but ones only accessible by car, train or bus are ruled out. Communication with the outside world and with family members and friends who do not live locally will perforce be problematic without the use of mobile phones and computers, to say nothing of emergency situations when the mobile phone really comes into its own and so often saves the day. To banish computers and the television is to banish two invaluable educational tools and means of cultural enrichment. When it came to the matter of a conclusion, many candidates ignored the question posed by the title – *Que pensez-vous de cette façon de vivre?* However, a succinct and pertinent conclusion quite often arrived at by those who had looked at both sides of the question was that they could not envisage life without the benefits of modern technology but equally they appreciated the dangers posed to both themselves and the environment of becoming a slave to it. *A consommer avec modération!*

# FRENCH

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Paper 8682/32

Essay

## Key Messages

In order to perform well on this paper, candidates need to select a title with which they feel comfortable and write a response that is clearly relevant, well illustrated and coherently structured. The use of French should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. Sentence patterns should show some evidence of complexity and the style should be easy to follow.

## General Comments

The paper followed the usual pattern: candidates were given a choice of 5 titles, 24 of the 40 marks available being awarded for quality of language and 16 for content. Though fewer in number than in previous years, the best essays were well constructed and fluently argued, they put forward a balanced viewpoint with a range of points in support of both sides of the argument, they were at pains to provide exemplification and there was a conclusion commensurate with the material adduced in the body of the piece. In less good work, there remains a tendency for opening paragraphs to reel through memorised generic definition-centred material which adds little or nothing to the discussion. Candidates would be better advised, after due analysis and planning, to plunge straight into the salient issue or issues highlighted in the title. Many candidates seem to have difficulty in honing a satisfactory concluding paragraph that synthesises the various strands of their essay. In a fair number of cases, concluding remarks are absent and the essay comes to an abrupt halt, while in others the conclusion either fails to target the title set or the candidate simply repeats, often using exactly the same words, what he/she has already said. Candidates would do well to give more thought to the need to provide a succinct and well-targeted conclusion that avoids these pitfalls.

The best essays were characterised by a very sound grasp of grammar, a wide and precise vocabulary and the use of complex sentence patterns. In spite of quite a few lapses, a significant proportion of the work submitted read quite well and there was a conscious attempt to deploy a variety of vocabulary and structures which was rewarded. Less good essays tended to be simple, awkward or laboured: in particular, there was a tendency to use the same noun repeatedly in close proximity when it would have made for far better reading to use pronouns and synonyms. Lack of care in the matter of concordances also proved costly in quite a lot of essays, pointing to the importance of systematic checking. In weaker scripts, many of the linguistic errors highlighted in recent reports were endemic. Other recurrent linguistic features noted included:

- errors in sequence of tenses, especially with *si* clauses
- the use of *cela* in place of a gender-specific pronoun
- the overuse of *personnes/individus* where *gens* is more natural
- *faire* used for *rendre*
- use of the subjunctive instead of an infinitive when the subject is the same in both clauses, e.g. *ils travaillent afin qu'ils puissent gagner de l'argent*
- confusion between the past participle and the infinitive, especially in the case of *-er* verbs
- confusion between words where a discriminating accent changes the meaning, e.g. *ou/où, a/à*
- slips in register, e.g. *pas mal de, plein de, mec, télé, truc, nul (= sans intérêt)*
- *plusieurs* used instead of *nombreux/beaucoup de*
- use of *auparavant* for *autrefois*, *quelque part* for *jusqu'à un certain point*, *sans doute* for *certainement/sans aucun doute*
- use of *à travers* for *au moyen de*, e.g. *se faire de l'argent à travers le sport*
- use of *penser si/réfléchir si/s'interroger si* for *se demander si*
- overuse of *avec* to introduce a phrase before a main clause, e.g. *Avec la technologie moderne, cela encourage les gens à être paresseux.*

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

This proved to be a popular choice and, in terms of quality, the essays submitted spanned the whole range. The need for perspective here was paramount. The more mediocre and weak scripts confined themselves to a list of the various sorts of family and what often read like a pre-prepared section on the role of the family in society, thus neglecting the prime focus of the title, namely the prospect of marrying, having children and anticipating and shouldering the burden of new responsibilities. A certain number of scripts showed misunderstanding of the word *entreprise* and consequently expanded on the problems of reconciling work and family life. Vocabulary presented few problems, apart from the use of *grandir un enfant* for *élever un enfant*. Additionally, *le couple* was frequently followed by a plural verb form. The best scripts outlined the various pitfalls involved in setting up a family both in material and interpersonal terms and a whole raft of points was made. The starting point for many was the impossibility of knowing one's prospective partner so well as to be able to predict with absolute certainty how he/she will behave once married: how many have got married only to discover that they are living with an alcoholic, a drug addict, a philanderer or a person with a predisposition to violence? Moreover, before taking the decision to get married and start a family, the prospective husband and wife would do well to ponder on the ever-increasing divorce rate and the reasons why that rate is so high. They need to understand and accept from the outset that marriage and family life will not always be easy and that they will need to be able to draw on reserves of understanding, tolerance, self-sacrifice and determination if the enterprise into which they are about to launch themselves is going to succeed. Family life implies responsibilities which restrict the freedom of parents to do as they please. In particular, they must refrain from the sorts of behaviour that would set a bad example to children, e.g. smoking, taking drugs, excessive alcohol consumption. Parenthood carries with it too heavy financial responsibilities: parents need to be able to supply the means to provide the family with somewhere to live, to ensure that the home is properly heated, to provide food and clothing, to pay for their children's educational and recreational needs. This will often require a certain amount of self-sacrifice on their part, and they must also bear in mind that there is no certainty that they will not fall victim to the sort of compulsory redundancies that have become an increasingly common feature of the world of work. In deciding to have children, parents must also be prepared to assume a vital educational role. The educational process begins in the home and it is their job to inculcate moral and civic values in their offspring. Not least, we live in a world where the dangers that lie in wait for young people – drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual predators, sexually transmitted diseases – are such that parents need to exercise not only great vigilance but also tact and circumspection in educating and arming their children against such scourges. Parents are faced too with the very considerable problem of making themselves sufficiently available to their children. This is a particular headache in the large proportion of families where it is necessary that both parents work in order to ensure an income sufficient to provide for the family needs. The dangers implicit in inadequate parental attention and guidance are plain for all to see: delinquency, psychological problems, failure at school, drug and alcohol addiction. Nor should it be forgotten that family life generates conflict – brothers and sisters have different tastes, one's choice is not that of his/her sibling(s), one thinks that he/she is being unfairly treated etc. etc. – and great patience and tact are needed on the part of parents to try to ensure that fair and equitable decisions are arrived at and that harmony wins through. However, notwithstanding all of the sweat and tears involved, many concluded that the satisfaction derived by parents when they see their offspring succeed first at school, then at university and then in their working and their own family lives makes it all worth it.

### Question 2

Not many candidates opted for this title. A number had difficulty in distinguishing between the law and the agents of law enforcement, *l'ordre public* being taken to mean the police or the army, whereas the concept of individual freedom was more felicitously explained and illustrated with reference to current affairs. Reconciling the two proved to be the major stumbling block but there were some successful attempts. Some essays began by pointing out that if everyone had the right to act as they wish with no laws, then society would descend into chaos and anarchy. Rules and laws enforced by the police and the judiciary keep individuals and society in order. Civil liberties groups complain about Big Brother tactics – CCTV cameras, ID checks, the application of stop and search restrictions during public demonstrations and marches. However, the recent riots in the UK and those that shook France a few years ago illustrated what can happen when public order breaks down and individuals come together into groups to indulge in violent and criminal behaviour, demonstrating that if one wishes to live peacefully in an orderly society one must accept some limitations of personal liberty. In a democratic society, the guiding principle of government and law-makers legislating on matters of public order must always be the greater good of the majority which will perforce mean the curtailment of the freedoms of some for the good of all. A number of candidates pointed out that we do enjoy certain freedoms in democratic societies, e.g. freedom of speech, but that there must

always be caveats designed to protect social harmony: homophobic, anti-semitic and racist remarks and remarks calculated to inspire hatred are all outlawed. We can express our disapproval by marching or demonstrating but the law will intervene if a certain line is crossed and the march or demonstration is in danger of becoming a riot. Nor is it necessarily the maintenance of order itself that clashes with individual freedom but more the methods used. It sometimes happens, for example, that individual freedom is curtailed by the over-zealous maintenance of law and order or suppression of dissent, e.g. kettling and other tactics employed by the riot police. Another pertinent observation made was that the balance between the protection of individual liberties and the maintenance of order is especially difficult during times of crisis, e.g. in the face of terrorist threats, war and even, as has been demonstrated in recent times in certain Eurozone countries, national economic disaster. Fear of such threats and of crime and civil unrest sometimes leads people readily to accept restrictions; the greater the fear, the greater the readiness to accept curtailments of liberties. By way of a conclusion, a few essays stressed the need to strike a balance between individual freedom on the one hand and a society that functions smoothly on the other. Such a balance is achieved more or less well in a number of democratic countries (e.g. the Scandinavian countries, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Mauritius) where individual citizens feel, as they need to, that they enjoy some measure of control. Hence the importance of such things as democratic elections, consultations on all matters of local and national importance, laws allowing demonstrations and marches within reason and also freedom of the press which enables people to put forward opposing and even anarchic viewpoints and to express anti-establishment sentiments without fear of prosecution.

### Question 3

This was another very popular choice. Many candidates were able to make the distinction between sport in its amateur manifestation and professional sport. Too many, however, were sidetracked into listing the health benefits of sport to the detriment of a discussion of the arguably pernicious role of money in professional sport. The best scripts presented a broad range of considerations and many reached reasoned and measured conclusions. In many of the essays submitted, there was no lack of pertinent exemplification and this often made for very good essays indeed. Vocabulary again presented few problems, though two items that featured widely were *fixer un match* and *pratiquer le sport*. Many began with a rehearsal of the time-honoured values of sport that have been held aloft by sportsmen of all creeds and colours down the generations – fair play, self-discipline, mutual respect, loyalty and solidarity. These, it was posited, are being increasingly eroded, and the principal culprit is money. For sport has become highly commercialised. For commercial reasons, industrial and other corporate concerns provide sponsorship to clubs and individuals alike, and this puts great pressure on the clubs and individuals concerned to perform at a level which will win the approval and thereby the continued backing of their corporate partners, not infrequently resulting in the use of tactics that go completely against the sporting ethos: cases of violence on the pitch and of the detection of illicit substances in the blood of athletes are reported by the media with alarming frequency. The lure of personal financial gain also engenders corruption in sport. Bribes are paid to people in high office in the sporting world to ensure that a major sporting event is held in one country rather than in any of the other postulant venues. Fuelled by the scourge of betting, cases of match fixing in sports ranging from football to boxing to cricket to tennis occur with increasing regularity and, despite their condemnation and the disciplinary measures taken when a scandal makes the headlines, the sporting regulatory bodies concerned fail to take the concerted action necessary to eradicate the corrupt practices exposed. The intervention of multi-millionaires and even billionaires, particularly as far as football is concerned, means that, metaphorically speaking, the playing field is no longer level. Such individuals buy football clubs and then use their money to enable the clubs in question to offer transfer fees and contracts which ensure that they have a monopoly of the top players. Many of their rivals competing in the same league and who do not enjoy such backing do not stand a chance against such competition: fair play has been ousted by the power of money. However, the picture is not entirely negative. The very substantial influx of money into the domain of sport in recent years has ensured a dramatic improvement in the standard of sporting infrastructures – cities and towns all over the world can boast new stadiums, swimming pools, gymnasiums and other sporting facilities thanks to this money – which in turn has led to a much greater level of spectator interest as well as greater individual participation in the sports that have benefited. On another tack, in days prior to the advent of sponsorship in the world of sport, most sportsmen had to support themselves and their families by taking jobs in other domains. However, sponsorship means that they do not have to do this and, as a result, are able to channel all their energies into improving their performance. Moreover, they have at their disposal all manner of facilities that would have previously been unthinkable, witness expensive training apparatus and equipment, physiotherapists and even specialised sporting psychologists. Money is a great motivating factor for sportsmen to excel and thereby win the coveted prizes. It was suggested that it is the two factors combined – the advent of sponsorship and the lure of the very substantial monetary prizes on offer – which go a long way to explain the large number of new sporting prodigies who have emerged in recent times. Commercialisation and the construction of new infrastructures have engendered much greater spectator interest as well as individual participation in sport, which in turn have given a great boost to the economy at

both local and national levels. The sporting industry has created new jobs and wealth: the construction industry, manufacturing industry, the service sector and media concerns have all benefited. Major sporting events are a great opportunity too for the local economy: the thousands of people who are attracted to such events spend money on food and transportation and often on tourist and other recreational activities. Money, moreover, may fuel such scourges as the use of illicit substances amongst sportsmen but it has also been a major factor in efforts to eradicate that and other ills afflicting the world of sport. Scientists have, for example, been given the resources to develop sophisticated technological devices that can detect even the smallest traces of a drug present in an athlete's body. Highly sophisticated camera systems have been developed and installed at major sporting venues to help with the task of crowd control and give a boost to the fight against hooliganism. Thanks to the means put at their disposal, they have also been able to develop ways of ensuring fair play in cases where referees and umpires may have made errors of judgement, witness the "Hawk Eye" system in place at Wimbledon and similar systems that are in the process of being installed at major football venues to be used when, as in the famous incident during the 2010 World Cup, there is a dispute as to whether a goal has really been scored. The conclusion of many was that we need to ensure that money is at the service of sport and that it is not allowed to become its guiding principle since, when that does happen, the whole sporting ethos is seen to crumble.

#### Question 4

This title came in fourth place based on the number of candidates who opted for it. A good number of those who did had a clear understanding of recent moves in many countries to raise the retirement age in the light of increased life expectancy and the current financial crises. Equally, many showed a commendable ability not only to consider the prospect from their own point of view but also to project themselves into the mind-set of those some decades older than themselves. As a result, pertinent reference was made to a wide range of considerations. The starting point for many was the fact that, thanks to a whole raft of factors, people live longer and, as a corollary, want to be active for longer: continuing to work not only helps them stay fit and mentally alert but it also makes them feel useful and wards off the sort of feelings of social exclusion that induce depression and that, in some cases, might even contribute to propelling them to an early grave. Moreover, many people who arrive at the age of 65 are still very fit and active and, in the absence of adequate pension provision, need to continue to work to be able to fund the lifestyle that will enable them to remain fit and active. Too many elderly people who have, for whatever reason, to stop working find that they do not have sufficient means to eat as well as they did when they were earning, to provide themselves with the level of heating and other comforts that they had previously enjoyed and to indulge in the leisure activities that have hitherto been their passion and source of stimulation. Quite a serious blow is thereby often dealt within a relatively short space of time to both their physical and mental state. It needs also to be borne in mind that it helps the state and thereby hard-pressed taxpayers if large numbers of old people are able to continue to work and support themselves rather than rely on state-funded pensions and other benefits such as help with their heating bills and free transportation. Also beneficial to the state is the fact that, by continuing to work and thereby remaining fit and mentally alert, elderly people will be less prone to illnesses requiring medical treatment. Elderly people, moreover, have a mine of experience gleaned in the course of their working lives, and their continued presence in the workplace will mean that they will be able to share that experience with younger members of the workforce, making thereby for greater efficiency. Notwithstanding, there are a significant number of factors which support the counter view, notably that people should not work beyond the age of 60 or, at maximum, 65. Not least, many people have long looked forward to the moment when they can stop working and start to enjoy all the benefits that retirement brings with it, e.g. more time for leisure activities and less stress. Suddenly to force them to work longer will be a serious blow to many which could have more or less serious consequences for their mental state and, as a result, affect their performance in the workplace. It is also generally accepted that, notwithstanding many people's desire to continue working and thereby – as they see it – remain fit and mentally alert, the longer a person works and is subject to the physical demands and/or the stress of the workplace, the shorter his/her life expectancy. Equally pertinent is the fact that beyond a certain age, many people's physical and mental capacities begin to decline and they also tend to be less adaptable and less open to new ideas. This might well pose problems in the workplace if they were still working and, what's more, would mean that when they did finally retire, they would not be in a position to derive as much enjoyment from many of the benefits usually associated with retirement (e.g. travel, family outings, more time for leisure activities) as if they had retired earlier. A consideration that was to the fore in many essays was the fact that the longer one allows elderly people to continue working, the less openings for the younger generation. Unemployment among young people is already at record highs in both developed and developing countries and delaying the retirement age will only make matters worse, increasing the incidence of despondency and often despair that prevails among cohorts of young people unable to find jobs and who feel that all their hard work at school and university have been in vain. Many essays arrived at the conclusion that people should have choice and that there should be no statutory retirement age. A pension should be available to anyone who has reached the age of 60 and who wishes to retire but, equally, those who wish to carry on working should be free to do



so, though subject to certain conditions designed to protect both employee and employer and, not least, the young. Given the urgent need to provide a stimulus to youth employment, there needs to be a cap on the number of hours they are allowed to work.

### Question 5

This was the third most popular question. Unfortunately, many candidates saw it as an excuse to unveil everything they knew or thought about either technology or indeed, specifically, the television, the car, the mobile phone and the computer (listed in the title, incidentally, for the purpose of exemplification). Only the better scripts showed an understanding of WHY a person might wish to adopt a lifestyle unfettered by technology, and of the advantages AS WELL AS the disadvantages of so doing. Some introductions went straight to the heart of the matter: their authors took an objective stance, and pointed out that though not tempted by the same extreme reaction, many people do feel a certain solidarity with and even possibly a certain sneaking, tacit admiration for the lifestyle advocated and observed by the ever-increasing number of environmental activists passionately concerned about the damage being wrought by man's thoughtless and selfish disregard for the ecological problems that beset the world. They eschew all the paraphernalia and gadgets of modern technology, deeming quite correctly that their manufacture is a source of pollution, their usage is a source of yet further pollution and their disposal, when they have reached the end of their life, presents even more serious problems of pollution. Such a way of life, moreover, would have very tangible economic advantages. Not only would there be no initial capital outlay to purchase a car, a television, a computer, a mobile phone or whatever, but a further considerable saving would be made on fuel, insurance, taxation and repair costs in the case of a car, on electricity and software costs in the case of a television and a computer, and on call costs in the case of a mobile phone. There would also be obvious benefits for health. Cycling or walking are far healthier options than the use of motorised transportation, likewise engaging in less sedentary activities as opposed to watching television and sitting at a computer. Moreover, someone doing without a mobile phone would be far less exposed to the dangerous rays that have been repeatedly linked by experts with various types of cancer. Social advantages would also accrue. Not only young people but also adults tend to spend excessive amounts of time watching television and sitting at their computers. Doing away with such gadgets would make for more cohesive bonds within the family: there would be more communication between parents and children who would be free to spend much more time together and to engage in pursuits which bring them together rather than isolate them as computers do. Equally, children would not fall into the snares laid by video games and social networking sites and would, as a result, have the opportunity to develop social skills and self-confidence which are stifled in their computer-addicted counterparts. The risks run and, in an increasing number of cases, the actual harm done, especially to children but also to adults, as a result of exposure to certain television programmes and certain computer games and Internet sites, would be obviated. Children would not be exposed to the violence and pornography that are a major scourge of the audio-visual media and they would not run the risk of encountering sexual predators masquerading under a fictitious identity on social networking sites. Nor would their parents risk being ensnared in one of the myriad of scams operating via the Internet. Notwithstanding, however convincing such a *plaidoyer* may sound, the drawbacks are clear for all to see and, indeed, many weaker candidates listed only the drawbacks. At the most basic level, to eschew the fruits of technology would be to deprive oneself of the time and labour saving devices that are generally accepted as raising living standards, not least by making it possible for an individual to spend more time pursuing passions and activities that he/she finds stimulating and enriching. Similarly, to turn one's back on all the various forms of transportation that are responsible for atmospheric pollution has highly restrictive implications at several levels. Not least, one's choice of work is restricted to what is on offer within walking or cycling distance of home and, moreover, the job must not involve any long-distance travel (or, presumably, for that matter, working with computers). Moreover, overseas holidays or even holidays in not so far-flung destinations but ones only accessible by car, train or bus are ruled out. Communication with the outside world and with family members and friends who do not live locally will perforce be problematic without the use of mobile phones and computers, to say nothing of emergency situations when the mobile phone really comes into its own and so often saves the day. To banish computers and the television is to banish two invaluable educational tools and means of cultural enrichment. When it came to the matter of a conclusion, many candidates ignored the question posed by the title – *Que pensez-vous de cette façon de vivre?* However, a succinct and pertinent conclusion quite often arrived at by those who had looked at both sides of the question was that they could not envisage life without the benefits of modern technology but equally they appreciated the dangers posed to both themselves and the environment of becoming a slave to it. *A consommer avec modération!*

# FRENCH

Paper 8682/23  
Reading and Writing

## Key Messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) that fit(s) **perfectly** in the place of the one from the text/question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate the answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **b** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text).
- **Language:** when preparing for the exam make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

## General Comments

This year's paper on the theme of air pollution and the use of the horse as an environmentally friendly way of transport was of a similar standard to that of previous years and included exercises of a broad scale of difficulty to cater for the full range of candidate ability.

It was particularly pleasing to see that many candidates had time to write a plan or a rough draft for **Question 5**. These candidates had been well prepared in the techniques and requirements of the examination, as well as coached on how to manage effectively the time at their disposal. The word limit recommendation in **Question 5** was also respected better this year on the whole but some candidates still ignored the specific brief thus losing some marks.

In **Question 3 and 4**, there was still a tendency for some candidates to write unnecessarily lengthy answers, which did not always address the questions or rephrased the same points again and again. This added to the incidence of language mistakes and sometimes led the candidates to actually forget to include the correct answer. Please note that the best answers are the short, straight-to-the-point ones listing all elements of the answer within one or two phrases.

For example: **Question 3 (a):** *L'espérance de vie sera réduite (A) et le nombre de décès augmentera (B). Le manque de respect des lois (C) et la réduction de l'argent accordé aux groupes de contrôle de l'air (D) ont aggravé la situation actuelle.*

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold (specific details and examples are listed in the next section). The number of marks allocated to each question serves as a clear indicator of how many separate ideas need to be included in the answer in order to gain full marks. Candidates must also stay within the paragraph indicated in the question, even if they feel another point can be made from further down the text.

The quality of language varied greatly from some almost entirely mistake-free papers to some phonetically spelled answers with total disregard for any grammatical rules.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word within the paragraph(s) indicated in the brief, which is completely interchangeable with the words listed from (a) to (e). Consequently, nouns and adjectives will have the same gender, and the verbs will be conjugated in the same form. The question asked for **le mot**, therefore answers with a group of words lost their marks.

On the whole, this question well answered by candidates.

- (a) *Préoccupe* was found by most candidates.
- (b) This question was well answered by most candidates.
- (c) *Attribuée* was the correct answer. Some candidates selected *respectée* because they were seeking a feminine past participle used as an adjective without focusing on the meaning of the sentence.
- (d) *Moyens* was generally found with ease by many candidates. Some candidates left the question blank.
- (e) *Excessive* was also a successful answer for most candidates.

### Question 2

Candidates should remember that their answer **must** begin with the words in the bracket. They must also include all the words from the original statement, whilst manipulating the sentence to fit its new beginning, but retaining the **same** meaning. Some candidates “imported” some extra words (mostly without any reason) and changed the meaning as well as the grammar.

- (a) The main mistake was the omission of the feminine plural agreement on *accordées*. Some candidates avoided the passive voice and used the reflexive form of *préoccuper*, which was a totally acceptable alternative, as long as it was followed by *de cette situation*, and not *par cette situation*, which was needed in the passive phrase option.
- (b) The main errors resulted either from failing to see the need for a subjunctive verb or from using the wrong word order and writing a sentence meaning ‘life expectancy reduces pollution’ (*...l'espérance de vie réduit la pollution*). It was possible to continue the sentence with *espérance de vie* but a passive form had to be used to continue the sentence in order to respect the meaning: *...soit réduite de neuf mois*. Many candidates kept *réduirait* as it was in the prompt.
- (c) The beginning of the sentence demanded the use of an infinitive, which most candidates managed well. Some candidates kept *être* in the answer and a few placed the *à* in front of *une forte augmentation des décès* thereby giving rise to a sentence meaning that pollution was due to a high raise in the number of deaths!
- (d) Similarly to (a) the challenge here was to make the agreement between *affectés* and *les jeunes* when the passive form was chosen by candidates. However, some candidates avoided the passive by continuing the sentence with *que la pollution affecte*. *Atmosphérique* had to be included to respect the original meaning of the question. Some candidates stated that young people affect pollution which was not the meaning intended in the question.
- (e) In order to correspond to the sentence of the question, the answer had to include *devraient*, to echo *il faudrait*. The most common mistakes were its omission or using *devoir* in the present tense.

**Note:** some candidates added unnecessary complications in their sentences such as *on peut dire que (c)*. Candidates are advised to rephrase the sentences as closely as possible to the original given their new beginning.

### Question 3

To show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that the candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in **their own words** as stipulated in the rubric of **Question 3** and **4**. Yet many candidates (even when perfectly capable of producing such an answer) still copied the text word for word (called a **lift**), thereby losing the mark. The easiest technique to achieve marks and avoid a lift is to ask oneself if the noun has a corresponding verb or vice versa: examples will be quoted below. However, it is still essential to formulate an answer that makes sense. Some candidates can go too far in changing the vocabulary and end up with sentences that make no sense.

Where a paragraph is clearly stated, it is essential that the candidates confine their answers to it.

- (a) Four pieces of information were required for the full mark here. Most candidates managed at least one correct answer, generally point A (the reduction of life expectancy) but many candidates managed to explain all four points and avoid lifting from the text, with the use of *réduction* (from *réduirait*), *augmenter les décès* (not *augmentation*), *respecter les lois* and *diminue* (not *réduit*) to quote but a few. Occasionally candidates seem to have read the text too quickly or misunderstood, as they expressed that the state gave no money at all to the organisations, whereas the text clearly states that financial support had been reduced.
- (b) Almost all candidates found 'the use of diesel or too many car/lorries', etc. easy to spot to gain a mark for (A). However, many found expressing *combustions industrielles* quite challenging for point (B). Some candidates managed it well with answers such as *les fumées qui viennent de l'industrie* or *la pollution de l'air causée quand les industries brûlent des trucs.*(sic) To gain the final point, candidates had to express that we use too many chemicals. Most candidates managed to answer in their own words, but some missed the idea of *excessive* in the text and did not score the point.
- (c) This question was well answered in the majority of cases, and candidates often added a phrase concerning *des problèmes respiratoires*, which was another way to score (A).
- (d) Finding the answers in the text for (A) (the level of exposure / where people live: country vs town), and (C) (the age of people), presented little difficulty for most candidates. Some candidates unfortunately repeated the text unaltered and didn't score the mark. A number of candidates found the third reason (point B: *vulnérabilité naturelle*) difficult to understand. They either quoted the two words unchanged or they attributed the change simply to pollen. To gain the mark, candidates had to state that people already suffering from an existing allergy or health problem would see their problems increase. As one candidate wrote: *si on a déjà une allergie, elle sera pire*. A simple but very effective answer.
- (e) This question was seemed to be quite challenging for many candidates. Many candidates lost marks because they did not understand that there were two distinct points in the text: the more general fact that their recommendations were not followed/considered, or that the measures that followed their recommendations were too weak (A) and the more specific point that there was a motive to protect the interest of industry or that the measures controlling gas and transport emissions were not severe enough (B).

Point (C) was more successfully handled and lots of candidates used their own words to express the idea clearly.

### Questions 4

Candidates generally found this text slightly more challenging than the previous text and the incidence of lifts was higher. Candidates who had received a solid preparation for this type of exercise and knew how to distance their answers from the words used in the text did really well as opposed to candidates who just copied entire phrases of the text.

- (a) This was a very straight forward question, mostly well understood. It was pleasing to see one better candidate write *les chevaux transportent les touristes en calèche pour visiter la ville* (A). *Collecter* became *ramasser* as a good indicator of understanding and the candidate who knew *tondre* managed to say *les chevaux aident de (sic) tondre l'herbe*. Despite their physical impossibilities, phrases like *les chevaux collectent les déchets/ ramassent les ordures* or *tirent les*

*tondeuses* were awarded the points as they were seen as efforts to express the ideas in the candidates' own words.

- (b) To answer this question successfully candidates needed to understand that a study had to be carried out to establish if the project could be technically possible. One excellent answer was: *il faut savoir si le projet est possible au niveau technique* (A). The majority of candidates understood the second point and explained that the level of risk for the children has to be defined. Again it was a pity to see some candidates with strong linguistic ability copy the phrase from the text when they could have written: *on doit trouver les dangers potentiels pour les enfants* (B). The third item was the most challenging with *circuit* often misunderstood as a shift for the horse to work.
- (c) This question represented a high level of correct answers with more attempts to rephrase and the two points clearly made. A common error was that the *équibus* had given people some transport from village to village.
- (d) Candidates found points (A) and (D) most easily, although some expressed more carbon being released rather than less. Points (B) and (C) were often lifted from the text, even though it could have been avoided with two phrases such as *les chevaux coûtent moins cher* (B) and *les chevaux sont préservés* (C).
- (e) This question was answered well by most candidates, a fair amount of lifting was also evident. Using *le transport* (A) et *le ramassage* (B) were good choices to avoid a lift.

### Question 5

- (a) The mark scheme lists 16 points which could score points (7 causes and advantages and 9 benefits of using a horse). The majority of candidates identified at least 5, with many finding 8, 9 or 10. Candidates are reminded that they need to state 10 clear points and that no extra marks are gained for providing multiple details about the same idea or reformulating it in several ways.
- (b) Candidates had clearly studied the environmental issues in class and many interesting ideas were expressed such as *il faut planter plus d'arbres pour avoir meilleur oxygène* or *on doit construire les industries quand il y a moins de densité de la population (sic)*. Many candidates would like to see more taxes for the culprits of pollution and one candidate even wrote *je veux interdire toutes les industries!*

### Quality of language

Top candidates used excellent vocabulary, a wide range of verbs and tenses and impressive sentence structures. At the lower end of the scale in some cases basic plural agreements were missing and often sentences were unintelligible as candidates were struggling with limits of their French knowledge.

The most common mistakes were:

- Negatives in one part only: *la pollution affete pas*
- Misspelling of words issued from the text: *les cheveux, les cheveaux*
- Incorrect or absent agreement: *les lois ne sont pas repecté*
- Verb endings: *on utilsent, ils souffres, les chevaux collects*
- Many « anglicismes »: *dépend sur, transportation, les infants, l'ashma, un project, on doit save les animaux*
- Wrong connective word: *accepte à changer*
- Gender confusions: *une problème, un solution*