

# Chapter 2

## ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

The following report should be read in conjunction with the English First Additional Language question papers of the November 2019 Examination.

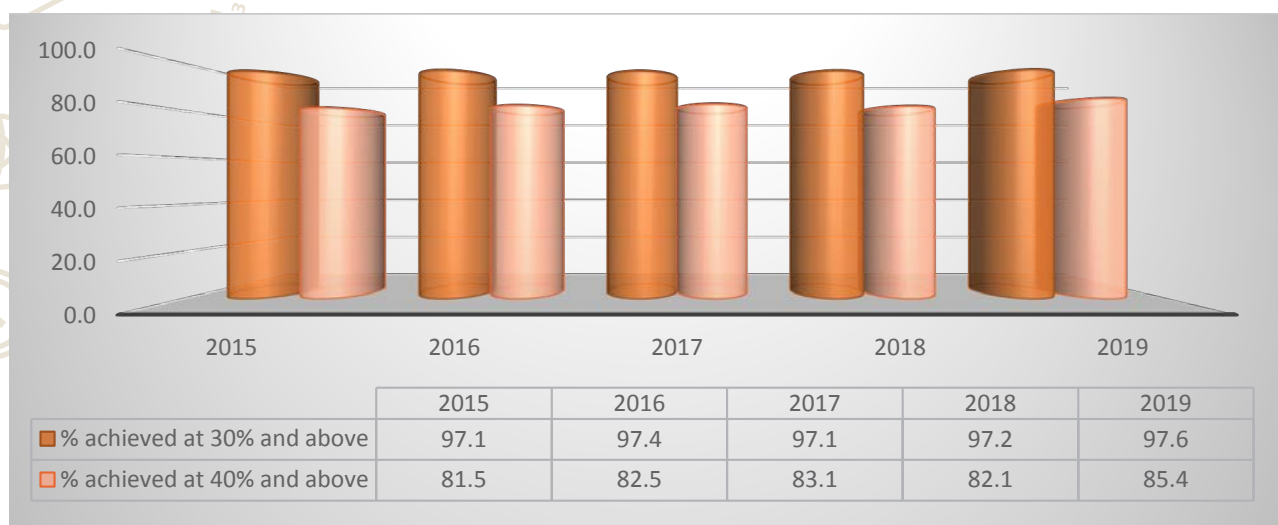
### 2.1 PERFORMANCE TRENDS: Papers 1 – 3 (2015 – 2019)

The number of full-time candidates who wrote the English First Additional Language examination in 2019 decreased by 9887 in comparison to that of 2018. The performance of the candidates in 2019 is consistent with that of the previous year with 97,6% achieving at the 30% level. There was an increase at the 40% level with 85,4% achieving at that level.

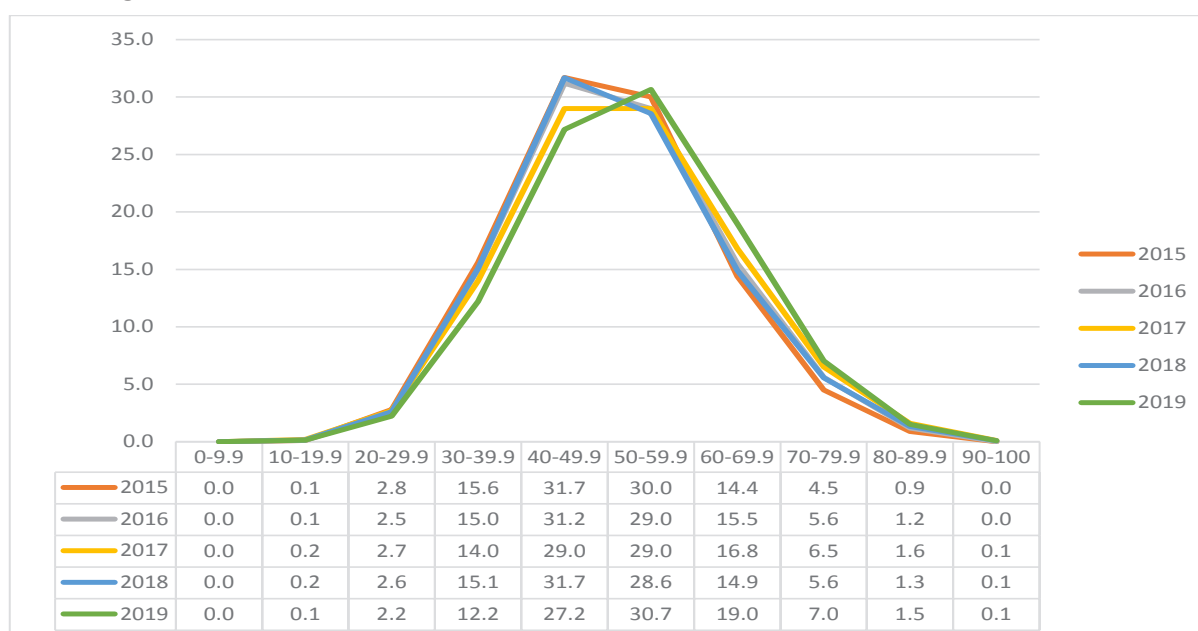
**Table 2.1.1: Overall achievement rates in English First Additional Language**

Year	No Wrote	No. achieved at 40% and above	% achieved at 40% and above	No. achieved at 30% and above	% achieved at 30% and above
2015	543,941	528,157	97.1	443,083	81.5
2016	547,292	533,235	97.4	451,376	82.5
2017	503,151	488,572	97.1	418,018	83.1
2018	498,959	485,112	97.2	409,878	82.1
2019	489,072	477,560	97.6	417,871	85.4

**Graph 2.1.1: Overall achievement rates in English First Additional Language (percentage)**



**Graph 2.1.2: Performance distribution curves in English First Additional Language (percentage)**



Year	0-9.9	10-19.9	20-29.9	30-39.9	40-49.9	50-59.9	60-69.9	70-79.9	80-89.9	90-100
2015	0.0	0.1	2.8	15.6	31.7	30.0	14.4	4.5	0.9	0.0
2016	0.0	0.1	2.5	15.0	31.2	29.0	15.5	5.6	1.2	0.0
2017	0.0	0.2	2.7	14.0	29.0	29.0	16.8	6.5	1.6	0.1
2018	0.0	0.2	2.6	15.1	31.7	28.6	14.9	5.6	1.3	0.1
2019	0.0	0.1	2.2	12.2	27.2	30.7	19.0	7.0	1.5	0.1

According to the graph above, the number of candidates who did not achieve at level 3, that is 40 – 49.9% has decreased by 4.5% from 31.7% in 2018 to 27.2% in 2019. This is a positive indication because levels 4 and 5 achievers have seen an upsurge of 2.1% and 4.1% respectively. Equally pleasing is the number of candidates who have achieved between 70 – 79% and 80-100% which have also shown an increase of 1.4% and 0.2% respectively.

## 2.2 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCES IN PAPER 1

### General comments

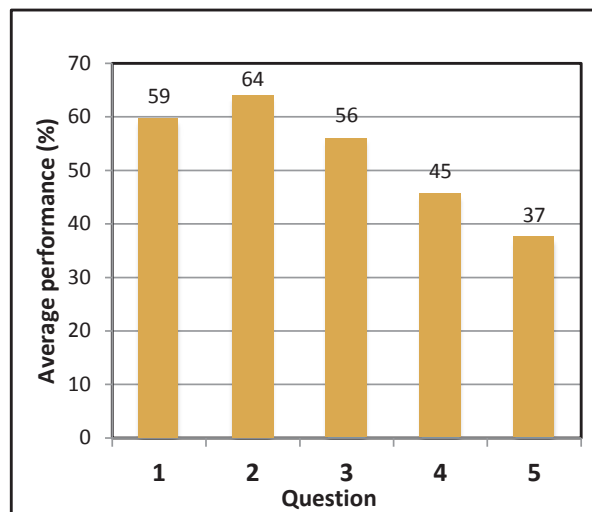
- There has been an improvement in performance on this paper; however, the open-ended questions remain problematic.
- Candidates who did not do well displayed a lack of vocabulary and a clear inability to interpret questions beyond lifting information from passages and visual stimuli provided.
- Performance in the summary question showed the greatest improvement. However, too many candidates were still not able to use their own words.
- There has been an improvement in the question that tests visual skills.
- Performance in Q5 remains a concern. A large number of candidates could not answer basic language conventions correctly. Formal language teaching deserves attention.

## 2.3 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION ANALYSIS FOR PAPER 1

The graph below is based on data from a random sample of candidates. This graph might not accurately reflect national averages, but it should still be useful in assessing the relative degree of success achieved by candidates.

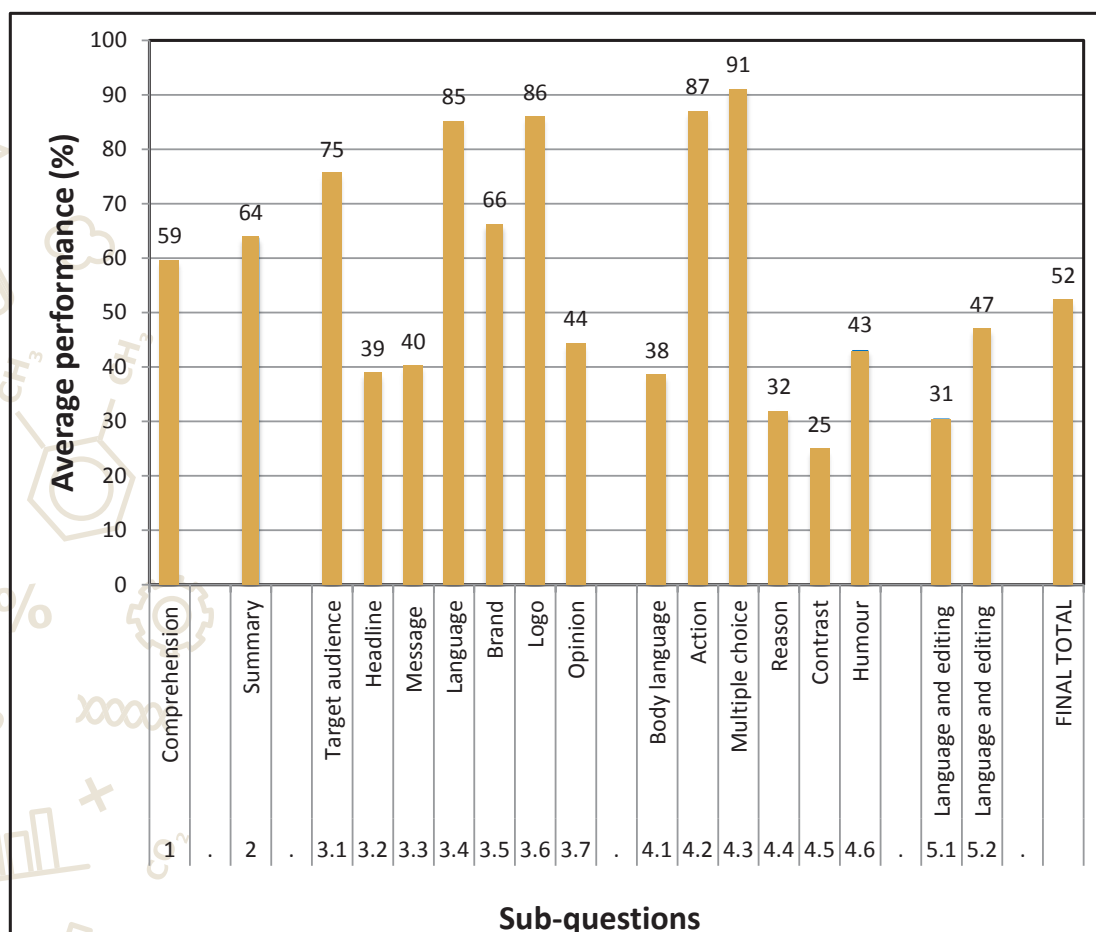
**Graph 2.3.1: Average performance per question expressed as a percentage in paper 1**

Q. No	Topics/Aspects	Average Percentage
1	Comprehension	59
2	Summary	64
3	Advertisement	56
4	Cartoon	45
5	Language and editing	37



In this sample, the performance of candidates in Q3 and Q5, which tested advertising skills, as well as language and editing skills, continued to decline. This is the section of the question paper where candidates achieved the lowest marks. Candidates performed best in Q2 which assessed summary writing skills.

**Graph 2.3.2: Average performance per sub-question expressed as a percentage in paper 1**



## 2.4 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS IN PAPER 1

### QUESTION 1: Comprehension Test

#### Common errors and misconceptions

##### TEXT A

- (a) Some candidates failed to understand the word, 'benefit' in Q1.1 hence scoring zero for the question. This is an indication that learners lacked basic vocabulary.
- (b) Many candidates lacked understanding of the difference between a 'hobby' and doing something for a 'living' in Q1.2.1; there was a lack of reading for meaning and understanding.
- (c) In Q1.2.2 many candidates, even the stronger ones, battled to explain the meaning of 'release our imagination' in the context of the passage. They lacked an understanding of the word, 'release'.
- (d) A number of candidates lacked understanding and vocabulary to answer Q1.3.1 and simply gave the meaning of 'pre-historic times'.
- (e) When answering Q1.3.2 candidates quoted from the paragraph, instead of explaining the meaning of 'in our blood' in their own words. Candidates lacked the ability to follow instructions and to read for meaning and understanding.
- (f) The candidates who failed to answer Q1.4.1 correctly failed to adhere to the instruction to quote a single word. It was also difficult for several candidates to identify the synonym, mainly due to a lack of understanding and a limited vocabulary.
- (g) Some candidates failed to provide the correct answer in Q1.4.2 because they lacked understanding of the concept, 'emotional healing'. Candidates clearly failed to read for meaning and understanding.
- (h) Most candidates lacked interpretation skills as they failed to answer Q1.5 correctly. They were unable to read and work out meaning in context.
- (i) Candidates repeated 'pen to paper' and 'old-fashioned' in their answers to Q1.6 instead of showing understanding by using their OWN words to explain the contrast.
- (j) Some candidates struggled with the options in Q1.7 as they lacked vocabulary. This showed a lack of understanding of the text as a whole.
- (k) Most candidates who answered Q1.8 incorrectly provided a quotation from the text instead of providing a valid explanation. This is an indication of candidates' lack of interpretation of the text and examination terminology.
- (l) Candidates concentrated on what can be learnt from the text instead of the trustworthiness and impact of the research in Q1.10. The question was merely restated as an answer.

- (m) In Q1.11 candidates did not have the necessary vocabulary to express themselves well enough to discuss the suitability of the title of the passage. Candidates merely repeated the title and did not link it to the passage.

## TEXT B

- (n) In Q1.12 candidates could identify the 'steering wheel' but most failed to use the correct English term for it, instead they referred to it as a 'steering'. This indicates a clear lack of vocabulary.
- (o) Candidates lacked the vocabulary to express what they saw in the visual in Q1.13. They lacked understanding of the visual as a whole.
- (p) Performance in Q1.14 was poor as candidates could not arrive at the message conveyed in the visual text. There was a lack of understanding and interpretation of the text as a whole.

## Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Teachers should use every available opportunity to expose learners to various texts to hone their comprehension skills. These should include visual texts, good verbal texts as well as audio texts. If learners understand that not only the reading passage but also the questions have to be understood, the quality of their responses should improve.
- (b) The importance of adhering to instructions should be instilled in learners. They must be taught to scrutinise questions for key words and instructions, like *name*, *explain* and *state*, to ensure that marks are not lost. Furthermore, learners must be taught to differentiate what each instruction requires of them; for example, *name/list* as opposed to *explain/discuss*.
- (c) Vocabulary can and should be built actively. Learners should be encouraged and motivated to engage with good texts and, while doing so, to use dictionaries, thesauruses and other learning aids. There is not a single aspect of this question paper which will not benefit from such an exercise.
- (d) Teachers should demonstrate and teach learners how to formulate opinions based on a given text in order to see a definite improvement in performance for open-ended and opinion questions.
- (e) Interpreting figurative language is closely related to the ability to infer. In addressing this skill, learners must be exposed to a variety of good texts. Only by teaching them to find meaning below the surface of a text (reading between the lines), will teachers empower their learners to perform well in the questions with a higher cognitive demand.
- (f) Learners should be offered frequent opportunities to answer questions of the same complexity as those in the final examination. They should be familiar with the skill of analysing and responding to a question requiring more than a simple response, for example, when a difference between two aspects must be shown.
- (g) It must be expected that the reading passage in an examination will not be interesting to every candidate and it may contain subject matter that is not familiar to candidates. It is therefore essential that teachers broaden the horizons of their learners by exposing them to various reading material in class. Engaging them in topical discussions and teaching them to utilise the reading passage will enhance their ability to respond more appropriately to such questions.

- (h) Subject Advisers should have regular workshops to assist both teachers and learners to master the skills required in this section of the subject.

## QUESTION 2: Summary

### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Some candidates did not adhere to the instruction to summarise the text into a list of facts on 'getting a good night's sleep'. These candidates merely condensed the passage and often ended up with a summary containing only one or no relevant facts.
- (b) The absence of reading comprehension skills was identified in some very incoherent responses where candidates quoted haphazardly from the given passage.
- (c) In some cases, candidates wrote miniature essays offering innovative *tips* of their own, not adhering to the instruction to summarise using the provided passage.
- (d) Many candidates presented their responses in the same format as that of the marking guidelines, including both quotations and paraphrasing. This led to the word limit being exceeded, which resulted in the loss of marks.
- (e) Some summaries were presented in paragraph form, despite the point-form summaries having been set for many years now, as prescribed by the CAPS. Candidates were not penalised for using the wrong format; however, this very often led to the word limit being exceeded and the omission of key facts.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Learners should be afforded multiple opportunities to practise the skill of summarising information so that they can hone this essential skill. The curriculum requires the ability to summarise information from the early grades, therefore this skill should be well refined by Grade 12.
- (b) Learners should be taught that the summary must be written in full, coherent sentences.
- (c) Different ways of using one's own words to express facts identified in the text should be taught, for example, using active/passive voice, turning a negative statement into a positive one, and the use of synonyms. The format used in the marking guidelines can be a useful teaching tool, but learners should be made aware that their final summaries should not contain any quotations.
- (d) This summary lent itself very well to the use of the imperative form. Teachers should familiarise their learners with this language skill.
- (e) Learners should be taught to master the format of the point-form summary – this is one aspect of the question paper that should not be intimidating at all, as it has been asked in this form since 2000.

## QUESTION 3: Analysing an Advertisement

### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Although questions on the target audience have been asked in the past, the term appeared to be new to many candidates. Candidates' responses to Q3.1 referred to the visuals and identified 'musicians' as the target audience which indicates that the concept had not been taught thoroughly.
- (b) Many candidates failed to give a reason for the advertiser's use of the visual in Q3.2 and could not associate a spoon and bowl with breakfast.
- (c) Some candidates had difficulty in answering Q3.3. Candidates failed to describe the visual element and concentrated on the message instead. They failed to see the connection between eating Kellogg's and achieving greatness as a result thereof. They could only identify that the people are happy and energetic. Candidates lacked the ability to read with meaning and understanding within a context, in this case, the advertisement.
- (d) In Q3.5 candidates lacked understanding of the words, 'well-established' in the context of the advertisement. Instead, generalised answers like 'many years' were given.
- (e) Candidates failed to see the logo as a marketing strategy. This showed a lack of skills in understanding and interpreting an advertisement.
- (f) It was expected that Q3.7 would be challenging for candidates. However, several candidates made the correct inference, but were unable to transfer their understanding into a discussion of the effectiveness of the advertisement. Some candidates could not argue whether the advertisement succeeded in convincing the reader to purchase the advertised product.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Advertising skills and techniques should be taught, reinforced and practised regularly.
- (b) Exercises to hone learners' knowledge of advertising techniques and terminology, for example, 'target audience'; 'visual and verbal techniques', should be done regularly.
- (c) Teachers should expose learners to a variety of advertising texts to enrich their understanding and enjoyment of the genre.
- (d) Learners should be taught that not every advertisement promotes a specific product, but that some advertise a service, manufacturer, an idea or a lifestyle, among other possibilities. Being able to identify the purpose of an advertisement or any text is an important reading and understanding skill.
- (e) Frequent opportunities to interact with a variety of advertising texts will boost learners' self-confidence so that they will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of an advertisement and be less hesitant to voice an opinion in answering more demanding questions like Q3.7.
- (f) Subject Advisers should have regular workshops to train educators how to teach advertising skills effectively

## QUESTION 4: Analysing a Cartoon

### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) It was unfortunate that instructions were ignored in Q4.1.1 as it was intended to be the simple first question to ease candidates into the cartoon. Instead, it turned out to be a stumbling block for many candidates because of a lack of understanding of the concept of 'body language'.
- (b) A few candidates lost the mark by just referring to sleeping, without making any reference to the activity done while on the bed, e.g. 'reading'.
- (c) In Q4.3 a few candidates lacked knowledge and could not make the correct choice. This can only be because they missed all the clues pointing to the mother's forgetfulness.
- (d) A lack of vocabulary led to poor performance in Q4.4. Some candidates gave short responses without substantiating, e.g. 'he is bored'.
- (e) In Q4.5 many candidates failed to analyse the question and identify the keywords, 'contrast' and 'visual aspect' which would have assisted them to respond correctly to the question.
- (f) The open-ended question (Q4.6) was problematic for the candidates. This was exacerbated by the lack of understanding of the concept, 'humour'.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) The basic features of visual literacy must be taught. Learners must know, and be able to explain terms like 'body language'.
- (b) The language section of the question paper starts with Q3. The observation is that candidates treat the advertisement and cartoon questions as additional comprehension exercises. Finding a language question assessing parts of speech anywhere in the language section of a question paper should not be a surprise. Teachers must teach all the basic language structures and conventions as listed on pp 46–48 of the CAPS.
- (c) Regular exposure to cartoons is not only an enjoyable way of teaching an abundance of skills, but it is also essential in equipping learners for the visual literacy section of the question paper. There are many visual texts available on the internet, in the press and in textbooks, and learners can also be invited to bring some of their own.
- (d) Learners should be taught to re-read the questions and their own answers to ensure that they have answered sensibly, and to get rid of any incoherence that might have crept into a response.



## QUESTION 5: Language and Editing

### Common errors and misconceptions

Identifying and correcting language errors has become a regular part of Paper 1, but many candidates seem to find it very challenging. This exercise requires reading and language skills, as well as some technical knowledge, but sadly some or all of these seem to be lacking in many candidates.

- (a) Q5.1.7 instructed candidates to rewrite the sentence in reported speech, but also embedded in this question were verb skills, the use of pronouns and punctuation. Candidates often lost marks because they were inattentive to some of these aspects.
- (b) The fact that some candidates still used quotation marks in their responses to Q5.1.7, shows a severe lack of exposure to exercises on indirect speech and the punctuation thereof.
- (c) Responses to Q5.1.3 were sometimes completely meaningless, indicating that candidates did not know how to use the passive voice.
- (d) Q5.1.2 required an antonym. At Grade 12 level it is expected that candidates will know what an antonym is. Many candidates could not give a correct antonym to fit into the given sentence.
- (e) Unfortunately, many candidates could not respond correctly to Q5.2.1, even though it had been tested in the last few years. This indicated a severe lack of knowledge of what a tag question is or which punctuation mark to use.
- (f) A lack of technical and working knowledge of tenses caused many candidates to use the incorrect tense instead of the future continuous tense in Q5.1.5.
- (g) Many candidates could not respond to Q5.1.8 correctly; they simply used 'and' to combine the two sentences and failed to remove the redundancy.
- (h) Candidates did not do well in most questions on formal language structures: e.g. Q5.2.2, Q.5.2.3, Q5.2.4 and Q5.2.5.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Learners should be exposed to texts with errors and be given guidance on how to correct the errors. This can be done both orally and in writing.
- (b) The CAPS document lists the language structures and conventions which are to be taught. Teachers should utilise this and remember that regular practice in applying these skills is essential. Some basic skills might have been taught in an earlier grade, but the learners need to practise regularly to retain the skill.
- (c) Teachers must ensure that the jargon of the language paper does not become a stumbling block to the learners. A candidate who does not recognise the terms 'reported speech' or 'homonym/synonym/antonym' will lose marks even if he/she might unknowingly have mastered the skill to respond to a question on that aspect.

- (d) When preparing learners for the final examination, teachers need to plan carefully and include frequent exercises and class tests to monitor the learners' progress and identify problem areas for remediation.
- (e) The ability to construct a simple sentence should not be a point of contention at Grade 12 level. Learners must practise this skill (constructing a simple sentence) and they should not use words or constructions that they have not mastered well.
- (f) Remedial work after tests and examinations, and also after any written work, will yield quality feedback to learners and impact positively on their results.
- (g) Past question papers are useful revision tools, but they should not become a limiting or prescriptive source. Learners deserve to be given as many opportunities as possible to interact with texts from a broad range of sources.

## ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE P2

### 2.5 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE ON PAPER 2

#### General comments

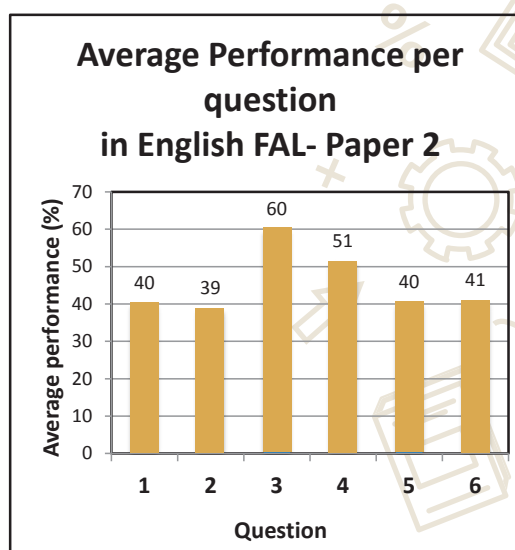
- (a) Some candidates still appeared to have read the prescribed texts very superficially, if at all. These candidates then treated the question paper like a comprehension exercise, offering all their responses based on the given extracts.
- (b) The candidates who performed well had a good knowledge of, and insight into the texts, and managed to respond in accordance with the instructions and the mark allocation.

### 2.6 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION ANALYSIS OF PAPER 2

The following graph is based on data from a random sample of candidates. While this graph might not accurately reflect national averages, it is useful in assessing the relative degree of challenge of each question as experienced by candidates.

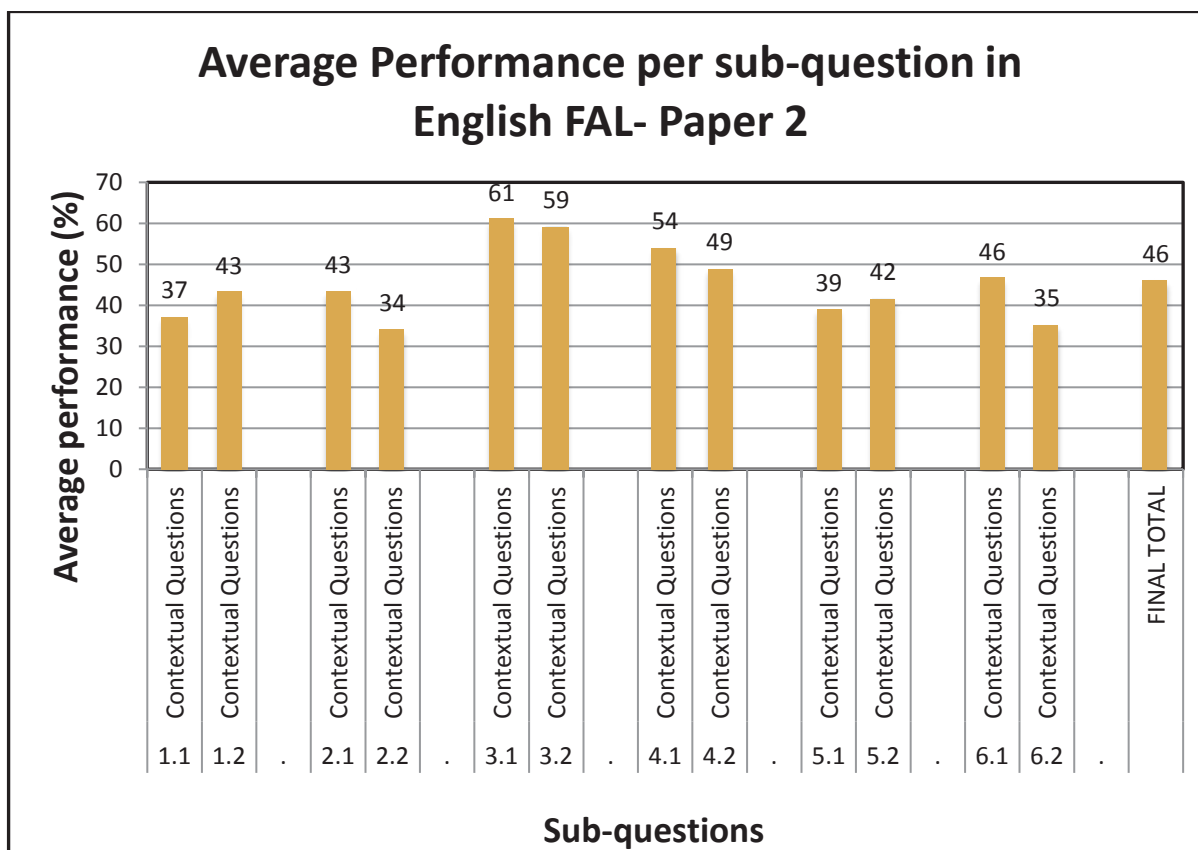
**Graph 2.6.1: Average marks per question expressed as a percentage in paper 2**

Q. No	Topics/Aspects	Average Percentage
1	Cry, The Beloved Country	40
2	Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde	39
3	Macbeth	60
4	My Children! My Africa!	51
5	Short Stories	40
6	Poetry	41



Candidates performed least successfully in Q5 (*Short Stories*) while they performed the best in Q3 (*Macbeth*). The most popular questions were Q4, Q5 and Q6.

Graph 2.6.2: Average marks per sub-question expressed as a percentage in Paper 2



## 2.7 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 2

### Common errors and misconceptions

- Executing choices remained a challenge for many candidates. They started answering questions as they were presented in the question paper, entirely disregarding the instructions, table of contents and checklist provided in the paper.
- Where a question required a certain number of responses, candidates wasted time with lengthy answers but could not be credited as only the required number of responses was assessed. This principle is followed across all subjects and is the only valid and fair way to prevent the marker from choosing the best responses on behalf of the candidate.
- Every question across all the genres included level 1 and 2 questions, requiring candidates to recall details from the texts. The fact that so many candidates had difficulty responding to these questions points to a lack of preparation, a lack of teaching, or a combination of these.

- (d) When asked to identify and/or discuss the purpose of stylistic devices (e.g. Q1.2.2(a+b), Q2.2.3(a+b), Q3.2.2(a+b), Q4.2.1(a+b), Q5.1.5(b+c) Q6.1.2 and Q6.2.5(b+c)), candidates often displayed a lack of knowledge and skills. Some could not identify these devices, and even more could not explain why the devices were used or how they contributed to the text.
- (e) The questions on identification and discussion of tone (e.g. Q1.2.3(a+b), Q2.1.3(a+b), Q3.2.6(a+b), Q4.1.4(a+b), Q5.1.6) and Q6.2.3(a+b)) presented challenges to some candidates.
- (f) Most candidates were unable to respond effectively to the questions testing irony (e.g. Q1.2.8, Q2.1.6, Q3.2.5 and Q4.1.6). Most could not identify the irony or use both elements to explain the irony, which is a requirement to score any marks.
- (g) The questions on characterisation in this year's question paper required candidates to provide character traits and to substantiate the character traits based on the extract provided (e.g. Q1.1.4, Q2.1.5 and Q3.1.6, Q4.2.6 and Q5.1.7). Some candidates appeared to be unable to discuss the character traits based on the given extracts.
- (h) Questions dealing with theme were once again not well answered even though the theme was given in the question (e.g. Q1.1.6, Q2.2.5, Q3.2.7, Q4.2.7, Q5.2.8 and Q6.1.7). Some candidates gave answers which were studied and then tried to make it fit the given question.
- (i) Responding to questions which required the candidate to give an opinion (e.g. Q1.1.7, Q1.2.9, Q2.1.7, Q2.2.6 Q3.1.8, Q3.2.8, Q4.1.7, Q4.2.8, Q5.1.8, Q5.2.9, Q6.1.8 and Q6.2.8) is a skill which requires knowledge and insight. Candidates had difficulty scoring full marks for these questions as one or more of the mentioned components were lacking or generalised responses were given.
- (j) Candidates often disregarded instructions. In some cases, it appeared that they did not read the entire question, but often the problem seemed to be a lack of understanding of the commonly used assessment terms such as 'explain, describe, how/why', 'state' and 'discuss'.

### **Suggestions for improvement**

- (a) Learners should be taught to choose the questions based on the text they have studied. Teachers should expose their learners to question papers containing questions from texts they have not studied in the mid-year examination and again in the September trial examination.
- (b) Teachers must apply the same marking principles in the lower grades. Learners must be taught that if they are asked for TWO points, they must choose the two points that are most likely to be credited. The choice can never be left to the marker as that would lead to innumerable unfair practices.
- (c) Learners cannot acquire insight into the texts without having mastered knowledge of the content. Even the short stories and poetry must be studied in detail and no teacher should expect learners to do this at home without these texts being taught and guidance given to learners. The short stories may be short, but the detail must be taught and studied – the characters in the short stories are often not very complex, but they are all important.

- (d) At Grade 12 level, candidates are expected to do more than merely identify stylistic devices. This is clearly stipulated on pp 31–32 of the CAPS. Teachers must ensure that their learners can name such devices, as well as comment on how these devices enrich the texts.
- (e) Characterisation must be taught in context – a character trait cannot be attributed to a character without referring to the behaviour to substantiate it. Teachers should guard against allowing or forcing learners to memorise lists of character traits without the accompanying insight into the behaviour of the characters in different parts of the text.
- (f) Themes should not merely be memorised without insight. Teachers must show learners how the various themes become evident in different parts of the text, so that the candidates will be able to identify and discuss a relevant theme in the given extract or the text as a whole, and also gain the skill of isolating events which support a certain theme from a text.
- (g) Teachers must guide learners to discover all the layers of literature and ensure that by the time they write the final examination they appreciate that literature consists of more components than just plot. Tone, irony and characterisation are aspects they must be exposed to – if they do not know this, a large part of the enjoyment of the text they are working with, will be lost.
- (h) Candidates must be exposed to examination instructions and questions so that they are confident when they are confronted with the question paper. This will ensure that the jargon of the examination will not be an obstacle to their ability to answer questions.
- (i) Poetry must be taught on both a literal and figurative level. This must include all poetic devices, tone and mood and how these contribute to overall meaning.
- (j) Subject Advisers must have regular workshops to ensure that educators are well prepared to teach the various elements. This is invaluable to the adequate preparation of learners for the literature examination.

## ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE P3

### 2.8 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE ON PAPER 3

#### General comments

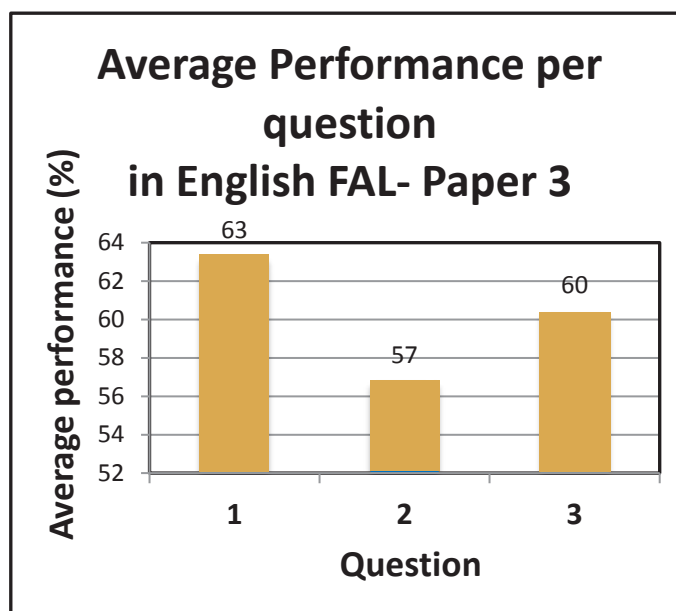
- (a) Teachers must emphasise that this paper carries the most marks and can make a significant difference to the candidates' results. The fact that the paper is written towards the end of the examination may create the misconception that it is not important.
- (b) Candidates must be encouraged to prepare well for this paper, as the skills and language structures used in the first two papers can be applied here with great success. In addition, the formal aspects of format should be taught and studied.
- (c) The importance of analysing a topic or a set of instructions should be emphasised. Candidates are penalised if they respond only partially to a given topic, and it is often the result of the candidate's neglect in paying attention to every aspect of the topic.

## 2.9 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION ANALYSIS FOR PAPER 3

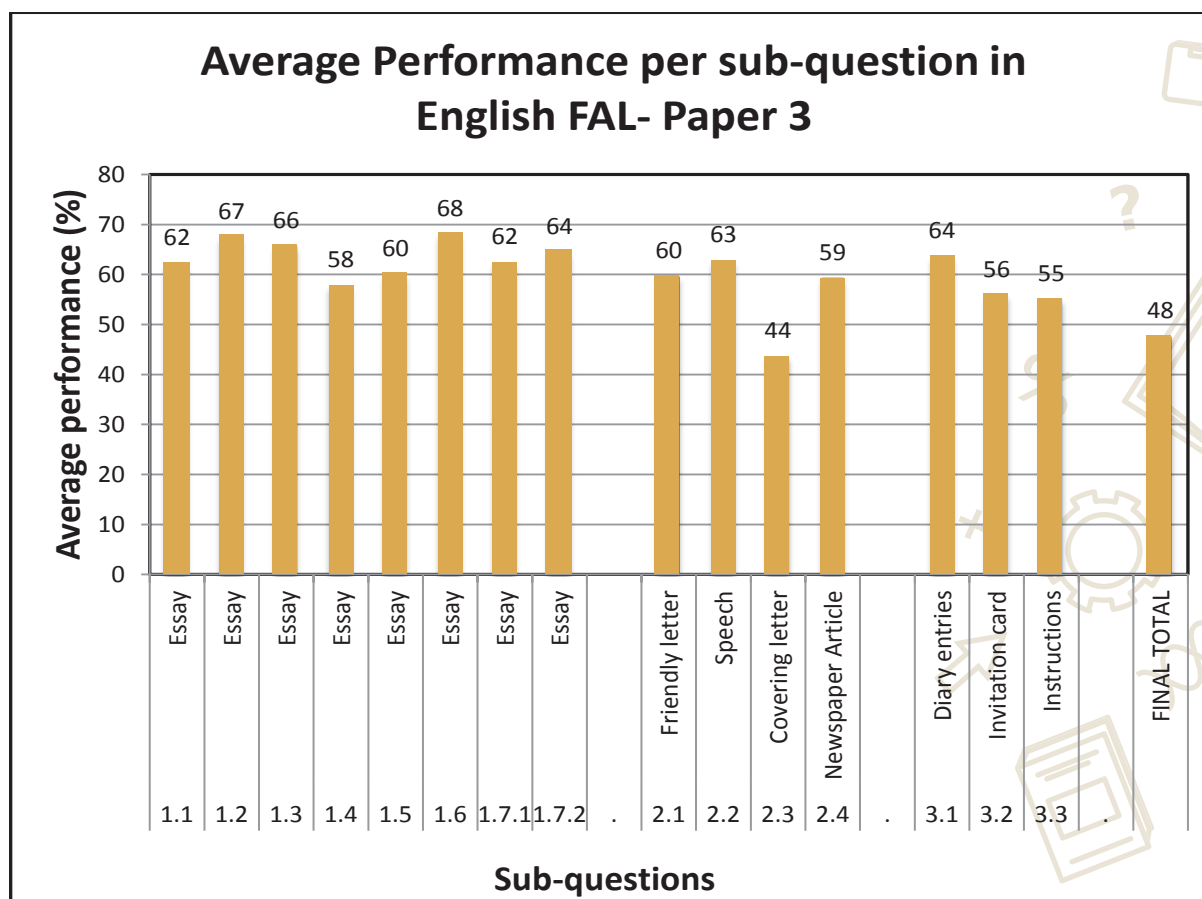
The following graph was based on data from a random sample of candidates. While this graph might not accurately reflect national averages, it is useful in assessing the relative degree of challenge of each question as experienced by candidates.

Graph 2.9.1 Average marks per question expressed as a percentage in Paper 3

Q.	Topics/Aspects	Average Percentage
Q1	Essay	63
Q2	Longer Transactional Text	57
Q3	Shorter Transactional Text	60



Graph 2.9.2 Average marks per sub-question expressed as a percentage in Paper 3



## 2.10 Analysis Of Learner Performance In Individual Questions In Paper 3

### SECTION A: ESSAYS

#### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Q1.1 was the most popular question. It was generally understood and well answered. Candidates wrote about the ordinary school year and how it impacted on their personal lives. Candidates mostly lost marks in the language and style categories.
- (b) Performance ranged from average to very good in Q1.2, although candidates merely discussed a particular issue or event in their lives in general and did not use the given statement well. Candidates who interpreted the question well produced good to excellent responses.
- (c) Some candidates had difficulty answering Q1.3 effectively. Candidates wrote about happiness in general. For example, one must respect the elderly, have education and be successful to be happy. The idea of being responsible for one's own happiness did not come out very clearly in the writing.
- (d) Not many candidates attempted Q1.4. Very strong candidates were able to interpret this topic figuratively and wrote brilliant, creative and gripping descriptions.
- (e) Q1.5 was one of the most popular topics. However, some candidates presented mundane interpretations of the topic and the essence of the topic was often lost.
- (f) Very few candidates attempted Q1.6. The topic evoked responses which ranged from very good to innovative and exceptional by more creative writers. Even weaker candidates who attempted this question produced good descriptions and reflections. Candidates lost marks in the language and style categories.
- (g) The pictorial stimuli in Q1.7 allowed for broad interpretation, both literal and figurative. Stronger candidates could relate to the topic, providing detail, whether in story-telling, descriptive or reflective essay-style writing. Candidates lost marks in the language and style categories.

#### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Teachers should ensure that their learners know how to analyse and interpret the entire topic so that all aspects will be covered in the response. Learners should not be encouraged to zoom in on a single word in a topic. If there is any aspect of a topic about which a candidate is uncertain, he/she should choose another topic. A practical hint is to teach learners to underline all the nouns/key words in a topic. If candidates had done this in Q1.6, they would have realised that the key words were 'conceive', 'believe', and 'achieve'.
- (b) Learners must be exposed to the different types of essays and given opportunities to practise them. When administering SBA tasks, teachers should not neglect the aspect of providing learners with the opportunity to exercise choices. If they are given more than one option when doing a task, the learners will be able to study the options carefully and choose the one most suited to their experience, ability and style of writing.

- (c) Learners should receive guidance on how to interpret visual texts. This can be done by exposing them to pictures and allowing them to practise in class, even if this exercise does not lead to an entire essay being written every time. Learners will benefit as it will take away the element of surprise at finding visual stimuli in the examination, and it may open up a wealth of creative possibilities.
- (d) The aspects of creativity and originality are often the difference between a good and an excellent essay. Learners must be taught that their first idea may probably be everybody else's first idea and will therefore lack originality. Teaching learners to be original and creative in their writing is a challenge that teachers should embrace. It is often the learner with limited language ability who has a knack for thinking out of the box, and thus can earn some valuable marks.
- (e) The correct structure of an essay is important and should be taught. The planning stage of the essay is essential in this regard. A striking introduction and strong conclusion are hallmarks of good writing.
- (f) Editing should be an integral part of the draft stage. If the draft and final copy of an essay are identical, the planning did not serve the required purpose. Learners must re-read their work and eliminate incoherence and other mistakes.
- (g) Concord, spelling, sentence construction and all other language skills must be taught, studied and used to improve writing. This can be further enhanced by using figurative language and rhetorical devices.
- (h) Learners must be encouraged to adhere to the required length of the essay.

## SECTION B: LONGER TRANSACTIONAL PIECES

### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Q2.1 was the most popular question in this section. Generally, candidates responded very well to the question. However, many candidates failed to have a suitable closing salutation to the letter. Reference was only made to one place, despite the question referring to the plural form.
- (b) Some candidates did not know the difference between studying and reading in Q2.2. The speech was focused on studying rather than reading.
- (c) Very few candidates attempted Q2.3. The candidates who did, often just rewrote the Curriculum Vitae and did not know the difference between a Letter of Application and a Covering Letter. The stronger candidates who attempted this question did very well and produced writing of an outstanding quality.
- (d) Q2.4 (the newspaper article) was the least popular question in this section. Candidates who opted for this question failed to use the correct format. Candidates also did not provide suitable headings in their writing.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Teachers should provide their learners with correct examples of texts and formats so that they can prepare adequately for this section.



- (b) Learners should get ample opportunities to write different pieces, listen to one another's efforts and refine the skills they acquire. This practice should help them identify and create a suitable tone for the specific piece they are required to produce.
- (c) The CAPS document provides all the different transactional pieces that must have been taught by the end of Grade 12. Teachers must expose learners to all these so that the choice is not unfairly limited when it comes to the final examination.
- (d) To produce logically structured, coherent pieces, learners should be taught to plan, proofread and edit their work.
- (e) Teachers should encourage learners to adhere to the required length of the transactional pieces.

## SECTION C: SHORTER TEXTS

### Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) The diary entry in Q3.1 was the most popular choice and candidates wrote well, describing personal feelings. Some candidates only provided one instead of two entries which was a requirement.
- (b) Q3.2 was not very popular nor was it answered very well. Many candidates who elected to write the invitation did not know the correct format. Important requirements in the question, such as providing the name of the local actor, were overlooked.
- (c) Understanding the context proved to be problematic for candidates who attempted Q3.3. The question was misinterpreted and candidates offered directions to the wedding venue instead of finding a suitable venue for the wedding.
- (d) Some candidates did not make use of any planning or editing, despite having done so in the other sections. Some went about their responses without much attention to correct language usage and very often these responses were either extremely short or exceeded the required length.

### Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Learners must read and analyse the topic of their choice, underlining key words and using them to ensure that all requirements of the topic are met.
- (b) The formal language conventions applicable to all texts listed in the CAPS document must be taught, using correct and well-written examples. Learners must be given as many opportunities as possible to practise writing these texts.
- (c) This section can boost the candidates' marks, as the pieces are relatively easy and, in many instances, they can get away with not writing in full sentences. For this reason, candidates must be discouraged from treating this section as relatively unimportant. The same attention to planning and editing should be given to this last piece as to the other two.
- (d) Time management should be emphasised and practised as running out of time might have been the reason for candidates' lack of attention to detail.
- (e) Teachers should encourage learners to adhere to the required length in the shorter transactional pieces.