

The Standard Grade option for candidates should not simply be seen as a 'dumping ground' for learners but should be seen as a focus area of extreme dedication and hard work, by both the educators and the candidates, for the preparation for the exams. Thanks to the many educators who have done sterling work in this regard. However it must be said that at many centres, the candidates did not perform as expected.

Generally, candidates who answered the Section A : Worldscapes , fared better than the candidates who answered Section B : Transitions. This is a turn around from previous years where the Poetry question was answered very poorly. There must have been some valiant work done out there, thanks. In Sections C and D, the candidates performed better than the other two sections. Not many centres opted for Section D : Shakespeare's Dramas.

Presentation of scripts – Neatness and handwriting is much appreciated. Please continue to encourage the candidates to keep up this trend. Encourage also that the candidate:

does not write in the margins,

leaves a line between answers,

places numbers above the answers,

numbers according to the question paper,

cancels (with a line through) any question that has been started again.

does not write his / her name on the first page of the answer book.

AREAS to be concentrated on :

Figures of Speech – At this level, the basic ones like Simile, Metaphor and Personification should be known. Candidates should also be able to indicate why the example is that type of figure of speech.

Also exercise should be given where the learners are able to ; identify the two 'things' being compared, the reason for something being personification, etc.

Literal and Figurative meaning of words or expressions : a motivation or reason is also required.

Interpretation of Poems / Short Stories : Educators should do research and network within Departments at school, with educators at other schools, with clusters, with Curriculum Advisor(s), to ensure that there is a common understanding with regard to Theme(s), symbolism, approach, interpretation, proper standards, etc.

Reading techniques : Quoting the number of words as required in question – The question asks for ONE word, the learner gives more than one, sometimes a sentence. Quotations should always be within Quotation Marks – this is seriously lacking. Learners simply do not use the quotation marks. WHY? Also learners tend to quote incorrectly; they omit words or parts of a quotation, quote too many words, etc. Provide exercises which develop this. Learners also do not give a reason in their own words when required. They 'lift' from the text.

Tone – How something is said helps the understanding, so we need to be teaching this.

Mark Allocation : Learners should be trained to give ONE fact for ONE mark. We have to move away from giving 2 marks for an answer that requires very little reasoning.

Sentence structure : Learners should be taught not to start their answers with and, because, that, but.

Multiple questions: The trend is that the answer should only be a letter, yet learners rewrite the letter and option, or just the option. Please encourage that ONLY the letter is required if that is in the question.

Please provide more examples of contextual type questions: Learners should not just be taught 'memory questions' but should be able to reason, argue, give their view, state whether Fact or Opinion (and why), and be able to reflect on what is happening within texts. Learners are not able to motivate or give reason for an answer.

Basic vocabulary in texts : Learners simply could not explain words or did not understand words / phrases in the poems which were examined, e.g. 'sordid' / 'bent' / etc. Maybe it is taken for granted that these words / phrases are understood. Test vocabulary from time to time.

Develop a basic understanding of texts : Learners do not know names of characters, their roles, their association with other characters, why things are happening or have happened, etc.

Standardization of work: Ensure that learners are able to write for 40 marks. The questions on the genre could have ONE, TWO, THREE or FOUR extracts. The learner must be prepared to answer ALL the questions on ALL the extracts as required.