

BACKGROUND:

Section A: Essay Writing – It was evident that learning to write sentences and paragraphs was not taught in all the schools. The essays had overlapping content in some instances. The prompts added to each question did not really stimulate the learners. Instead, it affected their creativity. Candidates would have performed better if there had been no prompts at all in some questions, particularly the visual stimuli question (1.6). Candidates performed best in the narrative compositions. Generally speaking, candidate had been taught to plan – though there was excessive time-consuming planning in some cases.

RECOMMENDATION: Candidates have to be taught to plan in a structured way, using mind-mapping and other less time-consuming techniques. Many of them wrote the same essay twice.

Section B: Candidates experienced problems with the writing of the magazine article. This was not taught well in many schools.

RECOMMENDATION:

There were candidates at some centres who had no idea of the format of a dialogue or a magazine article. Some answers became monotonous because candidates blindly followed prompts, whether they wanted to or not, which was the fault of the paper and actually disadvantaged candidates.

BREAKDOWN OF QUESTION PAPER

SECTION A

RECOMMENDATION

- Candidates should be taught in school to know the difference between different essay types.
- They should know how to go about tackling specific essay types, e.g. discursive and argumentative.

QUESTION 1.1 (Narrative/ Discursive/ Argumentative)

Most essays were similar in content, not very creative at all. They responded only to the cues given, which they were instructed to do. Generally, candidates performed either satisfactorily or well in this question because the interpretation was left open to them.

QUESTION 1.2 (Narrative)

Candidates performed best when they wrote about this topic – probably because it is a narrative composition. At this level one would have expected a higher level of sophistication when writing a narrative piece.

QUESTION 1.3 (Narrative/descriptive)

Candidates missed the point completely – no first-person narrator, not very creative. They need to be exposed to this more often .

QUESTION 1.4 (Argumentative)

The majority of candidates who chose to write on this topic produced very poor work. The responses were stereotyped and all used the same ideas. They did not really know what “degeneration of society” meant, but they felt compelled to write about it by means of the prompts.

QUESTION 1.5 (Discursive/ Argumentative/ Expository)

They performed much better in this one. With all the prompts they were given, they could hardly miss the point.

QUESTION 1.6 (Any of the above)

Good essays were written on the pictures. Each essay was an individual attempt. A pleasure to mark!
This topic accommodated the more gifted candidates, most of whom attempted this question.

SECTION B

RECOMMENDATION:

- **The short or shorter transactional texts**, as prescribed by the Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG), were obviously not taught by all schools or by all teachers.
- The paper allowed for all levels of competence, so generally speaking, candidates should have performed well.
- There were some disappointing cases where candidates had been let down by teachers because they were obviously not familiar with the format, style and register for a particular piece.
- Had the exemplar papers been completed and discussed by candidates and had the SAG layout been followed, all candidates would have had an equal opportunity to excel at this paper.

QUESTION 2.1 The Magazine Article

Many format errors. Content overlapped with essay. Candidates had not had much experience in the writing of magazine articles, which is something they should be able to relate to easily.

QUESTION 2.2 Dialogue

Too many prompts. Similar dialogues. Candidates performed well, and enjoyed and related to the topic. However, they committed frequent punctuation errors (such as the incorrect use of inverted commas) and indicated characters incorrectly.

QUESTION 2.3 Friendly letter

Good topic. Candidates performed well. They have been taught this since primary school. In some cases they did not know how to write their own addresses, use the salutation or conclude a friendly letter, which is disgraceful.

SECTION C**QUESTION 3 Instructions**

Candidates preferred to write the tips as they are very familiar with the summary. They did really well in this question, as no full sentences were required.

QUESTION 3.2 Diary

Candidates did well in this one as well, although not as well as in 3.1. Many candidates had not been taught about the personal nature of a diary, and their entries as and dates were riddled with format and register errors. This could have been prevented if candidates had been exposed to this type of writing more often.

Teachers need to attend workshops on creative writing and different kinds of transactional writing, and to be taken through a process wherein they can actually see what a dialogue, article, etc. looks like so that they can teach it correctly.