



ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATIONS

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NSC 2011 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT	ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE
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PAPER	TWO
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SECTION 1:

(General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

This paper was a very balanced paper, i.e. the choice questions followed the same pattern in terms of the types of questions asked, the mark allocations and the skills and knowledge application tested. As a result, the performance of learners in the various questions was more realistic and balanced.

It was pleasing to note that well-prepared, competent and deserving learners could score full marks on all sections, including the essays. There were far more full mark essays than in the past and talented learners should aim for this.

A general impression is that far more centres show evidence of having prepared learners to structure and write a literary essay in which their argument is clearly expressed. However, there are still some learners who answer two contextual questions instead of a contextual and an essay question. Learners must be trained in choices and reading instructions. Answering two contextual questions results in candidates being awarded zero for the Drama section (Section C).

I am heartened by the fact that there is evidence that in many centres in the province sound teaching and learning is taking place. There are, however, still centres where there is little evidence of learning having taken place and it would be to their benefit should the various districts offer assistance in equipping the teachers concerned with both skills and resources.

SECTION 2:

SECTION A: POETRY

QUESTION 1: Prescribed poetry essay – *An Abandoned Bundle*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

The responses varied from poor to good, although the majority were on the poor side. Learners relied largely on their own opinion, rather than on answering the question “the poet’s response to the mother”. Of those who did discuss the poet’s response, very few picked up on the ambivalence of the poet towards the mother.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

Not all learners seemed familiar with the terminology: diction; imagery; attitude and tone. Learners merely say what is happening in the poem instead of picking out words and images, analyzing these and relating them to the question.

The essay was frequently faulty. Many essays lacked introductions and conclusions. There was very little meaningful reference to text.

- (a) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teachers need to be equipped – consult as many guides as possible when preparing a poem. Do a detailed analysis.
- Teach the poem carefully and teach learners how to structure a poetry essay. There must be an introduction and conclusion and logical progression in dealing with the topic.
- Close reference to the text is essential.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

Learners gave generalized answers.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

QUESTION 2: Prescribed poetry contextual – *The Wild Does at Louis Trichardt*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Few learners knew what “cicadas” are. Many thought they are birds! Teachers must explain all aspects of the poem as this lack of basic knowledge did hamper learners’ performance.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- See (a) for comment on “cicadas”.
- In question 2.3 (“*Discuss how the diction in stanza 2 conveys the poet’s attitude to the cicadas*”) learners did not focus clearly on the diction.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teach all poetic techniques to learners and analyze as many poems as possible with them.
- Prepare a collection of responses to each question and let the learners identify the best response. This will inform their writing.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

A particular centre focused largely on gender issues. Teachers must avoid extending their personal bias to the poetry they teach, especially where there is not a natural relevance to the poem of the particular bias.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

QUESTION 3: Prescribed Poetry Contextual – *Rugby League Game*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

This question was reasonably well-answered.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- Learners failed to take into account the speaker’s opinion in question 3.1 (“*Explain why the speaker is of the opinion...*”) and 3.3 (“*Explain how the imagery used in lines 15-18 conveys the speaker’s opinion of the players*”).
- There was overlap in questions 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4 with regard to seeking lost youth. Candidates battled to differentiate between these questions.
- In 3.2 (“*Grappling, hooking, gallantly ... the county side*”) the ellipsis merely indicates the start and end of the section to be considered; it does not mean that only the quoted words must be discussed.
- In question 3.4 learners were to “*comment critically on the speaker’s attitude to the men in the last stanza*”. In such a question, the learner must state the speaker’s attitude and then discuss what it means or what is being conveyed or whether it is a change in attitude, etc.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

Teach learners how to analyze questions. They must focus on each aspect of the question.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**
Learners struggle to answer questions in which they are to explain how a technique works.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

QUESTION 4: Prescribed Poetry Contextual – *When to the Sessions of Sweet Silent Thought*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Learners performed fairly well on this question, except for 4.3.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

Learners battled to differentiate between what was required by 4.1 and 4.3, i.e. “why was he sad” and “what kind of person is he”.

Question 4.3 (“*Discuss whether the imagery used in these lines is effective in conveying the speaker’s feelings*”) was badly answered. The learners did not refer to the book-keeping image and could not link it to the past sorrows that are likened to debts that have to be paid again.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.**

Teach the differences between “tone”, “feeling” and “attitude”.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

Learners struggle to answer questions in which they are to explain how a technique works.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run with workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

QUESTION 5: Unseen Poetry Essay – *The Weeping of the Penny Whistle*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Very few learners answered this question.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- The same applies for this question as for question one: Essays lack structure and logical and coherent flow.
- Many learners lack the language competence to cope with and understand the unseen poem on their own.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

Expose learners to more “unseen” poetry. Many merely learn prescribed poetry by rote and do not have practice at analyzing poems on their own. They then lack the skill and confidence needed when it comes to this question in the exam.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

Learners are not following questions carefully. Frequently learners merely summarized/ paraphrased the poem instead of following instructions and focusing on “diction”, “imagery” and “state of mind”.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

QUESTION 6: Unseen Poetry Contextual – *The Weeping of the Penny Whistle*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

A fair number of learners did extremely well in this question, scoring 9 or 10 out of 10. However, others did not manage so well.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- Question 6.4 asked about the suitability of the title. Candidates struggled to make the link between the title, content and theme.
- Question 6.5 required candidates to discuss the imagery of “climbing the scales”. Many did not make the link between musical scales and the penny whistle. This shows a lack of general knowledge or musical background which one would expect the learning area “Arts and Culture” to have given them in the lower grades.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Expose learners to unseen poetry as much as possible.
- Teach them to analyse poems and to discuss all poetical techniques used.
- Introduce poetic techniques in Grade 8.
- Read poetry in class which will extend them in terms of content. Despite the glossary for “pennywhistle” included in the paper, many still battled to understand it in terms of the poem.
- Start unseen poetry in the lower grades so that it becomes second nature by Grade 12.
- Have class discussions/debates on many issues, not only current ones. This poem related to the struggle years during apartheid, a time beyond the experience of current Grade 12s. (However, candidates could discuss the poem in general terms regarding any protest or fighting for a cause.)

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

Candidates who did extremely well on the prescribed poetry tended to score high marks on the unseen poem. Thus, the more you expose your learners to poetry and in-depth analysis of poems, the more likely they are to achieve high marks on the unseen poetry question.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Marking teams could be used to run workshops with subject advisors to equip teachers with regard to helping their learners handle the examinations. This should happen in all districts and near the beginning of the year.

SECTION B: NOVEL

QUESTION 7: Essay Question – *Animal Farm*

(a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

The performance was mostly satisfactory in centres that had actually taught the novel. There were some centres which had no content knowledge of “Animal Farm” at all and one can only assume that there had been limited or no teaching of the novel. However, many of the learners were well-versed in the facts and story-line but lacked in-depth knowledge and critical reasoning skills with regard to the topic. The average learner seemed to have a basic understanding of how satire is used in the novel, but was unable to discuss it as an integrated concept in the novel.

(b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- There are still learners who merely re-tell the story, but the impression of markers who have marked this question previously is that there has been a vast improvement.
- Some centres seemed to have no concept of “Animal Farm” as a fable – this must be taught.
- Many learners lack language competence to do justice to a literary essay.
- The definition provided of “satire” seemed to confuse some learners who then tried to structure an essay using the various aspects of the definition as guided points.
- The lack of in-depth interpretation of the topic in the essay could be due to the learners’ lack of experience of challenging concepts and of their inability to marry knowledge of the novel with a critical response concept such as satire. If the essay were on the evil evidenced in “Animal Farm”, the learners would have fared better.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- More attention could be paid by teachers in making links between conceptual learning (such as satire) to specific texts (such as “Animal Farm”). This inter-textual learning should be applied where applicable. For example, History learners have the advantage of background knowledge of the Russian revolution – involve them in applying this to the novel.
- Teach all main areas of the novel, such as themes, characters, concepts.
- Spend time analysing questions, discussing these in groups and looking at critical response concepts.

(d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

This question did reveal that many learners are unable to apply critical thinking to their knowledge of texts. It is problematic that many students re-tell the story in a summarized way.

e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Learners could be given opportunities to prepare debates on issues in the novel and be guided how to support their points from the text.
- The expertise of the teacher in the classroom is critical. This expertise must not be limited to knowledge of the novel, but must extend to facilitating discussion opportunities and higher-order thinking skills.
- Learners must be taught register and that it is inappropriate to use a colloquial style in a formal literary essay.
- Place an emphasis on structure and style: no paragraphs and the use of sub-headings is unacceptable. Ensure that you teach the basics such as sentence structure and spelling.
- Teach learners to be concise.
- There were some “pre-learnt” (memorized essays) which did not quite answer the given question. This is a dangerous practice for learners to employ and reveals a lack of ability to apply critical thinking.

QUESTION 8: Contextual Question – *Animal Farm*

(a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

This question was mostly well-answered with a range from very poor answers to exceptional answers. The questions were straight-forward and well-balanced: if learners knew their work they could excel, while the students who struggle could pass.

(b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- Those learners who answered very poorly appeared to have no knowledge of the content of the novel (i.e. a lack of teaching and engagement with the text) or there was a language barrier. As this is a home language paper, learners are expected to have a high level of vocabulary.
- Learners must analyze the questions carefully in order not to provide overlap in their answers. For example, 8.6 required candidates to explain how the rhetorical questions contribute to the atmosphere in the particular scene, while 8.7 required learners to explain what the underlined words, “crept silently” convey about the animal’s feelings. 8.6 required a close reading of the rhetorical questions and an understanding of atmosphere. 8.7 required an interpretation of what the animals would be feeling if they crept away in silence. Many candidates could not distinguish between the two.
- Learners also floundered on question 8.8 (“*In your opinion, does Orwell succeed in conveying his message through the description of the pigs and the other animals in Extract B? Justify your response, taking into account that Animal Farm is a fable*”). Many ignored the “fable” aspect of the question and did not provide a sufficiently detailed response required by a 4 mark question.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teach all literary concepts as well as concepts such as “satire”, “irony”, “fable” and “allegory” in conjunction with the novel and not in isolation. For example, if you are explaining the concept of “propaganda”, do so with examples of how it is used in the novel.
- Teach learners how to analyse questions.
- Give learners practice at answering contextual questions. Make them read out their written answers and tell them where they would score marks or what their answer lacked. Many learners jot down brief points when answering work in class and then embroider on their answer verbally. They must practise writing an answer in full sentences.
- Encourage learners to read their set works more than twice.
- Explore all aspects of the novel: themes; characterisation; style; devices used; relevance.
- Advise learners to include points equivalent to the mark allocation per question.

(d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- Learners make faulty interpretations of the historical parallels and some dwell on that aspect too much at the expense of other issues in the novel.
- Learners cannot spell characters’ names, which is unforgivable.
- Avoid colloquialisms such as “gift of the gab”.
- Some learners write down everything vaguely related to the questions which results in long answers which frequently include irrelevant and incorrect details. These answers are frustrating to mark and inevitably cost the candidates marks. Learners must express themselves clearly and fully, but succinctly, according to the mark allocation.

e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Ensure that learners know and can spell terms relating to the set work. Some incorrect spellings included “propergada”, “gullable” and “minipulater”.
- Avoid showing the learners the film. If you do show it, discuss how it differs from the novel and ensure that they follow the plot of the novel.

QUESTION 9: Essay question: *Pride and Prejudice*

(a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

- The evidence pointed to this novel having been well-taught.
- Good learners performed very well in this question. They understood satire and the social class ideas, mentioned the characters, and even the weaker learners seemed to have a fair idea of how to answer the essay question.

(b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

The question was well answered. The weaker essays either did not go into sufficient detail or did not discuss the social class concept sufficiently.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Spend time analysing a variety of essay questions.
- Structure mock essays in groups.
- Hold discussions/debates on the class issues in the novel.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**
- As noted in (a), learners generally performed very well in this question.
 - Concepts and characters were understood.
 - Essays were structured.
- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**
Very few learners study this novel, but those who do generally perform well.

QUESTION 10: Contextual question: *Pride and Prejudice*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**
Learners performed well in this question, as they did in question 9.
- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**
- In question 10.1 (“*Why does Mr Bennet visit Mr Bingley?*”), learners did not grasp that Mr Bennet goes to Bingley on his own accord as a polite formality, and NOT to match-make his daughters, or on Mrs Bennet’s request.
 - Learners experienced difficulty with questions 10.4 and 10.6. In question 10.4, they battled to express the change in Darcy, or gave generalized answers with little or no reference to Darcy and/or Wickham. In question 10.6 (“*Discuss what the novel as a whole reveals about Darcy’s honour and credit*”) they did not understand what is meant by “honour and credit”.
- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**
- Ensure that learners are familiar with all vocabulary in the novel.
 - Work with as many contextual questions as possible: learners must write down full answers; let them read them out; tell them where marks would be assigned and what aspect of the question they might have overlooked.
- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**
- Questions 10.7 (“*Does this paragraph provide any evidence that Elizabeth is a selfish person? Justify your opinion*”) and 10.9 (“*If Darcy had witnessed this scene between Elizabeth and Lady Catherine, how do you think it would have influenced his attitude and feelings toward Elizabeth? Substantiate your response*”) were particularly good questions which demanded a fine reading of the text.
 - Question 10.8: (“*In your opinion, is Lady Catherine representative of the class-conscious society that Jane Austen satirises? Substantiate your answer.*”) Nobody mentioned that Lady Catherine was the only titled aristocrat, as was stated in the memorandum.
- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**
Although many teachers avoid choosing this novel, the learners who do have the opportunity to study it perform well and appear to benefit from the experience.

QUESTION 11: Essay Question: *The Great Gatsby*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

The performance varied from poor answers to those that scored 100%. Generally, learners would not address all aspects of the topic.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

Many learners confused the American dream with Gatsby's dream and focused on the latter. The question demanded a discussion of the way in which the American Dream was satirized. This required discussion of various characters who show the corruption of the dream. Many spoke about Gatsby, Daisy and Tom and overlooked others such as Jordan, the Wilsons, Nick and the party-goers, amongst others.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teachers must not focus on Gatsby's dream of Daisy alone but on the American dream in the context of the time.
- Give learners opportunities to practise writing literary essays in class. This should include analysing essay questions. Group work is a good vehicle for this as learners can discuss various ideas and substantiations.
- Encourage debates on the various themes.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- Those who are not English Home Language speakers are clearly identified through poor expression and lack of understanding of what the question is asking.
- How Fitzgerald satirizes the American Dream through *The Great Gatsby* is possibly too hard for Grade 12 level. Very few learners were able to talk about "the dream" and tended to focus on Gatsby alone.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Learners may not use abbreviations e.g. A.D. for "American Dream".
- Learners may not use the first names only of authors, i.e. they should not refer to "Scott" but to "Fitzgerald". (Likewise, this applies to Orwell, Shakespeare, Miller and Austen, too.)
- Underline the title e.g. The Great Gatsby. Do not talk about the novel as Gatsby (this refers to the character).
- Centres that have classes of second language English speakers doing English Home Language as a result of the subjects offered by the school, could possibly begin the texts in Grade 11 so that they are more familiar with them by the time of the final examination.

QUESTION 12: Contextual question: *The Great Gatsby*

(a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Not all questions were properly understood by the learners which affected their performance as these questions were only partly answered.

(b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- Q 12.3 (“Do you think there is anything ironic in Daisy’s appealing to Jordan? Justify your opinion”) fell outside the parameters of what is usually expected or of a Grade 12 learner’s range as Jordan’s ‘make-up’ is difficult for young learners to grasp. In fact several of the markers were not comfortable with answering why Daisy looked to Jordan for an answer and discussing the irony of this.
- Q 12.5 required candidates to place the excerpt in context. Many do not know how to place an excerpt in context and seem to rely on notes rather than interacting with the text.
- Q 12.6 (12.6.1 “Do you agree with Nick’s view as expressed in the sentence, ‘They’re a rotten crowd’? Motivate your answer. 12.6.2 “Explain why Nick says, ‘I’ve always been glad I said that’.) Learners appeared to interpret this as a question on Nick as opposed to a question focusing on Gatsby. The ambiguity in the question was unfortunate.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teach learners how to place a passage in context. For example, give a series of extracts and let them state what has come before and what will happen after the passage.
- Work with as many contextual questions as possible: learners must write down full answers; let them read them out; tell them where marks would be assigned and what aspect of the question they might have overlooked.

(d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- Those who are not English Home Language speakers are clearly identified through poor expression and lack of understanding of what the question is asking.

(e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Learners may not use abbreviations e.g. A.D. for “American Dream”.
- Learners may not use the first names only of authors, i.e. they should not refer to “Scott” but to “Fitzgerald”. (Likewise, this applies to Orwell, Shakespeare, Miller and Austen, too.)
- Underline the title e.g. The Great Gatsby. Do not talk about the novel as Gatsby (this refers to the character).
- Centres that have classes of second language English speakers doing English Home Language as a result of the subjects offered by the school, could possibly begin the texts in Grade 11 so that they are more familiar with them by the time of the final examination.

SECTION C: DRAMA

QUESTION 13: Essay Question - *Othello*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

The performance appeared to be centre-related, i.e. there were entire centres that performed poorly and others that performed well, showing the usual range of poor average and good answers. Also, learners in a centre would all show evidence of having been taught how to structure an essay, while those in another centre would not.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- When learners discussed Iago's "admirable qualities" (or "admiring" qualities as so many incorrectly stated), they tended to ignore the motives for his evil deeds. This is a case of answering half the essay and a lower mark would be awarded. Others tended to re-tell the story which also scored a lower mark than the essay which attempted to discuss the topic and extract and comment on the relevant information.
- The topic was more complex than what learners thought which led to aspects of the question being overlooked.
- Poorer essays showed a lack of textual substantiation, although the general impression is that there has been an improvement in this area from previous years.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Teach learners to use the present tense throughout their essay.
- Workshop essay writing in class.
- Emphasise reading in the lower grades so that learners are equipped to cope with a drama of this level.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- Some learners' answers stop mid-sentence which seems to indicate insufficient time. This is more likely poor time-management on the part of the candidate rather than the length of the paper.
- Some learners are not linguistically equipped to deal with the intricacies of a Shakespearian drama.
- Some learners had obviously learnt character studies off by heart. The question did not ask for a straightforward character study and pupils had difficulty adjusting to the specifics of the question.
- On the positive side, less pure story-telling was observed.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Emphasise that characters' names must be spelt correctly, correct punctuation, paragraphing and sentence structure is essential, and that register is always important.
- Learners must also avoid moralizing in the conclusion.
- It is not advisable to tell every learner to write the *Othello* essay. They must base that decision on their individual ability.

QUESTION 14: Contextual Question - *Othello*

(a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

There was a wide range of performance in this question, although certain sub-questions were very poorly answered. Generally, learners struggled to score 3/3 for 3 mark questions as they gave insufficient explanation.

(b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- 14.1 “‘I’ll go sell all my land.’ Account fully for Roderigo’s statement.”: Poorly answered – few learners scored the third mark.
- 14.2 “‘I hate the Moor.’ What reasons does Iago provide for hating Othello?” Othello’s blackness was given by candidates for the third mark, but this was not credited.
- 14.6 “‘a, hardness to dissemble!’ Comment on the irony in context of Othello’s thinking that it is necessary to ‘dissemble’.” Poorly answered. The irony of Othello’s pretending was completely misunderstood.
- 14.7 “‘This argues fruitfulness...exercise devout.’ Discuss how the language used in these lines conveys Othello’s attitude to Desdemona.” Learners battled to discuss the language in relation to attitude.
- 14.8 “‘Critically comment on the appropriateness of these two references to that which is hellish.’” Poorly answered. Learners did not link the second extract with Desdemona and therefore managed a maximum of 2/4.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Learners must interact with the text and read the language carefully.
- Do as many contextual questions with your learners as possible.
- Emphasise to your learners that they must use the texts given to answer the questions. Often they are guided by the question but ignore the text and go off on a tangent.

(d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- Some learners do not write in full sentences.
- Many answers lack substantiation.

(e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

- Learners must be taught what is required of them if they are to: “critically comment” (14.8); “discuss how language conveys attitude” (14.7); “account for” (14.1).
- If learners are instructed: “Discuss the extent to which you agree with Desdemona’s assessment of Othello.” (14.5), they must first state in their own words what her assessment is, and then state if they agree with it and why. They must also be taught that a mixed response could be valid, but that whatever opinion they give, they must be able to justify it clearly from the play.

QUESTION 15: Essay Question – *The Crucible*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Learners generally performed well – most passed this question. There is evidence of a definite improvement in the way essays are structured.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

Weaker essays included too much story-telling in un-paragraphed format.

- (c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

A focus on the dramatic aspects of a play as opposed to the story aspect of a novel would definitely make learners more comfortable with this genre. Read the text in parts in class; role play sections; hold class discussions in the form of the court section of the play.

- (d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

- The contextual passages in question 16 allowed the learners to write a reasonable essay which obviously benefited some candidates.
- Some learners cannot distinguish between the issue of witchcraft versus a witch hunt.
- Names of characters are incorrectly spelt. Some confuse the characters with each other.

- e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

Learners are to be encouraged to manage their time correctly: since this is the last question/section on the paper, some candidates did not complete this question.

QUESTION 16: Contextual Question – *The Crucible*

- (a) **General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?**

Learners generally performed well and passed this question. The trend in this section was that those who answered this question (the contextual question) tended to score a higher mark since the questions are a guide to the required response. However, this is true of the novel section as well as of the drama.

- (b) **Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.**

- Words such as “consistent” (16.3), “denunciation” (16.4), “validity” (16.5) were not understood by all learners.
- Learners answers to 16.5 (“*Account for the argument that occurs between Proctor and Elizabeth at this point in the play.*”) and 16.6 (“*Examine the following questions... What do these questions reveal about the relationship between Proctor and Elizabeth? Substantiate your response.*”) showed overlap.

(c) **Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning**

- Continually extend the vocabulary of your learners. Use a high level of vocabulary in the worksheets, tests and examination papers that you give your learners in order to make them familiar with possible vocabulary used in questions.
- Teach your learners to check their work. If they see overlap in their answers, they must re-read the questions carefully to distinguish what each one requires.

(d) **Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners**

It was pleasing to note that generally learners seemed to be adequately prepared in terms of the background to the drama.

e) **Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.**

The feeling is that this play is challenging and highly rewarding to teach and to mark. It is also topical for the Eastern Cape where vigilante justice is rife.

SIGNATURE OF CHIEF MARKER: _____



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