Caribbean Examination Council

English A

School Based Assessment

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# Plan of Investigation

The topic of my research is, “The Impact of crime and violence on children in Jamaica.” This topic interest me because I am concerned about the well-being of these children and as a result, I will investigate how it affects their behavior. The research will benefit my comprehension skills, writing skills and vocabulary. This will help me to analyze the material, express myself more and improve my usage of words. The materials to support this research are Jamaica Gleaner, Jamaica Observer and a YouTube video. These materials will give me better insight of how crime and violence affect children.

# Reflection 1

My first piece is from the article, Jamaica Gleaner titled “Haunted By Crime - Jamaican Children Unable To Shake The Memories Of Coming Face-To-Face With Criminals” by (Wilson, 2018), is very interesting. A quote from the article stated, "It's like every teacher told me that my attitude was changing, and I was dropping back, but I didn't really tell them why.” (Wilson, 2018) This is in line with my conclusion that crime and violence can affect a child’s behavior negatively.

The second source is from an article, Jamaica Observer titled “PAIN & FEAR” by (Francis, 2019) supports this. The article notes “Many of us are being sexually and emotionally abused...” (Francis, 2019) All in all, children are fearful and afraid of crime and violence. This has helped me to understand that crime and violence is very detrimental to a child’s mental and physical health.

Finally my last source, which is a YouTube video that is titled “How Domestic Violence Impacts Children | Child Anxiety” by (Howcast, 2015) is very informative. A quote from the video which states, “They may regress, they may fight…” (Howcast, 2015) I learned that it depends on the child’s personality and the severity of the situation that determines what behavior is displayed. This video helped me to understand that children may struggle to communicate their experiences from crime and violence.

# Reflection 2

First of all, each piece of material was written using a different organizational pattern. The article by (Wilson, 2018) uses cause and effect with informal language in it. The line “The world is a very cruel place” (line 40) is because as a result of the crime, it has affected him into thinking negatively. The article by (Francis, 2019) is problem and solution as stated in the line “Stricter enforcement of laws for those who abuse children (line 64). The video by (Howcast, 2015) uses a lot of illustration. She provided a series of examples and ideas about situations of domestic violence that affects children throughout the video.

Additionally, each piece of material was written using a different tone. The tone identified in the first article is serious. This is seen in the use of words such as “traumatic” (line 2),”spared” (line 39) and the phrase “too corrupt” (line 82). The tone of the second article is tragic that is stated in the line “Children had either experienced or witnessed violence” (line 27). The tone felt that way because of how she wrote about the experiences of the victims. The tone in the video is pragmatic. She speaks of great knowledge about human action and thought that happens in domestic abuse.

Finally, I observed in two of my articles that the use of language has the same diction in them while for the video is different. The articles use the phrase “according to” and the word “research” to show that their sources are reliable. The video uses the words “influence” and “perception” in it. This makes the writer seem like an expert in her field.

# Reflection 3

The English SBA has been a new but helpful experience. I have learned to work better in a group and to look out for each other during the process. As a result, I can undoubtedly say that the SBA journey made me grown more accustomed to working together as a team, to cite my sources and to be more analytical.

Firstly, the SBA helped me to develop the essential skill of working together in a group. Through teamwork, I was able to help my peer’s portfolio and also to improve my own. I learned to corporate with my group members and to listen to them. My idea about what it takes to work in a group became clearer to me and I believe I have matured because of this.

Secondly, the SBA made me learn to cite my sources. It has helped me to become aware of the value of the sources that I use during my research. I have learned to credit people whenever I research for my work. As a result, I have learned to properly cite the author of interest in order to avoid plagiarism.

Thirdly, the SBA improved my ability to analyze the materials. I learned to look at things from different angles because of tone, which led to the purpose of the piece. I also had to analyze the use of language in my piece. This has made me interpret the material better. I had to demonstrate creativity in how I wrote my work and I believe it will benefit me in future events.

# Written Report

The theme investigated by the group was “Crime and Violence”. The topics investigated under the theme included, “Causes of Crime and Violence”, “The Benefits of Community Policing”, “The Impact of Crime and Violence on Children”, “How Do Social Programs Reduce Crime and Violence” and “Effects of Crime and Violence”. In order to complete this report, we used online meetings, presentations and debated with each other. Therefore, we were eventually able to choose three articles for the analysis of the language and organizational pattern for our group report.

Firstly, our group began the process by having online meetings. We commenced the meeting by discussing about what kind of artifacts that we would want to use in the report. We then proceeded to present our favorite articles to each other. Afterwards, we debated and narrowed down to which three articles were the most suitable ones to use. The group decided that the report would focus on language use and organizational pattern for the articles. So, the article entitled “PAIN AND FEAR” (Francis, 2019), the poem entitled“Knights in Blue” (Higgins, 2019) and the song entitled “CRIME AND VIOLENCE” (Kamarla, 2018) were chosen.

Secondly, both the song and poem has a similar use of language while for the article is different. The diction in the article by (Francis, 2019) used words like “according to” and “research” to show that their source is of a reliable news article. The register used throughout the song by (Kamarla, 2018) is informal. The evidence found was “Mi tired a di crime and di violence”. The poem by (Higgins, 2019) also uses informal register in it. This is shown in the line, “Before the devil threatens your all”.

Thirdly, the writers’ organization observed in both the song and article are similar while the poem is different. The article shows problem and solution in the line “Stricter enforcement of laws for those who abuse children.” The song describes a young man that partakes in violent acts and the solution is that he was convinced by his mother to get a proper job and stop idling. The poem uses cause and effect in it. It is evident in the lines “Adults naïve as young children” and “Looking down at knights in blue”.

To conclude, our group was able to use effective teamwork and keenly review the articles while maintaining each member’s unique opinion on our theme. Based on the articles we noted that when language and organizational pattern are used, then effective communication is guaranteed to take place.

# Plan for Oral Presentation

Format: Speech

Genre: Expository Speech

Title: Children are suffering in Jamaica

Justification of Genre: The reason why I have chosen this genre is because I prefer to express my thoughts in a logical and factual manner.

Source of Inspiration: Based on discussions with my group members, I decided that an expository speech is most suitable for me.

Literary Inspiration: Jamaica Gleaner, Jamaica Observer and YouTube video

Language Used: Formal Register, Cause and Effect, Illustration

Summary: Crime and violence can affect children lives negatively.

# Jamaica Gleaner

Abigail Sinclair\* was only 13 years old the first time she stared down the barrel of a gun, and if that experience wasn't traumatic enough, she had a similar encounter a year later.

The teenager was home with her family in their St Ann community when a group of men broke in and held them up with guns. She watched as they gun-butted her stepfather until he bled and roughed up her mother. One then turned the gun on her and asked how old she was.

"It was the first time I had a gun pointed at me. I was getting so afraid that I couldn't speak because I was afraid that maybe their hand would pull the trigger, and that would be the last of me, so I began to pray, and I began to trust God that He would pull me through in that situation," Abigail told **The Sunday Gleaner**.

The men relieved her family of cash and a car that night, and for a long time after, everyone was on edge including her.

"It impacted me so badly. It's like every teacher told me that my attitude was changing, and I was dropping back, but I didn't really tell them why.

"My mother didn't want me to go anywhere, like, to visit any family, because she was scared and she wanted me by her side," shared Abigail.

Just as her family was beginning to pick up the pieces, the gunmen struck again a few days before Christmas. Her mother has since installed an alarm system at their house, hoping that it will ward off a third robbery attempt. But while the teenager feels more secure, this security measure has created other issues.

"It goes off sometimes, and you hear the noise and it wakes you up, so it's kind of hard. When I go to school, the first class is not really bad, but when it comes to the second and third class, I want to sleep," she said.

Abigail was among several students in attendance at a 'Youth Talk' event hosted by UNICEF in collaboration with the Ashe Company at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on International Children's Day last Wednesday.

Among a roomful of more than 120 students from schools across the island, Abigail did not have any distinguishing features that would indicate that she had been a victim of crime and violence, but neither did the three other students who shared their stories with **The Sunday Gleaner**.

**FACING THE GUN**

All had faced the gun at one point in their life.

St Jago High School student Rodje Blake\* was 14 years old when two men broke into the house he and his aunt share in a middle-income gated scheme in St Catherine. The men pointed guns at them before searching their house.

"I was shocked because I was wondering how they came in. One of them was talking to me a way, and I kind of reacted, and he released the safety off the gun, but my auntie was telling him to calm down," Rodje recounted.

His life was spared, but the youngster learnt a lesson that night that he feels will remain with him for a lifetime. "The world is a very cruel place."

Sixteen-year-old Trevor Campbell\* knows just how cruel the world is as for several nights, he has had to hide under his bed while warring factions in his western St Andrew community trade bullets.

"Most times, you can't come out at nights when shot a fire. Most times, you are in your house hungry and you can't come out to go to the shop to buy food or nothing," lamented Trevor.

There are several things that go through his mind as he tries to safeguard himself and his younger sister under the bed, but the thing that features most prominently in his thoughts is the safety of his parents.

"My mother and father come in late, so most times, I am worrying about them and wondering if anything a go really happen to them," said Trevor, who admitted that he has also been a perpetrator of violence.

"One time I used to really follow badness. Mi used to never really go school, and me smoke weed, but then I noticed that when you do those things and idle out your time, when you get older and your parents kick you out, that not going to really help you," declared Trevor.

Earlier this year, he spent three days in lock-up after the police found him in the company of another teenager who had a gun. Trevor didn't think twice when his friend came to him with the gun and told him that he was going for the youth who "dissed" his little cousin.

"You just don't want to be the one that is left out. Most times, you are in the house and there is nothing to do and your parents are not home a lot, and you don't really get much attention," he said.

That was not the first time Trevor was getting into trouble as he admitted that he had been involved in several fights at school.

"I was in class one day and a boy came and just started to chuck me, literally. I hid a knife in the bathroom at school the day before, so I went in there for it and came back out and said, 'If you trouble me again, I am going to stab you and kill you'. He thought it was a joke, and so I dipped into my waist for the knife and swing at him, but my friends hold mi back," recounted the lanky lad.

According to UNICEF'S U-report, 74 per cent of more than 3,000 Jamaican students who were polled in September said they are worried about violence in or around their school.

When asked who they feared the most on their school compound, eight per cent said teachers, 34 per cent said students, and 54 per cent said intruders.

"The place nah run right," said 17-year-old Patrick Thompson\*, who lives in Waterhouse in western St Andrew.

The firebombing of several houses in his community has made the news in recent times, and he witnessed the shooting of a man who called for peace.

In recent days, he has seen more security patrols in his community, which he welcomes with some reservations.

"The system too corrupt miss, because some of the police are on the bad man side," said a resigned Patrick.

\*Names changed to protect the identities of the children.

# Jamaica Observer

“A lot of children in Jamaica are dealing with a lot of pain.”

Those were the words of 10-year-old Keino King, who yesterday, along with seven-year-old Ngozi Wright, her twin brother Tafari, and 18-year-old Shaneille Hall, addressed the nation's Parliament in an unprecedented session on violence against children, ahead of today's observation of the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The UNCRC is a legally binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

Together, the four youngsters painted a grim picture before legislators of the reality of scores of children across the country, 46 of whom were murdered last year. Already, 41 have been killed between January 1 and November 14 this year, according to UNICEF Jamaica. One out of four students aged 13-15 is bullied, while one in four adolescent girls has experienced sexual violence.

“Our fear is based on the heartbreaking reality [that] many of us are being bullied. Many of us are being beaten. Many of us are being sexually and emotionally abused, and we are being murdered. This violence started in the days of slavery and to this day it continues. So I ask you, what are you doing to help break the cycle?” Keino asked.

The child shared the experience of some of his peers who were among 300 children from three parishes who participated in town hall sessions over the past three months discussing violence against children.

Among the stories were reports of children being violently disciplined; children witnessing crimes, including murder; children being sexually abused by people close to them; and children living in the same space with paedophiles.

“These are only [some] out of the hundreds of experiences that were shared by children just in the last three months. At every one of the sessions most of the children had either experienced or witnessed violence. Research from around the world shows that this kind of trauma can have negative effects on all aspects of a child's development and it can have a lasting impact. Children who have been traumatised by violence have higher risks of school drop-out, drug abuse, depression, diabetes, heart disease, and involvement with violence and crime.

“I don't want to live in a Jamaica where the children are so hurt by violence that they grow up to hurt themselves or to hurt other people. Do you?” the young boy let out to rousing applause from the members of the Lower House.

In her address, Ngozi shared the frustration of her peers with the House, declaring love for the country but disdain for the violence meted out to children.

“We hate the violence that is making children so afraid; the violence that is taking their lives. We are very concerned about what is happening to our children and what [may] happen to your children,” Ngozi said.

Along the same lines, Tafari expressed fear about being in spaces expected to be safe for children.

“Honourable adults, listen to us, please. Many of us are afraid to go to school, afraid to go home, afraid to go outside in our communities. We live in fear that we will be the next victims of violence,” the child said.

Hall, who lost both parents at a young age, relayed to Parliament a painful story of a life of sexual abuse by a close relative.

The young woman told Government and Opposition members that her abuse began at age five and lasted for approximately four years.

She remained silent about the abuse until age 10. Court proceedings ensued but eventually fizzled.

The ordeal destroyed her, she explained.

“Imagine if your daughter or your son is silently living with a nightmare like this?” she asked.

The four, having consulted with children through the town hall sessions, outlined the following:

Children want to be heard: There was a very strong appeal for decision-makers to consult with children on a regular basis to learn more about what they are experiencing in order to guide the development of relevant laws, programmes, and policies.

Children want parents to get help so they can be better parents: Children asked for more parenting education to take place within and outside their communities. They asked specifically for parents to be taught about alternative ways to discipline children, instead of corporal punishment.

Children want stricter enforcement of laws for those who abuse children: Many children do not feel confident that people who commit violence against children are being prosecuted.

Children want better relationships with the security forces: There were many recommendations for a stronger presence of security forces in communities, including regular walk-throughs. Children expressed their hope for creating more trust.

Children want to see an end to the flow of illegal guns and weapons: Children are very concerned about gun violence and many asked for guns to be banned.

Children want specific initiatives to be implemented: Launch a national anti-bullying campaign; implement a toll-free, 24-hour counselling service.

# YouTube video

How Domestic Violence Impacts Children | Child Anxiety

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-KNpZeczQk>

# Reference

Article #1

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20181125/haunted-crime-jamaican-children-unable-shake-memories-coming-face-face>

Article #2

<http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/we-re-in-pain-and-fearful-children-tell-legislators_180192>

YouTube # 1

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