FRENCH

| Paper 8682/01 |
| Speaking |

Key messages

- Centres need to make sure that candidates are aware that their Topic Presentation must make reference to francophone culture or society;
- candidates should try to expand on simple statements and develop their ideas and opinions;
- candidates are expected to ask questions of the Examiner in both conversation sections, and should make every effort to ask more than one question on the topic or topics under discussion.

General comments

Candidates have the chance to choose a topic of real personal interest for their presentation and research and structure it in any way they choose – the only proviso is that this should be related in some way to francophone culture or society. It is not enough just to choose some general topic and then say... *et c'est la même chose en France*.... and candidates living in a francophone country must still make the connections clear. The syllabus warns that where this is not the case, the content mark must be halved. Candidates should also be made aware that a factual topic is less likely to score well for content - the higher mark bands are only accessible when their presentation includes ideas and opinions.

In the conversation sections, candidates need to be prepared to expand on the material of their presentation, and not content themselves with single sentence answers to questions – it is in their own best interests to develop their responses, defend their point of view and try to hold their own in discussion. They do not have to agree with the opinions of the Examiner, and they should remember that there are 10 marks available in the mark scheme for the questions they ask of the Examiner, 5 in each conversation section. Turning the question back on the Examiner *Et vous, monsieur / madame?...*, is the simplest way to ask a question, but this, on its own, is not enough to score in the highest bands - they need to be able to use a variety of question forms accurately and be prepared to try to find out the Examiner's opinions on the various subjects of discussion, too.

Administration

The standard of recording was generally better, this year, with many Centres sending samples digitally recorded on CD. Please make sure that these are recorded as .mp3 files, and whether samples are sent on cassette or CD, Centres must make sure that these can be played on normal playback equipment, that the recordings of candidates and Examiner are clearly audible, and that all samples are labelled with Centre, syllabus and candidate details. Candidates for only one syllabus (i.e. AS **or** A-level but not both) should be recorded on each cassette or CD, and they should be listed in the order of recording, so that it is simple to locate particular candidates.

Pease see the syllabus booklet for details of the sample size - recordings should cover the mark range as evenly as possible. Examiners should make sure that a copy of the Working Mark Sheet, showing how marks have been awarded for each candidate according to the criteria in the mark scheme, together with the Moderator's copy of the MS1 are enclosed with the sample recordings.

Format of the examination

The examination consists of 3 parts: the Topic Presentation, on a topic of the candidate's choice, the Topic Conversation, on the **same** topic as that chosen by the candidate for the Presentation, and the General Conversation, on a range of **different topic areas, chosen by the Examiner**. The whole examination should last no more than 20 minutes, and it is as unfair to candidates to give them too little time, as it is to prolong sections. In the interests of international standards, candidates should be given the same

examination experience, as nearly as possible. It is noticeable that in over-long examination ... tire, and their ability to respond accurately decreases.

Presentation (3 to 3½ minutes)

There was a wide choice of topics at both A and AS Level: candidates dealt with the usual social themes of young people, family relations and the generation gap, education, health and fitness, work and leisure, tourism, food and drink, sport, and culture. The preference seemed to lie predominantly with sport, education, and the family. Some topics were particularly related to the situation in francophone countries, and some were most original, both in choice and treatment.

Candidates should remember that, even when they choose a francophone related topic, such as a French composer, it is often difficult to develop this past the factual, and treat it in an appropriate way for an examination at this level. When preparing a topic, candidates should try to think of at least half a dozen questions which could be asked about it, and not just questions which ask for further factual details. When researching a topic, they will inevitably find more material than can be used in the 3 to 3½ minutes allowed, but it is this depth of knowledge which will allow them to develop the subject further in the topic conversation section. There is no need to spend time at the beginning of the presentation outlining what they **intend** to say – they should get on and say it – 3½ minutes is not very long! There must be no script for this – candidates are allowed just a cue card, with up to 5 headings.

If candidates show signs of continuing longer than 3½ minutes, Examiners must interrupt them and begin asking questions – this is not a test of memory, neither is it intended to be the recitation of a speech – rather, an outline of a subject a candidate is interested in and will be able to talk about further in the topic conversation section.

Topic Conversation (7 to 8 minutes)

The topic conversation section often produced natural and spontaneous conversation, where the candidate had chosen a topic capable of development and was able to talk further about it. Questions must not just ask for a repetition of the material already given in the presentation, but should seek to explore further, and ask candidates to expand on their ideas and opinions. Candidates may be able to add details to factual information already given, but Examiners should be trying to develop a conversation, rather than working their way through a scripted set of questions and answers – to achieve marks in the higher bands, candidate must be able to show that they can respond to unexpected questions, and hold their own in discussion.

They must also be prepared to ask questions of the Examiner, and should be prompted to do so, where no questions occur naturally in the course of conversation – there is no penalty attached if they are prompted to ask questions, the full 5 marks are still available to be worked for - and they should try to ask more than one question. To score high marks for this element, they must be able to show that they can use a range of question forms, with a high level of accuracy. Examiners should answer questions asked of them **briefly**, in order not to take up time which could be profitably used by the candidate.

Examiners should signal the end of the topic conversation section and the beginning of the general conversation section, so that candidates are aware that they are moving away from their chosen subject, and into possibly less familiar territory.

General Conversation (8 to 9 minutes)

To help candidates cope with the change of subject, Examiners often begin with straightforward questions about the candidate's background and interests, but these should be very brief, before moving on to more abstract issues, or current events. It is often a helpful opening to say to candidates... *parlez-moi de...* but this should not be the cue for Examiners to let candidates recite a learnt response – they should be prepared to begin asking questions about the subject suggested, probing and challenging candidates, to stretch them and allow them to show what they can do. There is no prize for the number of different topics touched on in this section – it is infinitely preferable to discuss 2 or 3 in depth, in a real conversation, rather than asking 15 to 20 questions on topics discussed in class during the course, where answers come back pat and rehearsed. There are not necessarily "right" or "wrong" answers to questions, merely openings for discussion. Examiners must be prepared to engage with the candidates in order to give them opportunities to shine.

In Centres where there are a number of candidates, it should be remembered that subje[...] conversation should be varied from candidate to candidate – they should <u>not</u> all be asked the sa[...] predictable questions.

Candidates should be prompted to ask questions in this section, too – more than one question, since t[...] are 5 marks to be worked for – and once again, Examiners must restrict their own contributions.

Assessment

When Teacher/Examiners are working in isolation, in small Centres, it is difficult to find the pitch for marking because it is difficult to compare candidates with those from other Centres. Examiners generally made very conscientious attempts to apply the criteria from the mark scheme, and almost half the Centres entered had no adjustment made to their marks, or had their marks adjusted over only part of the range.

The most noticeable changes were where marks had been awarded for questions asked of the Examiner, although candidates had asked none - sometimes even though Examiners had correctly prompted them to do so.

If no questions are asked by candidates, a zero must be recorded in the final column of the working mark sheet for that conversation section – candidates must be warned that they are giving away a possible 10 marks if they choose not to ask any questions.

Generally, Centres coped well with the requirements of the examination, candidates were well-prepared and knew what to expect, and were given opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. There were some fascinating topics and conversations stemming from them, and many candidates showed themselves to be both well-informed, and able to maintain a conversation at a suitably mature level.

FRENCH

General comments

This was a fair test, similar in its level of difficulty to previous papers, but one which had to attempt to cater for an extraordinarily wide range of candidates. At the top end, there were candidates who were very much at ease in the language, handling it with assurance and displaying impressive powers of comprehension and expression. These candidates knew how to set about the challenges and were well equipped and prepared to cope with them. At the other end of the range, candidates appeared to have had relatively little exposure to the language and certainly not to the extent required at this level.

Candidates most often lost marks because they copied whole sentences or phrases unaltered from the texts in **Questions 3 and 4**, or because they preferred to give their own (often lengthy) opinions of what they thought the text ought to have said, rather than what it actually did say, or because they wrote general essays in answer to the first task in **Question 5**.

The topic (video games) appeared relevant to the experience of most candidates and one to which they appeared able to relate.

Apart from those who simply ground to an early halt faced with an unequal task, most candidates managed to attempt all questions, and there were few signs of undue time pressures. That said, **the practice of copying out the question in Questions 3 and 4 as a preamble to the answer is a waste of time for both candidate and marker**, as well as potentially introducing linguistic errors which detract from the overall impression for the quality of language mark. The most pointless and frustrating examples consist of simply copying out the entire question before proceeding to the answer. **It would help both candidates and Examiners if this habit could be discouraged**. There were also significant numbers of other candidates who insisted on trying to incorporate the words of the question as an introduction to every answer. For example, the answer to **Question 3(d)** does not need to start: *D'après le quatrième paragraphe, les jeux en réseau n'ont-ils pas été plus profitables financièrement parce que … . On peut télécharger les jeux* is perfectly adequate for the first mark.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, copying wholesale from the text remains a common feature amongst the weaker candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' sections directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. The rubric clearly states that candidates should answer *sans copier mot à mot des phrases entières du texte*. Candidates should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Question 2, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for straightforward vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary for its own sake.

In **Question 1**, candidates appear more aware of the need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing, but some marks are still lost on this - see **Comments on specific questions** below.

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the ~~~~~~
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and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores n~~~
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before it starts.

If, on the other hand, the responses to **Question 5** are significantly below the word limit, the overall quality of
language mark is reduced accordingly.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however
polished. It appears that there is an ingrained fear (perhaps from the requirements of other subjects) of not
introducing the topic, but it is easy to waste 20% of the available words on this for no reward. The word limit
is already quite tight to achieve ten points, and from the very outset, candidates need to make the point as
succinctly as possible and move on to the other nine. It is a summary/*résumé* of specific points from the
texts that is requested in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay (which is quite likely to score no
points).

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they
go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to
highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this
context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore *il y a* is three words,
as is *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This exercise held few fears for the majority and a reasonable number scored full marks. *Interaction* was
sometimes incorrectly offered for *concours* in **(a)**, but *inconnu* and *caves* were commonly correctly identified
for **(b)** and **(c)**. *Rejoindre* **(d)** defeated a fair proportion, and *répandus* was wrongly guessed at by some for
destinés **(e)**.

Question 2

There were some good answers to this question from the strong candidates, but as usual, the task proved
demanding for candidates with a less-than-secure command of grammatical structures.

Item **2(a)** was not done very well. Those who recognised the need for a subjunctive were often unable to
produce it in the *passé composé*.

Tenses were again a problem in Items **2(b)** and **2(c)**, with those who managed the active to/from passive
manipulations sometimes spoiling things by using the *passé composé – ont dû / ont été*.

Item **2(d)** required the use of *on* which was successfully handled in a large number of cases, but *on peut
téléchargés* was by no means uncommon.

Item **2(e)** presented the initial difficulty of changing *il est difficile de* to *sont faciles à*, but as often as not it was
the failure to provide the agreement on *faciles* that was the cause of a mark lost.

Question 3

Item **3(a)**: was well answered by those candidates who found easy ways of expressing *son copain de classe,
un inconnu* and *la même passion*. *Où qu'il soit* and *quel que soit son âge* proved more difficult, but the
maximum four marks from the five acceptable answers was not uncommon here.

Item **3(b)**: The idea of needing a physical link or cable to connect computers escaped some, as did the
notion of *un non-initié*, but most understood that it was the arrival of the Internet that had increased
accessibility.

Item **3(c)**: A lot of candidates simply 'lifted' *les adolescents et les personnes sans connaissances en informatique* and *en ajoutant des ressources informatiques plus avancées*. Those who made the re-phrase usually earned both marks.

Item **3(d)**: Candidates usually understood the problem of illegal downloading from the Internet for the first mark, but then often resorted to 'lifting' *souffre du piratage* and *imposer des contributions financières.*

Item **3(e)**: The first mark for identifying the need to purchase the software was often scored, but the idea of a monthly subscription was less frequently understood. Mention of the annual cost of 150 euros proved a readily accessible final mark here.

Question 4

Item **4(a)**: The idea that a parent or other adult may buy an unsuitable game for the child was well understood, as was the idea that this may be because they do not look properly at what the game contains. The point that children often know much more than their parents in this field was made less often.

Item **4(b)** produced some interesting responses. The point missed by many was that some German shops had decided to stop selling 'X-rated' video games to anyone, rather than to stop selling video games to people over 18. The point that children were likely to obtain them from other sources anyway was well made, but some candidates went too far in stating that it had been categorically proven that video games do not make people violent.

Item **4(c)**: Avoidable lifts – *troubles psychologiques, potentiel de violence* - were too tempting for some, but the first point about pre-existing vulnerability was generally made well enough.

Item **4(d)**: This question was well done by a large proportion of candidates who successfully identified the possible consequences.

Item **4(e)**: was again well answered by many candidates, some of whom displayed a pleasing range of vocabulary in ensuring that they avoided 'lifting': *évacuer/exprimer/canaliser/exorciser (se débarraser de); substitut/remplaçant des parents/nourrice (baby-sitter)*.

Question 5

This Question asks the candidates to summarise the main issues of the two passages and then to reflect on them, giving their own views. Being concise is part of the task. See **General Comments** at the start of this report for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction. *Le jeu vidéo de par sa grande présence dans l'univers des jeunes soulève des interrogations: est-il bon, sans effets ou au contraire néfaste pour les jeunes ? Le jeu vidéo présente en fait à la fois des avantages et des inconvénients. Ces avantages et ces inconvénients rendent donc ces jeux vidéo sujet à débats* is all very worthy but uses up over a third of the word allocation for no marks.

Candidates were required to summarise '*les avantages et les dangers des jeux en réseau et des jeux vidéo tels qu'ils sont présentés dans ces deux articles*'. The mark scheme identified 17 rewardable points, of which a good number of candidates managed 8, 9 or 10 (which was the maximum score). Of the advantages, the most usually mentioned were the possibility of connecting and interacting with a wide range of people regardless of age or location, ease of access, elimination of aggressive tendencies and encouragement of a spirit of competition. Dangers included access to violent games, accentuation of psychological problems, addiction, isolation and escape from reality.

Candidates who scored fewest marks of all included those who wrote general essays for which there was no evidence in the texts (e.g. the dangers of giving away personal details to strangers on line) and therefore could score no mark. Others latched onto one or two points early on and simply repeated them in different words.

The Personal Response gives the candidate the chance to express their own views on the topic, which some candidates did with some feeling – assuming they had not exceeded the word limit by this stage. There was less fence-sitting than sometimes, with opinions roughly evenly divided between the unacceptability of violence in any context, even virtual, and the healthy channelling of violent tendencies in a harmless way.

The quality of language varied from the excellent – fluent, accurate and idiomatic – to the very poor with little (if any) rewardable (or indeed, in some cases, recognisable) language. Verbs (even entirely regular ones in some cases) were as usual by far the most common sources of error: the choice of endings e.g. *-er, -é, -ez, -ait* seemed largely random for weaker candidates and the rules of agreement of both verbs and adjectives were frequently either ignored or applied on an unconventional basis, the plural of *il achète* being *ils achètent*. There was a marked tendency to spell words as they sound – e.g. *Sa nais pas juste* or the apparently interchangeable *ses, c'est, ce, ces, s'est* – or to invent new words: *piratager; confuser*

FRENCH

> **Paper 8682/22**
>
> **Reading and Writing**

General comments

This was felt to be a fair test, similar in level of difficulty to previous years, and one which produced a wide variety of marks. There were some first-rate scripts from able and well prepared candidates who handled all the tasks with commendable fluency and accuracy, whilst there were some at the other end of the range whose level of linguistic competence was over-stretched by what was being asked of them.

The topic (video games) was relevant to the experience of the candidates and one to which they appeared able to relate.

The majority of candidates knew how to set about tackling the different types of questions, revealing a good level of familiarity with the required tasks. Where candidates had problems, it was often because they copied whole sentences or phrases unaltered from the texts in **Questions 3 and 4**, or because they preferred to give their own (often lengthy) opinions of what they thought the text <u>ought</u> to have said, rather than what it actually <u>did</u> say, or because they wrote general essays in answer to the first task in **Question 5**. Another cause of lost marks this year was a tendency to over-complicate things in an apparent desire to impress linguistically: candidates sometimes passed up the relatively easy marks which could be obtained by straightforward re-wording or re-phrasing in **Questions 3 and 4** in particular, launching themselves instead into convoluted and impressive-sounding but ultimately unintelligible language when a few simple words could have gained them all the marks.

Most candidates managed to attempt all questions, and there were few signs of undue time pressures. That said, **the practice of copying out the question in Questions 3 and 4 as a preamble to the answer is a waste of time for both candidate and marker**, as well as potentially introducing linguistic errors which detract from the overall impression for the quality of language mark. The most pointless and frustrating examples consist of simply copying out the entire question before proceeding to the answer. **It would help both candidates and Examiners if this habit could be discouraged**. There were also significant numbers of other candidates who insisted on trying to incorporate the words of the question as an introduction to every answer. For example, the answer to **Question 3(d)** does not need to start: *Les différences entre passer des heures devant un écran de télévision et passer des heures devant une console vidéo sont que …* The three available marks are scored simply by: *Les joueurs doivent réagir et réfléchir. Les téléspectateurs peuvent rester passifs.*

In **Questions 3 and 4**, copying wholesale from the text remains a common feature amongst some candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' sections directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. The rubric clearly states that candidates should answer ***sans copier mot à mot des phrases entières du texte***. Candidates should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Question 2, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for straightforward vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary for its own sake.

In **Question 1**, candidates appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing, but some marks are still lost on this - see **Comments on specific questions** below.

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the ~~paper~~ of 140 words for both sections, 90–100 words for the summary of specific points made in the ~~original~~ and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores ~~nothing~~. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Sum~~mary~~ automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response**. A large number ~~of~~ candidates wrote answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin. Too often, good answers to the Personal Response cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

If, on the other hand, the responses to **Question 5** are significantly below the word limit, the overall quality of language mark is reduced accordingly.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. It appears that there is an ingrained fear (perhaps from the requirements of other subjects) of not introducing the topic, but it is easy to waste 20% of the available words on this for no reward. The word limit is already quite tight to achieve ten points, and from the very outset, candidates need to make the point as succinctly as possible and move on to the other nine. It is a summary/*résumé* of specific points from the texts that is requested in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay (which is quite likely to score no marks).

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore *il y a* is three words, as is *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The performance on this question was uneven. *Avouer* was correctly found by many for **(a)**, although *agir* and *réalisés* were not uncommon offerings. *Avouer* also appeared not infrequently as an answer to **(b)**, which was nevertheless the most successfully handled item here. Most identified *éprouvent* for **(c)** although some lost the mark by writing *éprouver* or *éprouvent-ils*. There were occasional spelling problems with *davantage* in **(d)**, where *mieux* was quite often offered instead. *Tout de même* was offered for **(e)** almost as frequently as the correct answer *totalement*.

Question 2

There were some very good answers to this question from strong candidates, but as usual, the task proved very demanding for candidates with a less-than-secure command of grammatical structures.

Item **2(a)** was not very well done. The use of *ne* was arbitrary, and the tense of *prouver* caused problems. *Personne (n')a prouvée* was frequent, as was the addition of *pas*.

Item **2(b)** was generally well answered, although a minority lost the mark by omitting *dans nos recherches*, or by mangling *découvert* even though it appeared in the original.

Item **2(c)**: The basic transition to the passive was often successfully handled, but a good number lost the mark by failing to provide the agreement in *remplacée*.

Item **2(d)**: The need for the subjunctive was recognised by a lot of candidates, but the correct form of *fassiez* was not always found.

Item **2(e)** proved difficult, partly no doubt because of the number of operations to be performed. It was relatively rare to find *sont obligés de*, and even then there was a tendency to omit the agreement or to provide *dans* or *avec* instead of *par*.

Question 3

Item **3(a)** was well answered by those candidates who recognised the need to re-phrase by us[ing verbs] rather than nouns, although *craindre* proved predictably difficult to handle for those who refused the [use of] *avoir peur*.

Item **3(b)**: The question asks *que font*, but responses frequently involved the simple 'lifting' of *sens de l'observation attentive* and *temps de réaction réduit*. The [candidates] who understood the idea behind *multitâches* often managed to transmit it using phrases such as *plusieurs choses/tâches en même temps/à la fois*.

Item **3(c)**: A lot of candidates scored at least two of the three marks on this question, although a surprising number settled for *Ils ont eu des difficultés à trouver des joueurs avec des capacités mentales*. *Anecdote* confused some who tried to include it in their answer without knowing what it meant. *Résolver* and *résoluer* appeared quite frequently.

Item **3(d)**: The majority of candidates successfully made the contrast between active and passive occupations for the first two marks, but were less successful in expressing the idea of *réflexion*, for which *réflecter* sometimes appeared.

Item **3(e)**: This question caused some difficulty for candidates who did not understand what *cinéphiles ou lecteurs passionnés* enjoy doing. Some were more successful in salvaging the third mark on offer here with *divertissement/évasion* etc.

Question 4

Marks on this question were generally slightly lower than on **Question 3**.

Item **4(a)**: The first mark was frequently earned by candidates who were able to make the point about time spent in front of the screen or living in a virtual world, although there was some lifting of *aspirés dans un espace-temps virtuel*. The sense of *coupure* was transmitted more successfully than that of *repli*. Attempts to make the obvious change of *confusion* to a verb sometimes resulted in *confuser*.

Item **4(b)** proved quite challenging. Relatively few candidates understood or expressed the idea of creating games deliberately to cause addiction. Despite what one would have imagined to be easy alternatives - *veut arrêter mais ne peut pas* – many of candidates lost the second and/or third mark by lifting.

Item **4(c)**: The first point was not very well handled, with many not making the link between excess in all three areas and the effect on health. The second and third marks were gained by those candidates who resisted the 'lifts' of *amaigrissement* and *prise de poids*. *Prise des pois* gave an interesting new slant, as did *Si on ne mange pas, on devient auberge*.

Item **4(d)** This question was well done, although some candidates seemed to be under the impression that if they simply preceded the noun with a pronoun they would earn the mark, e.g. *ils abandon de toute vie sociale*.

Item **4(e)** was generally well answered by candidates who avoided lifting *augmentation … addictions* and *diffusion … connexions*.

Question 5

This Question asks the candidates to summarise the main issues of the two passages and then to reflect on them, giving their own views. Being concise is part of the task. See **General Comments** at the start of this report for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction. "*Dans le premier texte on nous raconte les effets positives qui sont présentées par les joueurs de jeux videos qu'on ne trouve pas chez ceux qui ne fait pas de ces jeux*" scores no marks but uses up over 20% of the word allocation.

Candidates were required to summarise '*les bienfaits et les dangers des jeux vidéo tels qu'ils sont présentés dans les deux textes*'. The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points of which a good number of candidates managed 8, 9 or 10. Of the benefits, the most usually mentioned were improvements in short term memory, hand-eye coordination, the ability to multi-task, powers of observation, problem resolution and quick decision making. Dangers such as cutting yourself off from society and family and damage to health were perhaps the most common, but many included violence and addiction.

Candidates who scored fewest marks of all included those who wrote general essays for which th[...] evidence in the texts and therefore no mark could be awarded. Others latched onto one or two po[...] on and simply repeated them in different words.

The personal response gives the candidate the chance to express their feelings on the topic, which som[...] candidates did with some imagination and originality – assuming they had not exceeded the word limit by this stage. They were able to give some simple and helpful advice about how to tackle the problem. Most felt they should get them out of the house, playing sports, meeting other people, going to the cinema, getting the parents involved.

The quality of language varied from excellent to very poor. The weakest found it difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form, with verbs (even regular ones) as usual being far the most common sources of error: particularly concerning again was the wide-spread notion that the plural of *il encourage* is *ils encourages*. There was a tendency to spell words as they sound: *le servo (cerveau); un notre bienfait (un autre bienfait); saint et sauf; tuent les jours (tous les jours); cestait; ils leurs aient difficile de …* ; and even *éceque sais mauvé* ? *(est-ce que c'est mauvais ?)* New words were also much in evidence: *interacter, réacter, relationner.*

That said, the linguistic ability of the majority of candidates certainly enabled them to transmit the required facts and opinions effectively, whilst the best candidates wrote idiomatic, fluent and accurate French which was a pleasure to read.

FRENCH

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Paper 8682/23

Reading and Writing

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General comments

This was felt to be a fair test, similar in level of difficulty to previous years, and one which produced a wide variety of marks. There were some first-rate scripts from able and well prepared candidates who handled all the tasks with commendable fluency and accuracy, whilst there were some at the other end of the range whose level of linguistic competence was over-stretched by what was being asked of them.

The topic (video games) was relevant to the experience of the candidates and one to which they appeared able to relate.

The majority of candidates knew how to set about tackling the different types of questions, revealing a good level of familiarity with the required tasks. Where candidates had problems, it was often because they copied whole sentences or phrases unaltered from the texts in **Questions 3 and 4**, or because they preferred to give their own (often lengthy) opinions of what they thought the text ought to have said, rather than what it actually did say, or because they wrote general essays in answer to the first task in **Question 5**. Another cause of lost marks this year was a tendency to over-complicate things in an apparent desire to impress linguistically: candidates sometimes passed up the relatively easy marks which could be obtained by straightforward re-wording or re-phrasing in **Questions 3 and 4** in particular, launching themselves instead into convoluted and impressive-sounding but ultimately unintelligible language when a few simple words could have gained them all the marks.

Most candidates managed to attempt all questions, and there were few signs of undue time pressures. That said, **the practice of copying out the question in Questions 3 and 4 as a preamble to the answer is a waste of time for both candidate and marker**, as well as potentially introducing linguistic errors which detract from the overall impression for the quality of language mark. The most pointless and frustrating examples consist of simply copying out the entire question before proceeding to the answer. **It would help both candidates and Examiners if this habit could be discouraged**. There were also significant numbers of other candidates who insisted on trying to incorporate the words of the question as an introduction to every answer. For example, the answer to **Question 3(d)** does not need to start: *Les différences entre passer des heures devant un écran de télévision et passer des heures devant une console vidéo sont que …* The three available marks are scored simply by: *Les joueurs doivent réagir et réfléchir. Les téléspectateurs peuvent rester passifs.*

In **Questions 3 and 4**, copying wholesale from the text remains a common feature amongst some candidates. It is important to remember that simply 'lifting' sections directly from the text, even if they include more or less correct information, does not demonstrate understanding and therefore does not score marks. Candidates must show that they can manipulate the text in some way (even in a minor way) to provide the correct answer. The rubric clearly states that candidates should answer *sans copier mot à mot des phrases entières du texte*. Candidates should try to express the relevant points using different vocabulary or structures. Even quite small changes or extensions to the original can show that candidates are able to handle both the ideas and the language – see specific comments on **Questions 3 and 4** below.

Question 2, on the other hand, is not the time to attempt to find other words for straightforward vocabulary items used in the original sentence. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary for its own sake.

In **Question 1**, candidates appear more aware of need for the words given as the answer to be interchangeable in every respect with the word or words given in the question – i.e. the word or words to be inserted must fit precisely into the 'footprint' of the word or words which they are replacing, but some marks are still lost on this - see **Comments on specific questions** below.

In **Question 5**, candidates should realise the importance of the word limits clearly set out in the r l of 140 words for both sections, 90–100 words for the summary of specific points made in the o and 40–50 words for the response. **Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores n This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on the Sum automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their Personal Response**. A large numbe candidates wrote answers in excess of the word limit, sometimes by a large margin. Too often, goo answers to the Personal Response cannot be awarded any marks since the word limit has been exceeded before it starts.

If, on the other hand, the responses to **Question 5** are significantly below the word limit, the overall quality of language mark is reduced accordingly.

These limits are such that **candidates cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamble**, however polished. It appears that there is an ingrained fear (perhaps from the requirements of other subjects) of not introducing the topic, but it is easy to waste 20% of the available words on this for no reward. The word limit is already quite tight to achieve ten points, and from the very outset, candidates need to make the point as succinctly as possible and move on to the other nine. It is a summary/*résumé* of specific points from the texts that is requested in the first part of **Question 5**, not a general essay (which is quite likely to score no marks).

It is strongly recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used as they go through the exercise and record them accurately at the end of each of the two parts, if only in order to highlight to themselves the need to remain within the limits. For the purpose of counting words in this context, a word is taken to be any unit that is not joined to another in any way: therefore *il y a* is three words, as is *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The performance on this question was uneven. *Avouer* was correctly found by many for **(a)**, although *agir* and *réalisés* were not uncommon offerings. *Avouer* also appeared not infrequently as an answer to **(b)**, which was nevertheless the most successfully handled item here. Most identified *éprouvent* for **(c)** although some lost the mark by writing *éprouver* or *éprouvent-ils*. There were occasional spelling problems with *davantage* in **(d)**, where *mieux* was quite often offered instead. *Tout de même* was offered for **(e)** almost as frequently as the correct answer *totalement*.

Question 2

There were some very good answers to this question from strong candidates, but as usual, the task proved very demanding for candidates with a less-than-secure command of grammatical structures.

Item **2(a)** was not very well done. The use of *ne* was arbitrary, and the tense of *prouver* caused problems. *Personne (n')a prouvée* was frequent, as was the addition of *pas*.

Item **2(b)** was generally well answered, although a minority lost the mark by omitting *dans nos recherches*, or by mangling *découvert* even though it appeared in the original.

Item **2(c)**: The basic transition to the passive was often successfully handled, but a good number lost the mark by failing to provide the agreement in *remplacée*.

Item **2(d)**: The need for the subjunctive was recognised by a lot of candidates, but the correct form of *fassiez* was not always found.

Item **2(e)** proved difficult, partly no doubt because of the number of operations to be performed. It was relatively rare to find *sont obligés de*, and even then there was a tendency to omit the agreement or to provide *dans* or *avec* instead of *par.*

Question 3

Item **3(a)** was well answered by those candidates who recognised the need to re-phrase by using rather than nouns, although *craindre* proved predictably difficult to handle for those who refused the *avoir peur*.

Item **3(b)**: The question asks *que <u>font</u>*, but responses frequently involved the simple 'lifting' of *sens de l'observation attentive* and *temps de réaction réduit*. The who understood the idea behind *multitâches* often managed to transmit it using phrases such as *plusieurs choses/tâches en même temps/à la fois*.

Item **3(c)**: A lot of candidates scored at least two of the three marks on this question, although a surprising number settled for *Ils ont eu des difficultés à trouver des joueurs avec des capacités mentales*. *Anecdote* confused some who tried to include it in their answer without knowing what it meant. *Résolver* and *résoluer* appeared quite frequently.

Item **3(d)**: The majority of candidates successfully made the contrast between active and passive occupations for the first two marks, but were less successful in expressing the idea of *réflexion*, for which *réflecter* sometimes appeared.

Item **3(e)**: This question caused some difficulty for candidates who did not understand what *cinéphiles ou lecteurs passionnés* enjoy doing. Some were more successful in salvaging the third mark on offer here with *divertissement/évasion* etc.

Question 4

Marks on this question were generally slightly lower than on **Question 3**.

Item **4(a)**: The first mark was frequently earned by candidates who were able to make the point about time spent in front of the screen or living in a virtual world, although there was some lifting of *aspirés dans un espace-temps virtuel*. The sense of *coupure* was transmitted more successfully than that of *repli*. Attempts to make the obvious change of *confusion* to a verb sometimes resulted in *confuser*.

Item **4(b)** proved quite challenging. Relatively few candidates understood or expressed the idea of creating games <u>deliberately</u> to cause addiction. Despite what one would have imagined to be easy alternatives - *veut arrêter mais ne peut pas* – many of candidates lost the second and/or third mark by lifting.

Item **4(c)**: The first point was not very well handled, with many not making the link between excess in all three areas and the effect on health. The second and third marks were gained by those candidates who resisted the 'lifts' of *amaigrissement* and *prise de poids*. *Prise des pois* gave an interesting new slant, as did *Si on ne mange pas, on devient auberge*.

Item **4(d)** This question was well done, although some candidates seemed to be under the impression that if they simply preceded the noun with a pronoun they would earn the mark, e.g. *ils abandon de toute vie sociale*.

Item **4(e)** was generally well answered by candidates who avoided lifting *augmentation … addictions* and *diffusion … connexions*.

Question 5

This Question asks the candidates to summarise the main issues of the two passages and then to reflect on them, giving their own views. Being concise is part of the task. See **General Comments** at the start of this report for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction. "*Dans le premier texte on nous raconte les effets positives qui sont présentées par les joueurs de jeux videos qu'on ne trouve pas chez ceux qui ne fait pas de ces jeux*" scores no marks but uses up over 20% of the word allocation.

Candidates were required to summarise '*les bienfaits et les dangers des jeux vidéo tels qu'ils sont présentés dans les deux textes'*. The mark scheme identified 14 rewardable points of which a good number of candidates managed 8, 9 or 10. Of the benefits, the most usually mentioned were improvements in short term memory, hand-eye coordination, the ability to multi-task, powers of observation, problem resolution and quick decision making. Dangers such as cutting yourself off from society and family and damage to health were perhaps the most common, but many included violence and addiction.

Candidates who scored fewest marks of all included those who wrote general essays for which th
evidence in the texts and therefore no mark could be awarded. Others latched onto one or two po
on and simply repeated them in different words.

The personal response gives the candidate the chance to express their feelings on the topic, which some
candidates did with some imagination and originality – assuming they had not exceeded the word limit by this
stage. They were able to give some simple and helpful advice about how to tackle the problem. Most felt
they should get them out of the house, playing sports, meeting other people, going to the cinema, getting the
parents involved.

The quality of language varied from excellent to very poor. The weakest found it difficult to express their
ideas in a comprehensible form, with verbs (even regular ones) as usual being far the most common sources
of error: particularly concerning again was the wide-spread notion that the plural of *il encourage* is *ils
encourages*. There was a tendency to spell words as they sound: *le servo (cerveau); un notre bienfait (un
autre bienfait); saint et sauf; tuent les jours (tous les jours); cestait; ils leurs aient difficile de …* ; and even
éceque sais mauvé? *(est-ce que c'est mauvais ?)* New words were also much in evidence: *interacter,
réacter, relationner.*

That said, the linguistic ability of the majority of candidates certainly enabled them to transmit the required
facts and opinions effectively, whilst the best candidates wrote idiomatic, fluent and accurate French which
was a pleasure to read.

FRENCH

| Paper 8682/31 |
| Essay |

General comments

In this paper candidates were given a choice of 5 questions, one on each of the following topics; *La Famille, L'Ordre public, Le Sport, Le Travail et le chômage* and *L'Innovation technologique.*

The essays were marked out of 40, with a maximum of 24 for language and of 16 for Content. It was felt that the overall standard of performance of candidates was very similar to that of the previous year, both for Language and Content, marks ranging from a relatively small number of single-figure essays to a satisfactory number in the lower to mid thirties.

The Language work of weaker candidates was characterised by persistent errors in verb and tense forms, incorrect use of prepositions, simple sentence patterns with little use of subordinate clauses and a limited range of vocabulary.

The essays of candidates in the middle of the ability range revealed a fair level of grammatical accuracy. Common tenses and regular verbs were mostly correctly formed, though there was some difficulty with irregular verbs. There was more varied vocabulary and a smaller incidence of inaccurate spelling of common words which candidates need to have in their armoury at this level.

Stronger candidates demonstrated a generally sound grasp of grammar and the ability to handle more complex structures. Their essays read easily and displayed a greater breadth and depth of vocabulary.

Content marks were awarded according to the information supplied by candidates, to their focus on the question set and the relevance of their answer. Also important were the organisation and structure of the essay and candidates' development of ideas and their ability to draw conclusions from their argument.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalisation with little specific exemplification. Arguments were often naïve and simplistic. There was a tendency to write loosely on the topic, with little concern for the question set. Paragraphing tended to be weak. There was little build-up of an argument leading to a conclusion.

Essays in the middle of the range displayed more focus on the question set, though the material presented was not consistently relevant. Candidates' work was generally quite well structured, paragraphing was more satisfactory, and arguments more clearly developed. Candidates showed greater ability to draw a conclusion from the material presented.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clearer understanding of the issues involved. Relevance to the specific question was maintained. There was a coherent structure to the answer, with a logical progression of ideas leading to a conclusion or conclusions.

The majority of candidates observed the rubric concerning the number of words to be written and most appear to have had sufficient time to complete the task. The standard of presentation was generally satisfactory, though the handwriting of a number of candidates was almost illegible. Candidates finishing with time to spare would be well advised to carry out a careful and systematic revision of their work in order to eradicate avoidable errors which may well have cost them marks. Aspects of language that should be checked if time allows include adjectival agreements, verb endings and the gender and spelling of common nouns.

Examples of common language errors follow.

Misspellings of common words such as *mariage, progrès, développement, gouvernement, re_____ responsabilité, respect, quelquefois, après, raison, problème, beaucoup, technologie, exemple, il y_____ autorité, chacun, société, professeur, personnel, personnalité.*

Gender of common nouns such as *gouvernement, problème, domaine, crime, type, mesure, façon, développement, acte, téléphone, divorce, exemple, groupe, rôle, manque, chômage, environnement, coopération, innovation, communication.*

Confusion between / misuse of *ces/ses, des/les, parce que/à cause de, puisque/car, notre/nôtre, ce qui/ceux qui, c'est que/ ce que, ou/où, a/à, place/endroit, leur/leurs* (as adjectives or prounouns, as in *...ils leurs parlent*), *bon/bien, mauvais/mal, mieux/meilleur.*

Inclusion of *y* and *en* when not required.

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Constructions, as in *Les enfants sont donnés trop de liberté, Ceci est un exemple de ne repectant pas l' autorité parentale, Des difficultés qu'on fait face à.*

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was the second most popular question, in spite of a number of candidates having difficulty with the phrase *L'évolution de l'institution de la famille,* a fact which considerably restricted the scope of their answer. Such candidates tended to limit their response to a generalised definition of what constitutes a 'traditional' family and to describe its advantages and disadvantages without much analysis. Candidates who had no difficulty with *'évolution'* looked at the increasing rate of divorce and its effect on children, at single-parent families, at the effect on family life of the increasing need, for economic reasons, for both parents to go out to work. Also considered were the increase in cohabitation as opposed to marriage, the increase in the number of teenage mothers, same-sex marriages. The general consensus was that the movement away from the concept of 'traditional' families has considerably more negative than positive consequences.

Question 2

Few candidates opted for this question and answers tended to be ineffectual, with little specific reference to back up what tended to be rather vague generalisations. Consequently, essays lacked structure and argument. This type of question needed exemplification in order for answers to be considered adequate.

Question 3

This was by far the most popular question and attracted candidates from across the ability range. However, a number of answers took the wrong line of reasoning, due to *trop d'importance* being interpreted as *beaucoup d'importance.* Consequently many candidates wrote essays which attempted to explain why sport is so popular, with references to the worldwide popularity of *Association Football*, for example. Others concentrated on the amount of sport on television in order to demonstrate how much importance society attaches to it, in addition to referring to the amount of space given to sport in newspapers. Candidates who understood *trop d'importance* tended to agree with the statement, many arguing that the vast sums of money involved in sport would be better spent on helping the poor and hungry in less fortunate parts of the world. Those who disagreed with the statement tended to do so by referring to the important role played by sport in their own lives rather than to the general attitude of society towards it.

Question 4

This proved to be the third most popular question. Very few disagreed with the statement, most some reference to unemployment figures and examining such effects on the individual of bec unemployed as stress, depression and lack of self-esteem. Reference was also made to the effect unemployment on family life and relationships. Answers tended to be quite heartfelt and passionate.

Question 5

There were too few answers on this question to make comment appropriate.

FRENCH

> **Paper 8682/32**
> **Essay**

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Report on specific questions

Question 1

This was by far the most popular question, and was well answered on the whole. Candidates pointed out that the relationship between a child and its parents is a very special one. Reference was made to the bond between mother and child in the early years. Many candidates then referred to adolescence as the time when the relationship can be severely tested and other relationships, particularly those with friends, come into play. Other key relationships examined were those between a child and its siblings and also with its teacher. The siblings taught the child tolerance, cooperation and the personal negotiation skills that would serve it later in life. The relationship with the teacher encourages respect for authority and provides the opportunity to discover more about the wider world. Some candidates developed this argument to describe the child's relationship with society, learning, for example to become a good citizen.

Question 2

This was not a popular question, and generally was not handled very well. Candidates often merely described examples of police brutality, but failed to reach any conclusions as to how governments or society might be able to make any improvements. Stronger candidates mentioned better and clearer laws governing the behaviour of the police force, with human rights clearly to the fore. Others felt that little could be done in countries where the police back a corrupt government. This was a topic close to the heart of some candidates and it seemed impossible for them to see any real solution.

Question 3

A popular question but was not always well answered. This was a question where the link between sport and religion needed exploring. Candidates often considered the two elements separately and made no clear link between them, thereby not taking into account the idea of sport replacing religion in people's lives. Weak candidates made no reference to religion, simply writing about whether sport is a positive or negative force in society. Answers were often quite simplistic, little more than a description of people watching a football match on a Sunday instead of going to church. A few candidates looked for parallels between sport and religion and wrote about rules and regulations, the notion of fair play and the creation of a community with a shared purpose with a meeting place that is the stadium. Overall, candidates felt that sport is a good thing in that it creates a healthy body and a healthy mind.

Question 4

There were some very good answers to this question which explained clearly the function of work in life. Regardless of ability, candidates understood that work in not merely about money but that it has key roles to play in human life. The importance of keeping occupied, of having an important function in society, of developing a sense of self-worth, of working with others and of creating a team spirit were discussed. Some candidates referred to the sense of despair among the unemployed who feel useless and isolated. Candidates did not discount the fact that money is a key motivator, however, being aware of the fact that people obviously need it in order to survive and to ensure that their families are provided for.

Question 5

This was also a popular question which attracted candidates across the ability range. Weaker candidates tended not to answer the question set but to write a general essay on the topic title, describing the new technologies without providing evidence of negatives and positives. However most candidates discussed the advantages and disadvantages of telecommunications in the modern world, referring to mobile phones and the Internet, and, while seeing the possible downsides, were generally in favour. Many could see that whilst society cannot do without these relatively new technologies, they are not without side-effects both from a health and social point of view. It was widely recognised that addiction is a problem, with many young people, in particular, unable to tear themselves away from Facebook or online games, with consequent effects on their health and sociability.

FRENCH

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A popular question but was not always well answered. This was a question where the link between sport and religion needed exploring. Candidates often considered the two elements separately and made no clear link between them, thereby not taking into account the idea of sport replacing religion in people's lives. Weak candidates made no reference to religion, simply writing about whether sport is a positive or negative force in society. Answers were often quite simplistic, little more than a description of people watching a football match on a Sunday instead of going to church. A few candidates looked for parallels between sport and religion and wrote about rules and regulations, the notion of fair play and the creation of a community with a shared purpose with a meeting place that is the stadium. Overall, candidates felt that sport is a good thing in that it creates a healthy body and a healthy mind.

Question 4

There were some very good answers to this question which explained clearly the function of work in life. Regardless of ability, candidates understood that work in not merely about money but that it has key roles to play in human life. The importance of keeping occupied, of having an important function in society, of developing a sense of self-worth, of working with others and of creating a team spirit were discussed. Some candidates referred to the sense of despair among the unemployed who feel useless and isolated. Candidates did not discount the fact that money is a key motivator, however, being aware of the fact that people obviously need it in order to survive and to ensure that their families are provided for.

Question 5

This was also a popular question which attracted candidates across the ability range. Weaker candidates tended not to answer the question set but to write a general essay on the topic title, describing the new technologies without providing evidence of negatives and positives. However most candidates discussed the advantages and disadvantages of telecommunications in the modern world, referring to mobile phones and the Internet, and, while seeing the possible downsides, were generally in favour. Many could see that whilst society cannot do without these relatively new technologies, they are not without side-effects both from a health and social point of view. It was widely recognised that addiction is a problem, with many young people, in particular, unable to tear themselves away from Facebook or online games, with consequent effects on their health and sociability.