



EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ESWATINI

Junior Certificate Examination

**English Language (101)
Examination Report for 2024**

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Paper 101/01

General comments

In 2024 candidates registered for the examination were 16924. This showed a significant drop in comparison with the 18671 registered candidates in the 2023. Generally, the performance was almost similar to that of the previous year. 2024 saw the highest mark being 41 out of 50 and the lowest score was at 2 out of 50.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This proved to be the most challenging exercise as a majority of candidates failed to score high marks. Generally, the performance was poor which could be attributed to lack of comprehension skills.

(a) What activity did Poppy Jenkinson engage in at the end of each day?

Expected response

- Sit around the table and discuss her day.

Comment

This was an accessible question to most candidates. Those who failed to get full marks left out the 'discuss her day' which was a key component.

(b) What made it difficult for Jenkinson to find a house in Falmouth?

Expected response

- Rent is competitive/rent is high/rent is not affordable for student.

Comment

A majority of candidates failed to understand the requirement of the question and wrote 'broad trends in multi-generational housing' as their response.

(c) Why does Patty Holmes say that "the loneliness epidemic is a global trend?"

Expected response

- It is worldwide/happens in different countries in the world/all over the world.

Comment

Most candidates ignored the key word 'global' which in turn compromised their score.

(d) What recently worsened the loneliness epidemic?

Expected response

- COVID-19 stay-at-home-orders

Comment

This question was accessible to most candidates though some could not score as they wrote 'COVID' in small letters.

(e) What is the relationship between rent and inflation in the United States according to the passage?

Expected response

- Rent is rising faster than inflation/rent outpaces inflation.

Comment

Most candidates did not show the comparison between the two.

(f) How can exam periods make multigenerational arrangements difficult for students?

Expected response

- It can be difficult for the student to fit in another person's schedule in their own.

Comment

This was accessible to a majority of candidates.

(g) What can you conclude about Poppy Jenkins's cooking skills?

Expected response

- Not so good/not as good as the kings/ average.

Comment

Most candidates were able to access this one save for those who described Poppy as a cooker.

(h) Describe three (3) ways in which multigenerational housing can be problematic

Expected responses

- Supporting another person is not easy/requires time and effort.
- Takes a lot of intervention to support relationships.
- Multi-generational households can be complex/ people are more complicated.

Comment

This question proved to be a challenge to a majority of candidates as most created their own answers which were not given in the passage.

Exercise 2

General comment

This exercise aimed at testing the candidates' ability to follow instructions and use given information to fill in a form.

Section A

Section A: (Use block letters to complete this section)

Full name: BONISIWE MANGWENI

Stage name: LITTLE JAMZ

Age: 24 (YEARS)

Honours: BAT AWARD NOMINATION (FOR BEST INTERNATIONAL ACT)

Comment

Quite a majority of candidates were able to score full marks in this section except for those who:

- Didn't use block letters (as per instruction)
- Put full stops and the end of each detail
- Mixed both small and block letters

Section B

How long have you been a DJ: one year/ 1year

Hit songs: Woza
Soweto

Comment

Candidates gave their answers in one line, yet they were given 2 spaces for the hit songs. Other candidates also ignored that these songs are proper nouns and began with small letters.

Section C

Write a sentence of 12-20 words explaining your challenges when growing up.

Expected response

Ideas should include:

- being raised by grandmother.
 - only meeting mother when she was nine years old/abandoned by parents at birth.
- (any two)

Write a sentence of 12 to 20 words advising the youth about how to succeed in the music industry.

Expected response

Ideas should include:

- having a passion, working tirelessly to perfect your art/promote yourself.

Comment

Most candidates were able to write proper sentences though there were those who would not involve themselves in their sentences.

Exercise 3

This exercise aimed at testing candidates' ability to present given information in note form under relevant subtitles. This was another discriminating exercise.

Advantages of mangrove forests for animals living in water

- nutrient rich breeding grounds
 - provides protection from predators
 - provide home for marine life/provide critical habitat
- (any two)

Benefits for local communities

- supports local fisheries/supports people's livelihoods
- provided food
- provides revenue/boost local economies

(any two)

How they protect the shoreline

- trap sediments/slows coastal erosion and stabilises the shore
- provide formidable defence against storms and tsunamis

Providing help against climate change

- sucks up carbon dioxide from the air
- absorbs four times more carbon dioxide than rain forest

Negative effects of loss of mangroves in South Africa

- reduction in fish stocks
- illegal poaching of rhino and elephants

Comments

Most candidates found this exercise challenging as they presented their answers:

- in sentences instead of phrases;
- used full stops;
- used capital letters.

Other candidates presented incomplete responses.

Exercise 4

This exercise is aimed at testing learners' skills of answering explicit and implicit questions. This exercise proved to be problematic to most candidates.

(a) Why can it be said that the NMR is the slowest train in India?

Expected response

- Takes nearly five (5) hours to cover a distance of 46 km.

Comment

This question was accessible to most candidates, although others left the 'nearly' which was key.

(b) How does the train make travelling worthwhile?

Expected response

- Passes through 16 tunnels, 250 bridges, 208 steep curves/ on richly diverse mountain range

Comment

Most candidates got this question correct save for a few who gave incomplete responses.

(c) What makes us conclude that the writer was a travel enthusiast?

Expected response

- was eager to feel the Nilgris experience
- was armed with 1st class ticket

(any one)

Comment

Most candidates found this one accessible.

(d) Why does the writer say there was palpable excitement in the train?

Expected response

- Passengers cheering and clapping (when passing dark tunnels)/ everyone was in a holiday mood

Comment

Most candidates found this question accessible

(e) Why do you think cooler conditions were favorable to the British at Ooty?

Expected response

- They were used to cooler Britain temperatures
- needed to escape the stifling heat/located at higher altitude.

(any one)

Comment

Most candidates found this question accessible. Those who failed to score lacked an understanding of the requirements of the questions.

(f) What, according to the writer, were the reminders of British colonial times?

Expected response

- British station names/station names like Lovedale

Comment

Most candidates found this question easy save for those who just gave the station names which made their answers incomplete.

(g) What can be concluded about the serpentine twists of the train?

Expected response

- The train was winding/had bends and turns

Comment

This was the most challenging question in the exercise as most candidates failed to understand the implied meaning of serpentine.

(h) In your own words, why did the train change to a steam engine at Coonoor?

Expected response:

- The steep track would require a powerful engine.

Comment

This question was quite challenging for the candidates as a majority repeated the words ‘more power’ in their responses which were the exact words in the passage i.e. the question required interpretative skills hence use of own words.

(i) What can be said about the writer’s attitude towards the train service? Give evidence from the text.

Expected response

Appreciative attitude as she says:

- “...it is an integral part of Ooty’s tourism sector.”
- ‘...four calm and relaxing hours after leaving Ooty.’
- “...the kind of throwback I needed.”

Comment

A majority of candidates failed to identify the appropriate attitude, instead they gave feelings like happy, pleased etc

Exercise 5

This exercise aimed at testing candidates’ abilities to identify relevant points to the question and present them in continuous prose. An overwhelming majority of candidates were able to score maximum marks in the content aspect of this exercise. However, for the language aspect, candidates scored average marks due to limited expressions. There were those who used topic sentences of advantages and in turn mentioned disadvantages or vice versa. Most candidates relied on lifting from

the original text and failed to group as well as sequence ideas in their own words. Some wrote in two paragraphs instead of one.

Read the following passage about apples and write a summary about the advantages and disadvantages of eating apples. Your summary should be about 100 words (and not above 120 words) long.

You will receive up to 6 marks for content and up to 4 marks for language.

Expected response

Advantages:

- have vitamin C/healthiest food
- high in antioxidants
- have soluble fiber such as pectin/helps prevent cholesterol
- mitigate asthma and dementia
- little or less side effects
- assisting with weight management, any three

Disadvantages

- may cause weight gain if eaten in excess
- acidic which damages the teeth/acidic may damage the tooth enamel
- have pesticides on the skin
- seeds are highly poisonous when chewed any three

General recommendations

Due to the foregoing, it is, therefore, imperative that when preparing candidates for the paper they are:

- Exposed to a lot of extensive and intensive reading as a means of enhancing their comprehension as well as enriching their vocabulary;
- Given ample reading and writing exercises to aid in the mastering of question analysis and interpretation of implied meanings;
- Taught basic grammar and sentence construction;
- Taught the skill of note making;
- Exposed to exercises designed to equip them with the skill of following instructions;
- Taught how to differentiate between attitude, feeling and mood.

Paper 101/02

General comments

This is a paper which measures candidate proficiency by giving them an opportunity to synthesise all the acquired writing skills and produce their own work. It also carries considerable weight in the overall ranking of the four English Language papers, paralleled only by Paper 1 at 35% per paper.

Generally, in the 2024 examination, candidates did not confuse the rubric. They responded to the compulsory questions and further chose one essay from three given choices in Exercise 3. This was also evidence of their efficient use of time because they managed to answer all questions within the given paper duration. This showed that they were prepared for the examination and knew the structure of the paper. However, candidates still struggled with developing the body in their writing and they wrote shallow paragraphs. Most of the candidates also produced work which lacked cohesion and coherence, and the paragraphs ended up reading like a list of isolated items. Otherwise, the questions were generally accessible even though there were a few candidates who missed certain keywords which then compromised the relevance of their essays. Question analysis was in fact a huge problem, with candidates sometimes only getting a part or certain parts of the question right and missing the rest. It was also observed that there is a need for teachers to still work on grammatical accuracy so that candidates attain better clarity in their writing. The overall performance slightly dropped from what was attained in the 2023 examination, and a number of candidates got marks that were below average.

The paper consisted of three exercises; two compulsory guided writing exercises and one extended writing essay that allowed candidates to fully express their creativity in a genre of their choice among the three given options. Below is a breakdown of the questions and specific comments on each one of them.

Exercise 1

You have been selected to represent the country abroad in the upcoming public speaking competition.

Write a letter to your cousin telling him or her why you have been chosen to represent the country.

In your letter you must include the following:

- why you think you are the best candidate
- how the opportunity will contribute to your personal growth
- how you think the country will benefit from your participation.

Expectations

The exercise was an informal writing task, specifically a friendly letter. The question required candidates to write a letter to a cousin sharing exciting news about how they had been chosen to represent the country in upcoming public speaking competitions. Several key words were to be considered for the candidates to be relevant in their responses such as ‘selected’, ‘abroad’, and a ‘public speaking competitions’. A good candidate would be expected to factor these in their writing to show they understood the question. This looked like a straightforward question and yet there were candidates who missed such basic guides in their writing. As a result, they wrote about competitions that were going to be held locally, and there were different types of competitions other than public speaking.

Good candidates were able to adhere to the conventions of writing a friendly letter; a greeting and introduction stating the purpose of the letter. From simply these, the reader was able to detect the social distance between the writer and intended recipient. They made the letter believable instead of a cold mechanical response that was simply following guidelines. These were also able to employ the informal register which shone through their choice of words, exclamation marks, simple sentences and contractions. They were bubbling over with joy and excitedly sharing the news with their cousins. Reading their letters one couldn’t help but remember how it is said that our cousins are our first friends. The first prompt required candidates to say why they thought they were the best candidates. Since candidates are familiar with public speaking, it was easy for them to cite previous public speaking activities where they outshone their peers. These activities included debates, speech presentations and other such engagements. They spoke of the confidence, eloquence and exposure they could boast of. Some made it even more interesting by showing how they had improved from not-so-impressive beginnings to a point where they earned the confidence of their superiors. When they had to say why they think they were chosen, they would cite excellent performance in subjects that have nothing to do with improving speaking skills.

The second bullet required candidates to show how this opportunity would contribute to their personal growth. It was a slightly deciding prompt because personal growth was apparently not an easily accessible notion to some candidates as they would say things like, “I believe in your personal growth’ or ‘I will contribute to the personal growth of the country”. A majority were mainly talking about anticipated prizes, a lot of money and could not come up with meaningful benefits which would bring about personal growth. However, there were those who spoke about long term gains such as scholarship opportunities and an opportunity to network with other participants worldwide and benefit from their unique talents. They spoke about the high level of the competition as an opportunity for them to launch themselves and unleash their full potential. Their responses showed depth and insight.

Lastly, the candidates were supposed to talk about how the country would benefit from their participation in the event. This prompt exposed even more those candidates whose interpretation of the prompts was not done in the context of the stem of the question, that is, the writer going to represent the country in a competition. Instead, they spoke about infrastructure development, building houses for the poor and other far-fetched ideas which would be funded by part of their prize money. Others spoke about benefits to the school instead of the country. A few candidates spoke about placing the country on the map of the world and attracting potential partners who would bring needed aid in the country.

There was also failure to employ the informal register as some candidates used words/phrases such as ‘kindly’, or ‘I would like to inform you’. However, other candidates took it far by using slang instead of acceptable informal language. Teachers should discourage candidates from words such as ‘*wanna*’, ‘*gonna*’, ‘*ain’t*’, even though candidates think it is sophisticated English, they must use the dictionary to understand the distinction.

Exercise 2

The Minister for Youth, Sports and Culture is visiting your community for the celebration of the International Youth Day. As the youth leader, you are expected to present a speech on behalf of the youth in your area.

Write a speech that you will deliver on the day.

In your speech you may want to discuss such issues:

- the challenges faced by young people
- skills and activities that would empower the youth
- how the area can be developed.

Expectations

This was a formal writing exercise which required the candidates to write a speech. The expectation for this question was for a youth leader to represent the young people and deliver a speech at an event where their minister would be in attendance. The event was a celebration of the International Youth Day.

This was an opportune moment for the young people to raise their issues of concern, hence the prompts offered guidance as to what areas were to be highlighted in the speech.

This type of writing was formal and required formal register. It was also expected that the candidates adhere to the conventions of writing a speech, i.e. observing protocol and clearly stating the aim of their speech. Throughout the speech, candidates were expected to show awareness of the audience and address them directly, and to also use rhetorical devices to make the speech memorable and persuasive to the listener. These could include the rule of three, alliteration, exaggeration for effect, rhetorical questions, using contrast, and many other such devices. The main points as captured by the prompts were supposed to be presented with supporting details, and the candidates were supposed to show logical progression from one point to another through the use of cohesive devices (linking/transition words and discourse markers).

Because this was a speech, candidates knew about observing protocol first and unfortunately some used up a lot of space acknowledging the different people who were in attendance. Most were not reasonable enough to keep it brief and move quickly to the question. This took up space which was otherwise supposed to be dedicated to responding to the prompts.

First, the candidate was supposed to speak about challenges faced by the youth. Candidates generally did well, they spoke about challenges such as unemployment, lack of scholarship, lack of sports facilities, drugs and substance abuse, absent parents and other such challenges. Some candidates, however, instead of discussing challenges faced by the youth would discuss challenges caused by the youth and how the youth were wreaking havoc in the community. Or, in some extreme cases they would talk of challenges faced by the community lack of clean water and other developmental issues. It was also observed that the youth leader would sometimes talk about these challenges as if he was personally not affected by them but just speaking on behalf of a group of people.

For the second prompt, candidates were supposed to suggest a few skills and activities which would empower the youth. They were able to make suggestions and further support because they thought those suggestions would make a difference in their community. These included income-generating projects, sports facilities, fashion and talent shows, as well as funding small businesses. Finally, good candidates were supposed to suggest how the area could be developed. This was also a straightforward prompt, and candidates were able to speak about the development their area needed.

Exceptional candidates were able to tie back the second and third prompts to the first one, creating harmony in the whole text. This created the sense that the skills and activities, as well as the needed development, were all going to address the challenges faced by the youth. Average candidates treated the prompts in isolation. Even though they were not necessarily wrong, their speech lacked harmony. However, some responses were quite weak, exposing a lack of basic understanding of the question. Some candidates talked about challenges faced during the celebrations, or even challenges caused by

the youth during the event. Other candidates changed the question into an argumentative article, for example, they argued if the minister should come to their community or not. For others the speech was a post-mortem where they discussed whether the Youth Day was a success or not. Such a gross misunderstanding was very disturbing, suggesting a drilled expectation for an argumentative article in Exercise 2. As a result, despite what they were seeing in front of them, candidates still forced an argumentative approach into an otherwise straightforward question. Teachers are, therefore, urged to familiarise themselves with the assessment syllabus so that they can offer the right guidance to their candidates instead of relying on past examination papers.

Exercise 3

Exercise 3 was an extended writing question where candidates were supposed to fully express their creativity without much guidance from the question. It consisted of three questions from which they had to select one.

Question 1

Write a story with these words... “How can I ever forget such a character in my life?”

In this question, candidates were expected to write a story based on a character that would remain unforgettable in their lives. With this kind of question, candidates could not be channelled either to a positive or negative impact for their characters to be unforgettable, and they were allowed to craft stories in either direction, as long as it encapsulated an element of having a long-lasting impact either on the storyteller, directly or indirectly. The important thing was for this writing to be a story and not a discussion of that character. It was supposed to be a story with characters, a story line, rising action, climax and denouement. However, a number of candidates just got carried away in the idea of a character that they would never forget and started discussing reasons why the character would never be forgotten.

Sometimes the reasons would be presented as a collection of several short incidents that portrayed what made the character unforgettable, instead of developing one story.

Another misinterpretation of the question was when ‘character’ became an equivalent of a clown, something that translated to 1st language interference in the context of Eswatini where it is common for a clown to be referred to as a character. A number of candidates either developed a story depicting a clown, or they wrote several snippets showing someone who could be easily dismissed as a clown. Some associated the word ‘character’ with movie or novel characters, and therefore they narrated the stories and then said those movie/story characters would remain unforgettable. Good candidates, on the other hand, wrote captivating stories which met the basic requirements of storytelling, and left no doubt that that particular character could not be easy to forget indeed.

The most unbelievable misinterpretation was when candidates associated character with personal traits. Candidates would pick a character trait that they thought best described them, and then they would say it was an unforgettable trait because of the things it made them do.

Question 2

Describe how your school celebrated culture day and state how it will benefit the candidates.

Question 2 was a descriptive essay which was double-barrel in nature and required that candidates both paint a picture of a recent celebration of culture in their school as well as discuss how celebrating the event would benefit the candidates. The other aspect of the question was that it expected the two parts of the question to be addressed in two different tenses: the past tense for the event, and the future tense for the benefits. Most candidates had no problem describing a culture day, one could tell that across the country, they were familiar with the celebration. It can safely be said that this question turned out to be the most popular question in the section. Candidates had a lot to share on the celebration of a culture day in schools, and that included candidates from both rural and urban schools.

Good candidates painted a vibrant picture of the day, giving the reader a vicarious experience of the celebrations such as describing how candidates and teachers came clad in the traditional attire, the different performances, the voices of the singers, the dances that got the audience giving a standing ovation, the lectures in between, the different prepared dishes and how they tasted, and many other activities that took place. Such candidates were able to appeal to the five senses, arouse readers' interest and sustain it. However, weak candidates often overlooked the implication of the adjective 'recent' in the question and wrote about a cultural celebration that once took place at their school while a few wrote about a day that was still coming. Other candidates used the simple present tense and generalised how the culture day is normally celebrated in their schools.

The second part of the question required candidates to discuss how they thought candidates were going to benefit from experiencing such a celebration. This part was supposed to be stated in the future tense: that is, 'candidates will...' as a result of taking part in such a celebration. Candidates spoke about many things which would benefit the candidates in the long run. These included handling with ease the siSwati syllabus which requires that they demonstrate extensive knowledge of their culture. Good candidates spoke about gaining skills such as preparing some of the traditional dishes as well as wearing the traditional regalia the right way. However, candidates who had failed to consider the future tense 'will' spoke about how candidates benefitted on the day of the celebration like free traditional food and other such once-off benefits.

Some confused a Culture Day with a SiSwati Day, but the difference was negligible. Some candidates gave shocking responses such as talking about other celebrations commonly held in school other than the culture day. Dominating among those was the Speech and Prize-Giving Day. Getting the celebration wrong meant even the benefits would be irrelevant, showing the importance of careful question analysis. In the description, some candidates officially switched to siSwati names for the food, customs and for the different attire items. Even things with well-known English words were written in the vernacular language, e.g. they would write *bhatata* instead of sweet potatoes. This was shocking and led to poor performance.

A common challenge with this essay was failure by the candidates to scope the description of the culture day. They would start from how they were woken up by their parents, the breakfast they had, the wearing of the uniform, the walk to school...and none of these things had to do with describing the culture day. Some would start with a description of the preparations that were made in the school as the day approached, right up to the final arrival of the day and the headteacher's announcements at the morning assembly. By the time they started to actually describe the celebration they had used up a lot of space and could therefore not earn a lot of marks. Candidates sadly exhibit a careless and casual approach to the exam, and they miss very obvious details, sadly 'wasting' their good English on irrelevant details. A few candidates wrote more a narrative than a descriptive composition, and those only talked about the event and did not then discuss the benefits.

Question 3

Our society places too much emphasis on college/university qualifications. What are your views?

This was an argumentative question requiring candidates to talk about whether, in their opinion, there is too much emphasis on academic achievement in society. This required candidates to take a clear stand and persuade the reader to embrace their perspective. It meant candidates were supposed to pick societal actions which portrayed a heavy or even skewed emphasis on university or college qualifications. Good candidates brought out interesting details showing how society was glorifying academic achievements from government expenditure which goes to the Ministry of Education and Training instead of vocational training or business empowerment. They spoke about the Free Primary Education programme, the secondary school grants and just the lion's share in the national budget which goes to education. They spoke about the respect afforded to learned people in families and how, directly or indirectly, the not-so-educated are looked down upon. They brought out how parents' faces light up when they hear that a son/daughter-in-law is highly qualified academically.

Unfortunately, very few candidates understood the question. Even those who started out well ended up digressing and talking about something else. The major pitfall in the question was candidates arguing whether society should place emphasis on college/university qualifications. They gave reasons why academic achievements are important for society. How the question shifted from 'society places...' to 'society should place' is the biggest question. This was by far the trickiest of all the three questions for the candidates and most of those who attempted it did not do well. It is noteworthy that the poor performance was not a result of the mechanics of writing an argumentative essay, few candidates struggled with that. A majority knew they had to introduce and take a clear stand. They were also able to state arguments and develop them, give illustrations, use rhetorical devices and just stick to their side. Regardless of their competences, a lack of basic understanding of the question cost them immensely. However, there were still those who took a discursive instead of an argumentative approach.

General comments

Candidates used mainly simple structures and hardly ventured into a variety of because they lacked the prowess to manipulate different language structures. There was also over-reliance on vocabulary used in the questions as most candidates were not independent enough to paraphrase and use their own vocabulary. Actually, the writing sounded like they were responding to isolated questions rather than writing unified essays.

Grammar accuracy was a big problem, from lexical and syntax level to vocabulary-related issues, work was just marred with errors. This points to a gap in the reading culture which needs to be inculcated among candidates.

Candidates still failed to stick to the number of words, or if they did, the development of their prompts was not proportional, with more attention given to the first prompts. Very few candidates failed to cover all the prompts, the majority clearly showed that they knew that requirement so they made the attempt.

Candidates grossly misunderstood very straightforward questions showing that they probably read the questions once and rushed to respond without properly analysing it.

It would also seem that some candidates failed to differentiate between the different genres and wrote descriptive essays where they were supposed to narrate, or they narrated where they were expected to describe. They also mixed up argumentative and discursive writing. Teachers are urged to take candidates through the elements of the different genres so that candidates are aware that the mode is just as important as the content.

Most narrative compositions were flat, no rising action or build up to a moment of intense suspense and how it was resolved. Instead, they presented a sequence of events that simply progressed from one point to another. Teachers need to thoroughly teach the craft of writing a narrative composition.

Paper 101/03

General Comments

The 2023 examination was fairly performed even though there was a slight decrease in candidates that attained the total score of 25 compared to 2022. This was evident in that a majority of the candidates attained average scores and also there were those that got single digit scores. The paper seemed accessible even though quite a number of candidates did not perform very well.

This component is aimed at testing the skills of listening for general and specific information with understanding. It was noted from the candidate's responses that a majority of them still need to improve this skill. Worth noting was the fact that a number of candidates still had a lot of spelling errors and failed to follow basic principles of the language, like the use of proper nouns. It was also noted that some candidates lacked proper practice of the listening skill as they would leave blank spaces without responding to the question.

Exercise 1

This exercise was fairly done as candidate's marks ranged from 3-4 marks.

Question 1

What does the teacher want the students to do?

Expected response

- cover their desks (with sheets of plastic)

Comment

Candidates were able to give a correct response, but some were challenged by the spellings for "desk" and "sheet". For desk they wrote: *dask, dusk*. For sheet they wrote: *shirt, shit, shet*.

This made their responses to be incorrect thus could not score any marks.

Question 2

How often do the trains come?

Expected response

- (usually) every ten minutes

Comment

Some candidates omitted the word "every" which was key or important and couldn't score. Some misspelt 'minutes' as *minits, minites, minute* etc. Some misspelt 'every' as *evry, ever, evry*.

This made their responses to be incorrect thus could not score any marks.

Question 3

What has Lizzy just discovered about her leave days?

Expected response

- she lost some of her leave days

Comment

Most candidates counted the number of days instead of giving the actual response. This question proved to be challenging to most candidates as they omitted the key word 'some' and thus could not score any mark.

Question 4

What do Vuyiswa's parents want him to do to get a new phone?

Expected response

- to work at the *neighbour's* farm and earn money

Comment

Most candidates left out the most important part of earning money and gave incomplete answers. Some candidates were challenged by the spelling of 'neighbour'. They wrote *neighbour*, *neihgbour* and could not score any mark.

Question 5

What is excluded from the tour package?

Expected response

- transportation to and from one's place

Comment

Most candidates could not score because they gave incomplete responses like; "transportation" only. Some could not spell transportation correctly, they wrote '*transpotation, transpotion, transport.*' Some left out the last part of 'earning money' which was key and thus could not score any mark.

Exercise 2

This was a gap filling exercise. Candidates performed well as most of them got 4-5 marks.

Reasons for accidents

Item 1

Expected response

- subways/underpasses

Comment

A majority of candidates were challenged by the spelling of subways they wrote: *sabways, surbways, sabhways*. Some even wrote 'them' which was a distracter and incorrect. Some wrote pathways, roads of which they did not score any mark.

Item 2

Expected response

- designed

Comment

Candidates wrote responses with incorrect spellings like: *desighed, disanged, designed, design* etc. Some repeated the phrase 'not well maintained' and they could not score.

Item 3

Expected response was:

- signals

Comment

A majority of candidates were able to give correct response. A few were challenged by spelling and some gave responses like: *signal, signl, stay, department*, thus could not score.

Measures to prevent accidents

Item 4

Expected response

- emergency

Comment

Some candidates misspelt the word emergency, they gave incorrect responses like: *imergency, emergency, emmergency* etc, which all did not score.

Item 5

Expected response

- courteous

Comment

This was the most challenging question as only a few candidates were able respond correctly. Most candidates did not score as they misspelt the word courteous and wrote: *caucious, curious, cattle's*. Some even wrote *careful* which displayed lack of understanding of the question and could not score any mark.

Exercise 3

This was also a gap filling exercise but proved to be a bit challenging with most candidates scoring less than 3 marks.

Nutritional value

Item 1

Expected response

- Carbohydrates

Comment

A majority of candidates were able to give the correct response though we have a few candidates who were challenged by spelling. They gave responses like: *cabohydrates, cabhohydrates, carbohistrates* etc which all did not score.

Origins

Item 2

Expected response

- Humid

Comment

Most candidates misspelt the word and wrote incorrect responses like: *humit, humide, hummid, hurmid* and could not score a mark.

Cocoa beans

Item 3

Expected responses

- soothing, delicious and fermented.

Comment

For soothing: most candidates gave incorrect responses like: *smoothing, sweeding, soothe, swing* etc and they could not score. For delicious: candidates would write incorrect responses like: *delecious, delitious, delicius, delisious* and could not score. For fermented: candidate's common errors were: *femented, fermaned, firmented, fermented, firm* which to all could not score.

Evolution of chocolate

Item 4

Expected response was

- beverage

Comment

For this response candidates included unsweetened before the word beverage and could not score because it made the whole sentence to be wrong, some even wrote the spelling of beverage wrong: *bavarage, berverage, bavarages, burverage, beverages* of which they did not score.

Exercise 4

This exercise proved to be a bit challenging as most candidate's marks ranged from 2-3 marks with some getting 1 or nothing.

Question 1

How do polythene bags and wraps become a threat to urban environment? Give one detail.

Expected response

- choke your drains, provide breeding facilities for deadly germs or breed deadly germs.

Comment

Some candidates could not spell the word choke correctly and they wrote: *chock, shoke, chok, chalk*. Most candidates misspelt the word "drains" and wrote: *grains, brains, drans, dress, dreams* etc. For breeding they wrote: *breathing, bleeding, building* hence they could not score

Question 2

What are the findings of the recent study about plastic waste?

Expected response

- about 250 tonnes come out of major cities every day.

Comment

The words “about”, ‘major’ and ‘everyday’ were key in the answer. However, most candidates left out these words thus they did not score. The word ‘tonnes’ was misspelt as: *tones, tuns, tunns*. Some gave the wrong number of tonnes, instead of 250 tonnes they would write, *25, 250 000* etc, hence they did not score.

Question 3

Why do villagers throw plastic bags into the fields?

Expected response

- they want to show off/ because of pride

Comment

A majority of candidates were able to give the correct response except for a few who couldn't write the correct ‘off’ and ‘pride’, they wrote: *of, offer*. For pride they wrote: *bride, prade, cride* etc, and could not score.

Question 4

Why do students carry plastic bags?

Expected response

- to carry their lunch boxes

Comment

This question was fairly done as most candidates were able to score. Some candidates were unable to spell the word carry, boxes and lunch yet carry was in the question. For ‘carry’, they wrote: *curry, cary*. For ‘boxes’ they wrote: *boxs, boxis, boxies*. For *lunch*, some wrote: *luch, lauch, launch*. Some wrote strange responses such as *to rape the food* thus could not score.

Question 5

How do plastic bags affect the greenery?

Expected response

- They stop rain water from seeping deep into the earth.

Comment

Most candidates were challenged by the spelling for seeping, they wrote: *sipping, siping, stepping, sippening*. Some left out the key word ‘deep’ and they could not score. Some came up with penetrating, reaching and they could not score.

Exercise 5

This was the most challenging exercise as a majority of candidates did not score a mark.

Question 1

What Makes environmentalists angry?

Expected response

- the use of fossil fuels (to power vehicles)

Comment

Some candidates wrote wrong responses like: *fossil*, *forceful* for 'fossil' fuel. Some left out the key word 'use' hence they did not score a mark.

Question 2

Mention the alternative fuel suggested.

Expected response

- biodiesel

Comment

Most candidates were able to score, however, those that failed did so because of spelling yet the word was available in the same exercise. They misspelt the word and gave: *biodeséal*, *biodiesel*.

Question 3

Why do you think the vehicle was named the 'veggie van'?

Expected response

- it uses vegetable oil

Comment

Most candidates misspelt vegetable and wrote: *vegetable*, *vegitable*, *vegatable* *vegetable* etc and thus could not score.

Question 4

What advantage does the alternative fuel have over petroleum diesel? Give one detail.

The correct responses

- vegetable oil readily available
- (process)of converting is cheap
- require zero modifications to the engine or does not require engine modifications
- works undiluted (or blended)

Comment

Most candidates could not score marks because of incomplete responses and wrong spellings they came with words such as: *diluted*, *deluted*, *diluted*, *daluted*, *undiluted* thus could not score.

Question 5

What evidence is given to show that biodiesel fuel has gained popularity?

Expected response

- an official alternative fuel in the US, use in the US by bus and truck fleet has scored more than 1000 percent.

Comment

This was also the most challenging question in the whole paper. Most candidates could not write the complete answer, and others could not attempt it as they displayed lack of understanding of the question. Those that attempted left the key words like: 'official' and 'alternative' and could not score.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that they practice listening exercise more.
2. Students should be encouraged to read extensively to boost their vocabulary and improve their spelling.
3. Candidates should be taught about homophone, so that they are able to relate to particular themes/ contexts.
4. Students must be guided in identifying key words which are usually before and after the gap.
5. teachers should help candidates with spelling exercises
6. neatness should be emphasised, and candidates should be taught not to overwrite and cancel their responses as they become unclear.
7. Candidates should be now and again taught and be reminded question analysis.

Paper 101/04

Oral Assessment

This is a school-based component assessed by teachers and moderated at ECESWA.

General Comments

There was a very huge noticeable change this year. 2024 was much better than 2023 as most candidates were able to get more than the average mark of 3, all mark bands combined. This was, among other reasons, due to the fact that the topic cards were more relatable to candidates. Another point was the inclusion of the oral assessment in the Mock examination by the Inspectorate. This worked best for most centres and candidates as they were better prepared this time around. The oral cards were not so abstract to candidates. We can also add that the effects of the COVID-19 era are slowly fading. Some of the cards had topics which candidates are familiar with as they them do in other subjects, for example Card E: Morals.

Comments on specific aspects of the oral test

PART A – Welcome and Brief Explanation

Most examiners were able to explain the exam procedure to candidates. This is applauded as it helped in the smooth running of the test. There were, however, those examiners who only said “Welcome...” to candidates and not explaining the exam procedures to candidates. Examiners are asked to explain each oral step to candidates for them to be well prepared. For example, “Welcome to the oral exam Majobo. In this exam, we are going to talk about an assessment card which I will hand over to you. It is in 3 steps; the first step is the warm-up where I will ask you just general questions. This is 2- 3 minutes long. Then I will hand you your card. You are asked to read the card and if you have questions, you are allowed to ask me then but no notes please. Lastly, we will then talk about the card you were given...” Examiners are asked to also state the candidate’s name and number without repeating the centre number and name with each candidate.

PART B – Warm-up

This part was done exceptionally well, with the exception of a few centres. Some examiners did quite well and took the required 2 minutes. Centres that had candidates with learning disabilities are to be applauded for giving candidates enough time to relax in the warm-up and feel at ease before the actual test. It was only a few examiners who decided to use the warm-up to fish for the appropriate card to give to candidates. Examiners are encouraged not to use cards during the warm-up. Examiners are also asked not to ask very sensitive or questions which may trigger an emotional response from candidates.

PART C – Handing of Card

This part was not so well done. A majority of centres did not mention the card before pausing the recording. Mentioning the card before pausing is done to limit the rate of malpractice which may be changing a card given to a candidate or allowing the candidate liberty to choose a card of his own while recording is paused. Examiners are required to mention the card before pausing the recorder.

PART D – Conversation

This is the part that is examined and graded. It is the longest part of the whole exercise. It is noted, however, that most conversations were not so long as candidates either did not speak because of lack of information or because examiners did not probe candidates at all. They were left to their whims which defeats the purpose of having a conversation. Some examiners would jump to the next bullet once a candidate keeps quiet. Examiners are asked to simplify the bullets for candidates. Some bullets needed to be separated for candidates to talk, such as the bullet on benefits and disadvantages of learning new things. It would have been easier to first talk about the benefits or advantages then move on to the disadvantages.

Some candidates made presentations instead of conversations. If an examiner is going to use phrases like, “Over to you...” the candidate is likely to talk non-stop, assuming that you have given him or her the liberty to talk without involving you. Again, words like society have to be simplified by asking from what candidates know, to what is unknown, e.g. home, school, church, etc. Examiners are also encouraged to exercise patience, especially with candidates with learning disabilities.

Examiners are reminded that this is a test of conversational skills not a test of knowledge or content. Do not try to sway candidates to your own viewpoint and expectations but allow them to talk about what is in their mind pertaining to the given card. Examiners are reminded not to interrupt the candidates or interject while the candidate is still talking. This is a learner-centred test not teacher-centred task.

Teacher-talking time should be less.

Oral Assessment Cards

CARD A – Effort

This was a card that was accessible to those candidates given. It was a topic that they related to in terms of schoolwork and manual labour, depending on location. Rural centre candidates were able to talk about putting effort in herding cattle, fetching firewood and doing household chores, while those in urban areas talked mainly about school work. The only hindrance to rural centre candidates was having enough precise vocabulary. Those who had vocabulary were those who were familiar with sports like soccer. For bullet 3, *why people usually fail to put effort in certain tasks*, candidates talked about failing to do specific tasks not giving reasons for not putting more effort, e.g. **“Most people fail because they do not study.”**

Good responses were from candidates who were able to talk about the different scenarios where they put effort. These were also able to talk about their parents rewarding them for positive effort by buying them clothes or taking them out on excursions to enjoy themselves.

CARD B – Sleeping

This was the most popular card in most centres. This was because most examiners thought this card would be accessible to candidates as we all sleep daily but it was not so for some candidates. What candidates talked about showed they do not understand the value of sleeping. Those who scored higher marks were able to give and explain the benefits of sleeping, e.g. rejuvenate the mind to feel energised, to rest and have an energised body thus being able to have a good day.

Poor candidates had no typical vocabulary to talk about factors that disturb one's sleep. Most talked about bad dreams, noise, mosquitoes, without talking about those that really disturb one when sleeping.

Excellent candidates talked about stress, clubs nearby, and night vigils held by churches.

Candidates given this card got average marks. This was hindered by lack of understanding and lack of precise vocabulary.

CARD C – Learning new things

This was another fairly done card. Schools in urban locations talked about parents as role models who had side hustles or businesses thus are exposed to learning new things and skills from YouTube channels and their parents as well. Those who do practical subjects and extra-curricular activities were able to talk about the card more. They were explicit and precise as well. One such candidate was able to talk about learning how to apply make-up from YouTube thus is now able to earn a living from putting on make-up on other people. The card differentiated between candidates from rural centres and urban centres. Those in urban centres gave examples such as learning coding and robotics, forex trading, playing musical instruments such as the violin and piano. Those in rural areas talked about general stuff like baking and cooking.

Candidates in rural centres ran out of content due to lack of exposure. They did not have much to talk about outside their school environment and home experiences. This may be because of lack of appropriate technological gadgets. Those who do have only use them for other purposes like watching videos and social media. They do not explore beyond social media platforms.

CARD D – Morals

This was another popular card. Most examiners thought it would be accessible as it was on a subject they do in Religious Education. However, this card favoured candidates who come from religious families as they talked about topics based on ethics, integrity, self-respect, and making good decisions, which are topics covered in Religious Education. Those who only learn about morals in Religious Education focused on the 10 Commandments thus their vocabulary was not so competent.

Some candidates struggled to give ways in which good morals can be cultivated. They talked about beating. Examiners seemed not to have explained the word ‘cultivating’. Please use a synonym in such cases. Responses had no variety but only the word beating. Those who scored lower marks could not even comprehend the word moral thus had nothing to say or add. Examiners are encouraged to be patient, explain points to candidates and simplify bullets for candidates.

CARD E – Mistakes

This card was most popular with candidates as they related to their own experiences. One candidate talked about falling pregnant while at school while others talked about abusing drugs. Some boys also saw that impregnating a fellow student was a mistake on its own. Good candidates did not talk about teenage pregnancy but talked about gangsterism and how it was a huge mistake. They elaborated more on how this impacted their life thus hindering them from achieving certain things in life. Some even talked about emotion provoking mistakes like abortion.

Candidates were not able to differentiate between big and small mistakes. They talked about bunking classes as a small mistake, just like breaking their mom’s favourite glass. While in big mistakes, they talked about committing an abortion, and boys admitting to impregnating their colleagues. Examiners were judgemental while others were able to make candidates move from talking about emotional things to things which were neutral. Such was commended. Candidates who had made big mistakes in life shunned away from talking about their experiences and thus had nothing or little to communicate. Either they stopped talking or they were afraid that they would be judged.

Problems/ Challenges Encountered

Examiners/centres are requested to take note of the following errors:

1. Attendance Register

- Using a pencil
- Failure to submit original but submitting duplicate
- No page totals
- Unmarked candidates
- Marking in examiners column
- Unmarked script submitted column
- No signature and examiner’s name
- Not indicating absent candidates

2. MS1

- Faint shading
- Use of a pen

- Not shading properly- shading only the tens instead of also shading the ones/ shading the ones only
- Writing and shading percentages instead of raw scores
- Examiners do not follow instructions at the back of the MSI
- Confusing missing(M) and absent candidates (A)
- Not submitting MSI
- Signing in undesignated areas

3. Summary Form

- Wrong additions
- Not arranging candidates according to Attendance Register
- Using a pencil instead of a pen
- Not checking calculations/not cross-checking
- Not stapling summary form
- Use of correction fluid

4. CD/Recording

- Submitting blank CD's (please check to confirm if files have been burnt onto CD's)
- Omitting candidates from the audio
- Failure to label audios of candidates according to their given candidate numbers, names and surnames
- Failure to label CD's (centre number, range of candidates in CD, e.g. 1001 Name of Centre, candidates 001-064)
- Not using MP3 format discs (submitting more than 2 CDs)
- Separated tracks for warm-up and conversation

5. ECESWA Envelopes

- Not indicating absent candidates' numbers on the spaces provided

Recommendations

- Read all instructions given in the Attendance Register
- Ensure you find, fill and submit the MSI form together with all necessary documents and recordings to ECESWA (Teacher's Notes)
- Read instructions at the back of the MSI carefully before filling it
- Teachers need to co-ordinate before conducting the orals if more than one teacher will conduct the exam
- List all candidates in Summary Form according to the order they appear in the Attendance Register
- Listen to all audios burnt onto CD before submitting

- Cross check each official document to be submitted to ECESWA
- Keep all unnecessary gadgets out of the exam room. Only the recorder should be in the exam room with the teacher and the candidate.
- Centres are advised to invest in better recording devices, soundproof rooms for orals/English laboratory

Thank you for conducting the Oral Examination well in your centres.