

Section A: Essay and narrative writing

Candidates were able to answer the questions satisfactorily. In some cases, however, it was evident that process writing, learning to write introductions and effective closing paragraphs were skills not taught properly in some schools. Candidates struggled to adhere to the required length.

There was a tendency, at certain centres, to write short stories. Candidates fared best in narrative compositions and poorly in discursive and argumentative essays. They clearly did not understand when to take a stand and argue their point, and when to give both points of view. Proficient use of paragraphs was lacking.

The provided prompts below the pictorial stimuli somehow impaired creativity. Some candidates would use the prompts as paragraph headings. The lack of prompts in Questions 1.1 to 1.6 encouraged candidates' creativity.

Despite the mention of the candidates' lack of planning in the 2008 report, candidates still wrote the entire essay as a form of planning. Many mistakes were made in the rewriting process.

Recommendation: Candidates have to be taught how to plan constructively – skills like mind-mapping, spider webs and other less time-consuming techniques. Teachers must emphasise the importance of the instructions that accompany each topic.

Section B: Longer Transactional Text and Section C: Shorter Texts

The review proved to be challenging as candidates tended to write only on the plot. This genre was not taught well in many schools.

Candidates again struggled with the format of a dialogue, while the format of the formal letter also proved to be a problem, especially the subject line, salutation and address. Inappropriate register was also evident. It would seem that transactional writing, as prescribed in the Subject Assessment Guideline, is not being taught by all schools. Candidates also struggled with the layout of the poster and the advertisement.

Recommendation: The *Guideline Document: Writing*, made available to schools in 2008, and the *Subject Framework: Writing*, made available at the 2008 standard setting sessions, would prove to be effective teaching aids.

Section A:

The topics were varied and covered all cognitive levels. Candidates would have found a suitable topic to suit their writing abilities.

Question 1.1 was a popular choice amongst candidates. In Question 1.2, candidates often did not grasp the meaning of the word "benefited". This resulted in content that was off the topic. The visual stimuli resulted in varied and creative responses.

Question 1.4, although at a high cognitive level, allowed candidates to integrate prior knowledge from other subjects, such as Life Sciences and Geography. Candidates often misinterpreted the word "environment" and answered the question from a socio-economic point of view.

Section B:

Question 2.1 was problematic because candidates provided only details of the plot. Aspects like director, producer, characterisation, setting, author, recommendation, genre and dialogue have to be included in a well-written review. This question was answered very poorly.

Question 2.2: Instead of using proper nouns for the characters, candidates used common nouns and pronouns. The proper use of punctuation was lacking.

Question 2.3: The format of the formal letter was clearly not sufficiently taught. The tone, register and style were often inappropriate.

Question 2.4: The introduction to the speech was often too lengthy and candidates failed to get to the point, which caused them to exceed the number of words by a large margin.

Section C:

Question 3.1 and 3.3 were challenging, owing to the lack of understanding of the layout required for a poster and advertisement. Candidates tended to write in paragraph form. Teaching of these layouts should receive attention.

Question 3.2 was answered well, even though some candidates focussed on the actual event and not on what to do beforehand.