

FRENCH

Paper 9716/01
Speaking

Key messages

For Teachers/examiners:

- Keep to the timings prescribed for the examination (see below).
- Prompt candidates to ask questions during/at the end of each conversation section, but keep your own answers brief. A candidate cannot qualify for marks while the Examiner is speaking.
- More than one question per section is required for candidates to qualify for full marks under *Seeking Information/Opinions* and Examiners should be prepared to prompt candidates for several questions to enable them to have access to the full range of marks.
- Candidates' questions should relate to the topic under discussion. Please see the Mark Scheme.
- Cover a range of topics (not a single topic) in the General Conversation, some in depth, vary questions and topics from one candidate to another, be prepared to identify and follow the interests and passions of the candidate (not your own), and keep your own contributions to a minimum.
- Create as natural a conversation as possible, interact with the candidate and avoid lists of pre-prepared questions, especially those which elicit one-word or purely factual answers.
- Avoid asking each candidate the same questions on the same topic.
- Avoid topics of a highly personal or sensitive nature.
- Ask questions at an appropriate level and avoid IGCSE-type questions except as openers to fuller discussion.
- Ask questions clearly and concisely. Elaborate and/or unclear questions tend to unnerve candidates.
- It is the Examiner's responsibility to introduce the candidate at the beginning of the examination, not the candidate's.
- It is not helpful to use 'Maintenant, présente-toi...' as an opener for the General Conversation, as this tends to restrict discussion to a very narrow range of subjects.
- It is not a requirement of the examination for candidates to give their profile at the beginning.
- If the candidate's Topic Presentation is not related to a francophone country or society, the mark for Content/Presentation must be halved. (See published mark scheme.)

For candidates:

- Make sure that the presentation is not just factual, but contains ideas and opinions and also allows further discussion in the Topic Conversation.
- Ask questions of the Examiner in both conversation sections and make every effort to ask more than one question on the topic or topics under discussion in order to qualify for the full range of marks under *Seeking Information/Opinions*. Make sure your questions are relevant to the topic under discussion.
- Remember that the Topic Presentation must make clear reference to a francophone culture or society: *The presentation must demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a country where the target language is spoken*. This must be more than a passing reference, and candidates who live in a francophone country and who speak about an aspect of their own culture must make it clear beyond doubt to which country they are referring. If the Topic Presentation is not related to a francophone country or society, the mark for Content/Presentation will be halved.
- Candidates are advised that it is better not to ask the Examiner direct questions during the Topic Presentation, as they disrupt the flow of the Presentation and do not count towards *Seeking Information/Opinions* in the conversation sections.
- Rhetorical questions are not a requirement of the Test, but they may constitute, if desired, an appropriate part of the Presentation. However, candidates should be aware that they do not count towards *Seeking Information/Opinions* in the conversation sections.
- It is not in the spirit of the examination that candidates ask their Teacher/Examiner for key (or indeed any) vocabulary.

General comments

It is important for Examiners to remember that this examination is an opportunity for candidates to show what they have learnt and a chance for them to express and develop their own ideas and opinions. Examiners should see their role as providing and facilitating this opportunity.

The way in which an Examiner asks a question can make a huge difference to how a candidate is able to respond. Examiners need to be aware that:

- Very long, complex questions tend to unnerve candidates and rarely facilitate discussion.
- Closed questions usually elicit short answers, sometimes just yes or no, and should be avoided unless they are intended to open the way for a deeper discussion.
- Open questions such as *Comment?* or *Pourquoi?* are more likely to allow a candidate the freedom to answer at much greater length and in greater depth.

The examination should be a conversation, which can only be achieved by engaging with and responding to what the candidate says, not by asking a series of entirely unrelated questions with no follow-up. Going through a list of pre-prepared questions rarely results in a natural conversation and is not in the spirit of the examination.

Administration

Recordings

Recordings this year were mainly clear, though there are still examples of faulty recording equipment. Examiners must check the equipment before using it and ensure that the microphone favours the candidate without losing the Examiner's own contribution. There were a number of centres where the Examiner was completely audible and the candidate distant and hard to hear. This issue was not necessarily related to social distancing in the examination room or conducting the Test remotely.

Please choose a room which is quiet and where candidates are not distracted by external noise. Every year there are centres where there is excessive background noise.

Only the Examiner and the candidate should be present during the examination. If a third person is required to be present, for example a carer, permission must be obtained in advance from Cambridge Assessment.

Centres should keep a copy of the recording(s) in case a second copy is required by the Moderator or a broader range of marks is requested. Please make sure that the recordings have successfully transferred to the CD or memory stick submitted for moderation. We receive blank or distorted disks every year.

Where centres use digital recording software, each candidate's file must be saved individually, as .mp files, and finalised correctly, so that each candidate's examination can be accessed for moderation. Files should be identified using precise candidate details (see the paragraph below) rather than just 'number 1, 2' etc. Please ensure that all recording material (including CD cases) is labelled with details of the centre, syllabus, and candidates, listed with their full names and candidate numbers in the order of recording. Where a centre has candidates at both A & AS level, they should be recorded on separate CDs.

Centres are reminded that the sample of recordings they send should represent candidates throughout the range of the entry, from highest to lowest. For the size of sample needed, please see the guidance on the Cambridge International website.

Please avoid sticky tape or labels coming into contact with the recording side of CDs, as this makes them unplayable and runs the risk of damaging the equipment on which they are played.

Centres must submit their moderation samples in a timely fashion by the published deadline or they risk their results being delayed or not issued.

Paperwork

Centres are reminded that for moderation, in addition to the recordings, they need to send the Working Mark Sheet, a copy of the MS1 (computer mark sheet or equivalent), and any other relevant paperwork. There are always a number of clerical errors, either in the addition of marks or in transferring them to the MS1. These

should be checked carefully before submission and also that all necessary paperwork is present and enclosed with the recordings.

Application of Mark Scheme

There were a number of irregularities in the application of the Mark Scheme:

- Several centres awarded marks out of 10 for *Providing* and/or *Seeking Opinions*, when the maximum is 5; others awarded marks for *Seeking Opinions*, even when the candidate had not asked any questions.
- The Mark Scheme makes no provision for awarding half marks. Half marks should not be awarded under any circumstances.
- Many Examiners do not halve the mark for *Presentation/Content* if the candidate's topic is not demonstrably and unequivocally related to a francophone country.
- Where a centre engages two Examiners to examine the same syllabus, Examiners must standardise marks before submitting them to CIE for moderation and provide evidence of standardisation having taken place.

Format of the examination

There are 3 distinct parts to the Speaking Test:

1. Presentation – (3–3.5 minutes)
2. Topic Conversation – (7–8 minutes)
3. General Conversation – (8–9 minutes)

The Speaking Test should last no more than 20 minutes and no less than 18 minutes in total.

In order to be fair to all candidates across the world, these timings should be observed meticulously. When examinations are too short, candidates are not given opportunities to show what they can do, and when conversations are over-extended, an element of fatigue creeps in and candidates often struggle to maintain their concentration and level of language.

Examiners must also remember that the longer they spend on their own contributions, the less time candidates have to develop their ideas. Responses to questions asked by candidates should be kept brief.

Presentation (3 to 3.5 minutes)

In this part of the examination, the candidate gives a **single** presentation on a specific topic of his or her choice, taken from one of the topic areas listed in the syllabus booklet. This is the only prepared part of the examination and the only part for which candidates are able to choose what they want to talk about. Candidates should only present ONE topic and the Topic Conversation which follows will seek to develop that same topic. There were a number of cases this series where candidates spoke on more than one topic.

The topic list gives candidates a very wide choice – the most popular this year, at both A and AS Levels, were *La Pandémie*, *L'enseignement à distance*, *La Technologie*, *L'égalité des sexes*, *Les Médias Sociaux*, *Le Conflit des Générations*, *Le Sport*, *La Famille*, *Le Tourisme*, *L'environnement* and *La Pollution*. A few candidates spoke about culture or politics in a French-speaking country, as well as personal interests such as art or music. Some of the most interesting presentations managed to relate their chosen topic to a whole range of social and political issues.

For the most part, candidates were clearly aware of the need, stated in the syllabus, that the presentation **must** demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a country where the target language is spoken. Where this is not the case, candidates will have their mark for *Content/Presentation* halved by the Examiner (see published mark scheme).

Since the topic is chosen beforehand, candidates usually research quite widely, and have to select and structure their material to fit into 3 to 3.5 minutes – additional material which cannot be included in the actual presentation because of the time constraint may well prove very useful in the topic conversation section. In general, candidates had no problem speaking for the required time and many were able to give full and interesting presentations.

Candidates would be well advised to steer clear of very factual subjects e.g. *La famille* and *Le Sport*. The mark scheme criteria for the *Content/Presentation* element makes it clear that in order to score well, the presentation should contain not just factual points, but ideas and opinions. Candidates need to think carefully before making their final choice and consider whether it will be possible to develop and expand their chosen topic. Sport and family, though popular choices, are often the least successful for that reason.

Increasingly, candidates spend time giving dictionary definitions of very familiar topics at the expense of expressing their own ideas and opinions.

A few candidates this series gave Topic Presentations which were far too short. On the other hand, if a candidate goes over time, it is the Examiner's responsibility to draw the Presentation to a close after 3.5 minutes.

Topic Conversation (7 to 8 minutes)

In this section, candidates have the chance to expand on what they have already said and develop ideas and opinions expressed briefly during the presentation. Examiners need to beware of merely asking questions which allow a repetition of the same material already offered – their aim should be to ask more probing questions in order to give candidates opportunities to expand on their original statements and then respond to what the candidate says. There are not necessarily 'right' answers either here or in the General Conversation section and it is in the nature of a genuine conversation that those taking part may not agree with opinions expressed. However, differences of opinion can create lively debate (if handled sensitively and purposefully by the Examiner) and can give candidates the opportunity to defend their point of view.

At both A and AS Level, questions should go beyond the sort of questions appropriate at IGCSE Level. Candidates need to be able to show that they are capable of taking part in a mature conversation. In some cases, candidates were not able to offer much development or sustain the level of language used in their presentation, but others were successful in expressing additional ideas and seeking the opinions of the Examiner.

In each conversation section there are 5 marks available for questions the candidates ask of the Examiner: they should ask more than one question in each conversation section and it is the Examiner's responsibility to prompt them to do so. Examiners should make sure that they do not spend too long on their own answers to candidates' questions, thereby depriving candidates of valuable time.

Examiners should note that they must indicate the end of the Topic Conversation and the beginning of the General Conversation.

General Conversation (8 to 9 minutes)

The General Conversation is the most spontaneous section of the examination. Candidates will have prepared their own choice of topic for the Topic Presentation (to be continued in the Topic Conversation), but here they do not know what the Examiner will choose to discuss (and it is the Examiner who chooses, not the candidate). Clearly the areas of discussion will be those studied during the course, but there seemed to be fewer varied and in-depth discussions this series. In a centre with a number of candidates, candidates should not all be asked to talk about the same list of subjects – themes should be varied from candidate to candidate and should on no account return to the original subject of the presentation.

This section is intended to be a conversation between Examiner and candidate, so it is not appropriate for the Examiner to ask a series of unrelated questions, to which the candidate responds with a prepared answer, after which the Examiner moves on to the next question on the list! Examiners should display sensitivity in asking questions about topics of a personal nature i.e. religion and personal relationships and should try to keep their questions general rather than moving inappropriately into personal areas. Examiners should not regard the examination as a platform for imposing their own views on the candidates.

Examiners should aim to discuss a minimum of 2 to 3 areas in **depth**, giving candidates opportunities to offer their own opinions and defend them in discussion. Although the section may begin with straightforward questions about family, interests or future plans, which can, in themselves, be developed beyond the purely factual (questions asking 'Why?' or 'How?' are useful here), candidates at both A and AS Level should be prepared for the conversation to move on to current affairs and more abstract topics appropriate to this level of examination.

Candidates should be prompted to ask questions of the Examiner in order to give them the opportunity to score marks for this criterion, though Examiners should once again be wary of answering at too great a length.

A significant number of Examiners only covered one topic in this section. Many Examiners asked very basic questions which were not appropriate to this level.

Assessment

The greatest causes of difference were where marks had been awarded for asking questions where none had actually been asked or where Topic Presentations did not relate to a francophone country, in which case the mark for Content/Presentation must be halved.

A handful of Examiners also found it difficult to establish an acceptable level for *Comprehension/Responsiveness, Accuracy and Feel for the Language*, while others found it tricky to differentiate between the bands for *Pronunciation/Intonation*.

In rare cases, Examiners misapplied the mark scheme, most frequently by awarding marks out of 10 for those categories like *Pronunciation/Intonation* and *Seeking Opinions* which carry a maximum of 5 marks. Examiners at centres with a large entry of able candidates should be aware that marks may be bunched and that it may be impossible to differentiate between candidates to a greater degree than the Mark Scheme allows.

Where candidates ask questions to elicit clarification or obtain information during the course of conversation, they should clearly be rewarded, but Examiners must remember to prompt candidates in both conversation sections – the mark scheme gives the criteria for awarding marks for this element of the examination and these marks should be awarded regardless of whether questions are spontaneous or prompted, provided that they are relevant to the topic under discussion. A significant number of candidates this series had prepared questions which were not relevant.

Centres are reminded that, if at all possible, they should engage only one Examiner per syllabus. In cases where the engagement of two or more Examiners on the same syllabus is unavoidable, the Examiners must co-ordinate with each other to establish an agreed standard and submit evidence of standardisation with the Moderation Sample.

FRENCH

Paper 9716/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

- In **Question 1**, the word or words chosen as the answer must be interchangeable in all respects with the word or words given in the question. Additional or missing words invalidate the answer.
- In **Question 2**, candidates are required to manipulate the sentence grammatically, not to alter its vocabulary or meaning unnecessarily.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not simply 'lift' (copy/cut and paste) items unaltered from the text. They need to manipulate the text in some way, re-phrasing by using different vocabulary or structures.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should **not** begin the answer by writing out the question.
- In **Question 5**, any material in excess of the word limit is ignored. Candidates should not write a general introduction.
- In **Question 5(b)**, candidates should be encouraged to venture some brief relevant ideas of their own without confining themselves to the material contained in the text.

General comments

The paper produced the usual broad spread of performance. At the top of the range, there were very good scripts from able candidates who were well versed in handling the various tasks, whilst there were others at the opposite end whose level of linguistic competence and knowledge was very much stretched by what was being asked of them.

There were few signs of undue time pressure, with most candidates managing to attempt all questions, although quite a lot of answers in **Questions 3 and 4** were unnecessarily lengthy. Most of the questions on this paper could be answered in short sentences containing straightforward grammar and vocabulary, but some candidates still over-complicate things.

Many candidates still feel the need to incorporate the words of the question as an unnecessary preamble to the answer, which not only wastes time for both candidate and marker, but also potentially introduces linguistic errors which can detract significantly from the overall impression for the Quality of Language mark – e.g. *Notre attitude envers chacun des deux secteurs est-elle différente... (3(a))* ; *La production du coton a-t-elle aussi un impact négatif... (3(d))* ; *Ce choix contribue-t-il à la pollution... (3(d))* ; *Les enfants sont-ils particulièrement exploités... (3(f))*. Answers beginning with *parce que* and *en* are quite in order, indeed usually preferable.

Candidates would also do well to look at the number of marks awarded for each question (indicated in square brackets) as a guide to the number of points to be made.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, it is encouraging to note that copying wholesale from the text has diminished in recent series, with more candidates understanding how to 'work' the text to avoid 'lifting' (copying) items from the text, but it remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' items directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks at this level. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. They should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes (e.g.

transforming nouns into verbs or finding a simple synonym) or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3** and **4** below.

Candidates often sensibly substituted verbs for nouns when the question suggested it, although occasionally leaving the job unfinished with *émettre de CO₂* (from *l'émission de CO₂* **3(b)**), *choisir de vêtements* (from *le choix de vêtements* **4(d)**), *réduire du nombre de vêtements* (from *réduction du nombre de vêtements* **4(d)**), *incinérer de leurs vêtements* (from *l'incinération de leurs vêtements* **4(f)**), *dégrader de leur image* (from *la dégradation de leur image* **4(f)**). This betrayed a lack of understanding sufficient to invalidate the answer.

The paper ties the questions (and therefore the answers) to specific paragraphs (or occasionally to specific lines) in the texts.

In **Question 1**, candidates nowadays appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e., the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing.

Question 2, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary for its own sake. Candidates should therefore aim to make the minimum changes necessary, whilst retaining as many elements of the original as possible. They need to be aware, however, that alterations made to one part of the sentence are likely to have grammatical implications elsewhere, particularly in matters of agreement. **Candidates should not attempt to cut corners by omitting the prompt at the start of their answers.**

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both sections, 90–100 words for the summary of specific points made in the original texts and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond the word limit is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Summary automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response.** Although there has been a marked improvement in this respect in recent sessions, some candidates still write answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin, meaning that many good answers to the **Personal Response** cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. It appears that candidates are still unnecessarily afraid of being penalised for not introducing the topic. It is not rare for a candidate to waste (literally pointlessly) 25 per cent of the word allowance which is already tight to make ten points. From the outset, candidates need to make their points as succinctly as possible and move on to the other nine. It is a summary/*résumé/précis* of specific points from the texts that is required in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay.

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore, *il y a* is three words, as is *qu'est-ce que c'est?*

The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning and editing their material with the word limit in mind, but other scripts were littered with crossings-out, which did little to improve standards of presentation and legibility.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was a relatively straightforward first exercise which enabled a fair proportion of candidates to get off to a positive start.

Candidates should try to narrow down the choice by identifying the part of speech involved, but they should also realise that this in itself may not provide the right answer if meaning is ignored in the process.

Item (a) was often successfully identified, but a good number jumped at *gaspillage* as a related piece of vocabulary without considering whether it actually fitted the footprint left by *aux ordures*. Others omitted the à before *poubelle*, without which the text would make no sense.

Item (b) proved the most straightforward and successfully handled, despite *inférieur* being offered by some.

Item (c) proved more elusive, with *la production*, *l'émission* and *la consommation* all appearing and the omission of *sur* destroying the meaning.

Item (d) was even more often incorrect, with *impact*, *conséquences* and *répercussions* being offered, instead *plus* as the straightforward replacement for *davantage*.

Item (e) was misunderstood by a fair number who suggested *les vols* (presumably attracted by the plural) rather than *le transport maritime*.

Question 2

There were some excellent answers to this question from the strong candidates, but the task proved quite demanding for candidates with an inadequate command of grammatical structures, or who failed to observe the basic rules of agreement – an increasingly common feature.

In **Item 2(a)**, the transfer into direct speech required a switch to the first person plural which defeated some who then faced further problems with softening the *g* in *encourageons*.

Item 2(b) was better handled, although some forgot to make *comptés* agree, and others missed the point with *ne comptent pas*.

In **Item 2(c)**, a fair number appreciated the need for a subjunctive after *regretter que*, but some struggled to form it correctly (*aie*, *ais*, *ai*, *est*) or else omitted the *y* from *il y ait*.

In **Item 2(d)** some candidates erroneously offered *jètent* or even *jètes*.

In **Item 2(e)**, some candidates correctly offered *après avoir été déversés* or *après être déversés*. *Après qu'ils...* was an acceptable alternative, but *après ils sont déversés*, *après d'être...* and *après étant...* were clearly not.

Question 3

In **Item 3(a)**, successful candidates referred to the wasting of both food and clothing to score the first mark. Rather fewer made the distinction in the levels of public awareness/concern between the two sectors, with quite a number simply saying that *le gaspillage vestimentaire est inférieur*.

In **Item 3(b)**, the majority of candidates correctly identified *l'industrie pétrolière* as the main source of damage. Fewer managed to find the a correct verb to replace *émission* (as sign-posted in the question by *Que fait l'industrie... ?*)

In **Item 3(c)**, the first mark was usually successfully scored, although *consumer* was quite commonly offered. Some missed the second mark by omitting the fact the agricultural land was being used for non-food production, whilst others found it difficult to express the future need to clothe more people.

In **Item 3(d)**, the first two marks were scored by those candidates who identified the use of non-biodegradable products/substances and pesticides which damage the soil, although the use of *chimiques* as a noun was not rewarded. Most went on to score the third mark by pointing out the very large amounts of water involved in the production of cotton.

Item 3(e) was generally well understood and answered by those who didn't attempt to use *disposer* to mean 'dispose of' or *les produits usés* to mean 'the products that are used', or the use of *attendre* for *atteindre*.

In **Item 3(f)**, successful candidates scored the first mark by pointing to low wages, and the second by highlighting the pollution caused by burning fossil fuels to transport the goods across the world. The third mark required mention of both cardboard to package the goods and the cutting-down of trees to produce the cardboard, of which candidates often managed to identify only one.

Question 4

Item 4(a) saw both marks successfully scored by most candidates.

Item 4(b) required simple definitions as evidence of comprehension. The question *À quoi servent... ?* was not always understood, and the use of *une place* in some answers led to confusion, as did *les fabriques* to mean fabrics.

Item 4(c) was again successfully answered except by a few who misinterpreted *gaz* as 'petrol'.

In **Item 4(d)**, candidates generally heeded the nudge in the question (*Que pourrions-nous faire...*) and answered using a verb: *réduire le nombre* (not *numéro*) *de...*, or *acheter moins de...* for the first mark. There was quite a lot of easily avoided 'lifting' of *vêtements d'une plus longue durabilité* for the second mark. The third suggestion appeared to be regularly understood, but there was widespread mangling of the *avoir besoin de* construction: *si c'est un article vous besoin (de)*.

In **Item 4(e)**, a number of candidates found unexpected difficulty in expressing the fact that younger siblings were not happy to receive cast-offs (*les frères et sœurs n'heureusent pas*). One understood the verb *trainer* as referring to sporting footwear and several others invented *reventer* and *distributer*, but most scored all three marks by providing three simple sentences.

In **Item 4(f)**, candidates generally understood what was required for the first two marks and found appropriate verbs to express their answers without 'lifting' *destruction*, *incineration* and *degradation*. A pleasing number found good ways of explaining *le gouvernement fait la sourde oreille*, but a few met with less success with *les protestes/complaintes/manifestations*.

Question 5(a) (Summary)

See **General comments** earlier for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction.

The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points leading to a maximum score of 10, of which candidates often managed a good number. Most understood how to set about the task, although some simply copied out verbatim chunks of the text, which although they may have chanced upon some rewardable material for content, risked a reduction in the Quality of Language mark for excessive reliance on the text.

The most commonly identified harmful effects included:

- Impact on the environment/emission of CO₂/global warming
- Use of limited natural resources/agricultural land
- Damage caused by pesticides
- Pollution of rivers/seas
- Deforestation

The most commonly identified ways of limiting these effects included:

- Buying fewer garments/responsibly
- Choosing garments which last longer
- Handing them down to siblings
- Reselling them
- Giving them away through charitable organisations
- Banning incineration of unsold products

Question 5(b) (Personal Response)

The Personal Response asked why people buy so many clothes nowadays. Common answers included the desire to keep up with ever-changing fashions, low prices, availability, advertising, celebrities, the influence of friends and peer pressure, social media etc. The highest marks tended to be scored by those who made a conscious effort to move beyond the ideas contained in the text and to venture something of their own.

Quality of Language

The strongest candidates displayed confidence and competence in their use of the language, whilst the weakest struggled with the basic nuts and bolts which hold the language together, which inevitably limited their ability to transmit the required facts and opinions effectively.

This was particularly in evidence in the agreement (or lack of it) of adjectives with their nouns and verbs with their subjects (and even the process of making nouns plural), which appeared largely random in a number of scripts. Some candidates seemed to be unaware of the need to make any agreements at all. It is tempting to put this down to a lack of checking – and this is no doubt a major contributing factor – but one suspects that the problem may in some cases be much deeper than this.

There were difficulties in conjugating some of the most common irregular verbs: *faire, mettre, pouvoir, devoir*, and constructions following other common verbs also caused problems: *aider, permettre, demander*.

The approach to spelling was in some cases phonetic, even in very common words: *asser, esque* (est-ce que), *quantent* (content), *otre chose, sa vas entrai dans les riviere, les effets de sert*.

All of which said, most candidates were usually able to express what they wanted to say in a broadly comprehensible fashion, and the strongest wrote fluently and accurately, demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and idiom and a commendable control of structure.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9716/23 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

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- In **Question 2**, candidates are required to manipulate the sentence grammatically, not to alter its vocabulary or meaning unnecessarily.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should not simply 'lift' (copy/cut and paste) items unaltered from the text. They need to manipulate the text in some way, re-phrasing by using different vocabulary or structures.
- In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates should **not** begin the answer by writing out the question.
- In **Question 5**, any material in excess of the word limit is ignored. Candidates should not write a general introduction.
- In **Question 5(b)**, candidates should be encouraged to venture some brief relevant ideas of their own without confining themselves to the material contained in the text.

General comments

Legibility was sometimes a significant issue, with extremely poor or minute handwriting making marking problematic.

There were a number of very good scripts from candidates who were well versed in handling the various tasks, but there were others at the opposite end of the range of those whose level of linguistic competence and knowledge was very much stretched by what was being asked of them.

There were few signs of undue time pressure, with most candidates managing to attempt all questions, although quite a lot of answers in **Questions 3 and 4** were unnecessarily lengthy. Most of the questions on this paper could be answered in short sentences containing straightforward grammar and vocabulary, but some candidates still over-complicate things.

Some candidates still feel the need to incorporate the words of the question as an unnecessary preamble to the answer, which not only wastes time for both candidate and marker, but also potentially introduces linguistic errors which can detract significantly from the overall impression for the Quality of Language mark – e.g. *Le phénomène de la mode a-t-il évolué... (3(b))*; *Certains articles peuvent-ils rester... (3(d))*; *Les enfants sont-ils particulièrement exploités... (4(d))*; *Les bienfaits prétendus ne le sont-ils pas parce que... (4(f))*. Answers beginning with *parce que* and *en* are quite in order, indeed usually preferable.

Candidates would also do well to look at the number of marks awarded for each question (indicated in square brackets) as a guide to the number of points to be made.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, it is encouraging to note that copying wholesale from the text has diminished in recent series, with more candidates understanding how to 'work' the text to avoid 'lifting' (copying) items from the text, but it remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' items directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks at this level. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. They should

try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes (e.g. transforming nouns into verbs or finding a simple synonym) or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3** and **4** below.

Candidates often sensibly substituted verbs for nouns when the question suggested it, although occasionally leaving the job unfinished with *ils ont perdu de poids* (from *une perte de poids*), *créer de 40 millions d'emplois* (from *la création d'emplois*), *apporter de revenus* (from *l'apport de revenus*), *manipuler de machines* (from *la manipulation de machines*), *accepter de contrats* (from *l'acceptation de contrats*). This betrayed a lack of understanding sufficient to invalidate the answer.

The paper ties the questions (and therefore the answers) to specific paragraphs (or occasionally to specific lines) in the texts.

In **Question 1**, candidates nowadays appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing.

Question 2, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary for its own sake. Candidates should therefore aim to make the minimum changes necessary, whilst retaining as many elements of the original as possible. They need to be aware, however, that alterations made to one part of the sentence are likely to have grammatical implications elsewhere, particularly in matters of agreement. **Candidates should not attempt to cut corners by omitting the prompt at the start of their answers.**

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both sections, 90–100 words for the summary of specific points made in the original texts and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond the word limit is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Summary automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response.** Although there has been a marked improvement in this respect in recent series, some candidates still write answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin, meaning that some good answers to the **Personal Response** cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. It appears that candidates are still unnecessarily afraid of being penalised for not introducing the topic. One example among many: *De nos jours, avec le développement de la technologie et la mode rapide, de plus en plus de personnes achètent les vêtements de la mode rapide. Mais il y a non seulement les bienfaits mais aussi les méfaits. Pour les bienfaits de la mode rapide...* This candidate has wasted 30% of the word allowance which is already tight to make ten points. From the outset, candidates need to make their points as succinctly as possible and move on to the other nine. It is a summary/*résumé/précis* of specific points from the texts that is required in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay.

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore, *il y a* is three words, as is *qu'est-ce que c'est?*

The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning and editing their material with the word limit in mind, but other scripts were littered with crossings-out, which did little to improve standards of presentation and legibility.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates are advised to narrow down the choice by identifying the part of speech involved, or at least by making sure that a plural is replaced by a plural, for example, but they should realise that this in itself may not provide the right answer if meaning is ignored in the process.

Item (a) got most candidates off to a good start by identifying *désigner* as replaceable by *signifier*, but the search for an *-er* verb occasionally produced the unlikely *entier*.

In **Item (b)**, *dès la fin de* was sometimes incorrectly interpreted as *au cours de*, *en train de*, *qui date de*, or without the idea of immediacy as simply *après*.

In **Item (c)**, *constate* was commonly correctly identified, although it sometimes appeared as *constante*.

Item (d) saw was the common infringement of the 'footprint principle' (see above), with the correct answer (*est centré*) either lacking the *est* or including a superfluous *sur*. One imagined that the unlikely *à bas* was due to its similarity with *basé*.

In **Item (e)**, the occasional *destinés* and *remplacés* appeared to have been chosen because of their shared ending with *gardés* rather than their meaning. The noun *garde-robe* was equally unlikely.

Question 2

Many candidates displayed the ability to rework the sentences accurately, but the task proved quite demanding for candidates with an inadequate command of grammatical structures, or who failed to observe the basic rules of agreement – an increasingly common feature.

In **Item 2(a)**, the transformation from the passive was successfully handled by a fair number, but others forgot to remove the agreement from *accélérée* – or occasionally removed it from *arrivée* instead.

In **Item 2(b)**, the *après avoir* construction was not generally well handled, with even those who were familiar with the construction itself often offering *après avoir le porté*. The alternative of *après qu'ils...* was acceptable, but *après (de) le porter* was clearly not.

In **Item 2(c)**, pronouns proved to be frequent sources of error, with the appearance of *Internet se/la permet* and *sans lui/elle/la/sa déplacer*.

In **Item 2(d)**, the transfer to the passive was better handled. It proved the most accessible of these tasks, although there were instances of *est rapportés* or an unnecessary change of tense being introduced.

In **Item 2(e)**, the need for the subjunctive here after *Il est possible que...* eluded some, but those candidates who recognised it, generally coped with its formation.

Question 3

In **Item 3(a)**, the majority got off to a good start, although a few did not make it sufficiently clear that the garments were being copied/imitated or reproduced.

In **Item 3(b)**, speed and regularity were usually mentioned, but there needed to be some suggestion of increase. Finding (or conjugating) a verb to replace the noun *apparition* proved beyond many, whilst in some scripts *les nouveaux articles* appeared to mean 'news articles'.

In **Item 3(c)**, most candidates successfully mentioned the fact that the garments are cheap and quickly discarded before being replaced, but some slightly missed the point by writing *Ils ne peuvent pas être gardés longtemps* rather than *Ils peuvent ne pas être gardés longtemps*.

In **Item 3(d)**, most understood the fact that the clothes quickly fall apart when washed, although *lavagés* did not score. Attempts to express the verbs *tomber* and *passer* as *le tombement* and *le passement* were both unnecessary and unsuccessful, but the majority were rewarded for keeping things simple.

In **Item 3(e)**, there were good answers from candidates who appreciated the attraction for those on a modest budget, who resisted the appeal of *expresser* and who understood that *réaliser* here did not mean *comprendre*.

In **Item 3(f)**, the economic benefits to the countries concerned were understood and effectively communicated by a good proportion. *Plusieurs* was frequently used inappropriately, here referring to 40 million jobs.

Question 4

In **Item 4(a)**, mention of low wages and high levels of productivity in certain countries earned both marks for stronger candidates, although some focused exclusively on the price of the product.

In **Item 4(b)**, the hazards encountered by employees were often correctly identified, although confusing *les employés* and *les employeurs* led to a loss of marks for some, as did *les machines ne travaillent pas bien*.

In **Item 4(c)**, candidates by no means always managed to express the idea of *congé maladie payé* without resorting to 'lifting' it from the text, while others did not find the easy *chaque/par semaine/toutes les semaines* to replace *hebdomadaire, régulier* on its own being too vague. *Allouer* was sometimes used to mean 'allow', and *rester* to mean *se reposer*.

In **Item 4(d)**, stronger candidates managed to point to the exploitation of very young children and to explain that their families felt the need to do so in order to supplement their own inadequate income. Weaker candidates tended to produce unrewardable attempts such as *Les enfants sont fait à travailler*.

In **Item 4(e)**, responses such as *Une catastrophe* were too vague to earn the first mark. *Effondus* and *mortés* confused things here, as did *l'élevage de salaires/salaries*. It was important to mention that the increase in wages was only slight.

In **Item 4(f)**, there was some confusion caused by the incorrect use of *ils* to refer to *les entreprises* and *elles* to refer to *les propriétaires*, but many candidates were successful in distinguishing the international companies from the local factory owners and in identifying the three elements required for full marks here

Question 5(a) (Summary)

See **General comments** earlier for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction.

The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points leading to a maximum score of 10, of which candidates often managed many. Some simply copied out verbatim chunks of the text, which although they may have chanced upon some rewardable material for content, risked a reduction in the Quality of Language mark for excessive reliance on the text.

The most commonly identified benefits included:

- Low cost
- Making fashion accessible to more people
- Chance to express one's own personality through fashion
- Ability to identify with a group
- Generation of income and jobs

The most commonly identified disadvantages included:

- Poor quality/do not last
- Encouraging waste
- Exploitation/endangering of work-force
- Child labour
- Very low wages

Question 5(b) (Personal Response)

The Personal Response asked who or what influenced candidates when choosing clothing. Common answers included comfort, price, advertising, celebrities, friends, social media, the latest trend, sales etc. Among the influences less commonly mentioned were religious observance, modesty, originality, mothers,

what could be ‘borrowed’ from elder siblings’ wardrobes, and a desire to support local independent shops rather than chain stores.

Quality of Language

The quality of language varied from very good to very poor. The weakest struggled with the basic nuts and bolts of the language, which inevitably limited their ability to transmit the required facts and opinions effectively.

This was particularly in evidence in the agreement (or lack of it) of adjectives with their nouns and verbs with their subjects (and even the process of making nouns plural), which appeared largely random in many scripts. Some candidates seemed to be unaware of the need to make any agreements whatsoever. It is tempting to put this down to a lack of checking – and this is no doubt a major contributing factor – but one suspects that the problem may in some cases be much deeper than this.

There were difficulties in conjugating some of the most common irregular verbs: *faire, mettre, pouvoir, devoir*, and constructions following other common verbs also caused problems: *aider, permettre, demander*.

The approach to spelling was in some cases phonetic, even in very common words: *éder (aider), sa dans (ça donne), le jeu ne vos pas la chandelle, comême (quand même)*.

All of which said, most candidates were usually able to express what they wanted to say in a broadly comprehensible fashion, and the strongest wrote fluently and accurately, demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and idiom and a commendable control of structure.

FRENCH

Paper 9716/32
Essay

Key messages

In order to be successful on this paper, candidates need to read the questions carefully and take sufficient time to plan their essays before starting to write. They then need to create logical, well-illustrated answers on the precise question set. Candidates should use the introduction to show their understanding of the essay title with all its elements and the conclusion to show their considered final judgement of the issues they have discussed. Structure and use of paragraphs are also important in order to demonstrate both clarity of thought and logical progression through an argument. In order to attain high marks for language, candidates should use accurate and idiomatic French which shows complexity both in grammatical structure and vocabulary.

General comments

There was a wide range of ability demonstrated, from the very weak to the very good. Many essays included only a limited number of points or general statements or sometimes succeeded in including a wider range of ideas, but with little development and few examples. Candidates sometimes included material that was not directly relevant to the question set, and a few misunderstood the title, but there were no wholly irrelevant essays. Content marks reflected the level of discussion and sophistication of the argument.

The quality of language varied considerably across the cohort, but there were many essays with errors in the use of basic grammar, e.g., singular/plural, adjectival and subject-verb agreements, articles, the use of the infinitive in two-verb structures and prepositions. Most candidates demonstrated an awareness of register and some variety in the choice of vocabulary and structures.

The candidates' work was generally well presented although there were some examples of poor handwriting. Some candidates, due to insufficient planning, made excessive numbers of untidy revisions in the text of the essay, often hindering the examiner's ability to follow an argument.

Planning is a key element when writing a discursive essay and some candidates appear to bypass this important phase, writing a cursory few words, or nothing at all. It is clear that there is a strong correlation between a careful plan and a structured and focused response, resulting in a higher content mark.

Candidates who planned their essays carefully, defined the terms of the question and wrote a logical and persuasive argument, before arriving at a balanced conclusion, were, therefore, most successful. They used a range of linguistic structures and idioms and convinced the reader with the coherence and relevance of their arguments.

Among a number of common errors, the following were seen:

Spelling errors and anglicised spellings: *dangeureux, environment, government, essential, problem, example*

Anglicisms: *improver, distracter, balance, afforder, restricter*

Incorrect gender: *une problème, une programme*

Use of past participle after prepositions or modal verbs: *les parents doivent passé; pour compliqué; le gouvernement aide à sauvé*

Incorrect use of negative or part missing: *c'est ne pas; ne sont riches pas*

Incorrect use of *beaucoup*: *beaucoup des gens; beaucoup de l'argent*

Use of *grâce à* or *parce que* instead of *à cause de*.

Incorrect use of preposition after common verbs: *encourager de*; *préférer de*; *écouter à leurs parents*;

Confusion between *ce/ces/ses/c'est*; *ça/sa*; *son/sont*; *ce/ceux*; *à/a*

Incorrect use of direct/indirect pronouns: *ils les donnent*; *ils leur/leurs encouragent*

Anglicised structures: *ils ne sont pas donné*

Confusion between *bon/bien*; *mal/mauvais*; *aliments/alimentation/alimentaire*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

La routine : élément essentiel de la vie quotidienne. Qu'en pensez-vous ?

Few candidates attempted this question. Some explained their daily routine at length without any discussion of the title as set. Others mentioned the importance of a routine to give structure to the day, to provide motivation to get on with daily tasks and to make the most of every hour of the day. They felt that routine was important in allowing young people to organise their schoolwork and leisure activities and for adults to have a clear schedule for their working day. Candidates expressed the view that keeping to regular hours for eating and sleeping would have health benefits and that living without routines could lead to disorganisation and laziness. Some stronger responses argued that having too strict a routine could become boring and that there was need for spontaneity in life in order to flourish as a person.

Question 2

Si les jeunes mangent mal, c'est de la faute de leurs parents. Êtes-vous d'accord ?

This was the most popular question and all candidates who chose it had some points to make. Few, however, gave a full overview of the issue. Some essays described at great length what constituted good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. Candidates tended to agree that parents are to blame for young people's poor eating habits but also explained that long working hours and the high cost of healthy food were mitigating factors. Some thought that adults do not have a healthy diet themselves and therefore their children learn bad habits. Better responses distinguished between young children who are heavily influenced by their parents and teenagers who are less so. The diet of the latter group was more likely to be influenced by advertising for fast food, social media and their peers. It was felt that the government and schools, in particular, could do more to promote healthy eating in the young. Most agreed, though, that with a balanced diet and regular exercise, people can enjoy what they eat without worrying about the consequences, and still enjoy occasional consumption of food considered to be unhealthy.

Question 3

Les jeunes chômeurs ne sont pas responsables de leur situation. Qu'en pensez-vous ?

Candidates attempting this question could generally see two sides to the argument. Many thought that young people could be excused for being unemployed because of factors such as the global economic situation, the pandemic, lack of experience and an increased use of technology in the workplace replacing humans. Some argued that young people might be considered responsible for their situation because they spend all their time on social media, have a poor work ethic and believe that traditional jobs are tedious. Candidates also felt that too many young people have university qualifications and that there is too much government and parental support which takes away the motivation to work. Some felt that the future for young people was to develop businesses online or to move to countries where there was more work.

Question 4

La croissance économique bénéficie plus aux riches qu'aux pauvres. Discutez.

There were very few answers on this topic. Candidates generally felt that economic growth favours the rich and that the life of poor people does not improve measurably as a result of a country's development. Some candidates did see that economic stability led to a better standard of living overall but they felt that people on the poverty line were unlikely to obtain the benefits felt by those better off. Some candidates wrote general essays about the differences in lifestyle between the rich and the poor with little or no reference to economic growth.

Question 5

Il est dangereux de laisser aux gouvernements la protection de l'environnement. Discutez.

Candidates attempting this question generally had a good awareness of the topic and were able to express some views about the role of governments and other organisations in the protection of the environment. They wrote about governments creating national parks, passing laws to prevent pollution and creating initiatives to make the public become more aware of green issues. Some gave examples such as subsidies for solar panels and electric cars. Governments were often considered the best option to protect the environment as they have the means to support initiatives and the power to enforce laws. Candidates did point out that often economic priorities can be at odds with the protection of the environment, particularly in developing countries and that corruption was a problem. The best responses mentioned the need for individuals to be involved, both by holding governments to account, by making environmentally friendly choices in their daily life and taking part in demonstrations. Candidates illustrated their answers with a good range of examples and displayed a good knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary, although there were many different spellings of *environnement*.

FRENCH

<p>Paper 9716/33 Essay</p>
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Key messages

In order to be successful on this paper, candidates need to read the questions carefully and take sufficient time to plan their essays before starting to write. They then need to create logical, well-illustrated answers on the precise question set. Candidates should use the introduction to show their understanding of the essay title with all its elements and the conclusion to show their considered final judgement of the issues they have discussed. Structure and use of paragraphs are also important in order to demonstrate both clarity of thought and logical progression through an argument. In order to attain high marks for language, candidates should use accurate and idiomatic French which shows complexity both in grammatical structure and vocabulary.

General comments

There was a wide range of ability demonstrated, from the very weak to the very good. It was clear that most candidates had understood the rubric for the paper and essays were generally of the correct length, although a small number were very short. Most of the candidates did attempt a plan but it was often written in English and was short, in list form and sketchy in content. The importance of planning is clear since unplanned answers tend to be poorly constructed and full of alterations. This leads to ideas being presented in a muddled way with no clear prioritisation. Candidates sometimes included material that was not directly relevant to the question set, and a few misunderstood the title, but there were no wholly irrelevant essays. Content marks reflected the level of discussion and sophistication of the argument.

The quality of language varied considerably across the cohort. There were some weak scripts with frequent errors in the use of basic grammar, e.g., singular/plural, adjectival and subject-verb agreements, articles, the use of the infinitive in two-verb structures and prepositions. At the upper end, however, there were some responses which demonstrated a good knowledge of the topic area, focused on the terms of the question and expressed ideas in clear and accurate French using a range of structures.

Candidates who planned their essays carefully, defined the terms of the question and wrote a logical and persuasive argument, before arriving at a balanced conclusion, were most successful. They used a range of linguistic structures and idioms and were able to convince the reader with the coherence and relevance of their arguments.

Among a number of common errors, the following were seen:

Spelling errors and anglicised spellings: *dangeureux, environment, government, essential, problem, example*

Anglicisms: *improver, distracter, balance, afforder, restricter, définitivement, actuellement*

Incorrect gender : *une problème, une programme*

Use of past participle after prepositions or modal verbs: *les parents doivent passé; pour compliqué; le gouvernement aide à sauvé*

Incorrect use of negative or part missing: *c'est ne pas; ne sont riches pas*

Incorrect use of *beaucoup*: *beaucoup des gens; beaucoup de l'argent*

Use of *grâce à* or *parce que* instead of *à cause de*.

Incorrect use of preposition after common verbs: *encourager de; préférer de; écouter à leurs parents;*

Confusion between: *ce/ces/ses/c'est; ça/sa; son/sont; ce/ceux; à/a*

Incorrect use of direct / indirect pronouns: *ils les donnent; ils leur/leurs encouragent*

Anglicised structures: *ils ne sont pas donné*

Confusion between: *bon/bien; mal/mauvais; aliments/alimentation/alimentaire*

Difficulties with *bon/mauvais; bien/mal; meilleur/pire*

Confusion between *son/sa/ses* and *leur/leurs*: *les parents ne comprennent pas ses enfants; l'adolescent et leurs parents*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

« *Pour être heureux on doit se libérer des choses matérielles et vivre minimaliste.* » *Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez ?*

Candidates attempting this question had strong views on whether happiness depended on having possessions or eschewing them. Many felt that one's status in society was dependent on owning many things such as luxury cars, expensive clothes and accessories and that for some, this brought happiness and fulfilment. Others felt that the constant demand for material things drove people away from the important things in life which were family, friends and simple pleasures. They felt that happiness could not necessarily be gained through possession of objects. They did, however, recognise that minimalism was not for everyone and that most people liked to have some things around them which held memories either of family or friends or important occasions, such as photographs, mementos, certificates and sports trophies. In order to be happy, most candidates felt that people needed a minimum level of comfort, a secure environment in which to live and a network of family and friends.

Question 2

« *Manger sain est réservé aux riches.* » *Êtes-vous d'accord ?*

This was a popular question and led to discussion of the importance of healthy eating for everyone. Candidates, in many cases, agreed that it was much easier for rich people to have a healthy diet as they can afford high quality food, produced organically and safely, which ensures that they stay in peak condition. It was felt that poor people are much more likely to eat unhealthily since they cannot afford fruit and vegetables which are expensive in supermarkets. It was also pointed out that people with low incomes often work very long hours and do not have the time to cook and are therefore more likely to depend on fast food or pre-cooked meals which lack the nutritional value of food freshly prepared from good ingredients. The best responses explained that anyone can eat healthily, whatever their circumstances and that it is a question of what one considers important. They suggested that poorer people could grow their own fruit and vegetables, could visit local markets where food is cheaper than in big supermarkets and learn to cook economical and healthy meals.

Question 3

Les inégalités de salaire entre les hommes et les femmes persistent. Pourquoi, à votre avis ?

Few candidates attempted this question. Their answers were relevant and covered a range of points. They recognised that there is still inequality in pay between men and women and gave reasons for this such as old-fashioned attitudes towards women, women being seen as weak and unable to make decisions and women having to take maternity leave. It was felt that women, particularly in developing countries, are less well educated or have no formal education which leaves them only able to undertake the lowest paid jobs, with no chance to move up the career ladder. Candidates pointed out that in big companies, there is still a glass ceiling and that women are still unable to achieve the highest positions, even if they are suitably qualified. Women are seen by men in business as lacking confidence and more prone to taking time off for health issues. Candidates also felt that women were sometimes overawed by men and did not have the

confidence to ask for pay rises. It was recognised that there are some areas of work which do have parity of pay for men and women such as education and other public services.

Question 4

La meilleure preuve de la réussite économique est le bien-être des gens. Êtes-vous d'accord ?

There were insufficient responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 5

« La réponse des jeunes à la protection de l'environnement est souvent contradictoire. » Discutez de cette affirmation.

This was only attempted by a few candidates. They referred to the differences in approach between young people towards the environmental crisis. They felt that some young people have a very strong response to the crisis and spend their time organising marches and demonstrations in order to alert people to the dangers ahead. Other young people seem to take no action and remain passive in the face of the oncoming disaster. The best responses looked at the way in which young people can have a contradictory approach to protecting the environment. They can be vociferous in their protests about how we are destroying our planet, yet they will continue to use technology which is power-hungry, will be taken to school in cars emitting pollution and will fly around the world for holidays. Some candidates felt that it was pointless to complain about the use of plastic bags and litter while continuing to lead this kind of modern life.

FRENCH

Paper 9716/42
Texts

Key messages

Teachers should:

- Ensure that candidates are prepared to answer questions on **three separate texts**.
- Consider carefully which texts to prepare with their classes: certain texts may prove challenging for some candidates.
- Encourage some candidates to opt for the passage-based **(a)** questions in **Section 1**, which provide a ready-made structure for their answers and therefore might suit them better than the freer option **(b)** alternatives.

Teachers should encourage their candidates to:

- Manage their time carefully in the examination room, ensuring that equal weight is accorded to **three** questions.
- Think carefully about what the question is asking of them and **plan** their responses before they start to write.
- Stay on track as they write their responses by referring regularly to the question.

Candidates should:

- Label their answers with the question number, ensuring that the passage-based questions are correctly labelled with **(i)**, **(ii)** and **(iii)**. If passage-based questions are not properly labelled, it can look as though **parts (ii) and (iii)** have not been attempted.
- Commence responses to the passage-based **(a)** questions in **Section 1** with a **brief** introduction, locating the extract within the text and briefly explaining what events have preceded the extract.
- Ensure that answers to the option **(b)** questions in **Section 1** and all questions in **Section 2** include;
 - an opening paragraph, acknowledging the question and giving a brief indication of how it is to be addressed.
 - a closing paragraph, which should summarise the points made in the essay.

General comments

The passage-based question on the Beaumarchais text was well handled by most candidates, though relatively few attempted the extract questions on the Sartre and Gide texts. Faïza Guène's *Kiffe kiffe demain* is proving to be a very popular text: many candidates attempted the extract question and there were some excellent responses. It continues to be the case that the better responses demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the text, whilst also addressing the detail required by the question. Once again, it is pleasing to note that relatively few candidates attempted to answer questions by quoting lengthy extracts from the text. Quotations were, for the most part, kept brief and their relevance was made clear.

The essay questions were generally well structured, starting with a clear introduction and ending with a summarising conclusion. However, some candidates continue to insist on starting their essays with a brief history of the author and his/her works, rather than writing an opening paragraph which acknowledges the question being addressed. Marks are rarely awarded for such pre-prepared material. Though there were some cases of extraneous storytelling and answers that wandered off the point, essay planning helped the better candidates to remain focused and avoid irrelevance.

If a premise is provided in the question, candidates **must not be afraid to disagree with it**. It is far more important that candidate should give his/her opinion and that this opinion should be supported by relevant evidence from the text.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1 – Beaumarchais: *Le Barbier de Séville*

The Beaumarchais text was very popular, with a majority opting for **Question (b)**.

- (a) The question was capably answered by most candidates.
- (i) Bartholo and Bazile are, of course, talking about the doctor's impending marriage to Rosine, and most candidates successfully summarised the opposing attitudes on marriage and love held by Bartholo and Bazile. The stronger responses gave a little more background to the relationship between Bartholo and his intended: i.e. Rosine's confinement, her reluctance to marry the doctor, Bartholo's real reasons for wishing to marry his ward and his lack of true feeling for her.
- (ii) Whilst it was evident that a few candidates did not understand the term '*calomnie*', there were some very strong responses to **part (ii)**. Bazile is talking about the need for Bartholo to blacken the name of the Count in his attempts to persuade Rosine to marry him. Bartholo intends to confront Rosine with the letter she wrote to her suitor, Lindor, claiming this as evidence of her lover's insincerity. A number of candidates went on to observe, quite rightly, that Bartholo's attempts to malign Lindor/the Count and turn Rosine away from him were, at least initially, successful.
- (iii) **Part (iii)** was less well answered. Of course, it is true that Bazile is fully confident that he and his master have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that Bartholo's plans will succeed. However, what was also required was a statement that Bazile's confidence would prove to be misplaced: Figaro and the Count gain access to Rosine while Bartholo is out seeking a Justice of the Peace, Bazile is persuaded to act as witness to the lovers' marriage and Bartholo returns to find that his precautions have been frustrated.
- (b) There were some strong responses to this question. Bartholo represents the *bourgeoisie* and Beaumarchais intentionally paints him as a disagreeable character. He is avaricious and dishonest: he constantly criticises and exploits the lower classes: he mistreats his servants and Figaro: he even reduces Bazile (though not a member of the lower class) to an errand boy. He has no love for the arts and is the antithesis of a Man of the Enlightenment. Furthermore, he is a misogynist and treats Rosine as a mere possession. On the other hand, he is most deferential towards the aristocracy and is almost obsequious towards Count Almaviva after learning his real identity. It is, of course, appropriate that the plans of such a reviled and unlikeable character should be thwarted at the conclusion of the play.

Question 2 – Jean-Paul Sartre: *Les Jeux sont faits*

Questions on the Sartre work were attempted by few candidates, with **Question 2(b)** being twice as popular as the extract question.

- (a) (i) The question was quite well answered, though few candidates could recall every detail of what had just happened in the park and why Pierre should be so angry. While dancing, the couple has been mocked by Ève's snobbish friends and Pierre's rather 'agricultural' style of dancing has been ridiculed by them. Pierre is prevented from remonstrating with 'the snobs' by a member of the militia and Ève has had to intervene to prevent Pierre from striking the militiaman. Ève has shown her card, revealing her to be the wife of the Secretary of the Militia. Pierre is not only angry but is now also horrified to learn that his lover is married to a top official of the organisation against which he has been plotting.
- (ii) **Part (ii)** was relatively straightforward and was appropriately well dealt with. The Regent is the head of the military government and 'La Ligue' is a revolutionary organisation, founded by Pierre and committed to overthrow the government. Informed by a traitor (Lucien Derjeu), the militia is aware that 'La Ligue' has been planning an attack.

- (iii) Though most candidates explained that the couple had been given 24 hours to show that they can love each other without hesitation, some candidates were reluctant to place appropriate blame for the couple's failure on Pierre's shoulders, citing the fact that Ève leaves the apartment to try to rescue her sister. Nevertheless, it is Pierre who is the first to abandon the relationship (he leaves in order to warn his comrades) and he goes despite being begged to stay by Ève.
- (b) Many candidates focused on the immediate causes of the failure of Ève and Pierre's relationship (Ève's concern for her sister and Pierre's fears for his revolutionary comrades) and did not do enough to highlight the social differences which stood in the couple's way. In point of fact, the obvious differences in social standing between the two appear to be less of a problem for Ève: she is quite prepared, for example, to show Pierre off to her friends and is not deterred by his working-class appearance and his rather modest apartment. Pierre, on the other hand, is uncomfortable from the start: he is ill at ease in the luxury of the Charlier's home and fears that the social gulf that exists between Ève and himself will frustrate their relationship.

Question 3 – André Gide: *La Porte étroite*

A small number of candidates addressed **Question 3** with **3(b)** being twice as popular as the extract question.

- (a) (i) Some candidates found it difficult to summarise a relationship which had been gradually constructed over the previous 5 chapters of the novel. Influenced by Pasteur Vautier's sermon and the behaviour of her mother, Alissa has devoted herself to a life of religious asceticism. Accordingly, she feels incapable of committing herself physically to Jérôme and has rejected his proposal of marriage. Jérôme has learned that Alissa does not wish to marry before her sister and, indeed, that Alissa wishes him to marry Juliette. Jérôme and Alissa have continued to communicate by letter while Jérôme was away at school and on military service. In her letters, Alissa has revealed her apprehension at meeting again, seeming to prefer the idea of love to its actuality.
- (ii) There were some creditable attempts to analyse the text. The pair walk in embarrassed silence. The environment is hot and dry, and they are both red in the face and sweating. Jérôme is so concerned that he has a migraine: Alissa has tears in her eyes and she also claims to have a violent headache. She has allowed her hand to be held but has not given it voluntarily. Their hands are damp with embarrassment, and they eventually allow them to fall.
- (iii) Many candidates limited their responses to the immediate aftermath of the meeting described in the extract, whereas the question invited candidates to summarise the outcome of the novel. The relationship between Alissa and Jerome will not improve at all and they will continue to live a life of frustration, never able to enjoy a loving relationship. At their next meeting at Easter, Jérôme is again prevented from talking about engagement and the two become increasingly unable to communicate. At their final meeting three years later, Alissa is thin and pale. Jérôme subsequently learns that Alissa has died, alone, in a Parisian nursing home. Her diaries revealed the extent of the torment she had suffered.
- (b) The question was well answered by most candidates. Alissa is the older and the more serious of the two sisters. She analyses her feelings in a way that her sister does not appear to do. She feels more deeply the shame of her mother's infidelity, and she also feels a strong need to protect her father. Her commitment to God is so intense that she cannot give herself to Jérôme, in spite of the love that she holds for him. Juliette is younger and more carefree than her sister. A playmate and confidante of Jérôme, she loves him, probably as deeply as Alissa loves him, but she is not burdened by her sister's religious devotion. Juliette is devastated when Jérôme fails to respond to her subtle encouragement, and she marries Tessières on the rebound. Nevertheless, the pleasure that she derives from her children and from married life contrasts strongly with the misery that her sister suffers.

Question 4 – Faïza Guène: *Kiffe kiffe demain*

Kiffe kiffe demain is a popular text and **Question 4** was addressed many candidates. The majority opted for the extract question, which was well dealt with.

- (a) (i) Mme Burlaud is Doria's psychologist, appointed because Doria is withdrawn and introverted. She proposes the skiing holiday so that Doria can meet other people and get away from her home environment. Doria and her mother will not have to pay for the holiday and Mme Burlaud believes that it will help bring Doria out of herself.
- (ii) The question was very well answered. Doria gives a number of reasons for not wanting to go on the trip: she does not want to abandon her mother; she hates the idea of being confined in a coach smelling of vomit; she will be bored at having to make toilet stops every 30 minutes and having to sing songs from the eighties. In truth, these are all excuses – her real fear is having to socialise with strangers, the very reason her psychologist has been appointed.
- (iii) Doria's relationship with Mme Burlaud evolves. At the start of the novel, Doria – displaying a teenager's cynicism about everyone and everything around her – finds Mme Burlaud annoying and impractical, and she resents her prying into Doria's family life. Doria despises Mme Burlaud's Rorschach tests and claims that her psychologist smells of toilet disinfectant. As life gradually improves for Doria and her mother, and Mme Burlaud announces that Doria's therapy is finished, Doria acknowledges (still rather begrudgingly) that her psychologist has helped her.
- (b) There were fewer responses to 4(b) and the question was less well handled. Though most candidates were able to make some comment on the author's use of slang/*verlan* and humour, few were able to draw clear conclusions about the impact of de Vigan's style and language. Written in the first person, we hear Doria's intimate thoughts and feelings – the novel reads like the diary of a 16-year-old girl. Its style is simple and uncomplicated, and Doria's use of slang and obscenities is quite natural and unselfconscious – she is a teenager growing up in a tough Parisian *cit *. The use of unexplained Maghrebi/Arabic terms reveal her cultural inheritance. Her humour can be rather black and cynical – such as when she describes her father – but is often directed at herself, revealing her mental fragility.

Section 2

Question 5 – Michel del Castillo: *Tanguy*

Another less popular text: not many candidates attempted **Question 5. 5(b)** was twice as popular as **5(a)**.

- (a) The few candidates who attempted this question acquitted themselves well. The best essays gave examples of Tanguy's faith in people such as Rachel, Gunther, P re Pardo and Sebastiana. Some candidates observed that his was a blind faith, stemming from childish inexperience, rather than a genuine belief in the goodness of other people. By contrast, examples were also given of Tanguy's growing distrust of others, particular his cowardly father who had betrayed him, and his mother who had abandoned him. There was some disagreement that the ending of the novel was optimistic – the reader is left uncertain as to whether Tanguy will find 'la belle vie'.
- (b) The theme of betrayal runs throughout the novel and *Tanguy* may be viewed, at least in part, as the author's attempt to rationalise why his mother abandoned him as a child. The question was quite well handled, and candidates cited a variety of examples of betrayal, including that of Tanguy's mother and his father, and Tanguy's own feelings of disloyalty at having to abandon Robert, Michel, Gunther and Sebastiana.

Question 6 – Joseph Zobel: *La Rue Cases-N gres*

Question 6 was attempted a fair number of candidates, answers being equally divided between **6(a)** and **6(b)**.

- (a) Candidates dealt with the question well, highlighting the fact that the story is told through Jos 's eyes and that the reader experiences at first hand the joys and trials of his childhood on the plantation.
- (b) Valid examples were given of the misery suffered by the plantation workers and their children, and some candidates drew comparison with the easier lives led by the *b k s*. Notwithstanding the difficult conditions in which he and M'man Tine lived, Jos 's memories of life in the village are almost entirely joyful. It is only later that he learns how his education has saved him from a life of suffering in the cane fields.

Question 7 – Voltaire: *Candide*

The Voltaire text was addressed by a good number of candidates, almost all of whom opted for **7(a)**.

- (a) As most candidates rightly observed, what we can learn from Voltaire's '*conte*' are largely the lessons that the author intended to deliver. Optimism and a belief in the perfect order of things cannot be substantiated or sustained. The 'best of all possible worlds' does not exist, and the world is not necessarily the creation of a benign God. Life is challenging and often cruel: the pursuit of happiness should not be an individual's primary aim in life. Voltaire argues for moderation, realism, the avoidance of extremism, hard work and the patient acceptance of one's lot.
- (b) There were too few responses to **Question 7(b)** to allow for meaningful comment.

Question 8 – Delphine de Vigan: *No et moi*

Question 8 was attempted by many candidates, slightly more than half of whom opted to address **8(a)**.

- (a) There were some excellent responses to the question, though many candidates struggled to find a logical structure to their responses, perhaps because they had not allowed sufficient time for planning the third essay. The novel is not primarily an exposé of the failure of French society to deal with the problem of homelessness, though the plight of the 'sans-abri' is addressed throughout the novel. Lou's research for her school project and the experiences of No on the streets of Paris reveal in gritty detail the hardship and threats that homeless females in particular face on a daily basis.
- (b) There were also some very good responses to **Question 8(b)**. Most candidates agreed that, although Lou's attempts to rehabilitate No were ultimately unsuccessful in that No returned to her life on the streets, the friendship between the two girls had produced many positive effects. Not the least of these were Lou's developing self-confidence and maturity, her growing friendship with Lucas and the positive impact that No had on Lou's mother's recovery.

FRENCH

Paper 9716/43
Texts

Key messages

Teachers should:

- Ensure that candidates are prepared to answer questions on **three separate texts**.
- Consider carefully which texts to prepare with their classes: certain texts may prove challenging for some candidates.
- Encourage some candidates to opt for the passage-based **(a)** questions in **Section 1**, which provide a ready-made structure for their answers and therefore might suit them better than the freer option **(b)** alternatives.

Teachers should encourage their candidates to:

- Manage their time carefully in the examination room, ensuring that equal weight is accorded to **three** questions.
- Think carefully about what the question is asking of them and **plan** their responses before they start to write.
- Stay on track as they write their responses by referring regularly to the question.

Candidates should:

- Label their answers with the question number, ensuring that the passage-based questions are correctly labelled with **(i)**, **(ii)** and **(iii)**. If passage-based questions are not properly labelled, it can look as though **parts (ii) and (iii)** have not been attempted.
- Commence responses to the passage-based **(a)** questions in **Section 1** with a **brief** introduction, locating the extract within the text and briefly explaining what events have preceded the extract.
- Ensure that answers to the option **(b)** questions in **Section 1** and all questions in **Section 2** include;
 - an opening paragraph, acknowledging the question and giving a brief indication of how it is to be addressed.
 - a closing paragraph, which should summarise the points made in the essay.

General comments

The passage-based question on the Beaumarchais text was well handled by most candidates, though relatively few attempted the extract questions on the Sartre and Gide texts. Faïza Guène's *Kiffe kiffe demain* is proving to be a very popular text: many candidates attempted the extract question and there were some excellent responses. It continues to be the case that the better responses demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the text, whilst also addressing the detail required by the question. Once again, it is pleasing to note that relatively few candidates attempted to answer questions by quoting lengthy extracts from the text. Quotations were, for the most part, kept brief and their relevance was made clear.

The essay questions were generally well structured, starting with a clear introduction and ending with a summarising conclusion. However, some candidates continue to insist on starting their essays with a brief history of the author and his/her works, rather than writing an opening paragraph which acknowledges the question being addressed. Marks are rarely awarded for such pre-prepared material. Though there were some cases of extraneous storytelling and answers that wandered off the point, essay planning helped the better candidates to remain focused and avoid irrelevance.

If a premise is provided in the question, candidates **must not be afraid to disagree with it**. It is far more important that candidate should give his/her opinion and that this opinion should be supported by relevant evidence from the text.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1 – Beaumarchais: *Le Barbier de Séville*

The Beaumarchais text was very popular, with a majority opting for **Question (b)**.

- (a) The question was capably answered by most candidates.
- (i) Bartholo and Bazile are, of course, talking about the doctor's impending marriage to Rosine, and most candidates successfully summarised the opposing attitudes on marriage and love held by Bartholo and Bazile. The stronger responses gave a little more background to the relationship between Bartholo and his intended: i.e. Rosine's confinement, her reluctance to marry the doctor, Bartholo's real reasons for wishing to marry his ward and his lack of true feeling for her.
- (ii) Whilst it was evident that a few candidates did not understand the term '*calomnie*', there were some very strong responses to **part (ii)**. Bazile is talking about the need for Bartholo to blacken the name of the Count in his attempts to persuade Rosine to marry him. Bartholo intends to confront Rosine with the letter she wrote to her suitor, Lindor, claiming this as evidence of her lover's insincerity. A number of candidates went on to observe, quite rightly, that Bartholo's attempts to malign Lindor/the Count and turn Rosine away from him were, at least initially, successful.
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