

Assessment Report

Scholarship, 2008

French

COMMENTARY

The 2008 French Scholarship examination provided ample opportunity for the candidates to demonstrate a wide knowledge of language that often went beyond level 8 of the curriculum. Both listening and reading passages proved to be of interest and were well understood by candidates. Most candidates were very well prepared and showed depth and maturity of thought, as well as a level of fluency that is usually obtained by spending a significant amount of time in a French speaking country.

The listening topic reflected an important part of French history and culture, but would have been relatively unknown to the candidates. The range of issues discussed in answer to the second question was varied, interesting and very personal.

The reading passage was very relevant to the candidates' own experience and although almost all candidates would have studied the issue of part-time jobs in class, there was plenty of scope for development of ideas drawing on their own life experience.

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

- extremely wide range of language, often beyond level 8 of curriculum
- accuracy in the use of a wide range of grammar structures, particularly the subjunctive, manipulation of pronouns, order of object pronouns, agreements of preceding direct object
- ability to express a point of view, a personal reaction, reflection or comment with confidence
- originality in the use of language, showing personal creativity in the manipulation of language
- use of rhetorical questions
- use of sequencing and paragraphing to make their points clearly
- use of humour to make their writing or speaking more interesting
- ability to create expectancy on the part of the reader
- ability to pick up, refer back to and discuss the important points in the text
- extensive development of ideas
- ability to personalise and recount own life experiences vividly
- use of exclamations.

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

- used language or expressed ideas in a simplistic way
- made too many errors in language that sometimes hindered communication
- did not always fully understand the listening or reading passage
- did not complete one part of the examination or were too brief in their responses
- were unclear in their ideas and did not use paragraphing
- attempted unsuccessfully to use language that was beyond their ability
- failed to draw on their personal experience.

Example of structures used by the high achieving candidates:

- qu'on veuille ou non l'avouer . . .
- je m'égare complètement
- les expériences que j'ai eues . . .

- il va sans dire que. . .
- je suis étonnée que... . . .
- j'avoue que moi aussi. . .
- on ne se rend pas compte. . .
- mais nous avons vraiment de la chance
- il faut nous rappeler les risques pris par les peuples des années 60
- par conséquent. . .
- en premier lieu. . .
- par exemple le narrateur déclare que. . .
- selon l'intervenant. . .
- mais ce que j'ai éprouvé à Paris m'a changé la vie
- Quelle femme admirable!
- Tout simplement. . .