



## 19.0 FRENCH (501)

In the year 2007 KCSE examination, French was tested in the following three papers:

- **Paper 1 (501/1)** – tested Listening Comprehension, Dictation and Composition.
- **Paper 2 (501/2)** – tested Reading Comprehension and Grammar.
- **Paper 3 (501/3)** – tested Reading Aloud, Exposé and Conversation. This is an Oral paper.

### 19.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows candidates' performance in French (501) in the years 2007 and 2006.

**Table 22: Candidates Overall Performance in French in the Years 2007 and 2006**

YEAR	PAPER	CANDIDATURE	MAXIMUM SCORE	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
2006	1	2,259	45	16.89	7.40
	2		30	10.05	5.59
	3		25	14.75	4.41
	<b>Overall</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>41.63</b>	<b>16.00</b>
2007	1	2,118	45	18.34	7.97
	2		30	13.32	6.75
	3		25	15.72	4.54
	<b>Overall</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>47.28</b>	<b>17.00</b>

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- 19.1.1 The general performance in the year 2007 improved when compared to that of the year 2006. This is attested by the overall mean of **47.28** in the year 2007 as compared to **41.63** in the year 2006.
- 19.1.2 The candidature reduced in the year 2007 when compared to that of the year 2006.
- 19.1.3 The mean scores for *papers 1 (501/1)* and *2 (501/2)* improved in the year 2007 when compared to the year 2006.

### 19.2 PAPER 1 (501/1)

This paper consists of three sections.

#### 19.2.1 Section 1: Listening Comprehension

This section 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 passages. They made spelling mistakes and seemed to be confused with the number and length of dashes provided for the answers. The pauses provided after each passage to enable the candidates to respond were not sufficient and thus contributed to the poor performance in this section.

## **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 FM frequency in Nairobi and Mombasa. The students should also be exposed to more exercises that require them to fill in blanks.

### **19.2.2 Section 2: Dictée**

Dictée consists of a passage recorded on a tape, including punctuation marks and is marked out of 5 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 with pauses calculated to enable the candidates to write down what he/she heard. The third and the last time, it is read through once more.

## **Weaknesses**

The students demonstrated a poor grasp of punctuation.

## **Advice to Teachers**

Teachers should insist on correct punctuation marks, gender and tense agreements as well as pronunciation so that the students are able to identify and associate sounds and spellings.

### **19.2.3 Section 3: Composition**

This section is divided into 2 questions, each testing a different type of writing. It is marked out of 25.

#### **Question 1**

In 120–150 words, write in French on:

#### **Either**

- (a) Vous passez vos vacances chez votre tante et vous avez beaucoup de problèmes avec sa famille. Ecrivez une lettre à votre père pour lui expliquer votre situation.

#### **Or**

- (b) Vous êtes à l'hôpital après un accident de route. Ecrivez une lettre à votre ami(e) sénégalais(e) pour lui parler de votre expérience.

This question tested writing a letter to a friend or to one's father on an accident or a family dispute. The register to be tested was 'tu' form. The subjects were within the scope of the candidates.

## Weaknesses

The candidates were unable to format a 'friendly' letter and preferred to answer the one with the family as a subject rather than the other with health and medical terminology.

## Advice to Teachers

Teachers are urged to use guidelines in the manuals and KIE Handbook to give further practice in formatting a "friendly" as well as a "formal" letter.

## Question 2

Write in French a composition of 150–180 words on:

### Either

(a) L'année dernière, vous êtes arrivé(e) dans une grande ville ou un village pour la première fois. Quelles ont été vos impressions?

### Or

(b) Begin as follows:

J'ai commencé l'école primaire . . .

This question was a narrative, using past tense in describing the first impressions of a town or a village and an open ended topic on primary school.

## Weaknesses

Candidates were unable to use correct past tenses and lacked creativity in expression in question 2 (b) which as an open ended question was not so popular. The students also lost marks for not correctly numbering the questions.

## Advice to Teachers

Exposure to correct usage of the two (02) most common past tenses as well as intensive and extensive reading should help the students in creativity. Clear numbering of compositions should be instilled in the students from Form 1.

## 19.3 PAPER 2 (501/2)

This paper consists of two sections.

### 19.3.1 Section 1: Reading Comprehension

This section, marked out of 15, consists of a number of passages which the students are to understand and answer correctly based on the content of the passage.

## Weaknesses

Candidates tended to lose marks for not formulating correct sentences even though they understood the questions.

## Advice to Teachers

Teachers are advised to give more intensive practice to students.

### 19.3.2 Section 2: Grammar

This section, of 3 questions, is marked out of 15

#### Question 6:

For each of the following questions, complete the response correctly. Avoid unnecessary changes.

##### Example:

Bakari: Julien, qui a pris mon livre?

Julien: C'est nous .....

C'est nous qui l'avons pris.

(a) Henri: Tiens, tu as lu les romans de Wole Soyinka?

Millicent: Moi? Oui, je .....

(b) M. Safi: Ecoutez! Protégez l'environnement!

Marchand: Qu'est-ce qu'il raconte?

Passant: Qu'il faut que nous .....

(c) Docteur: Reposez-vous pour deux jours!

Malade: Pardon, docteur. Qu'est-ce que vous dites?

Docteur: Je vous demande .....

(d) Vendeur: Quelle chemise préférez-vous?

Client: Je préfère ..... ne coûte pas cher.

(e) Maman: Maintenant, je ne joue pas au foot?

Fils: Et quand tu étais jeune, maman?

Maman: Bien sûr, quand j'étais .....

(f) Marie: Mon copain est sorti très tôt; il n'a pas pris son café.

Anne: Ah, bon!

Marie: Eh oui, il est sorti sans .....

(g) Jacques: Et alors, mes amis, vous attendez quelqu'un?

Les amis: Non, .....

## Weaknesses

Candidates continued to make unnecessary changes to the sentences and made errors in conjugating verbs.

## Advice to Teachers

Students to be given intensive training in correct use of grammar.

### Question 7

Fill in the blanks with **ONE** word only.

Je suis arrivé hier dans la famille ① \_\_\_\_\_ me loge. ② \_\_\_\_\_  
samedi, ③ \_\_\_\_\_ les enfants de mon ami, nous avons ④ \_\_\_\_\_  
le Musée des Arts ⑤ \_\_\_\_\_ nous nous sommes bien amusés.  
Demain, nous espérons ⑥ \_\_\_\_\_ la journée ⑦ \_\_\_\_\_ village,  
chez des amis. Le weekend, on ⑧ \_\_\_\_\_ des courses; on passera l'après-midi  
⑨ \_\_\_\_\_ la plage. Lundi, c'est le jour ⑩ \_\_\_\_\_ départ.

### Weaknesses

Inability to use an appropriate word to make the sentences meaningful was a drawback.

### Advice to Teachers

Regular grammar exercises to enable the students to find the right words is a must.

### Question 8

Match the questions in column "A" with the answers in column "B".

#### COLUMN A

- (a) Vous écrivez quelque chose?
- (b) Qui travaille chez Total?
- (c) Quand part l'avion?
- (d) Pourquoi est-ce que Daniel arrive en retard?
- (e) Comment faites-vous pour aller à Mombasa?
- (f) Votre famille est nombreuse, n'est-ce pas?

#### COLUMN B

- (i) Très tôt le matin.
- (ii) Elle est arrivée en retard.
- (iii) On peut y aller par le train.
- (iv) Bien sûr, nous sommes dix.
- (v) Il ne s'est pas réveillé de bonne heure.
- (vi) J'en ai dix.
- (vii) Oui, une histoire.
- (viii) Chez les amis.
- (ix) C'est Jean Paul.

### Weaknesses

Candidates were to match the questions in Column 1 with answers in Column 2 with distractors. They rewrote questions and answers without punctuation marks.

### Advice to Teachers

In the absence of an example, teachers should train students to write corresponding numbers and not sentences.

### 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 an oral context. These aspects were examined in 3 sections and was marked out of 25 marks.

- 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 after choosing a card at random for section 1 and 2. Use of pens, papers and dictionaries is not allowed. Each candidate is assessed for approximately 15 minutes.

#### 19.4.1 Section 1: Reading Aloud

The candidates were to read aloud in correct French, *respecting liaison, intonation, articulation, punctuation* as well as *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 were noted. In card A *ailleurs, vraiment, prochain, plus, rigoler, décision* were noted as badly pronounced. In card B *Etats-Unis, ailleurs, réaliser, résultats, rigoler, dessinateur, prochain, dessin, lignes, payés* were mispronounced.

##### Advice to Teachers

Teachers are advised to put more emphasis on phonetics and encourage a reading culture amongst the students.

#### Section 2: Exposé

Candidates were to pick a card at random from the 4 subjects provided and were to analyze and synthesize their ideas in a coherent and logical manner with appropriate vocabulary and expressions. The cards had such varied topics within their syllabus such as *AIDS, Problems in the village, Education for both girls and boys* and *Employment*.

##### Weaknesses

Some candidates were unable to talk for the required 2 minutes because they did not have enough vocabulary or mastery of language, while others mixed English and French words. Card D was worded in a negative way and thus may have hindered comprehension.

##### Advice to Teachers

Teachers should emphasize on oral expression whilst not forgetting to cover all the 10 topics. They should give a lot of speaking practice in form of debates and should encourage students' participation in French Days.

#### 19.4.3 Section 3: Conversations

Candidates were to understand examiner's questions and respond appropriately, building on the questions and sustaining conversation by talking in context more than the examiner.

##### Weaknesses

Many had learnt a few easy topics by heart and insisted on reciting them. A lot of anglicism was evident.

##### Advice to Teachers

Teachers should encourage candidates participation in interschool debates, drama and music festivals.