

**ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS DIRECTORATE**

Bundy Park, Private Bag 4571, King William's Town, 5600

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, Website: [www.ecdoe.gov.za](http://www.ecdoe.gov.za)

## **NSC 2015 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE</b>
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<b>PAPER</b>	<b>THREE</b>
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<b>DATE OF EXAMINATION:</b>	<b>25 NOVEMBER 2015</b>	<b>DURATION:</b>	<b>2½ HOURS</b>
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This section of the instrument is aimed at providing valuable feedback to schools, subject advisors, teachers and learners about common errors committed by candidates in the answering of questions, to assist teachers and subject advisors to identify areas that need to be given special attention in the teaching and learning of the subject in 2016.

Your responses will be based on two parts:

**Section 1:** General overview of learner performance in the question paper as a whole

**Section 2:** Comment on candidates' performance on individual questions (Detailed explanations must be provided **per question** as follows: (You may include sub questions where necessary))

- General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
- Why the question was poorly answered?
- Provide suggestion for improvement in relation to teaching and learning
- Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
- Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development

## SECTION 1: (General overview of candidates' performance in the question paper as a whole)

### SECTION A : (ESSAY)

#### QUESTION 1

##### 1.1 Thank goodness!

The words "Thank goodness!" had to appear somewhere in the essay. Candidates could respond in a variety of ways using the following essay types as prescribed by CAPS, viz. narrative, descriptive, reflective etc. Many candidates responded by writing well-crafted, imaginative narrative and reflective essays. However, many candidates seemed to have misunderstood that "Thank goodness!" was required only once in the essay; they tended to use "Thank Goodness" (ignoring the '!') repeatedly throughout their writing, to express their gratitude for a number of blessings, e.g. "Thank goodness" for education, a caring family, supportive friends etc. Taking into consideration the implications of the exclamation mark would have given better meaning to candidates' responses.

##### 1.2 Hidden away at the back of a drawer ...

Very few candidates selected this topic. However, there were some outstanding creative responses where candidates used the topic in a figurative way, e.g. one candidate's repressed feelings and painful memories were hidden away at the back drawer of his/her mind. Even those candidates who responded in a literal fashion were able to write skilful essays in which they expressed themselves beyond normal expectations. The ideas were intelligent and mature.

##### 1.3 'The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling but in rising every time you fall.' – Nelson Mandela. Discuss this statement.

This was not a popular topic. Candidates were required to address both falling AND rising, i.e. challenges and failures experienced in life and then how those challenges and failures were overcome, leading to victory and success. Some candidates focused on Nelson Mandela, which was acceptable, but instead of mentioning or explaining how Madiba's "falling" resulted in "rising", or overcoming various obstacles, they either used a one-sided approach to write about the way Mandela changed South Africa, or they concentrated solely on how he was mistreated and victimised by the apartheid government, or they wrote a biography. Teachers need to impress upon learners that all aspects of a topic need to be addressed adequately to get full credit.

##### 1.4 We are controlled by electronic media. As a result we have lost our individuality. Do you agree?

The words "Do you agree?" dictated that candidates were required to write argumentative essay in which one distinct opinion either FOR or AGAINST the topic/statement had to be given. Furthermore, a clear motivation or argument for the position taken had to be explained. This was a very popular choice. However, candidates tended to ignore "electronic" media and focused on media *per se* i.e. they concentrated on how television, newspapers, radio programmes, advertising



affect and control us. Many expounded on how social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc. impact negatively on society and the dangers thereof and ignored how we have lost our individuality” part of the topic. This indicated that candidates were unable to distinguish between “media” and “electronic media”. The latter is related to computer networks, social networking etc. There were even some candidates who confused “electronic media” with electrical appliances such as washing machines, microwave ovens stoves etc. These types of interpretations by candidates resulted in them being awarded average to low marks.

### **1.5 Young people must take action to inherit a greener and cleaner world.**

This topic elicited some excellent, informed responses in which candidates not only pointed out and explained the environmental problems and issues currently being experienced in our planet (e.g. global warming, deforestation, carbon dioxide emissions, water and air pollution, littering, ozone layer damage etc.), but also clearly stated what action should be taken by young people in order for them to inherit a greener and cleaner world. However, there were a number of candidates who merely listed the environmental problems, and omitted to offer suggestions on action to be taken by young people. Many were of the opinion that the government was responsible for taking action. A few candidates interpreted the topic figuratively and wrote about moral issues like the lack of values and morality in society today (e.g. lack of respect for elders and contemporaries, degenerate lifestyles involving alcohol, sex and drugs, lack of accountability, etc.). Such interpretations were acceptable as “a cleaner and greener world” was perceived in the context of ethics and morality.

### **1.6 The season that brings out the best in me**

This was an extremely popular choice. Responses ranged from exceptional to inadequate. There were some beautiful descriptive essays explaining in detail the season (mostly summer) that appealed to candidates. Unfortunately few referred to how their favourite season “brings out the best in me.” These essays had to be dropped a content category because candidates did not address the topic in its entirety. Besides the four seasons of the year, candidates were also credited for writing about, the Christmas season, hunting season etc.

### **1.7 Pictures**

Both literal and abstract interpretations of the pictures were accepted. The only proviso was that the candidate’s interpretation had to show a clear link to the picture. These were not popular choices.

#### **1.7.1 Picture of people (heads, features not revealed) walking**

This picture was the more popular of the two. Interpretations ranged from gender equality in society and in the work place, the business world, being employed, the benefits of a good education in order to secure employment, having goals and being able to realise those goals. The fewer number of candidates choosing essays based on pictures could be an indication that there is not much effort given to visual literacy in the classroom. It should be taken into cognisance that we live in a world abundant with visual stimuli of diverse kinds and a better understanding of such a

world is a striking necessity in the twenty first century.

### **1.7.2 Picture of a bridge**

Very few opted for this topic. Candidates who did respond to this topic wrote about the importance of these structures in communities, how bridges allow access to remote areas, construction and design of bridges, narratives involving a bridge. A few candidates who opted for the figurative interpretation wrote brilliant essays about how people build bridges among themselves for reconciliation and on the contrary how bridges are broken down among people, an indicator of strained relations. Teachers are encouraged to give more attention to visual stimulus as a prompt for learners to write essays and explore the visual world.

## **SECTION B : (LONGER TRANSACTIONAL TEXT)**

### **QUESTION 2**

#### **2.1 LETTER TO THE PRESS**

The topic required candidates to write a letter to the local newspaper in which they had to express their views and feelings about the many electricity and water disruptions in their area. This was a popular choice, as these problems are topical and have probably been experienced by a number of candidates. Above average responses provided succinct details of the disruptions and expressed clear views and feelings about the disruptions. The tone, register and style of these responses were highly appropriate to audience and context of the topic. Weaker responses lacked clarity and detail. In many cases the register and style were inappropriate as the writers expected the editor to take action to solve their problems. Such candidates clearly do not know what a letter to the press entails. Some candidates had no clue about the format of the letter. This can be corrected.

#### **2.2 OBITUARY**

In the obituary the candidate had to write a death notice to inform others of the death of a beloved grandparent and pay tribute to the deceased. It is evident that this form of text has received attention in the classroom. Candidates knew which biographical details to provide: the name and surname of the deceased, and in most cases, the dates of birth and death, where the person had been born, key survivors etc. The part which many omitted was the tribute, where respect or admiration for the deceased was required. Some candidates were not realistic about the dates of birth and death of a grandparent, as one grandparent was as young as 15 years old and another as old as 197 years. Candidates tended to treat the obituary as a eulogy especially the more affluent ones.

#### **2.3 PERSONAL RECOUNT/INFORMAL REPORT**

Very few candidates attempted this topic. The question was poorly answered. Shoplifting was sometimes confused with breaking and entering. They were not able to provide a factual account of the incident. The crucial problem seems to have been a better understanding of the word 'shoplifting'. Diction used in questions

should be understood before a question is attempted as misunderstanding impacts negatively on content. We know this constitutes a large part of the marks allocated to transactional pieces.

## 2.4 **DIALOGUE**

The dialogue between a parent who does not approve of a child's friend and the child who has to try and convince the parent that the friend is not a bad influence, was hugely popular. It would appear that many parents do not take much convincing to change their initially strong opposition to a friend, as they readily capitulated and allowed the friendship to continue, even though some of the reasons offered by the child were shallow and unconvincing. There were very few exceptional responses, with the majority receiving a "moderate" assessment. Generally the format used by the candidates was correct, clearly indicating that this format has been given attention in the classroom. It is important to note that before the speakers start speaking, a brief scenario (context) must be sketched. In many dialogues this was lacking. The lengthy greetings which were a common feature in the past are no longer a frequent problem. Teachers and learners are tremendously appreciated for paying attention to our previous comments in this regard.

## **SECTION C : (SHORTER TRANSACTIONAL TEXT)** **QUESTION 3**

### 3.1 **FLYER**

Not many candidates attempted the flyer. A possible explanation is that the candidate is not familiar with this text. A flyer is a small poster advertising an event. In order to attract attention, a flyer must have catchy words and phrases, as opposed to a long tedious explanation. Details lacking were: information about the fitness programme, viz. date, venue and time, contact details; information regarding the nature of the fitness programme. Generally, the responses were disappointing. More effort to the teaching of the piece, with emphasis on requirements being met, is encouraged. Moreover, learners need to be made aware that the only striking difference between a flyer and an advertisement is the size.

### 3.2 **DIARY ENTRIES**

Candidates were instructed to write TWO diary entries: one entry had to deal with how the candidate felt before the talent contest and the second entry had to deal with the candidate's feelings after the talent contest. Candidates responded adequately to this question. However, few candidates were able to convey the spontaneity and immediacy expected in a diary entry. They tended to use a narrative style of writing which often resulted in digression and dulled the personal tone required in diary writing. A noticeable format error that cropped up was the fact that many candidates failed to provide each entry with a date.

### 3.3 **DIRECTIONS**

This topic was a popular choice. It is evident that candidates have had **reading** and practice in writing out directions. Most candidates complied with the **instruction**



to include landmarks, distances and specific directions. Although the destination was included at the end of the directions, many failed to mention the starting point, which was the school. Some candidates wrote long, detailed directions which, in real life, would be difficult to follow. In a few instances, distances were unrealistic, e.g. walk for 300 km. Candidates who gave directions that were clear, specific and to the point gained high marks.

#### 4 **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS**

- Consult the CAPS document in order to familiarise themselves with the types of texts that need to be covered in the FET phase. (This differs from the NSC curriculum document.) The types of texts are pertinently stated in the CAPS Document and in the DBE document entitled: OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE GRADE 12 2014).
- The teaching and practising of texts in Section B and Section C should be covered from Grade 10 onwards. Teachers cannot (with success) cover all these texts in Grade 12 only.
- Adherence to the length of the topics in each of the three sections is vital. Learners penalise themselves if they either go beyond the stipulated length, or write texts that are too short. This blatant disregard of the length indicates lack of proper planning and organisation which impacts on the marks awarded for content.
- Paragraph development and sentence construction is, in many cases, sadly lacking. Teach learners that shorter sentences are more effective than long rambling sentences which ultimately leads to incoherent, muddled writing. To counteract poor sentence construction, teachers should focus on “joining sentences” using the appropriate conjunctions when covering grammar.

#### **AREAS THAT SHOULD BE LOOKED AT IN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Vocabulary Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive Reading</li> <li>• Dictionary Work</li> <li>• Lexicon Development through listening and visual exercises</li> <li>• Crossword Puzzles</li> <li>• Critical Awareness</li> <li>• Summary</li> <li>• Intensive and Extended Reading</li> <li>• Informational texts</li> <li>• Mass media</li> <li>• Visual Texts</li> </ul>	
Language Usage and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple Sentences</li> <li>• Complex Sentences</li> <li>• Sentence Structure</li> <li>• Present Tense</li> <li>• Adverbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary Building</li> <li>• Conjunctions</li> <li>• Prepositions</li> <li>• Concord</li> <li>• Meta Language</li> <li>• Figurative language</li> </ul>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjectives</li> <li>• Emotive language</li> <li>• Reported Speech</li> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Verbs</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Active and Passive voice</li> <li>• Homonyms</li> <li>• Antonyms</li> <li>• Homophones</li> <li>• Synonyms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetorical devices</li> <li>• Cause and effect</li> <li>• Denotation and connotation</li> <li>• Polite forms of thanks and stock phrases</li> <li>• Culturally appropriate vocabulary</li> <li>• Register</li> </ul>
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