

## LES ASTUCES ET LES CONSEILS



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## TIPS & ADVICE

## JUNIOR CERT LISTENING SECTION

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The Junior Certificate French exam focuses on the receptive skills in language learning. Therefore, most marks are awarded for listening and reading. The productive skills of writing and speaking are given more prominence in the senior cycle.

The Higher level Junior Cert French paper is divided into 3 sections:

### 1. LISTENING COMPREHENSION

This section of the exam is really pivotal, as it carries a total of 140 marks or 43.75% of the total marks awarded.

### 2. READING SECTION

The reading section of the exam is allocated 100 marks or 31.25% of the total marks.

### 3. WRITING SECTION

This section carries the least amount of marks, but at 25%, this is still a substantial chunk of the overall marking.

## LISTENING COMPREHENSION

I cannot over-emphasise the importance of attuning a student's ear to the French language from DAY 1 of their experience with language learning. I try and incorporate a listening into *almost every* class – even a quick 3-4 minutes. This will really benefit students in all facets of the exam. A finely tuned ear to the sounds of French is vital to a proper understanding of this beautiful, albeit complex language. The listening piece usually takes about 45 minutes and luckily, the department of Education usually follows a fairly recognisable pattern every year.

The listening comprehension is broken into 5 sections, A, B, C, D, and E.

## SECTION A

In section A, you will be given 3 short conversations. In the case of each conversation, you must say what it is about. You are given options, a,b,c,d or e. These options usually cover situational French.

I have included a grid from the last 10 years to show vocabulary that must be covered:

YEAR	A	B	C	D	E
2015	Travelling by Train	Booking a Holiday	Buying item in a shop	Looking for lost pet	Invite someone to a party
2014	Shopping for clothes	Getting ready to go to cinema	Borrowing something from a friend	Reporting a theft	Visiting a Doctor
2013	Planning a wedding	Decorating a bedroom	Meeting at airport	Ordering meal in restaurant	Borrowing something in school
2012	Buying vegetables in the market	Looking for a lost item	Watching a TV program	Buying a train ticket	Booking a holiday
2011	Taking the bus	Finding a lost item	Going to swimming pool	Buying item in a shop	Cancelling an appointment
2010	Booking a holiday	Buying a newspaper	Cancelling a Doctor's appointment	Ordering food in a restaurant	Going to a concert
2009	Buying clothes	Getting something to eat	Someone feeling unwell	Making plans for the weekend	A new teacher at school
2008	Looking for a lost item	Giving someone a present	Travelling by train	Thanking someone for a holiday	Buying fruit at the market
2007	A tourist office	A Restaurant	A bookshop	A post-office	An Hotel
2006	Making a Doctor's appointment	Ordering a meal in a restaurant	Borrowing something in school	Inviting someone to a party	Going to a match with friends

## SECTION B

In this section, two people introduce themselves, and tell us a little about their lives.

The questions vary from year to year, but as you will see from the chart below, a lot of the questions are repeated year on year.

### GENERAL GUIDE TO TOPICS

#### SECTION B

YEAR	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
	Birthday	Birthday	Countries	Birthday	Age
	Age	Age	Age	Number of Brothers/sisters	Birthday
	Details of Appearance	Number of Brothers/sisters	Details of Appearance	School	Detail about family
	Colours	Activities/hobbies	House-hold tasks	Sport	School
	Professions	Personality details	Activities/Hobbies	Food	Activities/Hobbies
	Activities/Hobbies	Jobs/Professions	Fruit	Details about house	Animals
	Instruments	Countries	Jobs/Professions	Jobs/professions	Job/Profession
	Details about where they live	Details about where they live	Details about where they live	Instruments	Countries
	Sport	Holidays	Days of the week	Activities/Hobbies	Food
	Injury	Saving Money	Accidents	Countries	

## SECTION C

This section involves 4 or 5 short conversations. Each listening piece is played twice. The listening pieces usually involve situational French, such as a looking for directions, buying something, reserving a hotel room, or a meal in a restaurant. I have broken down what has come up in the last 10 years, from 2015 to 2006 to give you an idea of what vocabulary to concentrate on:

### GUIDE TO TOPICS FOR

### SECTION C

YEAR	1 <sup>ST</sup>	2 <sup>ND</sup>	3 <sup>RD</sup>	4 <sup>TH</sup>	5 <sup>TH</sup>
2015	Directions	Animals	Cancel appointment/ Phone No.	Past & future arrangement	Emotions/ Phone Numbers
2014	Directions	Animals	Emotion	Making a booking/ Alphabet	School/ phone Number
2013	Directions	Booking a room / Alphabet	Illness / doctor /time	Countries	Clothing/ phone numbers
2012	Directions	Injuries	Book a Ticket / alphabet	Emotions	School subjects / travel
2011	Directions	Dentist / alphabet	Kitchen utensils/ days of the week	Colours/clothes / Numbers	Sport/Phone numbers
2010	Directions	Computers	Helping / Suggestions	Months of the year/ Alphabet	Animals / events
2009	Directions	Making a booking/ days of week	Numbers/ events	Weekend / Buying items	Countries / attending events
2008	School	Making a booking/ Alphabet	Future plans/ Directions	Clothes/Numbers Phone numbers	Attending events/ TV / Time
2007	Train station	Illness/ Alphabet	Borrowing / Directions	Buying an item / Colours	Days of the week/ Sport
2006	Directions	Incident with handbag	Phone numbers	Making a booking / alphabet	Drinks / special occasion

## SECTION D

This section is usually played 3 times, the first time all the way through, then in segments, and finally all the way through again. It is considered by students to be the most difficult section in the listening, as it requires a lot of concentration. Below is a grid containing the subject matter of the last 5 years.

### GENERAL TOPICS COVERED

#### SECTION D

2015	Food, school, museum visit, party, events, helping with something
2014	Food, school, future plans, refusal to do something.
2013	E-mail, Ireland, pen-pal, family, personality, daily routine, school, visiting France, Advice
2012	Purchase, family, personality, Christmas, pets, France, Numbers
2011	France, jobs, money, numbers, months of the year, school.

### GENERAL GUIDE TO TOPICS FOR

#### SECTION E

This section usually contains 5 short news items

YEAR	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH
2015	Parade, Festival	Theft	Incident	Shop Sale	Weather
2014	School	Incident	Tour de France, Days of week. Numbers	Austria, Building	Weather
2013	Flowers	French Lottery	Incident	Collection	Weather
2012	Circus	Earthquake	Fashion Show/season	Crime	Weather
2011	Furniture sale	TV programme	Road accident	Sport	Weather
2010	Tour de France	Museum	Damage	Train station	Weather
2009	Festival	Sport	Road accident	Protest march	Weather
2008	Marcel Marceau (Mime artist)	Animal	Sport / country	Shop sale	Weather
2007	Crime	Incident	Referee Protest	Country/ festival	Weather
2006	Delay	Marriage/ prize	Sport/ Country	Shop sale	Weather