

CHAPTER 3

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE

The following report should be read in conjunction with the English Home Language question papers of the November 2017 Examinations.

3.1 PERFORMANCE TRENDS: PAPERS 1 – 3 (2017)

The tables and graphs below show that the general performance of candidates reflects a decline to that of 2016.

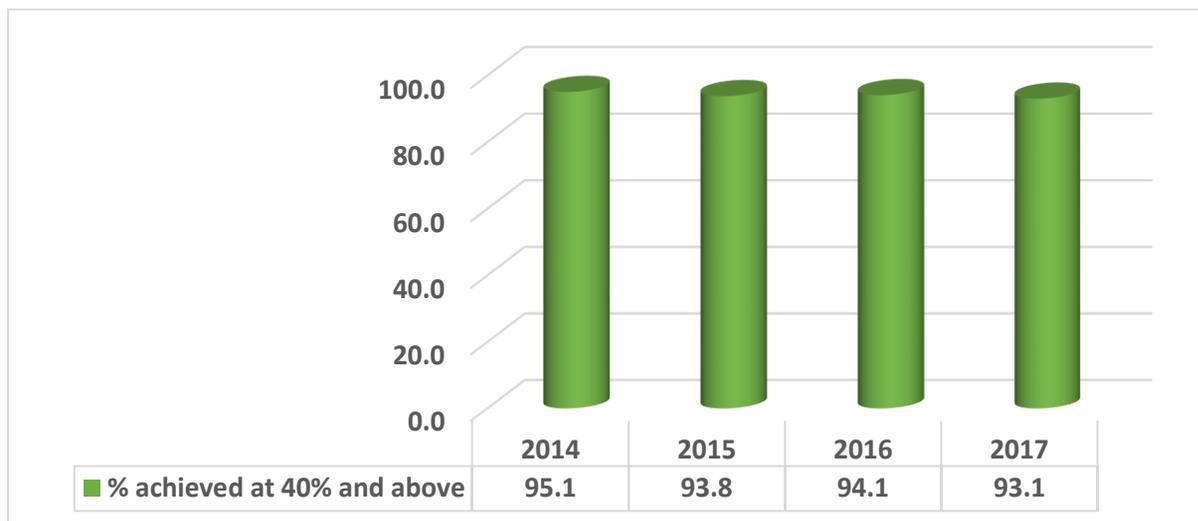
In 2017, the following features are noted:

- The number of candidates writing the subject decreased by 2 262.
- The general achievement of candidates declined by 1% in 2017. This is indicated by 93,1% of candidates achieving at 40% and above in 2017, as opposed to 94,1% achieving at 40% and above in 2016.
- The general performance has also been fluctuating over the past four years, and this subject is yet to get back to the 95.1% achieved in 2014.

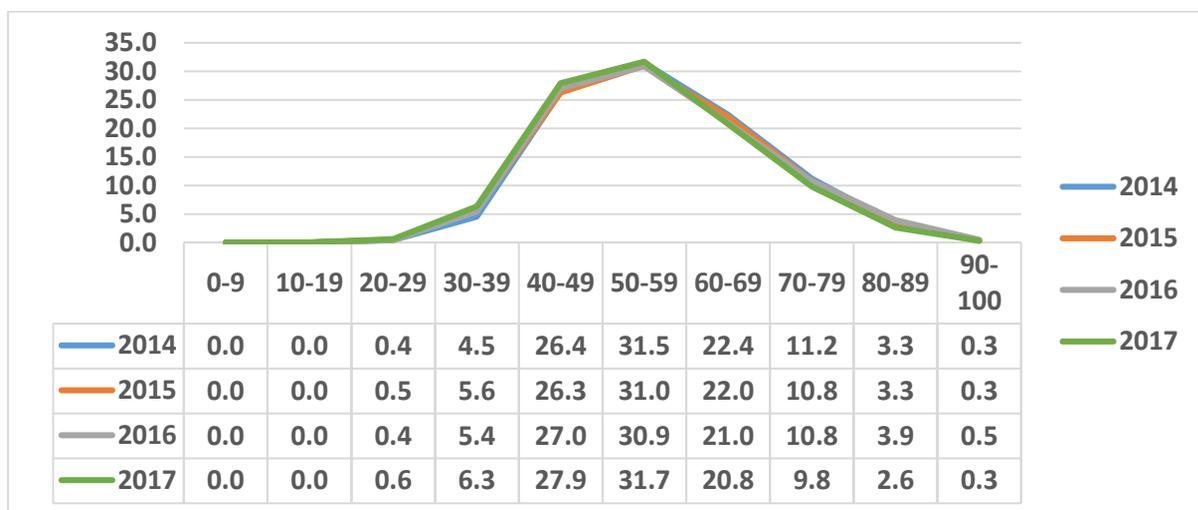
Table 3.1.1: Overall achievement rates in English Home Language

Year	No Wrote	No. achieved at 40% and above	% achieved at 40% and above
2014	105 480	100 279	95,1
2015	111 785	104 875	93,8
2016	107 967	101 610	94,1
2017	105 705	98 362	93,1

Graph 3.1.1: Overall achievement rates in English Home Language



Graph 3.1.2: Performance distribution curves (English Home Language: 2014–2017)



3.2 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 1

General comments

- Many candidates were unable to grasp the gist of the passages set for comprehension and the summary. They also displayed an inability to formulate coherent answers using their own words.
- Candidates who did not do well were unable to provide insight and failed to comprehend basic examination terminology.
- There was a general improvement in the performance of the learners in the advertisement.
- The performance of candidates in Question 5 remains a concern. It would appear that the teaching of basic language concepts was neglected in many centres in all the provinces.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 1

QUESTION 1: Comprehension

Weaker candidates still misinterpreted questions and merely lifted from the passage or gave irrelevant explanations. The majority of learners could not write answers that required critical thinking. Responses to higher-order questions were poorly constructed.

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) In Q1.2, many candidates merely lifted the first sentence of the paragraph without showing understanding of the argument.
- (b) In Q1.6, the metalanguage of texts posed a challenge to many candidates. They failed to focus on how language affected the writer's view. They did not refer to the language at all, resulting in their only being awarded a mark for identifying the writer's attitude.
- (c) In Q1.7, some candidates were unsure of the word 'fad'. The question was poorly answered as candidates found it difficult to *summarise* Shriver's view and then to *comment on this view*. Candidates struggled to *comment critically* on an issue and therefore gave personalised responses.
- (d) In Q1.8, candidates lifted the answer directly from the passage in an attempt to interpret the question. Many did not understand that this question was in essence about the logic of 'participating fully, yet keeping one's distance'.
- (e) In Q1.9, poor vocabulary skills contributed to many candidates making the incorrect choice.
- (f) In Q1.11, candidates did not analyse the *impact* of the statement and gave a general explanation. They were unable to link the impact of the statement to a reaction in the reader.
- (g) In Q1.12, reference to both texts was not reflected in many candidates' responses. The word 'subjectivity' was often misconstrued and responses were developed on the 'subject of ...' rather than the 'subjectivity in 1 ...'.

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 and even 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. Learners must be taught to decode what each instruction requires of them, for example 'critically comment'/'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 who demonstrate and teach how to formulate opinions based on a given text, will be doing their learners a service as they will see a definite improvement in their marks for open-ended and opinion questions.
- (e) The relatively weak responses to Q1.2 reflect that even basic level one and two skills are not being practised. This has an impact on performance as 40% of the questions are pitched at this level.
- (f) Higher-order thinking skills must be taught. This will ensure that candidates will perform at a higher cognitive level in questions requiring these skills.
- (g) 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. Responding to a question in its entirety must be taught.
- (h) The answering of questions demanding a discussion or critical comment, needs to be taught and practised. Such questions might be better answered if the learner starts the answer with 'I think that ...'.
- (i) There is always the possibility that the reading passage in an examination will not be interesting to every candidate, or even that it will contain subject matter with which the candidate is not familiar. It is, therefore, essential that teachers broaden the horizons of their learners by exposing them to various reading material in class, engaging in topical discussions and, perhaps most importantly, teaching them to utilise the reading passage when responding to the questions. The topic of 'Cultural Appropriation' is both current and topical – even affecting different schools' practices.

QUESTION 2: Summary

- (a) Many candidates' attempts to answer in their own words was evident although some continued to lift excerpts from the text.
- (b) Candidates still had a penchant for producing a point-form summary as opposed to writing a paragraph (as per instructions).

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Candidates battled to understand that the question's focus was on *strength-based parenting* and not on *narcissism*.
- (b) The absence of reading comprehension skills was identified in some very incoherent responses where candidates quoted haphazardly from the given passage.
- (c) There were a few well-written summaries where candidates offered opposing views or changed the focus of the points in the passage to write about what 'should' be done or 'should not' be done. These responses were, however, invalid and could not be credited.
- (d) The number of words required was often exceeded and not acknowledged by the candidate.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) The summary is an important aspect of learning and should be taught and practised. The curriculum requires this ability to summarise information from the early grades, and this skill should be honed by Grade 12.
- (b) Learners must follow instructions carefully; at this stage, no point-form summary should be presented. Teachers must prepare the learners to identify the necessary points and then write them in a neat, coherent paragraph.
- (c) It is advisable that learners be taught to re-read the question each time they write down a point.
- (d) It is important that learners are taught to use their own words when answering the summary. This skill can only be mastered with constant practise.

QUESTION 3: Analysing an Advertisement

This question was answered fairly well. Even weaker candidates were able to score marks in this question. There was evidence that visual literacy was taught and learners had applied advertising techniques in this question.

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Q3.3 and Q3.4 required candidates to comment on the text and the visual. However, too many candidates were unable to link the two.
- (b) In Q3.3, some candidates did not refer to the image at all, while others failed to identify aspects of the image and discuss its effectiveness.
- (c) Q3.4 required a comment on presentation. Many commented on the words presented and not on the *way in which* the words were presented.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Teachers must train learners to read the questions carefully.
- (b) Advertising techniques and how to apply them in answering questions must be taught.
- (c) Learners must be taught to identify the reason for specific visuals being used in advertising and how these visuals are linked and enhanced by the written text.
- (d) The key instruction words such as ‘What is the advertiser’s intention ...’/‘comment on ...’/‘critically discuss ...’ need to be identified. These instructions expect more than a mere identification of text and visual.
- (e) To discuss *effectiveness*, they must be taught to ask ‘... so what?’ after answering the question to see whether they have actually included the *effectiveness* in their answer.

QUESTION 4: Analysing a Cartoon

Candidates related to the cartoon and the questions were within the average candidate's capabilities. It was evident in this question that visual literacy was taught and that learners were exposed to different types of cartoons and contexts.

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) In Q4.1, the question focused on *speech and attitude*. The candidate was expected to identify an *attitude* and to *substantiate* the answer by referring to an aspect of speech. Many failed to substantiate their responses.
- (b) For Q4.2, two parts were required in the candidates' responses, viz. the different reactions of *both* Hobbes and Calvin. Even the stronger candidates often only referred to one character.
- (c) Q4.3 asked for one technique. Many candidates merely listed a number of techniques without discussing the effectiveness as required by the question. Of concern was the number of candidates who answered this question without mentioning or alluding to a technique. Candidates confused body language and facial expression.
- (d) In Q4.4, many candidates ignored the fact that they had to refer to *both* visual and verbal aspects of the last frame in their answer and tended to describe what was in the frame without interpretation. Quite a number of responses summarised previous frames and paid little to no attention to the last frame.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) The questions must be read carefully and once answered, learners must reflect on whether all sections of the question have been covered.
- (b) Teachers must make sure cartoon techniques, satire and how humour is achieved are taught and give the learners as much practice as possible. The impact and effectiveness of techniques used in visual literacy must be taught.
- (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.

QUESTION 5: Language and Editing

There seemed to be a slight improvement in this question this year as there were fewer zeros. However, this question remains a concern. Candidates, where teachers prepared the learners for the language part of the paper, had a chance of scoring decent marks for this section.

Unfortunately, most candidates were unable to answer these questions sufficiently. The only conclusion that could be drawn was that many schools did not teach language concepts. There is an expectation that a Grade 12 candidate should know the following: the function of a colon; tautology; malapropism; parts of speech and other terminology, as clearly indicated in the CAPS document.

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) In Q5.3, many candidates were still not aware of the use of punctuation marks used in context and could not differentiate between the two uses. Many candidates did not read the sentence carefully and gave a function of the colon that was not valid in this case, e.g. 'it introduces a list'.
- (b) In Q5.4, most candidates knew the meaning of 'uninterested', however, very few knew what 'disinterested' meant.
- (c) For Q5.5.1, the responses from many candidates reflected that they had a poor grasp of parts of speech.
- (d) Q5.7 tested the candidates' knowledge of both parts of speech and sentence structure, but it was clear that many had no idea and simply answered 'this' or 'that'.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Learners should be exposed to texts with errors and be provided with guidance in how to correct the errors. This can be done both orally and in writing.
- (b) The *CAPS* document conveniently lists the language structures and conventions which are to be taught. Educators should utilise this and remember that regular practice in applying these skills is essential. Some basic skills should have been taught in an earlier grade, but the learners need to practise regularly to retain these skills.
- (c) Teachers must ensure that the jargon of the language paper does not become a stumbling block to the learners. This can be achieved by familiarising learners with the metalanguage of this section.
- (d) When preparing learners for the final examinations, teachers need to plan carefully and include frequent exercises and class tests to monitor the learners' progress and identify problem areas for remediation. This will yield good feedback to learners and impact positively on their results.
- (e) 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.

3.4 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 2

General comments

- (a) Many candidates appeared to have read the prescribed texts very superficially, if at all. Candidates offered literal responses to the texts and were unable to engage with the texts on a figurative level. Some candidates even resorted to lifting from the poems and/or extracts in an effort to respond to the questions.
- (b) Many candidates were unable to respond to the specific requirements of the question; instead generalised analyses or paraphrases were provided. There was an inability on the part of many candidates to respond to the questions' instructions, e.g. 'explain', 'discuss', etc. and there was

a failure to respond to all aspects of the question in cases where the question required more than one aspect to be addressed.

- (c) Executing choices seemed to have been a challenge for some candidates. These candidates either answered all four prescribed poems and two contextual questions, instead of selecting two prescribed poems, one essay and one contextual question. They attempted, instead, to answer every question, entirely disregarding the instructions, table of contents and checklist provided in the paper.
- (d) Limited vocabulary and an inability to use language appropriately hampered many candidates' ability to express themselves effectively.
- (e) Thorough and critical engagement with the text under discussion is strongly recommended.
- (f) Despite the fact that many essay responses were narrative in nature, there was a general improvement in the quality of the writing of the Literary Essay with fewer candidates writing single paragraphs or point-form essays.
- (g) The candidates who performed well had a good knowledge of and insight into the texts, a good command of the English language and managed to respond in accordance with the instructions and the mark allocation.

3.5 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 2

SECTION A: POETRY

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) In responding to the Poetry Essay (Question 1), many candidates simply lifted from or paraphrased the poem. Very little analytical skill or critical discussion was evident. In many cases, no reference was made to *diction*, *imagery* and *tone* and where reference was made to these aspects of the poem, they were poorly handled. There was poor understanding of how to explain the effect of a word (diction) or image in context and most candidates neglected to respond to tone at all. The style and structure of the Poetry essay was generally weak.
- (b) In responding to the contextual questions in Q2, Q3 and Q4, most candidates failed to focus on the specific requirements of the questions. There appeared to be an inability to decode/interpret the question and to respond accordingly, for example Q3.4 and Q4.4 required candidates to refer to 'visions (plural) of the future' and 'options (plural) for human behaviour' respectively and most candidates only offered a single vision or option. Also, instructions to link a description to 'the context of the poem' (Q2.3, Q3.3 and Q4.3) or to refer to 'imagery and/or diction' to justify their response (Q2.4, Q3.4 and Q4.4) were largely ignored by candidates, which meant that markers were unable to award the third mark.
- (c) In their responses to Q2.3, Q3.3 and Q4.3, the majority of the candidates did not focus on the lines referenced in the questions, which meant that their responses were generalised and/or vague.

- (d) Many candidates were unfamiliar with the finer aspects of the poems being examined and in some cases, it would appear that there was incorrect teaching of some poems. For example, there were a number of candidates who referred to the speaker in *Remember* as already being dead and who were under the impression that *The Zulu Girl* was about a prostitute. The meaning of words used in the prescribed poems were often not understood, for example, 'flings'.
- (e) Many candidates responded to the poems in a very literal manner, with little or no understanding of the figurative meanings of the poems.
- (f) The Unseen Poem (Q5) was very poorly answered by the vast majority of candidates. This points to an inability on the part of the candidates to transfer the skills of poetry analysis from the prescribed poetry to the unseen poem.
- (g) In both the prescribed poetry and the unseen poem, it was distressing to note that many candidates did not appear to be familiar with basic literary terminology such as *mood*, *tone* and *imagery* or with the terminology used in the questions. At this level, candidates should have mastered these concepts.

SECTION B AND SECTION C: NOVELS AND DRAMAS

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) Many candidates responded very poorly to the essay questions (Q6, Q8, Q10, Q12 and Q14). Instead of an argument being developed in response to the set question, a superficial re-telling of the story was undertaken. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, candidates simply listed all the things the titular character did wrong and in *Life of Pi*, all the things Pi did to survive were listed without a link to the question. In the dramas, 'the problem of making moral choices' was not addressed. Instead candidates referred to all the immoral actions performed by various characters.
- (b) Very few candidates understood that a literary essay required the formulation and development of an argument.
- (c) Mere knowledge of the plot and film versions of the texts were presented. This is not sufficient at English HL level.
- (d) Many responses reflected a flawed understanding of the plot and characters of the novels and dramas.
- (e) Some candidates relied on pre-prepared essays such as the sample essays provided in the *Life of Pi* prescribed text. Candidates who rote-learnt these essays ran the risk of being accused of plagiarism and they disadvantaged themselves as these essays did not fulfil the requirements of the set question.
- (f) Overall, candidates' responses to the contextual questions (Q7, Q9, Q11, Q13 and Q15) were superficial and generalised. The specific requirements of the questions were ignored, for example Q7.4 and Q9.2, required learners to relate events to 'the novel as a whole' but this was not done.

- (g) The line references that were provided in the questions (for example, Q9.4, Q11.3 and Q13.3) and that were meant to be the focus of the response, were often ignored by the candidates.
- (h) Many candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with instruction words such as 'Account for' and 'Critically discuss' despite this terminology being standard. Similarly, questions about irony (Q11.7, Q13.4 and Q15.7) and stage directions (Q11.8, Q13.7 and Q15.9) which have been standard questions over the past few years were very poorly answered.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) The structure of the question paper and style of questioning has not changed despite the changes in the prescribed texts. Teachers should model their internal assessment tasks on previous years' papers in order to cover all the cognitive levels as set in these papers.
- (b) Learners should be exposed to past question papers so that they become familiar with the phrasing of questions and the standard expected in the NSC examination. The Unseen Poems set in past papers for example, should be used as practice exercises.
- (c) While some information about the prescribed poems is provided in the set textbook, teachers must gather information from a variety of sources to support their teaching and to ensure that misinterpretations of poems are eliminated.
- (d) Critical thinking skills must be developed in order for candidates to respond to questions that require higher-order interpretations. These skills can be developed by asking learners to argue a point or defend an opinion. This approach should form part of the daily lesson plan so that learners can gain confidence in these skills in an informal, non-threatening forum. Teachers must give learners multiple opportunities to practise answering these types of questions.
- (e) The meaning of words must be taught in the context in which they are used, for example, 'flings', 'hoe' and 'languors'. The connotations of words must also be discussed so that learners understand the impact on the meaning of the poem.
- (f) Teachers should use the poetry and literary essay rubrics to inform their teaching of the essay. Emphasis must be given to the structure of the essay (introduction, body and conclusion), as well as the appropriate register (formal) and language conventions (sentence construction and punctuation). Learners must be taught to use quotes or specific references to support their argument.
- (g) The essay requires a focused and critical discussion. When writing a poetry essay, learners must be taught to discuss how specific words (diction) and images are used by the speaker to create a particular effect in relation to the set question. Specific references and relevant quotes must be used to support the argument in the literary essay. Learners should however, be discouraged from lifting quotes from the extracts simply for the sake of being able to quote.
- (h) A thesis statement that responds to the question and positions the argument should be clearly stated in the introduction of a Literary Essay.
- (i) The PEE/PEEL method of structuring an argument must be taught: make a *point* and support it with an *example* that is *evaluated* in relation to the question. Learners should not simply repeat the question at the end of each paragraph in an effort to create the impression that an argument

has been developed. Instead, the statement and an example should be *linked* to the question to substantiate the argument.

- (j) Formal register in the answering of the contextual questions is crucial. Colloquial expressions (for example, 'he is crazy') and profanity are not appropriate under any circumstances.
- (k) Learners must be taught the meaning of basic literary terms such as *mood*, *tone*, *attitude* and *irony* and how to discuss them in relation to the texts being studied. Teachers should develop learners' vocabulary in relation to expressing such concepts.
- (l) Teachers must teach learners how to decode questions and how to link aspects of the questions. The underlining of key words should be encouraged. Responses should be succinct and mark allocation should be used to determine the detail to be included in the response. A 3-mark question, for example, will require a well-developed response and a critical insight.
- (m) Learners must be taught that questions requiring them to 'Critically comment on ...' require evaluation and judgement and that these are not to be confused with an explanation of plot.
- (n) When engaging with the drama, learners must become familiar with the actual text rather than relying on summaries or watching the film version of the play. If learners are unfamiliar with the text, they are unable to contextualise the extracts or refer to specific information required by the contextual questions.
- (o) Stagecraft must be taught so that learners understand how to respond to a question about directorial choices/staging (Q11.8, Q13.7 and Q15.9). Learners must realise that *tone* is not the same as volume or pitch, and *body language* is not the same as action. The choices offered by learners must be specific and the justification that is provided must be appropriate in the context of the dialogue.

3.6 OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 3

General comments

- (a) Teachers must stress 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.

3.7 ANALYSIS OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN PAPER 3

SECTION A: ESSAYS

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) The topic in Q1.1 was misinterpreted in a few cases as the breaking of trust or loyalty and did not mention togetherness or being part of a group. Candidates took a literal interpretation of building with sticks and the bundle being destroyed. This response was deemed invalid.
- (b) In Q1.3, most candidates who attempted this question focused mainly on only one aspect of the quotation. This weakened the responses. It was clear that most candidates did not fully understand the quote. The weaker candidates did not display a clear understanding of the words 'foe' and 'wrath'.
- (c) In Q1.4, some candidates focused on 'tradition' and disregarded the term 'transformation'. This was due to a lack of understanding of the definition of 'transformation'. Learners focused on *culture* or they just gave explanations of *tradition* and *transformation*. Most candidates who attempted this question were unable to express the reconciliation aspect fully.
- (d) In Q1.5, the concept of culture was understood but many candidates did not elaborate on the idea of a *tapestry*.
- (e) In Q1.6.2, most responses were simply a discussion of a mother's love or the role of women. A few candidates expressed faulty interpretations and focused on the water and not on the figure of the woman and child. There were essays that identified the figure only, as a mother, and described the characteristics of mothers in general.
- (f) In Q1.6.3, candidates repeated the same ideas throughout the essay, or they only addressed technology without discussing the contrast. The question was not answered holistically.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) There should be compliance with the writing processes as set out in the CAPS, i.e. process writing and sufficient writing of informal tasks (one piece per fortnight). The planning stage of the essay is essential. A striking introduction and strong conclusion are hallmarks of good writing.
- (b) Editing should be an integral part of drafting the essay. 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.
- (c) Learners should engage with more texts to improve their vocabulary and idiomatic language usage. Reading more books results in better writing.
- (d) Coaching learners on examination technique, for example identifying and focusing on keywords in questions so that answers are more relevant, must take place. Learners should also be encouraged to explore all the possibilities contained in a topic so that their writing is more original and authentic.

- (e) Peer assessment is a valuable tool when applied in a focused manner.
- (f) Learners must be discouraged from simply stringing together long lines of impressive vocabulary which add nothing to the meaning of the essay but which, in fact, obscure meaning and cause the essay to come across as contrived and convoluted.
- (g) There has to be a direct and discernible link between the essay and the visual stimuli. Learners should address all the elements presented in the picture.
- (h) The aspects of creativity and originality often make 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 therefore not original. Teaching learners to be original and creative in their writing is a challenge which teachers should embrace. It is often the learner with the limited language ability who has a knack for thinking out of the box, and thus can earn some valuable marks.
- (i) Learners must be discouraged from mentally preparing a set piece for this examination and then trying to synchronise it with one of the topics.
- (j) 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.

SECTION B: TRANSACTIONAL PIECES

Common errors and misconceptions

- (a) In Q2.1 where the dialogue has always been the topic of choice in the past, more skill was required in this question. Candidates were expected to include an element of humour which they found very difficult to do. It was very disturbing that candidates found bullying, abuse and personal insults very funny. There were several instances where profanity was used. Several candidates also included a third or even fourth character in the dialogue. Very few candidates understood that the dialogue was a written piece – a play script. Some candidates ignored the question and wrote general dialogues.
- (b) In Q2.2, while the response to the obituary had improved, there were still far too many candidates who did not know what the requirements for the obituary were. As a result, the tone and register were often inappropriate. Furthermore, the question required candidates to develop the idea of the deceased being 'an ardent supporter of the development of sport and culture'. This was not sufficiently elaborated. Many candidates did not write biographical, factual details in this regard.
- (c) In Q2.3, not all candidates provided solutions to their grievances and this was a topic requirement.
- (d) In Q2.4, there were some very good responses to this topic. The better responses understood the tension created by foreign actors playing the roles of South African characters. Most responses, however, were average, straightforward film reviews, but there were several candidates who presented a narrative rather than a review.

- (e) In Q2.5, many candidates did not identify who the vulnerable members of the society were. Unfortunately, there were still far too many format errors made by candidates who attempted this question.
- (f) In Q2.6, the question demanded that the candidates take a particular position – protecting the museum at the expense of building affordable housing. While there were several very good responses, there were many very mundane responses where candidates misunderstood the stance they should take.

Suggestions for improvement

- (a) Learners must answer two transactional pieces. This must be reiterated as this instruction was ignored in a few cases.
- (b) Transactional writing should be included in the teaching programme every fortnight. Even learners who are not skilful writers can do reasonably well in this section if they are familiar with the various categories of writing.
- (c) Learners should be encouraged to add realistic, substantial details to their writing, to make it more authentic.
- (d) The register in Section B should match the intention and audience of the piece. For example formal language is inappropriate in dialogues: it sounds unnatural and is stylistically ineffective. A dialogue should capture the feel of a conversation in real life, hence contractions and informal language are recommended.
- (e) Formats must be taught consistently and correctly, and learners must be given opportunities to practise these examples.