



**2009**

**French GA 3: Examination**

## **Written component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Students were well prepared for the format and time constraints of the examination. Only a few students did not complete Section 3 and a very small number answered in the wrong language. Texts were generally well understood, except for some words in Section 1. However, students seemed to have difficulty with the questions and should spend more time analysing them.

Students should write in pen and ensure their responses are legible. When correcting an error, students should cross out neatly and rewrite their response. Students are reminded that they must not write in the margin.

The most successful students performed at a consistently high level in the listening, reading and writing sections of the examination, demonstrating an excellent knowledge and command of all aspects of French.

Common mistakes included:

- agreements of adjectives and past participles
- incorrect tenses
- government of verbs: *à/de*
- word order, especially with object pronouns: *elle aide nous, je comprends le*
- omission of apostrophes: *que elle, que il, je étudie*
- *tu/vous*
- *Beaucoup DES, je n'ai pas DU*
- *parler/dire*
- *parce que/à cause de/grâce à*
- incorrect possessive adjectives: *son vie.*

Students need to make better use of dictionaries to avoid mistakes such as *je te mendie*, 'I beg you'. Students should analyse questions carefully before they attempt to answer them. Students are advised to make full use of the 15 minutes of reading time.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Listening and responding**

##### **Part A – Answer in English**

This task is designed to assess students' capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts.

Students should carefully read all questions in this section during reading time.

##### **Text 1**

##### **Question 1a.**

Tanned

##### **Question 1b.**

Any two of:

- holidaying (in Nice)
- swimming
- windsurfing
- going to the beach.

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## Question 1c.

Crowded beaches/too many people on the beaches

## Question 1d.

Both of:

- staying at home/here or working (in a supermarket)
- saving/preparing for a trip/holiday (to China).

## Text 2

### Question 2

Name of animal	Type of animal	Appearance	Age	Why mentioned on the program
Gaultier	Kitten/cat	Red collar	7 months	One of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disappeared</li> <li>• children are upset/sad</li> <li>• missing for three days/help them find it.</li> </ul>
Victor	Guinea pig	Brown and black	1 week	Needs a home
Nouf-Nouf	Dog		11 years	One of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• party</li> <li>• saved a person</li> <li>• paying tribute to it.</li> </ul>

The table was well received and students understood that they needed to give nine answers for nine marks.

Many students did not understand *cochon d'Inde*.

## Part B – Answer in French

In this part of the examination students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts and convey information accurately and appropriately. The accuracy of the language is assessed even if the answers given are incorrect.

## Text 3

### Question 3a.

Any four of:

- *Entraîner les adolescents qui voudraient devenir des joueurs de tennis professionnels/sportifs professionnels*
- *Les aider à réaliser leur potentiel*
- *Les aider à mettre au point/améliorer leur technique*
- *Les aider à faire face aux rigueurs de la compétition.*

### Question 3b.

*Veut faire un stage* and any three of:

- *Il est étudiant en psychologie/veut travailler comme psychologue*
- *Il comprend l'influence sur les jeunes/familles/il connaît un peu l'influence sur la famille/il s'intéresse à l'influence sur la famille/l'avenir/la vie des jeunes sportifs*
- *Il a un cousin qui veut devenir joueur professionnel*
- *C'est un travail important.*

### Question 3c.

- *Envoyer son CV (par email/courriel) à Christine*
- *Contacter la secrétaire pour un rendez-vous (avec Christine) (la semaine prochaine)*



## **Section 2 – Reading and responding**

This section is designed to assess students' knowledge and skill in analysing and responding to information from written texts. It is very important that students use the reading time to ensure they understand the questions before answering them.

### **Part A – Answer in English**

This section is designed to assess students' capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts.

#### **Text 4**

There was some confusion between Tunisia/North Africa and Africa in general in this text. Nadir was often perceived as being a girl, although adjectives and agreements were masculine.

#### **Question 4a.**

- started/existed in France
- started in 2001
- now has a North African/Tunisian/Maghreb(i) version

Maghrebin was not acceptable.

#### **Question 4b.**

- how to express their emotions
- choreography/dance lessons
- stage presence/movement (not scene)
- memorising/learning plays, extracts of plays (not acting lessons and not pieces or extracts of theatre)

#### **Question 4c.**

- concert/show/performance
- elimination of one candidate
- audience/public vote for favourite

#### **Question 4d.**

- launch/begin a career in music
- become a star
- it is a challenge
- passionate about music
- plays the organ
- plays the piano
- sings in (not speaks) several languages
- from Maghreb/North Africa/Tunisia/Maghrebi (not *Maghrébin*)

#### **Question 4e.**

- his brother and sister are musical
- his parents encouraged him
- his parents' financial support
- his parents predict a great future for him (as a singer)

### **Part B – Answer in French**

In this section of the examination students are required to demonstrate their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts and their ability to convey information accurately and appropriately, and in full sentences. Most students had little difficulty in selecting the relevant points. Students should ensure that they demonstrate their ability to express themselves in French, not simply copy information directly from the text. Students must make a concerted effort to rephrase data in their own words.

#### **Question 5a.**

- *Musicien doué/capable de composer/écrire de belles mélodies*
- *Capable de bien danser*



- *Capable de jouer du violon*
- *Courtisan subtil/sut conserver la faveur du roi*
- *Manque de scrupules/écarter des rivaux potentiels*
- *Se disputait avec Molière*

**Question 5b.**

- *Troisième personne*
- *Passé simple*
- *Signale/inclut les réussites/contributions/influence de la personne*
- *Décrit la vie (et la mort)/donne des dates*
- *Détails sur ses origines*

Question 5b. was handled well, with some students giving excellent answers.

The following is an example of an excellent answer.

*Au fur et à mesure du texte le passé simple est employé (fut, entra, devint) qui va de pair avec des histoires et des biographies. En plus, on nous donne sa date de naissance et de décès, et l'auteur raconte la vie de Lully d'une manière plutôt objective.*

### Section 3 – Writing in French

In this section, students were asked to write an original text of 200–300 words in French on one of the five topics. Five marks were given for each of the following criteria:

- relevance, breath and depth
- appropriateness of structure and sequence.
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary.

Students handled this section fairly well. The most popular topics were Question 6 and Question 8. Very few students chose Question 10. Some students exceeded the word limit and this impacted heavily on their marks for Criterion 2 as their final sentences were not assessed.

Pre-prepared material was poorly connected to the topic and the language used was often inappropriate to the task.

In order to maximise their performance, students should pay special attention to text types and the kind of writing required.

**Question 6**

This was the most popular topic and was well handled. Students were asked to write an informal, persuasive letter to a classmate who stole a mobile phone. The letter needed to identify the guilty party, describe the crime and how someone else had come to be punished, provide advice and give reasons to persuade the guilty party to follow the advice.

The topic clearly indicated that a persuasive kind of writing was required and yet students did not always use persuasive strategies. The letter needed to include the features of an informal letter, such as address, date, greeting and signing off with a fictional name. The use of *vous* was not appropriate.

**Question 7**

This was a fairly popular topic. Students were asked to write an evaluative article presenting two advantages and two disadvantages of vegetable gardens. It also needed to include a title, an author/by-line and a brief introduction.

As students were required to write an article, an objective style creating an impression of balance and impartiality was expected. Students should also have included expressions of cause, consequence, opposition and/or concession.

**Question 8**

Students were required to write the text for a speech and most students were familiar with the features of a speech. Many students wrote about how wonderful a particular teacher was but did not really address 'how much the teacher really influenced his/her life'. Students had to write in a personal style and should not have given the real name of the teacher described.



### Question 9

Students were asked to write an imaginative short story and include a title, the name of an author/by-line, and the style appropriate to a short story.

Many students chose this topic. Students were expected to use descriptive vocabulary, build up suspense towards an original conclusion and include some scientific or science-related material.

Some students used pre-prepared material from their assessment tasks or Detailed Study which was often unrelated to the topic.

It is often difficult to write a good imaginative response. However, some students excelled and the following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Comme le savant s'approchait du laboratoire, une lumière verte et scintillante s'est glissée sous la porte. Antoine hésita un moment avant de poser sa main sur la poignée. Il ouvrit la porte et fut aveuglé par cette étrange lumière. Il se frotta les yeux et vit quelque chose d'extraordinaire: le réservoir en verre dans lequel était posé un escargot était brisé en mille éclats. Quant à la pièce, tout était recouvert de bave qui, d'ailleurs, était d'une luminosité incroyable. En plus, il y avait un grand trou dans le mur.*

*Malgré tout cela, Antoine ne paniqua point. Ce qui était arrivé exactement, il ne pouvait en être sûr mais il savait que son expérience s'était déroulée d'une façon imprévue. Friand de ce mets raffiné que l'on appelle l'escargot, il a voulu créer une nouvelle espèce de cette bête, le « Massif-Gris » parce qu'il trouvait le « Petit Gris » fort petit !*

*Sans perdre trop de temps à réfléchir il s'arma d'une fourchette et partit en quête du monstre. C'était une tâche nullement difficile, la bête laissant de la bave pendant sa cavale du labo. L'escargot avait détruit une bonne partie de la forêt qu'il avait traversée. Le chemin du savant était éclairci par la bête, ce qui lui permit de voir les dégâts. Il fallait absolument arrêter la bête avant qu'elle ne cause plus de dégâts ou même la perte d'une vie humaine.*

*Après quelques minutes, Antoine se trouvait nez-à-nez avec sa création qui dormait au bord d'une rivière. Tout doucement, il s'en approcha et après s'être mis sur la coquille de l'animal, il enfonça sa fourchette à travers la tête de l'escargot. Réveillé brutalement, ce dernier eut beau essayer de se défendre mais c'était bien trop tard. Au bout de trois minutes de lutte il était mort.*

*Se réjouissant de sa victoire, Antoine se décida de ne plus jamais faire de telles expériences et commença à préparer une sauce au beurre.*

### Question 10

This topic was not a popular choice. This may have been because students were unsure what a report consists of. The report needed a topic/title, introduction, body, conclusion and a formal register. It also needed to include activities, logistical details, information as to why 14 July should be celebrated, and the writing needed to be objective. The use of the conditional was expected, as indicated in the topic.

Students had no difficulty with vocabulary but their reports often lacked structure. Students need to be familiar with different text types and remember them when answering questions in Section 3. Students may benefit from writing a plan. Students are reminded that they must not mention the name of their school.