

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION®**

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FRENCH

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GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall performance of candidates in both Units 1 and 2 was good. There was improvement in performance in many areas, which is a pleasing development. There were several scripts of an extremely high standard. Nevertheless, the poor standard of work in a number of cases continues to be a matter of grave concern. Detailed comments highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of candidates are given below.

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

Paper 01 – Listening Comprehension

Candidates had to listen to five short selections in Section A and one extended interview in Section B. The selections were in French, but candidates were required to answer in English. Most candidates were able to complete the examination within the time allotted.

On the whole, there was improvement in the performance of candidates this year when compared with that of previous years. It was apparent that sufficient listening practice had been done by candidates and they appeared to be more *au courant* with the vocabulary as it pertains to the respective topics. What is noteworthy is the fact that few candidates received marks in the lowest band or left entire sections blank, as has previously been the case.

The selections were based on the three modules of the syllabus:

Questions 1 and 2	–	Module 1 (<i>L'individu, la famille et la vie journalière</i>)
Questions 3, 4, and 5	–	Module 3 (<i>L'environnement</i>)
Question 6	–	Module 2 (<i>La société et les affaires sociales</i>)

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

The topic of this selection was sport. Candidates did well for the most part.

Part (a) was definitely the most problematic. While candidates understood the reference to physical enjoyment in the original meaning of *sport*, they had problems with *divertissement* and *plaisir...de l'esprit*.

Part (b), identify three elements that define modern sport, and Part (c), how much time should be devoted to a sport, were answered well, although some candidates had problems with *coordination*. Most were able to say that a sport should be practised three times a week, but several wrote the wrong number for the duration of the exercise — *cinquante minutes*.

Part (d) was challenging. Some candidates understood that participating in a sport helps with weight loss, but *le maintien ...de son poids*, maintaining one's weight, was not understood. Some candidates gave general answers, such as 'keeping fit', 'stress relief', 'increased cardio-vascular health', while others used elements from the answer to Part (e), which required the response *resistance to fatigue* and *one's age*.

Many candidates gained at least one mark for Part (e), on identifying the factors that should determine the appropriateness of a sport. They were unable to include the part about one's age. From jottings made by some candidates, it seems that *son âge* was interpreted as the unknown word **sonage*, and therefore not understood.

**An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.*

Selection 2

This selection dealt with challenges faced within the education system.

Most candidates were able to correctly identify the criticisms that have been levelled at the education system in their answer for Part (a). However, several candidates mixed up the answers for Part (b), attitudes schools should be encouraging among children, and Part (c), the type of environment a school should provide. Others had difficulty understanding the key words required for Part (b) — *le goût et le plaisir d'apprendre*, and some gained at least one of two marks for Part (c), by describing the environment as one that encouraged development and creativity. An example of a full response to Part (b) is *Schools should encourage a taste or like for learning and the pleasure of learning among children.*

Part (d) required candidates to respond to how the young people in the school system are described. Most candidates understood *paresseux* but were unfamiliar with *indolents*.

Part (e) was well done. Candidates were aware of the challenges which lie ahead for young people. However, with regard to Part (f), on the attributes required for success, many candidates translated *niveau* as 'new', doubtless confusing the words *niveau* and *nouveau*. Hence, there were many scripts in which candidates spoke about 'a new culture' as opposed to 'a high level of culture'. Finally, the French word for training (*la formation*) was reused by candidates who did not recognize that it meant something completely different from its meaning in English.

Selection 3

This topic of this selection was water pollution caused by agricultural practices.

For this selection, Part (a), three sources of pollution that are linked to human activity, and Part (b), two products that have led to contamination, were well answered by candidates. However, Part (c) posed a bit of a challenge as many candidates distorted the answer. The answer was that *water used in irrigation became useless because it was contaminated by an excess of nutrients and sediments*. However, many candidates wrote that it became useless because it lost its nutrients and sediments. An example of an excellent response is: *Water sourced from rivers contains an excess of nutrients and sediments which degrade its quality thus making it unsuitable for all crops.*

Selection 4

This selection dealt with deforestation.

For this selection, Part (a) posed little challenge to candidates. They understood the impact of deforestation on the environment. However, candidates were unable to correctly identify the two examples of infrastructure that contribute to deforestation as an answer to Part (b). Many candidates misunderstood or misinterpreted *les autoroutes et les chemins d'accès*, referring to 'train tracks', 'railways' and 'the construction of factories,' for example.

In the case of Part (c), two commercial activities which may have led to deforestation, though the answer was *cattle rearing/exploitation of mineral resources*, few candidates understood *l'élevage de bétail* or wrote an acceptable alternative. In addition, many candidates were not specific enough about the type of resources to be exploited, referring to the exploitation of wood, for example.

Part (d) asked candidates to state how the survival of forests can be ensured. Candidates heard *Il faut améliorer les moyens d'évaluation et de surveillance des forêts*, but some were unable to understand the structure of the sentence and so referred to the 'devaluation of the forests'.

Selection 5

This selection was about ecotourism.

For this selection, Part (a), how does the International Tourist Association define ecotourism, and Part (b), identify three factors which contribute to the success of ecotourism, were well done. However, this was not the case for Part (c), what information is given about small initiatives in ecotourism. Candidates had great difficulty answering this question as they wrote things totally unrelated to what was expected. An example of an excellent response is *Some small initiatives were started but simply failed because these (aforementioned) factors were not taken into account.*

Part B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

Candidates were required to listen to the managing director of a toy manufacturing company talking about children and toys.

Generally speaking, performance ranged from satisfactory to excellent, with several candidates getting full marks. The vocabulary used was understood by most candidates and a clear understanding of the essence of the passage was evident.

Nevertheless, Part (a), on the observations made by the managing director about children, proved fairly challenging. Several candidates were unable to gain all four marks for understanding *Aujourd'hui les enfants deviennent vieux plus tôt. A partir de huit ans, ils achètent de moins en moins de jouets.*

Most candidates earned at least one mark in each section of Part (b). In the first section candidates readily understood that music was one element that would make toys attractive to girls. The second element, *fashion*, was problematic for two reasons. First, it seems that some candidates did not know that *la mode* meant *fashion*, or interpreted it as *monde, mots*, or 'mode', for example, 'products with words'. Secondly, having heard *des produits autour de la musique, de la mode...* with no *et* between *musique* and *mode*, a number of candidates combined the two and wrote, for example, 'music from around the world', or 'products that play music in automatic mode'. In the second section, it was easy to understand *du sport* as something that would interest boys, but *des concepts de jeux comme les cartes Magic* was more challenging.

Part (c) was generally well done. Candidates were able to provide information on the ages of children who test toys.

The word *subtilités* was misinterpreted by some candidates in response to Part (d), on how children differ from adults when choosing toys. Candidates gave answers such as 'Children choose toys with subtitles'. In other cases, candidates seemed to misunderstand completely: 'Children like figurines and parents prefer safe toys.' Candidates were expected to say that *children were interested in details which adults found insignificant.*

Candidates did well on Part (e), the strategy used to encourage parents to buy Playskool toys. However, many candidates gained only one of two marks for Part (f), which required them to say that parents wanted toys that contributed to their child's development, but also toys *faits pour durer*, and it was clear that *durer* was not understood by many of them. A good response was *That they are lasting and contribute to development.*

There were many variations in the answers for Part (g), which required candidates to understand *La Fédération du Jouet et le Ministère de l'Éducation nationale.*

While most candidates had no difficulty identifying *violence* and *socialization* as problems which exist in schools for Part (h), a few of them found Part (i) difficult. This question asked about the conclusion drawn about the value of toys within the context of schools. Instead of the answer that *a child who plays accepts rules*, some responses were far off, for example –'Children aren't focused'. Some gave the opposite answer, saying that toys had a negative effect.

Recommendations

Although candidates showed understanding of most of this Paper, the Listening Comprehension, and their performance improved, the following points should be noted:

- Candidates should pay attention to spelling and avoid coining words. Misspelt and invented words were frequently seen. Some examples of this are: ‘dimmuniation’, ‘disbehaviour’, ‘autoroot’, ‘substitutatily’, ‘poachering’, ‘deminates’, ‘societize’, ‘useliss’, ‘proxide.’
- Although it is better to attempt an answer than leave it blank, care should be taken with proper sentence construction and clarity of meaning. Some examples of careless expression are – ‘After the age of 8, they less and less to play with’; ‘Urban cause inimaginable (sic) site the visual cause by international’; ‘Signifies fun, several physical and spirit.’ □
- While it can be helpful to make use of prior knowledge to make understanding a passage easier, candidates should nevertheless avoid making up answers which may be related to the topic of the Selection but which have nothing to do with the passage itself. Some examples of this are: Selection 3 (a) ‘From littering, car engines and disposal of unwanted furniture and appliances on the land.’ The answer expected was *industries/municipalities/agriculture pesticides/animal waste*. Selection 3 (b) ‘Gasoline and proxide’. The answer required was *fertilizers/pesticides/animal waste (manure)*.
- Candidates should revise basic vocabulary, such as numbers.
- Although cognates obviously help with comprehension, candidates should also beware of *faux-amis*, for example, *formation*.
- When trying to decipher a word, candidates should consider several options including analysing the structure of the sentence, for example, *adapté à son âge et à sa résistance à la fatigue* and *il faut améliorer les moyens d’évaluation et de surveillance des forêts*.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully so as to identify the point in the passage that relates to the question.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

Section A – Reading Comprehension

This section of the paper required candidates to respond to questions asked on two passages in French. Passage 1 was based on Module 1 (*L’individu, la famille et la vie journalière*). Candidates were required to respond in English to questions asked in English. They also had to find synonyms in the passage for five words and expressions in French. Passage 2 was based on Module 3 (*L’environnement*) and required candidates to respond in French to questions asked in French.

Passage 1 – *La crise d’adolescence*

This passage was within the scope of the syllabus and within candidates’ expected level of mastery of the language. The general performance on this question was above average. Many candidates demonstrated comprehension of the passage, although some exhibited difficulty comprehending certain sections of the passage. Most candidates answered all sections of the question, the most challenging of which proved to be Part (c). Approximately 70 per cent of the candidates scored between 12 and the maximum 24 marks.

For Part (a), most candidates identified the adolescent crisis as *natural*. Many candidates also understood the idea of the adolescent crisis as *a rite of passage*, but in some cases parts of the response were translated directly from the passage. Answers given included ‘an obligated passage’, and ‘no one chooses to question the adolescent crisis anymore’. In fact, *indisputable (personne ne la conteste)* and the idea that the crisis was now considered *part of the discourse (est entrée dans le vocabulaire)* posed great difficulty. A few candidates interpreted *ne la conteste* to mean that some sort of competition was involved. An example of a correct response is as follows:

People tend not to debate it, they simply consider it as natural, a phase that everyone goes through.

Part (b) proved to be extremely difficult for many candidates and the answers given suggested a lack of vocabulary on their part. Candidates translated *sous les feux de l’actualité* as literally ‘under the fire of the actuality’ and therefore did not grasp the true meaning of the phrase. Several candidates indicated that young people were ‘never aware/concerned with social preoccupations’ or that young people were the ones who were complaining. Few candidates were able to explain clearly that young people had become the focus of society’s concern, and indicated instead that adolescents were ‘preoccupied’. Some attempted literal translations of the

relevant section of the passage, for example, ‘Young people have never been under the fires of the present and in the surrounding of preoccupation of society’.

A correct response that answered both elements of the question and attained full marks is presented below.

Young people find themselves as the focus of the news and at the heart of society's thoughts and concerns.

Part (c) was also extremely challenging for many candidates who seemed unable to clearly explain the significance of the eighteenth century in relation to the notion of adolescence. A few candidates scored full marks for this section of the question. However, vocabulary proved to be a great challenge to many. As a result, there were literal translations of the words/phrases in an attempt to produce a response.

Most responses highlighted the fact that it was the first time that something had occurred. However, many candidates neglected to include the idea that it was the first time that adolescence was mentioned as a social phenomenon. Only a few candidates produced clear and accurate explanations of the time factor of the *début* of the social phenomenon relating to adolescence or its documentation of the complaints. Further, there was frequent misuse of the word *sensible* to mean ‘sensible’, and *affrontement* to mean ‘affrontation’. Candidates misinterpreted *une spécificité adolescence* as ‘specific adolescents’ and referred to *plaintes* as ‘plants’ or ‘plantation’. Distortion of English words produced ‘preoccupied’ and ‘publically’.

An example of a response that attained full marks is presented below.

*The eighteenth century is important in relation to the notion of adolescence because this was when it was first mentioned, when written and spoken complaints were filed regarding troubles or predicaments caused by these groups of young people. It is recognized in terms of this adolescent crisis, as a period specifically concerned with adolescents and also a *sensible and confrontational period.*

While Part (d) was well done by most candidates, there were still those who misinterpreted *intra-scolaire* and *extra-scolaire*, sometimes stating that violence existed between schools. This indicated a misunderstanding of the use of these prefixes in English. Several candidates also concluded that *le taux de suicide* meant ‘thoughts of suicide’. In addition, many candidates demonstrated limited vocabulary in translating *phénomène de bandes* as ‘band phenomenon’. The candidate who produced the following response obtained full marks for this section of the question:

The main problems that are manifested in adolescent years are the gang phenomenon, violence within and outside of school, rejection of the education system, and suicide, the rate of which is highest among those aged 15 – 24.

Part (e) was well handled by candidates. Many candidates were able to understand that adolescence was the period between childhood and adulthood, and they therefore gained full marks. Several candidates, however, were not sure how to interpret *enfance*, so conjugations such as ‘infance’, ‘enfancy’, ‘enfantry’ were used as part of the answer. The candidate who produced the succeeding response was awarded full marks for this section of the question.

Adolescence is considered to be a period of transition because it acts as a bridge between childhood and adulthood.

Most candidates understood what was required for Part (f), but some failed to state that males were more anti-conformist than females. Too many candidates had difficulty expressing themselves in English. As a result, responses were poorly structured, and the vocabulary weak, for example, ‘Males are more inclined to the reactions about the exterior’ or ‘males care more about seen appearance.’ In the same vein, some candidates indicated that boys were more interested in how they looked physically (their attributes).

*An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.

Candidates were unable to adequately render the expressions *exalté* and *positionnées sur le volet*, in some instances misinterpreting *volet* as ‘theft’. Candidates also did not seem to comprehend the word *inhibition*, suggesting that girls were ‘less inhibited’ and other similar ideas which were the opposite of the required answer. Presented below is an example of a correct response:

Males are more inclined to show/express their reactions to non-conformism on the outside whereas females are more inhibited or are introverts.

Parts (g)–(k), the section on synonyms, was not well handled by many candidates and very few of them scored full marks. Parts (h) and (i) were generally handled well by most candidates. Many candidates suggested *suicide* as a synonym for *mort* instead of *décès*. Other incorrect synonyms included *obligé* and *n’ont* for *nie*; *vigueur* and *dégradations* for *dégoût*; *découle* for *cadre*; and *plus, débordement* or *enclin* for *excessif*.

Candidates are reminded that they must look for expressions of the same part of speech as the one presented in the question. They should also try to identify the part of speech correctly.

Recommendations

- Candidates should avoid using French words when answering in English.
- It was generally observed that the primary challenges faced by candidates include a lack of vocabulary, the failure to understand (and therefore analyse) the information given, and inappropriate use of English to express themselves. It is recommended that candidates read more widely, both in French and English. This will enhance levels of vocabulary in both languages.
- Additionally, students should be taught to be more precise/less ambiguous in responding to questions. Students must also be taught to gauge meaning based on context.
- In some instances candidates’ responses were long-winded and this detracted from the clarity of the response.
- At times candidates’ answers suggested that they used their own observations, knowledge and experiences to respond to the questions rather than base their answers on the passage. Responses to questions must be limited to the information presented in the passage.
- Candidates are reminded that answers in the Reading Comprehension follow chronologically.
- Candidates are asked to refrain from writing multiple responses on the same line for the synonyms. Conversely, candidates should refrain from writing each section of the question on a separate page.
- Candidates pursuing both Unit 1 and Unit 2 in the same year should ensure that they write the appropriate Unit at the front of their examination booklet.

Passage 2 – *Une collision qui a stimulé la coopération*

Candidates generally performed better on this passage than on Passage 1 and scores were consistently higher. A few candidates were able to score full marks on this section. It should be noted that although many candidates were awarded high marks in this section, not enough effort was made by candidates to use their own words. In some cases they quoted directly from the passage, using quotation marks. They were *penalized* for this. *Candidates are reminded that answers must not be copied verbatim from the passage if full marks are to be awarded.*

Further, it was observed that many candidates applied their personal experiences and knowledge to answer the questions instead of basing their responses solely on the passage. This is to be discouraged.

Candidates need to read the questions more thoroughly and familiarize themselves with question phrases (“*Qu’est-ce qui*”, or “*à quels risques...*”) to ensure that they understand what is being asked, and to ensure that their selected response is drawn from the accurate section of the passage. Many answers given indicate that there was insufficient comprehension or faulty analysis of the information presented in the passage. Additionally, candidates are reminded that answers for each question are normally found *chronologically*. *More attention needs to be paid to the number of marks awarded for each question as a guide to the number of points to be made.*

In Part (a), the word *s'échouer* proved problematic for candidates. Many candidates did not realize that the risk was that the oil tanker would run aground and *not* the oil itself. Many candidates scored less than two marks for this question because they sought their answer in the first and second sentences of the passage rather than the third sentence. They considered that the oil spill on the North American coast of the Gulf of Mexico was the risk. This observation revealed the need for candidates to read the passage carefully in order to find the most appropriate answer. An example of a candidate's response that received full marks is presented below:

**Les risques sont s'échouer sur un récif corallier, sur un banc de sable au-delà de la côte ou auprès d'une île. Ils peuvent même prendre feu et exploser ou même couler.*

For Part (b), almost all candidates identified the correct answer. However, many failed to use their own words and were penalized accordingly. Good responses written by two candidates were:

**La pire possibilité est qu'il y a un accident entre deux des navires énormes.*

**La pire des mésaventures probable qui puisse arriver est que deux de ces navires énormes peut avoir une collision et celui peut mener à une catastrophe pour le pays ou les petits Etats insulaires qui seraient affectés.*

In Part (c) most candidates correctly identified where the answer was for this section of the question. However, many did not make any attempt to put the response in their own words. Instead, they copied the entire section from the passage and were penalized for not following the instructions given. Model answers provided by two candidates follow:

**... causé le pire rejet de pétrole dans la mer, cependant, il a également provoqué des actions des pouvoirs publics dans la Caraïbe.*

**Elle a causé un nombreux de marées noirs et a provoqué une réaction régional par les gouvernements.*

Part (d) was generally well handled by candidates. However, more effort could have been made to use synonymous expressions for the words in the passage, such as *le secteur pétrolier* instead of *l'industrie pétrolière*, or *aussi bien que* instead of *ainsi que*. Candidates should note, however, that it is not always possible or necessary to change some words.

Sample response:

** Les personnes qui sont partie de la lutte sont les gouvernement avec l'aide des organisations d'autres mers, les industries du pétrole, du gaz, et du transport maritime parmi d'autre partenaires.*

For Part (e), candidates generally performed well. They correctly identified the direct consequences of the collision. Effort was noted on the part of candidates to answer in their own words. An example of a good response is as follows:

**...inculquer des mesures/stratégies protectrices et des modes/manières de combattre contre la contamination d'hydrocarbures par les pays caribéens.*

In Part (f), the majority of candidates responded correctly. Many candidates were penalized, however, for lifting their entire response from the passage without any attempt to put their response in their own words. There were candidates who successfully managed to express themselves in their own words, gaining full marks for their responses. One candidate's response is presented below.

**Ils ont eu des conventions internationales avec la protection du milieu naturel en tête et ont commencé des programmes des activités pratiques d'information.*

**An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.*

Model responses are also presented:

**L'organisation d'assemblées/réunions globales/mondiales de plans/projets sur le plan national/à l'échelle nationale d'intervention/d'assistance d'urgence.*

**L'implémentation/La mise en œuvre de programmes de formation/d'apprentissage et d'exercices/d'activités pratiques.*

**L'amélioration de la collaboration/des relations avec les industries pétrolières, du gaz et du transport dans la mer.*

Recommendations

- Teachers should encourage students to answer only what is asked. They could also suggest that students look at what is asked in the question that follows the one they are answering so that they get an idea of the boundaries of each question.
- More practice in learning how to paraphrase passages in French would also help. One possible approach is using short extracts from key passages in the literature books. This would help with language as well as allow students to become more familiar with the set books.
- It is also important for candidates to acquire as wide a vocabulary as possible, and to practise changing verbs to nouns and vice versa, so that the wording of an answer can be altered.

Section B – Essays

In this section candidates were required to write an essay in French (250–300 words) based on one of five topics from Module 2 (*La société et les affaires sociales*). In order to receive the maximum mark of 24, candidates were expected to demonstrate the ability to present their ideas and arguments coherently and cohesively, in grammatically correct language. Candidates who were able to properly structure their essays with an introduction, three well developed and illustrated points, and a conclusion usually scored high marks for content. Those who were able to demonstrate an excellent grasp of grammar and idiomatic usage received high marks for their expression.

Question 3

« *La peur et l'ignorance sont les causes principales du racisme.* » *Discutez.*

This was, undoubtedly, the most popular question in this section. Although this question was straightforward, nearly all candidates who attempted it failed to present appropriate points. This question required candidates to discuss the main causes of racism and state if fear and ignorance were among the main causes. Too many candidates went on to discuss examples of racism without answering the question presented. Candidates who did agree with the statement did not explain exactly how fear and ignorance led to racism or the effects they engendered.

Acceptable points would have been that *fear and ignorance were among the main reasons for racism, but that other causes existed such as bad experiences with one specific race, colonialism, the Holocaust, and slavery* (which a few candidates mentioned), *and disparity in wealth among races*. There was a need to link these examples to the question and discuss the link between fear and ignorance and the effect one could have on the other, resulting in racism. Instead of focusing on the topic, some candidates used the essay to 'vent' about their particular race; how intelligent they could be if they believed in themselves, and their capabilities, instead of allowing others to feel superior. One candidate discussed how white people wanted to become rich and rule the world and that society contributed to this since white people got all the good jobs and black people got jobs that did *not* pay a lot.

**An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.*

Question 4

« *Le chômage, notamment dans la région des Caraïbes, est tout simplement une excuse pour la paresse.* » Commentez cette constatation.

Few candidates selected this question. Among those who did, most dismissed the idea of laziness in this question and turned the question around to suggest many other reasons for the problem of unemployment including *discrimination* (racial and sexual), *recession*, and *a lack of qualifications*. It was evident that some candidates found this question relatively manageable and were able to link unemployment and the causes of this phenomenon, linking each to the second part of the question. Good points presented also included the premise that *some people were not working because of a lack of jobs or because they had to stay at home to take care of their children or spend more time with them*. Some also argued that some individuals are deemed medically unfit to work or are overqualified for available positions.

Question 5

« *La fuite des cerveaux, déjà un problème pour la Caraïbe, a été aggravée par la crise financière.* » Donnez votre opinion.

This was the least popular question among candidates, but was handled very well by one candidate. This candidate suggested that *people migrated because of a lack of educational and employment opportunities, a high crime rate in their home country, the state of development of the country*. Other points that could have been explored include *political instability, war, and terrorism*. Other candidates discussed the brain drain in general and migration, without fully answering the question presented.

Question 6

« *Le crime et la violence font partie de l'existence humaine. On ne s'en débarrassera jamais.* » Donnez votre opinion.

This question was popular among candidates. However, it was poorly handled by many of them. The majority of candidates wrote extensively on crime and violence in general and did not focus on “*On ne s'en débarrassera jamais*”. Few attempted to discuss whether crime and violence were part of our human existence and whether or not we could get rid of them. Those who agreed with the idea gave reasons why such a situation would continue. These include the continued presence of poverty/recession/unemployment.

Question 7

« *La toxicomanie contribue à l'instabilité dans beaucoup de familles caribéennes.* » Discutez.

This was among the more popular questions selected by candidates. This question required candidates to show how drug addiction contributed to instability in Caribbean families. It was fairly well done by some candidates. However, some appeared to have rewritten an essay which was previously done in class dealing with the effects of drug addiction. These candidates did not focus on how drug addiction affects family life and, therefore, did not fully answer the question. Some points that were presented by candidates referred to *pressure being placed on the other parent or children to take care of the home; physical/emotional/sexual abuse; reduced health and well-being of the drug addict and family members; the inappropriate use of funds for drugs, underperformance of children in school; the abandonment of the home by the drug addict (by death and voluntarily); the increase in the number of street children and single parent families*. Some candidates were able to present different types of addictive drugs and discuss the effects of these on Caribbean families. The question was considered to be the best answered by candidates.

Further Comments

Although the majority of candidates observed the word limit, some produced too long or too short essays. *Candidates are reminded to adhere to the stipulated word limit.*

Common errors noted in the essays included:

- Errors of syntax – *Ils ont devenu très l'ignorance à chaque autre. Quand un père, qui est la tete de chez...*
- Lack of subject/ verb agreement (*les enfants peut*)
- Pluralization of nouns/articles (*l'enfants*)
- Omission of the apostrophe in nouns and other structures beginning with a vowel (*la invention, que ils...*)
- Incorrect verb conjugation (*la techologie est développer, c'est utiliser dans la maison ; les gens sont changant ; ils croitent*)
- Inaccurate use of the relative pronouns *qui, que* (*un enfant que était exposé*)
- Inaccurate use of pronouns (*ne parlent pas à ils*)
- Inaccurate use of demonstrative adjectives (*cet pression, cettes drogues*)
- Lack of contractions with *à + le, à + les* (*à les familles*)
- Non-use of prepositions governing verbs and expressions (*«Il est une manière rester en contact»; «...permettent les membres de famille discuter»; «l'ordinateur aide les personnes effectuer tâches.»*)
- Coining words/Anglicisms (*il ne pas le knowledge, ou le matter, experiencé*)
- Improper use of negative structures (*le racisme est ne voit pas chaque jour*)

Examples of good expressions, vocabulary, structures:

- *Le phénomène de la toxicomanie est un thème brûlant de l'actualité qui procède d'un écheveau de facteurs différents.*
- *Afin de réduire le problème, à mon avis, il est nécessaire que les individus sans emploi reçoivent l'option de...*
- *Elle a une portée mondiale*
- *Vraisemblablement*
- *De surcroît, engendre, l'effondrement*
- *La recrudescence de la toxicomanie*
- *Les ennuis familiaux*
- *Il va sans dire que*
- *En ayant la responsabilité*
- *On ne peut pas nier que...*
- *Par crainte*
- *Le désir de goûter *le fruit défendu*
- *Les enfants sont soumis à*
- *Un gaspillage d'argent*
- *Une initiative pour éviter le problème*
- *Cette situation aide à*
- *L'action de juger*
- *La méconnaissance peut provoquer le racisme*
- *Au sein des racistes*
- *En dépit du fait*
- *L'interdiction du foulard islamique*
- *Elle augmente toujours*

Recommendations

- Candidates need to read the questions thoroughly and ensure full comprehension before attempting their essay. If some words are not understood by the candidate, he/she may produce an essay which seems irrelevant.
- Candidates need to develop at least three points in their essay, have a proper introduction and a strong conclusion.

*An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.

- Candidates need to place more emphasis on the development of paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence. The point being discussed should be expressed clearly and truly lend itself to the overall development of the point of view taken in the essay. (**N.B.** Candidates should develop their points, instead of simply listing them.)
- Where possible, candidates should give recommendations/propose solutions to the situation suggested by the question.
- Candidates need to spend more time learning vocabulary relevant to the topics for Module 2 and they should also use a variety of structures in French to enhance their writing skills.
- Teachers should make additional effort in reviewing grammar. There is a greater need for attention to be paid to correct conjugation of verbs in all tenses, agreement of subject and verb; agreement of nouns and adjectives; the structure of sentences (for example, *Il est évident dans la couleur de sa peau, l'ethnicité où même si le status économique.*) The sense of the statement is lost, otherwise.
- Adherence to the word limit is extremely crucial. Candidates should ensure that their essays are not too long or too short or they will be penalized accordingly.
- Candidates are to be reminded that they must not copy sentences or expressions wholesale from the reading comprehension passages and incorporate them in their essays as this amounts to plagiarism. There is no harm in reusing one or two words or expressions, but wholesale copying must be discouraged.

Paper 03 – Literary Analysis and Themes

Section A – Literary Extracts

In this section, candidates were required to answer one of four questions based on a literary extract taken from the prescribed texts studied: *L'enfant noir*, *L'odeur du café*, *L'étranger* and *Une si longue lettre*. Candidates were required to comment on plot, setting, characterization, and simple literary techniques.

The majority of candidates, approximately 54 per cent, responded to Question 1. This question focused on the text *L'enfant noir*. The other responses were distributed among the other three texts, with 19 per cent of the candidates electing to base their answers on *L'étranger*, 16 per cent on *Une si longue lettre* and 11 per cent on *L'odeur du café*.

Question 1: *L'enfant noir*

Generally, this question produced very good responses. Over 90 per cent of the candidates earned scores ranging from satisfactory to excellent. At least 10 per cent of the candidates who responded to this question scored full marks, which was most commendable. Some responses were lengthy, but some candidates gave brief and concise answers. A minority of candidates failed to analyse the extract. One candidate disregarded the instructions and answered all but one part of the question in English.

The performance for Parts (a) and (b) was generally satisfactory. However, Parts (c) and (d) proved challenging to some candidates. For Part (c), some candidates seemed uncertain about the amount of information to be included in the response. Examiners accepted a statement in adjectival form — *Il est observateur* — or a description of the trait identified — *Il a l'imagination fertile*, with a statement or quotation to justify the response: *Il décrit le reflet de la lumière sur l'eau : « l'eau luisait doucement comme le ciel... »* or *Il compare Conakry à une grande fleur...*

For Part (d), some candidates experienced difficulties and were unable to adequately comment on why the alternative title of '*la variété*' was a good one. A possible answer was: *Je suis d'accord avec ce jugement parce que le narrateur décrit les différentes scènes qu'il voit pendant son voyage à Conakry* (with examples given). Another approach could have been to note that *Son voyage commence pendant la journée mais se termine le soir*, followed by examples of the various scenes described.

Question 2: *L'odeur du café*

This question was generally well done, with approximately 85 per cent of candidates receiving grades between satisfactory and excellent. Most candidates were able to answer Parts (a)–(c). The most challenging part of the

question was Part (d) which asked candidates to pick out elements which underscored the concept of masculinity. Some candidates did not appear to fully grasp what was required. Answers were being sought which reflected the code governing masculine behaviour whereby it is *le mâle qui poursuit la femelle* and normally an adolescent male *garde ses distances par rapport à une parente femelle*. The behaviour of the narrator in the situation under study would have been governed by this unwritten code of conduct.

Question 3: L'étranger

An analysis of the performance of candidates on this question highlighted the difficulties/challenges experienced by candidates in responding to this question. Unlike the other questions, only about 50 per cent of the candidates who chose this one were able to score marks between satisfactory and excellent.

Some candidates experienced difficulty in formulating responses to Part (a) because they failed to comment adequately on the technique used to make the section of the extract dramatic, and could not identify some of the words which illustrated the point being made, such as *bruquement, il en a tiré...*

For Part (b), a large number of candidates could not fully explain the ambiguity in the extract. The candidate who received high marks would have grasped the idea that ... *d'une part, l'individu semble jouer le rôle d'un évangéliste, et d'autre part, il joue le rôle d'un interrogateur qui cherche à débrouiller les mobiles des actions criminelles de Meursault.*

Most candidates were able to identify an element in Part (c) which demonstrated the vulnerability of Meursault and provide adequate justification for their answer.

For Part (d), most answers were satisfactory.

Question 4: Une si longue lettre

Candidates performed fairly well on this extract. Eighty-four per cent of the candidates earned marks ranging from satisfactory to excellent.

Most candidates were awarded maximum marks for Part (a) because they concluded that the family had a good/loving relationship. They were not specifically asked to provide evidence to support that conclusion, and although many supported that argument, those who did not were not penalized.

Some partial responses were received for Part (b). This stemmed from the fact that the question required knowledge of stylistic devices, and an ability to explain them, but some candidates were unable to do so effectively. In this case, candidates needed to refer to *la répétition du mot 'même'*, explain the purpose *pour indiquer que les hommes se ressemblent*, and then give examples.

Part (c), which focused on the irony of the situation, proved challenging because most candidates were only able to identify one element of the situation, *Tout unit tous les hommes*, but not the other point being made: *Alors pourquoi s'entretient-ils...?*; and *L'homme se prend pour une créature supérieure...* and the further observation: *Son intelligence enfante aussi bien le bien que le mal, plus souvent le mal que le bien...*

Most answers received for Part (d) were satisfactory.

Further Comments

- Candidates must be reminded that there is no need to write answers to each question on the extract on a new page.
- Candidates need to become more familiar with answering varied types of questions, for example, those requiring comment: *Commentez ce jugement*; and, in particular, those requiring analysis, *Analysez la peinture de Da.*

- The judicious use of dictionaries should be encouraged to assist candidates in understanding certain key aspects of the extracts/or questions.
- Candidates should be advised that the use of abbreviations in responding to questions is *not* acceptable. The full word should be written, *quelque chose* instead of ‘*qch*’, for example.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write one essay, of 350–400 words, in English, from the thematic areas: La Jeunesse and L’individu et la société. The prescribed texts for this section were: La jeunesse – *L’enfant noir* and *L’odeur du café* while those for L’individu et la société were *L’étranger* and *Une si longue lettre*. Four questions were given, two on each theme. In general, many candidates displayed a sound knowledge of the texts.

For the questions in this section, the majority of candidates were able to obtain marks ranging from satisfactory to excellent. The preferred text for the majority of those who selected a text from La Jeunesse was *L’Enfant Noir*. Over 76 per cent of the candidates opted to choose a question based on the theme L’individu et la société. The most popular text from this section was *L’étranger*. The least popular text overall was *L’odeur du café*.

In general, many candidates read the questions carefully and were able to respond appropriately. Candidates who demonstrated mastery of the higher level skills were able to identify recurring motifs, draw parallels and highlight contrasts as well as provide deeper analysis. Many candidates attempted to incorporate French quotes into their essays in order to enhance the development of their points. Less competent candidates displayed a fair knowledge of the texts, but weaknesses were observed in terms of their analysis and organization of the essays.

Question 5

“Generally speaking, adults have positive relationships with the younger generation.” Discuss this observation with reference to the text that you have studied.

This question was chosen by about 15 per cent of the candidates. Candidates who opted for this question handled it fairly well, in general, receiving scores which ranged from satisfactory to excellent. The majority of candidates selected *L’enfant noir* as their reference text. Many candidates were able to identify a number of the characters who were positive in the young people’s life, for instance, the mother, the father, the relatives. Others provided a balanced argument by identifying the principal as a negative influence. Others pointed out that the mother was overprotective.

L’odeur du café was not a popular choice.

Question 6

Discuss the portrayal of the prominent female characters in the text that you have studied.

About nine per cent of the candidates opted to answer this question and most earned marks between satisfactory and very good. A few candidates experienced difficulty in determining who the prominent characters were. For *L’enfant noir*, although many candidates were able to identify the prominent female characters, some did not examine the question in sufficient depth to be able to score top marks.

No candidate chose *L’odeur du café*.

Question 7

“Unexpected and unconventional”. To what extent might these words be used in relation to the text you have studied?

This question was chosen by about 34 per cent of candidates. Candidates performed commendably on this question, with over 90 per cent of those who answered scoring marks between good and very good. Most of these candidates opted for *L'étranger* instead of *Une si longue lettre*. A few candidates were unable to give in-depth answers. Others struggled with the characterization of Meursault as they strove valiantly to link his portrayal with philosophical theories about existentialism and got confused in the process. In some instances, a number of candidates wanted to stress that the behaviour of the character was unexpected and unconventional but could not express themselves clearly. Instead, they referred to the character as being ‘unexpected’.

A smaller number of candidates selected *Une si longue lettre*. Most candidates focused on Ramatoulaye and Aissatou. As with *L'étranger*, candidates performed creditably on this question.

Question 8

“It is through a study of one’s relationships that one’s character is revealed.” What can one learn about the MAIN characters in the text that you have studied, based on their relationships?

This question was chosen by the majority of candidates who decided to focus on the theme *L’Individu et la société*. Most of them were able to score between 15 and the 32 marks possible, which suggested a sound knowledge of the text and a commendable attempt to apply this knowledge to the set text. However, there were some candidates who could not make a conclusive statement about a character’s personality as revealed by his/her interactions with others; instead, they simply related events.

Further Comments

- Candidates would benefit from more practice in interpreting questions and developing adequate thesis statements that encompass a personal response to the question, validated by evidence from the text.
- Storytelling should be avoided.
- Teachers must ensure that students have a clear understanding of *who* the main/prominent characters are and their role. Many times subordinate characters are chosen when main characters should be the primary focus.
- Candidates should be advised to pay careful attention to the rubric for all questions before they attempt to write their response. The texts for each thematic area are indicated on the question paper, therefore candidates who do not follow instructions are penalized.
- Students should be given much more guidance and practice in the selection and use of quotations to illustrate the points made.
- Candidates should be encouraged to plan essays before they start to write. They should continue to pay attention to the organization of the essays so that ideas are communicated in a more coherent and clear manner.
- There is still the need to emphasize the importance of a well-structured, well thought out opening paragraph and conclusion.
- Candidates should be encouraged to obey the word limit as penalties are imposed if it is exceeded. Generally nothing is read after the cut-off point, therefore candidates could end up with lower than expected grades on a particular question.

UNIT 2**Paper 01 – Listening Comprehension**

Section A of the examination required candidates to respond to a series of questions based on five short selections. The selection for Section B was an extended interview. All the selections were in French, with answers in English. Generally speaking, the performance in this unit, as with Unit 1, has shown great

improvement when compared with that of previous years. In fact, few candidates scored marks in the lowest band or failed to get a mark in the various selections. Candidates attempted most questions.

The topics of the selections were set in line with the three modules of the syllabus:

- Questions 1 and 2 – Module 1 (*L'actualité*)
- Questions 3, 4 and 5 – Module 3 (*L'industrie, le commerce et l'économie*)
- Question 6 – Module 2 (*La science et la technologie*)

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

This selection presented the multi-talented Joëlle Esso, from Cameroon.

Part (a) was very well done by many candidates who had six professional activities from which to choose three. However, answers to the remaining four questions were often only partially correct.

In Part (b), many candidates mentioned that Joëlle Esso was associated with a film, but failed to note that she had composed the music for the film. In Part (c), many candidates knew that she had studied in Paris but did not recognize the words *Lycee d'Art*, and so either omitted the name of the institution or tried to spell it phonetically — *Lycée d'Ars, lisedar*, for example.

In Part (d), many candidates realized that Joëlle was the first African to have accomplished something, but they were unable to say that she was a cartoonist/scriptwriter.

In Part (e), a number of candidates noted that the comparison made at the end of the selection was between African women and Western women but failed to understand on what terms (one group was as gifted or talented as the other). Several candidates did not understand *occidentale*.

Selection 2

This selection discussed the fortunes of a Haitian singer/musician, Jean-Prosper Dauphin or Beken.

Candidates were able to answer Part (a) and Part (b) without difficulty, by stating that the singer came from Haiti and had lost a leg in a traffic accident. Whereas Part (c) (i) was straightforward and almost all the candidates identified his profession correctly, Part (c) (ii), how is he described in relation to his craft, proved problematic because of the expression *le plus doué*. Some candidates interpreted *doué* as *dur*, and stated that he was the most hard-working. Several described him as a 'musical deity'.

Part (d), in what unfortunate position has Beken found himself during the last 15 years, was the most challenging section. Few candidates understood *il est de manière incompréhensible resté en marge de la foisonnante scène musicale d'Haïti*. This was one question that was not attempted by quite a few candidates. Others gave answers that were either entirely out of context or lacked any kind of meaning. Some examples of this are: 'He has been typecast to Haitian music and his music of the past.' □ 'He is in a position of inconsiderable rest from his musical diet.' 'He found himself in an unpredictable moment in which music is rarely as good as it was.' Some candidates thought that he was still suffering because of his accident.

Part (e), in what context has the 1980s been mentioned, was also challenging. Some candidates interpreted *les mémoires* as 'memoirs', thereby distorting the meaning. Few were able to say that Haitians still remembered the songs Beken had composed in the 1980s.

Selection 3

This selection dealt with peasants who had to abandon farming and move to the city.

Part (a), requiring a response to how the peasants are described, proved to be quite challenging. Many candidates seemed unaware that *la culture* had more than one meaning, and that it was, in this context, a *faux ami*. Instead of referring to the cultivation of food crops, many answered that the peasants were ‘producers of the living culture’ (*producteurs de cultures vivrières*).

In Part (b), several candidates wrote that they (the peasants) left after abandoning their former activities, but did not state that they became a part of the urban poor or that they migrated to the city.

For Part (c), in response to what has been the impact of rising prices, some candidates understood that *les populations urbaines* [...] *ne peuvent plus acheter*.

In Part (d), most candidates gained at least one out of two marks for identifying ‘the increase in the price of oil on the world market’ as being the cause of the increase in transportation costs.

Selection 4

The topic of this selection was tourism in Canada.

Candidates had little difficulty with this selection. Most were able to gain full marks. Though Part (c), the ways in which ordinary Canadians benefit from tourism, posed a slight challenge to a few, Part (a), how the revenue earned from tourism is used by the Canadian government, and Part (b), three purposes for which taxes are used, were very well done, although some candidates had difficulty understanding *le patrimoine*.

In Part (c), candidates understood that some people benefited from tourism due to the economic spinoffs but they omitted the fact that many people were employed in the tourism sector.

Selection 5

This selection dealt with the various uses of petroleum.

Performance on this question was very good. For the most part, candidates understood and answered all the questions for this selection quite well.

Section B – Extended interview

Selection 6

This selection comprised an interview with Mr Bernard Borceux on the profession of information technology.

Generally speaking, the questions for this selection were answered fairly well.

For Part (a), most candidates were able to find at least two of the three functions performed by Mr Borceux. However, the word *gérant* was not always known.

In Part (b), candidates had to list two articles sold by Mr Borceux. Most understood *des PC*, *des imprimantes*, *des fax*, but others who wrote ‘registers’ instead of ‘cash registers’ received no marks.

Part (c) required candidates to list three items installed by Mr Borceux: *des ordinateurs* and *des softwares* presented no problem; less straightforward were *la mise en réseau* and *des périphériques internes et externes*. A number of candidates did, however, include *networks* and others used the expression *peripherals*, or *hardware*, which were also accepted.

The most challenging question for many candidates was Part (d), two daily administrative tasks performed by Mr Borceux. Several gave answers that were quite far-fetched. For example, though the correct answer was *bill payment/reading e-mails*, answers such as ‘visiting stores to fix things and factories, and also giving lectures on IT’; ‘instructing trainees and looking after the store’ were also given. Candidates would have been well advised to note that the question asked for *administrative tasks*.

Part (e), which asked why a computer engineer needs to be up to date, and Part (f), four human qualities that a computer engineer should have, were successfully answered by most candidates. For Part (f), the human qualities included being logical, open-minded, professional, patient and being able to work in a team. However, not many candidates understood *être débrouillard*.

Part (g) asked for the information given about languages. Most candidates were able to mention that English and French were used, but very few indeed understood *le néerlandais*. Furthermore, not many candidates understood that English was used in information technology more than the other languages.

Most candidates gave the correct answers for Part (h), two things that Mr Borceux enjoys about his profession, and Part (i), two negative aspects of Mr Borceux's profession.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

Section A – Reading Comprehension

Candidates were required to read two passages in French in this section of Paper 02. Passage 1 was based on Module 1 (*L'actualité*), and candidates were required to respond in English to questions asked in English. Questions on this passage also included an exercise in which synonyms were to be found in the passage for various words and expressions in French. Passage 2 was based on Module 3 (*L'industrie, le commerce et l'économie*), and candidates were required to respond in French to questions posed in French.

Passage 1 – *La peine capitale: une pratique archaïque encore vivante*

Candidates generally performed well on this question. They were able to understand the vocabulary and, as a result, gave correct answers to the questions. Few candidates scored in the weak/satisfactory range.

Part (a) was generally well answered. Many candidates were able to state that Mitterrand displayed political courage and that he had kept his promise to abolish the death penalty. An example of a candidate's response that received full marks is presented below:

The passage shows us that François Mitterrand courageously resolved the matter of his promise to abolish the death penalty.

For Part (b), *s'il y avait eu* posed problems as many candidates were confused. Some ignored the *si* and posited that the referendum had happened. Other candidates produced varied answers that indicated that the sanction would happen or would not happen, or that it had not happened. The response produced by one candidate follows:

The writer says that of all evidence, if there had been a referendum, there is no doubt that the punishment of the death penalty would still be maintained in the penal code (code of punishment) for some (more) years still.

Almost all candidates attained full marks for Part (c). Most were able to note that the French usually sanctioned the death penalty when a brutal crime had been committed that interfered with the general peace of their existence. For, example, one candidate wrote the following:

The French people normally call for the death penalty when a heinous/abominable crime has been committed against what is socially accepted.

For Part (d), most candidates correctly indicated that Aristide Briand lobbied to abolish the death penalty. A few candidates, however, indicated that he lobbied to end slavery. Some candidates lost marks when they demonstrated a lack of comprehension of the term *projet de loi*. Some candidates simply wrote 'project' or 'plan', which did not gain full marks. *Aristide Briand proposed a bill to abolish the death penalty in 1980* was an acceptable answer.

Part (e) proved to be the most problematic for most candidates. Candidates incorrectly translated *trentaine* as one third, and *soixantaine* as 1/6, 1/16, 1/60, 60, 60%, 60 000, and 6 dozen. Many candidates also

misinterpreted *ont recours à*, translating the expression as ‘renounced’, ‘reverted’, or ‘reintroduced’. Although some candidates were able to point out that the use of capital punishment was still popular, only a handful of candidates were able to state clearly that about 60 countries still used the death penalty, and about 30 countries had suspended it. The following response gained full marks:

About 60 states resort to capital punishment while about 30 states have suspended it.

Most candidates attained a full score for Part (f). However, some interpreted *gratuitement* as ‘freely’. Some candidates also did not fully comprehend that *réussi à* meant *managed to*, writing instead ‘intend to.’ Candidates were expected to indicate in their answer *that capital punishment had not, in fact, reduced crime and that innocent persons were executed*. Some candidates included in their response the idea that capital punishment was against human dignity.

For Part (g), most candidates correctly identified *l’abolition* as the synonym. Some, however, incorrectly identified *aïgu*. In Part (h), many candidates accurately identified *sanction* or *peine* as the synonym. Some, however, chose *code pénale* which was incorrect.

Most candidates correctly identified *ouvrage/texte* as the correct response for Part (i). For Part (j), many candidates were unable to determine that *cheminement* was synonymous with *route*. Quite a few incorrectly identified *ouvrage* as the synonym.

Part (k) was well handled by almost all candidates who were able to identify *concrètes* as the synonym for *solides*.

Passage 2 – *Choisir l’emplacement de son bureau*

The responses to the questions in this section were generally very good. Some candidates wrote their responses in their own words as was required of them and received full marks.

Part (a) was well handled and most candidates provided all three points required for a full answer. Some candidates, however, had difficulty finding a synonym for *l’emplacement* and many wrote *location* which has a different meaning altogether. Candidates also mistakenly thought that *disposition des meubles* meant *l’état des meubles, avoir les meubles qu’on veut* or *acheter les meubles*.

For Part (b), although many candidates explained the details of the factors such as *having a small company would allow the employees to work at home*, many candidates omitted the first point: *il s’agit de la taille de l’entreprise*. The word *isoloirs* seemed to be generally unknown to the candidates, since the majority of them rewrote this word in the answer.

For Part (c), most candidates wrote the first part of the answer: *les considérations juridiques et administratifs, des règlements municipaux et des lois réglementant les logements et les condominiums*. The latter part of the answer, however, *les conseils de ces experts peuvent changer du tout au tout la structure de l’entreprise*, was often omitted.

Part (d) was generally well answered and many candidates attempted to write their answer in their own words.

For Part (e), given that there were many options from which candidates could select their answer, it was easy for candidates to identify three of the seven points, thereby, scoring three marks for their response.

Part (f) proved to be somewhat challenging for some candidates who did not realize that an advantage to purchasing one’s own premises included *attracting investors, improving the value of the business, or attracting individuals interested in purchasing the business*.

Several candidates included the response for Part (f) in their answer for Part (g) and were not credited for their response. Some candidates were awarded partial marks for their responses, but few scored full marks for this section of the question.

Recommendations

Candidates should pay heed to the following:

- The marks allocated for the sections of each question.
- Learn vocabulary related to topics in the syllabus and read widely.
- Review tenses and complex structures, for example, *s'il y avait eu* and *serait maintenue*.
- Review conjunctions such as *alors que*.
- Review numbers — ordinals, cardinals, fractions, percentages and approximations.
- Practise more comprehension passages (in class).

Section B – Essays

In this section, candidates were required to write an essay, of 250–300 words, in French on one of five topics from Module 2 of the syllabus (*La science et la technologie*). Marks (maximum of 24) were awarded for content and presentation (organization and coverage of the topic, relevance and inclusion of facts, ideas and opinions) and correctness of expression (range of vocabulary and idioms as well as accuracy of grammatical structures). Candidates were expected to write essays with a proper introduction and conclusion and to present at least three clear points in their discussion of the topic. Candidates' performance ranged from poor to excellent. There were excellent scripts in which candidates manipulated the language well and were able to present tangible, well-argued points. On the other hand, some candidates treated the topics superficially and many of them presented points without adequate development. Overall performance was good.

Question 3

« *Les inconvénients de la chirurgie esthétique dépassent les bénéfices à en tirer.* » *Discutez.*

This question was the most unpopular among candidates. However, those who chose to answer this question dealt with it effectively. Good points noted and developed included *the notion that patients sometimes became addicted to plastic surgery; cosmetic surgery helped to develop an individual's self-esteem; and to make one feel more physically attractive; it was another way of playing God; it was a way to correct or remove a scar and improve the look of burns; it was costly.*

Question 4

« *La fécondation in vitro et la mère porteuse ont résolu le problème de la stérilité mais elles donnent lieu à de nombreux problèmes.* » *Donnez votre avis sur cette déclaration.*

Although few candidates attempted this question, those who did were generally well informed on the topic of in-vitro fertilization. Too many candidates, however, did not address the *mères porteuses*. The majority of candidates scored between 11 and 21 marks out of a maximum of 24. Good points noted included that *it was an expensive process; it sometimes had a negative psychological effect on the woman who was already frustrated from not being able to get pregnant on her own and anxious about the results of many attempts which failed; doctors made mistakes; it was the solution for people who could not give birth naturally; sometimes the surrogate mothers became emotionally attached to the baby when it was born and wanted to keep the baby instead.*

Question 5

« *Il y a trop d'argent gaspillé sur les nouvelles technologies plutôt que sur les services médicaux.* » *Commentez cette déclaration.*

This question was the second most popular question and marks were generally satisfactory. Some of the points presented included the idea that *governments needed to invest more in technology with a view to improving public health care; comparisons between rich and poor countries and reference to the money available in the rich countries when compared with the poorer countries (Haiti was a common example of a poorer country).* Others argued that many Caribbean people wasted money on many brand name products like Blackberry and

Iphones, and failed to invest in their own health care. It was found that whereas some candidates were very general and vague with their arguments/discussions and did not fully develop their points, others had three solid points but invariably erred in the correctness of their expression.

Question 6

«*La Caraïbe ne profite pas de la technologie pour assurer son autosuffisance alimentaire.*» *Discutez.*

This too was not a very popular question. Performance was satisfactory. Some of the problems encountered were: candidates were not very familiar with the topic and had a limited idea as to what *autosuffisance alimentaire* meant. As a result, some of the points included the idea that Caribbean/developing countries were too poor to afford the technology for self-sufficiency; even though the technology existed, many Caribbean people still preferred or stuck to the traditional methods; there was insufficient arable land and Caribbean countries could not compete with the bigger countries which were producing more at lower prices.

Question 7

«*D'après vous, quelle est l'invention la plus bénéfique aux êtres humains? Justifiez votre réponse.* »

This question was by far the most popular question and more than 50 per cent of candidates opted to answer it. It was also the best answered essay question.

Candidates who scored higher marks wrote well-informed essays and were able to present balanced arguments, using a wide range of vocabulary and a high standard of expression. The most popular inventions mentioned were the *computer, Internet, and cellphones*. Candidates were able to show that *the computer and Internet facilitated high-speed, low-cost communication with friends and family all over the world; working from home was facilitated; the computer and Internet facilitated research*. They also mentioned *the ease and benefits of e-commerce*.

Some candidates, however, ignored the key word in the topic for discussion, *Justifiez*, and simply put forward points without fully discussing or illustrating why they considered their choice to be the most beneficial invention to human beings.

Further, some candidates interpreted *invention* as technology, human beings, and mathematics. The question required the one most beneficial invention. However, a few candidates presented more than one. Candidates should pay particular attention to the specific requirements of each question.

Further Comments

Common errors noted in the essays included:

- Lack of subject/verb agreement (*d'internet permettent, les enfants devient*)
- Using parts of the verbs as nouns (*le travaille, d'après une étudie*)
- Omission of the apostrophe in nouns and other structures beginning with a vowel (*la invention, que ils...*)
- Failure to conjugate verbs (*la technologie est développer, c'est utiliser dans la maison*)
- Inaccurate use of indefinite demonstrative pronouns (*ça, cela, ceci (je pense ça)*)
- Inaccurate use of demonstrative adjectives (*parce que de cette, si cette occuré*)
- Lack of contractions with *à + le, à + les (à les familles)*
- Non-use of prepositions governing verbs and expressions («*Il est une manière rester en contact*»; «*...permettent les membres de famille discuter*»; «*l'ordinateur aide les personnes effectuer tâches.*»)
- Incorrect syntax and vocabulary (*la mère seule* – single mother; *le perdue* – the loss of; *privé* – privacy; *ameilleuré* – improved; *mauvaiser* – to worsen)
- Anglicisms: (*un degré* – a degree; *provider* – to provide; *beneficial* – beneficial; *accesser* – to access; *abilité* – ability; *j'agree pleinement* – I fully agree)
- Improper use of negative structures (*ne aucun personne; c'est juste ne droite pas*)

- Conjugation and use of irregular verbs (*savraient, devroient, a pert, mortent leurs parents*)

Examples of good expressions, vocabulary, structures, use of the subjunctive:

- *La recrudescence*
- *Une aubaine*
- *Une kyrielle*
- **Une foisonnement*
- *Les trapeuses*
- *Les bandes transporteuses*
- *Cette autoroute de l'information*
- *À l'instar de*
- *Pour que son bébé soit intelligent*
- *Je préconise*
- **Les bienfaits emportent sur les désavantages*

Recommendations

- Candidates should use a topic sentence in each paragraph of the body of the essay and develop their idea. Several points should not be developed in one paragraph.
- Candidates need to develop at least three points in their essay.
- Where possible, candidates should use factual information/statistics to support their points.
- Candidates should choose the essay question which they fully understand, instead of choosing one with key words.
- Adherence to the word limit is extremely crucial. Candidates should ensure that their essays are neither too long nor too short.
- Candidates must observe the rubrics and do only *one* essay question. It is pointless to write two mediocre essays when more valuable time could be spent writing a good essay.
- If candidates include a plan, the plan should be in French and *not* in English. A candidate who obviously did not have much time left, wrote an essay plan in English with just an introduction in French. This should be avoided.
- Candidates should have more general knowledge in the areas of the modules. They must have exposure to and be more curious about current affairs and topical issues. The essays presented this year demonstrated, in some cases, limited ideas.
- Candidates must develop their critical thinking skills.

Paper 03 – Literary Analysis and Themes

Section A – Literary Extracts

Candidates were required to answer one of four questions based on an extract taken from the prescribed texts — *La rue cases-nègres, Maria Chapdelaine, Gouverneurs de la rosée* and *La tragédie du Roi Christophe*.

Candidates were required to comment on plot, setting, characterization, themes and simple literary techniques. Overall, candidate performance was good.

The most popular choice among candidates was Question 1. This question, which focused on the text *La rue cases-nègres*, was chosen by approximately 43 per cent of the candidates. This was followed closely by *Gouverneurs de la rosée*, which was chosen by about 35 per cent of the candidates. Approximately 12 per cent of the candidates chose *Maria Chapdelaine* while about 10 per cent based their answers on *La tragédie du Roi Christophe*.

**An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.*

Question 1: *La rue cases-nègres*

The majority of candidates who opted for this text demonstrated a good knowledge of the novel. Performance ranged between satisfactory and excellent.

For Part (a), candidates were expected to comment on the link that existed between the town and the moonlight and then use an example from the extract to support their point of view. Several candidates managed to score full marks, but there were others who simply selected aspects of the extract which related to the question without really producing an adequate comment. They could not, therefore, gain full marks.

Some candidates did not fully understand what was expected of them for Part (b), therefore, a number of partial responses were given. Candidates were expected to make a statement describing the atmosphere the writer was trying to create, then, present an example to illustrate their point.

Some difficulty was experienced by candidates in responding to Part (c). Candidates failed to recognize that they were being asked to make a comparison. A mere description of the children or of the flight of birds without the inclusion of an element of comparison did not earn full marks.

Part (d) was generally well done.

Question 2: *Maria Chapdelaine*

This question was not chosen by many candidates. Of those who chose the question, about 62 per cent scored in the satisfactory to excellent range.

For Part (a), most candidates were able to reflect on the different views on Maria's character which emerged in the first paragraph. However, they did not always go on to justify their response.

The majority of candidates were able to score marks on Part (b). For the most part, they grasped the sense of relief which Maria would feel if she left Quebec, as well as her longing to leave. Many were also able to allude to the intensity of suffering she would experience if she decided to stay.

Candidates produced varied responses for Part (c). Many candidates gained marks because they were able to select relevant quotations. However, they were not always able to clearly express their ideas.

The majority of candidates handled Part (d) well.

Question 3: *Gouverneurs de la rosée*

Approximately 35 per cent of the candidates opted to respond to this question with approximately 84 per cent of these candidates achieving scores ranging between satisfactory and excellent.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to comment on the portrayal of the storm. This type of question again seemed challenging to candidates. Although many were awarded at least two marks for commenting on the storm, quite a few candidates lost marks because their answers were too convoluted.

Parts (b)–(d) were generally well done.

Question 4: *La tragédie du Roi Christophe*

Only 10 per cent of the candidates chose this question. Although it was not a very popular choice, it was handled well by the majority of candidates. Of those who chose it, 82 per cent scored marks ranging from satisfactory to very good.

Most candidates were able to discuss effectively the portrayal of the Master of Ceremonies in Part (a). For Parts (b)–(d), candidates were also able to respond appropriately to the questions asked. Some rambled, but, in general, they were still able to mention points that gained them a number of marks.

Further Comments

Generally, the performance of the candidates was good for this section of the paper. While it is clear that candidates know the texts, the impression created is that more attention should be placed on literary analysis as specified in the syllabus.

- Candidates should pay attention to the length of their answers. The marks allotted should serve as a guide.
- Candidates should refrain from quoting an entire paragraph when asked to select specific terms or references. Only the relevant word/references should be selected.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write one essay, of 350–400 words, in English, based on one of two themes: *La vie rurale* (for which the prescribed texts were *La rue cases-nègres* and *Maria Chapdelaine*), and *Les conflits politiques et sociaux* (with prescribed texts being *Gouverneurs de la rosée* and *La tragédie du Roi Christophe*). The examiners were looking for a comprehensive understanding of the texts and their themes, application of knowledge and organization of the essays. Candidates were rewarded based on the extent to which their work reflected these areas.

This year the majority of candidates, about 56 per cent, answered a question based on the theme *La vie rurale*. The preferred text was *La rue cases-nègres*, with about 46 per cent of the candidates choosing to base their answers on this text. The text *Gouverneurs de la rosée*, chosen by about 40 per cent of the candidates, was also a popular choice. *Maria Chapdelaine* and *La tragédie du Roi Christophe* were not as popular.

On this section of the examination, candidates' performance was generally good, with over 90 per cent of the candidates receiving scores ranging from satisfactory to excellent, regardless of the text chosen.

Question 5

Discuss the theme of hardship with reference to the text that you have studied.

This question was chosen by approximately 56 per cent of the candidates. The majority of those opting for this question chose *La rue cases-nègres*. Generally, candidates recognized that hardship was one of the main themes of the work. Most focused on the hardship endured by M'man Tine and even Délia. However, they struggled to adequately present the hardships in José's life. Some candidates presented the systems which made life difficult: for example, *les petites bandes*. Only a few candidates commented on the fact that although life was hard, there were elements of happiness, achievement and pleasure as well.

The text *Maria Chapdelaine* was also well suited to a discussion of the theme of hardship and all the candidates who chose this text answered this question. Their performance was commendable. However, the candidate who spent most of his/her time discussing the impact of the nature of the climate alone, scored less than the one who was able to look at the severity of the weather, as well as the hardship endured by characters like Samuel Chapdelaine, Maria and others. There was hardly any reference to the comfort that family members found in each other's company or to the fact that Maria's decision to remain in Québec suggested that in the end patriotism triumphed over hardship.

Question 6

Discuss the portrayal of children and young people in the text that you have studied.

Only three per cent of the candidates answered this question, and all responded using the work *La rue cases-nègres*. The majority of the candidates gave good responses to the question. Although most candidates

demonstrated a good knowledge of the text, their major downfall was that, in their portrayal of children and young people, the developmental changes as children moved from childhood to adolescence were not examined. Most of the focus was on Jose and his young friends in *la rue cases-nègres*.

Question 7

“Thinkers make poor leaders. They are neither practical nor realistic.” Discuss this opinion with reference to the text that you have studied.

This question was selected by 14 per cent of the candidates. In general, almost all of the candidates earned marks ranging from satisfactory to very good.

The majority of candidates used *Gouverneurs de la rosée* as their point of reference. It was felt that, compared to the other questions, for this one there were, perhaps, too many angles for the candidates to consider: *thinkers, poor leaders, practical and realistic*. Not all candidates were able to discuss all these points and so they focused mainly on the first part — *thinkers make poor leaders*. Some candidates examined not only Manuel but other characters, for instance, Larivoire.

La tragédie du Roi Christophe was a good choice for Question 7, but not many candidates selected it. In general, candidates suitably examined aspects of Christophe’s character which underscored his ability to be a good leader or a visionary. They were also able to show how his thinking led to his downfall.

Question 8

“A truly inspirational work.” Discuss this view of the text that you have studied.

This question was selected by 27 per cent of the candidates and all of them were able to earn marks ranging from satisfactory to excellent.

Gouverneurs de la rosée was the preferred text of most candidates. Candidates had no difficulty in identifying the key elements which made the work inspirational. The question was well handled.

Candidates who selected *La tragédie du Roi Christophe* found this question challenging. While some struggled to find the inspirational aspects of the work, others were able to focus on Christophe’s desire, though misguided, to build and restore the nation. In fact, it has been said that *This is more a cautionary tale than an inspirational story. It reminds us that we need to be humane and realistic when we are trying to realize our dreams. If not, all could end in tragedy.*

Further Comments

- Candidates need more practice in essay writing. They should be advised to pay attention to the organization of their essays. They should strive to present an introductory paragraph, then develop their points in the body of the essay, paying attention to proper paragraphing as points are developed, and finally, there should be a conclusion to the essay.
- Teachers need to remind students that quotations must be in French. Although quotations from critics may be valid, and used appropriately, examiners are also looking for the personal response of the candidate to the question posed.
- Candidates should be reminded that there is no need to translate quotations used into English.
- Candidates need to be judicious with discussing the author’s theories, as in many cases, candidates are ignoring the set questions to focus on these.
- Candidates should be advised to pay careful attention to the rubric for all questions before they attempt to write their response. The texts for each thematic area are indicated, therefore, candidates who do not follow the instructions given will be penalized.
- Teachers need to remind students to read questions carefully and explore relevant points and examples before beginning to write the essay.

- It is recommended that candidates pay attention to the word limit. There were a number of essays which were extremely long and candidates need to know that points made after the specified word limit are not considered.

UNIT 1 and UNIT 2

Paper 04 – School-Based Assessment

In the school-based assessment this year, the performance of students was quite fair. There were very few students with poor results. Teachers continue to show their commitment to preparing students to learn and perfect their French-speaking skills. Weaker students experienced difficulty in their expression and use of grammar which suggests the need for more exposure to listening to the language and also for more practice in speaking the language.

The moderators would like to commend the students who carried out research on a wide variety of topics ranging from children, food and women to social issues such as discrimination in France. In Unit 1, some of the topics presented were « *Le football français est éclipsé par le racisme* », « *Le béké en Martinique* », « *Malgré la devise de la France « Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité », pourquoi les Maghrébins font-ils face à la discrimination?* », « *L'homoparentalité en France* », « *La Traite des Etres Humains en France* », « *Plus que jamais, l'industrie de la mode affecte gravement les jeunes français* ». Unit 2 topics included « *L'Euthanasie en France* » and « *Le développement de la nanotechnologie en Suisse* ».

Prepared Topic

Most students gave evidence of thorough preparation and presented the speeches enthusiastically, though it was noted that grammatical errors and hesitancy affected the quality of some presentations. The majority of students' presentations fell within the stipulated time. There were some presentations, however, which exceeded six minutes. In such cases, time is reduced for the topic conversation and general conversation. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on organization for conciseness and effective use of supporting material in order to meet the time requirements.

Topic Conversation

This section is marked in three categories:

- Comprehension
- Correctness of expression/Range of vocabulary
- Pronunciation/Intonation/Fluency

Comprehension

Students were able to understand questions and demonstrated competence in their responses. The examiners also maintained a conversational nature throughout the examination which helped students to be at ease during the examination. Some students also asked the examiners' opinion on aspects of the topic. In the odd cases where the examiner's questions were too long or the vocabulary used was unfamiliar to students, there was some difficulty with comprehension.

Correctness of expression/Range of vocabulary

The quality of the language used was fair to excellent but whereas some students were able to gain full marks in this area, others experienced difficulty in expressing their ideas without making basic errors. There were students who had inaccuracies in their expression which affected the meaning and so impeded understanding of the idea being conveyed.

Pronunciation/Intonation/Fluency

Pronunciation, intonation and fluency were satisfactory on the whole. Students made a great effort to produce correct intonation and spoke without much hesitation. There were some recurring errors of pronunciation which need attention.

General Conversation

In this section, students were required to discuss topics of a general nature. They were very responsive but seemed less relaxed than in the topic conversation. Many, however, answered with confidence. There was a wide range of questions posed to students on various topics and examiners are reminded that these questions are to be based on the topics of Modules 1, 2 and 3.

Comprehension

Examiners are encouraged to commence with questions of a personal nature for example, *Qu'est-ce que vous faites comme loisirs?* or *Pourquoi étudiez-vous le français?*, and then advance to questions which reflect the topics drawn from the three modules studied. The comprehension skills demonstrated were quite fair, although some students had difficulty with long and intricately worded questions.

Correctness of expression/Range of vocabulary

Students were enthusiastic in sharing their ideas on the various topics in French and demonstrated a good grasp of French structures and a good knowledge of vocabulary on a variety of subjects. There were some errors made, but on the whole, students were able to make themselves understood.

Pronunciation/Intonation/Fluency

A commendable effort was made by the students to produce correct pronunciation and intonation. Many students attained satisfactory levels of fluency.

Common Difficulties

Correctness of expression/Range of vocabulary

Errors were made by students principally in the following areas:

- The use of incorrect articles with the nouns (*la pays, un responsabilité, la gouvernement*)
- Use of the infinitive instead of the conjugated verb (*quand les femmes remarier*)
- Position/gender of adjectives (*le publique santé, la musique est très négatif*)
- Use of the partitive (*à cause de les problèmes*)
- Subject and verb agreement (*nous célèbre*)
- Position of object pronouns (*Je l'aime entendre*)
- Negation — omission of « *pas* » (*Je ne pense que...*) use of two negatives — *Il n'y a pas rien*
- Formation of the perfect tense (*je me suis rend compte*)
- Syntax (*d'autres Caribes festivals, le solaire énergie*)

Pronunciation

Errors were made by students in the following areas:

- Omission of the liaison — *Les Etats-Unis*
- Anglicized pronunciation of several words — *variété, développement, utilisation,*
- Mispronunciation of *in,* and *im* at the beginning of words
- Similar pronunciations for *-eur* and *-ure* (*ordinateur, nature*)
- Omission of the *é* sound in the perfect tense

Recommendations

- Students must practise the delivery of the prepared topic in order to ensure that it does not extend too much beyond the three minutes nor fall too short.
- In the general conversation, questions which allow students to give a fairly extensive response should be asked on three or four topics rather than a series of questions on six to eight different topics.
- A check should be made to ensure that the entire interview has been properly recorded and that the audio level is adequate.