

2023 NCEA Assessment Report

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| Subject: | French |
| Level: | Level 3 |
| Achievement standard(s): | 91543, 91546 |

General commentary

The examination comprised texts across both standards which were of interest to candidates working at this level. The texts related to a variety of current events and aspects of life in French-speaking countries. The written texts and spoken passages provided opportunities for candidates to engage deeply with the language, demonstrate thorough understanding, examine different perspectives and explore nuance. The texts were equally accessible to all candidates, containing a range of basic and more complex structures and vocabulary.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91543 Demonstrate understanding of a variety of extended spoken French texts

Assessment

The assessment comprised three spoken passages in different formats: a radio report, a podcast, and an announcement.

The texts related to different aspects of life in French-speaking countries. The first text related to a cultural initiative in Quebec City, the second text concerned the problems facing athletes due to their short career span, and the third was an announcement about a music concert.

Questions One and Two were divided into three parts. Question Three comprised two parts. The first part of each question allowed candidates to engage with the content of the text on a surface level. Subsequent parts of the questions led candidates to explore the meaning of the texts, requiring detailed explanations supported by justification from the text.

Commentary

Candidates who organised their listening notes were able to provide responses that were logical and clearly expressed. Candidates should be encouraged to ensure that all the information they note is incorporated in their written response to the question.

Some candidates experienced difficulties with context when little background information was provided about the text they were about to hear. In some cases, candidates tended to use the image and the glossed word to guide their response and, in Question One, they were often unable to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the project described, often assuming that the text referred to an art project.

The familiarity of the context for Question Two generated irrelevant information from some candidates, such as how athletes need to start sport at a young age if they wish to become professional, the mental health problems professional sports people may have, and the demands of rigorous training and controlled diet.

The familiarity of the context for Question Three, the introduction (an event to raise funds for charity), the image, and the glossed vocabulary, as well as a number of cognates (*unique, festif, magique, télévision, livestream exceptionnel, UNICEF, musician, DJ, producteur, électronique, pop, danse, public, Grammy Award, streams, artistes, célébrité, popularité*) allowed most candidates to provide a response that indicated some understanding of the text. More successful candidates discerned more detailed information, demonstrated understanding of nuance, and gave clear explanations justified with evidence from the spoken passages.

Candidates must consider that they are being assessed on their ability to understand spoken French they hear. They should therefore ensure that their response demonstrates understanding of the spoken passage by supporting their ideas and opinions with evidence from French language they have heard, rather than incorporating prior knowledge or general information related to the theme of the text.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- showed understanding of key vocabulary and ideas in the texts
- did not show understanding of some detailed language, including small words that add nuance, resulting in incorrectly linked ideas, e.g. “As well as many well-known artists, there will also be a DJ and producer”, *l'une des plus belles, il est plus qu'un DJ*
- produced a response that contained the gist, but which lacked more detailed information, e.g. “the concert will be held in the most beautiful town”, “Artists told stories in audio clips”
- showed understanding of the texts, but did not identify less-frequent vocabulary, such as *trentaine, du coin* and *but*, or confused numbers and similar-sounding words, i.e. *quatre ou cinq ans* (as 45 years old), *réveille | rêve*
- showed understanding of only one meaning of a word such as *souvenir* (souvenir and memory), or *mal* (badly, difficulty).

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- demonstrated a confident knowledge of vocabulary overall
- developed their responses by linking ideas together and provided detailed information
- occasionally misunderstood vocabulary without detracting from the overall quality of the response, e.g. “athletes retire around 30-40 years old”
- developed their response based on the content of the text, often adding an explanation, e.g. “The event will be successful in raising funds for UNICEF as the previous events in New York and Miami raised 1.5 million dollars”.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the prescribed vocabulary lists, including words that could have different meanings in different contexts, e.g. *j'en garde un souvenir vif, soit au bas, soit en haut, Nouvel an* and *celui-ci*
- provided detailed and organised responses that showed in-depth understanding of the texts.

- added conclusions to their responses, such as “United at Home is in support of a good cause, which will motivate people to watch and donate”
- included explanations, such as “This story is magical as it was from a time well before we could access the world in one click, via the internet, and so hearing another language would have been a rare and unique experience for this child”
- supported their viewpoint with evidence, e.g. “Athletes will not know what their options for retirement are because, devoting themselves so completely to their sporting career, they often have ... ”
- expressed their understanding clearly and directed their response to the question in an organised and articulate manner.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the prescribed vocabulary lists from NCEA Level 1, 2, and 3
- developed a response that was based on isolated items of vocabulary
- relied on glossed words, cognates, and images to decipher meaning, e.g. “the concert is unique, and magical”
- integrated prior knowledge of the context of the text, such as “athletes start their careers young and so don’t have any qualifications”
- linked ideas to produce incorrect information, e.g. “her mum disappeared and went to China”, “Anabelle worked there when she was 45”, or “athletes should see the passing of time as a sign to plan their retirement”
- relied on words that sounded similar to English words but do not have the same meaning, such *precedents* (as presidents)
- did not complete all sections for each question, or did not transfer information from the listening box to the question response.

Achievement standard 91546: Demonstrate understanding of a variety of extended written and/or visual French texts

Assessment

The assessment was at a suitable difficulty level, and the three selected topics were well-suited for interpreting written texts and showcasing understanding of information and diverse perspectives. All three topics were current and relevant to the level and age group. The cultural elements such as the Michelin stars, *service civique* and French-speaking countries were well embedded, and enabled candidates to showcase their knowledge.

Commentary

In all questions, some candidates got deeply involved in discussing the topics, often including many personal ideas instead of offering evidence from the texts. The themes of volunteering in Question One, World Clean-up Day and Covid restrictions in Question Two, and the vegetarian menu for a restaurant in Question Three led some candidates to include information outside the scope of the text, or their own opinions about the theme.

It's important for candidates to understand that in a language examination, which aims to assess their comprehension of written texts, it is neither required nor recommended to write long paragraphs solely dedicated to their own ideas. Any opinions or explanations should be linked directly to the content of the text.

Candidates should refrain from quoting whole passages in French from the text, as this does not demonstrate understanding. There is no requirement for candidates to justify their comprehension by quoting the relevant French directly from the text.

Candidates should ensure that they address their response to the questions. For example, where the question asks candidates to explain how Aurélie became involved in volunteering, candidates should refrain from using the first person as a direct translation of the text.

If candidates choose to answer in French, they should make sure not to copy exactly from the text, as this does not provide evidence of detailed understanding of the language. Candidates should demonstrate understanding of the language and ideas in the text by expressing them in their own words and by rephrasing and summarising.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- summarised key concepts from the texts and incorporated them into the answers, though there were instances of misunderstanding certain numerical figures, such as *dix* being confused with *six* or *deux*
- expressed some key ideas with a reasonable level of clarity, but occasionally made inaccurate assumptions about words resembling cognates, such as translating *réveiller* as "relieve or reveal" or *plats* as "plates"
- demonstrated a grasp of basic vocabulary, yet lacked precision in more detailed information
- did not demonstrate higher-level vocabulary knowledge, evident in the handling of words / phrases such as *course à pied*, *douloureux*, *monter (un projet)*, *m'a vraiment plu*, *propre*, *communautaire*, *net*, *quartier*, and *tandis que*.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- incorporated specific details from the texts to support their ideas and opinions
- structured their responses logically and employed clear language to convey understanding
- presented contrasting perspectives effectively
- articulated their own viewpoint convincingly, utilising textual evidence
- included pertinent personal ideas related to the issues discussed in the text
- did not demonstrate an understanding of the underlying meaning of the texts.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- produced highly detailed responses that incorporated finer details from the text
- crafted responses closely mirroring the information in the text, prioritising alignment of opinions with the content of the text over the inclusion of personal ideas
- structured their thoughts with exceptional clarity and logic
- argued their personal viewpoint persuasively
- presented diverse perspectives effectively, and thoughtfully evaluated them
- exhibited a broad and precise vocabulary knowledge
- discerned nuances in grammatical structures and showed understanding of their impact on meaning
- demonstrated exceptional skills in clearly communicating their understanding.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- provided responses that demonstrated inadequate and / or insufficient evidence of comprehending the text
- made overly generalised statements
- did not show understanding of, or avoided, vocabulary items that were pivotal to the context of the passage, such as *viande*
- relied extensively on personal interpretations to discuss the text, almost entirely neglecting to reference ideas present in the texts.