

EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT CHIEF DIRECTORATE

Home of Examinations and Assessment, Zone 6, Zwelitsha, 5600

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2019 NSC CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT:	English Home Language
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SECTION 1: (General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

Proficient English Home Language candidates fared extremely well in a question paper that has accessible and topical texts. However, weaker learners struggled to grasp questions that required insight and in-depth understanding. In Question One *discuss, comment and critically discuss* as instruction words in 1.4, 1.6, and 1.10 are clearly overlooked and candidates merely respond on a literal level and cannot earn the full THREE marks for these higher order questions. There is a definite trend throughout the question paper that many candidates are simply unable to earn the third mark as they merely describe what they see in the texts as opposed to understanding that an advertiser or cartoonist uses the visual medium to convey setting/ tone/attitude to his audience. The question, as has been the trend for the past years, that boosts learner performance is the summary (Question Two) as quoting verbatim is not heavily penalised. There were reservations about the instruction of the summary, '*the political censorship of the internet*'; however, learner performance indicated that the summary was accessible to most candidates. Learner performance in Questions 3 and 4 was encouraging and this is directly related to the fact that there was one advertisement for Q3 and the accessibility of the texts. Question 5 was extremely encouraging as even weaker candidates managed to score at least 40% of the total mark. Many stronger centres scored a 100% in Q5. Many learners who are not at an ENGHL level are severely disadvantaged as they struggle with the subtle nuances of language and this is reflected in their overall performance.



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?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Q1.1 was generally well answered as candidates were able to apply their knowledge of the function of the rhetorical question: engagement of the reader and to bring the topic in sharp focus.Learners must be discouraged from lifting blindly as this was evident in Q1.2 where full marks were not scored. Most candidates highlighted the comparison where humans fall short of the precision and speed of humans.The contradiction was apparent to most candidates in Q1.3. However, one mark was lost where the essence of the question was not focused on.A progression in cognitive level in Q1.4 showed an inability of many candidates to respond at the appropriate level.Many candidates interpreted this question as a test on stylistic technique and answered this aspect quite well. The tone of the aside, 'you heard me', was well answered.Stronger candidates grasped the irony and scored the full 3 marks commenting on the irony implicit in paragraph 6: It is ironic that machines would have power over human beings who are their creators.For Q1.8 many candidates scored full marks and discussed TWO ideas well. The idea of job loss/retraining/divide between social classes exacerbated/dilemma related to the rights of machines/negative impact on the economy were incorporated in answers.The 'unreliable electricity grid' was easily identified and at least 2 out of the three marks were scored here as the erratic electricity supply in South Africa is relevant and felt by all.Many candidates in Q1.9 could not identify the setting and gave vague answers to the effect of: 'they were in a public place'.Stronger candidates clearly gathered from the clues that this was a 'social gathering' and mentioned the shadows behind the robot and the man.The average generally for 1.10 was 2/3 as the responses all correctly identified the man's tendency to prioritise human life and the robot is more concerned about the car. The critical discussion was missing in many of the answers.1.11 was poorly answered as paragraph 4 of Text A and Text B were quoted from blindly. In some cases learners failed to refer to both components as well.

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

Q1.4 was approached from the consumer's perspective and not the manufacturer's marketing /manipulation point of view. The negative aspects of '**valuable intelligence**' for the consumer was overlooked. Many learners lifted large sections of the passage.

Q1.6 was poorly answered because vague examples of irony were given /blind quoting was evident.

Weaker candidates lifted more and commented/discussed less for 1.7.

Candidates fail to follow the instruction word which is '**COMMENT**' and were guilty of lifting from paragraphs 7 and 8.

Many candidates merely repeated the rhetorical question and also did not interpret the '**corporate buildings lit up**' as **wasteful/irresponsible**.

The '**relationship**' in 1.9 was interpreted as having a romantic meaning attached to it. The relationship was also described as a '**symbiotic relationship**'.

Q 1.10 was poorly answered by weaker candidates because the focus was on '**prioritise**' and its implications and not the '**differences**'.

The physical differences between the man and the robot were also discussed and that had no bearing on the priorities of each character for 1.10

1.11 was poorly answered because some candidates referred to the whole of text A and not specifically to paragraph 4.

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

- o Learners must be specific with responses and be guided by the line/paragraph (line 18: Q1.5) (paragraphs 7 & 8: Q1.7, paragraphs 9 & 10: 1.8). Full marks cannot be attained if both paragraphs are not referred to.
- o Learners must be taught to **comment/interpret/conclude** after identification of an implication.
- o Candidates must be taught to begin an answer where the stance is clear/do you **agree** with the **writer's viewpoint? Yes/No** the writer argues convincingly that South Africa is not ready for the Fourth Industrial Revolution because it has such unreliable electricity grids.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- It must be emphasised that the definition of a rhetorical question as 'a question that does not require an answer' is not sufficient to earn any marks.
- The aside is used for **emphasis** is also not enough to earn marks.
- Use '**yet**' and '**but**' when explaining irony to get both legs of the **IRONY**.
- **DO NOT QUOTE** unless instructed to do so.
- When asked for a viewpoint on whether TEXT B supports the views expressed in PARAGRAPH 4 candidates must be taught to identify which text they are discussing: The man in Text B believes that robots could make split-second decisions, whereas

human beings would grapple with ethical issues. SIMILARLY, Text A presents the views of military experts....

- 1.11 had two aspects to it: identifying what was happening when robots make split-second decisions (TEXT B) and the mechanized military decisions (TEXT A) AND then identifying the writer's scepticism '**or so they argue...**'. Most candidates missed the scepticism.

QUESTION 2

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

Candidates performed fairly well even though the instruction of summarising '**the political censorship of the internet**' was initially thought to be challenging. Candidates were not penalised for using the incorrect format and lifting from the passage. Non-adherence to two key instructions did not have a negative impact on learners' performance.

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

Learners grappled with the vocabulary of the passage.

The points were challenging for weaker candidates to identify.

Learners exceeded the word count.

Some responses included an introductory sentence and then the first point.

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

- All rough work must be cancelled.
- Learners must be taught to highlight/ bracket salient points in the passage and work from there.
- Instructions must be followed: a fluent paragraph is required and not point form, yet this instruction is overlooked.
- Guide candidates on how to do the summary in paragraph form.
- Do not EXCEED THE WORD COUNT.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- The key word/verb is omitted from the 'adapted' quote:
 - **'to control the political ... NARRATIVE**
 - **'the financial costs can run into millions of dollars for each day... THE INTERNET IS BLOCKED.**
- Learners must be encouraged to use full sentences and to start a sentence with a capital letter.
- Learners must be discouraged from writing the quotes, own words and then a paragraph. **THIS IS A WASTE OF PRECIOUS TIME!**
- Teach learners to read and follow all instructions precisely.
- Use connecting words to link ideas: e.g. **therefore, however, so.**
- The summary must be in the **third person** (he, she, it, they) even if the original passage is in the first person (I, we). Candidates are not writing about themselves.
- Repetition, listing examples and padding are to be avoided.
- Where the topic appears to be complicated, learners need to re-read it before they start so that they have a proper grasp of the content.

QUESTION 3

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

The performance was average to good because learners are visually inclined and had to focus solely on TEXT D. The NIKE logo resonates with the average teenager so it was extremely accessible and pertinent.

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

Answers are too general

- o The reader is persuaded to buy the product.
- o The advertisement attracts the reader's attention.

It is clear that candidates do not understand TONE.

- o The tone is positive.

For Q3.3 there was a lot of lifting and no critical discussion.

- o Inability to identify ONE persuasive technique and critically discuss.
- o 'You're warm. You're dry. You're nuts. The runner is crazy.

'The footwear is not clearly identifiable on the runner' was a response that cropped up quite often for 3.4 for as NO response. However, this was not enough for 3 marks.

There was a lot of lifting from the body copy which reveals that learners are unable to critically discuss.

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

Learners must be given a table that describes **TONE**, **ATTITUDE** and **MOOD**

Positive Tone/Attitude words			
Amiable	Content	Friendly	Pleasant
Amused	Dreamy	Happy	Proud
Brave	Encouraging	Hopeful	Relaxed
Calm	Energetic	Joyful	Romantic
Cheerful	Enthusiastic	Loving	Surprised
Compassionate	Excited	Optimistic	Sweet
Confident	Fanciful	Peaceful	Vibrant
Negative words / Attitude words			
Aggravated	Childish	Disgusted	Irritated
Agitated	Choleric	Disinterested	Passive
Angry	Cold	Furious	Shameful
Apathetic	Contradictory	Hateful	Superficial
Arrogant	Critical	Hurtful	Surly
Audacious	Desperate	Indignant	Tired
Boring	Disappointed	Insulting	Wrathful

Humour-Irony-Sarcasm Tone/Attitude words			
Bitter	Droll	Ironie	Quizzical
Comical	Facetious	Joking	Ridiculing
Cynical	Humorous	Mocking	Sarcastic
Disdainful	Insolent	Pompous	Satiric
Sorrow-Fear-Worry Tone/Attitude words			
Aggravated	Fearful	Numb	Resigned
Agitated	Gloomy	Ominous	Sad
Anxious	Grave	Pessimistic	Serious
Confused	Horrific	Pitiful	Somber
Disturbed	Nervous	Regretful	Upset

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Learners tended to answer Q3.3 vaguely, unsure of the range of persuasive techniques:

- **Second person pronoun/use of colloquial language**
- **Use of short, active sentences**
- **Jargon**
- **Anti-climax**
- **Emotive diction**
- **Visual image**
- **Bandwagon advertising**
- **Oxymoron**
- **Hyperbole**
- **Tricolon**

QUESTION 4	
(j)	General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Generally well answered because the cartoon was accessible and very much within the realm of experience of a grade 12 learner. The inclination to be vague/evasive is an ATTITUDE that any typical teenager can relate to.	
(k)	Why the question was poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to attain 2 marks in Q4.1 can be attributed to the inability to IDENTIFY the boy's and then followed by the EXPLANATION. 'He doesn't like his mother interfering in his business.' It was evident in some answers that the candidates were confused by the INSTRUCTION. Instead of focusing on the boy's ATTITUDE (frame 2) in response to his mother's question in frame 1, the attitude was based on the boy's reaction in frame 1. For Q4.2 there was an inability to identify the mother's TONE in frame 2. Instead of realizing that the mother was being SARCASTIC the mother's tone was incorrectly identified as curious/ questioning/interrogative. It was encouraging to note bold font/exclamation mark/hyphenated word in 'MO-OM' correctly identified. However, the reason for the EFFECTIVENESS was incorrectly explained as the boy shouting /screaming as opposed to indignation/annoyance/frustration. Failure to identify the visual and verbal cues used in frame 5 meant that full marks for Q4.4 could not be attained. 	
(l)	Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the cartoon in its entirety, do not refer to frames in isolation. Learners must be taught vocabulary related to question formats and how to interpret. When asked to refer to a picture/cartoon/graphic, learners must look at the visual clues/detail and avoid generalisations such as facial expressions/ shouting. Learners must study mark allocation and actually study the frames and provide relevant responses. 	
(d)	Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Q4.1: The attitude was identified as rude/abrupt/embarrassed. ➤ Q4.1: Body language was explained, 'he was turning away from his mother' and not the ATTITUDE. ➤ Q4.4 focused on frame 6 instead of frame 5. ➤ Discourage inappropriate/foul language to explain anger/frustration. 	

QUESTION 5
(m) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
There was a definite improvement in the performance in question 5 compared to previous years. It is encouraging that the function of the hyphen (compound adjective) , dash (additional information) and part of speech (adverb/differently) in Q 5.1.1,5.1.2,5.1.3. were correctly identified.
(n) Why the question was poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
<p>Q5.3 into was two words: in to</p> <p>Q5.4 Failure to follow the instruction: Heavy, leaden was given as the answer.</p> <p>The instruction clearly states, 'Write down the redundant word in paragraph 2.</p> <p>Q5.5 Started the passive voice with a subject.</p> <p>Q.5.7 Failure to correct sentence with a subject.</p>
(o) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terminology needs constant revision. • Colloquialism/slang/jargon • Concord in as many situations as possible. • Active and passive voice. • Parts of speech. • Adverbial/adjectival clauses • Misrelated/dangling participle • Split infinitive • Comma splice error • Ambiguity • Malapropisms • Redundancy/Tautology • Function of punctuation marks: hyphen, dash, parenthesis • Prefixes/suffixes • Spelling rules • Sentence structure
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
<p>Q5.5 pronoun error: Write the entire sentence.</p> <p>Q5.8 The tense is incorrect. eat too much: ate too much</p> <p>The difference between colloquial/formal register must be taught.</p> <p>Ensure that the entire sentence is rewritten correctly: spelling, tense, omission of words.</p>