



19.0 FRENCH (501)

In the year 2006, the KCSE French examination was tested in the following three papers.

501/1 (Paper 1) - Tested Listening Comprehension, Dictée and Composition.

501/2 (Paper 2) - Tested Reading Comprehension and Grammar

501/3 (Paper 3) - Tested Reading Aloud, Exposé and Conversation. 501/3 is an oral paper.

19.1 GENERAL CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE

The table below shows candidates' performance in French in the year 2006.

Table 22: Candidates' Overall Performance in French in the Year 2006

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean	Standard Deviation
2006	1		45	16.89	7.40
	2		30	10.05	5.59
	3		25	14.75	4.41
	Overall	2,259	100	41.63	16.00

19.2 PAPER 1 (501/1)

This paper consists of 3 sections.

19.2.1 Section 1: Listening Comprehension

Deals with different situations such as advertisements, interviews, news items, etc and is marked out of 15 marks.

Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to transfer their knowledge of grammar, which interfered with their ability to grasp the meaning of the passages.

Advice to Teachers

The syllabus expects the candidates to understand French spoken in different registers and at normal speed as spoken by a native French speaker. Teachers are advised to integrate grammar and listening comprehension and expose their students to all the readily available teaching/learning resources at the Alliance Française and the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE). They should encourage their students to listen to Radio France International available on FTI frequency in Nairobi and Mombasa.

19.2.2 Section 2: Dictée

Dictée consists of a passage spoken on the tape, including punctuation marks. The passage is read three times. The first time, it is read through for students to acquaint themselves with the text. The second time it is read in sections with pauses, calculated for the student to be able to write down what he/she heard. The last time it is read through once again. It is marked out of 5 marks. This is the first time Dictée has been integrated in the examination though many teachers do use it as a teaching tool.

Weaknesses

Candidates showed poor knowledge of punctuation in French and poor grasp of tenses.

Advice to Teachers

Since Dictéé is now part of the French examination, the onus is on the teachers to insist on speaking, pronunciation, gender agreements and capital letters in general basics of writing. A number of revision books are available in the market, which have recorded dictée passages.

19.2.3 Section 3: Composition

This section is marked out of 25 and in the year 2006 examination it consisted of the following questions.

Question 1

In 120–150 words, write in French on:

Either

(a) Vous vous êtes cassé la jambe et vous avez vu un médecin. Vous (A) en parlez à un(e) ami(e) (B) qui a eu le même problème. Ecrivez la conversation.

Or

(b) Vous (A) rencontrez votre ancien(ne) directeur (-trice) (B) de l'école primaire. Imaginez la conversation.

This question tested functional writing. The subjects were within the scope of the candidates.

Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to distinguish between appropriate language register (tu/vous). The dialogues were also to reflect past tenses.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers are advised to use guidelines in the manuals and the KIE handbook to give further practice to students.

Question 2

In 150–180 words, write in French on:

Either:

(a) Un souvenir scolaire

Or

(b) ending with "..... mais c'était trop tard; il ne restait plus rien.

This question expected the candidate to narrate an incident in past tense.

Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to use correct past tenses and lacked creativity in expression. They also failed to number their answers.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should expose candidates to correct usage of the two most common tenses, refer to a multitude of grammar books and past papers and expose their students to intensive and extensive reading. They should also advise their students to ensure that their chosen composition topics are clearly numbered.

19.3 PAPER 2 (501/2)

This paper consists of 2 sections.

19.3.1 Section 1: Reading Comprehension

This section was marked out of 15 marks and consisted of a number of passages.

Weaknesses

Candidates tended to pick chunks of lines from the passages instead of answering the questions.

Advice to Teachers

Candidates should be taught to look for key words based on interrogative adjectives e.g. qui, que, quoi, comment, où, quell, quand etc.

19.3.2 Section 2: Grammar

This section is marked out of 15 marks and candidates were supposed to complete sentences beginning as indicated and avoid repetitions by using pronoun.

Question 6

Beginning as indicated, complete the sentences below, making all appropriate changes. Avoid unnecessary repetitions.

Example: – As-tu mangé de la tortue?

– Non, je

– Non, je n'en ai pas mangé.

(a) – Votre ami(e) demande à son père. "Samedi, tu es là?"

– Il lui demande

(b) – Toi, est-ce que tu as offert quelque chose à tes visiteurs?

– Oui, je

(c) – Souvent, quand j'écris des rapports, un client téléphone.

– Hier, encore

(d) – Mais . . . tu ne vas pas te loger ici?

– Si, je

(e) – Il pleut beaucoup, Danielle; tu sors quand même?

– Oui, papa, bien qu'il

(f) – Elle vit à Besançon depuis quatre ans.

– C'est vrai?

– Bien sûr, ça

(g) – Les Kenyans, aiment-ils manger des escargots?

– Non,

Weaknesses

Candidates' responses showed that they had not thoroughly mastered the rules of grammar.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should give intensive lessons in grammar and encourage their students to read widely to improve their grammar.

Question 7

Match the sentences in column A with the correct ones in column B.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
(a) Elle a demandé le divorce	(i) car il est tard.
(b) Il y a eu une série d'accidents sur la route	(ii) grâce au beau temps.
(c) Nous devons aller nous coucher	(iii) parce que son mari le battait.
(d) Il faut apprendre deux langues	(iv) à cause de trop de travail.
(e) Elle est tellement fatiguée	(v) parce qu'il y a trop de chômage.
(f) La pauvreté augmente	(vi) car elle aime son mari.
	(vii) pour pouvoir trouver un bon métier aujourd'hui.
	(viii) à cause du brouillard.

Candidates were supposed to match sentences in column A with correct ones from column B.

Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to copy correctly and some did not match the responses in a logical manner.

Advice to Teachers

Students should be given practice in link words e.g. parce que, car, à cause de, pour, etc

Question 8

In the following text, fill in the blanks with appropriate words to make it meaningful.

Samedi dernier, à 9 heures, j'ai (i) _____ l'avion (ii) _____
Dar-es-salaam. J'y suis allé (iii) _____ matin. Pour être à l'heure, je suis parti
(iv) _____ la maison très (v) _____. Dans l'avion, je
(vi) _____ suis installé à l'avant, pas loin (vii) _____ pilote.
Le voyage (viii) _____ agréable et au bout (ix) _____ une
heure, l'avion (x) _____ atterri à Dar-es-salaam.

Candidates were required to fill in the blanks with appropriate one word responses to make the sentences meaningful.

Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to apply rules of grammar.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should give regular grammar exercises to students to accustom them to this kind of questions.

19.4 PAPER 3 (501/3)

This is an oral paper which tests the candidates knowledge of communicative and grammar skills, their ability to understand the input stimulus and instructions as well as demonstrate their productive skills in oral context. These aspects were examined in three sections.

- **Section 1:** Reading aloud (cards A & B).
- **Section 2:** Exposé (cards A B C & D).
- **Section 3:** Conversation.

Each candidate is given 15 minutes to prepare for the three sections. The candidate chooses cards at random for sections 1 & 2. Use of pens, papers and dictionaries is not allowed. Each candidate undergoes 15 minutes of examination.

19.4.1 Section 1: Reading Aloud

The candidates were to read aloud fluently in correct French, respecting liaison, intonation, articulation, punctuation and show comprehension. It could be a dialogue, a monologue or a description. Both cards have equal areas of difficulties.

Weaknesses

Cases of lack of respect for liaison and improper pronunciation of French words were noted.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should as much as possible expose the students to authentic oral French to enable them acquire proper pronunciation.

19.4.2 Section II: Exposé

The candidates were to pick one card at random and address the audience by carrying out the task, giving order of events, time and sequence. They were to use a variety of tenses and expressions. The candidates were to illustrate coherence, relevance and mastery of language skills as well as comprehension of their chosen topic.

Weaknesses

In card A, simple words like *oncle* and *number 300* were pronounced in English as well as other words like *commissariat*, *portemonnaie*, *police* and *justement* were mispronounced.

In card B, *donne*, *zoo*, *en plus*, *lunettesde soleil*, *toute*, *copine* were all mispronounced. Infinitive verbs were not respected either and *pour qui* became *pour quoi!*

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should help their learners to work on phonetics, liaison and nasal sounds. Audio cassettes available at Alliance Française and KIE can be used. They should give practice in speaking and reading aloud. They should also record students' voices so that they can listen to their mistakes and rectify them. Candidates lacked the vocabulary to express their views on the relationship between media, western influence, religion, drugs etc

19.4.3 Section 3: Conversations

The students are led by the examiners to talk on 3 to 4 topics from the syllabus. They are required to show understanding of questions and respond appropriately. They are to show mastery of grammar and idiomatic expressions.

Weaknesses

Many candidates had learnt some topics by heart, ignored examiners' questions and continued speaking. A lot of Anglicism use. Many schools only concentrate on the first 4 to 5 topics and candidates' floundered when accosted with others.

Advice to Teachers

Encourage participation of students in French debates, drama and music festivals.