

Assessment Report

Scholarship, 2007

French

COMMENTARY

In 2007, candidates were required to answer two questions in Section One (Writing) and two questions in Section Two (Speaking). All questions required the candidates to have a thorough knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary up to Level 8 of the curriculum. Many candidates seemed unaware of these changes in the format of the examination, and the need for two, clearly labelled, separate answers for the written response.

Question One of the Speaking Section proved more challenging than in previous years because it asked the candidates to show understanding as well as give their opinion. The candidates had to be able to rephrase the material, show comprehension, and integrate their own opinions and experience, in a natural way. Since it was necessary to give advice, the use of structures such as the subjunctive was called for.

Question Two, which asked the candidate to comment on a related topic, gave the candidates more freedom since there was no need at all to refer to the material in the texts if candidates did not wish to. However, it required more depth of thought, an ability to organise one's ideas and to catch the reader or listener's interest. Since they were asked to use their imagination, candidates again had to master the subjunctive and the conditional tenses.

The best performing candidates most commonly demonstrated the following skills and / or knowledge:

- integrated high level constructions in a natural and unconstrained way
- rephrased or explained the content of the stimulus text while avoiding repetitions
- expanded on the material provided to express their own opinions and ideas in a clear and detailed manner
- used more formal language in the writing and more spontaneous language in the speaking
- proofread their work in order to provide more accurate and more organised answers
- organised their answer logically and showed essay writing skills such as the use of an introduction and a conclusion
- drew on the cultural differences between the situations described in the text and their own.

Candidates who did NOT achieve scholarship lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge above and in addition they:

- provided short responses that did not show thorough understanding or answer the questions adequately
- repeated the same ideas as in the stimulus text in their answers to the questions on a related topic
- did not expand on their own ideas
- spoke too quickly, read out answers without inflections, and did not sound natural
- failed to use vocabulary and structures at Level 8 of the curriculum
- tried unsuccessfully to integrate previously learnt material or gave lengthy answers that were not related to the topic.