

LITERATURE –IN – ENGLISH 2

1. GENERAL COMMENTS

The standard and quality of the paper compare favourably with the previous year(s). Candidates' performance was average.

2. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

- (1) Candidates demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the texts.
- (2) Candidates' essays demonstrated good control of vocabulary. Textual references and quotations supported details and comments cited.
- (3) Candidates stayed close to/within the text.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that candidates had well-read the texts and understood the demands of the questions.
- (5) Some candidates were prolific in the details provided, in their answers.
- (6) Some were very analytical and critical in their presentations and discussions.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

- (1) Some candidates showed an inability to grasp the demands of the questions (rubrics) – lacked full comprehension of the questions.
- (2) There were inconsistencies in details and characters presented in their answers.
- (3) They over-concentrated on the background details of the texts and their authors – unnecessary.
- (4) Vague and unrelated details and references were made. Others were unfamiliar with the texts, names, roles, and events involving characters resulting in poor spellings.

4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

Candidates should be guided and encouraged to:

- (1) read the texts thoroughly well, and be abreast with characters, events, and literary techniques;
- (2) avoid overly reliance on commentary but be expressive in projecting their personal views based on facts from the texts;
- (3) focus on the demands of the question and avoid unrelated details, for example, the biography of the authors;
- (4) be consistent in presenting details in their responses.

5. DETAILED COMMENTS

Section A- African Prose

Buchi Emecheta: *Second Class Citizen*

Question 1

Discuss the theme of child abuse in the novel.

Candidates were expected to state the general theme of the novel, identify the victims of child abuse, discuss Adah's earlier abuse of Adah (before Pa Ofili's death), her latter abuse of Adah (after Pa's death), and finally the abuse of Titi and other children.

This was a popular question that received averagely high marks on the scheme.

Most candidates cited Adah as the victim with rare references to the children of Adah and Francis. The earlier abuse of Adah was highlighted together with the later UK. The abuse of Titi and other siblings was also focused on by a few of the candidates.

Question 2

Comment on the police treatment of Ma upon the disappearance of Adah

Candidates were expected to state the general theme of the novel, describe Ma and Adah, discuss Adah's disappearance, elaborate on the incident at the police station, and end with what happened to Ma after the arrest.

The question was generally fairly well answered.

The theme of "gender discrimination" was cited along with "police brutality" by most candidates. The characters: Ma and Adah were scantily identified, while the circumstances leading to Adah's disappearance were overlooked by some candidates.

However, details were captured of Ma's detention and punishment at the hands of the police.

Candidates also touched on the events after Ma's release, leading to Adah's enrolment in school.

Alex Agyei-Agyiri: *Unexpected Joy at Dawn*

Question 3

How does Nii treat his wife in the novel?

It was expected of candidates to state the general theme of the novel (events and the actions of the characters are founded on social dysfunction), describe Nii and his wife, describe Nii's relationship with his wife, discuss the ailing condition of his wife and end with all issues surrounding her death.

Performance by candidates was on average. The statement of the theme proved a little challenging to most candidates. A few identified "corruption" and "hardships". Character identification skewed to Nii with a little alination on the wife, Massa. Other details on "Nii's relationship with his wife-Massa" were sparsely stated in the essays.

Candidates, however, stumbled on good points regarding Nii's ailing wife, her subsequent death, and the aftermaths.

Question 4

Discuss the relationship between Mama Orojo and Joe Boye.

Candidates were expected to state the general theme of the novel, describe Mama Orojo and Joe Boye, and discuss the business that brought them together, the love between them as well as the mutual respect and support.

This was not a popular question. While Mama Orojo was adequately identified, fewer details were given on Boye's character. Points on Business and Love relationships were alternated but fairly detailed. Candidates cited events leading to the relationship that brought the two – Mama Orojo and Joe Boye together.

Candidates dealt better with the "Mutual respect and support" between the two, and subsequent marriage.

Section B - Non-African Prose

Ralph Ellison: *Invisible Man*

Question 5

Examine the narrator as a tool in the hands of the Brotherhood.

Candidates were needed to state the general theme of the novel (the plight of the Blackman in racist America of the 20th century), describe the narrator and the brotherhood, discuss the activities of the narrator in the Harlem District, discuss the narrator's association with Brother Tod Clifton and comment on the final denial of liability.

Candidates performed average on the question. "Racism" and "dominance of blacks" in white American society were established as key themes. Character identification was well-done, on the narrator and the Brotherhood, save that the latter was regarded as costing the former to achieve its "racial discrimination" ideals. The narrator's activities were described as being used to achieve solely the purpose of the Brotherhood. There was no mention of the Narrator's relationship with Brother Hambro, the committee, Brother Todd Clifton, etc.

Question 6

How does the narrator respond to Dr. Bledsoe's accusation of betrayal after he drove Mr. Norton to the black quarters?

Candidates were expected to state the general theme of the novel, describe the narrator and Dr. Bledsoe, narrate the key events of the drive to the black quarters, identify Dr. Bledsoe's accusations, and end with the narrator's response.

This was quite a popular question, which was answered satisfactorily. "Racial discrimination and racial segregation" in American society were cited as themes, while the character identification found the Narrator, Dr. Bledsoe, and Mr. Norton being mentioned without other

details. Candidates were also brief on the Narrator's drive with Mr. Norton to the Black quarters, which led to Dr. Bledsoe's accusations against the Narrator. Some candidates were able to put the Narrator's responses across and the details of his sack from the college.

Emily Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*

Question 7

Examine Heathcliff's treatment of Hareton.

Candidates were expected to state the general theme of the novel, describe Heathcliff and Hareton, discuss the execution of the revenge by Heathcliff, discuss how Heathcliff deprives and denies Hareton many things, and elaborate on the effect(stagnation) it had on Hareton.

Candidates performed creditably on the "Relation to the general theme of the novel" – i.e., interplay of love, hatred, and revenge. Character identification was fairly detailed. The points on "Revenge", and "Denial and Deprivation" were very exhaustive. However, details on "Stagnation" were shallow. The question was answered satisfactorily.

Question 8

How do Catherine and Isabella perceive love in marriage?

Candidates needed to state the general theme of the novel, describe Catherine and Isabella, discuss the general perception of love and marriage in the novel, and focus on discussing the uniqueness of Catherine's marriage as well as that of Isabella.

This was a favourite question of candidates. The theme was well stated – e.g. "Interplay of love and revenge". The characters were well-identified, yet a few inconsistencies in declination occurred. Candidates, though failed to relate to the general perception of "love and marriage", those were captured under "Catherine's marriage" and "Isabella's marriage" in detail – with some inconsistencies though. Performance was above average on the question.

LITERATURE –IN – ENGLISH 3

1. GENERAL COMMENTS

The standard of the paper favourably compares with the standards of papers in previous years.

2. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTH

There is a generally improved performance in the subject. The key factors for this include:

- (1) Candidates' understanding of the major themes of the texts;
- (2) Candidates' ability to identify characters and also define or explain key concepts to meet the demands of the questions;
- (3) Candidates' demonstration of textual knowledge;
- (4) Candidates' ability to coherently organize their ideas in their essays.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

The major weaknesses of candidates include:

- (1) Lack of details;
- (2) Inability to make accurate references to the appropriate lines of the poems in support of their points;
- (3) Over elaboration or repetition of points;
- (4) Weak expressions and poor command of the English Language.

4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

- (1) Candidates should deliberately prepare and arm themselves with relevant quotes from the poems and plays.
- (2) Candidates should read the texts more closely and also read beyond the prescribed texts to broaden their scope of the language.
- (3) Candidates should rely on their knowledge and understanding of the texts rather than commentaries from AI, pamphlets, etc.
- (4) Teachers should engage potential candidates in essay writing more often and prepare them very well for the final examination.

5. DETAILED COMMENTS

Section A – African Drama

John K. Kargbo: *Let Me Die Alone*

Question 1

Assess the role of Lamboi in the development of the plot.

Candidates were expected to state the overarching theme and identify Lamboi as the brother of Yoko, the antagonist of the play, an ambitious, desperate, treacherous character who gets whatever he wants. They were also to discuss his ambition, and involvement in the plot to kidnap Ndapi's daughter, Jeneba as well as the denouement (the real murderers are found out and they run into exile)

This question was tackled by very few candidates who seem not to have read the text.

Question 2

Discuss the use of proverbs in the play.

Candidates were to state the general theme, define proverbs, and discuss the major proverbs cited in the play. Gbanya, Yoko, and the Palace guard are the characters who use proverbs in their speech. In discussing these proverbs, candidates were to state the circumstances surrounding the use of the proverb and its effect on the speech.

Almost zero candidates responded to this question. *Let Me Die Alone* is the most unpopular text amongst students.

Wole Soyinka: *The Lion and the Jewel*

Question 3

Discuss three incidents of humour in the play

Candidates needed to relate to the major theme; define humour; and give three instances of humour. They were to identify humour through (any three of the following) the use of diction, music and dance, pantomime, and the first encounter between Baroka and Lakunle.

This was a popular question. However, some candidates were not able to define humour properly. Most candidates were unable to cite appropriate examples of humour. Humour through diction was the most popular example cited by candidates- Baroka's *guru morning* greeting and dressing – *an old-style English suit, threadbare but not ragged ... a size or two small* provoke laughter and ridicule.

Question 4

What makes Baroka win the ‘fight’ over Sidi?

What was expected of candidates was to point out factors that made Bale Baroka win the fight between him and Lakunle over Sidi’s hand in marriage. First of all, candidates were to state the general theme of the play (clash between tradition and modernity). They then had to identify the characters mentioned in the question (Baroka and Sidi), Baroka's approach to Sidi, how Baroka wins Sidi's love, and how Sidi snubs Lakunle for Baroka.

Most candidates identified the major theme and the characters. They were able to touch on Baroka’s deception and essential triumph, crowded by his master plan and the help of Sadiku and Lakunle’s inabilities. The question was the most popular and it was well answered by the candidates.

Section B – Non-African Drama

John Osborne: *Look Back in Anger*

Question 5

Examine three incidents of irony in the play.

Candidates were to state the general theme of the play (frustrating social class life of post-World War II in Britain and its negative effects on relationships) and define irony by way of introduction. They were also to discuss any three of the following instances of irony in the play: Helena’s appearance in Jimmy’s apartment; the change in the life of Colonel Redfern and Mrs. Redfern; Jimmy and Alison’s marriage and Jimmy’s tantrums against the middle/upper class.

Candidates were generally good at identifying the theme and defining irony but poor at citing appropriate examples.

Question 6

Examine the importance of Helena’s visit to the development of the plot.

Candidates were expected to state the general theme and describe Helena. Also, they were to explain the plot and touch on Helena’s entry into the marital home of Alison, Helena's relationship with Jimmy, and the sudden return of Alison.

Candidates did fairly well with their responses. However, most of them were not able to identify the main characters of the question and the defined plot.

August Wilson: *Fences*

Question 7

Consider Troy as an admirable character.

Candidates were to discuss the admirable things about Troy. They were to talk about the general theme of the play (racial discrimination and its effect on the lives of the American black community in the 1950s) and identify the general traits of Troy (53-year-old African-American, protagonist, husband, father, and brother.) The remaining part of the essay was to focus on Troy's good qualities – strong and resilient, open and candid and the opinions of other characters about him.

Though most candidates gave fair responses, many of them treated the question as a general character stretch of Troy rather than focusing on the specific demands of the questions.

Question 8

How is the theme of family bonding portrayed in the plot?

In answering this question, candidates were to identify the theme, the specific families in the play, their bonding, the challenges in those bonding, and how the challenges were overcome. Most candidates gave fairly good responses touching on family bonding. However, they largely failed to identify the challenges and their regulations. The majority also focused on only the Maxson family leaving out Bono's family.

Section C – African Poetry

Smart Learning Tools

Onu Chibuikwe: *A Government Driver on His Retirement*

Question 9

What life-long lessons do you learn from *A Government Driver on his Retirement*?

Candidates were to state the major theme (how one prepares for and handles one's retirement which the poem advises to be in moderation), lessons on hard work, self-restraint, retirement, and how to handle retirement.

This was a popular question but some candidates struggled. Though they exhibited a good understanding of the questions, they were unable to fish out the lessons and relate them to specific lines of the poem. The result was a generic approach to the question rather than text-based presentations.

Niyi Osundare: *The Leader and the Led*

Question 10

Compare the leadership qualities of the lion and that of the Giraffe in the *Leader and the Led*.

Candidates were to state the general theme of the poem (the search for the right leadership qualities in a leader or ruler) and identify the general traits of the Giraffe and the lion (though they both belong to the wild and aspire to be leaders, their individual qualities disqualify them). The focus of the essay is on the qualities of the lion, the qualities of the giraffe, and the solutions of the forest sage.

Again, candidates struggled with the question. They were largely generic, unable to tie down their opinions to relevant lines of the poem. Few candidates however did well.

Section D – Non-African Poetry

David H. Lawrence: *Bat*

Question 11

Comment on the use of personification in *Bat*.

Candidates were to state the general theme (how people express their biases/prejudices in their appreciation of nature) and define personification. Also, candidates were to discuss the personification used in the poem – personification in respect of the setting; the swallow's flight and their departure, and then the arrival of the bats and their resting habit.

This is the least-answered question in the poems. Candidates either failed to or in the attempt to define personification. Relating the concept of personification to any line of the poem was almost absent. The performance was abysmal.

Thomas Dylan: *Do not Go Gentle into that Good Night*

Question 12

Show how the poet conveys the will to live in *Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night*.

Candidates were tasked to show how the poet conveys the will to live in the poem. They were to touch on the inevitability of death, the opposition to death, facing the prospect of dying, and the admonishment of the poet's father.

This was a popular question. Generally, the response was fair. The attempt at relating points to lines or expressions from the poem was more pronounced in their responses than in any other answer.