

## **LITERATURE-IN-ENGLISH 2**

### **1. GENERAL COMMENTS**

The standard of the paper was the same as that of the previous years. The questions were straightforward as they clearly set out the tasks for the candidates.

On the whole, candidates' performance was slightly lower than that of the preceding year.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS**

- (1) A number of candidates showed good understanding of the questions and responded appropriately to them.
- (2) Some candidates wrote good introductions devoid of biographies of authors and set out the task ahead.
- (3) Good answers spelt out points and discussions clearly, paragraph by paragraph, using inter-paragraph links.
- (4) A good number of the candidates displayed in-depth knowledge of the set texts and supported their points with relevant references.

### **3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES**

- (1) There were instances of very poor knowledge of the set texts. In some cases, it was apparent that the candidates had not read the texts at all.
- (2) A good number of the candidates failed to either state the relevant themes or identify the characters or both.
- (3) Some of them only regurgitated notes, commentaries, etc., which were not appropriate to the requirements of the questions.
- (4) There were others who only presented sketchy answers; in some cases, only eight lines, or not up to half of a page.
- (5) Many of the candidates demonstrated a lack of understanding of the questions as they presented answers that did not actually address the questions they were supposed to be responding to.
- (6) A few of the candidates misspelt names of some characters and places, e.g. 'bigger' for 'Bigger'; 'Oderlay' for 'Odarley'; 'Poision' for 'Poison'; 'Kabira' for 'Kabria' ; and 'Agboloshi' for 'Agboglobshie' .

### **4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES**

To overcome the above-mentioned weaknesses, the following measures are recommended:

- (1) Candidates should be made to understand that questions are set to elicit specific lines of reasoning and analysis, not mere narration of the entire plot. They should therefore be able to raise points and develop them for good marks.
- (2) Students must be encouraged to buy and read set texts.
- (3) A lot of assignments should be given, marked and discussed with students.

- (4) Teachers should read the Chief Examiner's Report so as to know the weaknesses of students and correct them.
- (5) Teachers should guide students to identify the various themes of the set texts and the relation of such themes to some practice/past questions.
- (6) Workshops for teachers of Literature-in-English should be organised from time to time.
- (7) Students must be taught the techniques of answering questions.
- (8) Teachers should encourage students to finish reading the prescribed texts before reading any commentaries on them.

## **5. DETAILED COMMENTS**

### **QUESTION 1**

**Comment on the significance of Poison's attempted rape of Fofo.**

Candidates were required to state the theme in relation to the predicament/vulnerability of street children; identify Poison and Fofo; give relevant details of Poison's attempt to rape Fofo; recount Fofo's immediate action after her escape; and explain the significance of the episode/incident.

Good answers contained all the above. Weak ones, however, did not address the theme and identify the characters but merely focused on the incident of the attempted rape. On the significance of the attempted rape incident, some of the information presented by candidates went too far away to include such irrelevant details as government's irresponsibility and MUTE's involvement in Baby T's case.

### **QUESTION 2**

**Examine the friendship between Odarley and Fofo.**

Candidates were expected to state the theme in relation to streetism and the relationships among street children; identify Fofo and Odarley and indicate how they end up in the streets; explain the nature of their relationship; and consider their relationship after parting company with each other.

Good candidates were able to provide answers that contained the required information and earned good marks. Weak ones, however, did not address the theme and identify the relevant characters—Odarley and Fofo.

### **QUESTION 3**

**Discuss the effect of Alani's visit on Yaremi in the novel.**

The requirements of this question included the following: statement of the relevant theme of the suffering of widows; identification of Alani and Yaremi; Alani's conduct during his visit to Yaremi in the village, his determination to return to the city and the consequential rejection of Ajumobi's legacy; and the effect of the visit on Yaremi.

A few candidates presented answers that met the demands of the question and scored good marks. Weak candidates failed to address the requirements of the question and ended up scoring low marks.

### **QUESTION 4**

**How do Yaremi's three suitors reflect the attitude of the people of Kufi to women?**

The requirements of this question included the following: statement of the relevant theme of male dominance and the plight of widows; identification of the relevant characters, i.e., Yaremi, Ayawanle, Olonade and Lanwa, who are the three suitors; the way the suitors try to woo Yaremi; Yaremi's rejection of all of the three suitors; and the reaction of the people of Kufi to Yaremi's rejection of the suitors.

Good candidates presented answers that met the requirements of the question and earned good marks. Weak candidates' answers failed to identify the three suitors as three distinct individuals but merely dwelt on the plight of widows in general. This resulted in such candidates scoring low marks.

### **QUESTION 5**

**Account for Bigger's frustration in the novel.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and indicate its relation to the question. They were also to identify the character Bigger, discuss the source of Bigger's frustration and explain how his frustration manifests.

While the good candidates discussed relevant factors, such as racial discrimination, the poor living condition of members of Bigger's race and family, and his inability to fulfil his dreams as being responsible for his frustration, the weak candidates only focussed on fear as the cause of Bigger's frustration in the novel.

### **QUESTION 6**

#### **Comment on the role of Ma in the novel.**

Among the requirements of this question were the following: statement of the relevant theme of the importance of family relationships; identification of Ma as Mrs Thomas, a single parent and mother of Bigger, Vera and Buddy; the financial support Ma provides for her family; the emotional support she gives her children; her disciplining of her children; and her soft spot for Bigger.

A good number of the candidates answered this question. They showed a good knowledge of the identity of Ma as Mrs Thomas and provided other relevant details. However, some wrongly identified Ma as Max and others as Mary. Such answers were awarded some marks for the statement of the theme only, if it was stated at all; otherwise, they scored zero for the entire question.

### **QUESTION 7**

#### **Examine Theodore's escape from the castle and its contribution to the plot.**

The candidates were required to provide answers that contained details on the following: statement of the theme of superstition; identification of Bianca; Bianca's attitude towards Matilda, Hippolita, Isabella and certain events; Conrad's death and Theodore's detention; Matilda's encounter with the young peasant.

### **QUESTION 8**

#### **Examine the relationship between Matilda and Isabella.**

The candidate was expected to give a good introduction of Matilda and Isabella; how Isabella comes to live in the castle; their being brought up together as sisters by Hippolita; how Isabella nearly becomes sister-in-law to Matilda; Manfred's proposal to marry Isabella and her horror; their rivalry over Theodore; Matilda's death and her wish for Theodore to marry Isabella, etc.

Candidates displayed a good knowledge of the text and gave apt identification of Matilda and Isabella. Many of the candidates presented the following salient points:

- (1) Their close relationship; seeing each other as sisters.
- (2) Their love for each other.
- (3) Their calm expression of their personal loves for Theodore.

These points were clearly spelt out by some candidates, but others merely narrated the story and displayed only a superficial knowledge of the text.

### **LITERATURE-IN-ENGLISH 3**

#### **1. GENERAL COMMENTS**

The standard of the paper was the same as that of the previous years. Candidates' performance was slightly lower than that of the previous year.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS**

- (1) Several candidates exhibited familiarity with the texts.
- (2) Some candidates wrote good essays devoid of mere narrations.
- (3) Good answers spelt out points and supported their points with relevant references.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES**

- (1) Generally poor use of English
- (2) Inclusion of irrelevant biographical details of authors in candidates' answers
- (3) Relevant textual reference being often ignored
- (4) Candidates avoiding reading the set texts and preferring to read commentaries instead.

#### **4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES**

To overcome the weaknesses of candidates, the following suggestions are made:

- (1) Teachers should ensure that students study the prescribed texts and are given essay type exercises in class.
- (2) Students must be taught how to answer questions appropriately.
- (3) Students should engage in intensive and extensive reading of relevant novels and other supplementary readers to broaden their knowledge and acquire adequate vocabulary.
- (4) There should be effective teaching and learning to ensure that the syllabus is totally covered before examination.
- (5) Teachers should also read the Chief Examiner's Report to be able to guide students.
- (6) Teachers should guide students to identify the various themes of the set texts and the relation of such themes to some practice/past questions.

## 5. **DETAILED COMMENTS**

### **QUESTION 1**

**Examine the significance of Wara's abduction in the play.**

Candidates were required to state the relevant theme and identify Wara as a character in the play. They were further required to discuss Whitehead's demand for Wara and proceed to discuss the abduction itself, giving its significance.

The very few candidates who answered this question exhibited only a superficial knowledge of the text.

### **QUESTION 2**

**Assess Kindo's reception of Whitehead and Parker.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and identify the characters mentioned in the question; i.e., Kindo, Whitehead and Parker. It was also expected that candidates would discuss the arrival of Whitehead and Parker, how they are received by Kindo and the significance of the reception.

A few candidates answered the question, but the majority failed to present answers that satisfied the requirements of the question.

### **QUESTION 3**

**Comment on the significance of Chief Haladu Ade-Amaka's visit to the Commissioner of Police.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and identify the two characters mentioned in the question. They were also required to discuss the purpose of the visit and then state what it foreshadows.

This was a popular question, but it was generally poorly tackled. Many candidates failed to identify the characters. Again, several of them stated that Chief Haladu Ade-Amaka visits the Commissioner of Police to offer him bribe to secure the release of Aloho, who is put before court for carrying cocaine overseas. The fact, however, is that the visit to the Commissioner is made before Aloho's arrest.

#### **QUESTION 4**

**Discuss the visit of Okpotu to Pannya in the play.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and discuss its relation to the question. They were also to identify the characters, discuss the purpose of the visit, wider implication of the visit and Ogeyi's resolve to seek revenge for Aloho.

The question was well answered. However, most of the candidates were unable to highlight the point on the wider implications of the visit.

#### **QUESTION 5**

**Examine the role of religion in the Younger family.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and discuss its relation to the question. They were also to identify the relevant characters that are members of the Younger family. They were to discuss such instances as the invocation of God's name in times of difficulty or joy, God's name never to be profaned, and religion as source of strength and determination.

A few candidates presented answers that met the requirements of the question and scored good marks. The weak candidates failed to address the requirements of the question and ended up scoring low marks.

#### **QUESTION 6**

**Discuss Mrs Johnson's visit to Mama in the play.**

Candidates were expected to state the relevant theme and discuss its relation to the question. They were also to identify the characters, discuss the purpose and significance of the visit, etc.

This was not a popular question, but the candidates who answered it did quite well. They were able to cite textual evidence to support their points.

#### **QUESTION 7**

**How do Mr Hardcastle and Mrs Hardcastle's differing attitudes to life affect their relationships?**

As usual, a statement of the theme was required in addition to the identification of two characters mentioned in the question. The candidates were also expected to discuss Mr and Mrs Hardcastle's approach to parenting, their attitude to travel and fashion, their sense of

humour and their varying attitudes to marriage. This was a popular question and many candidates who attempted it performed creditably.

### **QUESTION 8**

**What impression do you form of Catherine in the play?**

Candidates were expected to state the theme, identify the character, and discuss her discretion, her presence of mind and sense of conformity, steadfastness and simple honesty. Many of the candidates who answered this question performed quite well.

### **QUESTION 9**

**Consider the mood of the persona in Okara's *Piano and Drums*.**

Candidates were required to discuss the theme, explain mood and then give details of the different moods, which are nostalgia, uncertainty, sadness and dilemma. A few of those who attempted this question did well while others failed to provide the expected responses.

### **QUESTION 10**

**Examine the diction of the poem *The Panic of Growing Older*.**

Candidates were expected to state the theme of the poem and then proceed to explain/define the term 'diction'. They were also to discuss the fear of growing older, words conveying images of failure, time of old age and death.

Most candidates only defined 'diction' as 'choice of words of the author', without giving any further details. Again, many of them failed to support their points with references from the text and ended up scoring low marks.

### **QUESTION 11**

**Comment on the lessons that can be learnt from the subject matter of *Birches*.**

Candidates were expected to state the theme and then explain the term 'subject matter'. They were required to discuss the use of the birch trees as timber, and for sport in addition to the lessons for the poet.

The few candidates who answered this question displayed poor knowledge of the text. Lessons were only based on the poet's experience of swinging birches. Other important points on resilience, the need not to succumb to failure and the need to take life easy were lost on the candidates.



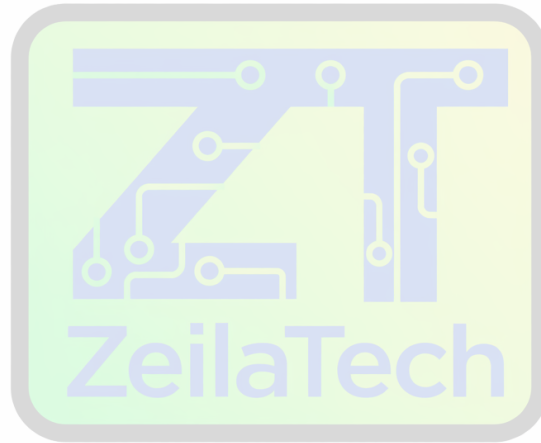
### **QUESTION 12**

**Discuss the use of visual images in *Crossing the Bar*.**

Candidates were expected to state the theme related to the question and then explain the term ‘visual images’. Detailed discussions of the setting, death as a voyage, and the expectation of the poet were also expected.

This was a popular question, but only a few of the candidates who chose it answered it well.

Most of the candidates did not explain the term ‘visual images’; neither were they able to highlight instances of visual images. Some did not even state the theme relative to the requirement of the question.



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