

The following comments are made to facilitate an improvement in the preparation of candidates for this examination paper.

As potential voters, candidates must be taught that opinions must be based on evidence.

Using the examination as an opportunity to vent rough-and-ready political views is not appropriate.

In setting their own question papers, teachers would be wise to school their candidates to emulate the style and instructions of this national examination paper.

There is an appropriate style required in an English language examination. Please teach the candidates to differentiate between the spoken word (“Well, the writer ... or rather ... and maybe ...”) and an appropriate style for formal written English.

The use of correct language and punctuation throughout the examination paper is rewarded.

QUESTION 1

Question 1.2.1 required a discussion on the effect of the exclamations. “Discuss” implies that an opinion must be expressed with supporting evidence. Candidates must be taught to provide evidence for their opinions – it is central to NCS requirements.

QUESTION 2 Summarising

- The use of “approximately 90 words” is a clear indication of a reasonable limit. Using too many words incurred penalties.
- When told to use their own words, candidates must heed that instruction.
- Writing a summary in point form means expressing one idea, fact, thought, etc. per point in 10- 12 words.
- A connected prose summary consists of only one paragraph.

QUESTIONS 3 AND 4 Advertising and other media

- Answers were generally of a poor quality as candidates ignored instructions to confine their comments and evidence to specifics. Again, providing specific evidence is essential to earning marks. A bald “Yes” and “No” is not acceptable.
- These questions did not require descriptions. Candidates were required to offer interpretations of such matter as the parody in “Understanding Dummies for Computers”.
- It was clear that many candidates were not acquainted with the financially successful and very popular “... for Dummies” series.
- Appropriate evidence about specific facial features of cartoon figures earned marks while generalised comments did not. For example: “The raised eyebrows of the man indicate his confusion while the wide eyes of the woman suggest her alarm.”

QUESTION 5 Using language correctly

- Teachers must be reminded that sound editing is based on a thorough working knowledge of the rules of English grammar and punctuation.
- Very few candidates could see the need for correct punctuation.
- We urge teachers to teach correct punctuation of direct speech, use of the apostrophe and concord.
- Common spelling errors: *rember, inlove, aswell, separate, singular, women, concertrated, yous, there* (for "*their*").