

2015 NCEA Assessment Report

French Level 1 90878, 90881

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to 2015 examinations for all achievement standards covered by this report.

Candidates need to select relevant information from the texts and look for nuances to justify their responses.

However it seems that higher level candidates are either:

1. translating word for word, thus demonstrating translation skills and ignoring the need to listen or read for nuance; or;
2. finding the nuance but failing to justify the implied meaning by selecting specific details from the text.

The Explanatory notes in the Achievement Standards and the Evidence Statements in the Assessment Schedules provide very clear guidance about what “thorough understanding” looks like.

A major concern is the number of Achieved level candidates who struggled this year. Language taught at the lower end of the curriculum, such as times and dates were misunderstood or ignored. Simple food items and quantities, part of the NCEA Level One French list, proved difficult.

Candidates were less inclined to go off on tangents based on their prior knowledge, but the addition of images to certain texts did influence a number of answers, with candidates writing answers based on what they saw in the images over what was in the written documents.

Candidates dealt well with tense markers – the majority of candidates could distinguish between present, past and future. Higher level candidates included tense markers through out their responses.

Higher level candidates were able to explain, differentiate and summarise meaning in their own words rather than simply translating the text word for word.

This year, very few of the candidates answered in French. Those who did were required to significantly reword the language to demonstrate thorough understanding. As last year, those who simply copied large sections of the text in French into question spaces did not demonstrate understanding beyond knowing that the answer was located within that text.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 90878: Demonstrate understanding of a variety of spoken French texts on areas of most immediate relevance

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote some basic responses to some questions • understood some low level lexical items (food items, quantities) • misunderstood some low level lexical items (e.g. days of the week, numbers) • left some parts of questions blank • understood the basic gist of some of the texts • were confused by different tenses.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote nothing or very little as a response to each question • created responses based on their own thoughts or opinions rather than what they had heard • wrote scattered, single lexical items as response • struggled to understand basic words from levels 1 – 4 of the NZC.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used the listening notes boxes to good effect • responded to each part of each question • responded accurately to the easier part of each question (e.g. shopping list) • had some understanding of tense differences • Included some details in responses.

<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responded fully to each part of each question • successfully understood high frequency vocabulary (numbers, quantities, times) • correctly interpreted tenses at all times – past, future, imperfect, present • understood irregular verb stems and were able to translate these into sensible answers • read the question and wrote succinct answers based on the text.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Candidates struggled with questions that required them to identify how a speaker's mood or circumstance had changed from the start of the passage to that at the end. When asked to give an opinion, or justify and argument, candidate need to ensure that their response is based on the detail in the text, not their own personal experience.</p>

2. Assessment Report for 90881: Demonstrate understanding of a variety of French texts on areas of most immediate relevance

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified some key facts e.g. “aged 10-15 years” “it answers their questions” “you can read it on your computer, on paper, or on your portable device” • used cognates but not always correctly e.g. garder – guard, rester – rest, notes – “read through the notes from your teachers”, billet – “he’s going to be billeted in NZ” • failed to consistently link answers with the text – e.g. “the way he writes is naïve although that could just be all hippos, I’ve never spoken to one before” and in Question 4 giving lots of advice but only relating it to a few facts from the text • understood key vocabulary but arrived at the wrong answer because of a lack of understanding of the rest of the text. e.g. “He’s staying in NZ until he’s 20” “They are the first games for 20 years” “he had to defend himself against the lions” “they can send in questions and get answers” “When his mother told him he couldn’t leave the house, he cried” • wrote illogical responses • repeated the same information, often filling the space provided but reiterating the same facts in different ways • were not able to identify less common items of vocabulary such as “jeux” • wrote responses which were not entirely clear in English such as “ questions which are the same as others” • were not able to recognise that some words have more than one meaning according to context • used the same information more than once to answer different parts of the question • gave responses which linked loosely to the text e.g. “for her next 3 exams I would tell her to drink a big glass of water” “I don’t think the fields of sheep are our biggest perk but whatever floats your boat, I guess” • attempted to explain answers with weak links to the text.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relied heavily on the images to provide an answer e.g. “Hugo is lazy because he likes lying in the water with only his ears showing” • used their general knowledge to answer the questions rather than the text. • came to incorrect conclusions “Since Thomas is from a big city in the middle of France, he has never seen the sea” • failed to understand basic vocabulary “the elephant has big eyes” “At ages 10 and 8” “Thomas played football on Sundays” • created an incorrect answer around the understanding of one or two words e.g. “for 15 days there will be a party” • gave personal opinions which were not linked to the text e.g. “He swims around in waters that crocodiles visit. I don’t think he’s very smart not to find a safer place to swim.”
<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misunderstood some discrete items of vocabulary – e.g. “her head hurts” “he hears well with the elephant” • showed understanding of correct meaning of false cognate “a long day at school

	<p>(not journey)”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated some implied meaning e.g. “he must be a dedicated football fan to put so much effort into his football” “he hasn’t been to NZ before therefore..” “he has been playing all his life so he..” • linked implied meanings with some evidence from the text even though some details may be missed or misunderstood e.g. “his dad bought two tickets to the final” • missed nuances in meaning e.g. “he doesn’t know where the country is” “he is always excited for a good game” “he has never been a stranger” “the world cup for less than 20 years” • translated the text without structuring the answer to the question.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured their answer and organised their ideas • made connections and elaborated on them “last year, when he was only 3 years old” “ He wants to spend less time with his mum.... but he is still only 4 years old” “he’s brave.. he’s still prepared to go in the water even though he is afraid of the lions” “he thinks he’s big enough not to stay with his mum but this may have been the wrong assumption because...” “he finds his friendship with the elephant beneficial” “his mother is still protective of Hugo, even though he wants to distance himself from her and be more independent, he still relies on her to save him from the lions..... and to find food” “he must be naughty because when the mothers ran towards him, he automatically thought it was because he was doing something wrong” “Hugo looks at his friend’s qualities – his mother should not judge a book by its cover” “Thomas is happy to be in NZ because it is a journey of many firsts – First time in a foreign country, First time seeing a live game, First time seeing a truly blue sea and sky..” “Hugo doesn’t want to be a child any more but he still has yet to learn his place in the food chain, it seems • supported their answers with references to the text which showed thorough understanding e.g. “he is still passionate about the beautiful game” “he has always wanted to ..” “he knew nothing about this country so far...” “It is recommended to relax with the magazine after a long day at school which shows that it is an interesting and fun thing to do” “since you are originally from France and presumably a native speaker of French, you should have no problems with the French exam and you can use this to build your confidence before sitting the English and Science exams” “perhaps the language barrier is a problem for you since you are originally from France” “his father managed to get tickets for the final; they would have been in high demand and very expensive” • recognised nuance in language e.g. tenses, he is still passionate, questions that you have about yourself and about others • were not misled by cognates • demonstrated the ability to analyse the text thoroughly, break it down and explain each part. E.g. for Delphine’s letter, each problem was explained fully and then a solution proposed.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Many candidates did not provide enough detail in their response to question one. There was a great deal of information in the short text and students need to practise giving full responses based on shorter texts.</p> <p>The best responses were those in which candidates carefully organised their answer, frequently providing firm evidence from the text in support.</p> <p>Candidates must be encouraged to proof read their answers – in some cases the English response did not make sense or was not consistent/logical and therefore could not be correct. Candidates have time to do this as most left before the end of the examination.</p> <p>Candidates need to be aware that this is not simply a translation exercise. The standard is about reading which indicates the need to understand meaning and nuance beyond a simple translation.</p> <p>The new format of Question 4 was a good indication of a candidate’s ability to summarise, link and justify meaning with details from the text and removed the tendency to slip into literal translation.</p>