

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

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

**FRENCH
(TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)**

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FRENCH
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

MAY/JUNE 2008

GENERAL COMMENTS

There were 188 candidates from Trinidad and Tobago entered for Unit 1 and 124 entered for Unit 2 examinations. Overall performance was comparable to previous years. Detailed comments and recommendations follow.

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

Paper 01 - Listening Comprehension

This paper required candidates to respond, in English, to a series of questions based on five short selections and one extended interview. The selections and interview were recorded in French. The subject matter for the selection came from each Module of the Unit as set out in the syllabus: Music (le zouk), and sports (Module 1), street children (Module 2), and pollution, ecotourism and waste disposal (Module 3). The performance on this paper was very good on the whole, with quite a few excellent scripts.

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

The performance on this selection dealing with zouk music in Martinique was quite good. A number of candidates had problems with the word “*villes*” and “*rurales*”, and wrote “villages and rural areas” or “rural towns”. Almost all candidates identified Africa and Europe as the continents that contributed to the creation of zouk, but many had problems with describing how the zouk is danced. Most candidates understood that it is danced quickly, but did not always understand that couples or a man and a woman danced together. Several wrote that the dance was done in a group, or by women. The group *Zouk Machine* was not familiar to candidates, and several of them did not interpret correctly the words “*des groupes comme Zouk Machine*”. Several thought it was a dance group or a machine of some sort, but the majority answered correctly that the group had made zouk music popular worldwide.

Selection 2

The majority of candidates performed well on this selection, especially identifying the persons obliged to help a child select a sport - part (b), and the technique sports mentioned - part (d). In part (a), many candidates understood that sports contributed to a child’s physical and psychological development, but were unable to express “a positive lifestyle” clearly. They wrote, instead, of “positive development”, “a positive part of life” or “a positive symbol”. Having correctly identified “shy children who lack self confidence” as the type of child who would benefit from playing football in part (c), several candidates were unable to state the benefits of being involved in technique sports – part (e). They were unfamiliar with the word ‘*extravertis*’ or they interpreted “*reserves*” as a verb (‘They reserve ...’), or they gave the opposite answer: “They allow them to be reserved and extroverted.”

Selection 3

Although, the selection was well done, the word “*milieu*” proved to be problematic. In defining pollution, many candidates simply omitted it, which produced, for example, “Pollution is a degradation of chemical substances in the atmosphere”. Part (b) was well done, although some answers gave “land” instead of the more specific “agricultural” pollution. The last question was quite well handled, but some candidates simply repeated their answer for the previous question (referring to pesticides, for example), instead of referring to human activity. Some candidates also were unsure of the word “*phénomènes*”.

Selection 4

The majority of candidates were able to explain the difference between ecotourism and traditional tourism. However, some gave answers that were not phrased properly, for example, “Traditional tourism aims to degrade/intentionally degrades the environment.” In part (b), quite a few candidates gave what they expected the answer to be, namely that the main benefit was the protection of the environment. In fact, the correct answer was providing jobs. In part (c), the word “*agriculteurs*” was difficult for some (who gave “agricultural persons”, “agriculturalists” and “farmers”). Many candidates were able to add “women” or “young people” to “farmers” to get full marks. Part (d) was very well done, although some candidates provided answers that were not in the selection - “zoologists”, “ecologists”, “environmentalists”, instead of “bird/animal lovers”.

Selection 5

This selection was also well answered by candidates. Some candidates selected more than four sentences and were therefore penalized accordingly. Options (b) and (f) were the ones most often chosen in error, at the expense of option (d).

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

The interview dealt with the familiar topic of street children. The performance was quite good, with some candidates recording perfect scores, and very few failing to earn half of the maximum mark. In some cases, candidates gave stock answers instead of referring to the selection. Candidates had no difficulty identifying governments, international organizations and families as categories of people concerned about street children. There were problems, however, identifying places where street children are found: “*bâtiments vides*”, and “*terrains vagues*” proving to be challenging. Answers such as “old houses”, “slums”, “vague terrain” and “battered, broken up places on the street” were given instead of “empty buildings” and “open lots”. Part (c) was well handled, although some candidates had difficulty differentiating between industrialized or developed countries and developing countries. In part (d), many candidates left out the important detail that children who slept at home had good relations with their family. Part (e) was well handled, but many omitted “precise” or “exact” in describing the statistics, saying instead that statistics were not available. A few candidates had difficulty with “*plusieurs*”. The majority of candidates identified the need to get a job and earn money to buy food as the factors required in part (f). In part (g), the main problem was referring to “drug abuse” for “*la vente de drogues*”. Most candidates earned full marks for part (h), although some included details that were not part of the selection.

Recommendations

Candidates should practise transcribing texts in class and should continue to listen to as many different sources as possible. When answering questions, candidates should limit themselves as much as possible to the selections. General knowledge is useful, but specific answers are usually required.

Paper 02 - Reading and Writing

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). In parts (f) - (j), candidates were required to identify synonyms.

Passage 1: *Obésité, l'épidémie du 21ème siècle*

Performance on this first passage was quite reasonable, with candidates (almost 63 per cent) being able to score between 11 and 18 marks out of a possible 24. Few candidates performed poorly on this question – about 21 per cent.

Many candidates received four of five marks for part (a). The word “*jeûné*” eluded almost all candidates and this resulted in only a few of them gaining a perfect score in this question. On the other hand, most candidates performed very well on parts (b) and (d) and even wrote more than was required.

Part (c) proved to be the most challenging for candidates as many did not fully grasp that the body resists attempts to go below a certain weight that it had registered.

Candidates performed satisfactorily on part (e) and many were able to identify the irony of the expression “*Choisir de maigrir*”. Candidates were able to recognise the first goal, “not to lose weight”. Many understood “definitely not too quickly”. Those who focussed on personal choice were awarded one mark.

Parts (f) - (j) were generally poorly handled by most candidates. Very few were able to identify “*jeûné*” in particular, as well as “*diminution*” and “*déclenché*” as synonyms for “*s'est privé de nourriture*”, “*baissé*” and “*active*”, respectively.

Recommendation

Students need to develop their vocabulary bank if they are to perform creditably on this section.

Passage 2: *Éruption de volcan*

This question was generally not well handled by the candidates, possibly because they did not fully comprehend the questions asked. The candidates were required to respond **in their own words**, in French, to questions posed in French. Many did not express themselves very well.

In part (a), many candidates missed the point of the appointed commission having a willingness to serve although it was judged as not being well informed and knowledgeable to deal with the situation at hand.

In part (b), most candidates did not include in their answers that evacuating the town could have been risky business as the ruling party could have faced defeat in the upcoming elections.

Part (c) was generally well answered and most candidates were able to score full marks.

Part (d) proved to be very challenging as it required some amount of synthesis on the part of the candidates. Many candidates were not able to say that the sources of information were questionable and therefore, without any objectivity.

Very few candidates scored full marks on part (e). Candidates were required to talk about the effects of the volcanic eruption. Many candidates gave the answers for (f) in this question and vice versa.

In part (f), some candidates could not interpret correctly the information needed for this question and spoke about the possible effects of having elections.

Recommendations

Teachers may need to spend more time in helping students to access reading material for reading comprehension practice so as to boost performance and competence in this area.

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 French in a reflective, well organized fashion on a topic related to current issues as outlined in the syllabus. Much maturity of thought is expected of 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' performance on this section was generally not of a high level. Very few responses were in the excellent category.

Question 3

Very few candidates opted to attempt this question. For those who did attempt it, performance ranged in the 'Good' to 'Very Good' category since most of them were able to give reasons for the marginalisation of men, its negative effects and solutions.

Question 4

Very few candidates attempted to answer this question, the most challenging of all the essay questions set. Candidates did not seem to be comfortable with the whole issue of remittances and the economic benefits of such remittances.

Question 5

This was, by far, the most popular question although it was not always well handled by those who attempted it. There was a wide range of scores. However, most candidates were able to speak to the issue of crime and violence, the different types and causes and how they destabilised families and society at large.

Question 6

This question was fairly popular among the candidates who dealt with the issue at hand satisfactorily. There were reasonable and mature arguments about the government's role in providing housing accommodation for its citizens.

Question 7

Candidates who answered this question were able to present reasonable arguments on the crime and violence which were tearing families and the society apart and to relate these to the Caribbean experience.

A number of candidates organized their essays quite well, including facts and opinions to enhance their essays. However, they were weak in correctness of expression and range of vocabulary and use of idioms. There were a few instances when candidates' answers were less than satisfactory in that their 'essay' comprised only a few lines.

Recommendations

- (i) Teachers should be encouraged to place greater emphasis on getting students to interpret carefully on essay topics, highlighting key words or concepts, so that a fully informed response, supported by facts, can be properly dealt with.
- (ii) Teachers should provide students with more practice in the correct use of grammatical structures and stylistic features in order to produce better essays.
- (iii) More practice in essay writing, beginning with introduction, paragraphs, body paragraphs and concluding paragraphs, should be provided in order to get students accustomed to evaluating and discussing topical issues. This will also help students to analyse their errors.

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 of them, 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 one of the essays. All four of the extracts were attempted by the candidates.

Section A – Literary Analysis1: *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 satisfactory. However, 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. The selections and interview were recorded in French. The subject matter for the selections came from each Module of the Unit, as set out in the syllabus: the role and influence of the media, gender issues (Module 1), information technology in today's world (Module 2) and the significance of agriculture, oil, the impact of tourism (Module 3). The performance on this paper was of a very high standard.

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 SelectionsSelection 1

Candidate performance was very good. Most candidates understood the general comment about television, its popularity and its role as the prime means of communication in developing countries. Part (b) proved to be challenging, as candidates named images and styles as some of the things portrayed on television. The word “*idées*” was sometimes expressed in other forms, but the reference to “*la condition humaine*” was often omitted or expressed as “the public” or “humanity”.

Part (c) was well done. Most candidates understood that people of all nationalities, ages and social classes watched television. The amount of time a child spent watching – “*plusieurs heures par semaine*” was well done, although some candidates omitted “per week”, and several misunderstood “*plusieurs*”.

Selection 2

Candidates performed well on this selection. Part (b), however, was challenging. Some candidates understood only a part of the answer – girls have more restrictions placed on them, and they are not given the opportunity to progress in life. With respect to part (c), most candidates earned the mark for “poverty”. However, there was some difficulty experienced in responding to part (d). Many candidates did not understand that women were rarely allowed to be religious leaders or to take part in certain ceremonies. Part (e) was well handled, although some candidates appeared to be confused with “*l'égalité*” and “*légalité*”, while “*l'application de lois*” was often translated literally.

Selection 3

Many candidates understood that agriculture helped to meet the needs of the population, but the expression “*subvenir aux besoins*” led to answers that included references to “survival” and “subsidizing”.

Some candidates did not understand “*le climat défavorable et le manque de capital financier*”, producing answers such as “They do not have a favourable climate in the financial capitals.” Most candidates were able to identify all of the ways in agriculture had a negative impact on the environment - water pollution, the extinction of certain species and the degradation of the environment. “*La pollution des eaux*” was problematic, as sometimes only “pollution” was given.

Selection 4

Part (a) was extremely well done, while part (b) proved to be challenging to several candidates. Candidates understood that something would be reduced but not everyone understood that it was the production of oil. Some candidates were confused by the fact that the rate of production was increasing or peaking.

The need to conserve or manage reserves - “*ménager des réserves*” - was not well understood. Candidates sometimes found it difficult to understand whether “*réserves*” was a noun or a verb.

Part (c) was well done. Most candidates were able to use “sustainable”, “lasting” for “*projets durables*” and this is quite pleasing, but several wrote “strong”, “hardcore” or omitted the word.

Selection 5

This was very well done. Some candidates chose option (b), perhaps because they felt that the fact that tourism caused social problems meant that it had lost its appeal. The options most often omitted were (h), (f) and (e).

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

The performance on this selection was most pleasing, with a number of candidates scoring full marks. The description of the computer, part (a), was accurate, although some candidates did not understand “*siècle*”. The areas suggested for installing the computer were readily identified – living room, office, bedroom, but some candidates had difficulty expressing the way in which the computer could unite the family. They did not include the fact that brothers and sisters or members of the family worked together to try to understand how computers worked.

With regard to part (d), candidates had difficulty expressing themselves clearly. Most understood, however, that parents, who were the traditional intellectual leaders in the family, were now learning about computers from their children.

In part (e), many candidates understood that computers did not have the personal “contact” or touch that teachers had with their students, but few were able to express the idea that computers could not replace teachers. Some gave totally wrong answers – that computers facilitated contact.

Performance on part (g) was satisfactory. Most candidates understood that the computer helped children to compose poems and songs, and improved their drawing. However, difficulty arose with “*écrire [leurs] propres textes*”. Candidates wrote “learn proper writing/write properly/write in Standard English/write proper text(s)”. The word “books” was rarely mentioned. Both “*propres*” and “*textes*” proved to be challenging, therefore the word “*écriture*” was often interpreted as “literature”.

Question (h) proved to be straightforward for candidates.

Paper 02 - Reading and Writing

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.

Passage (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). In (f) - (j), candidates were required to identify synonyms. Passage 2 required candidates to answer in French, in their own words, seven questions asked in French.

Passage 1: *La culture antillaise*

Candidates’ performance on this question was fairly good. This question required candidates to answer the questions posed in English. Candidates were able to read and understand the passage quite well and the marks fell within the upper range of 16 – 24.

Most candidates gained two marks for part (a), although, very few of them were able to identify that it normally took place on weekends or that the last three days of Carnival was the only period of non-stop activity.

Part (b) posed hardly any difficulty to the candidates.

In part (c), most candidates recognized that the “*bouillon d’aourara*” is eaten at Easter and Pentecost and that it is prepared in honour of distinguished visitors. However, only a small number of candidates were able to say that those who ate it would return to French Guiana.

Part (d) posed hardly any difficulty to the candidates.

Part (e) posed the greatest difficulty to candidates and very few were able to identify that there is a difference between earlier visitors’ interest in the island and that of today’s visitors.

For parts (f) - (j), many candidates were unable to identify the synonym for “*distingué*” as “*de marque*”. On the whole, this section fared well.

Recommendations

- (i) Teachers must encourage students to pay attention to parts of speech when doing the question on synonyms.
- (ii) Teachers must also encourage students to read extensively on the core and related topics of Module 1 to give themselves an advantage in this section of the examination.

Passage 2: *Le commerce électronique*

In this question candidates were required to respond **in their own words**, in French, to questions posed in French. However, very few candidates made any attempt to do so. They copied sections of their responses directly from the passage. Despite this, most candidates performed satisfactorily on this question.

Part (a) was generally well handled, with candidates producing synonyms for integration of cultures that were creative, for example, *“mondialisation de culture”*. Instead of *“c’est profitable à tous les niveaux”*, some candidates wrote *“joue un rôle primordial”*.

Part (b) was well done with most candidates scoring maximum marks.

Part (c) was fairly well done. On the rare occasion, candidates confused *“milliards”* with *“millions”* or left out *“centaines de milliards...”* in their answers.

Part (d) proved to be challenging for some candidates. Many of them did not explicitly express *“ils le prennent au sérieux”* but listed the questions under consideration and gained the mark. Some candidates located the answer to the question and simply re-wrote the entire third paragraph, completely ignoring the instructions to use their own words. The question required some amount of synthesis but this was not grasped by many candidates. Candidates were able to express “questioning” using *“s’interroge”* or *“questionne”*. Most candidates had difficulty in indicating clearly the attitude of governments on the matter of e-commerce.

Part (e) was not fully understood and proved quite challenging. Some candidates understood *“le fossé économique”* and tried to offer a detailed explanation, sometimes providing an answer which was far from clearly expressed – causing confusion in their own minds. Some candidates failed to express *“l’écart”* or the words *“les pays”* or *“citoyens”* and lost marks as a result. The word *“instruit”* posed some problems for some candidates, either referring to people’s ability to manipulate a computer/Internet, or their educational level on the whole.

Part (f) eluded some candidates who were only able to respond in part. Many candidates wrote about protecting the rights of the consumers and suppliers but omitted to mention that confidentiality of transactions was ensured.

Recommendation

Teachers should encourage their students to make a concerted effort to use their own words when answering the questions on Passage 2. This may require the devotion of a number of sessions to vocabulary building.

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 issues as outlined in the syllabus. Much maturity of thought is expected of 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.

Some essays were exceptional and obtained maximum marks. While the majority of candidates scored between 15 – 18 marks out of a possible 24 marks, there were those who performed poorly, displaying limited capability in the language.

Most candidates chose to do question 5, while questions 4 and 6 were the least popular. Generally, candidates lost marks for inadequate development of points and unclear language.

Common linguistic errors found were:

- (a) Many words coined from English were included: *provideurs, empouvoir, commitment, la challenge, un victim, meuré, morté, involvé, géranter, contribuer*. Spanish also had its place, for example, “*le crimen*”
- (b) Vocabulary lapses: “*une ‘descend’ or ‘réduit’ dans l’économie*”.
- (c) Structural errors: “*le discrimination racisme*”
- (d) Spelling errors with words ending in ‘eux’: **“nombreaux”*, **“cheveaux”*
- (e) Problems with use of “ce”, “cette”, “ça”: **“Il ne sait pas les vrai conséquence de cette”*
**“Ça chiffre est toujours augmenter.”*
- (f) Problems with “beaucoup”: **“beaucoup des voitures”*
- (g) Problems with terms preceding countries: “*dans Trinité*”
- (h) Weak essential grammar structures:
 - *“parce qu’il utiliser ...”*
 - *“les parents ont achetés un ordinateur pour leurs, et ordinateurs portables pour le uns enfants”*
 - *“Beaucoup des changements ont passent rapidement”*

Question 3

A number of candidates ignored the fact that the question referred to lifestyle diseases and spoke about sterility and reproductive cloning, organ transplants (when one organ is absent), or plastic surgery. Many candidates did not address the fact that lifestyle diseases are predictable. Many of them did not write anything about controlling or managing these diseases.

Question 4

Very few candidates attempted this question. Those who did in fact write on this essay performed fairly well.

Question 5

This question was by far the most popular among candidates. Performance varied, but overall, this essay was generally well handled.

Question 6

This question was treated mechanically by many candidates who, instead of relating cell phone use to social relations, simply expounded on the pros and cons of cell phone usage.

Question 7

This question could have been better handled if candidates had focused on the benefits for countries which attempted to invest in canning some of their local food rather than importing at huge costs, thereby creating other problems for the country.

Recommendations

- (i) Teachers should encourage their students to:
 - a) plan their essays well – introduction, properly developed paragraphs, brief conclusion, while avoiding repetition
 - b) interpret the topic given and present a variety of perspectives
 - c) avoid imbalance in essay-writing
- (ii) Candidates must be encouraged to pay careful attention to grammatical structures.
- (iii) Candidates must improve their grammar skills and, in so doing, their writing skills. Candidates need to broaden their knowledge base on the topics according to the content given in the Modules in the syllabus.
- (iv) Candidates must be careful not to plagiarise as they will be penalised for this practice.

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 writing the essay, 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 one of the essays. All four of the extracts were attempted by the candidates.

Section A – Literary Analysis1. *La Rue Cases-Nègres*

This was a popular choice and generally well done. Candidates responded well to parts (a) and (d). One area of concern is the candidates’ inability to list themes as one word as opposed to describing

their idea – therefore giving long explanations. Candidates were weak in organization of the answer for part (c) and at times just included quotes without any statements.

2. *Maria Chapdelaine*

There were very few responses to this question which suggests that the novel is not a popular choice. Most responses were good.

3. *Gouverneurs de la Rosée*

This question was also not a popular choice. The better responses were for parts (a) and (d). However, candidates must express themselves more concisely and would benefit from exploring the main themes of each text.

4. *La Tragédie du Roi Christophe*

This was a very popular question. Parts (b) and (c) posed some challenges to the candidates. Candidates did not note that Délima did indeed come to a decision (part (b)).

Recommendation

Candidates must concentrate on the extract and attempt to respond in a clear and concise manner. The extracts are not potential essays. They must also base responses on the extract unless asked to look outside of it.

Section B – Themes

5. *The Importance of Family and Friends*

This was indeed a popular question. Responses were very good and there were a few excellent essays. Candidates made an attempt to look at both family and friends but some limited themselves to examining ‘*M'man Tire*’ only. With so many examples in the novel, it was at times disappointing that candidates did not thoroughly explore these examples.

6. *Loneliness is a Major Theme in Novels*

This was not a popular question. When it was attempted, candidates did not reveal that they had fully grasped all aspects of the question – especially if the novel used was ‘*La rue cases – nègres*’ where loneliness is NOT a major theme.

7. *A Dismal View of Humanity*

Although not a popular question, it was pleasing to see those essays which dealt with ‘*Gouverneurs de la Rosée*’ and looked at the positive elements as well, ... because some candidates did NOT do so. There was too much story telling, resulting in excessively long essays.

8. *Perseverance is the Only Important Attribute of Leadership*

This was the most popular question. Many candidates were able to discuss the question in a thorough manner and saw that qualities other than perseverance were desirable in the good leader. Others dealt only with perseverance.

Recommendations

- (i) The prescribed novels are set to relate to specific themes. It would be better for candidates to study the texts in relation to said themes. When candidates rely too heavily on philosophical backgrounds and theory they tend not to respond to the question as it relates to the theme. Essays must focus on the question as they relate to the themes, with candidates providing a balanced discussion of the question. For example, responses on “*Gouverneurs de la Rosée*” were heavily based on Marxist philosophy. Candidates should avoid random discussion of ideological/sociological/philosophical issues unless it is asked for in the question.
- (ii) Candidates must obey the word limit. Furthermore, they must be shown how to plan and structure their essays, for example, introduction/body/conclusion and paragraph development.
- (iii) Quotes should not be prolonged nor used as a paragraph, and they must be supported by some point.
- (iv) Attention must be given to the important themes of the texts.

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 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.

General Observations Regarding the Examination

Units 1 and 2

- (a) Candidates need to be reminded that they must take the time to read questions carefully before attempting to give answers. Marks are lost because responses which are only partly accurate are provided.
- (b) Candidates also need to ensure that they master the grammar, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions that will help them to obtain high scores when answering questions.
- (c) Greater attention must be paid to mastering the techniques of literary analysis if the overall quality of responses in Paper 03 is to improve.
- (d) There is need for an improvement in fluency in the overall examination. This can only be realised if candidates work on improving their vocabulary and practise speaking in the target language more regularly.