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NSC 2016 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

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| SUBJECT | English Home Language |
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| PAPER | 1 |
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| DATE OF EXAMINATION: | 26 October 2016 | DURATION: | 2 Hours |
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SECTION 1: (General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

A candidate-friendly question paper with accessible and interesting texts that are pertinent to any Grade 12 candidate. *The crisis faced by youth, gesturing in communication, safety on our roads and poor service delivery* are topical and relevant issues. Question One was generally well answered by proficient English Home Language learners and as has been the trend in the past three years, weaker candidates struggle with higher order questions requiring a comment/discussion/justification/substantiation. Candidates fail to earn the third mark as a clear inability to demonstrate clarity of thought is revealed in answers. Wholesale lifting from the text also reveals an inadequacy to comment/discuss/comment/ substantiate.

The summary was well answered, even by weaker learners, as they managed to lift the relevant quotations. This follows the trend of the past three years where weaker learners score 30% in the comprehension and amass 70% in the summary. Lifting without comprehension is not credited in Question One, whereas a lack of vocabulary does not negatively impact performance in the summary.

Questions Three and Four were not well answered by weaker learners as they are clearly not armed with the basic techniques used by an advertiser/cartoonist. It must be stressed that if these areas are reinforced through the use of past examination papers, it can only benefit candidates.

It is encouraging to note that in centres where basic grammar skills were

taught even weaker candidates scored in Question Five. Candidates must be encouraged to adhere to the guideline that time spent on a question must be related to the mark allocation. Poor time management leads to a rushed attempt of Question Five and marks are unnecessarily lost.

SECTION 2: Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions
(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question on a separate sheet).

QUESTION 1

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

| Average mark from the sample of 100: | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| SUB-QUESTION | TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED | AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE |
| 1. | Comprehension | 14.21 |

- 1.1 to 1.3 as entry level questions were generally well answered and instilled a sense of confidence in candidates who managed to answer in their own words.
- The **disparity** in 1.2 is mentioned, but **effect** is not discussed.
- The explanation of '**catalysts for change**' is managed; however, relating the meaning in the context of the **paragraph** is not answered.
- The inclusion of statistics for 1.4 is not understood in its entirety. Learners fail to refer to the statistics in relation to the loss of life through violence in the **paragraph**.
- Weaker candidates were penalised for merely lifting the appropriate phrase/clause.
- 1.5 was interpreted on a literal level by weaker candidates. An explanation is given by quoting from the passage.
- 1.6 presented a challenge to many candidates as the contrast was mentioned in own words/lifting but the impact of the contrast was not explained.
- In 1.7 candidates focused on the word 'limbo' which was misunderstood.
- 1.8 required a **critical comment** for the full complement of 3 marks. However, candidates were guilty of lifting verbatim from the paragraph or adapting the quote. A **no response** reflected the popular belief related to the importance of education. Hence it interfered with the demands of the question.
- For 1.9 learners have not consolidated the basic idea that **rhetorical questions** are placed strategically to engage the reader: think about issues, take action and relate it to the context.
- Poor vocabulary resulted in many weaker candidates choosing

'nonchalant' in 1.10 since they understand **committed** and **relaxed**.

Apathetic/Apathy does not fall into the learner's scope of experience.

- Learners do not understand '**irony**' and there is a gross misinterpretation in 1.11 resulting in answers like: 'Is that any young person can make a difference' and also giving a personal response.
- Generally in 1.12 candidates earned a maximum of two marks for concentrating on the content of the text only, but failed to link it to style.

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

- Learners paraphrase the text without understanding what the question requires :
- 1.1 It is not known whether to consider individuals between the age 15 to 25 or 12 to 35 as youth, hence it is difficult to define what youth is.
- Learners do not focus on instruction words in the question.
- 1.6 and 1.8 are questions which require a comment/critical comment
'The youth living in less-developed countries have less opportunities than the youth living in more developed countries which shows us it is not a good thing.' **(1.6)**
'This suggests that even if you are well educated and skilled enough job opportunities are hard to find.' **(1.8)**
Both these answers just touch on the surface: contrast in 1.6 and the definition of panacea in relation to education. The impact and critical comment is overlooked because of an inability to see that a three-mark question requires insight.
- In 1.7 learners focused on the word '**limbo**' which was misunderstood.
'No because the use of informal language in the text is unexpected and is about reality and the situation.'
- For 1.9 many candidates comment on the content of the rhetorical questions. *'Yes, young people can become dynamic contributors to.....'*
- Candidates are unable to focus on visual clues and merely retell what they see happening in the text. *'The way the youth looks so relaxed and how the newspaper reads, Only 1 in 4 young people to vote.'*
- Learners need to understand that for a mark allocation of 4 in 1.12 depth is required in the answer and not mere statements like:
'Text A gives us information that we need to better ourselves. It gives statistics to inform us.' OR *'Text A because it gives greater details of the crises the youth faces.'*

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

- The concept of **in context/in relation to a paragraph** must be drilled. Responses that are drawn from personal experiences must be discouraged unless the question requires that.

- **Critically comment** is repeated as an instruction word and the answer requires insight, analysis and clear substantiation.
- Simply repeating the question will not earn you marks.
- Learners must be alert to higher order questions that have two/three tiers to them.

Comment on the **impact** of the **contrast**.

Comment critically.....

- Vocabulary must be improved: must be done on a weekly basis.
* New words plus meanings can be sourced from the literature texts.
* Spelling tests on a weekly basis for GET phase.
- Open-ended questions must be highlighted and the tiered-approach must be taught.
- The content must be used to validate statements.

1.12 *'Text A has a greater impact on me because the statistics highlight the extent of the violence experienced by the youth.'* **As a response, this is too shallow for a mark allocation of 4.**

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

- The poor vocabulary of learners is evident in 1.3 where 'catalysts for change' had to be explained. Reference was made to physical science/cyclists/ caterpillars/ Catholics.
- Looser/loser commonly confused.
- Confusion about migration/urbanization/mobility.
Confusing 'apathetic' with 'sympathetic'

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

- Skim the entire passage quickly to get the gist of what it is about.
- Then read the questions carefully and reread (scan) to find references to the questions.
- Most comprehension questions follow the **order** of the passage, so you can find the answers in the same order as that in which the questions appear.
- Pay attention to line and paragraph references.
- Look at the mark allocation for each question, which gives you an idea of how long your answer should be.
- Use full sentences when answering.
- Copy the examiner's number system exactly.
- Read through your answer to ensure that it makes sense.
- Avoid blind lifting from the texts.
- Leave a line between one answer and the next.
- Write neatly. The markers cannot give you marks if they cannot read your answer.
- Teach learners to paraphrase and sift without adding their own

information to the text.

- Teach learners that a mixed response is possible.
- Learners must be taught to insert a “but” or a “yet” in answers that require a comment on **irony** as they will then be aware of the contradiction implied by the word “irony”. It is also a good idea to separate “sarcasm” – intended to be cruel - from “irony”.
- Highlight or underline the task words to be certain of what you are being asked to do.
- Terminology used in questions must be taught to achieve better marks:
Discuss: Present an argument, express an opinion.
Comment: Say something valid/have an opinion/analyse.
Comment critically: Show learners how to focus on a multi-layered question.

A discussion should contain valid, logical deductions.

Substantiate: Give reasons for your response.

Suggest why: Say why

Tone: The emotion behind the “voice”/expression/words

Attitude: How the writer feels about the subject at hand

QUESTION 2

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

| Average mark from the sample of 100: | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| SUB-QUESTION | TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED | AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE |
| 2. | Summary | 7.45 |

The topic was extremely accessible so learners fared generally well when they followed the instruction of extracting seven points related to **why hand gestures are a crucial element in communication**. Most candidates were able to quote at least five relevant points from the passage as they grasped the concept of how gesturing is a crucial element in communication.

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

- The nature of the topic did not allow for drawing from own experiences.
- When learners ignore the instruction and write in point form, the second mark is lost if the point contains two facts.
- Learners exceed the word count.
- Blind lifting from the extract.
- Some points become convoluted when an attempt is made to put in own words.

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

- Make sure that all points are relevant and on the set topic.
- Instructions must be followed: a fluent paragraph is required and **not** point form; yet, this instruction is overlooked.
- Guide candidates on how to do paragraph summaries within the stipulated word count.
- Learners must be taught to bracket/highlight salient points in the passage and work from there. All rough work must be cancelled.

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

Extremely weak candidates could not express themselves in their own words.

- 'Hand gestures develop a strong vocabulary.'
- 'Using hand gestures may give information that may be forgotten in the speech.'

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

- Follow the instructions exactly.
- Write a **paragraph**.
- Repetition, listing examples and padding are to be avoided.
- Do not write more than the required number of words.
- Draw a line through your rough draft to make sure it does not get marked.
- Where the topic appears to be complicated, learners need to re-read the passage before they start, so that they have a proper grasp of the content.

Use correct grammar, spelling and sentence construction so that your summary can be understood.

QUESTION 3

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

| Average mark from the sample of 100: : | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| SUB- QUESTION | TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED | AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE |
| 3. | Analysing advertising | 4.52 |

This question was well answered by candidates who could clearly see BMW as the sponsor of the advertisement and a proponent of road safety. Weaker candidates failed to score the full three marks for 3.2 and 3.4. Here learners were unable to connect the text, visual and advertiser's message.

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

- For 3.1 no elaboration earned only 1 mark: 'BMW is endorsing the advertisement'.
- 3.2 and 3.4 caused confusion as learners had to **discuss** and **analyse** whether the combination of **picture** and **words worked**.
- For 3.2 learners merely quoted from the text: 'You can't count on a text message to reveal what's happening on the road...' The link between the statistics/accidents (**text**) and the driver's obscured view because of the cellphone in his hand(**visual**), conveying the message of irresponsibility causing accidents, was lost on many candidates.
- For 3.3 a mere paraphrasing of the slogan was given by many candidates. 'You must Stop texting so that the accidents can stop.' This is merely paraphrasing the slogan and not identifying the techniques used by the advertiser in order to make the message effective. A clear discussion of the effectiveness of the slogan will flow from the identification of the technique used by the advertiser: Repetition of '**STOP**' is a warning of danger. The **rhyming/sound devices** used in '**texts**' and '**wrecks**' emphasises the message that **texts**(texting)lead to **wrecks**(accidents)
- 3.4 required a **critical discussion** of both elements (**image** and **text**) in conveying the advertiser's message. Here learners had to focus on specifics in the image of the irresponsible driver texting while driving and how the text is strategically positioned over the driver's face, Then conclude what the advertiser's message is : A clear warning is conveyed that texting while driving is dangerous and causes accidents.

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

- Learners must be exposed to more advertisements from magazines/newspapers/past years' papers. **What is the advertiser's intention/purpose and how is this message conveyed through the image and the text?**
- 'The slogan attracts the reader's attention' is **vague** and **elaboration** is required.
The learner must ask **how does it attract my attention? Which techniques are employed?**
 - **An eye-catching image or picture**
 - **Catchy headlines**
 - **An attractive layout**
 - **Fonts**
- **Linguistic Techniques**
 - **Punchy headlines and captions**
 - **Puns**
 - **Repetition**

- Cliché's
- Alliteration
- Opinion stated as fact
- Rhetorical questions
- Slogan
- Emotive language
- Exaggeration
- Jargon

Regular practice in identification of these techniques is vital for an improvement on questions in visual literacy.

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

- 3.1 Learners were influenced by prior knowledge of the BMW brand: *'Apparently the BMW has the highest rate of accidents that occur.'*
- 3.3 *'It attracts the viewer's attention that if stopping texting which is the main problem becomes successful then less problems to deal with.'* A paraphrase of the slogan which does not touch on techniques or the effectiveness of conveying the advertiser's message.

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

- Aim at full answers and deeper analysis to get full marks.
- **Style must be taught.**
- Tone (informal, chatty, simple, verbose)
- Diction
- Register (appropriate use of language in a particular situation)
- Colloquial language, slang and jargon
- Verbosity, redundancy and tautology
- Remember that not all advertisements advertise **products and are commercial advertisements**. There are also **social consciousness and public service advertisements** and it is a very good idea to expose learners to a wide range of these.
- Remember to link the text and visual to show how they complement each other.

QUESTION 4

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

| Average mark from the sample of 100 : | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| SUB-QUESTION | TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED | AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE |
| 4. | Understanding other aspects of the media | 5.02 |

A wide range in marks scored in this question as stronger candidates' marks ranged from 7-10 and weaker candidates 1-4. Weaker candidates struggle with the concepts of **attitude**, **impact**, **humour** and **effectiveness of technique** to get the cartoonist's message across.

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

- 4.1 'Shocked' is a popular incorrect response. This means that candidates **do not understand the policeman's attitude in context**.
- 4.2 Often candidates **misinterpret the cartoon completely**: 'The police officers actually stole the car' / 'The cartoonist is trying to teach us a lesson that patience is a virtue!'
- 4.3 Inability to pick up on **technique** used by cartoonist: 'The difference in frame styles draws attention to the frame that is different' - a vague answer that says nothing.
- Weaker candidates did not score here as they merely paraphrased what was happening from frames 1-3 and were unable to pick up on the figurative meaning (**introspection**).

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

Cartoon analysis needs to be taught with many varied examples so that learners realise that they need to focus on every detail.

- Facial expressions, body language, and speech convey attitude - learners must be able to describe, explain and say what they imply and show.
- When asked to refer to a picture/cartoon/graphic, learners must be taught to identify visual clues/details and then be able to make pertinent comments. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 demand an observation on **technique/impact** and a **logical deduction**.
- The use of 'good'/'positive', 'bad'/'negative' to describe attitude must be totally discouraged.
- Learners need to be able to recognize **humour** and to discuss it in detail

by focusing on literal and figurative language, facial expressions, hand gestures, background details, clothing, position of characters relative to one another and any other details, no matter how minor.

- Pay attention to style of language, omission of frame/words.

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

- 4.3 had a variety of responses.
- Many responses referred to the fact that the frame is removed to create 'a different world or focus' /The frame is removed for 'emphasis' /'Garfield has such a huge ego it cannot fit into the frame.' /'No words and no frame create an anti-climax.'
- No discussion related to the effectiveness of the technique.

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

It is essential that learners are able to recognise and be able to use the following figurative devices.

- Alliteration: **repetition** of **consonants** to create an **effect**.
(He **cl**asped the **cr**ag with **cr**ooked hands.)
- Assonance: repetition of vowel sounds to create an effect.
(STOP THE **TEXTS**. STOP THE **WRECKS**)
- Onomatopoeia: words which convey the sound of what they are describing.
(The **clip-clop** of horses' hooves)

Denotation, Connotation and Implied Meaning

- **Denotation:** the dictionary definition of a word
- **Connotation:** The act or process of connoting is the set of associations implied or signified in addition to its literal meaning.
- **Implied meanings:** a meaning that is not explicitly stated. It is indicated by connotation though not expressed directly.

QUESTION 5

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

| Average mark from the sample of 100: | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| SUB-QUESTION | TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED | AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE |
| 5. | Using language correctly | 3 |

Weak candidates coped fairly well but struggled with 5.3, 5.5 and 5.7. Stronger candidates managed to score 100% in this question as they were familiar with **concord, misrelated participle, malapropism and tautology**.

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

Textual editing is not taught enough and this is evident in the candidates' inability to pick up on a concord error. Inadequate vocabulary is a glaring shortcoming.

- 5.1 'always' most common but every time/frequently/recurring/permanently given as synonyms.
- 5.2 Dashes are used to create suspense/give an explanation.
- 5.3 Clear unfamiliarity with the misrelated participle led to garbled and jumbled versions of the sentence.
- 5.4 The use of '**parlayed**' caused confusion for the weaker candidates so '*paralysed*'/ '*played*'/ '*portrayal*' were some common errors committed by learners.
- 5.5 **Performance was**/or **were** changed to '**is**'.
- 5.6 '*The hyperbole **was ramped** by us.*'
- 5.7 '*deranged*' most common incorrect response or '*very good*'/ '*great*'/ '*amazing*'/ '*awesome*'
- 5.8 '*Step away from the piano*'/ '*One's face cannot leak*' because of not knowing what a subordinate clause entails.
- 5.10 '*Just give up the performance*'/ '*Do not go to the performance if it is not for you.*'/ '*You cannot get rid of an obsession as it is an obsession.*'

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

- Terminology must be revised
- Synonyms/homonyms/homophones
- Punctuation
- Misrelated/dangling participle
- Malapropism
- Concord
- Active/Passive voice
- Tautology/Redundancy
- Adverbial/adjectival clauses
- Parts of speech
- Ambiguity
- Split infinitive
- Comma splice error
- Prefixes/suffixes
- Spelling rules
- Sentence Structure

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

- Learners do not follow instructions.
- 1.1 clearly asks for ONE word; if the correct answer comes second, it is not accepted.
- Spelling is a major problem-experience identified as the malapropism is identified, yet spelt incorrectly.
- 5.9 '*pretentious*' for pretentious.

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

- Although only 10 marks can be directly earned from teaching grammar, it must be done. A good understanding and application of grammar basics improve language expression in general.
- Encourage learners to manage their time carefully so that they can finish Question Five. Alternatively, suggest that they answer Question Five (but in its sequence) before tackling the time-consuming questions.
- If textual editing is practised regularly, the learner can earn full marks in this section.