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FRENCH

Paper 0520/12
Listening (Multiple Choice)

Question Number	Key
1	B
2	A
3	A
4	C
5	D
6	B
7	A
8	C

Question Number	Key
9	C
10	B
11	C
12	B
13	A
14	D

Question Number	Key
15	D
16	F
17	C
18	E
19	A

Question Number	Key
20	B
21	C
22	C
23	A
24	C
25	A
26	B
27	A
28	C

Question Number	Key
29	B
30	C
31	D
32	A
33	C
34	A

Question Number	Key
35	A / E
36	B / D
37	A / C

General comments

The March 2023 Listening paper consisted of 37 multiple-choice questions. Overall candidates performed well, and most attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only for **Questions 1** to **34**, and **two** letters for **Questions 35** to **37**.

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The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity and featured simple transactional exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts. The paper differentiated well.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

The extracts were short, straightforward interactions and candidates generally performed very well in this exercise. For **Question 1**, a small number of candidates did not identify the price and for **Question 3**, some candidates did not understand *la banque.* **Question 4** was slightly more demanding. Candidates who were not familiar with *à pied* often incorrectly selected option **B** instead. Some candidates did not recognise *fraise* in **Question 5**, and *dentifrice* in **Question 8**.

Questions 9–14

Candidates heard a longer extract which featured a public announcement on board a ferry. Candidates generally performed well in this exercise. For **Question 9**, three quarters of the candidates understood *nuages*. **Question 11** was the most challenging and under half the candidates recognised *oreiller*, whilst a third incorrectly selected option **B**. Many candidates successfully answered the other questions although some candidates did not understand *poulet* in **Question 12** and the time in **Question 14**.

Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation between Sébastien and his mother about his old university friends. Overall candidates performed well in this exercise. **Question 15** proved the most challenging with just over half the candidates understanding statement **D**, *a déménagé.* The most frequent incorrect answers were **B**, then **C**. **Question 16** was answered well with no real pattern in the incorrect answers. Many candidates answered **Question 17** well. Those who answered incorrectly tended to choose option **B**, and wrongly linked *apprendre l'espagnol* with studying at university rather than travelling around South America. Many candidates answered **Question 18** successfully. For **Question 19**, some candidates did not understand *il est tombé / s'est cassé la jambe.* The most frequent incorrect answer was option **B**.

Questions 20–28

In this exercise, candidates heard an interview in two parts with Mareva, then Raina, about a secondary school in Tahiti. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

For **Question 20**, only a third of candidates chose the correct option **B**, with most choosing distractor **A**. Candidates needed to listen carefully as *travaille à la bibliothèque* referred to Mareva's husband, not her. For **Question 21**, many candidates chose the correct option **C**. **Question 22** was also answered well. Those who answered incorrectly nearly all chose distractor **B**, having missed the negative. For **Question 23**, under half the candidates were familiar with *hebdomadaire* and chose the correct answer **A**. Many incorrectly selected distractor **C**. Over three quarters of the candidates answered **Question 24** successfully. Distractor **B** was the most frequent incorrect answer. Candidates needed to read the question carefully to select the most positive impact, introduced in the recording by *à mon avis le plus important*.

Question 25 was answered well with over three quarters of the candidates choosing the correct option **A**. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *oiseaux* and chose distractor **C**. **Question 26** was demanding with just over half the candidates selecting the correct option **B**. Most candidates who answered incorrectly heard *un blog* and chose distractor **A** which referred to Raina's ambition, not what students do as a group. For **Question 27**, over two thirds of the candidates successfully chose option **A**, whilst most of the others missed *surtout* in the question and selected distractor **C**. Two thirds of the candidates also answered **Question 28** correctly. Most of those who answered incorrectly heard *éteindre les lumières* and chose distractor **B**. Candidates needed to listen carefully as switching off the lights is in fact something Raina often forgets to do.

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Questions 29–34

Candidates heard an interview with Yannick who works in a mountain hut in Switzerland. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

Over half the candidates chose the correct option **B** for **Question 29**. The others mostly selected distractors **A** and **C**. A slightly lower number of candidates selected the correct answer **C** for **Question 30**; distractor **B** was the most common incorrect answer. Candidates needed to listen carefully to select what the walkers enjoy the most, introduced by *avant tout* in the recording. **Question 31** was the most demanding in the exercise with just a quarter of candidates choosing the correct option **D**. Many candidates incorrectly chose distractors **A** and **C**. For **Question 32**, under a third of candidates selected the correct option **A** and understood the key word, *essentiel*, in the question and in the recording (*la qualité essentielle*). Those who answered incorrectly chose distractors **C** and **D**, both qualities required to run a hut, but not the one Yannick considers essential. For **Question 33**, under half the candidates understood that Yannick finds other employment in the winter. Distractors **B**, then **A** were the most frequent errors. For **Question 34**, only a third of candidates matched *faire un documentaire* with *faire un reportage.* Many heard *enfants* and chose distractor **B**; most of the others chose distractor **C**. Candidates needed to grasp complex tenses to understand that Yannick had no desire to change his life even though he could earn more money doing another job.

Questions 35–37

Candidates heard an interview with Maëlle, a secondary school student, who talked about her drama club. For each question in this exercise, candidates had to identify **two** correct statements from a choice of five. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

For **Question 35**, under half the candidates correctly chose option **A,** and over three quarters successfully selected option **E**. Over a third of candidates heard *m'inscrire* and incorrectly selected distractor **B**. **Question 36** was attempted well with nearly two thirds of candidates selecting option **B** and three quarters option **D**. Distractor **E** was the most frequent incorrect answer. Candidates needed to listen to the end of the sentence to understand that, on the contrary, Maëlle remains shy when she must speak in class. For **Question 37**, over half the candidates chose option **A** and under half option **C**. Those who answered incorrectly often chose distractor **D**. Understanding the time phrases was key here: ***dès que*** *je suis montée sur scène, j'ai oublié ma peur* contradicted statement **D**, *était stressée* ***pendant*** *la pièce.*

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FRENCH

Paper 0520/22
Reading

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success on this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they answer all questions: marks are **not** deducted for incorrect responses.
- bear in mind that answers in the first person in **Questions 4** and **6** are unlikely to be correct.
- ensure that their response answers the question asked.

General comments

Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper, and almost all candidates were appropriately entered for the examination. A few candidates left some answers blank on multiple-choice questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Overall, candidates performed well on this question. Some candidates incorrectly chose **E** for **1(b)** and **1(e)**.

Question 2

Many candidates scored full marks. For **2(b)**, some candidates chose **E** or **C** instead of **D**. For **2(e)**, some candidates answered **E** instead of **C**.

Question 3

Most candidates found this question to be accessible. For **3(b)**, some candidates did not recognise *beau* in the text and incorrectly chose **C** (*de l'orage*). A few candidates thought Claire was the speaker instead of Nadia for **3(d)**. Claire was mentioned in the text, but she was the subject of the story rather than the speaker. For **3(e)**, a significant number of candidates chose **C** (*soirée*) instead of **B** (*matinée*).

Question 4

For this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended text about Benoît who went to visit his older brother in Lille. Overall, candidates wrote concise answers, which helped them avoid grammatical inaccuracies, but some candidates did not show sufficient understanding and lifted too much of the text.

The text was written in the first person, and the questions used the third person. Most questions could be answered by lifting a small number of words from the text, but some answers also required a minor manipulation. If candidates choose to lift more than is required to answer questions, they must make any manipulation needed in the extra material, for example replacing *je* with *il* and changing the verb if necessary. Candidates are therefore advised to answer with the minimum number of words.

For **4(a)** and **4(b)**, candidates often answered incorrectly with *3 jours*. For **4(c)**, some candidates included too many words, which made their answer ambiguous, or wrote that it was Benoît who was not there, instead of his brother's friend.

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For **4(d)**, some candidates tried to paraphrase or offer synonyms to answer the question, instead of lifting from the text. Those who answered *il n'aime pas les sciences* could not gain the mark, as it did not convey the same message as *il a horreur des sciences*.

For **4(e)**, some candidates incorrectly used a subject with an infinitive to answer both parts of the question. For **4(h)**, some candidates did not answer the question asked and wrote something that merely happened to contain the answer.

Some candidates seemed to misunderstand the question for **4(j)**. Being able to understand the questions is as important as understanding the text. For **4(k)**, some candidates focused on the wrong part of the last sentence in the text and chose the *scientiques* part, which was a harmless addition but not enough on its own to answer the question.

Question 5

For this exercise, candidates had to match a series of descriptions with statements from people looking for something to do before going to university. Candidates had five people and eight descriptions to choose from. Candidates had to process a variety of information and match several requirements whilst eliminating responses that did not fit. The question is aimed at the higher grades, and candidates with a wide range of vocabulary and knowledge of synonyms performed well on this section.

Each person's statement gave specific requirements for what they were looking for in a job/project, for example duration, location or type of job. These details excluded all answers except the correct one. Candidates need to ensure they consider all the information given as this is not a gist comprehension question and a global understanding of the texts will not be sufficient.

For **5(a)**, candidates sometimes selected **3** instead of **5**, but the advert required somebody who would be staying for a year rather than the five months that Hakim could offer. For **5(b)**, the most common incorrect answer was **4**: candidates did not take into account that Florence did not wish to work at the weekend. For **5(c)**, candidates often chose **7** instead of **8**, maybe thinking that *garderie* and *jardin* were linked in meaning. There was no pattern of incorrect answers for **5(d)**, and **5(e)** was answered very well.

Question 6

This final exercise about Adèle, who organised a show to collect money, was intended to be the most challenging part of the paper. About half the questions could be answered with a careful lift from the text and the others needed a small manipulation of the text. Very few candidates achieved full marks, and the questions seem to have discriminated appropriately.

Not all candidates realised that Adèle was female, despite the use of *elle* in the text. Nevertheless, as candidates are not expected to recognise names, candidates were credited with the mark unless it was ambiguous who they were writing about.

A careful lift was required to answer **6(a)** and candidates who kept *donc* in their response could not gain the mark. For **6(b)**, **6(c)** and **6(d)**, many candidates lifted the wrong part of the text, which did not answer the questions. Some candidates quoted a part of the text in the first person, adding *Adèle a dit:* in front of it. This is not sufficient as candidates need to demonstrate that they can do a basic manipulation of the text. For **6(e)**, candidates often found the right part of the text but did not answer the question asked. For **6(f)**, candidates frequently stated what the headteacher had said rather than what Adèle did, with their answers referring to giving permission to use the theatre and publicise the event. For **6(h)**, Adèle and the headteacher were given as incorrect answers, candidates perhaps not recognising *en larmes*.

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FRENCH

Paper 0520/03
Speaking

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the Speaking test.
- Role plays were conducted well by most examiners.
- In the topics section, some centres need to make greater use of extension questions to elicit fuller answers from candidates. Sometimes, the topic conversations were very short.
- Most examiners understood the need to adhere **precisely** to the script in the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners and not to rephrase any questions.
- Most examiners also understood the need to ask **no more than two further questions** of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- Centres are reminded to use the alternative questions provided in the topic conversations if a candidate does not understand the first version (and repetition) of the question.
- The randomisation grid in the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners was usually followed correctly.
- Clerical work was usually very good in centres.
- The quality of recordings was overall very good and centres were quick to upload their work.
- Sample sizes were correct and covered the full mark range.

General comments

In this third year of the new style Speaking test, many examiners are now much more familiar with the format of the test and consequently more confident in their approach to its conduct. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of **spontaneous** communicative ability. A wide range of performance was evident across the candidature and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Most centres had prepared candidates well for the format of the test and examiners were usually aware of how to conduct the test efficiently and correctly. Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all examiners read the scenario for the role plays, as instructed, in French. Most centres correctly followed the instructions concerning the randomisation grid and understood the need to test candidates according to the prescribed order of the cards and conversation topics. Centres are reminded that the cards should be distributed according to the grid provided on pages 14–15 in the Instructions, with Card One given to the first candidate who takes the test and so on.

Role plays were generally conducted well. Centres are reminded that questions can be repeated once (but not rephrased) if the candidate does not answer a question or gives an ambiguous response. It is important for examiners to read the role play tasks **exactly** as printed to ensure that they are not changing the nature and level of difficulty of the tasks. It is useful to note that the role plays are not timed.

For the **topic conversations**, timings were not always appropriate. These were often too short, especially on the first of the two topics and, in some cases, too long. **Some examiners needed to ask more extension questions**, (e.g. *Donne-moi plus de détails ?* or *Peux-tu me dire autre chose à ce sujet ?*) to give candidates the opportunity **to develop their answers** and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which did not communicate clearly. Candidates need to understand the wordings of these extension questions so that they know when they need to give more detail. **When asking extension questions, examiners should not rephrase questions as this can change the nature of the set task**. Examiners must also not provide vocabulary or ideas to the candidate. In the conversations, *Décris* or *Parle-moi* are cues that indicate open questions. When responding to such questions, candidates should try and put in as much detail as possible as they are invited to develop and go beyond straightforward answers.

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If a candidate does not understand **Questions 3**, **4** or **5** in the topic conversations, the examiner should repeat this first set question. If the candidate still does not understand, the examiner must then go on to ask the **alternative question**. These alternative questions give candidates another opportunity to understand the task and use easier language to test the same points. Some examiners asked the alternative questions when the candidate had already answered the first question clearly or used the alternative questions as extension questions. This should be avoided as it can be confusing for candidates.

When there was a PAUSE between two questions in the script, most examiners gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one. The PAUSE is there intentionally to give candidates the time to process the questions and think best how to answer relevantly.

Before the tests, examiners need to have a clear idea of which questions they may use as their own further questions on each topic and make sure that further questions are not too closed in nature for more able candidates. Stronger candidates should have further questions which are a little more open and which give them the opportunity to say more than a brief response.

Centres are reminded that if a topic conversation lasts 3½ minutes or less, even after asking extension questions, the examiner must ask **up to two further** questions of their choice on the **same** topic as the other questions to make sure that the conversation lasts 4 minutes. If after these two further questions the topic conversation still lasts 3½ minutes or less, the examiner must stop the conversation.

Nearly all examiners remembered to introduce the topic area in French at the start of each topic conversation and used French to link the different sections of the test.

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had been completed very efficiently. It is essential that all clerical work is checked carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. The mark recorded on the centre WMS must match the mark uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal. When marks have been internally moderated, it is the internally moderated mark that should be uploaded to the Submit for Assessment portal. Centres generally made efficient use of the Submit for Assessment portal and were able to submit their samples correctly. Centres generally understood the requirements of the sample size and samples were usually correct. Please ensure that work is uploaded as soon as possible after the test has taken place.

Centres are reminded to consult the Samples Database at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples to check how to submit their sample and the correct format of files to be submitted. Audio recordings and **not** video recordings should be uploaded.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Examiners generally read the scenario as instructed. The nine role plays were accessible to candidates and set at an equal level of difficulty. They were all set in situations in which candidates could find themselves with a speaker of French and were transactional in nature. Contexts such as arranging outings with friends, buying cakes, buying health products, renting a chalet, discussing travel details, talking about a job, and buying souvenirs featured on the cards. Most candidates approached the role plays well with many scoring good marks. The weakest candidates also showed that they could score marks for partial communication on some tasks.

The first two tasks on each card were of a very factual nature and gave candidates the opportunity to answer briefly. They did not require longer and more developed answers. Candidates mostly answered these two opening questions well. It was essential for candidates to be familiar with questioning formulations such as *À quelle heure ? Combien ? Quand ? Où ? Quel ? Comment ?* Weaker candidates did not understand these well and consequently gave irrelevant information which did not answer the set task. The vocabulary used in the role play questions was straightforward and usually notions of time and place were quite well understood.

On each card, the last three tasks were more challenging and gave candidates the opportunity to show that they could use past and future time frames correctly and give opinions and simple explanations. Candidates should remember that, on the role plays, brief answers can be awarded full marks provided they are correct and appropriate. Candidates should aim for concise answers that communicate their message clearly and without ambiguity. A useful technique for candidates to adopt in the 10-minute preparation time is to think

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very carefully about useful vocabulary and structures which could occur in their given role play scenario. Candidates should also think about the person with whom they are talking, the country they are in and the role that they are playing. Many candidates understood the key question *Pourquoi ?* and were usually able to give simple relevant reasons and opinions. In each role play, weaker candidates experienced some difficulty in answering in the time frame of the question and this made their responses ambiguous. **The best responses heard were ones in which the time frame matched the time frame of the question as this meant the message was relevant and communicated unambiguously.** Candidates also need to be aware that sometimes the form of register heard in questions is different according to the nature of the interaction and whether it is informal with a friend, or formal with a stranger when purchasing goods or obtaining services. On cards using the more formal *vous* form of address, candidates heard conjugations of verbs which they sometimes repeated inappropriately and did not conjugate the verb correctly in their answer, e.g. a question such as *Préférez-vous travailler à la réception ou dans le restaurant ?* was sometimes answered as je préférais/préférer which led to some ambiguity of time frame and prevented a mark of 2 from being scored.

Card 1 was found to be accessible and generally approached well by candidates. On **Task 1**, most candidates asked for chocolate cake and answered quite well but pronunciation of *chocolat* was not always clear. Some also found it hard to give a number of cakes on **Task 2** and did not immediately understand *Combien…?* in the question. On **Task 3**, most made a good attempt at the first part of the task but on the second part gave *delicious* instead of *délicieux.* On **Task 4**, most realised that they needed to say when they arrived in France on the first part of the task. Weaker candidates experienced time frame issues on the second part and thought they were being asked who had accompanied them rather than how they had travelled. On **Task 5**, most candidates said they would like to see the Eiffel Tower and/or the Louvre. Many found these difficult to pronounce correctly.

On **Card 2**, weaker candidates did not always understand *c'est pour qui ?* and sometimes said how much they required. Generally, most were able to give an appropriate number of bottles on **Task 2** but pronunciation of *deux* was often not clear. Those who chose to add *bouteille(s)* pronounced this better than in previous years. On **Task 3**, the stronger candidates could give longer reasons for liking to go to the beach such as *j'aime aller à la plage pour me détendre et pour faire du sport.* Shorter responses such as *j'aime nager* were equally relevant and also gained the marks. **Task 4** required candidates to say which other tourist attractions they had visited in the region and what they thought about it. Most were able to give a positive response here. **Task 5** sometimes needed repeating as some did not understand that future intentions were being cued with the use of *projets. Demain* however was generally understood better and most were able to answer in an appropriate time frame and give an appropriate tourist or leisure activity.

On **Card 3**, **Task 1**, some were unsure of the verb *louer* and those who used it sometimes pronounced it as *loyer* which added some ambiguity to their message. Most however were able to give a date when they wanted to rent the chalet from. The cue in **Task 2** was usually well understood with most able to give a time. In **Task 3**, *Comment…?* was not always recognised and this sometimes caused confusion as candidates replied instead with whom they were coming. They were then confused when the second question was heard asking with whom they were travelling. On **Task 4**, the stronger candidates recognised *la dernière fois* and were able to give a verb in an appropriate time frame and also an opinion as to what the experience had been like. **Task 5** was approached well with weaker candidates being able to express a preference and the stronger candidates giving a good reason for their preference.

Candidates generally made a good start to **Card 4**, and most could give a day clearly. **Task 2** required information about the price. Not all recognised the verb *coûter* but most were able to communicate how much it would be. **Task 3** proved a little more difficult for those who tried to give a fuller answer to say who was going with them. The second part of the task was also not well understood by weaker candidates who did not realise they were being asked about where they would sleep. Candidates answered **Task 4** a little more confidently. If a verb was used it needed to be expressed in a past time frame to communicate unambiguously. The second part of the task was done quite well. **Task 5** was done well with most being able to state a musical preference and give an appropriate reason for their preference.

Tasks 1 and **2** on **Card 5** were approached well by candidates with most being able to give their age more confidently and accurately than in the past. **Task 3** was less well done with many replying ambiguously and not stating clearly when they would be free and for how long. The stronger candidates were able to state when they could start and how long they could work. Some answered briefly just stating a date and also gave a brief response to the second part of the task, but this was often very appropriate and scored the marks. Those who chose to use a verb needed to ensure it was in a future time frame so that the message remained clear. On **Task 4**, a few candidates tried to say they had not worked before and consequently found the second part of the task difficult. Most candidates however were able to state where they had

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already worked and what it was like. **Task 5** was well done with most candidates able to state a preference and give an appropriate reason. Weaker candidates sometimes confused the time frame and only scored marks for partial completion of the task.

Card 6, **Task 1** was generally answered well as most understood *boisson*. On **Task 2**, a few examiners misread *magazines* as *magasins*. This led to confusion on the candidate's part. It is essential that all cues are read exactly as printed. Most candidates could however indicate what kind of magazine they wanted. **Task 3** was usually well understood, and most were able to give a sensible brief reason for their like or dislike of long-distance travel by plane, such as *c'est pratique* or *c'est rapide.* On **Task 4**, the stronger candidates could give details in accurate and appropriate language about what they had done in France and what souvenirs they had bought. **Task 5** was usually done a little less confidently. Some candidates did not always understand that the question was asking what they would be doing with their family rather than with friends. Any activity was accepted but if candidates made it clear that the family were not involved in any way then only partial achievement of the task was awarded.

Candidates made a good start to **Card 7** and gave a logical opening time in response to **Task 1**. **Task 2** was also well done by most. Occasionally weaker candidates said who they were going with rather than how they were getting there, showing they had not understood *Comment…?* On **Task 3**, some were not able to say when they had started swimming as they did not always recognise *Quand…?* The second part of the task was better done. **Task 4** was answered well with most able to give a simple reason. On **Task 5**, most indicated they would like to go to a restaurant or to the cinema and then gave an appropriate reason.

The first question on **Card 8**, *c'est pour qui ?* was not always well understood, with weaker candidates saying instead what they wanted to buy. On **Task 2**, a short answer stating a price was adequate for 2 marks. Any currency was accepted but the number had to be in French. Those who tried longer answers sometimes answered in inappropriate time frames and could not therefore gain 2 marks. Most were able to state what they wanted to buy for a present fairly clearly on **Task 3** but were not as successful on **Task 4**. The stronger candidates gave one or two details about what they had already bought in France, with most choosing items of food and drink, perfume or clothing. On **Task 5**, most gave their future plans in France, before returning home, as visiting the Eiffel Tower or the Louvre. Candidates could perhaps benefit from learning a slightly wider range of possible leisure and tourist activities.

On **Card 9**, weaker candidates did not always recognise *c'est combien ?* in **Task 1**, but most managed to give a price. Any currency was acceptable. Those who gave the price in *euros* often experienced difficulty in pronouncing it well. **Task 2** was generally done well but on **Task 3** only the stronger candidates coped well with the question asking about the weather. The second part of the task was approached better with most able to give a clear idea of what they would be wearing. **Task 4** was done more confidently with most saying they liked history or found it interesting. On **Task 5**, some weaker candidates responded saying what they would like to visit rather than what they had visited. Some had not read the scenario clearly and had not realised that the French friend was visiting them. Consequently, a variety of tourist attractions were given in a variety of countries and this was acceptable. The stronger candidates responded enthusiastically and could give a reason in a past time frame which went beyond the very straightforward *c'était bien* or *c'était intéressant*.

Topic conversations

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area in French just before the start of each conversation. The first three topics were based on one of the sub-topics of Areas A and B as listed in the syllabus. The last four topics were taken from one of the sub-topics in Areas C, D or E of the syllabus. All these sub-topics were familiar to candidates and a full range of performance was heard with each conversation having its easier and more challenging questions. The first two questions on each conversation were closed and straightforward in nature and were set at an easier level to start off the conversation. They could be answered briefly and with factual language, although stronger candidates took the opportunity to give more developed responses containing relevant details and this is something to encourage candidates to do. The time frame used in the first two questions was the present. The final three questions on each card were more open and required candidates to communicate relevantly in past and future time frames. Each topic conversation also gave candidates the opportunity to express opinions and give their reasons for their opinions. The topics were equally balanced in term of demand and each topic featured easier straightforward questions and others which were more challenging.

To help improve their performance, candidates need to be reminded to listen to the **whole** question and process it carefully before answering to ensure that their answers contain **relevant** information. Centres need to encourage candidates to try to develop their answers in a spontaneous way and also to try to

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develop a range of interesting opinions by learning useful structures and phrases. It is also a good thing to encourage them to develop their use of subject pronouns other than *je* as many candidates limited their conversation to the first person singular. The stronger candidates were also able to include subordination and a good range of linking phrases and conjunctions.

Topic 1, ***La santé***, was a familiar topic for candidates. A few candidates did not understand *fruits* on **Question 1** but most found this an easy starter question. Likewise, most could say how many litres of water they drink a day on **Question 2** although the pronunciation of *eau* was problematic for some. On **Question 3**, most candidates were able to give suitable reasons, although some responded saying whether they ate fast food or not rather than whether they liked it. On **Question 4**, a few candidates needed the alternative question. On this easier question, *te relaxer* was usually understood better than *te reposer*. Understanding the two reflexive verbs in the perfect tense in the question and the subsequent manipulation required when trying to convert *tu t'es senti(e)* to *je me suis senti(e)* proved challenging. Likewise, the concepts of *senti fatigué*(*e*) and *te reposer* were sometimes confused with being ill and needing a doctor. A few candidates missed out the idea of being tired altogether and instead gave answers including all kinds of energetic activities and consequently gave information which was irrelevant to the question. On **Question 5**, many candidates missed *plus de sport* and thought they were simply being asked if they liked sport. This led to some ambiguity and time frame errors. However, even if that was the case, they could still provide suitable reasons for wanting to exercise, so some relevant communication was usually achieved.

Topic 2, ***À la maison***, was approached fairly confidently by candidates. On **Question 1**, candidates generally knew the word *pièces* quite well and were able to say how many rooms they had at home. On this familiar material, many were also able to go on and list which rooms they were. **Question 2** was well done but weaker candidates struggled to say which floor their bedroom was on. Most were able to respond however with a range of suitable prepositions. Not all understood the phrase *plus tard dans la vie* on **Question 3** and thought they were being asked about their current home rather than a future home. Some good responses were developed by stronger candidates who gave good reasons for wanting a garden in the future. Some wanted to grow their own fruit and vegetables and others just wanted a pleasant place in which to relax. On **Question 4**, some candidates answered too quickly and did not register the *chez toi* in the question and that they were being asked about what they had done the evening before at home. Some examiners repeated *chez toi* and managed to get the candidate back on course, but a few candidates gave irrelevant answers such as that they had been to a restaurant or the cinema. Most however gave relevant activities that they had done at home. Some errors of time frame led to ambiguity of message for weaker candidates. On **Question 5**, only the best candidates were able to give a convincing explanation as to why young people should help parents with housework. Many instead resorted to outlining what they did at home. When the question was repeated, or the alternative question was used, some managed to say they should help as parents worked hard and were tired after work. Quite a few candidates confused the pronunciation of *jeunes* (heard in the question) with *gens.*

Topic 3, ***Les transports***, was done quite well by candidates although some showed the need to listen more carefully to the question as in some cases they answered too quickly and did not hear some vital words. On **Question 1**, some did not understand *public(s)* in *transport(s) public(s).* They consequently gave irrelevant information such as *je vais en ville en voiture.* **Question 2** was well done but those who tried to say more than one person in the family often could not conjugate *conduire* in a plural form. On **Question 3**, a few candidates talked about the advantages of electric cars rather than bikes. Here, examiners could have repeated the question to focus the candidate on the set question. Most were able to convey that electric bikes were a good thing and gave several different reasons why, such as not causing pollution, being better for the environment and being quiet and free to use. On **Question 4**, some did not listen carefully and did not realise that they were being asked about an *excursion* ***scolaire*** *en car.* Unless the examiner repeated the question and set them back on course, they gave information about a trip with their family instead. The second part of the task was done better with many talking about watching videos, playing video games, listening to music and playing cards. **Question 5** was approached quite confidently with most saying they would like a car. The best candidates were able to go on and say that they could go where they would like to go and be independent. A few candidates responded that they would not like a car of their own as it would be a danger for the planet.

On **Topic 4**, ***Les pays et les langues***, the first two questions were generally well understood but mispronunciations of *Inde* and *Asie* were very frequent. On **Question 3**, some did not register the *francophones* in the question. They consequently answered giving irrelevant detail about non francophone countries. Weaker candidates did not recognise the future time frame and talked about visits in the past. On **Question 4**, most were able to talk about at least one advantage of speaking a foreign language such as communicating more easily in a foreign country/with foreigners or working or studying abroad. On **Question 5**, only the best candidates were able to use *il y a* with a number of years. Many used *depuis*

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incorrectly and tried to say *j'ai commencé depuis.* Weaker candidates often struggled to conjugate correctly in a perfect tense. On the second part of the task, candidates sometimes needed to make use of the alternative question but were then able to say they had listened to, talked and written in French, watched films and TV, played games and done role plays.

Topic 5, ***L'éducation***, was generally approached well by candidates who seemed to be very familiar with the vocabulary required. The first two questions were generally answered well with most able to communicate relevantly and successfully. Stronger candidates were able to develop their answers beyond a number and some days in the week. Most understood **Question 3** well and were able to say what they had done the previous day during their lunch break. Weaker candidates found it difficult to maintain the past tense correctly throughout their answer. Nearly all candidates answering **Question 4** said that they preferred learning in class to learning online and most could usually justify this with good arguments. Many cited it was easier to learn with a teacher or it was less boring. Some just hated using computers all day and others wanted to be with friends. Candidates generally understood **Question 5**, but weaker candidates did not understand *devenir* and needed the easier alternative question. A few candidates thought that they were being asked if they liked their teachers, which was the wrong message.

Topic 6, ***L'éducation et le travail***, was approached well by candidates. **Questions 1** and **2** were generally answered well, although some candidates missed the *où* in **Question 2** and talked instead about how much homework they had rather than precisely where they did it. *Chez toi* was often missed in **Question 3** and candidates sometimes started talking about working in shops or cafes. This points to a clear need for all candidates not to answer the question too soon and to make sure they have understood it properly in full so that they respond relevantly. When the *chez toi* was picked up by candidates, they often listed a few household chores with no real reference to *petit travail* or getting any reward for it. Stronger candidates were able to say precisely what they had done to earn some pocket money, and some went on to develop either how they had spent or would spend it. **Question 4** provided a full range of responses from candidates. The stronger candidates understood *stage en entreprise* well and could answer why they thought it was a good idea with most stating that it would help them gain experience in the world of work or develop vital skills. Some required the alternative question but were not always fully aware of the meaning of *stage* so they talked about the general benefits of working in a company and earning money or a better salary which was not quite the focus of the question. Some mispronounced or misheard *jeunes* as *gens* and this introduced some ambiguity into some responses. On **Question 5**, not all understood *en plein air.* This was also, in a few cases, mispronounced in the question which made it harder for a few candidates to understand. Some candidates needed to hear the alternative question which used *à l'extérieur* in its wording. Most could state a preference for working (or not) outside and the stronger candidates could make a clear case for their preference.

Topic 7, ***Les coutumes et les fêtes***, was usually approached well by most candidates. **Question 1** was understood well and all could name a relevant festival or *fête* they preferred. On **Question 2**, some did not always hear the *où* and therefore gave irrelevant information in the response. **Question 3** was quite well done with most saying which festival they had attended but the weaker candidates found it more challenging to use appropriate time frames in the past when saying what the *fête* was like. On **Question 4**, *assister à* was often misunderstood. Some candidates thought they were being asked if they liked helping at weddings. A few candidates thought they were being asked if they wanted to get married. The alternative question was used often which meant that many were still able to give suitable reasons for liking weddings and the more able candidates could articulate their opinions and justifications with *je peux* or *on peut* plus an infinitive. **Question 5** was generally answered quite well but not all understood the irregular future conjugation *feras* in the question. The alternative question, when required, was well understood and even the weaker candidates made a good attempt at this last question. Most said they would go to parties, a restaurant with friends or go on a holiday with their family.

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FRENCH

Paper 0520/42
Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to:

- use single words and not to reuse examples when completing the form in **Question 1**
- respond to all parts of **Question 2** in the tense indicated
- use simple linking words in **Question 2**, for example when giving opinions/explanations
- choose the option in **Question 3** which allows them to show what they know
- give brief additional details in response to individual tasks in **Question 3**
- plan and organise answers into a coherent piece of writing, using extended sentences where possible.

General comments

Candidates must remember to frame their answers in the tense used in each individual task. In both **Question 2** and **Question 3**, some candidates responded in a different tense from the one indicated and did not fulfil the requirements for *Task completion*.

It is important to be able to understand and adapt the rubric. In **Question 3(a)**, candidates tended to ignore the use of the imperfect tense in the first task. With regard to the opinion of parents, the answer could be easily framed by simple adaptation e.g. *mes parents pensent…* In **Question 3(b)**, a simple adaption of the rubric provided the basis for a coherent response to the idea of keeping fit and healthy e.g. *il faut manger…*

Some structures presented problems for candidates. The verb *parler* was often used instead of *dire*, e.g. *le médecin m'a parlé 'il faut rester au lit'.* The verb *rester* means to stay but some candidates used it to mean to rest. There were also many instances in both **Question 2** and **Question 3** where candidates wanted to convey the idea of relaxing; there are three verbs to express this notion and they are all reflexive verbs: *se détendre*, *se relaxer*, *se reposer.* Reflexive verbs were also useful in **Question 3(b)** to explain the detail of the injury e.g. *je me suis blessé le bras*, *je me suis cassé la jambe*, *je me suis coupé la main.* The verb *rendre* rather than *faire* is needed with an adjective to convey the impact of an incident e.g. *ça me rend triste, ça m'a rendu malade.* With a noun, it is appropriate to use *faire* e.g. *ça m'a fait peur*.

Few candidates crossed out important details to meet the recommended word count. Rash editing can significantly reduce marks. The aim should be to respond within the word count but if an answer is longer than recommended, the whole piece will still be considered. Short pieces will not display the expected range of detail and linguistic variety, overlong answers are at risk of being less accurate.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Vous commandez des vêtements en ligne.

Overall, candidates answered this question well. For Gaps 1, 3 and 4, candidates often answered with *chemise*, *jupe*, *manteau*, *pantalon*, *pull*, *robe*, *short.* Most candidates could identify a colour for Gap 2. For Gap 5, the most popular answers were *ceinture*, *chaussettes*, *chaussures*, *cravate*, *écharpe*. Other items which might complete an outfit were also rewarded e.g. *boucles d'oreille*, *bracelet*, *collier*, *lunettes de soleil*, *montre*.

Some candidates were a little uncertain about correct spelling e.g. *chausseurs*, *joggeurs* which have different meanings.

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Question 2: La pause-déjeuner à l'école

There were many ways of conveying the duration of the lunch break in **Task 1**, e.g. *nous avons trente minutes pour la pause, la pause commence à midi et finit à une heure.* Some candidates used *minuits* rather than *minutes.* Others misunderstood the task and answered with how many breaks they had during the day, e.g. *il y a deux pauses chaque jour.*

In **Task 2**, candidates were able to state what they usually eat and drink e.g. *je mange du poulet et du riz*, *je bois de l'eau.* Common errors in the verb compromised the message e.g. *je manger*, *je prend.* The perfect tense, e.g. *j'ai mangé*, appeared frequently. Candidates must respond in the tense indicated.

Candidates were divided in **Task 3** and arguments for and against doing homework at lunchtime were given. Many wanted to convey the idea of relaxing whether at lunchtime or after school, but they did not remember that the verbs are reflexive e.g. *je veux **me** détendre / **me** relaxer / **me** reposer.*

Candidates successfully conveyed their other lunchtime activities in **Task 4**, often giving a number of additional details. A correct present tense was expected e.g. *je joue au foot, je bavarde avec mes amis, je vais à la bibliothèque.*

Overall, candidates understood **Task 5**, but they were often not successful. The simple response is often the easiest and the most successful e.g. *je voudrais avoir plus de temps, je voudrais utiliser mon portable, je voudrais pouvoir aller en ville.* Many candidates used *changement* as a verb.

Candidates showed that they were able to produce sentences of varying length, sometimes with simple linkage and on occasion with more complex language. Candidates were able to express their ideas largely within the recommended word count and the few who wrote more than was required did not randomly cross out correct and required information.

Question 3(a): Mon ordinateur

28% of candidates chose this question.

Task completion

All bullet points must be answered in the correct tense/time frame and in the correct person, and appropriate opinions/reactions/explanations must be communicated where required by the task in order to gain full marks for *Task completion*. A mismatch between the subject and the verb will result in ambiguity and the message not being communicated clearly.

For **Task 1**, candidates were free to give any kind of relevant detail regarding the breakdown of their computer e.g. *je regardais un film, je mangeais mon dîner quand mon portable est tombé en panne.* The imperfect tense was often the most appropriate tense in the context.

Reactions to the breakdown varied in **Task 2**, e.g. *j'étais furieux, j'ai eu peur, j'ai parlé à l'informaticien.* Some candidates gave explanations as additional detail e.g. *parce que j'ai perdu tous mes documents / mon travail scolaire.*

For **Task 3**, candidates offered a range of reasons why their computer matters to them. This was the easiest of the tasks, but candidates needed to use the present tense.

For **Task 4**, regarding their parents' opinion of use of the computer, those who kept their ideas simple were generally more successful. There were more negative opinions (e.g. *mes parents pensent que je passe trop de temps devant l'écran*) than positive ones (e.g. *mes parents sont contents que j'utilise la technologie moderne*).

Many candidates stated that they would like to work in the field of technology for **Task 5**, e.g. *je voudrais travailler dans la technologie parce que c'est un emploi bien payé.* Candidates who stated that they did not want to work in this area often explained that they had a different career in mind, e.g. *je voudrais devenir avocat*, *je voudrais être médecin.*

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Range

Many candidates demonstrated that they could organise their answers using simple conjunctions e.g. *alors, donc*, *enfin*, *en plus*, *pourtant* and give explanations using *parce que* and *car.* Such candidates reached the standard broadly outlined by the descriptors in the 5–6 band. There were few candidates who gained marks above that level and their work was characterised by frequent examples of complex structures often combined into longer sequences of language, e.g. *j'ai appelé mon père pour lui dire ce qui s'est passé, j'ai été choqué parce que cela n'est jamais arrivé avant, mes parents pensent que je gaspille beaucoup de temps à jouer au lieu de me concentrer sur mes études.*

To access high marks for *Range*, candidates need to include a greater variety of linking words, e.g. relative pronouns and conjunctions, and use more complex structures. The use of object pronouns, infinitives after prepositions or modal verbs, comparisons and adverbs would enhance the complexity of their writing.

Accuracy

There were numerous incorrect spellings of *parce que* which compromised the intended meaning e.g. *pas que*, *parc que*, *parse que*. Candidates should also remember that elision is sometimes required e.g. *parce qu'il est utile.*

Candidates should copy carefully from the question paper (e.g. *la technologie*) and they should be able to make simple adaptations of structures in the rubric e.g. *mes parents pensent* and not *mon parents pensent.*

The accuracy of spelling, gender, use of the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. Candidates need to spend time checking the accuracy of their essay. Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. It is vital that candidates show their ability to manipulate verbs consistently in a variety of tenses and persons.

Question 3(b): Passer du temps à la maison

This was by far the more popular question, chosen by 72% of candidates.

Task completion

All bullet points must be answered in the correct tense/time frame and in the correct person, and appropriate opinions/reactions/explanations must be communicated where required by the task in order to gain full marks for *Task completion*. A mismatch between the subject and the verb will result in ambiguity and the message not being communicated clearly.

For **Task 1**, many candidates gave the most obvious explanation to describe what happened, e.g. *je suis tombée pendant que je jouais au foot, je suis tombé de ma bicyclette pendant une promenade.* Candidates did not always recognise the need for an imperfect tense when using *pendant*. Many candidates did not give any context and just repeated the detail of the rubric.

Task 2 was straightforward, e.g. *je fais mes devoirs, je regarde la télévision*, but many candidates wrote in the past tense instead of the present.

The easiest way to respond to **Task 3** was to adapt the rubric e.g. *il faut faire du yoga, il faut manger beaucoup de fruits et de légumes.* Some wrote *il est nécessaire de rester au lit* and others suggested *je dois beaucoup dormir*, which was acceptable. Answers such as *je mange régulièrement, je me repose, je fais une petite promenade dans le jardin* did not convey fully the sense required by the task.

Candidates found many disadvantages to being obliged to stay at home for **Task 4**. The most popular answers were *je suis seule à la maison*, *je ne peux pas voir mes amis*, *je ne peux pas jouer au foot.* Some successfully wrote that it is boring/wearisome, but candidates often used *ennuyé* and *fatigué* instead of *ennuyeux* and *fatigant.*

For **Task 5**, successful candidates used a future tense to say what they will do when they are able to go out again e.g. *je vais manger au restaurant*, *je vais faire des courses en ville.* Some candidates used the simple future successfully e.g. *j'irai à la piscine*, *je ferai une promenade.*

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Range

There were some well organised accounts which met the criteria outlined in the 5–6 band. A small proportion of candidates reached the 7–8 band as they used some more complex language e.g. *je suis tombée en jouant au foot, le médecin m'a donné des médicaments, j'essaie de rester en forme en mangeant sainement et en évitant les sucreries, je suis triste quelquefois quand je pense à mes amis qui s'amusent sans moi.*

To access high marks for *Range*, candidates need to include a greater variety of linking words, e.g. relative pronouns and conjunctions, and use more complex structures. The use of object pronouns, infinitives after prepositions or modal verbs, comparisons and adverbs would enhance the complexity of their writing.

Accuracy

Some candidates confused *ennuyé* and *ennuyeux* and often misspelt them. Other commonly misspelt words included: *beaucoup*, *exercice*, *médecin*, *nourriture.* Sometimes the error compromised the meaning.

Candidates should be reminded about where to place adverbs as these were often wrongly put before the verb e.g. *je aussi regarde la télé*, *je toujours mange sainement.*

The accuracy of spelling, gender, use of the appropriate article, placing and agreement of adjectives and elision are all critical, as is the correct choice of verb tense and form. Candidates need to spend time checking the accuracy of their essay. Verbs are critical to the effective passing of information. It is vital that candidates show their ability to manipulate verbs consistently in a variety of tenses and persons.

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