

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008**

**FRENCH
(REGION EXCLUDING TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)**

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CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

MAY / JUNE 2008

GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall performance of candidates in both Units was satisfactory. There were approximately 277 candidates who wrote the Unit 1 and Unit 2 CAPE French examinations. Candidates need to be encouraged to spend more time developing their oral/aural skills in an effort to acquire greater overall proficiency in the language.

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

Paper 01 - Listening Comprehension

Candidates were required to respond, in English, to a series of questions based on five short selections and an extended interview, recorded in French. CDs were provided for each candidate.

Candidates attempted to answer most of the questions and there were few cases of the last question being left undone because of insufficient time.

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

Topic: *Sports (Racism in Football)*

Performance on this selection was fair.

The International Football Federation, FIFA, was correctly recognized as the organization that held a meeting in Zurich. There were, however, many different versions, and candidates seemed confused by the reference to FIFA's executive committee ("The Federation Executive", "The International Committee of Football"). Quite a number of candidates missed the point that the purpose of the meeting was to fight, or apply stiffer penalties against racism in any stadium, rather than simply "discuss" racism. Most were able to identify at least two sanctions, including "disqualifications", "deduction of points", "suspension", and in a few cases, "relegation". Although most candidates understood "2006/2007", they had difficulty with "*à partir de la saison ...*", an important notion to show that sanctions would start from that season and not be limited to a two-year period.

Selection 2

Topic: *The Function of the Family*

Performance was generally unsatisfactory, with many candidates having problems identifying the elements required for each question. The area of research, children and physical activity, was the answer for part (a), but often the answer for part (b) – "the important role played by parents and teachers" – was included in the response to part (a). Candidates were then unable to respond to Part (b). Another challenge was the word "*jeux*", required for two responses. "Children had to face up to the challenges of new activities and organized games", part (c), and "older persons were encouraged to help children because of their knowledge in the area of games", part (d). One other difficulty was avoiding putting the opposite response.

Instead of the children showing enthusiasm and interest, according to the selection, candidates wrote that they lacked enthusiasm, refused to participate or were afraid. Finally, some candidates seem to have misinterpreted “areas” of research, instead, referring to “the home”, “America”, “Africa” and, “physics”.

Selection 3

Topic: *Depletion of Ozone Layer*

Performance was satisfactory. Many candidates heard and understood “... *son existence et évolution dans le temps et dans l’espace*” but could not apply it to the hole in the ozone layer. Few candidates realized that the industrialized countries had stopped producing CFCs, and wrote answers that had the opposite meaning, doubtless because of preconceived ideas about such countries producing large quantities of gases.

Selection 4

Topic: *Conservation of the Environment*

Generally, this selection was well done. Many candidates understood that the main goal was to protect the environment, but did not mention how – by implementing sustainable development practices. Several responses referred to using renewable sources of energy. The renewable resource required for part (b) – energy – proved easy for most candidates.

Most candidates also understood at least two of the areas which would benefit from using renewable resources, but the word “*milieux*” presented a challenge for part (d). However, a few candidates were able to add “the restoration of the environment (natural sites)” to the other points “the reduction of waste”, “the elimination of waste/garbage”, to earn full marks. The word “*milieux*” was often rendered as “minerals”. Other responses had no relation to the passage, for example, “reusing left-over food” and “water conservation”.

Selection 5

Topic: *Urban Green Areas*

This selection required candidates to identify four correct answers out of eight. Performance on this selection was good.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

Topic: *Unemployment in France*

Performance ranged from poor to good. The format proved difficult for some, with candidates guessing rather than giving answers from the selection. Candidates performed creditably on the first question. Most candidates understood that France had one of the highest unemployment rates, but failed to add “in the world”. Candidates were also able to identify the group with the highest number of unqualified persons – the young. Many candidates earned a mark for saying that the unemployment rate of small countries was low, but a significant number said the opposite, for example, “Globalization affects small countries like Ireland and [has] a bad effect on their employment rates”.

Many candidates understood the countries named – Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, but some responses were illogical – Miami, Wyoming, and the United Nations, were listed in addition to the United States for “*le Royaume Uni*”.

Some candidates were confused by the phrase “*le problème n’est pas une surabondance de main d’oeuvre*” and were therefore unable to explain that France’s problem was not an overabundance of manpower, but difficulty creating enough jobs. Candidates found it difficult to identify the elements of comparison in part (i), France being rated the highest in terms of the cost of unskilled labour in proportion to the average median salary, and in part (j) that there were more unqualified young people in France than in most industrialized countries. Examples of incorrect responses included: “They all have a high employment rate” and “France produces well-trained young people...”

Recommendations

More practice in listening to French from a variety of sources is recommended. There should also be more practice in speaking. The vocabulary for each Module should be well known. The environment, as a topic, has very specific expressions and it is expected that teachers will ensure that students learn these expressions.

The topics for each Module are related to the wider world and are topical, sometimes even controversial. It is commendable that students draw on their general knowledge, and it is preferable that they attempt all questions rather than leave them unanswered. On the other hand, students need to focus more closely on the passage so that preconceived ideas do not get in the way. They need to practice identifying the point at which the answer is to be found.

Students should also try to improve their spelling in English.

Paper 02 - Reading and Writing

Performance by the candidates on this paper was considered to be satisfactory. There were a few excellent scripts where candidates scored full marks on the reading component and there were also a few essays in the outstanding category (23-24), gaining the maximum 24 marks. Candidates’ performance on the essay questions ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Most candidates performed satisfactorily.

Section A – Reading Comprehension

This section consisted of two passages with questions based on the passages. Candidates were to answer all questions in Section A. Part 1 of Section A was designed to test the ability of the candidates to select relevant information and answer five questions in ENGLISH, showing comprehension of the passage, (a) – (e). Candidates were required to find synonyms in parts (f) – (j).

Passage 1: *La Famille Moderne*

Some candidates found this passage a challenge but there were many others who were able to understand and write the answers appropriately in English. Very few candidates performed poorly in this first section.

In part (a), many candidates understood that women gained access to education but some failed to recognize that women acquired rights.

Part (b) was generally well handled and many candidates received full marks, showing that they understood that the family was a source of refuge and remained a solid aspect of the society.

In part (c), candidates understood that the tradition of having a Sunday meal together was maintained, but only a few understood that this tradition was “no longer” considered compulsory.

Both parts (d) and (e) were generally well-handled as candidates were able to extract the appropriate information.

Parts (f) – (j), which required candidates to find synonyms, were also satisfactorily handled, with “*Souhails*” posing the greatest difficulty in this section of the question.

Many more candidates (at least over 60%) scored in the middle range. Just about 6 % scored in the outstanding category on Passage 1.

Passage 2: *L'écotourisme*

This question posed a greater challenge to candidates than question 1. Candidates did not perform as well on this question. Their performance might have been influenced by the sheer task of responding in French to questions posed in French. In many instances, candidates simply ignored the instructions to answer the question in their own words. Too many candidates copied from the passage, albeit, correctly. There was no attempt to rephrase when the answer or answers were found.

In part (a), many candidates only scored partial marks on this question since they did not recognize that the fact that two prestigious international organizations were involved, was a significant factor. Most candidates were able to recognize that the speed at which ecotourism activities developed was significant, as well as the fact that the Internet was the only means of communication for the conference.

While parts (b) and (c) were generally well handled by most candidates, part (d) posed the greatest difficulty for most of the candidates who did not quite grasp the positive impact of ecotourism as highlighted in the passage.

Although part (e) also posed some difficulty for some candidates, this was less of a problem than the previous question. A number of candidates quoted directly from the text, failing to use their own words.

Part (f) was generally well handled by most candidates and only a few did not recognize that one of the reservations expressed involved concerns that ecotourism may not be an “*activité durable*”. A few candidates omitted this response.

In part (g), candidates generally did not express themselves in their own words and quoted directly from the text. A few candidates also omitted this response.

Section B – Essays

This section required candidates to write an essay, in French, of 250 – 300 words on one of five topics. The section tested candidates’ ability to express themselves in a reflective and organized fashion, showing relevant coverage of the topic or theme, as well as a coherent treatment of the issues involved. Candidates were expected to express themselves in a well argued and structured way, showing facts, ideas and opinions.

It is expected that at this level the basic structure of an essay will be adhered to by the candidates – a brief introduction, 3 – 4 paragraphs which highlight the different perspectives of the question under examination, and a brief conclusion.

Question 3

This question was very popular among candidates and was fairly well handled. For the most part, candidates interpreted the question correctly. Some candidates used examples to illustrate their answers.

Question 4

A few candidates misinterpreted “*quartiers urbains*” as “rural areas” and wrote an essay depicting the problems associated with rural life. This question was the least popular.

Question 5

A few candidates misunderstood the expression “*en voie de développement*” and wrote an essay on how drug dealers contribute to the development of a country. It was also not a very popular question among candidates.

Question 6

This was a popular question among candidates and was well handled by those candidates who attempted it.

Question 7

This question was, by far, the most widely chosen by the candidates and many very good scores were noted.

Recommendations

The ‘content’ of the essays was generally quite good and fairly well organized. Some candidates demonstrated that they had read widely and were therefore able to provide good coverage of the topic chosen. Although some candidates performed creditably on the essay, the quality of responses needs to be better developed. Candidates must pay attention to the tense(s) that they need to use, as well as the subject-verb agreement, use of past participles, articles... Very few candidates enhanced their essays with the use of idioms or varied their vocabulary and generally showed marked inaccuracies of grammar and even lexical items. At this level, basic rules of grammar should be known. Teachers are encouraged to get their students to pay particular attention to the vocabulary related to the various topics they study according to the syllabus. Teachers should also provide more practice in composition writing with a view to producing good written French at an advanced level.

General Observations

1. Candidates should pay close attention to instructions as there were some candidates who gave responses in French where responses in English were required. They should also give consideration to the number of marks awarded for a question as this is usually an indicator of the depth of the answer required.
2. Candidates should, at all times, indicate the question they are answering. There were some candidates who failed to number their responses or some ended up numbering their responses incorrectly.
3. Candidates must be encouraged to pay particular attention to penmanship.
4. Candidates must be careful about writing back pre-learned essays in a related topic. More often than not, the answers they write are not going to be relevant and will, therefore, score a low mark.
5. Candidates should try at all times to present neat work.
6. Candidates must also make every effort to rephrase or use their own words when answering the questions on Passage 2 of Section A.

Paper 03 - Literary Analysis and Themes

This paper was divided into two sections. In Section A, candidates were required to analyse an extract from one of four prescribed literary texts. Candidates were expected to describe and analyse plot, setting, character and narrative techniques.

Section B consisted of four essay topics. Candidates were expected to write on one topic, in English, using 350 – 400 words. This section was subdivided into two parts, each with a different theme. The themes were “*La Jeunesse*” and “*L’Individu et la société*”. In answering the question, candidates were required to focus on one of the literary texts they had studied.

Most candidates observed the instructions for this exam and used two texts, one to answer general questions on the extracts, and the other to answer the essay. All four of the extracts were attempted by the candidates.

Section A – Literary Analysis

1: *L’Enfant noir*

This was a popular choice. However, not many candidates were able to give complete answers to questions. In parts (a) and (c), which required information on the personalities of the father and mother, some of this was provided. The answers to parts (b) and (d) were also, at times, incomplete. Candidates should be encouraged to read texts more closely so that their answers will be more balanced.

2: *L’Odeur du café*

This was not a popular choice. Just as in *L’enfant noir*, answers were at times incomplete. Far more information could have been provided in answering parts (b) and (c) which required details on grandparents. In responding to part (b), for example, there were many references to the absence of the grandfather but not much mention was made of his infidelity. There also seemed to be some uncertainty with regard to the themes of the novel.

3: *L’Etranger*

This was another popular choice. Parts (a) and (c) were generally well done. Part (d) proved to be the most challenging. Candidates generally did not indicate that they understood that they were being asked to comment on the narrative technique that was used. There may be need for more practice in understanding, identifying and analysing narrative techniques and their importance to the appreciation of literary works.

4: *Une si longue lettre*

Candidates who answered the questions on this extract generally performed well. In some questions the majority of candidates scored full marks. Part (d) seemed to be the most challenging as candidates failed to fully describe the various reactions to the offer of marriage.

Recommendations

1. Candidates need to be more analytical when answering questions so that they may be able to more fully exploit all the information which might be relevant to a particular question.
2. Candidates need to prepare themselves to answer questions which may deal with literary/narrative techniques.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write one essay in English based on one of the two themes, that is, “*La Jeunesse*” or “*L’individu et la société.*” Specific texts were to be studied for each theme. The prescribed texts which fell under the theme “*La jeunesse*” were *L’Enfant Noir* and “*L’Odeur du Café.*” The texts to be studied under the theme “*L’individu et la société*” were *L’Etranger* and “*Une si longue lettre.*”

Most candidates responded to their question of choice, using the prescribed text, but in some instances the specified guidelines were not followed.

L’Enfant Noir

The essays on *L’Enfant Noir* were generally well written. There was the appropriate use of quotations and relevant examples. Themes were fairly well developed. At times, however, conclusions were not appropriate.

L’Odeur du Café

The theme of childhood was generally well discussed. Candidates seemed to be vague in their analysis. Essays did not seem to be well planned or, they focused on irrelevant issues.

L’Etranger

Candidates who chose this work to answer their question generally gave a fair performance. Sometimes however, they took too long to get the point. Nevertheless, valid points were made with reference to heroism and tradition. Commendable attempts were also made to connect the novel/theme to the world at large.

Une si longue lettre

Candidates who chose to discuss this novel performed well. Some candidates made excellent comparisons between the characters in the novel.

Recommendations

The following should be noted:

1. Candidates should be careful not to exceed the word limit. It is better to be concise and relevant.
2. Candidates need to study in detail more than one text.
3. Candidates need to learn to apply knowledge in a more appropriate manner.
4. Candidates must be encouraged to spend some time planning/structuring their essays.

UNIT 2

Paper 01 - Listening Comprehension

Candidates were required to respond, in English, to a series of questions based on five short selections and an extended interview recorded in French. The overall performance of the candidates was good.

Nevertheless, it is recommended that candidates pay attention to the way in which they express themselves in English. They should avoid long, complex sentence structures and aim to be concise. Although candidates are encouraged to use previous knowledge or general knowledge to help them to understand the selections, they must remember that answers must come strictly from the text heard. Literal translations should be avoided.

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

Topic: *Léopold Senghor*

Candidates performance was generally satisfactory. Most candidates understood that French-speaking countries were organizing the event, but many went on to specify that it was a country in the Caribbean or Africa, although that was not mentioned in the selection. The majority of candidates understood that the year marked an anniversary, but many did not include the fact that it was the one hundredth anniversary of Senghor's birth.

Few grasped the ideas of “Man of Letters” and “Head of State” to indicate the ways in which he had distinguished himself. However, they were able to note that he promoted cultural diversity. Some candidates were confused by the phrase “*personnifie les valeurs ...*”, and translated it as “being full of valour.”

Most candidates understood the sense in which “*père*” was used – “founding father” – but they failed to add “of the francophone movement”.

Selection 2

Topic: *Terrorism*

Candidates performed well on this selection. A number of candidates identified recourse to violence or the threat of violence as key elements in defining terrorism. Many gave the answer for part (b) as part of the answer for part (a), “spreading panic in a society” or “overthrowing governments”. The difference between terrorists and guerillas proved to be challenging because of the expression “*s'emparer de territoires*”. Terrorists were incapable of seizing land or not interested in doing so.

Candidates did not understand the notion of “left” and “right” in politics and struggled to make sense of words they understood, for example, “*ethnique*”, “*séparatiste*”, “*attaques*”, “*sans discrimination*”. Examples of incorrect answers are (i) “They discriminate against politics and attack without reason” and (ii) “based on ethnic differences rather than on rights or wrongs”.

The elements required were that terrorists did not belong to the right or left, were inspired by ethnic or separatist issues, no longer made direct attacks but killed indiscriminately.

Selection 3

Topic: *Trends in business, e-commerce*

Performance on this selection was fairly good. Many candidates identified at least two of the details given about the people mentioned – that they earned a living by working at home with e-commerce. Some candidates drew on general knowledge to say what computer knowledge was required. The selection simply mentioned sending e-mail and clicking on the mouse.

Many candidates did not know the answer to part (d) – the difference between certificates and know-how.

Selection 4

Topic: *Tourism in Mali*

Again, candidates performed well on this selection. Most candidates understood that tourism had become a key industry, and a pleasing number realized that tourism had made significant advances in interpreting “*le tourisme a fait un pas géant*”. The three sectors influenced by tourism were more challenging. The question required a reference to craft workers, people in the public work sector (often given as transportation works) and agro-industry.

Some candidates misinterpreted the impact of tourism on the stability of the country, stating that economic activity encouraged immigration. Others produced accurate answers: “Tourism helps create economic activity which makes inhabitants of the country remain in the country instead of following the trend of emigration.”

Selection 5

Topic: *Natural gas production*

Although performance was very good on this selection, unfortunately, a number of candidates did not follow instructions. Instead of ticking four items they ticked up to seven.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

Topic: *The relevance of computers to education*

Performance on this selection was fairly good. However, some candidates omitted Part 2 of the interview.

The first question was often misunderstood. The computer expert suggested turning the question around – “Il nous fait inverser notre perspective sur la question”, but many candidates were confused by the notion.

Examples:

“He stated that it is possible for the schools to adapt the use of computers.”

“In our perspective computers are very informative to children and useful in schools.”

A good response received was:

“He says that we must change our perspective on that question. We thought that we had to adapt education to the computer! “

Whereas many candidates understood that computer courses were created, few understood that a special language called LOGO was also created for the children.

Answers for part (c), “Who else benefited?” led to many general answers or guesses such as, “Teachers”, “Parents”, “Teenagers” instead of “People with little knowledge of the subject”.

Most candidates were able to identify two of the subjects named (“Chemistry”, “French”, “History”).

Although part (e) was fairly detailed, a pleasing number gave clear and full answers, such as “He acknowledges it as a concern for many, but states that teaching humans is a complex and intricate job not easily replaced by machines. However, computers are to aid the teacher’s skills, not replace the teacher.”

There was general comprehension of the word “*passivité*”, but some candidates failed to understand that a child’s critical development was affected. A religious or mystical attitude towards computers, the attitude to be avoided, was understood by most, as was the way in which computers should be considered. Even those candidates who did not necessarily understand the word “*outils*” gave acceptable answers such as, “a machine” or “an implement to help students”.

Candidates were able to understand that teachers could use the computer to analyse the status of each student’s knowledge or skills and use the results to give specific attention to each student. The response to part (k) was problematic for some because they had to interpret “*une telle pédagogie*”, that is, using information technology and computers in the education system.

Recommendations

As candidates try to choose the correct answer for each item in question 5, they may tick one answer, only to change their mind and choose another slightly similar one. They should remember, however, to leave only four items ticked.

Candidates should try to use information from the selection rather than rely too much on general knowledge. It is better, however, to give an answer than to leave the question unanswered.

Time management is important – a number of candidates did not finish the last section.

Paper 02 - Reading and Writing

Section A – Reading Comprehension

Section A consisted of two passages, the first requiring candidates to respond in English to five questions and to find in the text synonyms for words or phrases given. Passage 2 required candidates to answer, in French, in their own words seven questions asked in French.

Passage 1: *Panorama des musiques Africaines*

Most responses fell within the good and very good categories. The section of this question which posed the greatest difficulty was part (b) where many candidates did not quite grasp the meaning of “*ouverte aux métissages*”. A few candidates also had difficulty identifying synonyms in the passage for parts (f) – (j) of the question.

Passage 2: *Nouvelles perspectives sur l’agriculture*

This passage (just as Passage 2 in Unit 1) presented more of a challenge for the candidates. Copying wholesale from the text was a common feature of some candidates’ scripts. The rubric clearly states that answers should be given in one’s own words. Material from the passage can be used but should be done in such a way as to demonstrate understanding. Some candidates copied whole phrases verbatim from the text but this technique does not always demonstrate understanding. Candidates must make a concerted effort to express the relevant information needed using different vocabulary or structure, thus showing that they can handle both the ideas and the language. Only few candidates attempted to use their own words and were able to gain scores. Candidates need to pay greater attention to the questions posed by carefully analysing them.

In part (a), many candidates were able to answer competently, but some were unable to provide all the elements required of this question.

Parts (b), (c), (d) were handled well by most of the candidates with part (d) more often than not, receiving the maximum 4 marks.

Part (e) required candidates to comment on the statement below making reference to the passage:

“même au niveau international on ne se passionne pas pour l’agriculture”.

Many candidates did not fully grasp the expression and as a result, made no mention of the two countries involved, Switzerland and Canada. The performance on this question was satisfactory. Scores for the candidates on both passages ranged between the 15 – 18 marks. Both passages had a maximum mark of 24.

Some of the fluent candidates produced long and reflective answers but still managed to score full marks as the answers showed that they fully understood what they read. However, teachers should remind candidates to keep their answers concise and relevant.

Section B – Essays

This section required candidates to write an essay, in French, of 250 – 300 words on one of five topics. This section tested candidates’ ability to express themselves in French in a reflective, well organized fashion on a topic related to current causes as outlined in the syllabus. Much maturity of thought is expected from candidates in this section.

Examiners expect that candidates will be able to adhere to the fundamental structure of essay-writing and so produce essays with a brief introduction, three to five paragraphs focusing on different aspects of the topic under discussion, and include a brief conclusion.

Candidates were given a choice of five questions on each of the following topics: Medicine, digital camera, technology and food production, the internet and children’s games. The essays were marked out of 24, with a maximum of 12 marks for content and presentation, and 12 marks for expression. The overall standard of the performance was satisfactory. There were only a few candidates who could produce well argued and fully organized essays, thereby, scoring in the two top ranges.

Language marks tended to fall in the middle of the “satisfactory” category. Many candidates lost marks due to careless errors. These errors might have been avoided if candidates had spent time in reviewing their finished product. It cannot be over emphasized that thorough and systematic revision is of paramount importance as it is one of the examination techniques which all examination candidates should put into practice.

Marks for content were predominantly between the lower end of the “good” and in the “satisfactory” categories. Introductions and conclusions tended to be weak and therefore, ineffective. There were only few candidates who produced thoughtful, well-structured and developed essays.

Most candidates paid attention to the required number of words (250 – 300 words). There were only a small number of candidates who wrote extremely short essays, which indicated that there was sufficient time allotted for candidates to be able to complete the paper.

Common linguistic problems found were:

- Failure to manipulate infinitive constructions correctly, that is, uncertainty of using prepositions coming after certain verbs or using the incorrect preposition, for example, (*avoir besoin* +N)
- Incorrect form of irregular verbs such as *pouvoir, vouloir, devenir* in the present, perfect or conditional tenses.
- Confusion between *la médecine/les médicaments; le malade/la maladie; mal/mauvais; bien/bon; cette, ce/quel*.
- Unfamiliarity with relative pronoun “*dont*”. Candidates used “*que*” instead or used “*qui*”, for example, “*L’information de leurs enfants que les parents ont perdu le contrôle de*”.
- Far too many candidates used ‘*beaucoup*’ followed by ‘*de la*’, ‘*des*’, ‘*de le*’, ‘*de les*’
- Confusion also between “*parce que*” “*à cause de; peuple/personnes; ne.. que/ ne.. pas; leurs/ils*”

- Failure to use idioms/idiomatic expressions and relevant vocabulary related to the topic under discussion
- Candidates would sometimes simply insert an English word in their essay instead of trying to find another way of expressing what they wanted to say.

Candidates must pay particular attention to the structure of the essay – effective introductions, body and conclusion. One sentence does not constitute one paragraph. Ideas should also be developed within the word limit if candidates are to be assessed as “very good” or “excellent”.

Question 3

This question was the third most popular question and performance was satisfactory for those who attempted it. It was generally agreed that doctors were the kings of the world as many scientific advances have been made whereby doctors are now able to cure certain illnesses and perform difficult and successful surgical operations. However, a few candidates digressed and discussed animal experimentation and euthanasia which were irrelevant to the topic.

Questions 4 and 7

These questions were attempted by one and two candidates respectively.

Question 5

This question was the second most popular question showing that candidates had done some research on the contribution of technology to food production. Good illustrations included ideas on genetically modified plants and fertilizer. However, very few candidates were able to produce very good essays on this topic.

Question 6

This question was by far the most popular. Some candidates spoke about the benefits of the Internet or its danger rather than show how the parents have lost control of their children because of the Internet. Other candidates answered, giving well founded illustrations.

Paper 03 - Literary Analysis and Themes

This paper was divided into two sections. In Section A, candidates were required to analyse an extract from one of four prescribed literary texts. Candidates were expected to describe and analyse plot, setting, character and narrative techniques. Candidates were also expected to display detailed knowledge of the structure and content of the text.

Section B consisted of four essay topics. Candidates were expected to write on one topic, in English, using 350 – 400 words. This section was subdivided into two parts, each with a different theme. The themes were “*La vie rurale*” and “*Les conflits politiques et sociaux*”. In answering the question, candidates were required to focus on one of the literary texts they had studied.

Section A – Literary Analysis

This section was generally well done.

1. La Rue Cases-Nègres

- (a) Most candidates got the fact that José would get new shoes though occasionally new clothes were also mentioned. Some candidates missed the point of José’s feelings of inferiority but were still awarded marks for mentioning the quotation << *m’auraient ...dépassé* >>.

- (b) Most candidates understood the point concerning the fact that the children were afraid of Mélie and gave evidence of this fear (lowered heads, immobile bodies, silence) when she passed by.
- (c) Candidates were not always able to express the term ‘mistrustful’ in French but statements which expressed Mélie’s cruelty and dislike as well as José punishment were accepted.
- (d) Themes were generally accurate.

1. Maria Chapdelaine

- (a) Most candidates earned full marks for their responses to this question.
- (b) Most candidates were unable to identify the point that exchanges were more ‘familiar’ than ‘formal’.
- (c) This question proved also to be somewhat challenging. The responses were not very satisfactory.
- (d) Themes were easily identified.

2. Gouverneurs de la Rosée

- (a) Although most candidates were able to identify the tangible aspect (mending of the dress) and the intangible aspect (mending of lives), some found this question a challenge.
- (b) Most candidates were able to mention the quotation << *La vie... c'est un fil...*>> which indicated that they understood what was required in the response.
- (c) This question was handled well by all candidates.
- (d) This question was also answered well although the responses of some candidates were lengthy.

3. La Tragédie du Roi Christophe

- (a) Many candidates used the appropriate quotations in answering this question and were rewarded accordingly.
- (b) The quotation << *état-stable ... femme stable* >> was very often mentioned but a comment on social well being/security was required for a more complete answer.
- (c) The responses to this question were generally accurate.
- (d) Although the responses to this question were generally accurate, it appears that several candidates were not too familiar with the themes since they ‘created’ themes.

Section B – Themes

La Vie Rurale

- 5. Most candidates who used the text La Rue Cases-Nègres failed to give a balanced presentation of the subject in that the positive and negative aspects of women were not always discussed in a balanced way. Candidates focused on characters such as Maman Tine and Delia but did not mention characters such as Mélie and Jojo’s stepmother.

In Maria Chapdelaine, emphasis was only placed on Maria Chapdelaine and her mother. Other minor female characters were not mentioned.

The analysis of texts by some candidates was very general and seemed to suggest that they were more familiar with commentaries on the text rather than the text itself.

6. As in the case of question 5, candidates sometimes failed to discuss the question in a balanced way. Positive and negative social values were not given equal attention.

Les Conflits Politiques et Sociaux

7. Essays on symbolism were generally good. With regard to “*Gouverneurs de la Rosée*”, candidates were comfortable describing such symbols as water and the earth. However, at times there seemed to be some confusion between the term ‘symbol’ and the term ‘theme’.
8. This question was somewhat similar in its requirements to Question 6 and demanded similar analysis. Some misguided candidates therefore simply used texts from the theme ‘*La Vie Rurale*’ to respond to this question.

Recommendations

1. Candidates need to pay more attention to the requirements of essays with respect to length. Some essays were too long. This meant that candidates sometimes sacrificed quality for quantity by including irrelevant details.
2. Candidates need to spend more time carefully reading questions so that the application of knowledge can be more appropriate.
3. Candidates need to be encouraged to present essays which are well structured, logical and with a proper introduction and strong conclusion.

Paper 04 - Internal Assessment

Units 1 and 2

In most cases, the moderator approved of the marks which were awarded by the examiner at the centre. It was encouraging to note that the range of performances included some which fell into the categories of good, very good and excellent.

However, it was also noted that there was some disparity in complexity of questions to which candidates were required to respond. At some centres questions asked by examiners bordered on the CSEC level whereas at other centres, candidates were asked to respond to questions at a more appropriate level.

In some instances there were also serious problems with regard to the levels (volume) at which recordings were made. Examiners are reminded to test voice levels before the commencement of the exam since the moderator sometimes found it very difficult to hear comfortably all that was said.

This is a paper to which more time should be dedicated in terms of preparation, since it was obvious that some candidates were finding it extremely difficult to express themselves in standard French, although it was obvious that they had good ideas.

Overall Recommendations Regarding the Examination

Units 1 and 2

1. Candidates need to be encouraged to pay more attention to the rules of French grammar and syntax.
2. Candidates need to acquire more general knowledge with regard to the areas to be studied in the syllabus. This will enhance their performance.
3. Candidates must read more widely in the language. This will enrich their vocabulary and improve the quality of their writing and spoken language.
4. Candidates must be encouraged to listen more regularly to French radio and television stations if they wish to perform at an acceptable level in the listening comprehension paper.