

EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ESWATINI

JC

EXAMINATION REPORT

FOR

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

YEAR

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JC Literature in English**Paper 120/01****General comments**

In the 2022 examination, a significant drop in candidature was noted. However, there was a remarkable improvement in the candidate's performance. Out of a total of 60 marks, the highest score was 55, whilst the lowest score was 2. This year, a majority of candidates had good knowledge of text content hence they were able to meet the demands of the questions. Unfortunately, there were still a lot of rubric infringement cases, which was the main contributory factor for poor performance in some candidates, who otherwise would have scored high marks. The worst-case scenario was a few centres where almost all candidates were penalised for rubric infringement.

It was noted that majority of candidates had an improved way of presenting their responses as compared to the previous year. For instance, in the passage-based questions, they were able to give analytic responses with support that was within the confines of the passage. There were also traces of personal response, although limited. In the essays, candidates had sound working knowledge of the texts, which enabled them to meet the demands of the questions. There were only a few instances where candidates used the passages to answer the essay questions. In the empathic questions, majority of candidates were able to assume the voices of the relevant characters. There were only a few cases where candidates did not recognize the given moment, thus rendering their responses unsatisfactory. There was a significant improvement in poetry in this year's examination. Candidates were able to meet the demands of some of the questions, particularly question 9.

Popular Questions among candidates in this examination were:

Section A – Question 4

Section B – Question 7 and 9

Section C – Question 10, 12, 16 and 17

Least popular Questions among candidates in this examination were:

Section A – Question 1,2 and 3

Section B – Question 8

Section C – Question 13, 14, 15 and 18

SECTION A: DRAMA

Candidates' performance in this section was very good as compared to the previous year(s). The most popular text was *The Gods are Not To Blame* as compared to *Pygmalion*.

Comments on specific questions

Pygmalion

Question 1

(a) What does the passage reveal about Higgins' character? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

This was one of the least popular questions in this section and it was very poorly done. Candidates who chose this question merely re-narrated the passage without relating it to the question. It was as if they had no idea of who Higgins was and what was happening in the frozen moment. They were supposed to identify Higgins' character traits as revealed in the passage as disrespectful, a controlling bully, manipulative, impatience, condescending, defensive, however loving towards his mother, confident and intelligent.

(b) What does the passage reveal about Mrs. Higgins' feelings? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

In this question, candidates' responses were average. The question required candidates to express Mrs. Higgins' feelings as they read the passage. However, most of those that chose this question expressed their own feelings towards Mrs Higgins. They were supposed to reflect Mrs. Higgins' feelings of anger and annoyance towards his son, shock at her son's decision to come when he knows he is not supposed to, be uncomfortable with his presence as she was expecting visitors, be disappointed that Higgins likes older women and be curious of his son's request about the lady in question.

Question 2

How far would you agree that Higgins has successfully transformed Eliza? Refer closely to the text for support.

This was the most unpopular question among candidates in this section and in this examination and it was poorly done. Poor knowledge of text content was the major contributory factor in the poor performance. As result, candidates used only the details in the passage in question 1 which were irrelevant to the question demands. As this was an argumentative question, candidates were supposed to give both the pros and cons of Eliza's transformation. On one hand, Higgins' success is evident when Eliza easily passes for a Duchess in the garden party. She also was able to speak English eloquently and unlike her teacher, she had the appropriate manners and was able to have 'small talk' with people of the upper class. On the other hand, her basic character did not change at all. She was still the loud, assertive and proud Eliza who does not take kindly in being ill-treated.

Question 3

You are Eliza, just after storming out on Higgins at the end of the story. Write your thoughts.

Again, this was one of the least popular questions among candidates in this section and was very poorly done. Candidates did not recognize the moment as well as the character. As a result, they only reflected their own thoughts than those of Eliza. They were supposed to reflect feelings of anger at Higgins for treating her poorly and dictating how she was to live her life by suggesting that she should marry for money, so that she would be able to maintain her new social class. She was, however, proud of herself for having been able to learn English and that she did not owe Higgins anything as she had paid for the lessons in full. Also, she was to have fond thoughts of Freddy and be determined to marry for love not money.

The Gods Are Not To Blame

Question 4

(a) What does the passage reveal about Odewale's character? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

This was the most popular question among candidates in this section and it was well done. Candidates were able to identify Odewale's character traits with relevant support as revealed in the passage. He was a rude, harsh, impatient, demanding, persistent and a violent but determined and clever in trying to find out the truth about King Adetusa's death and his own true identity.

(b) What does the passage reveal about Gbonka's feelings? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

Again, candidates did well in this question. They were able to express Gbonka's feelings as revealed by the passage. Only a small number of candidates expressed their own feelings towards Gbonka. They were supposed to reflect his feelings of fear and anxiety as to why he had been brought to the palace. He was feeling intimidated by Odewale's intense mood and questions, anger at being questioned on things he cannot remember, was livid at Alaka for revealing details of his connection with the baby in Ipetu forest and was regretful of not following orders when he was sent to the evil bush of Ipetu years ago.

Question 5

How far do you blame Odewale for killing the old man he found on his farm? Support your answer with details from the text.

This question was poorly done. Candidates did not recall the details of the moment well. Some candidates resorted to re-telling the story instead. They were supposed to give reasons to blame Odewale for killing the old man on one hand and defend him on the other. For instance, on one hand he was justified because the old man had trespassed and destroyed his sweat. Odewale also did try to reason with the old man, but he was met with disdain. The old man's charms were meant to kill him, so he was defending himself. Ultimately, it was the will of the gods, there was no way to avoid it. On the other hand, Odewale had to be respectful of the elders and walk away. He was also not supposed to run away from Ogundele's home because the oracle had clearly stated that he should stay where he was.

Question 6

You are one of the Chiefs after Odewale has accused you of being responsible for the death of the former king. Write your thoughts.

In this question, candidates' performance was very good. They were able to reflect the relevant thoughts to the given moment. Only a few candidates thought the moment was after Baba Fakunle had departed from the palace. They were supposed to reflect feelings of anger towards King Odewale for the unfounded allegations, be worried about their reputation to the townspeople, reflect on how Odewale had been made king in the first place with a sense of regret, be hopeful that the truth will eventually come out and they will be exonerated.

SECTION B: POETRY

In this section, candidates' responses displayed a remarkable improvement as compared to the previous year(s), particularly question 9, on the poem "Agony of the Dark Child". Question 7 still proved to be challenging yet it was one of the popular questions in this section.

Comments on specific Questions

When Fishes Flew and Other Poems

Question 7

In what ways has Mbuyiseni Mtshali vividly narrated a very shocking story in the poem?

This was the most popular question among candidates in this section, however their performance was average. A majority of candidates who chose this question merely gave the general analysis of the poem, without relating the shocking part. However, it was noted that there were quite a number of good responses. Candidates were supposed to see the shocking story through the description of the environment of White City Jabavu, the irony in the name itself, the description of the dogs, the way they 'fiercely fought' for the bundle, the reaction of the speaker towards the dogs and the bundle and lastly, the description of the mother.

Question 8

How has the poet used language to show a great appreciation of nature in one of the following poems?

***I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud:* William Wordsworth**

***The Lamb:* William Blake**

In this question, candidates' performance was below average. Candidates who chose this question did not remember the poems' details well. For example, In the poem *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* they were supposed to see the speaker's appreciation of nature through the description of the vibrant colours of the daffodils, how vastly they covered the environment, the 'fluttering' dancing movements they made, the effect of the breeze, the beauty of the sparkling waves and the stars that shine, how the stars and waves compliment the flowers, as well the effect these flowers had on the speaker. In the poem *The Lamb*, candidates were supposed to see the speaker's appreciation of nature through the way that he was in awe of the creator of the Lamb, how thoughtful he had been by not only creating a beautiful animal but also putting it in an ideal environment for it to survive, by giving it a coat that is not only beautiful but also warm and comfortable, by giving it a meek and mild voice that is soothing, by alluding to the fact that humans too are part of the same creation: both the lamb and human are made in the creator's image.

Question 9

Choose one of the following poems and explore how the poet has used language to make the poem very emotional for you.

***To Daffodils:* Robert Herrick**

***Agony of the Dark Child:* Syl Cheney-Coker**

This question was amongst the popular questions in this section, and candidates' performance was outstanding. A majority of candidates chose *Agony of the Dark Child* over *To Daffodils*. In the poem *Agony of the Dark Child*, candidates were able to give reasons for being emotional. For instance, sympathy for the child who was not only rejected by the mother but the grandmother too, anger at the mother for being afraid of her own child, sympathy for the speaker for the medicated bars of soap and oils that his young and delicate body is subjected to, sympathy for the mother and grandmother for

living in a society that was colourist. In the poem *To Daffodils*, candidates were supposed to give feelings of sadness that the beautiful daffodils have a short lifespan, anxiety as the speaker begs them to stay a little longer, helplessness because of the fact that humanity too has the same fate that is compared to the spring and summer rain: very short.

SECTION C: PROSE

In this section, candidates' performance fair as compared to the previous year. The most popular text among candidates in this section was *The Pearl* and the least unpopular text was *The Mending Season*.

Comments on specific Questions.

Question 10

(a) What does the passage reveal about Juan Tomás and Kino's relationship? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

In this question, candidates' performance was fairly good as compared to the previous year. They were able to bring out what the passage reveals about the brothers' relationship. For example, they have a strong bond, they love each other, they are protective of each other as they both did not want to put the other in danger.

(b) What are your feelings towards the family at this moment? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

This question was well done. Candidates were able to express their feelings not only to Kino and Juana but included Juan Tomás and Apollonia as required by the question. They were able to express feelings of admiration for Juan Tomás for risking his life and helping his brother, sympathy for Kino's loss of the house and the canoe, anger at Kino for the continued stubbornness, pity for Juana and the baby for going through so much because of the pearl and admiration for Apollonia for playing her part in making sure that Kino and Juana were not found by the neighbours.

Question 11

With close reference to any three characters in the story, explore how Steinbeck has portrayed human beings as greedy. Support your answer with details from the text.

In this question, candidates' performance was extremely wanting. A majority of candidates who chose it either re-narrated the whole story or chose more or less than the required number of characters. They were supposed to choose only 3 characters and show how they are greedy. For instance, The Doctor is prominently greedy as described by the beggars: they had seen his corpses and had said he did illegal abortions for money. His greed is also evident in the way he refused to treat Coyotito because his parents did not have money and lastly how he poisoned the baby so that he could get a share from the pearl. The Priest could also be seen as greedy because immediately he hears that Kino has found the pearl, his thoughts went to some repairs that were needed in the church and for the first time he visited Kino's house. Not only that, but he also tried to soften Kino's heart to give to the church by lying, saying Kino's name was written in the Bible. Moreover, The Pearl Buyers may be seen as greedy too. This is because they tried to rob Kino of his pearl by offering 1500 pesos for the pearl that was worth 50 000 pesos. Better responses did mention Kino himself as greedy because his obsession with the pearl clouded his judgment. Even after he had been attacked, his canoe broken and his house burnt, he still insisted on keeping the pearl. Candidates also mentioned the Beggars, the trackers, the Shopkeepers and the neighbours as greedy.

Question 12

You are Juana at night, running alone towards the shore to throw away the pearl. Write your thoughts.

In this question, candidates' performance was fair. They were able to recognise the moment and thus reflected thoughts that were relevant to the question. For example, feelings of worry that Kino might follow her, determination to get rid of the pearl even if it meant facing Kino's wrath, reflect on the good

peaceful times before the pearl was found and be resolute to bring their lives back to normal by getting rid of the evil pearl.

The Mending Season

This was the most unpopular text among centres in this section and candidates' performance was average.

Question 13

(a) What does the passage reveal about Mrs. Addis and her relationship with her students? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

In this question, candidates' performance was fair. They were able to establish that Mrs Addis favoured white girls but hated the black girls. She reprimanded them harshly for defending themselves against her accusations yet when Laura commented on her habit of eating chalk, she was only dismissed with a subtle tone of annoyance. Mrs Addis was also seen as a racist who believed that the black girls needed MUCH of the white education.

(b) What are your feelings towards the Black girls as you read the passage? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

In this question, candidates' performance was good. They were able to express their feelings towards the Black girls. For example, sympathy for being accused for noise making by Mrs Addis, admiration for them standing up and defending themselves, pity for them when Mrs Addis lashed out at them, sympathy for them because they were not allowed to speak their own language.

Question 14

With close reference to the Masemola sisters, discuss what you have learnt about the importance of family. Support your answer with details from the text.

This question was one of the least popular among candidates in this section and it was poorly done. Candidates who chose this question merely re-narrated the story, without relating it to the question. They were supposed to give evidence from the text that showed the importance of family. For example, the way the sisters were united, the love and protection they gave to each other, the good life they provided for their daughter, their tolerance and understanding for one another.

Question 15

You are Mrs. Allison at the end of the story. Write your thoughts.

This was another unpopular question among candidates in this section. However, it was fairly done. Candidates recognised the moment and hence they reflected the relevant thoughts and feelings. For instance, Mrs Allison could have reflected on the netball court incident and how much chaos it caused, she was glad that it was now a distant memory. She was proud of herself and the school, that despite the challenges they had faced, they were able to endure and get more students from other races and would see the integration a success after all.

Africa Kills Her Sun

This was one of the popular texts among centres in this section. Candidates performed very well.

Question 16

(a) What does the passage reveal about Lungi and Bheki's relationship? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

This was one of the popular questions among candidates in this section and it was well done. However, some candidates described Bheki and Lungi as being in a romantic relationship, yet they

were siblings. They were supposed to identify the relationship as close, that they were supportive and protective of each other, that they love and have great concern for each other and lastly, they are open and trusting of each other.

(b) What are your feelings towards Lungi as you read the passage? Remember to support your answer with details from the passage.

In this question, candidate performed very well. They were able to express feelings of admiration for Lungi for being assertive, for loving Petros even though he is a drunkard and for standing up for her other siblings against her father. Moreover, they were able to express feelings of pity for her for having a drunkard for a fiancée. However, some candidates were annoyed at her naivety and being blinded by love. Also, candidates expressed anger at her for confronting her father with issues that do not concern her e.g., her father's relationships with the other wives.

Question 17

With close reference to the story *Tekayo*, by Grace Ogot, explore how greed sometimes results to an unhappy life. Support your answer with details from the text.

In this question, candidates' performance was average. Even though they were able to point how Tekayo was greedy, they could not say how this led to an unhappy life. They were supposed to relate the instances where Tekayo showed being greedy and how that resulted to his life being unhappy. For example, it was greed that made Tekayo rob the eagle of its meal when he had his own meal that his wife had prepared for him, as a result he then had an insatiable desire for the liver and committed a lot of taboos that he knew would bring him bad luck. For a long time, he was depressed and did not perform his husband duties or socialise with his own family. He also killed his own grandchildren who loved and trusted him and lied about it to his family. He became an unstoppable savage who later killed himself when it was discovered that he was the one that had been killing his grandchildren all along.

Question 18

You are the narrator of the story *Excerpt from Eyes Are Moving*, by Sarah Mkhonza at the very end of the story. Write your thoughts.

This was another unpopular question among candidates in this section and their responses were unsatisfactory. Some candidates reflected their own feelings and thoughts rather than those of the narrator. In another scenario, they did not use the first-person voice but treated the question as if they were responding to a traditional essay. However, it was noted that there were also a few outstanding responses. Candidates were supposed reflect feelings of regret for marrying young, resentment for Bingo for the broken promises, reminisce on the future that never was but be determined to love and protect her son from the toxic marriage and be angry at Bingo's drunkenness.

Recommendations

- Teachers are advised to cover all texts as required by the syllabus, as this becomes the major contributory factor of poor performance in the examination.
- Candidates must be trained to choose questions correctly; adhering to the instructions of the component, as failure to do so results to rubric infringement, which greatly disadvantaged some candidates even in this year's examination.
- It cannot be emphasised enough that, in the traditional essays, candidates should be reminded not to use only the details in the passage of the same text; they are required to expand to the whole text. The passage for that text's passage-based question may be irrelevant for the traditional essay question so candidates must be careful not to use it indiscriminately.
- Like the previous year(s), it was noted that some candidates chose two questions from the same section or text. The requirement is that: candidates must answer one question from each section. They must answer at least one passage-based question and at least one essay or 'empathic' question.
- In poetry, teachers are commended for the remarkable improvement of this year's candidates' performance and are encouraged to continue to give focus to the language and its effect, not the mere interpretation of the poems as these interpretations tend to be vague, out of context and misleading.
- Teachers are also advised to give candidates ample practise time in the different types of questions so that they can respond accurately to the different genres.

Paper 120/02

General comments

The candidature was less than the previous year this time around. The performance unfortunately showed no improvement from that of last year. This may be due to the fact that for the better part of the year candidates did not have ample time for lessons hence no full exposure to the demands of the paper. For this reason, teachers are encouraged to expose candidates to this kind of paper as early as possible and give as much practice as possible. Candidates need more practice in text appreciation, question analysis and essay writing skills.

Structure of the paper

The paper had two questions. Question 1 was a prose question; question 2 was a poem. Candidates were required to respond to either question one or question two in 1 hour 30 minutes. Each question carried 20 marks.

Comments on specific Question**Question 1****How is the writer's portrayal of the two girls memorable?**

This question was attempted by a majority of the candidates, about 65 %. This passage is about two main characters – the red girl and the narrator. They lived in the same neighbourhood but lived completely different lives. The narrator in the passage envies the life of the red girl. She views her as living a carefree, independent and lawless life. The narrator does not understand that she is from a humble background; her daring character is influenced by her mother who does not enforce strict rules in her household as a result she has become a genius in marbles as she competes with the Skerritt boys. On the contrary, she has a mother who takes good care of her, protects her from all things deemed bad and unhygienic. She is made to bath twice a day and is not allowed to walk bare footed outside the house and has a special woman to attend to her hair regularly. She has to iron her uniform ceaselessly to her mother's satisfaction.

Most candidates who chose this question were frustrated by two words – portrayal and memorable, they responded by firing confusedly as a result they failed to explore the question well, thankfully the passage was relatively short so candidates had ample time for the task. A majority of candidates decided to compare and contrast the two girls which were against the demands of the question.

Candidates who performed well are those who commented clearly about the red girl's squalid life which is a result of poverty, her 'I don't care' attitude, her breaking the rules at home as her mother sometimes reminded her to bath, they also portrayed the frustration of the narrator who failed to understand why she was always forced to be clean. In the quest to answer the question well, some candidates merely depicted their feelings which was not what the question required. This can be curbed by exposing learners to a variety of questions for practice.

Weak responses were those that had vague or elementary understanding of the passage. Their errors in understanding included quoting or sharing personal or family experiences about poverty in general which had nothing to do with the passage or task. Gross irrelevance was also noted whereby candidates poured their anger on to the mother of the red girl who was dubbed as irresponsible. Others attacked the red girl for being irresponsible.

Question two**What are your feelings as you read this poem?**

There was a rise this time around in the number of candidates who attempted this question, about 35%. In this poem dogs are portrayed as man's best friend; it is portrayed as loyal to man. Its valiant efforts are seen when it saves people from drowning. They bark and frighten prowlers away. They also cheer up people who are frowning. Good as dogs maybe to man, they sometimes exhibit negative traits, they

show reluctance and wrath towards bathing. They also truck mud on beds or even chew people's clothes to shreds. The poet also showed sadness towards town dogs that are kept on leash.

Candidates who performed well in this question were able to come up with a variety of feelings. They stated the feelings and explained or justified those feelings evoked while reading the poem. Not only did they "name" the feeling, but they also explained why they feel that way after giving an example. Other candidates though, highlighted the important role and responsibilities of dogs towards man in general terms. Of course, candidates came out with other relevant and specific parts of the poem to substantiate their feelings.

Weaker responses were those that displayed a vague or little understanding of the poem. A few enumerated the feelings without bringing any useful comment. For example, they would quote: 'the dogs save man from drowning'. Some candidates totally ignored the question by writing general comments about dogs in their respective homes. Also, some candidates failed to explore the poem up to its end. They focussed on the first few stanzas.

Factors affecting good performance

- Not writing one whole essay. Such a method of responding limits the flow of ideas hence affecting the candidate's development of the response. This results in ideas that are sketchy and disjointed or incomplete and inadequate.
- Writing quite a number of feelings then lifting directly from the text or merely narrating the passage or poem instead of explaining how that particular feeling is being evoked.
- Use of synonyms instead of a variety of feelings.
- Discussing feelings of the characters in the text instead of discussing **their** feelings when asked to do so e.g. Bullet 2 in Question 1 and Bullet 3 in Question 2.
- Some candidates wrote lengthy responses which were, however, repeated points and over explanations of some points thus failing to develop their ideas and comments convincingly.

Expectations

- The expectation is that the feeling is stated or named. It should be accompanied by a clear explanation; why, how, and what evokes such a feeling. Close reference should be made to the text to justify or exemplify the moments or situations that are the reason for such feelings.
- Explanations for feelings should be related to the feeling mentioned. For example, an explanation or reason for a feeling of excitement should prove that indeed whatever moment or situation is exciting.
- Knowledge of the meanings of words denoting feelings is essential if there is going to be any relevance.
- Mention specific feelings instead of generalisations. Avoid using; I feel emotional; I feel good, or I feel bad. Candidates are expected to be specific.

Recommendations

- Teach question analysis skills to help learners to focus on the task or question requirements.
- Teach candidates how to develop responses i.e., paragraph building.
- Expose learners to different question types.
- Teach text analysis and how emotions are evoked as opposed to giving learners lists of feelings which they will merely regurgitate and use out of context. Learners should be able to give appropriate feelings and support them with relevant examples as well as explain how the selected example evokes the said feeling.
- Explain to candidates the purpose of the synopsis, bullet points and glossary.
- Help candidates by giving them different situations where they will identify different feelings, name them and explain clearly why they get such feelings.