

### **NSC 2016 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	English FAL		
<b>PAPER</b>	1		
<b>DATE OF EXAMINATION:</b>	26 October 2016	<b>DURATION:</b>	2 Hours

#### **SECTION 1: (General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)**

Learners generally performed satisfactorily in this question paper than in previous years. This year they were not penalised for quoting verbatim from the Comprehension passage. This allowed them to score higher marks in this section than in previous years.

It was evident that summary skills have been taught since the majority of the learners fared well in this question. Those who fared poorly were guilty of introducing their own information into their answers thus deviating from the original extract.

Candidates did not perform well in Question 3 where they were required to analyse an advertisement. The majority scored below 50%. The kind of advertisement used in this question paper differed from those used in previous years' papers.

Question 4 was relatively well answered except for the open-ended question where candidates struggled to substantiate their answers. In most cases the stance taken in their answer did not correspond with their substantiation.

As in previous years Question 5 was poorly answered. It appears that grammar is not being taught at schools. More time should be spent on Language in the lower grades to adequately prepare learners for Grade 12.

**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 - COMPREHENSION**

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

<i>Average mark from the sample of 100 :</i>		
SUB-QUESTION	TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED	AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE
	Comprehension	56.7%

Many learners/centres produced excellent results, while some fared dismally, some scoring below 9 out of 30.

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

The open-ended questions, i.e. 1.5; 1.11; 1.12 and 1.16 were poorly answered. Many learners were unable to express an opinion related to the question and grounding their answers in the passage.

It is shocking that learners who fared extremely badly, chunk quoted, using random irrelevant information. These learners had no understanding of the gist of the passage and did not understand what the questions required.

1.4 Learners with a limited vocabulary were unable to explain what 'leading' and 'fast food/outlet' meant.

1.5 Candidates had difficulty in understanding and interacting with the text in order to provide an answer that was grounded in the text.

1.6 Although this was a straightforward lower order question, many failed to identify two fast food outlets (there were four to choose from).

1.11 In this question learners were required to take a stance. However many had difficulty in understanding 'effective' (producing the desired result) and were unable to answer coherently.

1.12 Those who did not fare well in this question failed to grasp the meaning of 'pinch of salt' and give an answer relating to the contents of the passage.

Text B: visual – weather report: those who fared poorly could not interpret what they were seeing. They seemed not to have been exposed to this type of visual text.

1.16 Candidates were expected to make a judgement on whether the visuals accurately convey the message of the text. (What was the message? Did the picture show this?)

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

Reading skills need to be developed and practised from grade 8. Learners should be guided to read comprehension questions carefully in order to be able to answer what is asked. Educators can make use of past examination papers to coach learners in comprehension skills. Instruct learners to take note of the mark allocation for each answer in order to provide meaningful answers and also to guide them on the length of their answers.

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

Learners struggle to interpret visuals. They should be taught to describe what they see in the visual and relate it to the question.

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

Reading and viewing and Language should not be regarded as separate entities. Educators should be familiar with the content of CAPS. A useful tool that can be utilised in Grade 12 is the "Mind the Gap" which was issued to schools. Text B: weather visual: knowledge of geography was not being tested here. This is visual literacy which should be taught and practised in the classroom. Refer to the CAPS document, page 31.

**QUESTION 2 - SUMMARY**

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

<i>Average mark from the sample of 100 :</i>		
SUB-QUESTION	TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED	AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE
	Summary	60%

A large number of candidates were able to earn full marks for the summary. It was evident that these candidates were taught how to approach and present a summary by eliciting the relevant required information and using their own words.

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

It was also evident that there are some schools/districts where summary skills are not taught.

Some learners could not identify a single relevant fact and ended up scoring 0/10.

The point form summary has been asked for a number of years and one would expect teachers to provide their learners with the necessary guidance and practice.

Learners who fared poorly could not identify the relevant facts, failed to write 7 points using the information in the given passage, could not use their own words and merely chunk quoted, did not adhere to the word limit (70 words), did not use the imperative form which is necessary when a list of instructions is required.

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

Summary skills need to be developed and practised from grade 8.

Teach learners to follow instructions.

When given a summary, encourage learners to underline the relevant information in the given passage, then to write a rough point form draft using their own words.

Only the information in the given passage is to be used when summarizing, no extra information may be provided.

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

Learners are instructed to use their own words. It is still a quotation if: a word is omitted; If a deliberate spelling error is made, if only a part of the original is quoted. Learners will, thus, be penalised for quoting and will forfeit the three language marks.

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

Learners should read and follow the instructions. The same instructions are used year after year.

Use previous exam papers as tools to practise summary skills.

### QUESTION 3 – ANALYSING AN ADVERTISEMENT

- (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
	Advertisement	40%

Those who were versed in analysing advertisements and the relevant terminology, scored high marks.

However, to some learners it appeared that this was an entirely foreign, unknown skill.

Of the 5 questions in the paper, this was the most poorly answered.

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

Many learners had no idea of what 'visual' and 'verbal' clues were.

'3.1 'target audience' could not be identified. Learners responded to this question by identifying cats, everyone, humans, people, farmers as being the target audience.

It seemed as if this was their very first encounter with this jargon.

3.3 Learners were asked to state verbal and visual techniques used by the advertiser to convey the idea of a horror movie. A large number mentioned only one of the two techniques.

Learners were unable to unpack the techniques used by the advertiser to convey the idea of a horror movie.

3.4 This question required learners to apply what they had learnt about ellipsis. The general use of ellipsis, e.g. to indicate an incomplete sentence, or words missing was incorrect.

They had to specify that the ellipsis in the advertisement was to create suspense/anticipation of what was to follow, or to indicate that the sentence has been interrupted, would proceed.

3.5 It is worrying that so many learners were unable to spell 'laboratory'.

Learners spelt: 'labratory', 'laboratry', 'laboratary'

3.8 Instead of writing about the 'effectiveness of this advertisement' learners discussed the effectiveness of the product. They were required to discuss whether the advertisement produced the desired result by referring to the advertiser's use of visual and verbal techniques.

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

Terminology used in analyzing advertisements needs to be taught. This includes target audience, recognition of AIDA, visual and verbal techniques used by advertisers, persuasive/emotive language, the message the advertiser wants to convey. Not all advertisements are about a product, a service can also be advertised.

Figurative language is also used by advertisers, e.g. alliteration, puns, innuendo, onomatopoeia etc.

Allow learners to create their own advertisements using the relevant techniques (writing and presenting paired with reading and viewing, language).

Expose learners to this skill from grade 8.

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

Many learners were unable to provide coherent answers owing to a lack of vocabulary.

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

We are inundated with advertisements every day: in the press, magazines, on the radio, television, electronic media. Analysing advertisements is a skill that should receive attention, not only as a language exercise, but awareness of advertising techniques is a life skill.

**QUESTION 4 – ANALYSING A CARTOON**

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

<b>Average mark from the sample of 100 :</b>		
<b>SUB-QUESTION</b>	<b>TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED</b>	<b>AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE</b>
	Cartoon	60%

There were many excellent, well-rounded responses with high scores of 8 – 10 out of 10.

Unfortunately there were those who seem not to have encountered, or have had very little exposure to analysing cartoons.

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

Learners tended not to read the speech bubbles carefully. Many seemed not to have understood the cartoon and the humour in the cartoon.

Body language and facial expressions were not clearly described, e.g. learners need to state what body language is being used by the cartoonist, e.g. hands on hips, not just body language.

Although the characters are described, explained in a note below the cartoon, candidates mixed up the characters and also mixed up the genders – male/female.

4.1.1 Weaker learners used incorrect prepositions to answer a simple question, e.g. in/on the fence, instead of along, at the fence. Some could not recognize that the conversation was taking place outside, and answered 'in the house'.

4.1.2 The visual clue was accurately identified by most learners. However, due to limited vocabulary, some were unable to express themselves and ended up being incoherent.

4.1.3 Whilst there were very many correct answers, learners who scored only 1 mark, were those who could not discern between literal and figurative language (denotation and connotation).

'Starter' was identified by many as a first course on a menu. This answer was totally irrelevant.

4.1.4 It was obvious that a tag question is a foreign concept to many learners. There were learners who lost the mark here because they did not complete the answer by including 'it' after 'isn't'. Marks were also lost by learners not inserting the apostrophe correctly.

Some learners confused a tag question with the ordinary question form.

4.3 Lack of vocabulary caused learners not to recognize a 'hammock'.

4.5 Many learners misunderstood the question by stating that Blondie was angry. There was no evidence in the cartoon for them to have reached this conclusion. There were also many contradictions in candidates' answers, e.g. Blondie's calm tone is appropriate because she is angry.

Learners also merely agreed with the statement instead of giving an opinion.



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

Teach learners to provide coherent, well-constructed responses.  
Literal and figurative language should receive attention.  
Practise answering open-ended questions.  
Expose learners to different types of cartoons with different characters depicting a variety of situations. Focus should also be on the different types of humour in cartoons.  
Body language: she is leaning forward, her hands are on her hips and facial expressions, e.g. his mouth is wide open, should be specifically described.  
When teaching the tag question learners should be taught that when the statement is positive the tag must be negative and vice versa. They must also be taught the correct punctuation pertaining to a tag question. After the statement a comma must be inserted and at the end of the tag a question mark must follow.

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

Many learners were unable to provide coherent answers to describe what they observe in the cartoon owing to having a limited vocabulary.

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

Ask learners to bring cartoons to class. Ask them to describe/explain what they observe.  
Use these cartoons to empower them to become familiar with this genre.

**QUESTION 5 – LANGUAGE AND EDITING SKILLS**

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

<b>Average mark from the sample of 100 :</b>		
SUB-QUESTION	TOPIC OR ASPECT TESTED	AVERAGE % FROM SAMPLE
	Language and editing skills	50%

On the one hand, many learners earned excellent marks, eg. 16 – 20 out of 20. However there were candidates who scored not a single mark for this question.



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

This question deals with grammar and language structures which requires teaching, revising, drilling.

5.1.1 Error correction requires reading and grammar skills which are often absent. Candidates were required to correct the SINGLE error in each sentence by writing down ONLY the answer. This instruction was often ignored and the sentences were written out still containing the error.

5.1.2 Those who did not earn a mark in this question, could not provide a collective noun to suit the context of the sentence, e.g. lot, many, pack, bag, bundle, library were some of the incorrect responses. Acceptable were: collection, pile, set, stack.

5.1.3 As mentioned before, learners confused a straightforward question with a tag sentence.

The tense had to be correct and a question mark had to be used at the end, as this was the structure being tested.

5.1.5 Many learners only earned one mark for this question, for changing 'I' to 'she'.

The tense was not changed, neither was the adverb. Punctuation, i.e. omitting the inverted commas and using a full stop at the end of the reported speech needs to be part of teaching and practising changing from direct to reported speech. The answer should also make sense.

Many learners did make changes, but the result was garbled and incoherent.

5.1.6 Changing the verb/tense from active to passive voice and using the correct new subject could not be accomplished by many learners.

5.1.7 There were learners who had absolutely no idea of what a homonym is. They were unable to give another meaning for 'case', i.e. their sentences had to use the word 'case' with a meaning other than a container.

The instruction to the question was not adhered to – the word 'case' had to be used in a meaningful, well-constructed sentence.

5.1.8 The answer to this question had to be in the plural form.

There were a large number of learners who gave the answer as 'rays'.

5.2.1 Learners have no idea of what a 'pun' is.

5.2.2 An antonym for 'important' is plain and simply 'unimportant'. Learners could not answer.

5.2.3 Tenses and the formation of tenses needs to be addressed.

5.2.6 Candidates could not provide the correct degree of comparison for 'health' in the given sentence. Many simply wrote 'health' as the answer.

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

Go back to basics when teaching grammar and language structures.

The information in the CAPS document should be thoroughly scrutinized, as this document tells educators exactly what should be taught.

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

Learners are unable to spell and their lack of basic vocabulary is cause for concern.

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

Refer to the CAPS document (page 9) where the specific aims of learning Additional Languages are expounded.

On page 15 CAPS states: 'There should be activities that focus specifically on grammar and vocabulary as part of a systematic programme and also in response to common errors identified by the teacher. Grammar should be taught purposefully; attention should be given to meaning as well as form.'

Refer to page 29 (Intensive reading of shorter written texts for COMPHENSION).

Refer to pages 31, 33 (Intensive reading of MULTIMODAL AND VISUAL TEXTS).

The above pages make mention of advertisements and cartoons which is part of CAPS and not an optional extra.

Pages 36 – 37 (Sentence construction).

Page 37: Language conventions (spelling and punctuation).

Page 79: (cognitive levels).

Vocabulary enrichment, spelling, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, homophones can be done in context, e.g. when doing literature.

It is imperative that teachers pay attention to intensive grammar and language teaching from grade 8. You cannot expect a learner in grade to 12 to have mastered grammar if he/she has not been taught properly in the lower grades. Perhaps subject advisors could arrange workshops in order to equip teachers with the necessary skills to teach advertisements, cartoons, summary skills.

Finally, the CAPS document is a MUST for each and every teacher to have and to familiarize him/herself with what is expected to be taught and mastered by a learner by the time he/she reaches Grade 12. Textbooks are a necessary resource, but CAPS is the main guideline.