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1 Giving clear information and opinions

This unit will help you to convey clear information and opinions. The skills you will build are to:

- clearly address all the bullet points in the question
- express opinions clearly
- only use language that you know to be correct.

In the exam, you will be asked to tackle a writing task such as the one below. This unit will prepare you to plan and write your own response to this question, giving clear information and opinions.

Exam-style question

Les relations personnelles

Un forum francophone sur les relations personnelles pose la question «Qui aimes-tu bien et pourquoi?»

Écris un message pour le forum. Tu **dois** faire référence aux points suivants:

- les personnes que tu aimes bien
- les qualités personnelles de ces personnes
- ton/ta meilleur(e) ami(e) à l'école primaire
- les personnes que tu vas voir ce week-end

Écris 80-90 mots environ en français.

(20 marks)

The three key questions in the **skills boosts** will help you to give clear information and opinions.

1

How do I clearly address all the bullet points in the question?

2

How do I express opinions clearly?

3

How do I only use language that I know to be correct?

Look at the sample student answer on the next page.

Read one student's answer to the exam-style question on page 1.

Je m'entends bien avec mon frère, Thomas. On se chamaille quelquefois mais par contre, si j'ai des problèmes, je peux me confier à lui. Au collège, ma meilleure copine s'appelle Chloé. Elle est intelligente mais pas prétentieuse. En plus, elle est très généreuse et, en particulier, elle m'aide quand on fait nos devoirs. Chloé et moi, on s'est connues à l'école primaire. En fait, elle était timide quand elle était petite. Ensuite, on a commencé le collège ensemble et on est restées amies. D'ailleurs, ce week-end, je vais retrouver Chloé en ville et on va voir un feu d'artifice.

Lisa

- ① Has Lisa addressed all the bullet points in the question? Circle (A) the relevant words or phrases in the text and number (B) them 1–4.

- 1 les personnes que tu aimes bien
- 2 les qualités personnelles de ces personnes
- 3 ton/ta meilleur(e) ami(e) à l'école primaire
- 4 les personnes que tu vas voir ce week-end

- ② In the exam, you are expected to make references to the past (using the perfect and/or imperfect tenses) and the future. Write (C) the main tense/s, you will need next to each bullet point.

- les personnes que tu aimes bien
- les qualités personnelles de ces personnes
- ton/ta meilleur(e) ami(e) à l'école primaire
- les personnes que tu vas voir ce week-end

- ③ Lisa uses connectives to help convey how she feels about Thomas and Chloé. Complete the following two steps for (a–e) below.

- i Find and note down (B) the French equivalent for these words and phrases.
- ii Underline (A) the one that expresses a contrast.

- (a) but on the other hand,
- (b) moreover,
- (c) in particular,
- (d) in fact / as a matter of fact,
- (e) besides / as it happens,

1

How do I clearly address all the bullet points in the question?

Make sure that you:

- respond to all the bullet points and keep the information relevant
- choose the right tenses and the right verb forms to keep your message clear.

1 Here is Jack's answer to the exam-style question on page 1.

- Highlight  the relevant sections in his text and draw  lines to link them with the corresponding bullet points on the right.
- Circle  any bullet point(s) that he hasn't addressed in his answer.
- Cross out  any irrelevant information in his answer.

J'aime bien mon beau-père, Simon, parce qu'il a le sens de l'humour. On va au foot ensemble et même quand notre équipe perd, il est cool et il voit le bon côté des choses. Par contre, je ne m'entends pas du tout avec ma belle-mère, qui est toujours pessimiste. Mon meilleur copain s'appelle Dylan. On s'est rencontrés parce qu'on faisait du judo ensemble et maintenant on est dans la même classe au collège. Dylan est toujours de bonne humeur et il me fait rire. On va souvent au skatepark le week-end.

• les personnes que tu aimes bien

• les qualités personnelles de ces personnes

• ton/ta meilleur(e) ami(e) à l'école primaire

• les personnes que tu vas voir ce week-end

2 You will have to write about the past as well as the future, using correct verb forms and time markers to make your meaning completely clear.

Correct tenses are one of the most important skills for the Higher Writing exam. Revise main tense forms of key verbs such as *avoir, être, faire, aller, ...*

- The sentence beginnings below tell us when an action is taking place. Draw  lines to match each one with a sentence ending.
- Label  each full sentence **Pr** (present), **Pa** (past – the perfect and/or the imperfect) or **F** (future).

A La semaine dernière,

B Quand j'ai rencontré Maxime,

C Le week-end prochain,

D S'il fait beau,

E En général, je m'entends bien

F Quand ils étaient plus jeunes,

a avec mes frères et sœurs.

b je vais rendre visite à ma tante préférée.

c nous allons faire du camping samedi prochain.

d nous étions à l'école primaire et j'avais six ans.

e mes grands-parents faisaient beaucoup de sport.

f nous sommes allés au cirque.

2

How do I express opinions clearly?

Express your opinions clearly by putting across a coherent viewpoint. Using a few well-chosen connectives (linking words) will help you do that.

- 1 Read this student's paragraph about an evening out in town. The writer has given only vague opinions and sometimes no opinion at all.
- a Read the more developed opinions A–E and translate  them into English on paper.
- b Write  the letter of each opinion in the box where it fits best in the text.

En septembre, il y a un festival dans ma ville. C'est intéressant. (1) Samedi, je suis sorti avec mon copain Kemal. Nous avons regardé un spectacle de cirque. C'était super. (2) On a aussi écouté un concert de rock fusion par Daft Punk. C'était bien. (3) Après, j'ai emmené Kemal au café et nous avons retrouvé ma copine Carla. C'était sympa. (4) Nous avons pris le bus à minuit et nous sommes rentrés. (5)

- A D'ailleurs, j'ai acheté le CD.
- B Franchement, nous étions contents mais très fatigués.
- C Les acrobates en particulier étaient formidables.
- D En plus, il y avait une bonne ambiance.
- E En fait, c'est la meilleure période pour visiter la ville.

The phrase *d'ailleurs* introduces a new example that reinforces the point you are making.

Useful connectives:

d'ailleurs – besides / as it happens
franchement – to be frank
en particulier – in particular
en plus – moreover
en fait – in fact

- 2 Connectives can be used to introduce a contrasting opinion as well as a similar one. In these sentences, circle  the correct connective according to the meaning.
- a Le concert était super. **En particulier**, / **Cependant**, les billets étaient très chers.
- b J'ai bien aimé la patinoire en plein air. **Malheureusement**, / **En fait**, il faisait très froid.
- c Je voudrais aller au spectacle *Forêt enchantée*. **D'un autre côté**, / **En plus**, ça commence à 22 heures, c'est tard!
- d Samedi, je vais en ville avec mes copines. **Par contre**, / **D'ailleurs**, ça tombe bien, j'ai besoin d'un nouveau jean.
- e Le nouveau cinéma est très moderne. **En fait**, / **En revanche**, je trouve que les sièges ne sont pas confortables.
- f J'ai visité une expo photos. Mes parents ont adoré. **En plus**, / **Franchement**, moi, j'ai trouvé ça très ennuyeux.

More connectives:

malheureusement – unfortunately
par contre – by contrast
en revanche – by contrast
cependant – however
d'un autre côté – on the other hand

- 3 On paper, add  another sentence to each sentence below, giving a clear opinion either positive or negative. Use an appropriate connective each time.

- a Ma copine Lucie est très généreuse. c Je n'aime pas la nouvelle pizzeria.
- b Je m'entends bien avec Paul. d Ma sortie préférée le samedi soir, c'est ...

3

How do I only use language that I know to be correct?

To get the highest grade in the exam, use impressive French, but don't overreach yourself. Only use complex language if you are sure it is correct.

- ① You can combine the **imperfect** with the **perfect** tense to set the scene for an action. Complete  the sentences using the correct tense of the verb given.

Example: Quand j'~~avais~~ douze ans, je ~~me suis cassé~~ la jambe. (When I was 12, I broke my leg.)

- a Nous [marcher] au bord de la mer quand nous [voir] un sous-marin jaune.
- b Hier, il [rester] au lit parce qu'il [être] malade.

- ② You can use the **imperfect** tense to talk about how things used to be. Complete  the sentence to write **two** things about your childhood.

Example: Quand j'étais petit, je rêvais d'être astronaute.

Quand j'étais petit(e),
et

- ③ Reuse French sentence patterns you have seen in your lessons. For example, each English **-ing** form in the table translates differently into French according to the **context**. Now complete the two steps below for **a–e**.

Learn language in chunks, as part of a phrase or even a sentence, to familiarise yourself with French sentence patterns.

A Likes and dislikes	We enjoy cooking.	<i>Nous aimons faire la cuisine.</i>
B Descriptions	He's sitting on the bed.	<i>Il est assis sur le lit.</i>
C Leisure activities	They go skating after school.	<i>Elles font du skate après l'école.</i>
D Ongoing action in present	We are walking in the park.	<i>On se promène au parc.</i>
E Ongoing action in past	He was eating when we arrived.	<i>Il mangeait quand on est arrivés.</i>

- i Label  the following sentences **A–E** according to the context they belong to.

- ii Then use the examples in the grid to help you translate  them into French.

- a  He goes swimming on Mondays.
- b  My grandparents love reading.
- c  He was running when he fell over.
- d  She's wearing a blue jumper.
- e  They're doing their homework.

- ④ Take evasive action! If you are unsure about how to use the subjunctive, replace it with something simpler. Look at the example, then, on paper, write  two French sentences to match **a** and **b**.

Example: 'Mum wants me to do sport' requires the subjunctive: *Maman veut que je fasse du sport.*
Instead, you can write 'Mum says I must do sport' – *Maman dit que je dois faire du sport.*

- a I would like my friend to be kinder. → I think my friend must be kinder.
- b My friend wants us to go on holiday together. → My friend says we must go on holiday together.

Sample response

Now look at this exam-style writing task, similar to the one you saw on page 1.

Exam-style question

Les sorties en ville

Un forum francophone pose une question sur les sorties en ville.

Écris un message pour le forum. Tu **dois** faire référence aux points suivants:

- ce qu'on peut faire le soir dans ta ville
- les aspects positifs et négatifs de ces sorties
- ta dernière sortie
- ce que tu vas faire ce week-end.

Écris 80–90 mots environ **en français**.

(20 marks)

Il y a des choses intéressantes à faire dans ma ville. Par exemple, je vais souvent au café Chez Fred avec mes amis, parce qu'on peut y jouer au baby-foot. En plus, je trouve que les boissons ne sont pas chères. Samedi dernier, c'était mon anniversaire et j'ai vu un film au cinéma du centre commercial. Malheureusement, c'est loin et il faut prendre le bus. Ce week-end, je vais aller à un concert de rock. Mon père dit que je ne dois pas sortir tard le soir, mais d'un autre côté, je pense que c'est une soirée exceptionnelle!

Leah

- ① Has Leah addressed all the bullet points in the question? Note  one example from her answer that addresses each point.

ce qu'on peut faire le soir	
les aspects positifs	
les aspects négatifs	
ta dernière sortie	
ce que tu vas faire ce week-end	

- ② Which connectives does Leah use to express her opinions clearly? Note down  four examples.

.....

.....

- ③ Leah uses good French sentence patterns. Find and note down  one example of each of the following.

- a** combining the imperfect tense with the perfect tense
- b** saying 'you have to'
- c** saying 'I'm going to'
- d** saying 'My father doesn't want me to go out late at night' (without using the subjunctive)

Your turn!

You are now going to plan and write your own response to the exam-style question from page 1.

- ① First jot down  your ideas in French.

Who will you write about? Two people are enough.

What are their qualities?

What was your friend like and what did you do together? Use both imperfect and perfect tenses.

.....

The fourth bullet invites you to talk about the future. One sentence can be enough.

.....

- ② Write  your answer to the exam-style question. Then check  your work using the checklist.

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Checklist

In my answer do I ...



answer all the bullet points?

give only relevant information?

express clear opinions?

use connectives (such as *en particulier* or *par contre*)?

talk about the past, using the imperfect and the perfect tenses?

combine the imperfect and perfect tenses in one sentence?

talk about the future, using *aller* + infinitive?

use accurate verb forms?

use phrases that I know to be correct because I recognise the context they come from?

use phrases that I know to be correct because I learned them as a chunk?

Review your skills

Check up

Review your response to the exam-style question on page 7. Tick ✓ the column to show how well you think you have done each of the following.

	Not quite ✓	Nearly there ✓	Got it! ✓
clearly addressed all the bullet points	☐	☐	☐
expressed opinions clearly	☐	☐	☐
only used language that I know to be correct	☐	☐	☐

Need more practice?

On paper, plan and write ✎ your response to the exam-style question below.

Exam-style question

Une personne que tu admires

Un forum francophone pose la question «Quelle personne admires-tu le plus?»

Écris un message pour le forum. Tu **dois** faire référence aux points suivants:

- la personne que tu admires
- les qualités de cette personne
- les actions les plus intéressantes de cette personne
- l'influence de cette personne sur tes projets d'avenir.

Écris 80–90 mots environ **en français**. (20 marks)

To write a good answer, try to include:

- a variety of structures
- examples of complex structures
- accurate language and structures to talk about past, present and future events
- creative language use, for example to express thoughts, ideas and feelings
- language used to interest and to convince the reader.

How confident do you feel about each of these **skills**? Colour in ✎ the bars.

1 How do I clearly address all the bullet points in the question? 	2 How do I express opinions clearly? 	3 How do I only use language that I know to be correct?
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