FRENCH LANGUAGE AND FRENCH

Paper 8682/01
Speaking

General comments

This year, Moderators have once again listened to candidates from all corners of the globe, talking on a very broad range of topics, and expressing a fascinating variety of ideas and opinions.

Paperwork has generally been clear, with only a very few clerical errors, but some Centres need to be aware that they should enter a mark in each column of the Working Mark Sheet, rather than just a global total per section: each column corresponds to one of the criteria set out in the mark scheme, and Moderators are better able to offer advice on marking pitch when it is possible to see exactly how marks have been awarded.

The Examiner's name should also appear on the bottom of the Working Mark Sheet.

When a Centre has candidates at both A and AS Levels, each syllabus should be recorded on separate cassettes. This session, there were only a very small minority of tapes which were not clearly audible, but Examiners need to ensure that, in fairness to candidates, the cassettes they submit are as clear as possible, and that they are correctly labelled both audibly and visibly with all the necessary details: syllabus, Centre, candidate names and numbers. Since each examination is expected to last approximately 20 minutes, it is also important that, when recording on a 90 minute cassette, a maximum of two candidates per side should be recorded, and when using a 60 minute cassette, only one candidate per side. When a cassette has to be turned in the middle of an examination, it is disruptive to the candidate, and parts of the examination are inevitably lost. Once an examination has begun, the recording should continue without interruption, it should not be paused or stopped between the various sections of the examination.

Before starting an examination, both candidates and Examiners should be familiar with the format and timings of the examination:

> 3 to 3½ minutes for the Presentation (on a topic chosen and prepared beforehand by the candidate with clear reference to francophone culture or society);
> 7 to 8 minutes of conversation about that topic;
> 8 to 9 minutes of General Conversation (covering topic areas different from the one chosen for the Presentation).

Examiners need to have given close attention to the mark scheme so that they can ensure that their questions allow candidates the best opportunities; they must also be prepared to prompt candidates to ask questions in both conversation sections. In each conversation section, 5 marks are available for Seeking Information and Opinions – that is, asking questions of the Examiner – and to score high marks, candidates need to show that they are able to ask questions on the topics being discussed, using a variety of question forms. *Que pensez-vous, Monsieur/Madame?* is a perfectly adequate question, but should not score highly if this is the only form the candidate is able to use with any confidence! There is no penalty attached to questions asked as a result of prompting by the Examiner – some candidates are shyer than others and find it difficult to interrupt an Examiner and choose a suitable moment to ask a question, so this is merely intended as a technique to ensure that all candidates are given the opportunity to put their questions.

There is sometimes a problem with over-rehearsal for oral examinations – when candidates have practised endlessly, and even more so when they have done this with their teachers, there are no unexpected questions, and examinations lack any spontaneity or natural sounding conversation. In Centres where there are a number of candidates, for example, candidates should not all be asked the same questions in the same order, just because these are the topics which have been covered during the course. Examiners should try to aim for a genuine conversation, developing responses and reacting to what the candidate says, rather than being satisfied with a practised series of questions and answers.

Presentation

This year there seemed to be fewer ecological topics than in some previous years, though there were the usual themes of Pollution and Nuclear Energy. The vast majority of candidates opted for socio-cultural themes, covering *Famille, Mariage, Divorce, Polygamie, les Femmes, les Jeunes, Autorité parentale*, traditional themes such as *Sport*, (with or without the addition of *le dopage), Santé, Chômage, Tabagisme, SIDA, Laïcité, Education, la Drogue/l'Alcool, les Médias,* and there were also more cultural offerings on *Berlioz, le Cinéma, l'Impressionisme, Influence des magazines* etc.

These topics all had in common a wide range of material available to candidates, allowing them to research and select aspects of particular interest to them. When choosing a topic, a candidate should ask him/herself whether they can think of 10 questions which could be asked about their topic - and these should not be merely questions asking for factual details, but requiring the expression of ideas and opinions. The majority of candidates had remembered that their chosen topic should make reference to the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a country where French is spoken, but there were still a number of candidates who seemed not to be aware of this, and consequently their mark for content/presentation was halved – and a little more reference is needed than merely *ici, comme en France…* Topics can be of burning importance to a candidate, but if the entire presentation is related only to particular circumstances in a candidate's own country, the requirements of the examination are not being fulfilled.

The Presentation should last between 3 and 3½ minutes, and the Examiner should not interrupt unless the candidate clearly needs some help/prompting. Candidates would be well advised <u>not</u> to ask questions of the Examiner during this time, as Examiners are instructed to begin asking questions after about 3½ minutes, and by asking questions then, the candidate is restricting the time he/she has left – and there are no criteria for the assessment of questions during the Presentation.

It is natural that candidates will want to practise for their oral, but there are dangers in over-rehearsal – pronunciation and intonation often suffer from the attempt to fit as much as possible into the time allowed, and from terror of forgetting what was supposed to come next – though candidates may bring a cue card into the examination with them, to remind them of the structure of their presentation.

Topic Conversation

This is the opportunity for candidates to show that they can develop their chosen topic, and the Examiner's questions should try to allow them to do this – questions should not just ask candidates to restate what they said originally, but should look for additional information, reasons and opinions, as appropriate. Examiners may not always agree with the opinions expressed by candidates, but candidates should be given the opportunity to express them, and even defend their own point of view – exchange of views is, after all, an important element of conversation. When candidates ask questions of the Examiner, whether spontaneously or prompted, it is expected that they will be on the topics under discussion, rather than at random, but Examiners may need to restrict their own responses to questions asked of them - they need to bear in mind that they should be trying to draw the candidate out, rather than answering questions at any great length. Here, as in the general conversation, where candidates do not ask <u>any</u> questions, a <u>zero</u> should be recorded in the final column of that section of the Working Mark Sheet – marks cannot be awarded for questions which have not been asked!

General Conversation

It is helpful to both candidates and Moderators if the Examiner signals that he/she is moving from the Topic Conversation to the General Conversation, and this section should deal with different themes from those of the first part of the examination – candidates should be able to show that they can use a range of vocabulary. Conversation may begin with everyday matters of the candidate's life, but at this level, it should move quickly on to matters of more concern to society, world problems – it would not be appropriate, for example, to spend too long discussing where the candidate last went on holiday, how they travelled, where they're intending to go this year – but it would be entirely appropriate to ask them to compare the life style in a country they've visited with that in their own, or the educational systems in both. Questions should try to extend the candidate as far as possible, and introduce and allow opportunities for discussion. A candidate who cannot sustain any sort of conversation at this level cannot be awarded high marks. In Centres where there are a number of candidates, Examiners will need to vary the topics they choose for general conversation, so that not all candidates are asked the same questions – topics will obviously vary, according to the interests of candidates. Candidates will usually find it more difficult to ask questions in this section, but they should be encouraged to do so and given time to formulate questions on the topics under discussion.

Assessment overall has been remarkably consistent, and though adjustments have been m
have clearly made every effort to observe a rank order – once again, for approximately a third
entered, no adjustment to marks was recommended.

Examiners and candidates alike are to be congratulated on their efforts to deal with the requirements of
examination, and the interesting conversations which ensue, which provide a great deal of enjoyment to
Moderators!

FRENCH

Paper 8682/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

This year's paper proved accessible to the vast majority of candidates, the most able of whom scored very well indeed, and there were few examples of candidates who appeared totally defeated by the texts, even if there was plenty of variation in the level of success with which candidates responded to them.

This accessibility was no doubt due in part at least to the fact that the ideas contained in the two texts were generally ones which were familiar and relevant to candidates. In other words, the candidates had few difficulties with the concepts involved. At the same time, this familiarity brought dangers, in that rather than confining themselves to what the text actually said, it was not uncommon for candidates to focus on what they thought the text ought to say, or to introduce facts for which there was no evidence in the text. In some cases, this resulted in answers which, although sometimes informative and interesting, sadly earned no marks. Apart from in the Personal Response (Item 5 b), it is important that candidates confine themselves to the evidence of the texts, unless specifically invited to do otherwise.

Nearly all candidates completed all sections of the paper (apart from the occasional comprehension question omitted through inadvertence) and there were few signs of candidates having been under undue pressure of time.

Even so, many of the weaker candidates wrote considerably more than was needed. The stronger candidates tended to make the necessary point(s) succinctly and move on. The weaker ones indulged in a good deal of unnecessary repetition and wandering from the point. The practice of copying out the question in **Questions 3** and **4** or of reworking it as a preamble to the answer is a waste of time, as well as potentially introducing linguistic errors which do nothing to enhance the overall impression for the quality of language mark. For example, the answer to **Question 4(a):** *Comment expliquer, selon le premier paragraphe, la popularité des fast-foods et des plats déjà préparés ?* does not need to begin *: Ce qui explique, selon le premier paragraphe, la popularité des fast-foods et des plats préparés c'est qu'ils sont délicieux.* The full mark for that element of the answer is scored perfectly satisfactorily by *Ils sont délicieux* on its own.

In **Question 1**, the word or words given as the answer must be interchangeable in all respects 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. See **Comments on specific questions** below for an example.

In **Question 2**, the re-working of the sentence must begin with the words specified in the brackets. This question is a test of grammatical manipulation, not of an ability to find alternative vocabulary.

In **Questions 3** and **4**, it was encouraging to detect a slightly lower level of wholesale copying or 'lifting' from the text than sometimes in the past. The rubric quite clearly states that candidates should answer *sans copier mot à mot des phrases entières du texte.* They may use material from the passage but they must use it in such a way as to demonstrate understanding. Copying sentences or whole phrases verbatim from the text (or indeed the question) in the hope that they contain the answer does not demonstrate understanding and is therefore not rewarded. Candidates should try to express relevant ideas 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. Candidates are advised to look at the number of points awarded for each question (indicated in brackets) as a clue to what may be required in terms of answers.

In **Question 5**, it was pleasing to note fewer candidates this session who exceeded the word limits set out in the rubric: a total of 140 words for both Sections (90-100 words for the summary of specific points made in the texts and 40-50 for the response). Material beyond 150 words overall is ignored and scores no marks. This means that those candidates who use up the entire allocation of words on Part **(a)** automatically receive none of the 5 marks available for their personal response.

These limits are such that candidates simply cannot afford the luxury of an introductory preamb… é *est devenue un danger pour le monde entier; cela a fait beaucoup de tort et a pris beaucoup de … plusieurs facteurs qui encouragent la prise de poids chez les gens. »* Even relatively modest examp… as these (some were significantly longer) mean that the candidate has used a quarter of the 140 … without scoring anything. It is a summary/*résumé* of specific points drawn from the texts that is requested … **Question 5** Part **(a)**, not a general essay.

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, 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?* It is also helpful if candidates make a clear distinction between Parts (a) and (b) in setting out their answers.

A number of candidates used bullet points to illustrate the points that they were making for content. Though content marks may be awarded for this, the language mark may be reduced if no verbs are used to express the ideas and the answer consequently lacks fluency.

The same 5-point language grid is used for assessing quality of language in each of **Questions 3, 4** and **5**:

5 Very good

Consistently accurate. Only a few errors of minor significance. Accurate use of more complex structures (verb forms, tenses, prepositions, word order).

4 Good

Higher incidence of error than above, but clearly has a sound grasp of the grammatical elements in spite of lapses. Some capacity to use accurately more complex structures.

3 Sound

Fair level of accuracy. Common tenses and regular verbs mostly correctly formed. Some problems in forming correct agreement of adjectives. Difficulty with irregular verbs, use of prepositions.

2 Below average

Persistent errors in tense and verb forms. Prepositions often incorrect. Recurrent errors in agreement of adjectives.

0–1 Poor

Little or no evidence of grammatical awareness. Most constructions incomplete or incorrect. Consistent and repeated error.

If any of the individual **Questions (a)** to **(f)** in **Questions 3** and **4** score 0 for content, or if the responses to **Question 5** are too short, the overall quality of language mark is adjusted accordingly.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was generally answered well, except for (a) where *capacité de concentration* was frequently offered. Nearly all candidates identified *baisse* for *diminution* in (e). *Sommeil* was often offered for *jeûne* (d), but *moeurs* (b) and *grignoter* (c) were usually correctly identified, even though some candidates invalidated their answer to (c) by adding superfluous words (e.g. *n'importe quoi à toute heure*) - see **General comments** above. Minor copying errors were tolerated, except where this produced a different meaning – e.g. *jeune* for *jeûne* in (d).

Question 2

There were some very good answers to this question from the strongest candidates, but as usual proved very demanding for candidates with a less than secure command of grammatical structures. uncomfortably common for candidates to score 0 or 1 out of 5. Minor spelling mistakes were not penali but grammatical mistakes were. Candidates should not change the vocabulary in the sentence for its ow sake, but merely re-arrange the words and make any changes to the grammar required by the new start to the sentence given – see **General comments** above.

In item 2(a) the expression *beaucoup de* proved too much for a very large number of candidates, with *beaucoup des* being produced surprisingly often. Those who chose to use the *passé composé* sometimes had problems in doing so: b*eaucoup de médecins ont tirer/tirés*…

In item 2(b) relatively few handled the transition from '*simples à respecter'* to *'il est simple de respecter'* successfully.

Item 2(c) was by far the best handled of the five items.

In item 2(d) the need for the subjunctive (after *Il est impératif que*….) was missed by weaker candidates, and some of those who did spot it spoiled things by the tautology of reintroducing *devoir* later in the sentence.

In item 2(e) the passive defeated the large number candidates who offered *sa concentration sera perturber/perturbé/pertubéré* or *se perturbera par.*

Question 3

This set of questions produced some good answers from a large number of candidates, and some correspondingly high scores.

Item 3(a) was generally well answered, although some missed the point about growth.

Item 3(b) was generally handled well, although some failed to need to indicate physical labour and others simply lifted *ils dépensaient beaucoup d'énergie.*

Item 3(c) produced a large number of good scores, even if this was a question on which some candidates wandered a long way from the reasons given in the text and produced their own theories. The unnecessary 'lift' of *Les enfants sont toujours véhiculés* scored nothing, as did *Les élèves pensent que le sport est à peine (*presumably *'*candidates think sport is a pain'*)* and *L'activité physique aide à éviter la grossesse.*

Item 3(d) was well understood but saw a high level of lifting of phrases (*tout ce qu'il faut pour apaiser la soif; ne font que l'accentuer*) which should not have been too difficult to express slightly differently.

In item 3(e) most candidates identified the need for breakfast to recharge the batteries and maintain the glucose level, but far fewer saw its importance in a balanced diet.

Item 3(f) was well handled, although lifting was quite common.

Question 4

Most candidates found **Question 4** significantly more difficult than **Question 3**. Weaker candidates tended to try to include as much material from the text as possible in their answers in the hope of including some of the correct information somewhere in the process.

In item 4(a) most candidates pointed out that fast-foods are quick and easy, but fewer mentioned that they are tasty and readily available

In item 4(b) most candidates understood that the advertisements were specifically targeted towards children, but the fact that they made dubious claims escaped many. The appearance of the phrase *poussent comme des champignons* led some to suggest that hiring '*des champions'* to endorse the product led to better sales; others recommended mushrooms as a side-order to balance the meal.

In item 4(c) some thought it was the *sucreries* which kept the children occupied rather than the [illegible] were many very successful re-workings of *scotchés* and *devient leur baby-sitter.*

In item 4(d) a good number of candidates failed to score by resorting to copying the words of the qu[illegible] (*bon pour la bouche* etc.) which should not have been difficult to express in other terms.

In item 4(e) most candidates managed to identify two of the ways in which the chains claimed they had already responded, but many incorrectly misunderstood the tense and introduced the idea of salads here rather than in item 4(f).

Item 4(f) produced the highest level of lifting of all (*attributer de vertus nutritionnelles à des produits qui n'en ont pas)*.

Question 5

This question asks the candidates to summarise the main issues of the two texts in Part **(a)** and then to reflect on them in Part **(b)** giving their own views. Being concise is part of the task. See **General Comments** above for the need for candidates to embark directly on identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction.

Candidates were required to summarise *'les causes de l'épidémie d'obésité'*. Although the was a relative scarcity of candidates who managed to score the maximum ten marks for identifying ten of the fifteen available points, most managed to identify and list quite a high proportion. A number invented causes of their own for which there was no evidence in the text and thus no mark.

The personal response gives candidates the chance to express their own ideas on the topic, which they generally did competently, sometimes with some imagination and originality – assuming they had not already exceeded the word limit by this stage.

The quality of language over the paper as a whole varied considerably: a small number found it difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form, but the best candidates wrote with impressive fluency and accuracy, making their points in correct, idiomatic French which was a pleasure to read. Verb endings were, however, common sources of error, in particular the confusion of infinitives with past participles, and there were problems with the third person plural, where the idea that the plural of '*il mange*' is '*ils manges*' was disturbingly common, as was *faisent* instead of *font*.

The difference between *qui* and *ce qui* (or indeed *ceux qui*) appeared unknown to many (*Les enfants mangent beaucoup qui mène à la surconsommation*), and there was a very common omission of *ne* in forming negatives, which in some cases led to sentences meaning the opposite of what was intended: *Après huit heures de jeûne on a plus d'énergie.* There was a very prevalent tendency to confuse homophones: *ces/c'est/ses; et/est; ce/se; on/ont; sa/ça; son/sont; sain/sein/saint; pois/poids; comme si/comme-ci.*

FRENCH

Paper 8682/03
Essay

General comments

Candidates were offered a choice of 5 titles, one for each of the 5 prescribed topic areas, and essays were assessed for both language and content, a maximum of 24 marks being available for language and 16 for content.

In the best scripts, candidates wrote articulately and cogently on their chosen title, demonstrating a broad lexical range and sophistication of syntax. They addressed the full implications of the title's wording and supported their arguments with pertinent illustrative reference. The weaker scripts betrayed a tendency to fall back on pre-prepared introductory material which very often consisted simply of pat definitions of the topic area terminology and which had no relevance to the title set. The very weakest failed to progress much further than this, neglecting the specifics of the title and disregarding the need to provide a structured argument and a conclusion.

Common linguistic errors included:

- a repeated failure in a large number of scripts to ensure correct agreements in gender and number, especially the latter
- the omission of *ne* in negative verb forms
- a failure to link subordinate clauses with the appropriate conjunction or relative
- a very common neglect of pronominal substitution, making for very laboured French in which the same nouns recurred many times in close proximity
- imprecise use of subject pronouns – *ils, ceci, cela* – when it was not at all clear what they referred to
- indiscriminate use of the demonstrative adjectives *ce, cette* and *ces* in cases where the noun qualified had not previously been referred to
- confusion between reflexive and non-reflexive verb forms, e.g. *s'augmenter, se diminuer, assurer que*
- the inability to provide correct tense sequences in sentences introduced by *si*
- gender errors incurred in the use of common nouns such as *manque, principe, acte, façon, problème*
- concordances with adjectives ending *–al,* e.g. *un des buts principales, associations environnementaux, d'aides internationaux*
- the presence, usually in weaker scripts, of a number of mangled forms of the sort *dortolé, amérioler, leur inculper des valeurs*
- the redundant use of *y* and *en* as in *il s'en sert de son ordinateur, les choses dont il en a besoin*
- erroneous comparative and superlative forms, e.g. *plus pire, plus meilleur*
- basic errors in past participle agreement, e.g. *ils ont remplacés*

Question 1

Perhaps not surprisingly, this was by far the most popular question. The best scripts pinpointed those social problems directly linked to family and upbringing, and were convincingly illustrated, occasionally with impressive literary references. The weakest failed to supply any cogent link, relying largely on jargon-laden expositions of family types and wild generalisations on moral decline. More balanced assessments often took as their starting point the vital social role played by parents over the centuries in ensuring that that their children grow up in a disciplined environment, pointing out that this role is even more vital in a society where there are so many pitfalls awaiting those young people who stray from the straight and narrow. Many highlighted the problem of maintaining parental authority when both parents have to go out to work to support their family since, when children are left to discover their own values rather than have them handed down by the traditional figures of authority, the danger is that they will fall prey to undesirable influences and thereby be led into areas that fall under the broad heading of juvenile delinquency. An allied problem is the need for parents to exercise their authority by keeping very close tabs on the sort of friends their children frequent and the sort of activities they become involved in. The category of parents who, for want of time or

for any other reason, completely abandon any attempt to discipline their children and who give them too much pocket money by way of compensation for neglecting their parental role, was frequently pointed out. Balanced essays often pointed out that ensuring that a child does not fall prey to one or more of the ills that beset contemporary society is not just a question of parental authority but also of providing a loving, caring atmosphere for him or her to grow up in: a child brought up in such a home will turn naturally to parents for guidance and advice, and the need for parents to assert themselves as disciplinarians will be correspondingly less. Many also made the point that in homes where parents are excessively authoritarian, the effect is often the opposite of that intended since many children rebel and/or develop psychological problems, the result quite often being that they develop patterns of behaviour that are, at best, socially irresponsible and, at worst, criminal. Better essays also suggested that the responsibility for the many problems undermining the fabric of society should be put down not only to poor standards of discipline in the home but also to schools for allowing standards of discipline in the classroom to decline and neglecting to update their educational and pastoral provision to take account of the sort of society in which we live. Governmental agencies were also criticised for their shortcomings in getting the appropriate messages across to young people as were deficiencies in the law which mean that current legislation is ill conceived to tackle the sort of social problems that prevail. Not least, rampant materialism encouraged by an affluent society was also targeted as a major factor in the rising crime rate among young people. Finally, and regrettably, it has to be said that a significant amount of the work submitted contained very few or none of the points mentioned since the candidates in question paid no heed to the second part of the title and interpreted the first part as an invitation to deliver their *passe-partout* piece on the generation gap which occasionally made some reference to the issue of parental authority but made no attempt to link it with the problems afflicting society.

Question 2

Relatively few candidates attempted this question. Of those who did, the best ones analysed the issue of likely quality of life and the question of social burden. In discussing the latter, essays focused not least on the burden for the family of having to look after a number of very elderly people, sometimes highlighting the likely detrimental psychological implications both for those needing to be cared for and those faced with the task of caring. Discussion of the extra strain placed on society took into account a number of factors including the obvious financial burden of having to provide pensions for so much longer, the need to provide extra housing and very substantial extra medical care and also the implications for fast dwindling natural resources. Another line of enquiry pursued by a number of candidates was the problem of the divisions that would be created in society on the assumption that only the rich would be able to afford the treatments necessary to prolong their lives for such a long time. Unfortunately, at the other end of the spectrum, quite a significant proportion of candidates who opted for this question concentrated exclusively on current health and lifestyle issues, often giving protracted and detailed, but alas, quite irrelevant advice on eating habits and exercise: the examiners were left wondering whether candidates had failed to understand the phrase *perspective effrayante* or whether they had ignored it because it did not square with the material they had prepared.

Question 3

The second most popular question, this title tended to generate very bland answers, conclusions often being of the “both confirm and deny” variety. Some of the best scripts focused on “computer as enemy” and provided some convincing illustrative support though, oddly perhaps in this day and age, very few broached the issue of privacy and human rights. Points that were common currency included loss of jobs and the sometimes devastating consequences for families, psychological problems – stress, frustration, lack of job satisfaction etc. – consequent upon computerisation, and medical problems occasioned by sitting at a computer all day long week in week out. While some highlighted the dangers of a machine whose manifold temptations (chat rooms, computer games, pornography etc.) lead employees to neglect their work and thereby put their livelihood in jeopardy, others saw the computer as encouraging malpractice in the workplace, sometimes citing specific examples of industrial espionage and of companies hacking into competitors’ databases in order to steal vital information. Quite a lot alighted on computer breakdowns and the consequent loss of productivity and profits and thereby, in some cases, of jobs, while another point that recurred was the way in which the computer gives rise to discrimination in the workplace, better paid jobs and better chances of promotion being the prerogative of the computer literate employees. In discussing “computer as friend”, candidates mentioned the greater efficiency and accuracy that computers ensure, the way in which they eliminate repetitive tasks, thereby making work more bearable, not to say enjoyable, their use as a valuable tool for communication with colleagues who are a vital part of the team in which we work, and also the fact that they enable people to work from home at times that best suit them, rather than having to make the journey to and from work during the rush hour. The computer was also seen as a valuable research tool in certain professions, as a valuable tool in helping to find a job and, not least, as an invaluable

saver of lives both in the medical profession and in domains where computerised robots do da[illegible] which could result in loss of life if performed by humans. Many candidates pointed out that comp[illegible] has meant the creation of a whole range of new jobs ranging from technicians to computer programm[illegible] that the labour market in under-developed countries in particular has benefited since, thanks to comp[illegible] firms can now employ people in places where labour is much cheaper. Though it was not necessary to [illegible] so to score a high mark, better essays took due note of the superlative in the title and considered what other *enemies* lurk in the workplace: among those cited were bullying whether by colleagues or by management, poor pay and having to work unreasonable hours, jobs involving danger to human life, work of a repetitive nature and the consequent boredom and lack of job satisfaction and, not least, stress and all its concomitants. Some even went as far as to suggest that in the matter of employment, as indeed elsewhere, human beings are often their own worst enemy, mentioning as evidence laziness and the unwillingness to take on jobs of a menial nature because they confer no social status. As in the case of the other titles set, at the other end of the scale, a certain proportion of candidates paid scant heed to the specifics of the title and wasted a lot of time discussing the virtues of the computer in areas which had nothing to do with the world of work.

Question 4

For whatever reason, this title, though not widely taken up, tended to appeal to better candidates. Just occasionally it was chosen by less good candidates who got sidetracked into the question of war *per se,* resulting in a confusion of the two and, in a number of cases, in essays that were more or less completely irrelevant. Relatively few of the scripts submitted were impaired by long-winded introductions. Most frequently, a concise definition of terrorism led into some very cogently argued discussions with specific reference and illustration from current world events. Conclusions often showed insight and deep understanding of the complexity of the problems involved and of the difficulty in arriving at any silver bullet solutions. Perhaps not surprisingly, many candidates focused on the USA and on George W. Bush's foreign policy which was widely seen as fanning the flames of terrorism rather than as making any positive contribution to combating terrorism. It was pointed out that when it is a question of warring nations, it is possible to bring them to the negotiating table but that in the case of terrorism, that is not possible, for the simple reason that there are so many splinter groups often spread over many different countries and whose leaders are frequently not readily identifiable. Moreover, the fact that terrorists quite often enjoy the covert support of certain governments who provide them with arms and money makes the problem even more difficult to solve. The very nature of fanaticism also came under the spotlight: by definition, fanatics will not listen to reason and as long as they are prepared to lay down their life for their cause, terrorism will flourish. Notwithstanding, cooperation and exchange of information between international bodies, such as the CIA, Interpol and Scotland Yard, active in the domain of counter-terrorism have borne fruit and certainly contributed to making the world a safer place. Moreover, despite the failings of the foreign policy of the current American administration, it was generally acknowledged that the efforts of governments have made considerable inroads in dismantling terrorist organisations such as Al Quaeda and hotbeds of terrorism such as Afghanistan. Better candidates also sometimes considered the phenomenon of state terrorism, usually taking the line that the only possible hope of reaching any sort of solution is international pressure. The example of Burma was cited in several essays and the point made that, though there is still a very long way to go, pressure exerted by the international community has already had some effect, the proof being that that the junta has recently opened dialogue with the icon of popular resistance, Suu Kyi.

Question 5

This proved to be the least popular of the titles set. Of those who did choose it, far too many became bogged down in doom-laden descriptions of ecological disasters and often completely lost sight of the specifics of the title that directed them towards the issue of moral responsibility. Others only considered the question of moral responsibility in the final paragraph where they tended to put forward just one point: some argued that that it is morally irresponsible to let human beings and/or animals and plant life die because of the effects of pollution and climate change, while others took the line that the planet is clearly dying and that it is man's moral responsibility, not least to future generations, not to let this happen. Good scripts which did clinically investigate moral responsibilities and priorities were few and far between: causes that were singled out as more meritorious from a moral point of view than environmental conservation included the eradication of poverty and disease in Third World countries, the battle against Aids and the fight against crime and drug addiction.