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Winchester College 13+ French 2024

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WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

Election

French Reading

May 2024

Leave this question paper behind at the end of the exam

Time allowed: 20 minutes

Write all your answers in the booklet.

Dictionaries are not permitted.

Name

25 marks

Qui était Molière ?

Molière, de son vrai nom Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, est né à l'époque du Grand Siècle, en 1622. **C'est un des auteurs français les plus célèbres qui a écrit des pièces de théâtre inoubliables. Il a réussi à élever la comédie au même rang que la tragédie et sa vision du monde est toujours d'actualité et ne vieillira jamais, car il fait le portrait de la nature humaine.**

Il fait d'abord des études de droit pour devenir avocat, mais il est déjà amoureux de la scène et malgré la colère de son père, il abandonne tout pour fonder sa propre troupe de théâtre. Le métier d'acteur n'est pas facile à cette période : ils sont même excommuniés et n'ont pas le droit d'être enterrés religieusement. De plus, un auteur ne peut pas vivre sans être protégé par un grand seigneur de la Cour.

Molière, couvert de dettes, est obligé de quitter Paris et voyage en province avec ses comédiens pendant treize ans. Il connaît la pauvreté et la faim, mais il écrit des farces qui plaisent et quand il rentre à Paris, il fait rire le roi Louis XIV qui va devenir son protecteur.

Molière crée des personnages mémorables tels que Tartuffe, Harpagon et Dom Juan et dénonce les défauts des bourgeois et de la Cour. Il s'attaque à l'hypocrisie, à l'avarice, au fanatisme religieux, à l'imposture, à la bêtise, à la crédulité. Il souligne le ridicule et les excès des hommes et des femmes et défend les jeunes gens face à la tyrannie de leurs parents.

Les comédies de Molière sont divertissantes mais il veut que les spectateurs tirent une leçon de ce qu'ils ont vu, comme la morale de l'histoire dans une fable, et essaient de ne pas commettre les mêmes erreurs que les protagonistes.

Souffrant d'une maladie des poumons, Molière est mort en 1773 après avoir joué le rôle d'un hypocondriaque dans sa dernière pièce *Le malade imaginaire*. Sa vie est aussi passionnante que son œuvre et il est à la France ce que Shakespeare est à l'Angleterre.

Section A

Answer the following questions in English, based on what you read in the text.

14 marks

1. What profession does he first aspire to? (1)

2. What does he create when he gives up studying? (1)

3. How does his father feel about his chosen path? (1)

4. Since they are excommunicated by the Catholic church at the time, what are actors not allowed to do? (1)

5. What do authors need in order to survive? (1)

6. For how long does he travel around France when he is forced to leave Paris? (1)

7. In the provinces, he encounters poverty and ...? (1)

8. Translate « il fait rire le roi ». (1)

9. Molière denounces many things. What do you think «la bêtise» is? (1)

10. What does Molière defend young people from? (1)

11. What are the two things Molière expects from his spectators after having watched one of his entertaining plays? (2)

12. When did Molière die? (1)

13. What was his last play called? (1)

[Please turn over for Section B]

Section B

Tick the correct answer (the words are underlined in the text).

4 marks

1. siècle means:
 - a) king
 - b) war
 - c) century

2. la scène means:
 - a) scenery
 - b) stage
 - c) set

3. personnages means:
 - a) characters
 - b) stories
 - c) people

4. son œuvre means:
 - a) his origins
 - b) his work
 - c) his dream

[Please turn over for Section C]

Paper Notes: 13+ French Question Paper (13+ French Past Paper (2024))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is the **Winchester College 13+ French Reading paper** from **May 2024**, designed for candidates applying for Year 9 entry. The paper tests reading comprehension, vocabulary recognition, and translation skills through a single extended passage about the life and work of **Molière**, the celebrated French playwright of the 17th century. The entire examination is conducted in French and English, with students required to answer questions in English based on the French text.

The paper is structured around a biographical passage that explores Molière's career, his struggles, his famous characters, and his enduring legacy. Students must demonstrate their ability to extract specific information, infer meaning from context, recognise key vocabulary, and translate complex sentences that capture Molière's literary significance. The passage is rich in cultural and historical detail, requiring candidates to navigate past tenses, formal register, and abstract concepts.

This paper is aimed at students who have studied French to a high standard, typically covering three to four years of secondary-level work. The **20-minute time limit** and **25-mark allocation** demand efficient reading and precise answers. Dictionaries are not permitted, so candidates must rely on their active vocabulary and contextual understanding. The Winchester College paper reflects the rigorous expectations of selective independent school entry at 13+.

How this paper is organised

The paper is divided into **three sections** totalling **25 marks**, to be completed in **20 minutes**. All answers must be written in a separate booklet, and the question paper itself is left behind at the end of the examination.

Section A (14 marks) comprises 13 comprehension questions in English, based on the French passage about Molière. Questions range from single-mark factual retrieval (e.g. "What profession does he first aspire to?") to a two-mark question requiring candidates to identify dual expectations Molière had of his audiences. One question asks for a short translation of a French phrase, and another requires inference to define an underlined French word.

Section B (4 marks) tests vocabulary recognition through four multiple-choice questions. Students must select the correct English meaning for four underlined French

words from the passage: siècle, la scène, personnages, and son œuvre. **Section C** (7 marks) is a longer translation task. Candidates must translate a four-sentence paragraph in bold from the passage, capturing Molière's status as one of France's most famous authors and the timeless relevance of his portrayal of human nature.

Topics covered

- Reading comprehension of a detailed French biographical text about Molière and 17th-century French theatre
- Extraction of specific factual information from extended French prose
- Contextual inference and meaning deduction from unfamiliar or abstract French vocabulary
- Recognition and translation of key French cultural and literary terms (e.g. la scène, personnages, son œuvre)
- Translation of complex French sentences into accurate, idiomatic English
- Understanding of French past tenses (passé composé, imparfait) and their use in narrative
- Comprehension of abstract concepts and moral themes in French, including satire, hypocrisy, and the function of comedy
- Familiarity with French cultural and historical references (Grand Siècle, Louis XIV, excommunication of actors)
- Ability to work under timed conditions without dictionary support

How to use this paper for revision

- Read the passage through once quickly to grasp the overall narrative before attempting any questions, noting key dates and names as you go.
- Practise reading French biographical and literary texts that discuss historical figures, as Winchester College favours culturally rich material over everyday dialogues.
- Build your vocabulary around theatre, literature, and historical contexts; learn terms like troupe, comédie, tragédie, excommunié, and protecteur.
- For translation questions, read the French sentence several times and draft your English version in rough before writing it out, ensuring natural phrasing rather than word-for-word transcription.
- When answering comprehension questions, look for the precise part of the text that answers each question and underline it lightly; avoid paraphrasing unnecessarily.
- In multiple-choice vocabulary questions, eliminate obviously incorrect answers first, then check the context in which the word appears to confirm your choice.
- Time yourself strictly during practice; 20 minutes for 25 marks means roughly 45 seconds per mark, so allocate more time to Section C and move quickly through Section A.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Translating word-for-word in Section C rather than producing natural English, resulting in clumsy or ungrammatical sentences that obscure meaning.
- Failing to read the whole passage before starting Section A, leading to missed context and incorrect inferences about Molière's motivations or circumstances.
- Confusing false friends such as *actuel* (current, not 'actual') or *assister* (to attend, not 'to assist'), which can appear in similar cultural texts.
- Rushing the two-mark question in Section A (question 11) and providing only one answer instead of two distinct points about what Molière expected from his audiences.
- Misreading the tense or subject of a verb, particularly in complex sentences with multiple clauses, leading to factual errors in comprehension answers.
- Spending too long on the translation in Section C and running out of time for final checks, leaving careless errors uncorrected.

Exam technique

Begin by reading the passage carefully from start to finish, underlining names, dates, and key events as you read. This initial overview will help you locate information quickly when answering Section A. Tackle **Section A first**, as it carries the most marks and requires close reference to the text. Answer questions in order, but if you cannot find an answer immediately, mark the question number and return to it after completing the others.

For **Section B**, use the context in which each underlined word appears to confirm your choice. If a word is unfamiliar, look at the surrounding sentence structure and eliminate implausible options. These four marks are relatively quick to secure if your vocabulary is strong, so aim to complete this section in three to four minutes.

Allocate at least **seven to eight minutes** for **Section C**, the translation task. Read the French sentences aloud quietly if permitted, noting the structure and any tricky phrases. Draft your translation lightly in pencil if space allows, then write it out clearly. Focus on accuracy of meaning first, then refine for natural English style. Leave a minute at the end to reread your translation and check for sense, tense consistency, and any omitted phrases. Precision and clarity earn more marks than overly elaborate phrasing.

What to revise alongside this paper

Students preparing for this paper should revise the core grammatical structures of French, particularly the **passé composé** and **imparfait** tenses, as the passage is written entirely in the past. Understanding how to distinguish completed actions from ongoing or habitual ones in the past will aid comprehension. Practise reading other French biographical and literary texts, especially those covering the 17th and 18th centuries, to build familiarity with formal register and historical vocabulary.

Translation skills can be strengthened by working through short passages from French literature or non-fiction, focusing on maintaining natural English syntax while preserving the original meaning. Study the conventions of French theatre and the cultural context of the Grand Siècle, including the role of patronage, the status of actors, and the satirical function of comedy in Molière's time. Familiarity with these themes will deepen your understanding of the passage and help you infer meaning more confidently.

To extend your preparation, explore other works by Molière in translation or in simplified French, such as *L'Avare* (The Miser) or *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Reading about Shakespeare's life and work in English can also provide useful comparative context, as the final sentence of the passage draws a parallel between the two playwrights. Broader cultural reading in French, including short biographies of historical

figures, will prepare you for the sophisticated comprehension expected at Winchester College 13+ level.

Key terms

Molière, Grand Siècle, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, la scène (the stage), troupe de théâtre (theatre company), excommunié (excommunicated), Louis XIV, personnages (characters), Tartuffe, Harpagon, Dom Juan, comédie (comedy), tragédie (tragedy), hypocondriaque (hypochondriac), Le malade imaginaire (The Imaginary Invalid)

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WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

Election

French Writing

May 2024

Leave this question paper behind at the end of the exam.

Time allowed: 45 minutes

Write all your answers in the booklet.

Dictionaries are not permitted.

Name

100 marks

PART I: VERBS

(A) Present Tense

19 marks

Fill in the numbered blanks with the correct form of the present tense of the verbs in brackets.

Example: Lucie (**1 étudier**) les maths.

1 étudie

Chaque matin, je (**1 se réveiller**) tôt pour ne pas être en retard à l'école. Après avoir pris mon petit-déjeuner, je (**2 prendre**) le bus scolaire avec mes amis. En classe, nous (**3 apprendre**) beaucoup de choses. Ma matière préférée (**4 être**) les maths, parce que j'aime comprendre comment les choses fonctionnent.

Mon meilleur ami, qui (**5 s'appeler**) Maxime, (**6 adorer**) l'histoire et (**7 dire**) toujours que c'est fascinant de découvrir le passé. L'après-midi, il y (**8 avoir**) des activités extrascolaires; je (**9 choisir**) généralement de participer au club d'informatique, tandis que certains de mes amis (**10 préférer**) le sport, donc ils (**11 aller**) au gymnase où ils (**12 faire**) de la musculation.

Au déjeuner, nous (**13 partager**) nos histoires. Je trouve que la nourriture est parfois bonne, mais mon ami Maxime ne (**14 vouloir**) jamais manger.

Les cours (**15 finir**) à 16h. Après l'école, je rentre à la maison et s'il (**16 faire**) beau, je (**17 sortir**) pour profiter de l'air frais, mais, s'il (**18 pleuvoir**), je reste à l'intérieur et je (**19 lire**).

1 _____

11 _____

2 _____

12 _____

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18 _____

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19 _____

10 _____

(B) Perfect and Imperfect Tenses

12 marks

Fill in the numbered blanks with the correct form of the verbs in brackets, choosing either the perfect tense (*passé composé*) or the imperfect tense (*imparfait*) as appropriate.

Quand je/j' (1 **être**) petit, je/j' (2 **aller**) toujours en vacances en Espagne parce qu'il (3 **faire**) toujours beau. Cependant, cette année, nous (4 **partir**) pour la France le premier juillet.

Nous (5 **prendre**) l'avion avec ma mère, mais mon père (6 **arriver**) le lendemain en voiture. Nous (7 **visiter**) des monuments historiques ; celui que je/j' (8 **apprécier**) le plus (9 **avoir**) des jardins magnifiques et un restaurant où je/j' (10 **pouvoir**) acheter un millefeuille délicieux pour moi et mon frère. Nous (11 **se régaler**) !

Après deux semaines de découvertes extraordinaires, nous (12 **rentre**) en Angleterre.

1 _____

7 _____

2 _____

8 _____

3 _____

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4 _____

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5 _____

11 _____

6 _____

12 _____

(C) Future Tense

13 marks

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the future tense of the verbs in brackets.

Pour mon prochain anniversaire, j' (**1 organiser**) une grande fête avec tous mes amis et ma famille. Je (**2 choisir**) le thème de la soirée, qui (**3 être**) "Les films classiques". Tous mes amis (**4 venir**) déguisés en leur personnage de film préféré. Il y (**5 avoir**) une vingtaine de personnes en tout.

Avant la fête, nous (**6 aller**) en ville et nous (**7 acheter**) un grand gâteau d'anniversaire et des sucreries. Pour la musique, je (**8 créer**) une playlist avec des chansons populaires. Nous (**9 pouvoir**) danser jusqu'au petit matin.

Pour le repas, mon père (**10 cuisiner**) et ensuite, nous (**11 faire**) la vaisselle tous ensemble.

Je pense que nous (**12 s'amuser**) ; on (**13 voir**) bien !

1 _____

8 _____

2 _____

9 _____

3 _____

10 _____

4 _____

11 _____

5 _____

12 _____

6 _____

13 _____

7 _____

PART II: TRANSLATION (26 marks)

Translate the following passage into French.

At the weekend, I do sport with my best friend.

I get on well with him because he is nice.

In the holidays, we go to London together.

I like to go shopping because there are lots of different shops.

In the future, I would like to live in a big city.

I think that the countryside is too boring

because I do not like animals.

Last week, my mum and I went to the cinema.

It was great !

Paper Notes: 13+ French Question Paper (13+ French Past Paper (2024))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is the **Winchester College 13+ French Writing paper** from **May 2024**, part of the school's internal entrance examination for Year 9 entry. It assesses candidates' ability to manipulate French grammar, translate accurately from English, and produce extended writing in French under timed conditions. The paper is worth **100 marks** and must be completed in **45 minutes** without dictionary support, making it a rigorous test of active language knowledge and fluency.

The exam is divided into three distinct parts: verb conjugation across present, perfect, imperfect and future tenses; translation of a nine-sentence passage into French; and a free-writing essay on the topic of school life. Each section demands different skills, from grammatical precision and vocabulary recall to sustained creative output with accurate syntax and idiom. The balance of marks reflects Winchester's emphasis on both technical accuracy and the ability to construct longer, opinion-rich texts in the target language.

This paper suits candidates preparing for selective independent school entrance at 13+, particularly those aiming for schools with strong modern languages departments. The level assumes at least three to four years of French study and familiarity with a wide range of tenses, including reflexive and irregular verbs. The essay prompt, with its four guided bullet points and suggested structures, offers a scaffold for less confident writers while allowing high achievers to demonstrate sophistication and range.

How this paper is organised

The paper opens with **Part I: Verbs**, worth **44 marks** in total and subdivided into three tense-focused exercises. Section A tests the present tense with 19 gaps embedded in a narrative about school routines; section B covers the perfect and imperfect tenses with 12 blanks in a holiday anecdote, requiring candidates to choose the correct tense for each verb; section C assesses the future tense with 13 gaps in a birthday-party scenario. Every verb infinitive is provided in brackets, so candidates must conjugate accurately rather than supply vocabulary.

Part II: Translation is worth **26 marks** and consists of nine short English sentences to be rendered into French. Topics include weekend activities, personal relationships, holiday plans, shopping preferences, future aspirations, countryside opinions, animal

likes, and a past cinema visit. The sentences are printed with wide spacing, inviting candidates to write their translations directly beneath each prompt.

Part III: Essay carries **30 marks** and asks for approximately 120 words in French on the theme of school. Four bullet points guide the response: favourite and least favourite subjects; overall opinion of school with reasons; what the candidate did during break yesterday; and an ideal destination for a school trip with justification. A box of useful structures is provided, including opinion phrases, conjunctions, relative pronouns and time expressions, to encourage varied syntax and cohesion.

Topics covered

- Present tense conjugation of regular -er, -ir and -re verbs in first and third person
- Present tense forms of high-frequency irregular verbs including être, avoir, aller, faire, prendre, vouloir, pouvoir, dire and lire
- Reflexive verbs in the present tense (se réveiller, s'appeler)
- Choosing between perfect (passé composé) and imperfect (imparfait) tenses to express completed versus habitual or descriptive actions in the past
- Formation of the passé composé with avoir and être auxiliaries, including agreement rules for verbs conjugated with être (e.g. partir, arriver, rentrer)
- Imperfect tense of être, aller and faire to describe repeated or ongoing past states
- Future tense conjugation of regular and irregular verbs, including stem changes for aller, avoir, être, faire, venir, pouvoir, voir and reflexive forms (s'amuser)
- English-to-French translation of everyday vocabulary and phrases covering hobbies, relationships, travel, shopping, housing, animals and leisure
- Use of opinion phrases (à mon avis, je pense que), conjunctions (parce que, donc, mais) and relative pronouns (qui, où) in extended writing
- Expressing preferences, justifications and hypothetical plans in a structured essay format, with attention to register and idiomatic accuracy

How to use this paper for revision

- Drill irregular verb stems for the future tense separately: memorise *ir-* for *aller*, *ser-* for *être*, *aur-* for *avoir*, *fer-* for *faire*, and so on, then practise adding the standard endings.
- When choosing between perfect and imperfect, ask whether the action was completed at a specific moment (perfect) or was habitual, ongoing or a background state (imperfect). Look for time markers like *toujours*, *chaque jour* (imperfect) or *hier*, *cette année* (perfect).
- For the translation section, read the entire English sentence before you begin writing in French. Translate meaning rather than word-for-word, and check your French sounds natural when read aloud.
- Practise writing 120-word essays to time, aiming for two or three well-developed paragraphs rather than four or five rushed ones. Quality of expression and variety of structures will score more highly than sheer length.
- Learn set phrases for giving opinions and joining ideas: *à mon avis*, *je trouve que*, *d'un côté... de l'autre côté*, *en revanche*, *par contre*. Using these naturally lifts the sophistication of your writing.
- Revise reflexive verb agreements in compound tenses: when *se régaler* is conjugated with *être*, the past participle must agree with the subject (*nous nous sommes régalés*).
- Keep a list of common irregular past participles (*avoir* becomes *eu*, *être* becomes *été*, *faire* becomes *fait*, *prendre* becomes *pris*) and test yourself regularly.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Forgetting the reflexive pronoun when conjugating reflexive verbs: writing *je réveille* instead of *je me réveille*, or omitting *nous* in *nous nous sommes amusés*.
- Using the wrong auxiliary in the *passé composé*: many verbs of movement and change of state require *être* (*partir, arriver, rentrer, venir*), not *avoir*. Candidates often write *j'ai arrivé* by analogy with *j'ai visité*.
- Overusing the perfect tense in contexts that clearly require the imperfect: describing repeated childhood holidays or continuous past states with *passé composé* rather than *imparfait*.
- Literal translation from English that produces unidiomatic French: translating 'I get on well with him' as *je vais bien avec lui* instead of *je m'entends bien avec lui*, or 'I do sport' as *je fais du sport* without the partitive article.
- Failing to make past participles agree with the subject after *être*: writing *nous sommes rentré* (singular masculine) when the subject is plural or feminine.
- Mixing up future stems: using *allerai* (a common misspelling) instead of the correct stem *irai* for *aller*, or writing *fairai* instead of *ferai* for *faire*.

Exam technique

Allocate your 45 minutes carefully: the verb section is the longest by mark value, so spend roughly 20 minutes on Part I, 12 minutes on the translation, and 13 minutes on the essay, leaving a few minutes at the end to check your work. Tackle the present-tense blanks first if you find them easiest, building confidence before the trickier perfect-imperfect and future sections. Read each sentence in context before filling in any gaps, as the surrounding words often give clues to tense, person and number.

For the translation, jot down key vocabulary or phrases in the margin if you are unsure, then construct the sentence around them. Avoid leaving blanks: an attempt at a French sentence, even if imperfect, can earn partial marks, whereas a blank scores zero. Check your agreements (adjective, past participle) as you go, since these are easy marks to lose through careless omission.

In the essay, plan your four paragraphs briefly before you start writing: one idea per bullet point, with an opinion and reason for each. Use the suggested structures box as a checklist, ticking off items as you include them. Aim for varied sentence lengths and conjunctions to show range, but prioritise clarity and accuracy over complexity. Reserve the last two minutes to reread your essay, correcting obvious spelling or agreement errors and checking that you have addressed all four prompts. Under exam pressure, it is easy to miss a bullet point entirely.

What to revise alongside this paper

To prepare thoroughly for this paper, revise all four main tenses in depth: present (including irregular and stem-changing verbs), perfect and imperfect (with clear rules for when each is used), and future (especially irregular stems). Practise forming questions and negatives in each tense, as these patterns reinforce your understanding of word order and verb placement. Work through past-paper style gap-fill exercises and translate short paragraphs in both directions to build fluency and accuracy under pressure.

Strengthen your active vocabulary by topic: school subjects, daily routine, hobbies, holidays, food, family, and future plans are all tested in this paper. Keep a notebook of useful phrases and idiomatic expressions, such as *faire du sport*, *s'entendre bien avec*, *avoir envie de*, *il y a*, and *ça me plaît*. These will help you produce natural-sounding French in both the translation and essay sections.

Beyond this paper, explore conditional tenses and the subjunctive mood if you are aiming for the most selective schools or scholarship streams. Reading authentic French texts (short stories, news articles for young people, or graphic novels) will expose you to varied sentence structures and improve your intuition for correct register and idiom. Listening to French podcasts or videos at a similar level will help cement verb forms in your memory and build confidence in recognising tenses by ear.

Key terms

Présent (present tense), Passé composé (perfect tense), Imparfait (imperfect tense), Futur simple (future tense), Verbe réfléchi (reflexive verb), Verbe irrégulier (irregular verb), Auxiliaire (auxiliary verb), Accord du participe passé (past participle agreement), Conjugaison (conjugation), Infinitif (infinitive), Traduction (translation), Rédaction (essay / composition), Opinion (opinion), Justification (justification / reason), Connecteur logique (logical connector / conjunction)

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