

FRENCH

Paper 0685/01

Listening

Key messages

- Performance on this Listening paper was of a very similar standard to that seen in 2011. Candidates showed very good levels of both specific and general understanding.
- Most candidates were aware of the need to write clearly in blue or black ink and not to write answers first in pencil and then overwrite in pen. Centres should remind candidates to write clearly and to cross out any material which they do not wish the Examiner to consider.
- Candidates need to have the opportunity to attempt past papers before they take the Listening examination so that they are familiar with the rubric requirements and structure of the paper.
- Answers are marked on the basis of whether they communicate the message. Inaccuracies in the use of French are only taken into account if the message becomes ambiguous.
- Most candidates understood the need to keep answers brief. New Centres should note that full sentences are not required. Long answers often include detail which is extra to the requirements of a question. Such extra detail may invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

General comments

As in previous years, a very full range of performance was seen on the Listening paper. Candidates had generally been well prepared and in all but a few Centres were familiar with the structure of the examination and the required response types in all three sections. The exercises discriminated appropriately and candidates found the topic areas tested to be accessible and within their cultural experience.

Candidates were instructed to attempt all three sections of the test and nearly all candidates managed to attempt at least some questions in the final and most demanding exercise. The French extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and density and featured both monologues and conversations. The emphasis of the questions moved from targeting candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual pieces, to testing their ability to understand specific factual information, as well as opinions and explanations, in longer narrated accounts and conversations.

Most Centres were clearly aware that brief answers are acceptable on this paper. New Centres should note that where questions require written responses in French, these responses do not need to be written in the form of full sentences. Questions are set in such a way as to make brief answers possible. The Listening paper aims to test comprehension and, therefore, inaccuracies in written French (e.g. incorrect spellings, verb endings) are tolerated provided the message is clear. If answers sound and read like French, they will be accepted provided that their message is unambiguous. However, where candidates add extra information which distorts an otherwise valid answer, invalidates it or places the Examiner in the position of having to pick out the correct answer from amongst the information given, the mark cannot be awarded. So, for example, if a candidate offers two elements or details of which one only is correct, the mark cannot be awarded, as the Examiner is being required to make the choice which should have been made by the candidate. Centres should remind candidates to use the pauses on the recordings to read the questions carefully and not to add extra details to answers which might distort an otherwise correct response. Any material which candidates do not wish the Examiner to consider should be clearly crossed out.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-8

This first exercise tested the understanding of eight short conversations/monologues through multiple choice questions with visual options. Candidates did well on this opening exercise, particularly so on the first three questions. The extracts were straightforward and short and the multiple choice questions required candidates to identify specific vocabulary items relating to topics such as food, leisure activities, places and transport. Visuals were well understood by candidates. The question least well done was **Question 5** which tested simple household vocabulary and relevant prepositions. On **Question 8**, *jeux électroniques* was not always well known.

Exercise 2 Questions 9-16

Candidates heard a longer extract which advertised a cookery course in a holiday centre in Sète. Questions required the identification of key vocabulary such as dates, tourist activities and leisure interests. On **Question 9**, some found it difficult to write *treize*. Answers such as *tres* were not accepted. **Questions 10-12** were well attempted but some found the identification of *promenade en bateau* and *port* difficult on **Question 13**. Likewise *terrain de sport* on **Question 15** was not always well known.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 17

Candidates heard four young people talking about the role of sport in their lives. Questions tested specific facts and some opinions. Candidates clearly felt at ease with this topic area and good numbers did well on this exercise: a full range of marks was seen but most scored at least four or five. The most common incorrect answer was when candidates selected option **j** instead of option **i**.

Over the years, performance on this exercise has improved as candidates have become more accustomed to the requirements. Examiners did however report that there are still a few cases of candidates ticking too few or too many boxes. Candidates should be reminded to tick the number of boxes indicated (six) and to use a consistent method to indicate their answers: ticks **or** crosses are both acceptable, but are likely to cause confusion when used together.

Exercise 2 Questions 18-22

In the first part of this exercise, candidates heard a short interview with Adrien about his life in *Guyane*. The extract heard was longer than what was heard for previous exercises and this exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the examination. Candidates were required to correct an incorrect detail in each of five statements by supplying the correct word(s), a question type with which they are familiar. The questions tested lexically frequent vocabulary (all to be found in the Minimum Core Vocabulary) that would be met by candidates at an early stage of their learning. Some questions were answered by most with ease such as **Question 18**. **Question 19**, however, was found to be difficult by many. The answer *pharmacie / pharmaciens* was frequently offered instead of the correct, *agriculteurs* or *fermiers*. This was perhaps due to them hearing *pour acheter une ferme ici* which occurred shortly after the vital information *ils sont tous agriculteurs*. On **Question 20**, candidates sometimes ran together the words *trop* and *chère*. This did not score the mark. **Question 21** was answered well and nearly all candidates did well on **Question 22**, offering acceptable spellings of *famille* or *cousins* to gain the mark.

Exercise 2 Questions 23-27

In the second part of this exercise, candidates heard another interview, this time with Ivo who also talked about his life in *Guyane*. Candidates were required to give short answers in French. Questions could be answered with as little as one or two words in French provided that the correct message was conveyed. On **Question 23**, the word *informaticien* was not well known. The word *informatique* was also acceptable as an answer. Instead, many candidates said where Ivo's father worked or that he was a *pharmacien*. **Question 24** was done a little better and correct answers stated that Ivo hated/did not like outdoor activities. On **Question 25**, many were successful in giving an acceptable spelling of *guitare* and a good number also could give *États-Unis* on **Question 26**. The last question proved to be more difficult. Candidates often rendered *gens* as *jeunes*, which invalidated their answer. Others sometimes did not see that it was not just

the people but the **variety** of people which Ivo appreciated. Both concepts needed to be the mark.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 28-33

Candidates heard an interview with Chloë, who talked about how her use of a social networking site had affected the friendships she made before and during her holiday. The question type used was multiple choice with written options. The extract heard was longer than in the previous sections and questions tested candidates' ability to follow the gist of what they heard as well as identify specific factual information. Some questions required candidates to identify attitudes and emotions. A good number of candidates answered the first three questions correctly. Most understood that Chloë had been due to go on holiday with her parents (**Question 31**) and also answered **Question 32** quite well. On the last question, **Question 33**, many incorrectly identified Chloë's holidays as having been *tristes* rather than *réussies*. The word *tristes* did appear on the recording, and it seems likely that weaker candidates made their choice too quickly, rather than listening to the whole of Chloë's statement. On this exercise, candidates should be encouraged not to choose their answer too quickly and instead to listen carefully for all the relevant detail they need to answer correctly. Candidates also need to be reminded to make good use of the reading time on this exercise so as to be able to pinpoint more precisely the information for which they are listening.

Exercise 2 Questions 34-42

Candidates heard an interview with Danielle who talked about her life in a province of Canada. As intended, candidates found this final exercise to be the most challenging on the question paper. Generally, many candidates made commendable attempts to answer at least some of the questions and, on the last three questions, which were perhaps the hardest on the question paper, there were many good answers given by the most able candidates. As such, this was an appropriate and suitably demanding final exercise.

On this exercise, candidates are required to provide short responses in French. The best answers were clear and brief. Candidates should be reminded that they are not expected to write their answers in full sentences and that this exercise will always include questions that can be answered with one or two words or a short phrase. The essential requirement is that the candidate's answer conveys a clear message and that in trying to give one word in French, the candidate does not give another which has a different meaning. It is also worth stressing to candidates that the longer the response, the greater the risk that it will include incorrect material which may invalidate other material which would be rewarded.

Many made a good attempt at **Question 34**. Some heard that Danielle was a teacher and had perhaps not realised the importance of the word *premier* on **Question 35**. Consequently, they offered *professeur* instead of *traductrice*. On **Question 36**, some invalidated their answers by saying that there was a large choice of *métiers* rather than *matières*. On **Question 37**, candidates could either answer that the candidates were *curieux* or could attempt to render the more difficult concept of *soif d'apprendre*. Those attempting the latter sometimes answered *ils ont soif* and did not gain the mark as the correct concept had not been fully grasped. Only the more able candidates were successful on this question despite a tolerant approach to the spelling of *curieux*. **Question 38** was an easier question and many were successful in expressing the concept with a brief answer such as *surprise(s)* which was sufficient to gain the mark. Likewise, good numbers were successful in rendering *culture* on **Question 39**, which was again sufficient for the mark. The final three questions were more challenging. **Question 40** required candidates to identify that the annual leave was not long or that Danielle did not have enough time to go to France. Only the best candidates were successful here. Incorrect answers often featured the word *loin*. **Question 41** was perhaps the most demanding on the question paper. This question required candidates to communicate that Danielle's way of dressing/her clothes identified her as being French. Incorrect versions often included the word *habiter* instead of *s'habiller*. The last question was attempted a little better by candidates. The two required concepts were *écoles françaises* and the French coming to live in Canada.

FRENCH

Paper 0685/02
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

To maximise their chances of success, candidates need to:

- read instructions, texts and questions very carefully;
- keep their answers to comprehension questions clearly focused;
- make sure that they have answered every part of every question;
- make clear their intended answer when the original one has been crossed out, or alterations made;
- check through their work at the end of the examination.

General comments

Candidates seemed well-prepared for this paper and for the style of questions. Most attempted every question and seemed to have plenty of time to complete the paper. Those candidates who changed their mind about answers to questions usually managed to make it clear which was their final intended answer, although these changes were sometimes difficult to read – it is better to think carefully about an answer before rushing to write anything down. In a few rare cases, 2 boxes were ticked for a multiple choice answer, so neither could be credited, as the final decision made by the candidate was in doubt. In general, presentation was clear and handwriting neat.

Candidates should try to make sure that they leave themselves enough time after completing the paper to read through their answers, in order to make sure that:

- their intended answers are clear;
- they have answered all the questions they can;
- words copied from the text are correct;
- subjects and verbs, and adjectives agree.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-5

This exercise was generally answered well. For **Question 1**, D was sometimes offered, suggesting that *champignons* was not a well-known item of vocabulary.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-10

In this exercise, many candidates were able to score the maximum 5 marks. **Questions 7** and **10** sometimes caused problems. Candidates saw the word *chambre* in **Question 7** and automatically chose F as their answer, rather than focusing on *nettoyer*. For **Question 10**, candidates did not always connect *coiffer* with D, *la brosse à cheveux*.

Exercise 3 Questions 11-15

This exercise was generally done well – for **Question 15**, candidates sometimes overlooked the negative in the text and therefore chose C as their answer, rather than B.

Exercise 4 Question 16

For this exercise, candidates were required to write a short message to a French friend, conveying information, based on the pictures provided.

The information needed was:

- (a) where they are going (picture of a market);
- (b) what they buy (apples);
- (c) what they will do afterwards (walk in park/go to countryside, park or garden).

A maximum of 5 marks are available for this exercise. 1 mark is available for communicating each of the 3 elements, and 2 marks are available for language.

For (a), some leeway was allowed in where the candidates were going – in addition to *marché*, *supermarché*, *magasin*, *centre commercial*, *marchand de fruits* and *alimentation* were all accepted. *Ville/centre-ville* were not accepted. Similarly for (b), any reasonable interpretation of the picture was credited, so any candidate who offered *fruits* or *tomates*, for example, was also able to score. For (c), candidates needed to include some idea of 'walking' or going to a park, so those who just said that they were going home did not score for this part of the task. Many tried to use *randonnée* or *promenade* as verbs.

For language, candidates need to provide two correct verb forms in logical tenses – though the third task asked for a future idea, other tenses were also credited. Language marks can only be awarded where a mark has been scored for communication. *Je vais au marché pour acheter des pommes* scored 2 communication marks for tasks (a) and (b) and for language both *je vais* and *pour acheter* could be rewarded, provided that the candidate had made an attempt at the third task.

In this exercise, there is no need to write at length; candidates are able to score maximum marks for a very short, simple answer.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17-25

Candidates were asked to read a more extended piece of text in the form of an e-mail from Morgane about her holidays, and answer, in French, the 10 questions asked about the text. For this exercise, the mark is awarded for **locating** the key piece of information required to answer the question, and provided that the candidate's answer contains that information, additional material copied from the text is usually tolerated. There is no need to write in complete sentences and, in fact, often only 1 or 2 words may be needed to score – for example **Question 19** could be answered just with *SMS* or *texto*.

Scores for this exercise were generally good. For **Question 17**, some candidates said that Morgane was visiting her aunt or her cousin Julie rather than that she liked the sea. **Question 18** was generally answered well – some candidates left out the required *par an*. In answer to **Question 21**, some candidates offered *on/il/elle a descendu le grand escalier* as one of their answers, omitting either that Morgane admired the view or that she took photographs, on arrival at the *château*.

For **Question 22**, some candidates seemed to have understood *où* rather than *qu'est-ce que*. For **Question 23**, instead of a walk on the beach, candidates looked to the end of the paragraph for the answer that Morgane and Julie took the bus home. Most understood what **Question 24** was asking and managed to convey that Morgane and Julie did not go swimming because they had not brought swimming costumes with them. For **Question 25**, some candidates failed to mention that the mobile phone was *perdu*, saying only that it had been dropped on the beach.

Exercise 2 Question 26

This writing task – a short essay of 80 to 90 words – was well within the experience of all candidates. Candidates were instructed:

- (a) describe one of your friends;
- (b) say what you do to be a good friend;
- (c) say what you plan to do with your friend next week and why.

10 marks are available for communication of the required elements and 5 marks for language. To score the maximum 10 for communication, candidates need to make sure that they have attempted all elements of the task – if one element is omitted, the maximum communication mark is 9, and if candidates attempted with one of the tasks, they cannot score more than 8 for communication. Most candidates scored well with many getting the maximum marks available. Very few failed to make an attempt at the question.

For task **(a)**, candidates needed to give some description of **1** of their friends – for example, appearance, personality, age, likes, dislikes – and usually scored well on this task. Candidates covered a wide range of material in their responses here, and these were often detailed and interesting, and remarkably varied. Candidates sometimes offered generalised descriptions of several friends – credit was given where the description was applied to one friend.

Task **(b)** sometimes presented problems and candidates wrote about what their friend did to make them a good friend, rather than what they did themselves.

For the third part, some misunderstood *la semaine prochaine* and instead wrote about what they had done **last** week, using the past tense. Even though no credit could be given for that part of the task (because the tense used made the meaning unclear), candidates could still score communication marks for saying why they wanted to do that particular activity.

A good number of candidates did cover all 3 tasks impressively, producing material which was comprehensive and highly accurate, paying close attention to verb forms and agreements. Few essays were overlong, and candidates generally tried to write within their own linguistic abilities, rather than attempting to write something very ambitious for which they lacked the structures and vocabulary. Many candidates were able to achieve the maximum language mark, expressing their ideas clearly, in a straightforward manner, yet often using a good variety of structures and vocabulary.

Section 3

In this section, candidates are expected to show a more precise understanding of longer French texts. Examiners are looking not just for evidence that candidates are able to locate the correct information in the passage, but for signs of genuine comprehension. It is important that candidates show that they have understood the texts clearly enough to identify the exact details needed for their answer, excluding any non-relevant material. It is better to keep answers simple and to the point, rather than adding extra material from the text which may invalidate an answer. This may mean perhaps selecting the first and last part of a sentence from the text, but excluding a phrase from the middle – the answers to **Questions 32** and **36** illustrating this point.

Answers are not expected to be in faultless French but the language does have to be sufficiently accurate to avoid ambiguity or distortion. Candidates need to be able to manipulate some elements of language, for example changing first person verbs to third person, and using appropriate possessive pronouns and adjectives.

Exercise 1 Questions 27-32

For this exercise, candidates were asked to read an extended passage in French, about the construction of a children's hospital. 6 statements about the passage are provided on the question paper, and candidates are told in the rubric that 2 of these statements are true and 4 of them are false. They are asked to decide which are true and which false and tick the appropriate boxes (6 marks awarded for this), and then correct the 4 false statements (4 marks for this). A simple negative version of the statements using *ne...pas* is not enough: corrections should be in the style of the example given, using the information found in the text. There is no need to write anything when *Vrai* has been ticked.

Question 27 was generally correctly identified as false and corrected well, as was **Question 29**.

Question 30 was usually seen as false, but candidates were not always able to offer an acceptable correction – many lifted material from the text without making clear that the hospital mentioned was the one in which Almech had worked as a doctor before the war. It was enough, here, to say *Almech/il était médecin* or *Almech/il travaillait comme médecin avant la guerre*, without mentioning the hospital at all.

Candidates were usually able to understand that **Question 32** was false, but some had difficulties constructing a correction using *générosité* and many lifted material from the text referring to *les Afghans*. This invalidated their answer, which should have focused on the French population.

Exercise 2 Questions 33-42

This final exercise of the paper required candidates to read an extended text and to answer questions on it in French. It was an appropriately challenging yet fair test for this stage of the paper. Most candidates showed that they understood the theme of the text quite well, and were able to attempt the questions.

Question 33 was straightforward, and most candidates understood that Gaëlle's work was tiring because she worked at night. For the next question, many were distracted by the sentence *...elle finit quand la plupart des gens se lèvent: à 7 heures du matin* and ignored the punctuation, thereby missing the point that Gaëlle finished work when others got up, so slept till 4 in the afternoon.

Both parts of **Question 35** were quite well answered, though for **Question 35(a)** some did not mention *relations familiales* and for part **(b)** some candidates could not manage the move from *travaillons* to *travaillent*.

For **Question 36**, most candidates were able to identify the correct part of the text to use for their answer. All that was required was *ils aident les victimes d'accidents* – where candidates included *appelés par téléphone* with an otherwise correct answer, this could not be credited.

Many gave correct answers for **Question 37**, stating that Gaëlle needed training in order to become a fireman, but some invalidated their answers by the addition of the phrase *malgré ses qualifications d'infirmière...* In answering the next question, candidates needed to make it clear that Gaëlle looked after accident victims in the ambulance **while it was on the way to** the hospital.

Many candidates made very good attempts at **Questions 39** and **40**. A number gave as their answer to **Question 39**, *elle déteste rester chez moi à regarder la télévision* – they could not manage the necessary change from *chez moi* to *chez elle* – and some saw this sentence as the answer to both parts of the question. Some missed the point that Gaëlle *veut avant tout pouvoir s'occuper des autres* and for the second part of **Question 39** offered *elle travaille mieux dans des situations d'urgence* – which was, in fact, the answer to **Question 40**.

FRENCH

Paper 0685/03

Speaking

Key messages

- To score well in the Role plays, candidates need to stick closely to the cues on their Role play cards and to be concise in their responses. Examiners must stick closely to the script in the Teacher's Notes booklet so that tasks are not missed out or distorted.
- Centres need to ensure that the correct timings are observed for each candidate taking the Speaking test. Each candidate must be allocated five minutes for the Topic presentation/conversation **and** another five minutes for the General conversation. If conversation sections are short this will affect the marks awarded. If a section of the examination is omitted, it cannot be awarded marks.
- In each of the conversation sections **all** candidates must be given adequate opportunities to show that they can use **both** past and future tenses accurately.
- Good performances in the conversation sections resulted when candidates were given the opportunity to respond naturally to both straightforward and unexpected questions, and where they were encouraged to expand upon their answers, giving and explaining their opinions.
- In the General conversation section, the objective should be to cover two or three of the Examination topics listed in the Defined Content with each candidate, and to explore each of these in some depth by asking a series of linked questions. Candidates should not be asked a series of unrelated questions on many different topics.
- The best performances from candidates of all abilities were heard in Centres where there had not been over preparation of work and where the spontaneity of the performance could be heard.

General comments

The standard of work heard was generally good and was very similar to that heard last year. Examiners had familiarised themselves well with the requirements of the Speaking test, including their part in the Role plays, and with the mark scheme. Most Examiners were very sympathetic to their candidates. Most understood how best to give their candidates the opportunity to show what they knew and could do.

In the Role plays, candidates usually seemed to have made good use of the 15 minutes they are allowed to prepare the card assigned to them. Moderators reported that the most successful Role plays were those where Examiners moved the transactions along at a fairly brisk pace **by keeping to the script provided** and by not inserting different or extra tasks. Centres are reminded that **teacher/Examiners** may have access to the confidential test materials (Teachers' Notes booklet and Role Play cards) in the four working days before the first Speaking test is conducted in order to prepare the Role plays. **The contents of these materials are confidential and must not be shared with candidates.** The confidential test materials must be returned to the secure storage facility after preparation has taken place and after each session of examining. Once the last Speaking test has been conducted, they must remain in secure storage until the end of the Speaking test period. Centres are reminded that candidates must not be allowed to do any writing during their preparation time and must not be allowed to bring any written materials with them into the preparation area.

In the conversation sections, it is vital that Examiners understand the requirements of the mark scheme so that they can ask the right kinds of questions which will stretch candidates. The best examining offered candidates the opportunity to answer spontaneous questions in a natural way. It enabled candidates to use a variety of tenses and to develop their answers. Consequently, such candidates had the opportunity to fulfil the descriptors in the higher mark bands of the mark scheme. Straightforward questioning of a 'closed' type does not give candidates the opportunity to reach these higher mark bands. Centres should note that to score a mark beyond six on scale (b) (linguistic content), candidates need to be able to show that they can use past and future tenses accurately. **It is therefore essential to include several questions to elicit past and future tenses in both the Topic conversation and the General conversation sections.** The full requirements of the test are clearly laid out on pages 8-13 of the Teachers' Notes booklet and all Centres are

strongly advised to read through these well in advance of the test so that they have plenty of time to address any uncertainties. A French language version of these requirements also exists and is available on the Cambridge website.

- **Clerical checks**

In most Centres, the addition and transfer of marks was accurate, but there were still cases of Centres where clerical errors had been made. Centres are reminded of the need to check all work carefully as it remains the Centre's responsibility to ensure that the correct mark is entered for each candidate. On the working marking sheet, the addition of the individual marks for each candidate must be checked to ensure that the total mark is correct. Then, for each candidate, the transfer of the marks from the working mark sheet to the MS1 mark sheet (or the electronic marks file) must also be checked. On the MS1 mark sheet, the Centre must enter the total mark for each candidate in figures as well as shading the lozenges, (some Centres forgot to shade in the lozenge or to write in the correct mark in figures).

- **Cover sheet for moderation sample**

This year, there were fewer cases of Centres forgetting to enclose the cover sheet. Completion of this form allows Centres to check that their moderation sample and paperwork are correct before they despatch material to Cambridge for external moderation and avoids problems at a later date. Please ensure that it is always completed and despatched with the sample.

- **Centres using more than one Examiner/Internal moderation**

Any Centre wishing to use more than one Examiner to conduct the Speaking tests for its candidates must apply to Cambridge for permission to do so well before the start of **each** Speaking test period. Permission is normally granted, on the understanding that internal moderation procedures are put into place to ensure that marks are awarded consistently for **all** candidates in the Centre. There were many cases of extremely thorough internal moderation where the various teacher/Examiners conducting and assessing the Speaking tests at the Centre had worked together to ensure a common approach to the conduct of the Speaking test and the application of the mark scheme. In some Centres there was evidence of inadequate internal moderation.

The most common approach to internal moderation is for one Examiner to be designated the Co-ordinating Examiner and to check the marking of sample candidates for each of the other Examiners at the Centre. If the Co-ordinating Examiner decides that an Examiner's marking is not in line with the Centre standard, **s/he will need to adjust the final total mark for all candidates examined by that Examiner accordingly and not just the marks for the candidates sampled.** Centres are reminded that guidelines on internal standardisation/moderation of Cambridge IGCSE Speaking tests are available from Cambridge and are also available on the website.

- **Sample size and recording quality**

Centres usually complied with the sampling procedures. One or two Centres did submit very large numbers of recordings in their samples: Centres are reminded to check the instructions on sample size very carefully and to ask for advice from Cambridge if they are unsure how to proceed. **Where Centres have entered more than 16 candidates, they are not required to submit the recordings of all candidates.** However, recordings for the first ten candidates according to candidate number order must be sent. Should a Centre have permission to use more than one Examiner, the maximum sample size is still 16. The recordings of the first ten candidates should be sent and the remaining six recordings should cover the mark range in the Centre and also be representative of the different Examiners.

A high proportion of the recordings received by Cambridge were of a high quality and Centres are thanked for this. The use of digital recording has resulted in a great improvement in sound quality. Where digital recordings are made, **each candidate's file must be saved individually** and named correctly on the CD. Some Centres still use cassettes and this is also acceptable. Whatever the method of recording, if an external microphone is used, this must be positioned to favour the candidate. This is especially important in rooms with tiled floors which may echo.

- **Labelling and packaging of sample**

It is essential that all CDs/cassettes are clearly labelled. Only CD-friendly marker pens should be used for writing on CDs. Sticky labels must not be placed on CDs as this will usually mean that the CD cannot be played by the Moderator. If the recorded sample is submitted on CD, a list of the featured recordings must be submitted with each CD. On the CD, the recording for each candidate must be saved individually and named according to the following convention, Centre number_candidate number_syllabus number_component number. If the recorded sample is submitted on cassette, each cassette must be accompanied by a list of the featured recordings in order of play.

Each CD/cassette must include a recorded introduction by the Examiner, listing the cassette/CD number, Centre number, Centre name, examination number, examination name, name of Examiner and date. This introduction need only be made once, and can be saved as a separate file (named 'recorded introduction') if Centres are submitting recordings on CD. Whether Centres are submitting recordings on cassette or CD, it is the Examiner who must introduce each recording by announcing the candidate number, candidate name and role play card number. **This announcement must not be made by the candidate.**

CDs are much more fragile than cassettes and must be carefully wrapped in some form of protective packaging before they are placed in the envelope with the moderation paperwork. The appropriate label (which includes the Centre name and a bar-code) should then be placed **on the envelope**. Labels must not be placed on CDs. The envelope containing the recordings and paperwork should then be packaged in another parcel/envelope and one of the return labels with the Cambridge address should be attached before it is returned to Cambridge. Centres are reminded to send their sample to Cambridge once the Speaking tests have been completed and not to wait until the very end of the examination period.

- **Duration of tests / missing elements**

The timings of the test were usually correct. Some Centres persist in going under or over the five minutes prescribed for the Topic conversation **and/or** the General conversation test. Each of these sections must last for approximately five minutes. Where conversations are short, this is likely to disadvantage candidates as they will not have enough time to 'warm up' and/or to show what they can do. Marks must not be awarded to sections of the tests that are missed out.

- **Application of the mark scheme**

This year, Moderators reported that many Centres marked close to the agreed standard. In some Centres, marks were awarded leniently or severely and had to be adjusted to bring them in line with the agreed standard. Where downward adjustments were necessary this was usually due to one of the following:

- Role plays: Centres sometimes awarded a mark of three when pronunciation was poor or if a verb was inaccurate. Often, tasks can be completed successfully without using a verb. If a verb is used, it must be accurate and appropriate for a mark of three to be awarded. In a two-part task, if one part is omitted then a maximum of one mark should be awarded.
- Topic conversation and General conversation
 - Scale (a) (comprehension/responsiveness): marks were sometimes awarded in the higher bands when there was little evidence that candidates could respond to unexpected questions and develop their responses beyond a straightforward level in a natural way.
 - Scale (b) (linguistic content): certain Centres frequently awarded marks in the higher mark bands on scale (b) even though there was no evidence of tenses and/or a range or of linguistic structures. A mark of more than six cannot be awarded if candidates cannot use past and future tenses accurately. For French, the construction *depuis* + present tense, e.g. *je fais du vélo depuis deux ans* does count as a past tense. The constructions *j'ai l'intention de...*, *j'espère...*, *je veux (aller)...* and *je rêve de...* do count as future tenses. The construction *demain je vais (en ville)* does not count as a future tense (but, of course, *demain je vais aller en ville* does).

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Examiners usually encouraged candidates to complete all parts of the tasks. The splitting up of two-part tasks into (i) and (ii) seemed to have helped candidates make effective use of their preparation time. Candidates should be reminded to keep their answers as brief as possible, especially on the A Role plays.

Overlong answers are not to be encouraged: marks can only be awarded for the set task. If candidates respond at length the extra material they include in their utterance may contain an error which affects the clarity of the message and therefore their mark for that task. Candidates should also be reminded to listen carefully to the Examiner, especially where they are required to choose from options provided by the Examiner (A Role plays) and before the 'respond to the question' cue (B Role plays). Examiners are reminded that while as a general rule they should aim to keep to the cues provided in the Teachers' Notes booklet throughout the Role plays, it is absolutely crucial that they do so on these particular tasks.

A Role plays

As in 2012, the A Role plays were perceived to be of equal difficulty and a fair test at this level. They are designed to be easier than the B Role plays and are set using vocabulary from Topic Areas A, B and C of the Defined Content. All cards featured one task which required a question to be asked and one task which required candidates to choose an option from the two provided by the Examiner. Candidates generally found them to be accessible and even the weakest candidates were able to score at least one mark on each task. Centres had trained candidates well to include a greeting and thanks where required. Centres are reminded that often a short response (perhaps one word) will be appropriate and in such cases a mark of three can be awarded. Moderators reported that poor or unclear pronunciation was sometimes not queried by Examiners. Please remember that if poor or unclear pronunciation affects the clarity of the message it is appropriate to offer the candidates the opportunity to self-correct, hopefully allowing them to access a higher mark for the task.

Buying tickets to tour a château

Candidates generally performed well on this Role play. They greeted as appropriate. Sometimes they mixed up the noun *visite* with the past participle *visité*. Nearly all candidates listened carefully to the options on the second task and chose a time as required. Some mispronounced the number of tickets they required which affected the clarity of the message. All could offer an age but many used *je suis...* instead of *j'ai...*. In such cases a mark of three was not appropriate. Centres are reminded that if a verb is used by the candidate, it should be accurate and appropriate for the award of three marks. Nearly all candidates remembered to include their thanks. Some asked the price by saying *Combien le prix?* which meant that a mark of three could not be awarded.

Reserving a hotel room

This Role play was approached well by candidates. Nearly all could state their wish to book a room. Those who stated *j'ai réservé une chambre* did not score marks for that part of the task as this communicated the wrong message. On the second task, a date was required to score full marks. Candidates who offered just a day scored one mark for partial completion of the task. Most communicated the number of people well on the third task, and on the fourth task listened well to the options and chose accordingly. On the last task, thanks were usually included. Weaker candidates sometimes found it difficult to formulate a question correctly even if their message was clear.

Buying perfume for a friend

Performance on this Role play was very similar to that heard on the other two A Role plays. Moderators commented that many candidates pronounced *parfum* poorly. On the second task some used the verb *être* instead of *avoir* when expressing their friend's age. For the third task most candidates were able to give the date of their friend's birthday and on the fourth task they listened well to the options and chose accordingly. On the last task some again found it difficult to formulate a correct question to ask the price.

B Role plays

The B Role plays were deliberately more demanding in that they required the ability to use different tenses, to explain, give an opinion, or express pleasure. The level of challenge was balanced across the B Role plays. They differentiated well, but even the weakest candidates could usually score marks on most tasks – thanks, often, to sympathetic examining. It was crucial for Examiners to know their own role and to stick to the set tasks. Candidates should be reminded that on the B Role plays there will always be one task in which they have to listen to the Examiner and reply to an unprepared question. They should be advised to think about the setting of the Role play in their 15 minutes of preparation time, and consider likely questions they might be asked in that context. Candidates should also be reminded to listen carefully in the examination room.

Organising a meal

Most candidates coped well with this Role play and were able to say that they wanted to organise a meal in January. In the second task most opted for one of the suggestions offered as the reason for the meal. Some candidates then forgot to say with whom they would be having the meal. In such cases, this second detail should have been prompted by Examiners. On the third task candidates did not always express their pleasure very convincingly – *super/fantastique/excellent* were all acceptable ways of fulfilling this part of the task. It is worth reminding candidates that the ability to express notions of apology, pleasure and displeasure is often expected in these Role plays and that an appropriate expression of such notions, rather than one relying on intonation, is required for the award of three marks. On this task some candidates also did not explain why they liked the idea of music. Again, a simple explanation of an opinion held is often one of the features of a B Role play. On the fourth task there was some hesitation and error on the formulation of an appropriate question. Simple questions such as *Pouvez-vous préparer un gâteau?* were adequate for three marks. Most candidates coped well on the last task.

A lost suitcase

The pronunciation of *valise* frequently caused ambiguity on the first task. Examiners are reminded that in such cases they are free to query for communication. Many accepted dubious pronunciation too readily. Nearly all candidates could say from which country they had travelled. Again, a good attempt at the pronunciation of the candidate's country was required for a mark of three to be appropriate. The description of the suitcase was well done. Many candidates experienced some difficulty in framing a question in an appropriate tense on the fourth task. On the final task the notion of displeasure was sometimes omitted: *je ne suis pas content(e) / ça (ne) va pas / c'est intolérable / c'est inacceptable* were all acceptable ways of fulfilling this part of the task. All were able, with prompting, to say where they were going to stay.

Applying for a job in a restaurant

Most candidates attempted the first task well but on the second and third tasks sometimes omitted part of the task. On task 2 most were able to communicate that they had worked in a restaurant but some mistakenly said they had worked elsewhere. Some forgot to add an extra detail as required in the second part of the task which limited their mark to one. With good examining, many were successful in expressing not just what they thought about the job but also why. On the fourth task some used a perfect tense instead of a future tense. Those who listened and thought were able to respond briefly without a verb, which was sufficient to score three marks. The formulation of a relevant question on the last task was done quite well. Again, weaker candidates found it difficult to use the interrogative form accurately.

Topic presentation and conversation

As last year, Moderators commented on the wide range of candidate performance heard in this section.

The whole of this section, which consists of the Topic presentation and Topic conversation, should last about five minutes. In some Centres, candidates were allowed to carry on presenting their topic for up to three minutes. This is not good practice as it restricts not only the time available for the follow-up conversation, but also the material available for discussion. **Candidates must not be allowed to carry on presenting their topic for more than two minutes.**

An interesting range of topics was heard this year. Candidates spoke about their country, life in another country, their pets (including snakes and chickens!), health and a healthy lifestyle, holidays, school and sport. Some of the most interesting topic presentations were on candidates' future plans. Teachers should guide candidates in their choice of topic to ensure that sensible choices are made. As observed last year, where candidates choose *ma famille/mon amie* it can be difficult for Examiners to offer them sufficient opportunities to develop responses in different tenses, which can in turn affect marks for language. This should be pointed out to candidates when they choose their topic. There were, pleasingly, very few instances of candidates choosing *moi-même* as their topic: new Centres are reminded to tell candidates not to present this very broad topic as it leaves little material to develop in the General conversation. Most importantly, Centres are reminded that it is not in the spirit of the test for all candidates in a teaching group to offer the same topic. In order to ensure variety and spontaneity, both in terms of the content of the material at the candidate's disposal and the questions the Examiner asks, a range of topics should be covered by candidates in a Centre.

Once the candidate has presented his/her topic for one to two minutes (Topic presentation) the Examiner must intervene and ask the candidate questions about their chosen topic (Topic conversation). In those

Centres where there was no follow-up discussion of the Topic presentation, candidates' capacity to score high marks in the higher bands for this section of the test was restricted. While it is expected that teachers will have prepared candidates for the Topic conversation, if candidates are to score highly, **this topic conversation must not consist of a series of pre-learnt questions and answers** in which both Examiner and candidate know what is coming and in which order. Rather, questions should arise spontaneously as the conversation develops. Examiners were usually aware of the need to elicit both past and future tenses.

Candidates had usually prepared their topics well and were aware of the need to present at an appropriate pace – not too fast. Some Topic presentations were delivered at a very fast pace and in such cases poor pronunciation often meant the message was lost. Candidates can best prepare for this part of the test by learning to present their material at an understandable and appropriate speed up to an absolute maximum of two minutes (one-and-a-half minutes is a very good target to aim for). There were some very confident performances in the Topic conversation. In the best of these, candidates were able to respond spontaneously to questions and continued communicating at a level which did not dramatically differ from the level heard in the presentation. **Such performances featured accurate use of a good range of tenses, structures and appropriate topic-specific lexis.** Candidates who went beyond the factual and straightforward, who developed their responses and explained their opinions scored high marks. Where the style of examining in the Topic conversation encourages candidates to produce a set of mini-presentations in response to over-practised questions, marks in the higher bands of the mark scheme will not be appropriate.

It is helpful to both candidates and Moderators to indicate when the Topic conversation has come to an end and when the General conversation is going to start. Such links should be made in French.

General conversation

There were many examples of good examining which enabled candidates to impress. In such cases, the Examiner asked questions on two or three topics only and these followed a logical order – the Examiner listened to what the candidate said and adapted their next question to follow on from that. As a result, a genuine conversation developed in which the candidate had the opportunity to provide explanations and use different tenses. In other cases, the style of examining made it difficult for candidates to show what they could do: Examiners asked long strings of random and unrelated questions on a very wide range of topics. Candidates became confused when trying to follow the thread of such conversations, and because questions were closed (eliciting brief answers) and on too many topics, they were not encouraged to develop their answers and go into depth (and therefore could not access the higher bands of the mark scheme).

A few Centres asked the same questions on each conversation topic from candidate to candidate: this approach must be avoided. While it is good practice to help candidates in class by using banks of questions, over-reliance on such banks in the live Speaking test tends to produce stilted conversations which do not flow naturally and which, at worst, do not seem to develop beyond a series of mini-presentations. Once in the examination room, it is far better if the Examiner listens to what the candidate is saying and responds as spontaneously as possible. **The descriptors in the Mark scheme make it very clear that in order to score marks in the higher bands, candidates must have the opportunity to respond to both straightforward and unexpected questions in both conversation sections.**

As last year, a full range of performance was heard by Moderators. The best candidates were able to respond to open questions which required them to express their ideas wherever possible and to develop their answers in a spontaneous way. Their use of register was appropriate and the language used by candidates in such performances was often very impressive, displaying good control of tenses and the use of subordination, as well as a wide range of accurate structures and appropriate vocabulary. In many large Centres, patient, sympathetic examining meant that candidates across the whole ability spectrum were encouraged to communicate a range of messages. Questions were not too hard for weaker candidates and were asked in a logical sequence and rephrased when necessary.

Despite the different everyday cultural experiences and local contexts of this very international candidature, it remains apparent to Moderators that candidates still have much in common. It is also clear that the skill of communicating in the foreign language is central to IGCSE classrooms and that the Speaking test is the culmination of much hard work.

FRENCH

Paper 0685/04
Continuous Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should follow the rubric closely.
- Candidates should plan their answers.
- Candidates should make full use of the time allowed.
- Candidates should aim to write between 130 and 140 words.
- Candidates should write what they know to be French and avoid attempting to use language with which they are not familiar.
- Candidates should check their work for errors.
- Handwriting must be clearly legible.

General comments

The performance of many candidates was very creditable, and the best produced work of a high quality. Their answers were characterised by a secure grasp of the basics of French grammar and a variety and depth of knowledge, both of vocabulary and structure. Others, while not in the top bracket, did justice to their ability by presenting answers which were relevant and communicated the requirements of the tasks effectively, using less complex language.

A number of candidates did not make the most of the opportunity to show their knowledge of French to good advantage. This was often due to a flawed examination technique. Insufficient attention was paid to the detail of the rubric. Some answers were over long and communication marks were lost. Work was not checked properly at the end, to correct elementary errors. It is with these matters in mind that Examiners offer the above Key messages, aimed at improving performance.

The rubric is not a list of suggestions to be interpreted freely. Instead, it sets out a number of required elements, each of which carries one or more specific communication marks. Candidates should keep closely to these stated tasks and avoid irrelevance. Material which is introduced which does not pertain to the subject is not credited for content or language. Normally, a statement is required using a finite verb for each task, expressed in the tense contained in the question.

Candidates are advised to prepare a brief plan of their answers under certain headings or paragraphs. They should spread their answer fairly evenly over the 'bullet points' in the rubric. In **Question 1** in particular, if they devote too much of the answer to the first one or two tasks they may not have enough words left to complete the later tasks and remain within the 140 word limit. If they cover all the points in 100 words or less they may be reduced to 'padding out' their answer to reach 140 words, so they should look for areas where they can expand their answer with relevant examples. No credit is given for any material which falls outside the 140 word limit. Short answers limit their own chances of accessing the maximum marks for language.

Once the plan is decided, candidates should compose each sentence carefully and pay particular attention to the selection of tense and verb forms. They should remember that grammatical accuracy and correct spelling are essential to acquire marks for language. They should avoid too much reliance on repeated items of language, such as possessive adjectives and the verb *être*. This tends to impair the overall quality of the piece and may reduce the mark given for General impression. Candidates are urged to stay within their limitations and to avoid over complicated sentences which may expose weaknesses. Some candidates try to 'force in' certain phrases or idioms, regardless of the context, while others cram in as many adjectives as they can, often gratuitously. These approaches should be discouraged as they are unnecessary and will detract from the effect of the response.

When they have finished, candidates should make full use of the time left to check their work for errors. The time allowed for this paper is quite generous and is normally sufficient to allow for this. They should look at

genders in particular, and the agreements of adjectives and past participles in the perfect tense and reflexive verbs. Accents should be clear and unambiguous.

Presentation is very important. Examiners do not reward French which they cannot read. This year saw improvement in the standards of presentation and some answers were written in minuscule handwriting which could hardly be deciphered. Some employed a style of writing which made certain letters ambiguous. Examiners give the benefit of the doubt whenever they reasonably can but there are limits and where writing is illegible, marks may be lost. Centres should ask candidates not to lay out their work in columns in the style of a newspaper article: Examiners are required to use both margins on the question paper when they mark, so if work is set out in columns, annotation of the candidate's answer is made difficult.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1(a) *Votre famille et vous*

This was overwhelmingly the more popular option, the topic area being widely known. Most began with a general description of their family, starting with the number of its members. Most said *nous sommes quatre* or *il y a quatre personnes dans ma famille*. This was usually followed by portraits of family members, their names, ages and professions. The majority could say: *Mon père s'appelle... Il a 45 ans. Il est docteur*, although not all knew to omit the article with professions. Some used *être* instead of *avoir* with ages. Where portraits regularly included many possessive adjectives (*mon, ma, mes*) and identical phrases repeated several times, this spoiled the impression. Some went into unnecessary detail, including personal hobbies and character traits, the colour of eyes and hair and the stature of each member of the family. These descriptions sometimes took up so many words that the answer exceeded 140 words in total and later tasks could not be credited, being outside the word count.

A small minority neglected to say *ma famille est importante dans ma vie*, which was a pity as it was a required task and carried a communication mark. Most said the family was very important and gave several reasons. They were loved by their families and loved them in return. Some admired their parents and mentioned the help they gave, especially with schoolwork and personal problems. Object pronouns were a source of difficulty and a number put *ils aident moi* instead of *ils m'aident*. Some said they liked to play with brothers and sisters, though little brothers were often *méchants* (rendered as *merchants* on some scripts). Girls shared secrets with sisters. Boys played games with brothers. Many said that parents were not only kind and understanding but also generous. They provided their children with money!

The next task required a past tense to say what they did recently with their family (*ce que vous avez fait avec votre famille*). A communication mark was lost by those who responded in present tenses (*nous allons en ville ensemble* etc.), which suggested a lack of care in reading the rubric. Some said they went for a picnic together, or played games. Others went shopping or went to the cinema or a restaurant. Some went on a foreign holiday. The value of these family occasions was much appreciated. The perfect tense was not well handled by a number of candidates.

As stated earlier, the final task frequently fell outside the word count in over long responses, and did not score for communication. Most were able to say *je voudrais avoir* with a number of children or to state that they would like a large/small family. Their reasons were varied. Some simply said they loved children. Others said they wanted a large family to mirror their own current situation, but this proved hard to express. Some wanted no more than one or two children, as large families were very expensive to provide for. A minority did not want any children at all, as they preferred to pursue a career and they disliked children. They were too much work and were difficult and noisy!

Question 1(b) *Le climat de votre pays*

This option was chosen by a minority. A number of excellent responses were received. Some of the candidates who chose this question might have fared better had they chosen **1(a)**.

Many began with a brief description of the climate in their country. *Il fait beau en été et il fait froid en hiver* was standard, although some put *le temps fait beau* or *il est froid*. The first task was to describe last week's weather. Although *le temps qu'il a fait* was given in the question, some answered in present tenses (*il pleut/il fait froid* etc.) and missed marks for communication and language. Candidates are reminded to look carefully at the tense in the rubric and to use that tense in their reply. Those who did not know the verb forms of the irregular *pleuvoir* should have chosen to say something else.

Next, candidates were asked which time of the year they preferred and why? Most were able to say *je préfère* or *je préfère* with a season or a month and to give a reason, but some copied *je préférez* from the paper. Some referred to the weather as a reason for their preference (*parce qu'il fait chaud* etc.) and others said they could enjoy their favourite activity at that time of year. They could do more sports in winter when the weather was not too hot. Some could enjoy skiing. Others liked summer because they could spend time on the beach or have barbecues. Most could say *je peux* or *on peut* with an infinitive. Some said they liked summer/winter fashions.

Understanding of the final task was good. Some would choose to live in a warmer climate in order to spend more time sea bathing etc. Some would choose a colder climate because they liked snow. The majority said that they enjoyed the climate of their own country, and would not wish to emigrate.

Question 2 Babysitting

Understanding of the task was generally good and the vast majority attempted to write an account of a difficult evening spent looking after young children. There were some excellent responses from the most able, who wrote fluently with only a minor incidence of error. However, for many the challenge of writing a continuous piece of French in past tenses proved too much. Since the requirement to use past tenses was evident in the rubric (*Décrivez les problèmes que vous avez eus* etc.) no communication marks were given for relating the events in tenses other than the past. Verbs written in present tenses to say what happened did not score marks for language. Some candidates wrote entirely in the present, while others used past and present randomly. A minority wrote about babysitting in general, and not about a specific occasion. Candidates should remember to follow the instructions set out in the rubric.

Accounts often began with the arrangement being made to 'babysit' for younger siblings or the children of neighbours or relatives. Better candidates were able to say *ma voisine m'a demandé de faire du babysitting*. This was quite acceptable but in some cases this 'introduction' was very long and the actual events of the evening were referred to only briefly.

To say that the narrator arrived at the house and that the parents left, required the verbs *arriver* and either *partir* or *sortir*. Candidates needed the auxiliary *être* and the correct agreement, of past participles. Only better candidates achieved this. The *problèmes* usually began at once. Babies awoke and would not go back to sleep. They began to weep (*pleurer* was often confused with *crier* or *pleuvoir*). They refused food. The narrator was often powerless! *Je ne savais pas quoi faire* was a feature of the better scripts. Sometimes calamities were narrowly avoided, as when babies disappeared and turned up, unharmed, in the street, in next door's garden or even in the fridge. In some accounts, the child was ill and needed medication. Many could not remember *malade* and used *être mal* instead. Those 'sitting' for older children met different problems. Little boys played football in the house and broke plates, furniture or even the television. They drew on the walls. They howled. They were noisy and uncooperative. Little girls wanted *maman* and cried unceasingly. The vocabulary needed to relate these events was that of everyday and was not a problem for average candidates, but verbs and linguistic structures were not generally well handled. A minority of candidates described a pleasant evening babysitting with no problems at all. No credit could be given for communication of difficulties and attempts to solve them in such cases.

'How the narrator attempted to resolve these problems' was expressed well by better candidates. Crying indicated hunger and some narrators offered milk. When baby refused to cooperate, s/he tried offering a variety of food or drinks instead. Some tried sweets or chocolate. Refusal to sleep was a problem sometimes solved by reading stories, playing games or watching television. On finding the child was unwell, they gave medicine. Many children had bad falls, and our narrators had to telephone the parents or even call for an ambulance. The story sometimes ended in the hospital, where the child had medical treatment. Parents came home (often late) and responded in a variety of ways to the babysitter's efforts. Some were pleased that he/she coped so well. Others were dismayed by events and refused to pay for his/her services.

The narrator's reactions to events were rewarded in the body of the account (*ça m'a énervé, j'étais choqué/étonné, j'avais peur, c'était horrible*) and at the end, when the narrator reflects on the experience. Some concluded that it was an ordeal from which valuable lessons could be learned. More often, candidates said it was a terrible way to spend an evening, and they decided never to be a babysitter again.

The best answers showed a good variety of perfect and imperfect tenses and in some cases the pluperfect. A wide depth of knowledge of vocabulary and structures was in evidence. Many, however, used perfect and imperfect indiscriminately and made errors in the formation of common verbs. Basic errors of usage and grammar were found on many scripts, spelling was weak and genders were inconsistent. Common words were confused, such as *entendre* and *écouter*, *dire* and *parler*, *avoir* and *être*, particularly when used as

auxiliaries and *heureux* and *joli*. It was noticeable that a number who had written a mostly accurate account in **Question 1**, made multiple errors in **Question 2**. Reasonable marks for accounts written in the past tense are accessible for candidates of only moderate ability, if they follow the guidelines set out in the comments section of this report. Candidates should revise the perfect and imperfect tenses thoroughly in their preparation for this paper, as these tenses will always be tested in the narrative question. Above all, they should check their work carefully at the end of the examination to eliminate simple errors.