

2024 ASSESSMENT REPORT

FRN315114 FRENCH

General Comments

The 2024 French exam was a good and fair test of the general capabilities of all students across three of the core macro skills (listening, reading, and writing). There was a variety of topics and themes that directly referenced the syllabus. Students performed well in all sections of the paper and the oral exam results were particularly strong. The areas where students need to focus on are the development of vocabulary and the mastery of basic sentence structure. Students had been well prepared for the examinations by their teachers who work tirelessly to promote the study and appreciation of French language and culture in Tasmanian schools.

Oral Component

This year's oral exam saw many students scoring in the A-B range. The standard is getting better every year, and this is confirmed by the comments of the marking teams. Candidates really seemed to enjoy the conversation, and they demonstrated clearly that they were confident and competent speakers of the language. The stronger candidates had very good pronunciation and were easy to understand. They did not hesitate to ask qualifying questions, especially when they were not sure of the meaning of a word or as in the case of some students, whether the subjunctives they had used were correct. These candidates were skilful at answering and redirecting questions so that they could fully demonstrate the wide range of vocabulary and structure they had learned during the year. Their conversation style was enthusiastic, and their conversations had good flow.

The candidates who struggled to achieve higher than a C grade had difficulty with the perennial problems: pronunciation of basic words, gaps in basic vocabulary, inability to elaborate, lack of preparation of baseline question types, lack of a spread of tenses, incorrect gender, and adjective agreement. One group of examiners noticed that students had trouble understanding the question form *est-ce que* in French which is a standard question form in the language. This said, the general standard was very high, and the examining teams were once again impressed not only by the candidates but by the enormous amount of work teachers had done throughout the year.

Written Component

Section A – Listening and Responding

General comments

Overall, students scored well in this section. There was a good gradation in the level of difficulty of the passages selected with students being challenged more by gaps in their vocabulary rather than by complex grammar structures.

Spoken Text 1 – Question 1

Candidates scored well in this passage as the topic was one close to their hearts. This said, many students translated “doit-on fêter...” to mean “how does one celebrate...” Students were not penalised for this mistake and awarded a half mark instead of the full mark. Not surprisingly, a group of students did not understand the word “un chiffre” as it belongs to a suite of words including “nombre” and “numéro” which often confuses students.

Spoken Text 2 – Question 2

Whilst it did not affect student scores at all, examiners wondered how many candidates knew what a postcard was, let alone had written one recently. Question a) had many candidates writing either Tahiti/ French Polynesia or just French Polynesia. The marking team decided that French Polynesia alone would also count for one full mark as it referred to a larger geographical concept. Students struggled with the expression “bêtes féroces” and misunderstood “plusieurs fois”. In question d), students left out the .5 in 26.5. Other than these concerns, students demonstrated good understanding of this passage.

Spoken Text 3 – Question 3

Students found this passage a little challenging due to the use of the word “âne”. Examiners felt that as the word was part of two answers, it was slightly problematic for a listening component as it is not a very common word one would find in a level three vocabulary list. This said, its presence did not adversely affect student scores. Students had trouble with the expression “sur le dos de l’âne” and many did not understand the urgency contained in the comment “n’attendez pas trop!”

Spoken Text 4 – Question 4

Whilst this passage proved to be the most challenging for students, once again scores were not terribly affected. Perhaps this is because students and their teachers nowadays do cover topics in class such as sustainability and, by extension, electric cars. The two stand-out vocabulary items in this passage were “au début” and “alterner” which students had problems understanding.

Section B – Reading and Responding

General comments

Candidates scored highly in this section with only a few students marking on their scripts that they were unable to find one or two key words in their dictionaries. As in last year's report, the marking team felt that the provision, type, and use of dictionaries at all points in the examination process should perhaps be reviewed going forward.

Question 5

This passage was well managed by students as they are obviously used to looking at articles dealing with an individual's journey both physically and personally. Students scored well but had issues with a few vocabulary items. For example, candidates did not know the word "patrimoine" and many did not include UNESCO in their answers. This led examiners to accept "worldwide" as a possible answer. In question d) several students wrote "salmon and eggs" which was not accepted as the answer was salmon eggs. In question e) "Bretagne" became Britain for some and the "les marées de Bretagne" was translated as the humour or the marriages of Britain. Corsica was often left written in the French form which was not accepted by the examiners. Of 41 candidates, 9 (22%) answered the multiple-choice question incorrectly.

Question 6

Candidates had a few issues with this passage, with the multiple-choice question proving to be the most problematic. In question e) some students decided that World War Two was a guerilla movement. In question h) the examiners also accepted "physics was already in her mind" as a possible answer. Of 41 candidates, 17 (41%) answered the multiple-choice question incorrectly with 13 (32%) opting for "international" as their preferred answer. After discussion, the examiners agreed that this was an acceptable alternative and accepted it along with "encounters." One candidate did not attempt the multiple-choice question.

Question 7

Once again, students performed well, demonstrating high levels of comprehension. However, in question b) many students omitted the answer "un territoire pas si vaste". In question f) the examiners accepted answers that mentioned simply "la marée" for full marks. One candidate wrote answers in a mixture of French and English and examiners were saddened to see some candidates crossing out correct answers. This passage included two multiple choice questions with approximately 32% of candidates answering both incorrectly.

Section C – Writing in French

	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Number of candidates attempting the question	3	15	4	2	16

In general, many essays displayed good fluidity and were relevant to the chosen topic. Candidates made sure that they wrote in the range of 250 words. There was a good display of humour and imagination in many of the essays and candidates are to be complimented for their ability to show their personalities under exam conditions. The stronger candidates were able to make effective use of the structures and vocabulary they had learnt over the year whereas those candidates who found writing in French more challenging struggled to fully express themselves.

This year's distribution showed that candidates had a definite preference for two essay topics with 36% of students opting for question (9) and 39% of candidates opting for question (12). The topics selected by students were obviously ones that they felt comfortable writing about and had no doubt encountered in some form during their writing classes throughout the year. These types of familiar topics are very reassuring for candidates as it reduces the stress involved with writing in a second language and allows them to express themselves confidently and clearly.

The following shortened list of structures and vocabulary highlight some of the challenges students experienced during the writing section of the exam.

- Adjective, plural and gender agreements were often inconsistent e.g. au cafés/cette vacances and préféré having many different combinations of accent.
- Frequently used vocabulary mis-spelt or given the wrong article e.g. la café/ la français/ le tour Eiffel/la tour de Eiffel/ la Lovre/ le matière
- **À + article** : we noted à + le/ à + les frequently
- **beaucoup**: misspellings of the word accompanied by des and de les.
- **m'amie** appeared a few times.
- **Elle/il** used to mean "her" e.g. elle oncles/ils famille and sa used likewise e.g. je regarde sa. Direct object pronouns proved to be a little tricky for some.
- **Dates/places**: à le 27 novembre/ sur la semaine/ en le matin/ à France ? en l'Angleterre/ dans Espagne/ en Paris/dans Londres
- **Tu VS Vous**: question 12 required an email to the teacher and "tu" was often used. This was the same for question 8 where students were not sure whether to use "tu" or "vous" with their grandfather.

This year, once again, the marking team and I would like to congratulate the setting examiner and critics on a job well done. This paper allowed students to be challenged where it mattered and made sure that teachers and students could see evidence of what they had taught and learnt in class this year. We are very lucky in Tasmania to have such a competent and dedicated set of professionals looking after the second language learning needs of our students.

Appendix 1 – 2024 Marking Tool

Section A – Listening and Responding

Spoken Text 1 – Question 1

- a) What is the theme of the discussion? (2 marks)

Should one celebrate (1) one's 18th birthday? (1)

Accept "how to celebrate" for ½ mark

- b) Explain Luc's opinion on the topic. (3 marks)

Accept a combination of any of the following for a score of 3 marks

Luc thinks it's a waste of time (1/2) and money. (1/2) 18 is just a number. (1)

You're still the same person (1) you have the same style of clothes (1)

the same friends (1)

- c) Christine's opinion differs from Luc's. Explain. (3 marks)

Christine thinks it's important to celebrate/ mark the occasion (1).

Birthday celebrations let us reinforce links (1) with friends (1/2) and family (1/2)

- d) What did Christine do the first time she celebrated? (2 marks)

She went to a restaurant (1/2) with her friends (1/2) Then they went (1/2)

to a night club (1/2)

- e) Describe her second celebration. (3 marks)

She had a traditional meal (1) at home (1/2) with her family (1/2).

There was as much cake (1/2) and champagne as one wanted. (1/2)

Total 13 marks

Spoken Text 2 – Question 2

- a) In which part of the French speaking world is Jeanne? (1 mark)
Tahiti (1/2) in French Polynesia (1/2) or accept French Polynesia (1)
- b) How long has she been there? (1 mark)
One month (1)
- c) Why is this place “blessed by the gods” according to Jeanne? (2 marks)
There are no wild animals (1)
The people are rarely ill (1)
- d) What is the average temperature there? (1 mark)
26.5 degrees
- e) Explain why one does not dry out much. (1 mark)
The humidity (1/2) is 75% (1/2)
- f) When is the rainy season? (1 mark)
From November (1/2) to March (1/2)
- g) What do we learn about the water temperature? (1 mark)
It's between 23-25 degrees.
- h) Why is this important for Martine? (2 marks)
She swims (1/2) several times (1) per week (1/2)
- i) Why are Jeanne’s children pleased to be there? (2 marks)
There is no school (1) on Wednesday (1/2) or Friday afternoons (1/2)

Total 12 marks

Spoken Text 3 – Question 3

- a) Where did the woman first find out about the farm holiday? (1 mark)
Tourist (1/2) bureau/ Office (1/2)
- b) What activity in particular does she mention? (2 marks)
Hiking/walking (1) with a donkey (1)
- c) What do we learn about her children? (3 marks)
She has 2 (1/2) girls (1/2) aged 14 (1/2) and 12 (1/2)
And a boy (1/2) aged 5 and a half (1/2)
- d) Why does the owner feel there will be no problem for quite young children? (2 marks)
If they get tired, (1) they can be put on the donkey's back. (1)
- e) What else does the woman enquire about concerning children? (1 mark)
Any discounts/concessions for children? (1)
- f) At what specific time of the year, does the woman wish to book this holiday? (1 mark)
The beginning (1/2) of August (1/2)
- g) What is the cautionary comment made by the owner at the end of the conversation? (2 marks)
Don't wait too long to book (1) as people are starting to book for the Summer (1)

Total 12 marks

Spoken Text 4 – Question 4

- a) In which century was France a pioneer of electric vehicles? (1mark)
19th century
- b) When was the “Golden Age” of electric vehicles? (1 mark)
At the start (1/2) of the 20th century (1/2)
- c) Why did petrol cars take over the market? (1 mark)
They were cheaper
- d) Explain why the French government made the production of electric cars a priority? (2 marks)
It had a policy to reduce (1) greenhouse gases/gas emissions (1)
- e) Which public business in 2007 had many electric vehicles. (1 mark)
The Post Office
- f) Explain why this was so. (3 marks)
Distributing mail (1) was particularly demanding for vehicles, (1) as they stop and start regularly (1)
- g) In the European Union, which country produces the most electric vehicles? (1 mark)
Germany
- h) At the end of 2023, how many rechargeable points were there in France? (1 mark)
100,000

Total 11 marks

Section B – Reading and Responding

Question 5

- a) What recognition has couscous achieved? (1 mark)
It's part of the UNESCO World Heritage accept also worldwide/global recognition
- b) From which country does Nordine come? (0.5 mark)
Tunisia
- c) How many different recipes for couscous does he write about? (0.5 mark)
100
- d) What side dishes can accompany couscous? (2 marks)
Veal with olives (1/2) snails (1/2) caviar (1/2) and salmon eggs (1/2)
- e) What are the three (3) main influences on his cooking? (3 marks)
The tides of Brittany (1), the perfumes of Tunisia (1) and the beaches of Corsica (1)
- f) How old was Nordine when he came to France? (0.5 mark)
26
- g) Who taught him to cook? (0.5 mark)
His mother
- h) Describe where he grew up. (3 marks)
A town in Southeast Tunisia (1) which was situated between the sea (1) and olive groves/fields(1)
- i) Explain why, as a child, he had to become the head of his family. (3 marks)
He was the oldest of 5 children (1) and his father was working in a factory (1) in France (1)
- j) Describe two (2) of the jobs he had to do when young. (2 marks)
He took out/ looked after the goats (1) Collected veggies (1/2) from the vegetable garden (1/2). Bought spices at the market (1)

k) Explain how these tasks helped Nordine in his career. (2 marks)

These tasks gave him the taste for produce (1) and cooking (1)

l) An alternative title for this article might be: (2 marks)

- an immigrant's success story

Total 20 marks

Question 6

- a) Where does Anne Huillier currently work? (0.5 mark)
Sweden
- b) Which major event in 1969 took her on her work path? (1.5 marks)
Man first walked (1/2) on the moon (1)
- c) Where was she at that time? (2 marks)
In the Southwest (1) staying with her uncle and aunt (1)
- d) Explain why her uncle and aunt were worried. (3 marks)
They felt Anne and her cousins (1) were too young/small (1) to have their sleep/night disturbed (1)
- e) What do we learn about Anne's grandfather? (2 marks)
He was an engineer (1/2) teacher (1/2) and part of the Resistance (1/2) in WW2 (1/2)
- f) Name **four (4)** activities / pastimes that were important for Anne as a child. (2 marks)
Skiing (1/2) swimming (1/2) music (1/2) and tennis (1/2)
- g) What were her first two choices of career? (2 marks)
P.E. teacher (1) Maths Teacher (1)
- h) Why did she decide to become a physicist? (1 mark)
She wasn't any good at maths or physics was already in her mind
- i) Explain why Marie Curie was so important for Anne. (4 marks)
M.C was a woman with a career (1) She was an exceptional researcher (1), world famous (1) as well as having a family (1)
- j) This article was found under which section of Le Monde newspaper? (2 marks)
accept either of the two following answers
- Encounters
 - International

Total 20 marks

Question 7

- a) L'Hexagone dans cet article c'est: (2 marks)
o La France
- b) Quelle est la particularité du territoire français? (2 marks)
Un territoire pas si vaste (1) mais qui rassemble une diversité de paysages absolument exceptionnelle (1)
- c) Pourquoi la dune de Pilat est-elle connue ? (2 marks)
C'est la plus haute dune d'Europe (1) et qui mesure 100-150 mètres de hauteur
- d) La dune rappelle une scène de quelle œuvre littéraire? (1 mark)
Les Mille et une Nuits
- e) On associe quel Français célèbre à Étretat? (1 mark)
Claude Monet
- f) Que risquent les visiteurs sur la plage d'Étretat? (2 marks)
la marée (2)
- g) Quelles sont les attractions en Auvergne? (2 marks)
Les volcans éteints (1/2) les villes thermales (1/2) paysages variés entre collines (1/2) et plaines (1/2)
- h) Nommez la faune de la Camargue. (2 marks)
Les flamants roses (1)
Les taureaux noirs (1)
- i) A quoi ressemble l'archipel des Glénan? (1 mark)
Un lagon tropical

j) Expliquez pourquoi cet archipel est décrit comme « un tableau merveilleux ». (3 marks)

ANY COMBINATION

Il y a une plage de sable blanc (1) une mer turquoise et cristalline (1)

une végétation unique (1) des oiseaux par milliers (1)

8 îles qui s'organisent autour d'une mer intérieure (1)

k) Cet article vise: (2 marks)

- des Français

Total 20 marks