IGCSE CIE Nov 2010: **Relationships**

**

**Examiners’ report:**

*The pen-portrait format seemed to be a familiar one, and most candidates made a genuine attempt to*

*address the tasks set. Most chose to write about a parent, girls usually opting for their mother, boys their father. Some chose their older brother or sister, others a close friend or even a teacher, while a minority wrote about a celebrity from sport or show business.The ‘description of the person’ required present tenses. Most gave a physical description, detailing age, height and appearance. Some added characteristics, such as kindness or a sense of humour. The subjects described were good company, they liked to laugh and shared activities with the candidate such as games, walks and outings. Their interests included music, sports or reading. Simple phrases such as il a les cheveux blonds proved to be problematic and the feminine agreement of adjectives was often missed when describing women or girls. Admirable qualities and ways in which the subject influenced the writer tended to merge but Examiners were usually able to award the two available communication marks. The person was a good role model because of his/her generosity, honesty or his/her caring or protective nature. Good friends or older siblings had what was perceived to be a mature attitude to school work. They also had a capacity for enjoying life and success in certain fields such as sport, which the candidate hoped to emulate. Candidates of more limited ability did not always have the language skills to express more abstract concepts and were more successful when they attempted more modest statements about their subject. Negative qualities were not so well expressed and were sometimes omitted altogether. A friend or sibling was too chatty or lazy or maybe shy. Parents were too strict at times or prone to anger. Often they were too busy working to spend enough time with their children. Those who said the subject was a paragon and had no faults at all were awarded the communication mark.*

*Influence was expressed in a variety of ways. Firstly the person was an example of what the candidate most admired so they were an inspiration, as mentioned earlier. Then again, a parent or older sibling could help with homework and advice with personal matters, although only the better candidates knew conseils or could use aider à with an infinitive. Girls especially valued a confidante, someone to listen when they were sad or had problems, someone to show understanding and say a kind word. Boys valued companionship from friends and practical help from parents such as driving lessons or money. The best candidates were able to say the subject had made them happier, more confident or even a better person. Future plans to spend time with the person were expressed appropriately by a future tense or more often the verb vouloir and an infinitive. Candidates would go out with the friend to a disco or a sporting event. They would arrange outings with a parent or more regularly they would organise a party in their honour. This was familiar ground and candidates were able to use more concrete vocabulary. Some chose to write what they would do for rather than with the person. To show their regard for their role model they would work hard to achieve a successful career and try to follow their example. More mundanely, some would be more helpful around the house. Some had already exceeded the 140 word limit before they addressed this final task and*

*forfeited a mark for communication.*