

FRENCH LITERATURE (MAURITIUS)

Paper 2020/01
Component Name

Key messages

- 1 Clear arguments and personal engagement are required for best responses
- 2 For emphatic questions, many candidates did not adequately address the emphatic focus of the questions.
- 3 They must abstain from producing general responses on themes and characters and rather concentrate on the specific element emphasised by the wording of the question.
- 4 There was limited reference to the emphatic element, leading to unbalanced essays where large sections of the answer were not directly relevant to the task set.
- 5 Many candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the text and were able to identify relevant ideas. Weaker answers relied on lengthy narration and did not sufficiently address the key focus of the question, particularly the emphasis on personal interpretation.

General comments

Overall, candidate performance in the 2025 French Literature Paper 1 showed a mixed but encouraging level of engagement with the five set texts: *Les Femmes Savantes*, *Le Château de ma mère*, *Le Liseur du 6h27*, *Le Fils du pauvre* and *Namasté*. Many candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the narratives, characters, and main themes. However, the challenging questions remain the emphatic ones. Many candidates fail to express the emotions and thoughts of the characters at specific moments of the text. It is important to note that they were required to answer three questions on three texts from **Section A** and **Section B** for the Paper 1.

Responses on *Les Femmes Savantes* revealed a good understanding of major characters such as Clitandre in **Question 1** and Philaminte; however, many candidates struggled to explore the evolution of Philaminte's character at the end of the play in **Question 2** and tended to focus excessively on earlier conflicts. In *Le Château de ma mère*, candidates were generally comfortable with character portraits and narrative detail especially for Joseph, though empathetic tasks, particularly those based on Lili, showed difficulties in adopting the appropriate emotional tone.

Questions on *Le Liseur du 6h27* were often well handled, especially analytical responses on Guylain's working conditions, while empathetic writing based on Julie proved more demanding. For *Le Fils du pauvre*, many candidates produced relevant and thoughtful responses though some were not able to fully evaluate the deeper emotional consequences of Fouroulou's changing family circumstances. Finally, *Namasté* responses showed good understanding of Ram's isolation and suffering, but some empathetic answers based on the same text, lacked precision in voice and perspective.

Comments on specific questions

Molière, *Les Femmes Savantes*

Question 1

This is a two-part question where candidates engaged well with the first part, the 'portrait'.

To show a good understanding of the first part of the question, candidates were expected to convey the good character of Clitandre, who is a sincere and honest person. He is determined to marry Henriette and is clear about his feelings for her while also ready to seek out support from Henriette's family, namely her dad, in order to make their union possible.

A very good portrait of Clitandre would be complete if the candidate mentioned that he is eloquent in his dislike of Trissotin and that he also shows courage in confronting his lover's mother, Philaminte.

The second part of the question refers to a description of Clitandre which was flung out to him by Armande, who feels jilted by him. Candidates were expected to state a clear opinion about whether they agreed with Armande or not. While some candidates agreed with Armande as they believed that Clitandre's feelings switched too easily from one sister to the other, many other responses shaped Clitandre into a genuine lover who only wanted to share his life with someone who had the same outlook on life as him.

Question 2

This empathetic question was widely attempted by candidates who chose a question on *Les Femmes Savantes*. Philaminte is a pivotal character in the play and pretty much all candidates showed their knowledge of her deep obsession with learning and how she dominates her household. While her decisions drive much of the conflict, she is known for her rigidity and her pride throughout the play. This is until the very last act, where she finally discovers the true intentions behind Trissotin's alleged love for her daughter Henriette. The majority of the candidates' responses focused on Philaminte's character throughout the play; however, very few explored the shift in her character that occurs in the end.

A good answer would express her relief that, thanks to Ariste, Trissotin's real intentions were divulged, and he finally ran away. Moreover, she is finally happy to discover that Clitandre is in fact, a good man with genuine feelings for her daughter and she would feel a bit ashamed that she let her philosophical pursuits blind her and carve distance between her family and her.

To achieve high scores, candidates were required to articulate Philaminte's precise emotional state at the play's conclusion. Few responses successfully captured these final feelings. The majority mistakenly focused on her earlier anger towards Henriette's refusal of Trissotin. Consequently, despite being a popular question, the overall performance was predominantly below average.

Pagnol, *Le Château de ma mère*

Question 3

Joseph's presence is strong throughout the whole novel, but this question was less popular than the empathetic question.

Candidates were successful in illustrating that Joseph is a dedicated educator who prioritizes diligence and Marcel's academic achievement. Though his demanding nature frequently irritates Marcel, Joseph persists in instilling these values in his son, who eventually complies. Some responses showed an ability to consider and alternative explanations. Best responses addressed the specific question asked and focused on the extent Joseph rejects religious doctrine, placing his unwavering faith in the principles of law and order instead.

The second part of this question required answers that showed that although Joseph was reluctant to break the law and trespass on other people's properties. Fewer candidates were able to show how he relented to make the journey to Bastide Neuve easier for his whole family. Also, despite being generally strict, he did not punish his son when he tried to escape to become an 'ermite' and recognized Lili's kindness and loyalty amidst all his spelling mistakes. Candidates should avoid vague statements and rather concentrate on the key elements of the question.

This proved to be a scoring question as the responses could be well illustrated with numerous many examples from the novel.

Question 4

When it comes to *Le château de ma mère*, more candidates chose to answer the empathetic question. At this precise moment in the story, when Marcel decides to wrap up and go back home, Lili is surprised and filled with incomprehension. He wonders why after all the planning and the risks they have taken; Marcel suddenly decides to cancel his project of becoming an 'ermite' and instead chooses to go back home, to accept that the holidays are over, go back to school and thus to say goodbye to Lili.

Lili is disappointed because he has organized everything and Marcel seemed to be so sure of himself and so brave. However, being a gentle soul, Lili understands that he and Marcel were brought up in different ways and that Marcel might have been feeling a bit overwhelmed by having to live by himself at night in the outdoors.

He cannot help being a bit hurt by Marcel's accusatory tone, but again, he tries to understand his friend and ends up forgiving him. Lili feels sad at Marcel's looming departure but reassures himself by thinking that they will soon see each other during the winter holidays.

Many candidates have given an angry and frustrated tone to Lili. Few candidates managed to find Lili's correct tone of voice, one that showed confusion, disappointment, hurt and sadness.

Didierlaurent, *Le liseur du 6h27*

Question 5

Many excellent responses showed that Guylain finds his job very painful and that is why he hates it. His job consists of destroying books and he really hates the monotonous nature of the work. He loves reading and literature but unfortunately, he spends his whole day destroying books, which makes his job painstaking. Guylain must endure the noise of the 'Zestor 500', which, due to his repugnance for the work, he names 'La chose'. Moreover, the presence of unpleasant colleagues like his boss Kowalsaki who is authoritarian and aggressive and Brunner his subordinate, who covets his position, makes his job onerous.

The second part of the question expected to show what helped him to endure his job. The recovered pages made his days bearable and gave him a purpose in life. Every morning, he reads excerpts aloud to travellers of the train, who listen to him with passion. Thanks to his talent for reading, he is invited to participate in literary meetings every weekend. Later, he will meet a literature lover, Julie and he will fall in love.

The best answers integrated both parts of the question. Some responses showed consistent analysis whereas weaker answers were characterised by a tendency towards generalised comment.

Question 6

This empathetic question required adopting Julie's perspective in explaining her thoughts upon receiving her USB drive from a young man at her workplace. This question was less frequently chosen and those who attempted it showed some confusion as per the young man who came to return her USB drive along with a flower bouquet and a letter.

A good answer would recall her surprise on seeing a young man in the basement of the shopping centre where she works as a toilet attendant. Julie is also happy to find her USB drive, which contains hours of work, back. She is captivated by his devotion and innocence. She is astonished by the giant flower bouquet which is an avalanche of fresh flowers that covers almost the entire space of the table. She finds him sincere, modest and honest. She will call her friend Josy who will find this guy either a lunatic or the most extraordinary one. She is moved while reading the letter. She finds that this man shares the same interest as hers in literature and according to her he is both romantic and unromantic. She will not hesitate to make his acquaintance.

Feraoun, *Le fils du pauvre*

Question 7

This question was widely chosen and was relatively accessible. Candidates needed to focus on aspects of the question, whether Fouroulou's experience confirms this observation or not. Many responses showed consistent analysis of episodes before and after the death of the grandmother. The foremost argument should show that the childhood of Fouroulou is a happy one. In fact, though being from a poor family and living with a lack of luxury, Fouroulou is loved and spoiled by his family members. Ramdane, his father and Lounis, his uncle, live united under the same roof. Furthermore, Fouroulou is a spoiled child, and he has privileges and power because he is a boy. Many candidates were able to identify the roles of Nana and Khalti who love him, and how he spends his childhood mostly at their house which he considers a 'havre sûr'. His friend Akli always supports him, be it during fights or in his studies.

To score higher, candidates were expected to focus on the episodes after the death of the grandmother showing that the Menrad family is not the same anymore. The division of the house impoverished both parties and they started facing financial difficulties. Fouroulou's life changes and he faces precarity and he experiences his father's hardships in trying to obtain the daily couscous and food. The death of his maternal aunt Nana and the mental disorder of Khalti cause sadness in Fouroulou. When Ramdane fell sick causing 'un deuil permanent', he was torn between his studies and taking his father's job.

Excellent responses should show how he does not share his teacher's opinion. He has known loss, disagreement, poverty, shame, and distress. Through his own experience, he knew that children are sensitive 'to the miseries of their parents' and suffer the consequences.

Question 8

This empathetic question was quite unpopular and only a small number of candidates attempted this question, with limited success. Chabha is a secondary character in *Le Fils du pauvre* and she has contributed to the carefree childhood memories. Fouroulou has been the sole source of affection, respect, and appreciation for her gentle and positive qualities. Candidates need to understand that Chabha, being a girl, cannot go beyond the village boundaries. She is destined to an inescapable destiny defined by domestic chores and denied personal ambition. This did not seem to be fully understood.

Strong answers would capture her profound sadness and how she is left helpless on Fouroulou's departure. Compounded by the constant neglect from her sisters and mother, she perceives her suffering, being continuously punished and feeling unwanted. Fouroulou was the only family member who took an interest in her and appreciated her gentleness and her lack of resentment. She recalls her repeated isolation and precarity marked by a frail appearance and inadequate clothing. She knows that she will be confined at home. Despite these hard circumstances, she holds pride for Fouroulou's successful journey and understands that their separation is dictated by social norms and education. She resolves to cherish the sweet memories of their shared past while bravely facing her own static destiny in the village.

Cabon, Namasté

Question 9

This was a popular question and many candidates successfully explained how Ram survived after the death of his wife Oumaouti and the attitude of the villagers towards him. Ram, who was initially lauded as a hero by the villagers, was shattered when a devastating cyclone took the life of his wife and unborn child. Grieved by this misfortune, Ram fell sick, a sickness caused by overwhelming grief and guilt and gradually lost his sanity. Good answers also mentioned that he became completely dependent on others for food. Moreover, candidates were required to explain his isolation until he claims himself to be a 'sadou' in the mountain. During a fleeting period of stability, he faces exploitation by Sitaram whose wife, amidst the cruelty of the latter, was however kind to him. The loyalty of his friends, Prem, Kissoune and Cassim, is laudable as they sought remedies to his madness and provided dutiful care for him.

As for the second part of the question, many candidates were able to explore the attitudes of the villagers towards Ram with the most common answers being the ungratefulness and wariness of the women of the village who claim that he is dangerous. Some excellent answers reported the selfish attitude of Pitia and Sitaram. Ram becomes prey of mockery from the children of the village. Furthermore, many candidates heavily criticized the disloyalty of the villagers who have forgotten that Ram had previously enriched their lives by bringing culture, music, and education to the community.

Question 10

Candidates demonstrated a mixture of initial fear and anxiety coupled with gratitude. A few responses were characterized by a tendency to a generalised tone and thoughts of a typical mother whose child spends more time at Ram's place.

Many responses were successful in showing that at this moment, Saheytra is trapped by the collective opinion that views Ram as a threat. His education and musical talent are perceived as tools to destabilize the order. Many responses demonstrated that Saheytra is at first suspicious about him due to his unusual gifts like talking to the birds. Despite all the rumours, Saheytra acknowledges Ram's fundamental qualities: he is strong, hardworking, and independent. This allows her to begin trusting him. Her own observations and her love for her child compel her to put aside the prejudices laid by the villages. Many candidates expressed their feelings as she is relieved to see her child under the guidance of Ram who teaches him about culture and

nature. She recalls how Ram braved a cyclone to save them and she is full of gratitude. Moreover, several answers showed that she is happy as Ram takes a paternal role. Ultimately, she becomes friends with Oumaouti, the future wife of Ram, which anchors Ram in a normal, respectable relationship in the eyes of the village.

FRENCH LITERATURE (MAURITIUS)

Paper 2020/02
Component Name

General comments

The 2025 French Literature Paper 2 (2020/02) was found to be relatively challenging for the candidates this year. Candidates had to choose one extract from five prescribed texts and answer a series of questions based on the abstract or the text as a whole. It was noted that most candidates opted to answer questions on *Les Femmes Savantes* and *Le Fils du Pauvre*. *Le Château de ma mère* was also relatively popular. In comparison to last year, the overall performance was slightly less good. Some questions were found to be challenging, and candidates' performance was below expectation.

In most extracts, candidates once again struggled with the multi-part nature of items **(a)** and **(b)**. Furthermore, it can be said that candidates had not fully grasped the texts and the purpose of the questions. Item **(c)**, which focuses on vocabulary interpretation, was also a weak point. Candidates did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the words in context. As for items **(d)** and **(e)**, where personal opinion on the themes in each extract and the text as a whole is required, responses were mostly brief and underdeveloped.

We strongly advise candidates to choose an extract wisely and to answer all parts and subparts separately and in an orderly manner. This is the most effective way to proceed so as not to omit any parts.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: *Les Femmes Savantes*, Molière

This question was widely chosen. Candidates who have shown a good knowledge of the text and a sound command of vocabulary have performed well.

- (a)** Candidates had to show a strong understanding of the text. For the first part, they had to mention the following elements of answer: Clitandre loves Henriette and wishes to marry her. She urges him to propose, and he wants to meet Chrysale, her father. But she advises him to meet her mother, Philaminte, who can be an obstacle to their union. He meets with Bélise to seek help, but the latter thinks Clitandre is in love with her. Ariste's meeting with Chrysale is to talk about Clitandre and they briefly discuss Bélise's madness and Philaminte who might be an obstacle.

For the second part of the question, candidates had to explain that the dialogue helps to understand Ariste's role as an intermediary in this situation about the wedding. We can also picture Philaminte's difficult character and understand that Chrysale is in favour of the wedding as he is a caring and sensitive father and thinks about his daughter's future. He pretends to have authority over his wife and he underestimates her authority and assertiveness.

- (b)** This question required a good knowledge of the text and of the character of Bélise. In this extract, Bélise thinks Clitandre is in love with her and that he does not love Henriette. She also imagines that all men are in love with her, but she has no proof. Some good candidates by pointed out Bélise's blindness and how she lives in an illusionary world. Her exaggeration and her madness contribute in making her a comic character. Very few candidates answered this question fully.
- (c)** Candidates were able to handle some of the simple vocabulary but the more complex terms proved difficult for many candidates. Candidates are advised to be precise while explaining words and expressions. Stronger candidates gave a good interpretation of words and expressions

- (d) This question also required a good knowledge of the text and of the relationship between Philaminte and Martine. Most of the answers were short and lacked details. For a strong response, candidates need to elaborate their answers and communicate the ideas clearly to examiners. It is also advised to answer clearly and separately to the different parts of the question to answer it fully.

For the first part of the question, we expected the following elements of answer: Martine has just been revoked by Philaminte. She is accused of being irresponsible regarding the kitchen chores, she makes too many grammatical mistakes when she talks. Her work is not valued; she has been ill-treated and humiliated and Philaminte has threatened to beat her if she does not leave immediately.

For the second part of the question, most of the candidates concentrated on Philaminte's excessive authority; she is cruel, she does not respect Martine and asserts her dominance over the servant. The best responses also identified the difference in social status - Philaminte's upper-class attitude - she is overreacting and she values theoretical knowledge. These candidates elaborated on the nuances of Philaminte's behaviour with well-sustained quotations from the extract.

- (e) Many candidates focused on treating the characters separately rather than emphasising the relationship between Chrysale and Philaminte. They mainly focused on Philaminte's dominance, her superiority over her husband and that she rules over the house. On the other hand, Chrysale is a submissive husband and he fears Philaminte. Many answers were very limited and lacked personal response. We also noted that many candidates tend to be repetitive while answering the question. A few good candidates elaborated well on the incompatibility between the two characters and the tensions in their relationship. They analysed the speech, attitude and language of both characters and showed how Philaminte dominates the scene. They also explored the social context of patriarchal control and the unusual nature of a woman's defiance in the seventeenth century.

Question 2: *Le Château de ma mère*, Marcel Pagnol

This was also a widely chosen question but was poorly answered on the whole. Many candidates did not succeed in identifying the exact moment of the extract.

- (a) For the first part of the question, candidates had to explain that it was the Christmas holidays and the Pagnol family was back at the Bastide-Neuve in Provence. There was a week break and in the extract, they had organised a wood fire after a day of hunting.

For the second part of the question, candidates had to say that the hunters are the father and the uncle, Joseph and Jules. Both names had to be mentioned. They also had to say that the hunters are in a gully under the Tête Rouge or deep in the Lancelot ravine. Marcel and Lili are the ones to set the traps. Both names had to be mentioned.

- (b) Most candidates did not show a sound knowledge of the text. They seem to be confused with the first part of the novel, where Marcel and Lili met with an owl. Many candidates did not clearly explain their answers. Here, it was expected that candidates show that they knew that a buzzard is a bird of prey and a dangerous animal, as it is large and can attack in flight. Marcel describes it as 'un oiseau meurtrier'. This buzzard makes Marcel think of the owl that attacked him in the Taoumé grotto. He was frightened of it and now he kills the buzzard in revenge because he had been so afraid the first time. When he fled from home, he had been afraid that the owl would attack him in the cave and he had thought of killing the owl to be able to stay there, but now he kills the buzzard ferociously to get rid of the danger. Furthermore, he wants to show that he is courageous now because he was afraid at the beginning. Some candidates were able to show sound knowledge.
- (c) Most candidates failed to explain key terms accurately due to lack of vocabulary.
- (d) Here also the question was in two parts, and many candidates did not focus on giving a personal response to the question.

For the first part of the question, candidates were expected to say that Augustine knows how much Marcel and the family love life in the hills. During the previous holidays, she had felt sad about Marcel's reaction at the end of the holidays. She can see how the fresh air is good for everyone.

Even her own health is much better and she eats well. Her intervention allows the family to enjoy the hills, and it makes the children happy. We can see the motherly love of Augustine, her tendency to protect her children and thanks to her, the family is reunited. Good responses mentioned some of these elements.

A few candidates have elaborated personal opinions. For this part of the question, they were expected to say that Augustine is usually shy, docile and does not occupy the forefront. Here, we are rather surprised by her ability to make the necessary moves to allow Joseph to stay longer in the hills. Most of the time Joseph makes all the decisions, and she takes care of the house and the children. But in this passage, she is the one to take initiatives. Her decision to meet with the director's wife is something that Joseph would not have done, nor would he have approved, had he known about it. Even if we are surprised by Augustine's move, we admire her and we understand her determination to make her family happy. It is a new aspect of her character that we see here, a mysterious side which shows her imagination and intelligence but also the urgency to enjoy life to the fullest.

Both parts of the question should have been addressed for a good response.

(e) Candidates did well in this question.

Successful answer contained some of the following elements; hunting brings the characters joy as they have much success. They can spend so much time in nature and kill many birds so, as hunters, they feel blessed. They come back home each day with a feeling of satisfaction and pride. Marcel is happy to kill the buzzard as it is his revenge. Furthermore, they have a good time during the evenings with the family, playing games, music, feeling relaxed and having good food by the woodfire. Augustine feels well, her health is better and her children are happy.

On the other hand, when it is time to go back home, they are all sad. They have to get back to the routine of work and school. Marcel is sad when he packs the luggage as it is the end of the holidays. The good times in the countryside are short, and it makes Augustine realise that life is short. She is sick and wants to enjoy the good times.

Both aspects of the question needed to be answered. In strong response candidates focused on all parts and sub-parts of these questions, developed their ideas fully with details and support from the extract. Weaker answers only mentioned some elements without fully developing them.

Question 3: *Le Liseur du 6h27*, Didierlaurent

Few candidates attempted this question. The few candidates who attempted the question, provided good responses.

(a) Here, candidates were expected to say that Guylain leads a monotonous life. He works in a factory where old books are destroyed for recycling purposes. His only source of happiness is reading for people on the train before work. He is not married and leads a simple life with his red fish, Rouget de Lisle. One morning, he discovers a USB key of garnet colour in the usual 6h27 train.

In good strong responses candidates stated that Guylain loses his focus when he picks the key. He reads the pages in an automatic way, not deriving much pleasure from it as usual, as his mind is set on discovering what is inside the USB. He is eager to open it and his day goes by like in a blur. He does not even listen to the people around him and quickly goes home, rushes to put on his computer.

(b) Candidates have mentioned that they are the different pages that are not destroyed by the Zerstor, the machine that destroys the books. Some pages are not totally destroyed and Guylain waits until the end of the day, when he cleans the machine to pick them up and collect them, without his boss seeing him. The machine is supposed to crush the books for recycling purposes but some pages escape destruction. These pages are precious leftovers of books that have existed. Guylain reads passages from these pages every morning on the train of 6h27. These pages create a good atmosphere during the trip, making the passengers smile and feel happy. Even if these people are strangers to Guylain, he gives them happiness and in return, he feels happy too. They allow him to make his days less monotonous and also for the passengers. Thanks to these pages, Guylain has new friends and becomes a member of a literary group. Through these pages he can valorise the authors who wrote the books. Most candidates answered these questions well.

- (c) Candidates performed reasonably well in this question.
- (d) Most of the candidates chose to describe the three colleagues without focusing on the question itself: the boss Kowalski is always shouting after them. He is a tyrannical boss who is obsessed with his work. He is compared to the Zerstor, always crushing, making noise. Every morning, he insults Guylain and the latter avoids this hateful character.
Brunner is second in the hierarchy at work. He has an arrogant attitude and a mocking smile. He likes to comment negatively on everything and Guylain considers him as stupid but dangerous. He likes to make fun of people and at the same time bow and scrape. He is compared to a snake, ready to bite at every wrong step. Guylain stays away from him.
Yvon Grimbert is the guardian. He likes classical theater and breaks into tirades all day long. He is most of the time silent. Guylain like the mad side of Yvon. They are friends as they both like literature, but Yvon is sometimes irritating.
In strong responses, candidates explained that during this day, when Guylain found the USB, none of the three colleagues have influenced his mood. He was so eager to go home and discover what was on the key that he did his work automatically and the bad mood of the others did not affect him.
- (e) Candidates with a sound knowledge of the text performed well in this question. The elements of answer were: the author of the '1.doc' is a woman. She is single and no longer believes in love. She has lost hope of finding love one day. She is a person with regular habits, and she has been doing her job for quite some time, counting the ceramics regularly. Routine forms part of her life and brings reassurance. She knows about the equinox, showing some culture. She likes to write down her thoughts and feelings. She needs a stable life to feel safe. But, deep down, she has hope that something new will come and change her life or that a prince charming will come and bring love. She knows that it is an immature thought, but hope is there. She accepts that she has a girlish side to her personality and has some kind of innocence and sensitive soul.

Question 4: *Le fils du pauvre, Feraoun*

Many candidates did not recall enough relevant details to situate the extract.

- (a) For the first part of the question, candidates had to mention the following elements of answer: Fouroulou lives with his family at Tizi. Ramdane, his brother Lounis, their wives Fatma and Helima and their children live in the same house. Helima is jealous of Fatma because of Fouroulou, both women are not on good terms.
The second part of the question needed a more thorough grasp of the text. Candidates had to mention the death of the grandmother Tassadit, who had absolute control over the house. After her death, they had to decide who was going to replace her. Ramdane gave the absolute control to Helima without consulting his wife, Fatma, but the latter was not in favour of this decision, and she asked for the division of the house. Fatma has caught Helima stealing and she does not trust Helima, and family life had become impossible.
Candidates are encouraged to understand the social and cultural aspects of the text and think hard about selecting materials and about saying things in a straightforward and concise way.
- (b) Most answers were limited, and candidates did not show a sound knowledge of the text. This resulted in short and vague answers.
For the first part, most of the candidates mentioned that each family is responsible of their own house and is conscious of the new responsibilities. There is no sharing regarding the meal, the tasks. Ramdane and Lounis are sad but Helima and Fatma are enemies so each family is pessimistic about the future and must work very hard to satisfy the basic needs.
For the second part of the question, candidates were expected to respond personally to the question. Most of the candidates mentioned that since Lounis is the elder brother, it is normal he inherited the biggest part. Ramdane loves his brother and respects him. He is also very docile. Very few candidates mentioned that the decision was not good, since Helima is weird and does not

deserve the best part of the house. Ramdane lacks courage and consideration for his family; he should have considered the dramatic impact of this decision on family life.

- (c) For the vocabulary part of the question, candidates did not perform very well. They have not grasped the cultural meaning attached to this text.
- (d) Most of the candidates stated that Lounis and Helima seemed to have benefitted more from the division of the house since they have inherited the biggest part of the house. But this situation will not last for long since they will have to work harder to overcome poverty.

Candidates are advised to pay close attention to the passage to find the elements of answer. The extract shows that Fatma and Helima seem to benefit most from the situation since they must be proud to now have their own share. They hate each other and want to show that they are happier than before. They seem to be indifferent to the sadness of their husbands, who are more conscious of the implications of living separately. Moreover, the situation will deteriorate in the future and both families will endure difficult situations and financial problems. They will have to toil hard to overcome poverty. Fatma and Helima will continue to hate each other. Most of the candidates have performed averagely for this question.

- (e) Many candidates' answer lacked depth of analysis. They did not grasp the true nature of the neighbours, hence answering in a short and vague way. Most of the candidates concentrated on the joy of the neighbours. They were happy for Fatma and Helima, they paid them several visits, congratulated them and showed much concern for Fatma and Helima. For a stronger performance, candidates needed to offer a deeper personal analysis of the neighbour's attitude, commenting on their hypocrisy, their fake joy and their lack of sincerity while congratulating Fatma and Helima. They seemed to be rejoicing in the division of the family and the tense relationships between Helima and Fatma. In a few strong responses, candidates have analysed both aspects of the neighbours' attitude.

Question 5: *Namasté*, Marcel Cabon

This question was not chosen by many candidates. Those who had a sound knowledge of the text performed well. We encourage candidates to answer in a concise and detailed way, focusing on details in the extract as well as general knowledge.

- (a) To situate the extract, candidates should say the Ram has inherited from Shive and is now living in the village. At the beginning, the villagers did not like him and rejected him. But now, Ram and Oumaouti are accepted by the people. He has helped Kissoune to build a pond similar to his and people heard about it.

Candidates were expected to say that Basdéo is one of the villagers/ the husband of Roukmine or the neighbour of Ram.

Candidates were expected to say that Ram is happier now that he is married and wants to form part of the community. He only knows Basdéo by sight. But Ram is generous and helping people is part of his personality. It is normal to help neighbours for him. He knows that he is strong and can see that Basdéo is struggling to do the work. Ram has much knowledge of this kind of work, and two people can achieve the job easily.

- (b) Lack of sound knowledge of the text was clearly seen here. However, a few candidates provided excellent responses.

The elements of the answer were: Ram and Basdéo do not know each other even if they are neighbours. It is the first encounter as Ram is new to this village and most of the villagers are suspicious of him. Ram has helped Basdéo instinctively and the latter realises that the rumours on Ram were false, that Ram is in fact a good man. He did not expect Ram to help him so readily. Basdéo does not have the techniques to do this work, and he is conscious that Ram is superior to him here. They are focused on the job and are sweating and it is not the right moment to do small talk. After the job is done, they smoke together but are still ill at ease with each other.

- (c) Candidates did not perform well in this question.

- (d) *Candidates do not follow the instructions well as the question asked them to explain the expression in the novel as a whole but many candidates just focused on the extract. However, a few candidates provided excellent responses.*

The expected answer was as follows. The expression concerns communication, dialogue. Ram is new in the village. He constantly says namasté but no one answers. But he succeeded in opening a door, in offering a hand to others. He is different from them but at the same time, he is like them. The village is angry that Ram has inherited from Shive. They wanted Shive's fortune to be given to the community. So, even before Ram comes, communication is impaired because of this resentment. But Ram continues his greetings, slowly breaking the ice. Furthermore, the relationship with Babou opens new possibilities. Ram tries to integrate community life by playing the gouli game with them. People slowly start admiring, accepting him. At the end of the novel, silence takes back its place. Ram is mad and does not speak anymore and everything is lost. Communication is broken so we can see how words help to create bonds.

- (e) This question asked candidates to be able to express their opinion on one specific aspect of the novel. There were some good answers but most candidates responded rather superficially to this question.

The elements of the answer were: Most villagers, just like Roukmine think that Ram has powers of witchcraft. He knows how to heal animals, he can calm the gusts of wind and he attracts children by playing the flute. The superstitious people think that this is witchcraft, but there is logic behind every capacity that Ram possesses. His gifts are inborn and he has also worked so much in nature that he knows all the tricks. He knows which herbs can heal animals and he has worked so much with them that he knows their metabolism. He has read a lot and has been educated in a different way than the villagers. He knows books, music and nature. Most of the villagers have not studied and do not reach his level. So, they do not understand Ram and they judge him from their own level of culture and superstitious nature. Ram has brought many changes that the villages have never heard of, and this amplifies their belief that Ram is a sorcerer.