

## LEAVING CERT FRENCH ORAL

### ***LE DOCUMENT***

#### Description

Candidates may present a '*document*' on a topic of their choice, which they will discuss with the examiner at some point in the exam.

This discussion usually takes place during the second half of the exam, but the subject may arise naturally at any point in the conversation. It may lead to a discussion of related topics.

The '*document*' may be

1. An article **in French** from the press, a magazine, the internet, etc.
2. A photo
3. An image (illustration, design, logo, etc.)
4. A project (*dossier*) **in French** on a chosen topic or event
5. A literary text **in French**

Solid objects should not be brought in as '*documents*'.

#### Advantages

- It ensures that candidates will get to talk about a subject of their choice.
- It rewards preparation done on that subject.
- Candidates are less nervous and more confident, knowing in advance what they will talk about in part of the exam.
- It can help candidates to express their individuality and particular interests.
- Examiners report that a well-prepared '*document*' helps candidates of all abilities:

*'The document frequently provided such candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate the acquisition of the specific vocabulary required for their chosen topic.'*

*'A well-prepared document was generally advantageous to candidates at all levels of ability.'*

*'The presentation of a well-researched document generally greatly enhanced the confidence of less-able students. The security of knowing that their prepared topic would be examined put them more at ease and their performance very often improved subsequently.'*

(2010 Chief Examiner's Report)

### Selection

The chosen topic should above all be of interest to the candidate. Personal involvement makes it easier to prepare in detail and to memorise the language and information necessary for a full discussion of its aspects. Reactions and opinions are authentic and individual.

Narrow, limited topics don't lend themselves to much discussion. A family photo, for example, may not go beyond a brief discussion of family. A family wedding however, may lead to conversation about people, relationships, place, preparations, role of the candidate and possibly even views on marriage. A photo of a soccer or rugby player could lead to a discussion of the local or national team, players' salaries, their lifestyles, the media, role models, being a fan, rivalry, etc.

If several students choose the same topic (school tour, Transition Year, school team/event) each one should be personal and prepared individually to avoid inauthenticity.

Both teachers and students should be on the lookout for possible topics from the start of Fifth Year or possibly during Transition Year. Interesting events (trips, activities, competitions, etc.) which take place or ideas which appear in students' writing (ambitions, charitable work, projects, etc.) should be flagged as possible '*document*' material and subsequently developed.

### Preparation

The physical document which the candidate brings into the exam is only important as a '*point de départ*' – it simply introduces the topic to the examiner.

Some topics lend themselves to a '*montage*' – several photos on an A4 page, each illustrating an aspect of the topic. Be prepared to talk about each photo if necessary, who took it, when, where, etc.

Transition Year, for example, could feature the year group, an activity, a trip, work experience, mini-company and so on. This could lead to a discussion of several aspects depicted, but also of the return to Fifth Year, leaving one's year group and reflections now as they are about to leave school.

Like the rest of the Oral exam, the '*document*' does not lend itself to last-minute preparation. It should be a gradual, structured process, each aspect being prepared, corrected, improved and the whole organised and kept safely.

The '*réseau de mots*' (word network / mind-map) approach can help candidates put a shape on what they might otherwise perceive as a daunting undertaking. In this way, they can be confident of having covered the most common aspects of their chosen topic. (*See examples....*) It can then become a checklist which helps with the organisation of material.

Like all oral material, it should be corrected / approved before it is learned.

### *In the Oral exam*

It is very important that the candidate carries the '*document*' into the exam room and shows it to the examiner at the start of the conversation. The examiner will remind all candidates about this at the preliminary meeting.

In the rare event of the document being overlooked during the conversation, the candidate should remind the examiner about it and it will then be discussed.

The topic may arise naturally at any point in the conversation. Saying that '*la musique*' is a hobby may lead to a discussion of the artist or group featured in the '*document*.'

Candidates should not attach any particular importance to the duration of the '*document*' part of the conversation, since discussion may move away from the main idea and back again several times.

Candidates should be prepared for a general opening question such as '*Pourquoi avez-vous choisi ce document?*' or '*Parlez-moi maintenant de votre document*.'

As in the rest of the Oral exam, candidates should avoid very long learned-off passages which sound inauthentic. Instead they should be prepared to respond to the examiner's interventions and aim to have a normal conversation.

Les clés junior comment lire une photo (lots of photos to describe / choose)

<https://www.google.ie/search?q=les+cles+junior+comment+lire+une+photo&client=firefox-a&hs=OPW&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&channel=fflb&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=toanUs-IHoWjhge844CYCw&ved=0CDEQsAQ&biw=1364&bih=632>