**Short Essay** – 10%, about 35 minutes.

**Short Essay**

3 questions, 30-40 words each paragraph, new paragraph for each answer. Variety of tenses required.

Questions tend to be in present tense – you MUST try a variety of tenses if want to access top marks.

Check questions carefully – might look like 5 or 2, but should actually be 3 questions, with a new answer (and new paragraph) each.

Opinions AND reasons for holding that opinion in every paragraph, at least once. Basic introduction is recommended (je vais écrire au sujet de…/je voudrais parler de mes opinions sur…) and a conclusion (Bref, j’espère que j’ai répondu à toutes les questions posées aujourd’hui) – helps pupils feel more comfortable (plus adds a couple of tenses, potentially).

Possible introductory sentences

* Je vais parler de….
* Je voudrais parler de….
* Je vais écrire au sujet de….

Possible conclusion

* J’espère que j’ai répondu à toutes les questions posées aujourd’hui
* En conclusion, à mon avis…..

**Advice before the exam**

* **Learn** certain phrases, expressions or words **off by heart**
* **Know** your grammar!
* If you don’t know how to say something, *try to phrase it in a way that you know*. Don’t try a totally new structure if you’re not sure how to do it. Or, if you’re still stuck,*lie*!! Examiners don’t care (or know) if it’s the truth or not, they only care that your **language is correct**!
* Try to include a **variety of tenses**. This is your chance to **show off** what you know

**Advice during the exam**

1. **Plan** what you’re going to write. There are usually 3 questions
2. **Write down notes** of language you know that you can include. Even if you’ve learned something in another context, try to change it to fit your essay.

*Eg. You’ve learned the nice expression*

Quand j’étais jeune, j’aimais jouer au foot mais maintenant je préfère faire de la natation.

Your essay is about holidays, you could say :

Quand j’étais jeune, j’aimais aller en France mais maintenant je préfère visiter l’Espagne.

1. Give a small **anecdote** in the past to vary your tenses (see above)
2. Use **structures** and small words such as ***when / because / after*** etc as they make your sentences longer and increase the complexity of language

Phrases exminers commented on

**Good**

* Qui / que to link sentences – which, that
* Additional information than simply what is provided for you
* Avant de / après avoir/être = before… / after having…
* Linking words such as et, parce que, car, puisque, qui, etc

For example : Le vol, qui a duré deux heures, était confortable.

* Range of tenses
* Range of verbs

Not good

* Weak endings je veux il / elle veut
* Repetitive use of verbs
* Bad structure – information that doesn’t flow and an essay that is disjointed
* Mispelling of verbs
* Bad control of language
* Incorrect constructions *eg.* J’ai fait les magasins le premier jour
* Incorrect articles and agreements *eg*. un groupe, mon temps libre etc.