



ZIMBABWE SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

ORDINARY LEVEL EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 2 (4005/2)

NOVEMBER 2022 SESSION

EXAMINERS' REPORT

1.0 Preamble

This report presents an overview of the candidates' performance in the November 2022 English Language (4005/2) examinations.

The purpose of the report is to give feedback to stakeholders on candidates' strengths and weaknesses as noted during marking in a bid to improve future candidates' performance. It is hoped that this feedback will inform teaching, learning and assessment.

1.1. GENERAL COMMENTS

Candidates were expected to answer questions based on a narrative passage entitled: 'Tragedy at the Dargans' Place'. The passage tested the candidates' ability to read for meaning and answer questions testing a variety of comprehension skills. Generally, candidates from urban centres and boarding schools acquitted themselves exceptionally well, with several of them scoring 20/20 in the summary question. On the other hand, most rural centres performed badly, with some candidates failing to score even a point in the summary question.

Candidates are advised to read the text and all questions carefully before attempting to answer any questions. Although candidates will be directed to certain paragraphs when answering the questions, it is always important to first read the whole text in order to get a general idea of the content of the text. Some questions actually require candidates to use information from different parts of the text not just one paragraph.

The section B of the O level English paper 2 tests candidates' knowledge and application of the various parts of speech and their variants. The candidates' performance in this section of the paper indicated some glaring gaps in their knowledge of language structures. The

majority of the candidates across the divide failed the questions on homonyms and punctuation marks - question 4 (d) and 4 (e), respectively. Candidates did fairly well on the following questions in this section: homophones [4 (a)], opposites [4(b)] and adjectives [[4 (c).

THE PASSAGE

The passage: 'Tragedy at the Dargans' Place,' was accessible to the candidates as it was relatively clear and easy to understand. The short paragraphs were an advantage to the candidates as this enabled them to easily identify answers. Use of direct speech in the passage was a welcome change which should awaken teachers on the need to effectively teach learners to handle such structures in both their writings and comprehension reading.

2.0. QUESTION BY QUESTION ANALYSIS

QUESTION 1

- 1(a) This was an accessible opening question which many candidates answered correctly. However, the word 'again' featured a lot as candidates failed to denote that the word referred to Grandma being seated in the chair once more. The correct answer was 'back'. Wrong spelling or excess material denied the mark.
- (b) A number of candidates failed to identify the correct answer by failing to realise that the word 'beyond' was key in establishing where the stretch was. Many candidates lifted 'a long treeless bank' which did not answer the question.
- (c) A comprehension question which a good number of candidates failed to answer. In the majority of cases, candidates went for the lift from the passage, 'it would not do to pass it by' which in fact should have assisted them in realising that he would not miss the cabin if he stayed awake and alert. Candidates were expected to deduce from that statement that it was necessary for Dewey to stay awake and alert so that he would not pass the cabin.
- (d) Candidates who did not understand the meaning of 'consecutive' failed to get the answer. However, many candidates got the correct answer, that is, "as if they were his own kin."
- (e) Many candidates managed to identify the two scoring limbs, although a number of candidates lost a mark by failing to include the word 'grass' which was necessary in showing the type of mattress on offer: 1. He would get a good/hot supper 2. He would sleep on a soft sweet smelling grass mattress.
- (f) The answer, 'he was a male dog' was common yet the question required candidates to focus on the dog being part of the family. Candidates failed to notice that the examiner had actually pointed out that Charlie was a male dog, so simply repeating the question wording as an answer did not score. Teachers should train candidates to always closely interrogate each question's wording.

- (g) This was a simple recall question which was well handled by the majority of the candidates. The two answers were easy to identify from the passage: 1. Mrs Dargan would teach her a new crocheting pattern, 2. Grandma would chat with Mrs Dargan.

QUESTION 2

- 2(a) Own words questions continue to give problems to candidates. This is indicative of the candidates' limited vocabulary. The question was poorly handled by many candidates as they failed to find alternative words to 'angled' and 'awkwardly'. Angled could be replaced by 'bent, slanted, inclined, etc.' The word 'awkwardly' could be replaced by 'clumsily, ungainly, oddly, strangely', etc. Surprisingly, a good number of candidates gave the following partially wrong answer: slanted haphazardly.
- (b)(i) A straight forward question. It was clear that 'her' referred to the boat and many candidates did not disappoint. However, a few thought 'her' referred to Grandma.
- (ii) This proved to be a difficult question to those candidates who failed to realise that the use of the word 'glide' brought in the idea of the raft moving without difficulty effortlessly.
- (c) This was an evaluation question which required candidates to have a holistic picture of the whole story, particularly Grandma's nagging instructions. Candidates who focussed on paragraph 41 alone did not get the correct answer. There was need to consider information contained in the preceding paragraphs in order to realise that there were too many instructions from Grandma.
- (d) This was another evaluation question. Only those candidates who had read paragraphs 42 and 43 together managed to establish the pomposity shown by Grandma. The pronoun 'These' at the beginning of paragraph 43 is pointing back to paragraph 42.
- (e) The question was fairly handled by candidates.
1. poled -pulled and pushed were common answers which unfortunately failed to bring about the idea of Dewey having oared the boat around the bank.
 2. glare – This was a popular choice but many failed to bring out the sparkling effect that was required for the answer to score.
 3. securely- well handled by many, as they managed to say how the bandage was tied, that is, tightly, strongly and firmly.
 4. scratched- The word 'rubbed' featured a lot. Even weaker candidates got it correct.
 5. fiddle - Many candidates gave the word 'moving' which in the context is wrong as it did not bring out the idea of lingering or toying around.

6. scrambled up - Was poorly handled. Candidates failed to bring out the idea of moving with difficulty
7. erect – A question that was fairly attempted by the candidates. Most candidates came up with correct answers such as 'upright/straight'
8. straining - Very few candidates got the correct meaning of this lexical item. Most of those who did, came up with striving or struggling.

QUESTION 3: SUMMARY

The question required candidates to focus on Dewey's actions and feelings. Candidates managed to identify the relevant points from the passage. There were 22 points to choose from. Candidates were awarded a maximum of 15 marks for any 15 points and 5 marks for grammatical accuracy. Below is a detailed analysis of the summary points.

1. He began to run more slowly. For this point to be acceptable, candidates had to include 'more slowly' in describing how Dewey ran.
2. Easily accessible- he walked
3. In order to get a point, candidates had to qualify how Dewey stood- then he stood perfectly still.
- 4.(a) Suddenly, he had a feeling that something was terribly wrong. This point was easily handled, but the suddenness of the feeling had to be captured for the point to score.
4. (b) He felt like turning and running back to the raft. Both limbs were required for the point to score
5. A direct lift of the line, 'There was an unnatural stillness beyond the trees,' does not bring the sense that 'he sensed an unnatural stillness beyond the trees.' Candidates were expected to infer from the original line instead of lifting the whole line.
6. Slowly, he walked to the trees. This point was easily picked by most candidates. However, those who did not state how he walked lost the mark.
7. His throat was so dry (he could not swallow). An easy point which was picked by many candidates.
8. He pushed through the low branches- another easy point.
9. In order to get a mark candidates had to clearly state the action, which was closing the eyes. Weaker candidates wasted a lot of space lifting directly from the passage instead of inferring that 'he closed his eyes.'
10. He walked forward - omission of the adverb 'forward' rendered the point invalid.
11. He stepped to where the entrance had been. Most candidates got the point correct, but the weaker ones twisted the facts by writing, 'He stepped to the entrance.'
12. He knelt as if in prayer. Some candidates left out the qualification 'as if in prayer' and missed the mark.
13. He felt the log. A straight forward point that was picked by many.
14. He turned it/the log gingerly. Omission of the adverb 'gingerly' rendered the point invalid. Where pronoun 'it' was used, it was supposed be clear that it was referring to the log.
15. He felt it again. Omission of 'again' rendered the point invalid and the pronoun 'it' was supposed to refer to the log.
16. A line lift was not enough, the point had to be presented in the active voice. e.g, he felt a faint warmth (beneath the log/door frame)

17. Clearly stated in the passage - he suddenly felt cold with fear. NB. Omission of the adverb 'suddenly' rendered the point invalid.
18. He rose slowly. How he rose was supposed be clear for point to score.
19. He surveyed the ruins. Point could be lifted direct from the passage .
20. He looked with dread for some sign of parents. Candidates were expected to clearly show how he looked.
21. His shoulders suddenly felt heavy and tired (both limbs were required for point to score)

QUESTION 4: SUPPORTING LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

- 4(a)(i)and (ii) Candidates handled the questions fairly well. Question tested candidates' knowledge and application of homophones. The expected answers were (i) patience (ii) relived
- (b)(i) and (ii) The majority of candidates managed to get the given words' opposites.
(i) carelessly/recklessly (ii) exit
- (c)(i) and (ii) The questions were poorly handled by the weaker candidates. A number of candidates showed that they could not form adjectives from the given nouns.
(i) heartbreak - heartbroken, (ii) threat - threatening.
- (d)(i) and (ii)The question required candidates to show that in one instance 'hinges' was used as a noun and as a verb in the other. Very few candidates got this question correct.
- (e) Many candidates failed to bring out the meaning between the two almost similar statements. The first one expressed Dewey's appreciation of the beauty of the house whilst the second brought out Grandma's contrary opinion/ reservations/disagreement that the house was beautiful etc. The difference in meaning was brought about by the use of different punctuation marks. This was a very good question that demonstrated that punctuation is essential for accurate expression of meaning.

3.0. CONCLUSION

The 4005/02 paper of November 2022 was a standard paper which could be easily accessed by the average candidates. However, weaker candidates struggled with comprehension and evaluation questions. As teachers prepare their learners for future examinations, emphasis should be placed on thorough analysis of both the questions and the relevant sections of the passage for their learners to have a fair chance of giving answers that are apt and correct. Teachers should not only concentrate on low order questions, but should also pay much attention on the whole spectrum of questions: simple recall, comprehension, analysis synthesis and evaluation questions. In addition to that, all aspects of language structures should be covered extensively.