

Part 1**Remarks on individual questions in the paper:****Section A****The role of Youth**

Very few candidates were able to write convincingly on this topic. The candidates who had received prior learning were those who were very vociferous about the youth playing an unimportant role in society. Very few of the young private candidates could write convincingly about their position in society.

Thinking about memory

Again, very few candidates selected this question. The few responses that were presented were very powerful. This question has raised some interesting issues about the power that remembering one's roots has on deciding your present life.

3. Going Away

Selected by three-quarters of the candidates who wrote the examinations this year. Many of the answers were predictable – going away from home for the first time, leaving a loved one, and death. However, a number of excellent responses were received, where the examiner understood that, through the writing, the candidate's experience had been authentic and cathartic.

A Short Story About Youth

Quite surprisingly, this question was not as well answered as expected. Many candidates did not answer in the genre of the short story, rather writing argumentative essays about the youth, and in this way did not follow the instructions set for them. This could also be a result of poor teaching, as teaching the narrative essay is a component of the English First Language syllabus.

The Wonderful Weekend

Many learners chose to answer this question as they could share with the examiners their activities during the weekend. It was disconcerting to note, though, the manner in which many of these candidates spent their weekends. There were a few responses that engaged in wholesome activities, but these were few and far between. It is important to note that the candidates were not penalised because of their questionable behaviour, as each essay was marked on its merit. Many candidates could write in dialogue form and some of the writing was fresh and immediate.

Wild Times late at Night

By far, this essay is the one that was answered the best. The candidates who selected this question might have been the weaker candidates, but boy, did they know about drag racing! A lot of these responses were authentic, filled with vivid descriptions and real-life characters. Candidates should be taught to select a question about which they know quite a bit, as this creates believable writing.

This Africa of Ours

This question was answered in a disappointing fashion. Many candidates could not relate South Africa to the rest of Africa, and would write about what they would do if they were the president of South Africa. There were, however, some thought-provoking and challenging responses to this question.

Section B

Scarcity of Water

Candidates should be aware of the format of writing a letter to the editor. On the whole, this question was answered quite well.

Letter of Complaint

It is important for candidates to be aware of the conciliatory, non-threatening tone that should be prevalent in this letter. Many candidates managed to answer this question quite successfully, although some of their solutions to the problem were quite fantastic!

Expressing your ambitions

Also a well answered question. Candidates should once again be taught the format of the friendly letter, and also be aware of the tone and register they should adopt when answering this question. It is important for candidates to answer the question set, that is, to speak about their ambitions and not just in a cursory, roundabout fashion.

Section C

Starting Your Own Business

Neither the brochure, the website nor the press release was well answered. Educators need to teach their respective formats, so that candidates can do better in these questions.

12. Farewell Speech

Generally answered well because most candidates had already experienced a farewell of some sort. Candidates should beware of personalising the experience too much though; it is about the class or grade, not about themselves.

13. Obituary

One of the better-answered questions. Many of the adult candidates have had experiences about death and could write well about it.

Section D

14. SMS

Contrary to our expectation, the sms was not well answered at all. Candidates did not use the abbreviated form of writing, neither did they give the situation in an abbreviated form. Upon further reflection, these adult learners might also not be as experienced with sms language as the examiners might expect them to be.

CV

A question which was answered competently, as many candidates would already have had to write the CV to look for a job.

Section E

16. Journal of A Wall

This was the most poorly answered question of them all. One candidate did remark that they were not informed about the literature component to this question paper, and were therefore not prepared. Other candidates thought that they would do well if they answered a comprehension-like question, but this was not the case. A number of the questions tested the candidate's prior knowledge of the story as a whole, resulting in large numbers of candidates not doing well.

17. Rain

Had more candidates answered this question, their marks would have increased. This question demanded a simple recap and recording of the details of the story. There were candidates who had not read the story and who attempted their own retelling of events, again indicating that no teaching had been taking place.

Part Two

General Comment

Many candidates struggled to reach the Higher Grade level. This was evidenced in the lack of paragraphing, poor vocabulary, quotation punctuation, consistency of tense and evidence that the questions had actually been read incorrectly.

A significant number of candidates did not finish the paper. Generally, the last question on the prescribed stories was left out.

Many candidates had simply not been taught the format of functional writing, such as the friendly and formal letter.

Candidates had been taught little or nothing to prepare them for Section E. We had the distinct feeling that many centres had simply not received the appropriate instruction as to the nature of Paper 3.

The question paper was one that took into consideration the ABET learners and private candidates. These candidates have not been exposed to a system of regular schooling, and also come to the examination room with prior learning previously received.

Generally, the questions were answered fairly competently. Often, the candidate who had experienced prior learning presented answers that were challenging and thought provoking. Marking these responses was, in some cases, an absolute pleasure.

There were some candidates who, for reasons unknown, wrote a first language paper when their capabilities are second language. This has seriously impacted on their results.