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

<b>SUBJECT</b>	ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
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<b>PAPER</b>	1
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<b>DATE OF EXAMINATION:</b>	26 October 2015	<b>DURATION:</b>	<b>2 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 Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

**Section A:** Comprehension was relevant as it is a popular topic-technological universe and communication. In the sample of 100 scripts selected randomly from almost all 23 districts in Eastern Cape, most candidates seem to have missed the main point when answering this question, this is reflected in the performance which is 37.4%. Candidates failed to follow the instructions given per question. Some pockets of excellence could be noticed in few centres, with candidates scoring up to 27 marks out of 30.

**Section B:** The question was fair and easy to understand. Candidates were expected to score high marks, disappointingly the majority of candidates performed poorly. The 100 sample scripts taken reflect 15.7% performance.

**Section C:** All language aspects were generally assessed fairly in all three questions. Question 3 was poorly answered by most candidates, with the exception of few candidates who scored full marks (10), and the sample scripts (100) performance stands at 13%. Question 4 was the question most poorly answered, with candidate only scoring 11.6% in the sample scripts. Lastly, most learners performed poorly in question 5 too, a 22.3% bears testimony to that.

Unfortunately the overall picture of the 2015 candidates is disappointing, with only 30% of them scoring between level 4 and 7. Even more disappointing is that 64% of candidates scored level 1.

## 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?
Candidates performed poorly, the greater percentage scoring low marks. In a random sample of 100 scripts from different districts, the performance is 37.4% in this question. Many candidates struggled to interpret the questions correctly. A marker could hardly make sense of the responses given by some candidates. Learners do not know how to express themselves especially when they have to give their opinions, they then tend to quote. In some centres candidates scored high marks (25-29 marks). Questions 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11, 1.14 and 1.15 were the most poorly answered.
(a) Why the question was poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
<p>Poor performance of candidates might be caused by the lack of reading and comprehension skills. Candidates have poor vocabulary, no insight to questions hence quoting and long sentences that do not qualify to be credited. Learners quoted chunks of words from the passage with the hope of getting marks, this shows lack of exposure to reading material. Candidates seem to lack critical and analytical skills, hence they struggle to differentiate between literal and figurative meanings. They also do not take note of the instructional verbs like explain, discuss, quote, name, give/list. They would rather rewrite the whole sentence instead of coming straight to the point. In text B candidates seemed to lack visual interpretation skills as they could not interpret the graph well nor the picture with the coin and some learners could not identify the voting process portrayed as the historic event.</p> <p><b>Examples of questions where common errors and misconceptions were identified.</b></p> <p>1.2 A level 1 question, supposedly the simplest question for candidates to score full marks, but candidates could not identify the three examples required by the question. Some simply gave quoted responses like, "at home, families sit together..."</p> <p>1.3 Most candidates, as it appears, were extremely challenged in creating a relatable interpretation in context, of the compound adjective "plugged-in" as given in "plugged-in lives". They could not explain the figurative meaning of the expression.</p> <p>1.6 Most learners did not understand what was actually required in this question. They commonly quoted a sentence with the phrase "tribe in one" and failed to explain the terms' <b>tribe, one</b> and <b>contrast</b>.'</p> <p>Candidates failed to write enough to earn full marks, some gave scanty responses without fully explaining the phrase. The common quote was "not too close, not too far, just right".</p> <p>1.9.2 Candidates struggled to differentiate between 'sips' and 'gulps' in the context of the</p>

passage. They showed poor understanding of both terms and failed to explain the meaning of sip and gulp in the context of the passage.

1.11 Candidates seldom scored full marks here. Some could not state whether they agreed or disagreed with the writer. The question required learners to refer specifically to the writer's view of effective communication. Contrary to that, candidates confused the effective use of communication with the importance of cellphones. They simply wrote about advantages of social networking. Most candidates simply quoted from paragraph 10 (Most of all...to one another) without stating their stance.

1.14 This question was poorly answered, candidates could not understand that the Gold Coin's appreciation value would benefit the investor. Candidates were unable to interpret the graph, as they kept referring to the expensive price of the coin, therefore missing out on the fact that it was a good investment.

1.15 Learners lost marks here too, they could not identify that people were standing in a line to vote and sometimes they would refer to general history, not specifically to the 1994 elections. Candidates appeared to be ignorant of S.A.'s historic events such as the first democratic elections and that people were in a voting queue. They could not interpret and express what they saw in a graph.

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

Evidently the learners failed to sensibly interpret the comprehension text. This might be due to a lack of reading skills, which must be practised in the classroom. The culture of reading is also lacking, probably the learners do not understand the importance of practicing reading skills. Thus more reading at schools is recommended. This could start with the reading aloud of some book reviews, cloze texts, etc. Furthermore, teachers must assist learners in increasing their vocabulary to enhance a better understanding of what they are reading by explaining what they have read.

Regular exercises assessing literal and figurative meaning should be prioritized in classrooms.

Teachers must 'drill' learners on paraphrasing and developmental work must also include levels 3-4 questions. Teachers should expose learners to many comprehension passages. Lastly, visual literacy should be prioritized, with learners making use of newspapers and other media material. Intensive reading of Multimodal and Visual Texts should be prioritized, for example graphs, pie charts, diagrams, maps, etc. must be taught to ensure that learners can interpret them. Teachers must also focus on the key terms such as 'contradiction' and the interpretation of contextual meaning.

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

Most of the poorly performing candidates in all questions worth 2 or 3 marks, do not take note of the mark allocation. They only answer the first part and ignore the rest of the question. These include questions 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9.2 and 1.11, 1.14 and 1.15.

Candidates seem not to clearly understand and follow the given instructions per question. With open-ended questions candidates seem to have no insight at all, and tend to contradict themselves. They would often provide a negative stance with a positively stated motivation. They resort to quoting sentences that they suspect contain the answers.

Learners do not know how to express themselves and the strong influence of mother tongue expressions makes answers clumsy.

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

The battle for quality results in this paper seems like a pie in the sky, the majority of learners score below 50%. More motivation and strong reinforcement is needed to make learners readers. The extended independent reading- content of Reading and Viewing, as specified in the CAPS document must be fully implemented and closely monitored in all schools. Learners should be exposed to reading texts from magazines, newspaper articles and current affairs/topics should be discussed in class. Teachers should build up their own resource files containing old question papers and memoranda. The use of previous question papers and their memoranda must be considered when 'drilling' learners to use the mark allocation as a guide to answering enough to score full marks. Constantly working through past papers could assist learners in realising what is expected as answers in the paper.

## QUESTION 2

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

Candidates performed poorly. The greater percentage scored low marks. In a random sample of 100 scripts from different districts, the performance is 15.7% in this question. Although candidates seemed to be familiar with the format of the summary, few performed exceptionally well and scored maximum marks (10 marks). The majority of candidates could not respond well to the question, quoting sentences blindly from the extract.

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

Lack of basic summary writing skills is evident. Candidates could not identify the main points. In instances where the points were identified, candidates struggled to paraphrase them. Candidates showed little summary skills, as they could not distinguish between main and supporting ideas. Some candidates disregarded the given text and came up with irrelevant opinions regarding/dealing with bad habits. The summary is about dealing with bad habits generally, but candidates talked more about peer pressure, leaving bad friends and praying for those smokers/alcoholics.

It is painful to see that candidates who quote verbatim, tend to score higher marks than those who put in an effort and try so hard to use their own words. Candidates struggling with the language could not make coherent/meaningful sentences and sometimes run-on sentences were written. They lost marks as their facts made no sense at times owing to their limited vocabulary. For example, in the first fact, 'It is important to identify the triggers that set off bad habits', candidates wrote 'Triggers that set off bad habits it is important to identify'.

Some candidates do not take into account the word limit. They wrote up to 120 words and still indicated 70 for the number of words used.

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

Learners must be taught the basic rules of summary writing: numbering points, use of own words/refraining from quoting verbatim, refraining from merely re-arranging word order (as this results in sentences that make no sense) and giving one fact/point per sentence. Learners should be given regular summary exercises, this could help build their confidence in identifying key points and therefore constructing proper/ meaningful sentences. Learners must be taught vocabulary especially synonyms. Learners must be constantly told how to handle first and final drafts and they must know that in the case of two summaries presented the first one will be marked. They must therefore delete the first/rough draft.

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

Dishonesty when it comes to word count indication is still prevalent. Some candidates simply responded without basing their answers on facts from the given text. They add their own information/personal experiences as facts. There are still candidates who present their summaries in paragraph form. A few candidates still do not delete out their draft summaries. Some candidates often repeat the same facts/points to get to seven points.

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

Subject Advisors must closely monitor the use of the Chief Marker's Report by all teachers in schools. Information sharing sessions must be organised in clusters for sharing good practices. Markers of 2015 must be optimally used to help other teachers.

### QUESTION 3

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

Candidates performed poorly, a greater percentage scored low marks. In a random sample of 100 scripts from different districts, the performance is 13% in this question. Many candidates struggled to interpret the questions correctly. Questions 3.2 and 3.6 were the most poorly answered questions.

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

Candidates struggled to analyze the advert presented in this question, they had difficulty understanding concepts like "target audience" and "effectiveness"

Candidates who scored low marks in 3.1 failed to spot the target audience and gave responses like "Children, because the advert says Centrum Kids". Candidates did not consider the fact that children do not play an active role in the market (they do not have the buying power), so they depend on their parents to purchase such products for them.

3.4 Some candidates had a tendency to write the whole sentence that has the website address instead of just writing the website.

In question 3.5 blind quoting was evident, e.g. 'A great-tasting' instead of 'great-tasting', that made them lose marks as the first word to be marked is 'A', and incorrect. Candidates were unable to give literal and figurative interpretations in both questions 3.2 and 3.6.

The mention of 'first picture' really confused some candidates, they interpreted "first picture" as the one in question 1, and answered according to it!

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

More exposure to advertisements can help learners improve in answering this question. Basic advertising terms like target audience, link between the picture and words, etc. must be taught thoroughly

Regular exercises on adverts which assess literal and figurative meaning should be prioritized in classrooms. The teachers must help learners draw clear and detailed connections between the product being advertised and the visual in advert.

Teachers should also allow learners to come with their own advertisements to analyze and interpret in class. Teacher should listen and assist in dealing with the different learner interpretations.



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

Candidates do not provide one word when asked to do so. Some candidates did not answer in context, they made general comments about parental/fatherly love. They missed the gist of the advertisement which deals with parents supplying their children with Centrum. Vocabulary is lacking, hence learners had a great challenge in responding to question 3.6. Lastly the lack of commitment on the side of candidates was evident. Some left blank spaces instead of attempting the question.

#### QUESTION 4

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

Candidates performed poorly, most candidates scored low marks ranging from 0-3. In a random sample of 100 scripts from different districts, the performance is 11.6% in this question, the worst performance of all (5) questions. Many candidates struggled to interpret the questions correctly. Questions 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 were the most poorly answered questions.

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

Candidates struggled to answer questions based on the cartoon, they could not identify characters therefore gave incorrect answers. Most candidates failed to refer to frame 2 when answering question 4.2.1, they gave answers pointing at frame 3. Some wrote that '**KNOCK KNOCK**' is in capital letters instead of saying bold font.

4.2.2 Most learners got it wrong because they failed to mention Olga's leaving the children with Helga/Hagar whilst going on vacation.

4.3 Candidates struggled to use the correct words in explaining Helga's mood, they wrote 'angry, shocked/furious'.

4.4 Most candidates could not explain the stereotype and how the children contradict it.

4.5 Candidates could not substantiate why they sympathized with Hagar. Some sympathized with Helga instead of Hagar, and in doing so lost marks.

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

Regular activities on cartoons could help learners improve in answering this question. Critical language awareness- bias, prejudice, stereotyping, assumptions, etc. is vital when looking at cartoons, therefore teachers must make an effort to help learners understand cartoons.

Exercises must focus more on literal and figurative meanings. The teachers must help learners draw clear and detailed connections between the visual clues and character mood/feelings. Teachers should also allow learners to bring own cartoon strips, analyze and interpret them. The teacher should guide and assist in learners' understanding messages in those cartoons, as most cartoons are fun (deal with a sense of humor).

Teachers must make use of study guides, e.g. Mind The Gap Study Guide, English Handbook and Study Guide for Primary and Secondary Schools, etc.

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

Candidates did not read the note provided in the cartoon, consequently they mixed up characters. They would even say Helga ran an orphanage instead of Olga. Other learners could not understand what was going on in the cartoon. They kept saying Helga was happy to get a job in the orphanage. Most learners struggled with the open-ended question. Some candidates did not attempt to answer the question at all, one cannot stop but wonder what they did during the year.

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

The fact that this question was the most poorly answered shows that some teachers need assistance when it comes to the teaching of cartoons. Districts must make an effort to assist all teachers, especially those that struggle to teach this section. With all efforts together learners' performance will improve in this question.

## QUESTION 5

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

Candidates performed poorly. The greater percentage scored low marks. In a random sample of 100 scripts from different districts, the performance is 22.3% in this question. Many candidates struggled to answer questions requiring the knowledge of basics in grammar. In some centres candidates scored high marks (15-19 marks). Questions 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3 and 5.1.5 were the most poorly answered questions.

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

5.1.1 Candidates failed to follow the instruction that they must only write the question number and the correction they have made, instead they wrote full sentences without underlining the change made.

5.1.2 (a) Candidates did not understand the meaning of the word 'italics', they gave answers like "It is from Italy, and some writing, "it is because it is a foreign language".

5.1.2 (b) Some candidates were not able to identify the part of speech, they gave answers like 'metaphor'.

5.1.3 Candidates were unable to give the homophone (prays/praise) and construct own sentences.

5.1.5 Candidates failed to score full marks, some could not even remove the inverted commas, and in fact basic changes in reported speech could not be made by many candidates.

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

Learners must be taught grammar rules from lower classes. Candidates' performance showed little understanding of them and therefore lost marks. Intensive teaching of content skill 4 (language structures and conventions) must be worked on as a matter of urgency, let it be the order of the day throughout 2016 in all schools. Regular exercises assessing grammar must be given to learners.

Revision of previous years' question papers must be done continuously.

Teachers must make use of study guides, e.g. Mind The Gap Study Guide, English Handbook and Study Guide for Primary and Secondary Schools, etc.

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

A common problem identified in almost all the centres is the issue of not leaving a line open between answers. This makes their work untidy and difficult to mark. Carelessness when it comes to punctuation, is evident in learners' work. Learners also battle with concord rules.



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

Language teachers should renew their passion for teaching, which will pay dividends in the end. Team teaching is very important, so cluster meetings should accommodate sharing of good practices. Teachers must build good relations with learners to share their weaknesses, strengths and experiences, thus opening doors for improved learner performance.

N.L. HUFKIE

11.12.2015

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**NAME OF THE CHIEF MARKER:**

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**SIGNATURE**

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**DATE**