



SOUTH PACIFIC BOARD FOR  
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

*Chief Marker's  
Report  
2009*

**Pacific  
Senior  
Secondary  
Certificate**

© South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment, 2009  
26 McGregor Road, Box 2083 Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji.  
Telephone: (679) 3309622, 3315600, 3302141 Fax: (679) 3302898, 6793303635  
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means  
without the prior permission of the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment.

**F  
R  
E  
E  
N  
C  
H**

## **A. Examination paper**

### **1. Standard:**

This year 2009, I have been the chief Marker for the PSSC French examination paper. This year's paper was set based on the PSSC French prescription.

However, the standard of this year's paper very high compared to past years. The highest mark in 2009 is 48.5/60 and the lowest mark is 1.5/60. Out of 83 candidates, 3 scored below 10, 13 scored between 10 and 20, 20 scored between 20 and 30, and 47 scored over 30.

Section 1.3: RE-presenting information appeared to be the most difficult section of the paper followed by Section 1.2: Filling in gaps which has always caused difficulties for candidates.

Section 3: Novel, Short story, Poetry or Film was another section in which candidates performed very poorly. This section has always been the same in past papers and teachers are aware of it. However, candidates had a lot of difficulties formulating an argument and maintaining the argument throughout their text. Candidates did descriptions instead of developing an argument.

The format and the time allocation of the exam were the same as in past years' papers. There was an appropriate allocation of marks between all the sections.

No adjustment was made to the marking scheme of this paper.

### **2. Comments on Specific Questions:**

#### **Section 1.1: Reading Comprehension**

The choice of the text was good. However, it was quite difficult for some candidates. Most candidates found Q.1, Q.2, Q.5 and Q.6 difficult although the questions were formulated in English.

#### **Section 1.2: Filling in Gaps**

Section 1.2 was probably the less difficult section of the 2009 paper. Only very few candidates scored low in this section.

#### **Section 1.3: Re-Presenting information**

This section has always been one the easiest section of the paper. However, this wasn't the case this year. Most candidates scored very low marks in this section even though the format of the activity was clear.

#### **Section 2: Written expression**

This section had 3 choices of topics: A) Writing an informal letter; B) Report - newspaper; C) Writing instructions. Although there were 3 choices of topics most candidates chose Topic A). Not more than 5 candidates attempted topic C.

Although nearly all candidates chose Topic A, the content of the letter was not what was required from them. Candidates were asked to tell their friend about their **last holidays** and not their future holidays. Candidates were expected to use the past tense to complete the task. However, the past tense was used by very few.

A lot of candidates did not get the format aspect of the letter right. Moreover, letter writing could have been the only text type they have worked on.

### **Section 3: Novel, Short Story, Poetry or film study**

This section like Section 2 had 3 choices of topics. However, unlike section 2, the three topics were all attempted. Topic A was a novel study; Topic B was a film study and Topic C was short stories study. Although quite a few candidates scored well in this section, there was a lot of confusion between the types of literary works studied during the year. This has been the case for past years exams. Most candidates confused short stories with poems, short stories with novels, films watched in French in their French class during the year as opposed to series on their local television station.

Another requirement that was not respected by candidates was the expression of an argument. Candidates either express their argument at the end of their written text without supporting it or they expressed it somewhere at the beginning of their text but were not able to support it throughout the text. They did mostly a description type of text.

## **B. Marking Scheme**

There were no changes to the marking scheme. This was clear and easy to follow.

## **C. Recommendations**

From this report it is recommended that:

1. The chief examiner should be more careful about the level of language used in some of the sections of the exams.
2. Section 1.2 of the exam is replaced by another type of reading comprehension activity such as cross word puzzle.
3. Candidates are trained in all the types of exercises that are present in the exam paper especially in writing different types of texts in French and giving an opinion about an issue in French.
4. Candidates are exposed to more French literary works.