

Question 1 - comprehension. The comprehension passage was challenging, however, the questions based on it were uncomplicated and answered well by learners who are able to grasp what they read. Learners must be able to read demanding material and must be taught to read carefully and re-read if necessary. Learners must also be taught how to analyse questions and to focus on key instructional words. Too many candidates skimmed through the passage and haphazardly wrote down answers that seemed appropriate to the question. There were certain questions that required more effort than merely snatching at the first possible answer. Question 1.6, 1.9, 1.12, 1.15 and 1.16 were the more difficult questions. Candidates must be made aware that questions demanding an explanation of contrast (difference) require two answers to earn marks. Here we refer to questions 1.2 and 1.8. Too many learners were careless here and lost marks unnecessarily.

Answers should be crisp, concise and to the point. There were fewer long, rambling answers this year. I need to reiterate that candidates cannot expect to earn marks if they write 15 lines for a one mark question.

Candidates must be made aware of the instruction to 'use own words'. Merely lifting sections directly from the passage cannot earn marks as the test is to see whether the candidates have understood the language and vocabulary. Many merely copied large sections directly from the passage for question 1.6, 1.9 and 1.12.

Question 2 tests summarising skills. This question requires the candidates to apply numerous proficiencies and those who had practiced this skill managed to score marks. The foremost problem with this question was the inability to follow the instructions. 2.1 was answered fairly well but 2.2 showed the inability of candidates to focus on the actual question and to follow instructions. The question demanded the writing down of 'hints'. Long rambling statements could thus not be accepted. Failure to state the number of words used and not numbering the hints also led to candidates losing marks.

The need to understand grammatical terms was made clear (see past examiner's reports). These terms need to be taught and understood by the candidates. In question 3 there were many 'easy' questions that merely required the candidates to be familiar with certain terminology. Terms such as *active and passive voice*, *fact and opinion*, *jargon*, *ambiguity*, *pronoun*, *irony*, *pun*, *reported speech*, and others need to be understood. Centres where candidates were unfamiliar with, for example, the meaning of *reported speech* had no idea what to do and subsequently lost those marks. Question 3.3.1 – the irony question – was poorly answered because most candidates merely rewrote the words spoken by the cartoon character.

Question 4 deals with editing and here candidates were better prepared than in the past. Again, centres that prepared their candidates for this question managed to gain marks. Candidates must realise that to earn full marks for a question they have to complete the question. In 4.1.5 they were expected to correct and explain the concord error. Many candidates confused the comma with the apostrophe. Punctuation needs to be taught. Candidates should be informed that correct spelling is vital, especially in this question, as answers spelt incorrectly are marked wrong.

It is necessary to use previously set examination papers as well as the examiner's report as a guide when preparing for the examination. Educators should familiarise candidates with the format of the examination paper. It is recommended that educators get their candidates to work through as many examination papers of previous years as possible in preparation for this examination.