

# 2009 HSC French Extension

## Sample Answers — Written Examination

This document contains ‘sample answers’, or, in the case of some questions, ‘answer may include’. These are developed by the examination committee for two purposes. The committee does this:

- (a) as part of the development of the examination paper to ensure the questions will effectively assess students’ knowledge and skills, and
- (b) in order to provide some advice to the Supervisor of Marking about the nature and scope of the responses expected of students.

The ‘sample answers’ or similar advice, are not intended to be exemplary or even complete responses. They have been reproduced in their original form as part of the examination committee’s ‘working document’. While the handwritten notes have been typed for legibility, no further editorial change or addition has occurred.

### Section I — Response to Prescribed Text: *Jean de Florette*

#### Part A

##### Question 1 (a)

###### *Sample answer:*

“ce dernier” refers to the last mentioned of Le Papet’s four brothers. This brother was Ugolin’s father. Of the four brothers, two died in the 1914 Great War and the two others committed suicide. Ugolin’s father suicided because of his wife’s death, sparked by the drought which caused their artichoke crop to fail. Now only Le Papet and Ugolin are left.

##### Question 1 (b)

###### *Sample answer:*

The reference to Ugolin as the “supreme hope of the race of Soubeyran” conjures up the image of a grand character, carrying the qualities of his ancestry. However, this must be seen as tongue in cheek, given the less-than-flattering description of Ugolin which follows immediately on these words. In terms of facial features and mannerisms, he is shown as awkward and unattractive (mop of red hair, twisted nose, nervous twitch, shifty eyes and “like an animal fearing a surprise”). On the one hand, this description does not fit well with the idea of “supreme hope”; and yet on the other hand, Ugolin is the only remaining heir, so the continuation of the Soubeyran race depends on him. To some extent, as a capable worker of the land (physically strong, with a knowledge of horticulture), he can reasonably be expected to fulfil some of this hope. The irony is that, whilst he isn’t the “supreme” hope, he is the only hope.

**Question 1 (c)*****Sample answer:***

The land is referred to constantly as an ever-present backdrop to the lives of these people. It is described in great physical detail as all of its features are noticed by those who live on it. It is a constant companion in all its changing details. (At this season the mulberry tree provides shade.) It is clearly a place of significant beauty to which people are attached. The descriptions here also include the harshness of the land, its dryness and the measures taken by farmers to combat the climate and the stony soil (dry stone walls, terracing, a well) – the land can be a difficult master. The role the land plays as provider of livelihood and essential food source is also highlighted – fruit trees, vegetables, wheat. We are also aware of the importance for these people of land with a house as a commodity passed down from generation to generation and a place to let out (tu pourras le louer à quelqu'un). The land as part of the family's marriage package and an incentive for a prospective wife re-emphasises the fundamental role of the land in the social fabric.

**Question 1 (d)*****Sample answer:***

Ugolin displays here his self-concern and lack of need of other people. He is not interested in marriage; women are seen as useless possessions. He dreams of being all alone, talking to himself in his little house and cherishing in a quasi-sexual way his hoard of gold coins. Ugolin proves to be a very complex character plagued by internal conflict. His love of money, however, further fuelled by his dreams of a successful carnation business is his overriding motivation / attachment. Greed overwhelms his clearly inherent love of horticulture and the land and puts them to the service of making lots of money. It consumes his moral conscience, leaving him fearful of God's wrath because of his selfish plans. It overrides any growing sense of friendship or pity for Jean Cadoret and his family. He enters enthusiastically into Papet's plans and despite his occasional misgivings he refuses to tell Jean the truth about the blocked-up well.

The complexities of Ugolin's motivations are evident even after Jean's death. There is the secret thought of a possible relationship with Aimée and what seem to be sincere tears of sadness at Jean's demise which clash so jarringly with the ultimate revelatory act of crowning himself "King of the Carnations".