



O LEVEL

ENGLISH

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EIGHTH EDITION

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HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU

The Turn-Up College English Language Study pack will help you because:

- It contains the essential content for your GCSE and Zimsec course without the extra material that will not be examined
- It contains progress checks and questions to help you confirm your understanding
- It gives sample GCSE questions and Zimsec questions with summary answers and expert advice to improve the answers.

FIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PASS GRADE

1. **Practise the kinds of questions you will need to answer.** As part of your preparations for the exams, you should make sure you are completely clear about the kinds of question you will need to answer. You should have practised writing answers to these kinds of questions, both throughout the course and as part of your revision programme.

2. **Read the question carefully.** Many students fail to answer the actual question set. Perhaps they misread the question, or answer a similar one they have studied during revision. To avoid doing this, read the question once right through, then re-read it more slowly. Some students underline or highlight key words as they read through the question. Questions set for GCSE English often ask you to give your views on a topic. Make sure you express your ideas clearly and, where necessary, support your ideas with appropriate references and evidence.

3. **Plan your answer**

Planning what you are to write is a very important part of answering the question, Essays written without any planning are usually poorly done, structured and rambling and, consequently score low marks. Do not think that time spent planning your work is wasted. Careful planning will mean that you produce a much better answer.

4. **Write Accurately**

Make sure your responses are written as clearly and as accurately as you can. Poor spelling, punctuation, and grammar will mean that you will not score as highly as you might and can interfere with the clarity of what you want to say. Try to leave time to check through your work before the end of the exam.

5. **Keep a check on the time**

Time is a major factor in writing an examination answer. In most GCSE and Zimsec English examinations you will have about 45 minutes to answer a question. In order to ensure that you say all you want to say in the time and do not have to leave the answer unfinished, you need to time yourself carefully.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Planning your study

The final three months before taking your examination are very important in achieving your best grade. However, a good grade also depends on you following an organized approach throughout your course.

Your Study Plan

- Go over your topics again and again. Copy down on a sheet of paper the main points on that topic
- A couple of days later, try to write out these ideas and key points from memory. Check differences between what you wrote originally and what you wrote later
- If you have written your notes on a piece of paper, keep this for revision later
- Try some questions in the book and check your answers
- Decide whether you have fully mastered the topic and write down any weaknesses you think you have.

2. Preparing a Revision Programme

In the last three months before the final examination go through the list of topics in your Examination Board's specification to identify those topics you feel you need to concentrate on. It is usually tempting to spend valuable revision time on the areas you already know well, but balance this with time you spend improving your knowledge of the topics about which you feel least confident.

When you feel confident about all the topics, spend time studying and trying past exam questions. Each time you must check your answer with those given. In the final couple of week, go back and re-read your summary sheets, notes or previous answers (or your markings in the book)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

It is well known that ordinary level English Language is a compulsory course in the Zimbabwean secondary schools curriculum. In industry and in tertiary institutions, a success in 'O' Level English Language is a must. It is therefore a standing fact that everyone must pass 'O' Level English Language. But from practical experience this requirement is not easy to meet for most students. The rate of failure has remained higher in this subject. It is even amazing that some students succeed in all other subjects in the exam but fail in the English Language course. The generic question that arises here is whether such students do not know English Language or whether they had some specific problem with the Examination itself. Experience has shown that remedial methods in this subject have yielded a 100% success with students who had failed the subject at the first sitting and even at subsequent sittings. Amazingly some students who fail the subject will be very fluent and eloquent in oral speech, but when it comes to writing the examination they fail. Why so?

Knowing English Language, speaking it and writing the examination may be different things, requiring different skills. This awareness has enlightened us and inspired us to produce a manual for success in English Language. Practical methods of imparting the requisite skills are demonstrated in this study pack. This practical approach begins by identifying the independent aspects of the language examination, defining them, disclosing their rationale or essence and indicating their value contribution to the whole examination. Management of examination time and verification techniques is emphasized in the study pack- an aspect that is not so much considered in some traditional textbooks.

Without departing from the customary ethic of constant practice and wide reading of novels and other literature, this study pack stresses the importance of the student's awareness of the principles of English Language examinations success. These principles had not been mentioned or included in the traditional textbooks. Therefore this aspect is an innovation of this study pack and so gives it a unique character in the study of 'O' Level English Language. We will proceed to the contents of this study pack with the conviction that for the first time we are preparing for 'O' Level English language examinations, on the basis of principles of English Language Examinations Success, - a manual for success.

Examination Preparation skills

Introduction

This study pack deals with the five major examinable aspects of the English language examination. These are:

Paper one

1. Free composition/imaginative writing
2. Guided /situational composition

Paper two

3. Comprehension
4. Summary
5. Appropriate register

We have structured these revision questions and answers according to the classification above. We feel this approach gives a student adequate practice on a particular aspect of the examination in isolation. In other terms a student with difficulty in a particular aspect of the examination can focus on that aspect independently from the other aspects. This approach also provides a lot of practice time to students to revise various aspects of the examination and attain a degree of competency in each of the weak aspects. We sincerely acknowledge the importance of various language structures as integral aspects in the examination, however, we feel that these were adequately dealt with in the main study pack and success in any of the aspects outlined in the study pack heavily depends on the learner's ability to use appropriate language structures to communicate ideas clearly

The English language examination

The English language examination consists of two papers i.e. paper one and paper two. Paper one is based on composition writing, and basically tests our ability to use the English language to create meaningful composition. Time allocated for this paper is one hour and thirty minutes (1hr, 30mins). Section A focuses on open compositions and students must choose a topic from a number of given titles and develop a composition. Section B is compulsory and students are expected to write a situational composition following guidelines or instruction given in the situation. The total marks for this component is 50 that is: 30 marks for section A and 20 marks for section B. Paper two is primarily based on the assessment of comprehension skills. This paper consists of a comprehension passage with an assessment worth 20 marks. There is

also a comprehension summary based on that particular passage worth 20 marks. Section B consists of 5 register situations worth 10 marks. The total marks for paper two add up to 50

Critical examination study hints

The final examination marks the end of a two year course. Therefore preparation for the examination begins on the first day of your form three class, through to the final examination. English language is peculiar in the sense that, unlike in other subjects, we can not claim to have completed the prescribed syllabus. This is because this is a skills based subject whose focus is the mastery of various skills that enable us to be well versed with the language. Hence we are examined on our ability to use the language as compared to knowing about the language. Therefore the most important thing is to interact in as much as possible with various forms of the English language. Thus, we should expose ourselves to literature or any material written in English language as well as making an attempt to communicate using the language. Doing so will enable us to acquire critical linguistic skills that can not be obtained during the English lesson. The English language lesson would therefore give us a room to further develop our skills and prepare us for the examinations

Presentation skills

One aspect which is usually overlooked by students is the neatness of their work. It is important to present our answers in a very clear and logically sequenced manner. We should be conscious at all times of the need to write legibly and avoid making common mistakes in spelling and grammar. The examination rubric (instruction) clearly states that mistakes in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be penalized in any part of the paper,

1. Write Accurately

Make sure your responses are written as clearly and as accurately as you can. Poor spelling, punctuation, and grammar will mean that you will not score as highly as you might and can interfere with the clarity of what you want to say. Try to leave time to check through your work before the end of the exam.

2. Keep a check on the time

Time is a major factor in writing an examination answer. In order to ensure that you say all you want to say in the time and do not have to leave the answer unfinished, you need to time yourself carefully.

3. Prepare adequately for the component to be written

In the final examination, we are generally aware of which component is to be written well in advance. Therefore it is very logical to prepare for that component well in time. This will prepare your mind for the examination and will indeed improve the quality of the presentation of the answer.

4. Plan your answers appropriately

The wise saying reads “failing to plan is planning to fail”. In the examination most students succumb to the exam fever syndrome and mess up what could have been good answers. Preparation before and during the examination creates the basis for examination success. It is important to take time to go over the instructions on the question paper as well as going through all the questions given before starting writing. This enables you to familiarize with the question paper and be able to realise any unnecessary tension associated with the examination. One important aspect to note is that, fellow students around you would be engaged in all sorts of activities, for example some may start writing when you have not yet decided on the write topic and make you feel as if you are behind time. The worst thing is to panic, stay calm, remember you are your own time manager and, anyway, it is better to hand in quality unfinished work as compared to complete jumbled work

5. Arrange your pages in order

At the end of the examination, take time to carefully go over your work, checking for any obvious errors or omissions. Place your pages in sequential order and number them appropriately. Remember to cross out any rough work.

Hints on examination marking

Paper one:

Paper one is marked on an impression based standard. In other words, there is no correct or wrong answer as may be the case with other content based subjects. Section A of paper one deals with free compositions. A good composition should develop the topic in question in a very creative manner in order to score highly. The presentation should be well structured in terms of language usage, sentence and word choice as well as have defined paragraph units. Linguistic and grammatical errors should be kept to a bare minimum or avoided at all cost. Simple mistakes degrade the general impression of our work and therefore will lead to a low score.

Section B of paper one deals with a guided or situational composition. The main trust of the marking process is on the ability of a candidate to stick to the demands of the question. In other words the main assessment is on your ability to use the given notes to develop a logically sequenced composition. Once examiners feel that you have kept to the boundary of the question, they then assess your linguistic and creative abilities. Therefore you will not score highly if, for example, you kept to the line of the question but failed to write a convincing account based on given notes, or your work is filled with a lot of grammatical errors

Paper two

Paper two is based on the assessment of various comprehension skills. That is, it tests our understanding of the given comprehension passage. Marking is therefore question specific, that is, incorrect responses to comprehension questions will not score any marks. It is important therefore to make sure that our answers are clear and straight to the point in as much as possible. Summary questions are examined according to one’s ability to extract and summarize relevant information from the given passage. Section B of paper two deals with the most appropriate response to a given situation. In other

words a response may sound correct but be viewed as being inappropriate for the given situation.

N.B: The Turn up college English language study pack makes an in-depth assessment of the issues raised above. We therefore recommend that this question and answer module be used in conjunction with the main study pack for best results

General revision and study hints

Having looked at the general expectations of the English language examination, we dedicate the next section to giving important study and examination hints on different aspects of the examination.

Paper one (section A)

- During the course of your study you should determine the best composition type that you can write on. By the time you sit for the examinations you should be in a position to know the composition type you shall answer, e.g. narrative, descriptive etc. This knowledge will help you in further strengthening your writing skills in that area.
- In the examination take time to first select a composition topic you are comfortable in. Do not be carried away by a topic or composition type you have never practiced or have been generally weak, stick to what you know.
- Make an attempt to draft a composition plan to guide you in your writing. Writing down ideas will enable you to make an outline of the most important points that you may include in your composition. In most cases students who do not write their ideas down only remember points that could have made a difference when the examination is over. Further more having a draft composition plan improves the general logical structure of your work as well as ensuring that you develop your composition consciously and hence become able to take note and correct silly mistakes
- Stick to the recommended word limit. You may be penalized for work that is too short or too long

Paper one (section B)

- During the course of study you should familiarize yourself with writing of different items that are examined in this section. These include, but are not limited to, formal and informal letters, reports, speeches and memos.
- Read and understand the given situation as well as the question instruction.
- Your answer should be based on the notes given and these should be well developed .Additional points should develop the composition further. In other ways the overall impression is based on your ability to respond to the requirement of the question

Paper two (Section A)

Comprehension

- A strong reading culture creates a very strong foundation on which we can develop strong comprehension skills. Therefore we should read widely .This improves our reading speed and enhances comprehension skills
- In the examination we should read the comprehension passage a number of times until we get a general direction of the events in the passage. Even if the

comprehension seems to be fairly simply, we recommend that one should go over the passage for at least three times

- Take note of the paragraphs where questions have been derived from. It does not make sense, for instance, to read the whole passage to find an answer to a question that has been derived from the first paragraph (all questions will indicate either the paragraph or line where the answer is)
- Take note of the number of marks allocated for each question. It is pointless therefore to write a long answer to a question that requires one to identify a single word. Your answers should be precise and meet the requirement of the marks allocated in each question
- The instructions given in the question paper recommend the manner in which we should present our answers. Therefore it is very important to present our answers in a very clear and concise manner.

Summary

- You should read and clearly understand the summary instruction.
- You should be able to delimit the boundary of the summary question. Remember that the summary question addresses a particular aspect raised by the question and this makes some aspects of the passage to be irrelevant
- You should be able to draw a summary plan where we write down points from the comprehension passage that is relevant to the demands of the summary question. This will help us to determine the number of words to add or remove in order to meet the word requirement set in the question
- You should familiarize yourselves with the use of discourse markers. They will enable us to link summary points clearly without changing the meaning
- Our summary should have a title that answers the demands of the summary question.
- Our summary should make use of the ten opening words given. These should become part of the main stream summary as compared to simply stating them and then failing to link them with the main stream summary
- Your summary should be written in a clear, logically sequenced manner, mistakes in grammar spelling will be penalized
- Your summary should state at the end the actual number of words used in brackets

Appropriate register

- Read and understand each given situation
- Choose the most appropriate response to that situation
- Situations usually require contradicting responses i.e. positive and negative
- Avoid repetition of responses for instance if you have used disrespectful in question one, you will not be accorded marks if you repeat the same term in question four
- Avoid the use of double negatives, for example, writing unhappy instead of not happy. Constant practice will help one to improve analysis of register situations
- Your answers should be clear and straight to the point

Concluding statement

We hope that the information we have given in this introduction will prove very useful in your study of English language. The next sections give adequate demonstrated practice on all core examinable areas we have outlined in this chapter. We wish you all the best in all your studies.

BASIS FOR THE STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Introduction

The study of English Language entails the approach of about 5 main components. These include comprehension, language structures, summary, composition and register. The components outlined above require particular skills to enable their mastery. This chapter gives a general overview of the above stated components. These will be further dealt with in a greater detail in the coming chapters.

A. Comprehension Skills

The purpose of learning comprehension work is to cultivate skills necessary for textual understanding. This means that a student should not only be able to comprehend passages but apply skills learnt to other situations inside or outside the classroom. Basic comprehension skills that teachers need to develop in their students through giving separate practice that is based on a particular skill, are outlined briefly below. In this module a section is set aside that focuses on the development, practice and application of each skill.

(i) Skimming

This involves the great quick overview of a given text. The main concern in the development of this skill is to get a general idea of the contents of the passage. Such an understanding forms the basis of deeper appreciation of textual content. Exercises to develop the skill of skimming are included in the approach section of the study pack.

(ii) Scanning

This involves the concentrated reading of a given passage looking for particular information. As can be noted this is a fairly higher order of skills that requires a lot of development and application practice on both the part of the teacher and the student. The mastery of the scanning ability places a learner of English Language on a better footing to appropriately respond to given questions and instructions.

(iii) Inference and deduction.

This entails the giving of contextual interpretation to words used in given passages. It should be observed that the two skills outlined above should be adequately mastered before someone can effectively apply the skill of inference and deduction on a given passage. Teachers and students alike are encouraged to make use of various texts so as to gain sufficient practice on the skills under discussion.

(iv) **Answering Questions**

Comprehension work demands an appropriate response to given questions. As such pupils should develop adequate question interpretation and analysis skills. This places them in a better position to correctly respond to an instruction. There has been a general observation of the fact that in an exam set-up candidates fail to answer but instead, copy whole sections of text from the passage which they feel contain glimpses of information required by the question.

Reading and listening skills in comprehension work should focus on developing the main comprehension skills outlined above. This will enable for a holistic approach to the learning and teaching of English comprehension which ultimately would lead to the development of an empowered English language graduate with the ability to fit well into the linguistic society.

B. Summary writing skills.

Summary writing is an aspect of comprehension. It is a general opinion that the development of summary skills should be dealt with in isolation from basic comprehension work, till such a time when there has been a general mastery of comprehension skills. Then two aspects can be consolidated. Summary writing basically involves the application of general comprehension skills discussed earlier. In summarization, there is a need to identify the question boundary and use discourse markers effectively. Later in this study pack, summary development and analysis shall be dealt with in the context of different summaries.

C. Language Structures

The appropriate mastery of English Language structures from the basis of the mastery of both oral and written English. As such teachers and students alike are encouraged to practice Language structure usage effectively. To that effect a lot of exercises are included in this study pack.

D. Register

Appropriate registers emphasise the practice of communication styles to various groups in society. The most fundamental skill is for students and teachers to analyse given situations carefully so as to come up with a number of background aspects to the register. These mainly include age, relationship between parties among others. It should be noted that the use of register should not be taught in total isolation from social values and norms. This trend has been observed at most times, with teachers only touching upon the aspect of register only as a component of the examination. Examenable as it is, the primary role of registers is to encourage the appropriate use of the English Language in real life situations. Teachers are thus encouraged to be very creative so as to make their students aware of good and bad aspects of behaviour or communication within their society. This approach will include in them a sense of self correction, in creating mainly acceptable individuals in societies and placing them indeed in a better position to do well in their register section in the examination.

E Composition

The composition paper in the examination is perhaps the most challenging. This can be attributed to a number of factors, chief of which is the failure by students to develop adequate writing skills as well as testing approach used by most teachers. This entails the testing of students by simply giving them questions and then there is a brief discussion on the topic. Pupils write the composition and remediation is rarely done after marking.

A composition is relatively a short story. As such, elements of the short story need to be sufficiently practised so as to enable the development of creative writing. Indeed students need to be exposed to a variety of literature genres as a point of reference. However the age-old call of English Language teachers that pupils should read widely without supervising what is being read or testing writing skill development needs to be corrected. Writing is a skill that needs to be developed from its simplest form to its most complex stages. This requires intensive skill training so as to enable sound acquisition of basic writing skills to develop good composition work.

Composition writing, for all types requires the development, acquisition and practice of writing skills outlined below:

(i) Planning

This involves the bringing up of ideas that may be included in a composition. This requires the development of a plot sequence framework which will give the general direction of the story. Students need to develop character profiles for their stories as well as outline in time and setting. Such an approach places the student in a better position to write better refined pieces of work. The points outlined above shall be explored fairly in later chapters in this study pack.

(ii) Sentence Development

Different sentence types serve different purposes in the writing process. As such there is a great need to expose learners to a variety of sentence forms making them aware of how they can be developed and apply in the writing process. To achieve this there is a need for extensive research by teachers on sentence forms suitable for each composition type. Hence particular authors may be recommended to students. Such texts could be analysed during sentence development sessions.

(iii) Word Choice

Diction is gained through intensive practice and wide reading. The choice of words used in a composition is called diction. It creates the writer's intended impression of a setting or character or action. Learners should therefore not be restricted on word choice as this makes their work pedestrian or lukewarm. Therefore extensive word practice is encouraged so as to give language users a cutting edge in creative writing. It is a door that opens for readers to come into the texts and find meaning in a composition. Word practice is the door.

(iv) Paragraph development.

The skills outlined above should manifest themselves in well structured paragraphs whose sentences are linked and related in a friendly way. Pupils ought to know that a paragraph is a structural unit that can stand independently from other paragraphs within the same composition. There is a basic tendency by most learners of language to simply put one paragraph.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter objectives

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Understand the fundamental principles for English Language examinations.
- Apply the principles on particular aspects of the examination.
- Understand the purpose of comprehension work
- Identify and explain the basic comprehension skills
- Apply correctly the language structures in written work
- Acquire a basic understanding of registers
- Acquire a basic understanding of the importance of composition work.
- Apply composition skills in composition writing
- Apply comprehension skills on questions on passages in this book.
- Apply summary skills and respond to summary questions in this book.

PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAMINATIONS SUCCESS

It is declared in this study pack that there is no subject without guiding principles. If they have not been mentioned in the earlier textbooks, it is a regrettable omission. Principles are basically rules. Therefore we believe in rules of tackling and passing English language examinations. This module identifies some nine (9) fundamental principles. These are:

1. Understand what is to be done
2. Follow instructions carefully
3. Choose what you know best
4. Manage time wisely
5. Proof-read all answers
6. Each aspect has its own techniques
7. The economics of time and marks
8. Risk management
9. Pass by tricks

Let us examine each of this one-by-one:

Principle 1

Understanding what is to be done:

This is an overview principle. The candidate must have an overall understanding of the English language examination; how many papers are to be written; the duration of

each paper; which one comes first, and knowing how each paper can best be approached. By this principle the candidate knows about the examination before he writes it. This principle fosters confidence, creates motivation and abolishes exam-fright.

Principle 2

Follow instructions carefully:

All examinations are governed by instructions. Never take any instruction for granted. Search for it and read it, at least twice and be sure you have understood what you are supposed to do. Ability to follow instructions accurately is a skill that is tested in the English language examination. Failure to follow instructions attracts a penalty e.g. if your summary must be 160 words, if you exceed this limit or go short of it you are given a penalty for that. Even an instruction on spacing of answers must be obeyed.

Principle 3

Choose what you know best

The examination offers options e.g. in section A of paper 1, you have to choose one out of 8 topics. In paper 2, question 2 (e) requires the candidate to choose 5 words out of 8 words. The tip here is that the candidate must choose what he knows best. Some candidates may think that it gives a credit or some prestige to choose difficult questions. This is frivolous and suicidal. In examinations your absolute aim is to maximize marks. Doing what you know best is a crucial ingredient in the examination recipe.

Principle 4

Manage time wisely

Time is an asset as well as a liability in the examination. It must be properly managed. Time management involves two things: its proper use and its proper distribution. Once wasted it may not be recovered. Observe carefully the instructions on time distribution e.g. “you should not spend less than 50 minutes on this section”, or “you should spend not less than 30 minutes on this section. It is common for some candidates to devote more time to one question at the expense of another. There are no additional marks to that favoured question. Moreover marks are not transferable from one question to another. Time utilization is sacred in all examinations. Do not take anytime to decide to leave a difficult question. Decide quickly and jump to the next, sparing its time. The reason for jumping, is not to abandon it forever, but to avoid overstressing the mind. Overstressing the mind results in fatigue, embarrassment; frustration and panicking. On time-management it must also be remembered that speed is a crucial factor, but over speeding is very dangerous. Using the right speed will ensure accuracy.

Principle 5

Proof-read all answers

This principle's aim is a verification and checking of accuracy. It occurs very frequently in examinations that candidates make omissions, grammatical errors, spelling errors and punctuation errors. These errors are penaltable. So they have to be curtailed in some way. The only way to check these errors is by proof-reading the answers. But the inherent question may be whether there is any time allocated for this. Tacitly yes. The time for this is there. But such time may be obscured by poor speed and mismanagement. The time allocated for any examination is undoubtedly sufficient for everything required in the examination. Be fast and steady in order to minimize errors and in order to get time to proof-read your answers. How do you proof-read? There are two ways of doing this viz: Immediately after finishing an answer, and, or after finishing all the questions. This study pack recommends that you proof-read immediately after finishing the answer. The advantage for this is that the mind will still be fresh on this particular issue.

Principle 6

Each aspect has its own techniques

For every aspect i.e. comprehension, summary; registers; compositions, there is a method or certain techniques that have to be applied when tackling it. These methods and techniques are not obvious things, and they are not mentioned in the textbooks. As an example: A comprehension passage certainly has to be read twice before attempting the questions; on summary, points have to be ticked in the passage and jotted on a rough paper.

A rough draft must be prepared before a final summary is prepared. Own words have to be used to shorten some long sentences in the passage so as to limit your summary to the required length. Therefore methods and techniques applying to each aspect must be known and applied practically.

Principle 7

The economics of time and marks

Time and marks are resources of the examination. They should be handled economically. Therefore your time should be viably utilized. What does this mean? Let us consider the English Language paper 2 for a while to illustrate this principle: The paper is 2 hours long. Summary and comprehension have to share 90 minutes (1½ hrs) while section B takes 30 minutes. Summary is 20 marks. Comprehension is also 20 marks. But in comprehension marks are distributed in bits of one mark or two marks. But in summary a total score of marks is determined. The mark may not necessarily be a reflection of the number of points you have included, because it is not only the points that are counted in summary testing. Therefore, at any cost, the candidates must complete the summary question. A comprehension passage may be difficult. Some one-mark questions may be difficult. Any wise person cannot spend ten minutes struggling with a one-mark question. On average the comprehension questions may be given two to three minutes. This means that for the 16 or 17 comprehension questions you will spend about 40 minutes. The careful reading of the passage will take (ideally) 70 minutes, while section B (Registers) takes 30 minutes. When things get too tough for you with some two or three one-mark questions, you better set aside those questions until you are through with the summary. It is

economically wise to do this. What you lose in failing to finish the summary is far too decisive than the three marks lost by failing to finish some three one-mark questions. In short, this principle is about the wisdom of noticing delicate matters of marks and time especially if the comprehension passage is difficult.

Principle 8

Risk management

There is always a risk in any examination. In English language there may be more than one risk: the risk of failing; the risk of failing to finish the exam and the risk of going off topic. If we know about these risks we better seek ways of minimizing them. That is risk management in examinations. Failing is a reflection of unpreparedness or poor learning, while failure to finish is a reflection of poor time management and speed. Going off-topic is a reflection of failure to understand (see principle 1). Therefore risk management is possible once you are aware of the risks that exist in the English language examination. Know about them early and practice counteracting them during practices before the actual examination.

Principle 9

Pass by tricks

An examination in English language comes once in two years. ‘O’ Level English Language is written after completing forms 3 and 4. A course that took so long to cover is examined in only 2 hrs. This sounds rather unfair. There is no course work assessment. So it means that you should make it or not in just 2 hours. In such a situation you need your own tricks to manoeuvre (Manoeuvre means to create or employ skillful stratagems) through the examination. One of the important tricks is creating good impression to the marker. There are two ways of doing this: start well, with things you know very well and demonstrate excellence. (2) A neat presentation. These two tricks send some psychological impressions that are crucial. They carry a credit with them. (3) Where an answer is difficult to express in own words, it is wise to extract it verbatim i.e. in the exact words of the passage, unless question expressly demand that you must put it in your own words.

APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES

The principles we have discussed above are practical tools. They are universal tools in the sense that every candidate has to apply them. In fact those who have passed English Language have used these principles but perhaps without being aware of it. The application of these principles is holistic. This means that all the nine principles are applicable in every English language examination be it in June or October. The important thing to take note of is that these tools should exist as part of the student’s consciousness not as crammed data. Just know that in order to pass the examination you should apply these principles in your approach to the examination, where and when necessary.

Now we shall examine how the principles outlined above apply to the English. Language composition examination.

The fundamental preparation for composition work is wide reading. As we have outlined in the creative writing section learners can only improve their writing ability through constant practice and wide reading. Therefore one should be aware of the type of composition one is strongest in. Therefore as one browses through the topics one certainly needs to tread on familiar ground, i.e. by choosing a topic that he/she is comfortable with for example you may not attempt a discursive topic when you are not confident in that type or have never given it sufficient practice.

Topic selection is very crucial. This is not the time to experiment with new topics. It is wise to tread on safe waters you are used to than to attempt the deep end. Selection of a familiar topic (type) for the composition saves time and reduces or eliminates incidents of having to stop and start all over again.

It is important that you allocate a few minutes of your time to prepare planning. Remember **FAILING TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL**. It is imperative for to quickly draw up points for use in your chosen composition. Re-order your points into paragraphic units. This has been dealt with exhaustively in the creative writing sections. Remember once you have your point in black and white you will not forget then. There is nothing as disheartening than to remember a good point or phrase when the exam is long over. Therefore planning is essential.

The second important aspect is time management. Remember you have to write two compositions within the given time period. As such stick to the time frame recommended in the question proper. There is a general tendency among learners to spend a lot of time on section A (free composition) and only to rush through the situational section. Imagine scoring a well deserved 24 out of 30 in section A and disappointing 6 out of 20 in section B, certainly the ultimate grade will be low. Therefore allocate sufficient time to plan, organize and write your composition.

There is also the aspect of length. Stick to the recommended length. There is a tendency to get carried away. When writing topics you are comfortable with, you end up writing long compositions that end up being meaningless. Remember it is quality not quantity of your work that gives good grades in this paper.

The aspect of presentation cannot be over emphasized. Composition work should have a clear outline and logical sequence of events. Use of phrases or new words that you are not sure of is not encouraged. One will never please the examiner in such a way. However use of simple expressions, well used, may give one a better score than one who has chosen to flourish his work with a lot of unnecessary phrases. These reduce originality in ones work. Therefore as you read widely during the course of your study, you will develop your own life style of creative writing. So go on and be yourself in the examination.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter objectives

By the end of this chapter students should be able to:

- Identify the linguistic structural aspects commonly used in oral and written work.
- Use correctly the appropriate linguistic structural aspects in oral and written communication.
- Construct sentences that are free from any grammatical error.
- Use language structures correctly in compositions, summary, registers and comprehension answering.

SUPPORTING LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

Introduction

Communication in English Language, both oral and written needs the appropriate application of various language structures. This section is therefore intended to give users a brief introduction to the usage of language structures. It should be noted that the explanations or practice exercises given in this module cannot be exhaustive. Users are therefore strongly encouraged to enhance their knowledge of language structure through use of a variety of language texts and wide reading.

Relevance of language structures:

The accurate usage of linguistic structural aspects enhances the mastery of a story. Very often language structures are confused or misused. We shall start by looking at basic word forms:

The verb and its tenses

In language, the verb is the most important component because it is the one component that carries the meaning and the sense of a statement. Depending on the time period that the communication refers to, the verb will adjust its tense or mode in order to convey sense. If the verb is not transformed into the correct time mode then the statement will not convey clear sense, hence a grammatical mistake. Grammar is all about the right Verb in the correct tense and concordial agreement with other language components. Therefore the verb and its tenses must be mastered.

What is a verb?

The verb is defined simply as “a doing word.” It depicts action or the act itself. Examples of verbs are: Play, cry, run, sing, walk, shout, dance, laugh, choose, take etc.

Verbs and Tense Rules

1. All verbs originally exist in the Present Simple tense e.g Walk, Play, Cry, touch. They transform into the following tenses:

a) Present continuous tense e.g walk-ing; play-ing, cry-ing; touching.

Usage:

He is walk-ing to school

They are play-ing cards at the table

She is cry-ing bitterly

- i) Please notice that the tense is applied in an action that is continuing now.
- ii) The tense is always used together with the auxiliary (helping verbs) “**is**” and “**are**” if the subject is singular or plural respectively

NB: This tense in most normal cases cannot be used in any type of composition writing except in situational compositions.

b) The Past tense (simple past)

The verb is transformed into the tense by adding (-ed) to the verb e.g walk-ed; play-ed; cry-ed;

Usage:

He walked a long distance

They play-ed a good game

She cry-ed bitterly

- i) Please notice that the tense is used in an action that has happened in the past. It may be the near or far past.
- ii) You can use this tense together with an auxiliary verb. “**is**” or “**was,**” and “**were**” if the subject of the sentence is singular or plural respectively e.g He is Kicked out of the classroom. She was knocked down by a car. They were expelled from the school

NB: This tense is popularly used in the narrative, the descriptive and the discursive compositions. It is also the tense you use in summary writing.

c) The Past Continuous Tense

This tense is formed by adding (-ing) to a verb that is preceded by the auxiliary verbs “**was,**” or “**were**” when the subject of the sentence is singular or plural respectively, and the time of the action is past e.g.

He was eat-ing breakfast.

They were eat-ing breakfast

My brother was smoking ganja

Their sisters were quarrelling over rumours

- i) Please notice that the tense is used in an action that was continuing in the past.
- ii) You cannot use the auxiliary “**is**” in this tense i.e. if you want to refer to some action in the continuous past.

NB: This tense is applicable in narrative and descriptive composition writing and also in narrative and descriptive talking.

d) The present perfect tense

This tense is denoted by adding (-en) to the root verb, and is always followed by the auxiliary “**has**” or “**have**” for singular or plural subjects respectively

e.g. has eat-en or has been eaten
has spok-en or has been spoken
have fall-en
have swoll-en

In some verbs this tense is also denoted by adding (-t) to the root verb that is accompanied by the auxiliary “**has**” or “**have**”

e.g. has slep-t
has kep-t
have swep-t

Usage

Marry has eat-en lunch
Jane has spok-en good English
They have fall-en asleep
He has kep-t a few dollars
They have swept- the classrooms.

- i) Please notice that the tense is used in an action that has happened in a perfect manner in a present time.
- ii) Please remember that the pronoun “**I**” will always go with the auxiliary “**have**” if you are using the present perfect tense e.g I have begun writing.
I have eaten beans
Never say ‘**I has**’ (it’s wrong)
- iii) This tense is applicable in narratives, in discursive writing, in reports and in letters.

The Past Perfect

This tense is identified by adding “**had**” to a past tense verb as follows:

- (i) By the time David arrived the match had begun.
- (ii) Monica had eaten all the food.
- (iii) She had slept late washing all the utensils.

The function of the past perfect tense is to help us to show a relationship between two different times in the past e.g a relationship between the simple past and the past future can be shown as follows:

- (i) I had hoped that Mr. Jones would be waiting for me
- (ii) Patience had thought that the surgeon would enquire about her.
- (iii) She had known that he would definitely come.

The past perfect tense is used in narrative and descriptive writing.

e) The future tense

This tense expresses an act in a time to come (the future). There are two auxiliaries that accompany the verb to give it a future tense. These are “**will**” and “**shall**”. In their past future tense they become “would” and “should”.

- i) Please note that the verb that is preceded by the future tense auxiliaries is always in the present tense, even if the auxiliary becomes a past future e.g
- i) I will go to the museum early.
- ii) After commuting back I will play.
- iv) I shall keep the words of the song in my memory
- iii) My young sister shall sing a nursery hymn.

The Past future e.g

- i) Ashel would go to the National University
- ii) He would play in the soccer team
- iii) I should sing in praise of God for his opportunity
- iv) I should keep the name of Jesus in my prayers.

**One of the most important rules of grammar to remember is this:
Whenever a verb is preceded by or has behind it the preposition “to” the verb must be kept in the simple present tense even if the time of the verb is past.**

e.g Last week I had to go for prayers

Next week I will have to pay the fees.

My sister had to apologize for the late coming

Test your understanding with these 1

Identify the tense of each of these verbs and use each verb in a sentence.

Pray, Kick, teach, laugh, swept, cried, sang, walking, felt, shaken, eaten, is eating, was swimming, will kill, had checked, shall pray, should prepare, would conquer, surrender, believe, was ploughing, were digging, have fallen, have kept, has drunken, has swallowed.

Test yourself with these 2

Identify the verbs in these sentences and give their tenses.

1. Tendai cooks breakfast in the morning
2. She kept all the coins in a cup that was bought by her father
3. I loved soccer when I was young.
4. They exchanged bad words
5. Rains have been pounding through the night
6. Cats and mice are bad enemies
7. He is good at mathematics

8. Tonny will succeed in his exams
9. He was studying very hard
10. She has been attacked by bees.
11. Percy has lost a pen
12. Jackals killed the kids in the night
13. Boys are used to fighting
14. I will punish you for that
15. Charles has begun his homework
16. Baboons climb mountains
17. He sold grain bags that he had stolen.

Test your understanding 3

Think of any ten verbs and use them in sentences correctly in the Past tense.

Test your understanding 4

Change the following verbs in brackets into their correct forms to complete the sentences;

1. Dawson (keep) his completed exercises away from his young brother.
2. He (shout) at his toddler brother to keep away from his satchel.
3. The same day (kill) a rat that was finding shelter in his bag
4. Dawson father (paint) the walls of their room that day.
5. The rat (bite) the edge of his satchel.
6. The young brother, Vandrose, (fall) from a small tree that day.
7. On the supper table they (drink) minerals from glasses.
8. Vandrose (cough) because he was too fast
9. Their mother (jump) and (wipe) his lips
10. The room (smell) of well-cooked food

Test your understanding 5

Correct the following sentences

1. I love to played soccer on Sundays.
2. Jane was cry in the morning
3. The game kick-off at 1 pm yesterday
4. You play well yesterday but you fail to make scores
5. He was bit by a snake.
6. I has two sisters
7. Next week they would play the match
8. Tariro get it right last week
9. They were run to school
10. The rains had begin when she left the office.
11. Donkeys and horse are relate
12. You will kicked the stone if you are not careful
13. I shall have to attend the meeting.
14. He preach the sermon so well yesterday
15. He marry last year but fail to paid Lobola.

Exercise 1

Correct the following sentences giving reasons for your answer.

1. His advises were very wise.
2. You was the first to do it.
3. The class was not able to agree
4. I have many works to do this morning.
5. The thunders and lightings frightened the little girl.
6. I have more than two dozens of books at home.
7. The poors say that riches does not make a man happy.
8. He sent a man to bring his luggages.
9. You should go and have your hairs cut: they are too long.
10. I am waiting for more information about this month.

Observation

One notable observation from the above exercise is that Root pronouns of the sentences are not in general agreement with the rest of the sentence structure. This means that the subject of each sentence should be in agreement with all the other word -forms in a particular sentence. We shall make an attempt to correct some of the sentences from the previous exercise.

Demonstration

- a) His advices were very wise
 Note that advices is an uncountable noun, and can not be used in plural form. When only one thing is meant we can say a piece of advice. Therefore the above sentence can be corrected to read:

His piece of advice was very good.

Note the balance that exists between various components of the sentence.

Demonstration i

- b) He sent a man to bring his luggages. Note that again luggage cannot be used in plural but singular form, hence the sentence can be corrected to read:

He sent a man to bring his luggage.

Demonstration ii

- c) You should go and have your hairs cut, they are rather too long. Note that hair can only be used in plural form when referring to a single thread, for example "he found two long hairs in his lunch. Generally hair is used to denote multiplicity of hair on one's head. As such they should be referred to in singular form. The sentence should read.

You should go and have your hair cut, it is rather too long.

The above demonstration highlights the aspect of nouns that can either be used in plural or singular forms. It should be noted that you should give yourself sufficient practice on noun forms so as to minimize instances of wrongly using nouns in both language and composition work.

Exercise 2

This exercise is a follow-up to previous work on singular and plural nouns. Write sentences showing whether the following nouns can be used in singular or plural.

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. News | 2. Money | 3. Advice | 4. Riches |
| 5. Dozen | 6. Knowledge | 7. Spectacles | 8. Gymnastics |
| 9. Furniture | 10. Damage | 11. hair | 12. Work |

Share your sentences with your friend and observe any areas where you did not use nouns appropriately. Your teacher will give you more practice on noun forms to test your mastery of appropriate noun usage.

Adjectives can be defined as words that qualify nouns. They give us a vivid picture of the nature of nouns. Effective use and mastery of adjectives lead to the development of good composition.

Exercise 3

Use his or her in the following sentences.

1. The father called _____ daughter to come
2. She gave the money to a neighbour of _____ uncle
3. He sent a letter to _____ niece
4. A woman lost _____ son
5. The father promised a nice gift to the eldest son _____ daughter
6. Samantha sent a letter to _____ brother

Observation! The most common error noted is the misuse of possessive pronoun like his, her, our, my, their and its. These are used to show that something belongs to someone. Teachers would certainly agree with me on the fact that generally male students use the male reference “he” even when making reference to feminine situations and similar patterns are observed among female students.

Exercise 4 In pairs write down a short paragraph or sentences that denote your understanding of sex reference. Your teacher will assist you to correct any notable mistakes and give you additional practice work.

Exercise 5

Re-write the following sentences with bracketed adjectives being used in the correct degree.

1. He is the (strong) boy in the whole school
2. Of the two sisters Mary is the (beautiful)
3. Ann is the (young) of my four sisters
4. Peter is the (old) of the two brothers
5. This is the (good) story I have ever read
6. Which do you like (good) tea or coffee
7. Iron is the (useful) of all matters
8. The Zambezi is the (large) river in Southern Africa

9. Which of the two boys is (tall)
10. George is (bad) than his brother.

Observation

The exercise above was an assessment of comparative and superlative adjectives. It is important to use the appropriate degree to comparison in order to come up with vivid description of nouns in your work.

Demonstration i

He is the (strong) boy in class

The form of the adjective in brackets is not in harmony with the rest of the sentence. The adjective has to be in its superlative form so as to vividly qualify the noun. As such the sentence should read:

He is the strongest boy in class.

Demonstration ii

This is the (good) story I have ever read. As in the above demonstration, the adjective in brackets has to take its superlative form in order to qualify the sentence. Hence it should read:

This is the best story I have ever read.

Demonstration iii

Which of the two boys is (tall)

The above situation is giving a comparative assessment. This is because two people are being compared. The correct form of the sentence should read.

Which of the two boys is taller.

Now correct the following, giving reasons for your corrections. Your teacher will assist you with sentences where you encounter difficulties. This test is recommended for pairs or group work.

Exercise 6

1. Chitungwiza is smaller than Harare
2. Landon is the Larger city in England
3. He is the better student from all
4. Jabu is more stronger than his brother
5. I am two years older than my sister
6. Which is the heaviest you or I?
7. Which of these three girls is elder?
8. The boy's manners are more good than his brothers
9. Which of the boys is smaller from the class
10. Mount Everest is the higher mountain in the world.

It is observed that the use of some adjectives is often confused. The following exercises are intended to give students practice in appropriate use of Adjectives. These can be done either as individual or group exercises. These serve to develop the necessary skill in using adjectives in continuous writing.

Exercise 7

Use some or any in these sentences.

1. I have _____ new books at home
2. There are not _____ flowers in the garden
3. Have you _____ brothers in school
4. Have I _____ letter this morning
5. This magazine has _____ beautiful pictures

Exercise 8

Use the adjective many or much in sentences to show your understanding of how they are used. Your teacher may have a preliminary discussion on quantifiable adjectives and guide you in developing your initial sentences.

Exercise 9

Fill in the gap with one of the adjectives in brackets

1. He sat down and said nothing _____ (farther, further)
2. Is that the _____ edition of the Gazzettee? (last latest)
3. Wash your hands if they are not _____ (Clear, clean)
4. A prize was given to _____ one of the best actors (each, every)
5. He knows _____ words than his brother (many, more)
6. Several people were _____ when the train ran off the lines (wounded, injured)
7. John is _____ than his cousin. (higher, taller)
8. Jack is five years old: he is too _____ to go to school (small, young)
9. George is my _____ brother (elder, older)
10. My brother Sam is _____ than I (older, elder)

It should be noted that students should be aware of the different forms of adjectives in general Language usage. Teachers and tutors should assist students to identify common adjective errors as to place them in a better position to avoid or minimize such errors in future language and composition assignments.

Exercise 10

Fill in the blanks with one of the nouns in brackets

1. The ancient _____ of Greece is an interesting study (story, history)
2. His _____ swelled and he cannot get his shoe on (foot, leg)
3. The _____ spoil the game (wind, air)
4. Mr. Jones is my lawyer and I have been his _____ for many years (client, customer)
5. We have a long _____ to learn by heart (poem, poetry)
6. He can play the guitar and other _____ (instruments, organs)
7. The _____ of Nyanga is very beautiful (scene, scenery)
8. There was not much _____ anywhere (shades shadow)
9. The ship was sinking in the _____ of the ocean (middle, centre)
10. The boys of the top class will do a _____ at the end of the year (theatre, play).

Pronouns form an integral part in our study of language structures. They reduce the monotony of continued repetition of Nouns, thereby causing a notable variation in the form or structure of the sentence. Pronouns take a variety of forms, but the underlying principle pertaining to their usage is to decide when and how they can be used.

Exercise One

Rewrite the following exercise crossing out every unnecessary pronoun.

1. The prizes they were given to the boys.
2. The girl she said nothing
3. The teacher gave us an exercise to do it.
4. He went home and he bought his book.
5. The book which it is on the table is mine.
6. Students who are good at their lessons they get good marks.
7. He gave us a football to play with it.
8. The people having seen the game they went away.
9. The headmaster I have seen him just now
10. The scorpion it has a string in its tail.

Observation

One believes that most language users encounter the problem outlined by the above exercise. Indeed a lot of teachers have made an attempt to teach their learners appropriate use of pronouns and nouns albeit with limited success. The challenge of the repetition of subjects or objects in sentences stems from two factors firstly communicative speech has few grammatical rules. It is acquired through environmental experiences, such as media forms, and general interaction within society. As such there are no hard and fast guidelines or how to communicate well in the English Language. However written communication has a set of rules that have to be applied in order to write fairly well. Secondly learners do not substitute nouns for pronouns but tend to use both concurrently.

Demonstration i

The teacher should guide students in identifying nouns and pronouns in the given sentences. Once students are able to separate nouns from pronouns then it makes it easier for them to use them appropriately in written and oral work.

Demonstration ii

The girl she said nothing.

We first have to identify the main subject in this sentence. Note that there is a repetition of the subject. The pronoun “she” also refers to the girl. Put plainly the above sentence before it is corrected reads.

The girl said nothing.

Therefore it is important to be very careful when making reference to nouns and pronouns because repetition of subject or object in a sentence spoils otherwise the good work.

Demonstration iii

The teacher gave us an exam to do it.

The above example shows a repetition of the object in a sentence: the pronoun 'it' referred to in the exercise, as such, should be left out. The corrected sentence should read.

The teacher gave us an exercise to do.

Exercise 2

In groups or pairs create your sentences to test your understanding of the use of nouns and objects in given sentences. Your teacher may guide your sentence work as well as give you more practice work.

Exercise 3

Put relative pronouns in each of the following.

1. That is the boy _____ came yesterday
2. The man _____ I spoke to is my brother
3. The girl _____ mother is ill has left school
4. This is the pen _____ I bought
5. I cannot repeat all _____ I heard
6. He is a boy _____ I know you can trust
7. She is the girl _____ we thought had been ill
8. He is the tallest man _____ I ever saw
9. She is the same _____ she has always been
10. I like to help those _____ I have known and _____ I know.

Demonstration i

Relative pronouns should show the relationship between a subject and object within a given sentence. When choosing pronouns to fill in the above sentence one should make sure that the most appropriate noun has been selected, for example.

The man _____ I spoke to is my brother.

The most appropriate pronoun is (whom), but most learners would certainly have used who

The man whom I spoke to is my brother.

Demonstration ii

This is the pen _____ I bought.

The relative pronoun to be used denotes the relationship between a subject or object. The sentence should read.

This is the pen that I bought.

PREPOSITIONS**Exercise 1**

Fill in the blanks with a suitable Preposition. The teacher may guide students in choosing appropriate prepositions.

Observation:

Preposition primarily serve to denote the position of subjects from objects. Teachers are encouraged to engage in activities with their learners that will denote position between subjects and objects. Such activation will include a sense of relation location and hence will enable students to use prepositions appropriately.

Exercise 2

Learners should attempt the following Exercise individually

1. The judge suspected the witness _____ lying
2. The policeman took the lady _____ the arm
3. We should not spend money _____ useless things
4. Divide the Apple _____ three parts
5. He is angry _____ you
6. I prefer honestly _____ death
7. I am not different _____ your happiness
8. They exchange clothes similar _____ the one I bought last year
9. The diary is not similar _____ the one I bought last year
10. I would not advice you _____ have confidence

Comment:

A variety of prepositions can be used in the above sentences. Teachers are advised to encourage their pupils to have prepositional word banks. Good usage of prepositions improve the quality of general sentence practice work.

Exercise 3

Supply the propositions omitted in the following sentences.

1. Somebody knocking the door.
2. I am searching my lost book.
3. He said me, "I shall not come".
4. He explained him the difficult words.
5. She never listens her mother
6. I replied his letter once
7. Do you wish anything?
8. I am too busy, I cannot wait you
9. I asked his book
10. She pointed the ship in the distance

Observation

After doing this exercise most pupils would certainly recognize the importance of propositions in language work. Even the weaker students would be aware of short comings of these sentences used in the above exercise. Some wrong prepositions may be used, but the main point is that pupils will be aware of the need for prepositions. Teachers may then guide pupils in use of appropriate prepositions.

The following exercises are intended to give students practice on the use of appropriate prepositions. These can be done as group tasks with minimal teacher supervision or as self-correction assessment exercises.

Exercise 4

Make sentences of your own using suitable prepositions after the following:

- | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Ask | 2.Explain | 3.Knock | 4.Listen | 5 Remind |
| 6. Say | 7. Search | 8. Speak | 9. Wait | 10. Wish |

Comment

The above exercise develops appropriate prepositional usage as well as practice in basic sentence construction.

Exercise 5

Write sentences using the following words with suitable prepositions

1. He was accused for lying
2. I am surprised from the news
3. I am interested for fishing
4. We believe to God
5. Water is composed from oxygen and hydrogen
6. Are you sure for his honesty
7. The cat was qualify for stealing meat
8. He was finally cured from the habit of drinking
9. He is very good in English
10. When is he leaving to England
11. Many birds live with seeds.
12. I cannot get rid from this cold
13. This cloth is superior from that
14. Some people are Jealous from their friends
15. He grew tired from working and sat down to rest

Prepositions in the above exercise are all used inappropriately. Learners should identify the preposition wrongly used. Explain why they are inappropriate and substitute them for appropriate ones.

Exercise 7

In the following sentences, choose the correct prepositions from those in brackets

1. He has been ill(from, since) last Friday)
2. You have sold your bicycle (at, for) a good price
3. I sold my bicycle (for, at) a good price.
4. I expect to return (after, in) a week.
5. I can wait (to, till) next week
6. We draw lines (by, with) a ruler
7. He has been absent (since, for) a month
8. They spoke (for, about) the weather
9. He worked (by, with) the light of a candle
10. You can send the parcel (with, by) Post

Exercise 8

Write sentences of your own to show clearly the difference between the following pairs of prepositions.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Beside; Besides | 2. Between; Among |
| 3. To; Till | 4. In; Into |
| 5. To; at | 6. For; at price |
| 7. For; since | 8. For; about |
| 9. With; by | 10. In; within |

Adverbs

Adverbs are parts of speech that qualify verbs or action being done. Good use of adverbs and adverbials improve quality of both oral and written communication.

Exercise 9

Rewrite the following sentences, placing the adverbs or adverbial phrases in the right position.

1. I can speak very well English
2. I like very much music
3. A beginner cannot speak correctly English
4. The teacher explained very well the problem.
5. The hunter shot with his gun a lion.
6. He put into his pocket the money
7. He likes very much wine.
8. He learnt by heart the poem
9. I received from my uncle a nice present.
10. He shut quickly the book

Observation

Certainly learners should note that the above sentences are vague as they are. It is important to note that adverbs or adverbial phrases should be placed in appropriate positions within.

Demonstration i

The hunter shot with his gun a lion.

The verb or action word in the sentence is (short). The adverbial phrase should explain therefore the effect of the shooting. In this instance the sentence shows the instrument or weapon used to shoot the object i.e lion. The corrected sentence hence would read.

The hunter shot a lion with his gun.

Demonstration ii

He put into his pocket the money.

Similarly the position of the adverbial phrase is misplaced. The action is 'put' and the rest of the sentence should qualify what was placed where. The sentence should hence read.

He put the money in his pocket.

Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences placing them in the right position.

1. We have only lost one game
2. He only was married yesterday
3. I am only left the one
4. These people only seen to live for pleasure
5. We only had one orange between us
6. She only wrote on one side of the paper.
7. The office is only opens in the morning
8. Peter was only punished: the others were not
9. I only have five dollars left
10. I only spoke to him once after that.

Observation: Hopefully as learners do the above task, they develop a sense of confidence in placing adverbs appropriately in given sentences.

Exercise 3

Correct the following sentences, giving reasons for your corrections. Pairs or group approach is recommended). Teachers may then engage in a general class discussion to test independent ability on adverb usage.

1. I always am on time
2. It rains seldom in the desert
3. We went yesterday there
4. I am not enough tall
5. He begged the teacher to not punish him
6. I could have not arrived sooner
7. He will have finished his work by tomorrow
8. I prefer usually coffee to tea
9. They are leaving for London this evening at seven o'clock
10. John yesterday did not come to school

Adverbs are often confused. The following exercises provide for basic practice on adverbial usage. These exercises, highlight common adverbs often confused. As such teachers are encouraged to give learners ample practice so that they acquire the appropriate skill.

Exercise 4

Give the correct adverb, (very or too) in these sentences

1. It is _____ cold today
2. He is _____ old to work
3. I can't drink the tea. It's too _____ hot.
4. Sugar is _____ sweet
5. This hat is _____ small for my big head

6. Sky scrapers or ____ high
7. The eagle flies ____ fast
8. My little brother is ____ young to go to school
9. I felt ____ tired to study
10. He is ____ rich

Exercise 5

Give the correct adverb (very much or too) in these sentences.

1. I like oranges
2. Thank you
3. I can't study here: there is _____ noise
4. Twenty dollars is _____ for that book
5. He drank _____ and became sick
6. I was _____ astonished to hear such news
7. She speaks _____: she is a chatter -box
8. I am _____ obliged to you.
9. She was _____ interested in the subject
10. He helped us _____.

Exercise 6

Give the correct adverb (hard or hardly) in these sentences.

1. The man works very _____.
2. I _____ know how to thank you for your kindness.
3. He has _____ recovered from his illness.
4. If you work _____, perhaps you can succeed.
5. Think _____ before you come to a decision.
6. He tried _____ but failed.
7. The clock had _____ struck eight when he arrived.
8. There is _____ any of the missing man's foot prints here.
9. The soccer team is _____ pressed to win to remain in the premiership.
10. All the good things in life _____ come easy.

Random grammar practice

Choose the correct comparative/superlative form in the following sentences

1. Prayer is (the most fast/fastest/faster) of all pupils at Mkogo Secondary School.
2. Mr. Jambaya earns (less/least/lowest) than his wife because he is not professionally qualified.
3. The (hardest/harder/hard) you work, the (most/more/highest) you will earn.
4. Of all her hobbies, Prince likes cricket the (better/less/best).

Correct the following sentences by replacing the underlined word with a most suitable one.

- (1) A group of pupils are planning a trip to the Great Zimbabwe.
- (2) Moses and I has been organizing this trip.

- (3) The use of these skills save lies.
- (4) No-one are exempt from wearing school uniform.
- (5) Neither of us are lazy.

Re-write the following sentences choosing the correct word in (brackets)

1. The cake was shared (among/by/between) Alex and Marx
2. Someone (between/among/out of) all pupils in the class had stolen the teacher's book.
3. George is (illegible/legible/eligible) to be chosen for the position of head boy.
4. The dent in Mr. Banda's car was very (notable/noticeable/noted)
5. The teacher's sense of humour had a (lightening/lighting/enlightening) effect on the pupils

Put the appropriate relative pronouns in each of the following sentences.

- (1) This is my father-in law. He is visiting us tomorrow.
- (2) This is my brother. I am visiting him next work.
- (3) I felt proud of Juliet. Her 'O' Level results were very good.
- (4) I admire the boy. I admire his humility.
- (5) This is the home I was born in.

Put the appropriate prepositions in the following sentences

- (1) They live _____ past.
- (2) The dog was barking _____ the house.
- (3) The teacher's books were _____ table.
- (4) What are you laughing _____
- (5) His phone is always _____ his pocket.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter Objectives

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Write vivid descriptions without overdoing it.
- Write logical narrations which create anxiety on the reader.
- Use language structures correctly in compositions

A PRACTICAL ANALYSIS OF PAPER 1

‘O’ Level English Language paper 1 is composed of ordinary compositions and a situational composition. Ordinary compositions are diverse in type. The most common types are:

The descriptive type

The narrative type

The discursive type

No one can be an expert in all types. In this regard principle 3 and 9 are very applicable. You must discover the type you know best, and the trick here is to choose your favourite and present it in excellency. Certainly some types are technically complicated compared to others:

Lets examine the types one- by- one.

Descriptive compositions

To describe is to present a vivid picture in words. It is a colourful presentation of something in words. Numerous language techniques are useful in this type. A vast wealth of words or vocabulary is needed. Adjectives (words that describe) play a dominant role in this type of composition. Proverbs and idiomatic expressions are very useful in this type. Both the past tense and the present tense are applicable in this type of composition. The composition must have a chronology i.e. an order or a sequence. Paragraphs must be distinct and clear- each paragraph deals with one aspect. To prepare on this type you must recall principles 3 and 6 found in chapter 11. Topics on descriptive compositions look quite easy at face value. But unless you are very wealthy in diction or choice of words, you will just present a plain composition, which scores very low on impression.

Descriptive compositions require a good command of vocabulary. A good description should use the reader’s senses: the sense of touch, hearing, smell, taste and sight. This will enable the reader to be actively involved in the reading. Some examples of good descriptions are:

Roberto Ngozi was a charcoal black man with fiery eyes which sent cold shivers down the spines of his victims before he said a single word. When he spoke his voice was thunderous, it left many of his victims deafened and lost.

Note: Instead of saying Roberto is a black man I chose charcoal black which is more vivid, Instead of saying he had red eyes, I have intensified that by use of “fiery”, instead of he spoke in a loud voice, I have used “thunderous”, all these are meant to give a vivid picture.

Descriptive compositions require carefully chosen vocabulary. The writer is like an artist or a painter, he/ she should weigh the effect/ impact of word chosen.

For example, it is more vivid to say He strode down the street than He walked down the street

OR

He stormed into the room than He walked into the room

So everyday words that we use in everyday speech should be replaced by words that capture action e.g. ran replaced by pelted, or bolted, looked, replaced by stared or stole a glance peered can be even qualified as in He looked at her piercingly.

Let us consider this topic:

Describe a car you would like to drive and say why.

- ◆ Firstly, do you know a lot about cars? You should demonstrate knowledge of various types of cars in detail so that your choice of one type will clearly reveal why you chose that type.
- ◆ Secondly, do you know the technical qualities of these cars? What about market avenues for this car and its parts; what about the road environment requirements for it.
- ◆ Thirdly, its physical appearance must be painted out clearly in words that are appropriate in the motor industry.
- ◆ Fourthly, the why part of the question needs a convincing impression. The marker may not be knowing anything about cars, so you have to convince and impress him with your descriptions.

NB. These guide lines can serve as your paragraph demarcations.

Examples of Descriptive Compositions

1. An exciting party
2. The most interesting person I ever met.
3. The funniest person I know.
4. Describe a local traditional ceremony/ celebration that you have taken part in.
5. Describe a busy market.

How to do it well in descriptive compositions.

1. Before you can choose this type be sure that you are (i) knowledgeable about the realm or domain of the thing to be described e.g. soccer, boxing, building, mechanics e.t.c. Also be sure that you (ii) have a broad terminology base commonly associated with that realm. If you are not sure about these two issues, do not choose the descriptive type because you do not know it best (recall principle).

The Narrative Composition

To narrate is to re-tell some event. Narrating imaginatively is a plain exercise that does not require any artificial additions. The event has to be told. What is important

on this type is that there must be a chronology or order of events. The narration must be seen to unfold chronologically from the first thing to the next and to the last. This type of composition is usually in the past tense form because we narrate events that have already occurred. The narrative composition may be in the form of a story or an actual event you experienced.

The strength of a good narrative composition lies in good command of English, use of variety of sentences ranging from simple, compound to complex ones. The strength also rests in the ability to arouse the reader's curiosity, anxiety and to keep the reader suspended until the climax of the story. Everyday when we tell stories to our friends we spice them up, we whet the curiosity of our listeners so is composition writing, especially the narrative. Our aim is to catch the interest of the reader, at the same time stay within the given topic. The first step to catch the reader's interest would be to have an effective introduction.

Consider these topics:

Write a story based on the following:

- (a) As he burst into tears, he remembered the saying "crime does not pay".
- (b) The abandoned baby lay on the hospital steps, crying pitifully.
- (c) Write about an incident in which you helped someone who had lost hope.
- (d) Write a story, which ends with the words "I knew I would remember his face as long as I lived".

All the above topics are narrative accounts. What is presented on any of these must be a straight forward account without incredible (unbelievable) things although some creativity or slight exaggeration may be necessary. It is recommended here that this type of composition is easier to manage. Most of these narrations may start with a day and date on your introductory paragraph as with the above three topics. The story-telling type may fall under this category also.

Demonstration:

A narrow Escape

Introduction

John Tshuma stood with a menacing smile as he gazed at the bullet drilling and shattering a man's skull. That smile had always been his seal, it meant business, in his own words well executed.

Explanation

From this introduction the reader already wants to know what has happened? Why has the man been killed? Who is this murderer? What business?

Pupils should desist from introductions that have turned into cliches. These have been used so many times to the extent that they sound boring to the reader.

Examples of poor introductions

It was during the holiday.....

It was on Tuesday afternoon.....

It was on a hot afternoon.....

Such introductions are a sign that the pupil has not given himself/ herself much time to think about an effective introduction. It is usually used by students who do not stretch their imaginations. Note that a good narrative composition can start with actual words from the characters, for example,

“You damn liar, show me the gold or your life is gone in a second!” He roared as he held his pistol straight into Leo’s throat.

Within the body of the composition, the writer should be able to keep the story interesting. Narrative composition calls for strong imagination and creativity. It would even be more interesting if the writer would be able to explore the reader’s five senses, for example, in Narrow Escape a clever student might include the following:

- Sense** - Sound of the boots of men in pursuit of the runaway man.
 - Sound of the runaway’s heartbeat – pounding/ thudding
 - Sound of guns firing
- Smell** - Smell of gun powder and fire.
 - Smell of death/ blood
 - Smell of sweat mixed with dirty.
- Sight** - Saw fire from the bullets blazing the dark sky/night
 - Caught a glimpse of a strange terrifying figure brandishing a gun and a long knife.
- Taste - Fear crept into him and left his bowels ill at ease producing an acid, which left his spittle bitter.

Just like the introduction and the body of the composition, the conclusion is also important. Lazy pupils leave their compositions without a conclusion some end by writing “In conclusion”. This is not the right way of story telling. Perhaps I need to remind you of the purpose of the conclusion. The purpose is to tie up such that the story is not left hanging or the reader is not left suspended. The conclusion can be a dramatic one like in the case of Narrow escape. You would conclude as follows:

“The man bolted from the bush and dived into the ocean as a bullet missed him by an inch. His face grimaced and cursed as he glared at the man diving through the deep blue waters.”

The conclusion might also use the actual words of the characters for example:

“Oh shit, the devil is gone”. These were his last words as he turned, slung his gun and paced back like a defeated soldier.

OR

Still, one may conclude by use of a question for example:

“A narrow Escape? Was it? Who would have thought that one could cheat death in such a way?”

As I indicated earlier that writing compositions is a form of an art, pupils can be creative to conclude their composition whichever way they like as long as it ties up the story.

Comment on selecting compositions

It may appear that we are recommending one or some types of compositions at the expense of others. Yes and No are all answers. Yes we have to make such recommendations because this study pack is a manual for success in the examination. You can succeed by technicalities. Moreover this study pack is a practical resource. By that fact we accept the fact that no one can be an expert in every type.

OR

No. We are not discouraging other types. All that we are pointing out honestly is that each type of composition has its own challenges. The learner retains the discretion to choose what looks manageable for him. Principle 3 in chapter 11 motivates the student to prepare thoroughly on the type he or she knows best. We reiterate that the study pack is a manual to be used by a candidate who already knows about English Language but has yet to prosecute the examination.

The discursive type

This type of composition tests on a number of things. Among others it tests on maturity; independent thinking; objectivity, being up-to-date with current affairs (international and local). Thus most discursive questions are based on some idea which may be social, political, economic or religious. In such issues there are always several contending views or schools of thought. You should be aware of them in order to be ably able to evaluate them or in order to participate in the discussion. A candidate will impress very badly if he just plunges into such a topic without a proper awareness of the mainstream views. Being objective, evaluating and passing judgment are advanced skills that need some training. In the examination, a candidate has to be ready and well-trained to prosecute a discussion if he or she wants to tackle a discursive topic. Consider this topic:

The year 2002: A new era or just another year in Zimbabwean history?

Your plan of action must be as follows:

- ◆ Why a new era?
- ◆ Why just another year?
- ◆ Were you in Zimbabwe in 2002?
- ◆ What unique thing(s) happened?
- ◆ What were the prevailing sentiments then?

These profound questions have to be maturely addressed in your discussion. The problem with discussion is that you may think that you are talking sense when you are actually waffling. Our recommendation is that you should choose this type provided you have considered well principle 8 which is explained in chapter 11.

Discursive Composition

This is about discussing and expressing a pupil's own point of thinking/ view in a convincing manner.

Examples of discursive compositions

- (i) Technology has done more harm than good.
- (ii) Traditional medicine has done more harm than good.
- (iii) Christianity is better than traditional religion.
- (iv) It's better to educate a boy child than a girl child.
- (v) Co-education should be banished.
- (vi) Lobola should be abolished.
- (vii) Today's media has misled the youths.

What is important in a discursive composition is independent thought as has been indicated. That independent thought should be supported by evidence or facts. In discursive composition one should weigh sides, look at both sides but taking a stand on the subject depending on the side with more points.

For example in case of the question on (i) Technology, one has to weigh the benefits/ advantages of, against its disadvantages.

Advantages

- Easy communication
- Networking
- Advertising marketing through the Internet
- Entertainment DVDs, Televisions, Satellite Dishes
- Easy storage and retrieval of information through computers
- Makes work easy
- Easy transportation of people and goods
- Easy communication through cell phones

Disadvantages

- Abuse of Internet
- Pornography
- Copying of music
- Abuse of media (means of propaganda)
- Destroying culture especially among the youth.
- Mass destruction through use of heavy weapons (mass destruction) e.g. nuclear weapons.
- Air and water pollution through use of chemicals.

A student should weigh both sides and the impact. One might say technology has more advantages than disadvantages and sustain that argument. In this composition an independent voice should be heard for example through words.

If you consider, facts show. It's pointless, if you compare, (etc) The approach here is authoritative. The writer is empowered by facts that he/ she has.

One form of a discursive composition is a factual composition. In this composition the pupil must have facts before writing it. One can not use imagination and pass this composition. Topics are usually drawn from things that are common in life.

For example it can be about the importance of oxygen, importance of water, importance of trees, the importance of the study of geography. Looking at the nature of topics, pupils need facts to do very well in the exam. In fact for pupils to do very well in discursive compositions they need to read newspapers, follow stories from television, discuss with fellow pupils so they should keep abreast with both electronic and print media.

Discursive Demonstrations

Demonstrations (i)

Question:

“It is essential to breach the generation gap between parents and their teenage children.” What is your view?

Generation gap is the difference in ideas, perceptions, interests and feelings between old and young people. The gap results in discord between parents and children. The discord in turn leads to malfunctioned relationships which are degrading to development.

Development takes place if relationships are functional, thus for healthy and harmonious relationships to exist there is need to breach the gap. The importance of breaching the gap is even made more acute by the dangers posed by H.I.V and A.I.D.S. Parents need to break out of the bog of traditions and taboos and create a conducive platform to speak freely to their children about sex. The tendency by most parents is to shy away from the subject while children tend to be inquisitive and adventurous. Children should also on the other hand cast away their all-knowing tendencies and listen to their parents.

Children also need guidance from parents about values and norms. These values and norms have been sources of constant conflicts. Issues of ethics and morals for example in forms of dress, language and what children see or view from the internet are some of areas of conflict. In order to create a generation with norms and values, it is essential to breach the gap between parents and children. If the generation gap is not breached more and more teenagers would seek for answers in wrong things such as drugs, alcohol and sex. Parents need to be open and show that they are not just being prescriptive but have reasons. On the other hand children should not always look at parents with suspicion. Rampant abuse of print and electronic media to churn pornographic material to young children makes it essential to breach the gap between parents and teenagers. If the gap is not breached more and more teenagers will turn into worshippers of pornography.

The generation gap has also resulted in parents and children getting frustrated and disappointed. Many parents force children to take up courses which parents think are the up courses which parents think are the best yet children may feel they are not capable. In the end there is a clash of expectations resulting in some conflicts and ultimately disappointment when the child does not succeed. There is a need to breach this gap. It is essential for parents to accept and value children’s expectations. In

relation to this, it is also essential for parents to be dynamic and not to remain rigid and static.

All in all, it is essential to breach the generation gap between parents and their teenage children. The development of nations and the preservations of future generations can only be ensured by breaching the gap between the two.

Comment:

This is a complex and challenging question that needs to be handled with care. The argument reveals knowledge of what generation gap is. The writer is also abreast with the current trends in Parenting and Childhood or Teenage challenges. Note also how the writer has taken a stand but does not personalize the issues he raises. Note also an attempt to balance the argument. For such questions as these (Discursive) the candidate should make sure that he or she knows a lot about issues in question and that he or she is abreast with current trends or debates on the issue.

SUMMARY

Demonstration (1)

Summary of points

Consider these among others

- Saw tarpaulin covered lorries, taxis, buses
- Stood undecided
- Saw a bus with engine, unbonneted, stopping, a boy seizing his suitcase
- Felt cowed
- Nodded
- Climbed into the vehicle
- Felt wonder (wondered)
- Saw a small and neat house
- Felt puzzlement and wonder
- Saw labourers working on sugarcane fields
- Saw changes in the plantations – came to rice.
- Felt fear
- Felt excited and free
- Walked on crowded pavements.
- Noted or saw stores, cafes and restaurants, signs.
- Saw (various) activities in the town
- Felt enchanted.
- Felt disappointed to find unfenced lot, unpainted wooden houses.
- Moved or walked past bleaching stones, slimy open gutter.
- Felt disappointed.

I had still not decided where to go by the time. I saw various vehicles passing by. While I was still undecided I saw a bus stopping by, then a boy seizing my suitcase. This made me to feel cowed. I then nodded in agreement to the boy and climbed onto the bus. I felt wonder passing through me. Later on from a distant, I saw a small and neat house and felt puzzled. Close by to the road I saw a group of labourers working on the sugar plantation and observed some changes from one plantation to the other. I

felt fear which was later replaced by excitement and freedom as I disembarked and walked on crowded pavements. I saw stores, cafes, restaurants and signs. I also observed various activities. I felt enchanted by the town. Then I was disappointed to find unfenced lot and unpainted houses. I walked past bleaching stones and felt disappointed again when I reached Ramchand's place.

Concluding statement

The discursive composition, challenging as it is, is not impossibility with appropriate practice and wide reading students can indeed master the skill of discursive writing.

Points for the topic

In this section we make an outline of the points in support of the topic

Points against the topic

In this section we list points that are against the topic

Arrangements of points into paragraphic units

In this part we re-arrange our ideas into a logical sequence

Task! For the above composition work in pairs and come up with points in favour of or against the topic. Teachers will guide you to put your points into a logical sequence.

The discursive introduction

Since the discursive composition is factual there is need for very factual introduction that will address the demand of the question. As such a discursive topic should address the following fundamental point.

Understanding of Question! It is very important that we exhibit sufficient knowledge of the question requirements in the introduction. This is done through defining or explaining of issues that will be discussed.

CREATIVE WRITING

Introduction

One main aspect of the English Language course is the ability to develop creative pieces of work. Composition development therefore requires extensive practice. It has been observed that most teachers tend to test compositions instead of teaching them. Well a lot of practice practitioners cannot indeed draw the line between teaching and testing. This Chapter and subsequent chapters attempt to provide a general framework on how composition skills can be developed.

A short Story

A composition is classified as a short story. Short story development requires a more creative skill than that of the novel. This is because a novel builds its plot over many chapters and the writer is at greater liberty to develop ideas fully. However the short story has a length limitation, meaning the whole piece of work should be introduced,

developed, and concluded within a fixed length. There is limited freedom therefore to express ideas gradually. The development of short story needs therefore a lot of creativity and skill.

The short story, like the novel, has basic elements that help to build up ideas. These are discussed and exemplified below.

1. **Plot Sequence**

Every story has a beginning and ultimately it should come to an end. The plot is the general storyline that develops our ideas. As such we should be able to decide on how best to develop our ideas before the actual writing. It is therefore better to plan a journey before you travel as compared to travelling not knowing where one is destined to. A plot sequence gives a planning framework on how our story should begin to develop and conclude.

Exercise

In groups decide how you may tackle each topic and how your story would develop from the introduction to the conclusion. At the end of your discussion you should be able to write a brief plot summary of your story which is not longer than 2-3 lines.

You may be given individual exercises by the teacher.

A plot summary therefore gives the general direction on how our story should develop.

In groups decide how you may tackle each of the following topics. Discuss how your story would develop from the introduction to the conclusion. Write a plot summary for each of these topics:

- (a) Describe your favourite food.
- (b) Write a story based on the following.
Either (i) I could not believe my luck.
Or (ii) in the end his father told him, Fortune knocks once at a man's door."
- (c) Access to the internet should be restricted? What do you say?
- (d) Dating.
- (e) The project.
- (f) Write an account about a trip you have just witnessed.
- (g) Violence.

2 **Theme**

Every piece of writing has got to do with a particular subject. The theme is therefore the main idea or the central subject in a piece of writing. In most cases when we are asked about the subject of the story most of us tend to narrate the events. This is not appropriate as narration of events is to do with a plot. A story may be about love, death, marriage, drought and so on. It is from this main idea that the story developed. A novel may have many central ideas or themes, however we recommend that due to length and time limitations, a composition should have one definite main idea as many ideas would lead to poor plot development and jumbling up of ideas.

Theme identification exercises

Read short passages below and identify the central idea that is given in each passage.

Passage 2

The passionate shepherd to his love

Come live with me and be my love
 And we will all pleasures prove
 That hills and valleys, dales and fields
 Or woods or steepy mountain yields

And we will sit upon the rocks
 And see the shepherds feed the flock
 By shallow rivers, to whose falls
 Melodious birds sing madrigals

And I will make the birds of roses
 And of thousand fragrant poises
 A cap of flowers and a kirtle
 Embroidered all with leaves of rigrtle

A gown made of the finest wood
 Which from pretty lambs we pull
 Fair lined slippers for the cold
 With buckles of purist gold.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
 For thy delight each morning
 If these delights thy mind may move
 Then live with one and be my love.

(Christopher Malowe)

N.B The fundamental difference in plot sequence and theme lies in the fact that the theme is the central idea and the plot is how this central idea is developed. Read this passage below and take note of the demonstration that follows:

Theme: Sadness/Remoarsness**Plot Sequence**

In composition writing it is very important to focus on one particular theme and develop it fully. This makes your work to be logical and ideas would be generally easy to develop.

Task 1:Your teacher will give you some passages from well known local and international writers. In groups or pairs determine the main idea of each passage and discuss how the idea is developed in the passage. Once this skill is mastered the teacher may give you individual exercises. Learners are strongly encouraged to practice this technique individually as this gives them a strong foundation in their compositions.

3. **Character development**

Every story is based on a character, whether living and non living. The manner in which we portray our characters gives an impact on the development of your composition. Character description usually has 2 dimensions i.e. the physical and the emotional aspect. The physical attribute refers to the outward description of a character, while the inward descriptions are evolved by the emotional attributes. It is inadequate to simply state a character in a composition without going further to describe its characteristics. It makes our story line to be simplistic without any trace of personal creativity.

The Aspect of setting time

Read the passages outlined below:

1. There was great excitement in the world land. Finally the Royal wedding was to take place. At exactly three am on Wednesday morning the bride was waiting happily for the groom, who soon arrived in a magnificent carriage accompanied by the wedding party who looked magnificent in black garments. The priest then presided over the ceremony a very dark night before dawn.
2. It was time to do it. He had just graduated from the school of witchcraft and had to prove his evil power to others. On a bright Sunday morning, with birds cheerfully singing in the trees, above he crept in to the grave yard. He wore a lovely white suit as he dug up the grave of the recently buried neighbour.

We would certainly agree that there is definitely something wrong with the 2 passages. The themes presented by the two passages are not supported by suitable setting and time. The general point to note here therefore is the fact that setting must have social and oral expectation, in order to satisfy the demands of the reader. General deviation may be used but should not be fetched. Even fictional accounts are supported by suitable setting and time frames.

Setting therefore refers to the environment in which the plot develops. The time refers either to the hour the story unfolds or the whole duration of the story. As we plan our compositions we should have in mind the aspect of setting, which should be in line with the development of the story. We shall make reference to the demonstrations below.

Compositions development

To compose is to put together different constituent parts to make a whole. As such composition writing requires development of particular skills that have applied in the composition process. This chapter seeks to provide a practical framework on how compositions may be developed.

Word Choice

The basic element in composition work is the choice of words that are used in the composition. Word choice to a greater extent influences the structure and richness of

one's sentences. The exercises and explanations on general word usage outlined in the earlier chapters serve to strengthen, one's understanding of language structures. Constant reference to the chapter is strongly emphasized for basic rules of structure developed.

Spellings

Inappropriately spelt words are possibly one of the biggest let downs in compositions writing. Constant spelling practice is advised. In learners are not encouraged to use complex words they are not aware of how they are spelt. Some commonly misspelt words are outlined below. **Choose the correct word:**

interested	intrested	intersted
truely	truly	truly
student	studen	studient
occurred	ocurred	ocured
acommodate	accomodate	accommodate
received	recieved	reseived
necessary	necessary	necasy
offered	offered	oferred
modern	mordern	morden
pehaps	perharps	perhaps

Sentence Construction

Learners should be able to work consistently with complete, properly constructed sentences. In addition they should be able to write longer more complex sentences as well as simple sentences which should be in agreement. Sentences that have disagreement in standard aspects tend to be vague and many subject verb agreement errors may be eradicated through a number of ways. Chief of which is consciously writing down preplanned ideas as compared to simple writing as we think. Unconscious writing. Hence preplanning is a very important aspect of composition.

Task

Read the following passage. Re-write the sentences correcting the subject-verb agreement as well as other errors.

1. Moving day were an ordered for the family. First of all the truck were late. The glass on some picture frames were broken and the cats was reluctant to leave their home. The driver of the truck were not co-operative. It appears he were not interesting in help. Their time cost enough, that were for sure. Eventually it were all sorted out and we finally leave the house we using to call home.
2. Cats is funny animals. They have tremendous pride and shows an independent few human beings has. Some people looks down on cats. Because their brains is said to be small. However the fact is that they possess native intelligence, a canning, an alertness, that alone make them in some ways more intelligent than humans.

Compare your corrected passages with your friend. You would definitely notice the difference as the new passage would flow smoothly and would certainly make more sense than the original passage.

A sign of mature writing skills is the ability to write in longer complex sentences when the need arises. This is because a repetition of short sentences may become monotonous as shown below.

Demonstration i

I am reading this novel. I want to finish reading it today. I can not concentrate. I am only trying very hard.

Note that the paragraph is rather dull and un-understandable. Therefore repetition of similar sentence construction becomes extremely monotonous; and lack of variety in the length of sentence is also tedious. Take note of the demonstration given below.

Demonstration ii

The rain poured all day. Play was out of the question. The umpires called it off. They had no choice.

Four sentences can be identified in the above passage. However the same idea can be expressed as shown below after changing a few structural aspects.

As the rain poured all day and play was out of the question. The umpires called it off because they had no ready choice. Notice that a few conjunctions have been added to join together the sentences, creating one complex sentence.

On the other hand the short sentence may be used to reflect meaning especially in descriptive writing. A good example is the use of short crisp sentences which are effective in building up tension in describing an action sequence.

She hesitated. What could she do? The shadow moved again in the room. Carefully she pulled out the gun. She cocked the trigger. Her eyes were growing accustomed to the darkness, she could see the figure – more clearly now. She aimed the figure. Somebody turned the lights on. It was his brother from South Africa.

More demonstration on sentence types have been included in particular composition chapters dealing with development of specific composition types. This is because each type of composition, favour a particular form of presentation.

Paragraph development

A paragraph by definition is a group of sentences that are based on one idea. There is a general misconception among learners that a paragraph is the number of lines one can write before skipping a line. Therefore one long sentence covering 4-5 lines is not a paragraph. Look at the example below.

The big day finally came and I was very happy because my brother was getting married but my mother was not pleased as she felt that my brother should have married the girl from our church.

Note that the above is not a paragraph. Such sentences are a result of unconscious writing by learners i.e writing as one thinks. At the end, instead of having 5 paragraphs a composition will have 5 sentences not well structured. The above can be modified to read;

The big day finally came and I was very happy. My brother was getting married. However my mother was not pleased as she felt, my brother should have married the girl from church.

By simply breaking down the sentence, we are able to develop very meaningful paragraphs. A paragraph therefore should have the following components.

The Topic Sentence!

This is the sentence that carries the meaning of the paragraph. It reveals the main idea being presented for example.

‘My brother was getting married.’

This is the main idea of the previous passage. All the other sentences are a reaction to the brother’s marriage.

2. Supporting Statements/developments

These are sentences that further explain the main idea or develop the idea further e.g

The big day finally came and I was happy.

The above sentence on its own is not really complete, we are left with a great question what was the big day for. But if we are to include the topic sentence, the 2 sentences make more sense.

The big day finally came and I was very happy. My brother was getting married.

The last sentence of this paragraph shows the mothers reaction to the marriage. The last sentence therefore develop the idea further and also acts as a concluding statement.

The big day finally came and I was very happy. My brother was getting married. However my mother was not pleased. She felt my brother should have married the girl from our church.

The above paragraph therefore demonstrates a typical arrangement of ideas in a paragraph. It is not always the case that the topic sentence is positioned in the middle of the paragraph. It can be positioned in any part of the paragraph as a sign of maturity and creativity. Also it would be rather monotonous to have each paragraph beginning with a topic sentence always. This makes the flow of our work to be very predictable.

Task: Sample some paragraphs from compositions you have written in class. Try to identify the main topic sentence in the paragraph. Your teacher will give you more paragraphs. Try to re-arrange the sentences in the paragraphs so that the topic sentence is not only found in one location in the given paragraphs. This can be done initially in groups/pairs and once the skill has been mastered, more individual practice shall be given.

Composition development

The development of good composition work goes beyond good command of English Language structure. Planning for what you are going to present forms the basis of good composition development. Remember **FAILING TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL**.

The Descriptive Composition

The main attributes of Descriptive writing have been discussed in the previous section. We shall now go on the basic steps to be taken in developing the actual descriptive composition.

Topic Outlines

Most questions would give you an instruction that you describe a particular situation. However at times it may not be the case, it would be up to the student to decide whether the topic is descriptive or not. Let us look at the topics given below.

1. A busy street.
2. Describe one person in your community who has changed the lives of others.
3. The year of drought.

All the three topics are descriptive in nature, however note that the third question can be also developed into a story. Therefore it is important to determine from the outset the topic direction. This enables you to plan effectively the situation and adjectives of your description

The composition Plan for Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing deals or focuses on the presentation of facts. As such it is important to identify the main facts that we need to describe. These are noted down and then we come up with interesting adjectives, adverbs and other Language structures to make our descriptions very impressive. We shall demonstrate descriptive composition planning using topics outlines above!

1. **A Busy Street**

Interpretation! This may seem to be a fairly straight forward question. However to write a good account one needs to identify what to describe. There are a lot of aspects about the busy street. These aspects should be in a sequential order. This composition may follow the planning outlined below.

Subject: Describing a busy street. (Note that the subject has been derived from the topic. There are some instances where the subject or theme of your composition is not necessarily the wording of your composition).

Plot summary : What happened in a busy street, that makes it busy
 Setting : Lobengula Street in Bulawayo
 Time : From sunrise to evening

- Characters : Outline of different people using the Street for a number of activities e.g. vendors, , shoppers, thieves, preachers beggars, gamblers.
- Ideas :In this section the learner brings up ideas related to the essay plan. These ideas may not be in approached sequence. This therefore is a brainstorming segment that develops from the plan. In other words the planning segments gives direction to the flow of ideas that will be used in the action composition e.g.

Pickpockets try their luck
 Preachers preaching
 Vendors selling the waves
 Running away from police
 One trying his luck by the corner
 Shopping windows shopping
 Long queues by nearly opened shops
 Worker rushing to catch taxes home
 School children all over
 Street very quiet in the morning
 Newspaper vendors by the corner
 Vendors rushing to the markets

Note that the points outlined above are not in chronological order. It is the task of the writer to carefully go over the given points. Identifying the main idea and also grouping similar ideas to form paragraphic units. These are then arranged in a chronological order as demonstrated below.

- **Street quite in the morning before sunrise**
 Vendors dropped by the corner with a pile of newspapers
 First minibuses drop early workers
- **Street fills with vendors rushing to market**
 Vendors set up the sell for another busy day
- **Many people come into town**
 Running to work and school
 Buy fruits
- **Midday traffic congestion**
 Long queues by new shop
 School children back from school
- **Pick pockets trying his luck**
 Running away from approaching police
- **Loud voice of the preachers**
 People gather around
- **Workers rushing to get home**

Omnibuses picking up passengers by the traffic lights

➤ **Vendors bargaining to clear vegetables**

Clear their streets

All is quite again

Note that the points given now have a chronological sequence. The bolded points indicate main ideas which can be supported by the points outlined below them. Now a good descriptive account can be developed. Note that the points identified in the plan can be rephrased or modified. It does not mean that the sentences in your final composition should be phrased in the same manner as your plan. The plan serves as a skeletal framework for your composition. Thus in writing the final composition the points identified in the plan should be enhanced through the use of descriptive devices.

Exercise

Using the above planning outline, develop composition plans for the following topics: it is advised that the first plans should be done as a whole class discussion with the teacher guiding the students. Once students are able to come out with a comprehensive descriptive plan, small groups and pair tasks can be given. The ultimate aim of this practice is for students to be able to quickly plan the essays. Therefore future planning exercises especially for students in their final year should be between 5-8 minutes.

Practice topics

1. An exciting party.
2. The most interesting person I even met.
3. The funniest person I know.
4. Describe a local tradition ceremony/ celebration you have taken part in.
5. Describe a busy market.

Developing a Descriptive Account:

Once we have planned how to structure our composition, we need to put the framework into actual practice. The obvious advantage that we have at this point is that all the ideas that are to be used in the composition are now available in our plan. What is left is for us to develop our plans into a vibrant composition.

The Introduction

There is a general tendency by most learners to have very dull introductions for the descriptive compositions. Such introductions take away the interest and enthusiasm to read the story and ultimately score low marks. Composition writing is all about creating a good impression to the reader. This impression is then enhanced through use of appropriate language structures suited for descriptive writing.

Let us read through a typical introduction for the topic A busy street

THE NARRATIVE COMPOSITIONS

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has extensively dealt with the descriptive basics of narrative writing. In the chapter we shall focus on the writing of the narrative compositions.

NATURE OF NARRATIVE TOPICS:

Strong writing involves a lot of personal creativity. Unlike the descriptive or discursive composition, narrative compositions need developed plot that agrees well with the topic.

Narrative topics come in a variety of ways, and the most common are outlined below.

One word topics/ or short phrases

These topics would require one to develop a story on the given topic. Examples include the year of drought, the fire escape.

Story beginning with/ending with a statement

The most important thing to do when dealing with this type is to follow instructions. Certainly your story should start or end with the given phrase/ If the instructions are not followed one may be penalized as one would written a story not related to the topic.

A story based narration

This type of topic does not necessarily tie the writer into using the words used in the instruction. In the final analysis the story you would have developed should certainly show a linkage with the instruction.

A story that includes the following words

Unlike the topic outline, your composition should at some point include the exact words of the topic. The writer should decide whether he will use them in the middle or the end of the topic.

N.B It is very important to first of all decide how you will develop your story before even beginning the planning process. This is because you can write a very good story which may not be inline with composition instruction and as a result lose a lot of marks.

Content of narrative composition.

The time and length restriction is very important in writing a narrative. One has to choose a story line that can be adequately told within the limitations imposed by the length one is expected to write. Therefore planning precisely what you want to do leads to the development of a good story.

The narrative plan

The basics of composition planning were dealt with intensively in the appropriate section. We shall now apply the same principles of planning to the narrative composition.

The most important thing is Topic Interpretation. One has to be sure of the demands of the question before commencing writing.

1. Theme of the subject: Before you begin to write you should identify the main subject of your story. This will give you a particular point of focus of your writing. This is against the backdrop of the fact that most topics for the narrative composition are statements. A single topic can be developed into a multiplicity of stories all with different themes and diverse story lines.

Plot summary! When you have decided on the theme or main subject of the story – you then should decide on how you are going to develop your story. Thus the plot summary in other words is an interpretation of the topic and development of the theme in brief.

Character development! Identify the main characters for your story. Remember the length limitations of your composition. As such your story should not have too many characters. The characters that you identify should develop your plot summary effectively. Once characters have been identified draw up character profiles, that will make your characters to be real. Instead of simply having identification.

Setting

Give a brief outline of your setting. Your story may be based in one place or may shift. It is at this point that your brief description will make an outline of objectives, adverbs etc, that you may use. In the composition time sequence! Decide at this point the duration of your story. Will your story begin and end in hours, months or years. This will help you to have a logical time sequence which will help in developing other aspects of the story.

Story outline: At this point you need to make an outline of your story. This involves the process of brainstorming on points that may be relevant to your story as per how you planned it.

Re-arrangement of ideas! The planning process ends with the arrangement of ideas into paragraphic units. This is whereby the ideas you have used should fit into the plot summary and be relevant to the theme.

N.B The process outlined above takes time to practice and perfect, however it shall be noted that with time the plan may not be as detailed as the one outlined above but students with constant practice should be able to internalize the main aspects of the plan and acquire the necessary skills that will enable them write better compositions.

Demonstrated Plan

Topic	:	Broken Promises
Theme/Subject	:	Heart break and future
Plot Summary	:	Siphiwe breaks her promise to g\finish school and be a doctor and goes to South Africa, where she

Main Character	:	Siphiwe a promising student, doing
Character	:	6 th form John Boyfriend
Lower	:	
Setting	:	Zimbabwe and South Africa
Time	:	Story covers 2 years

Story outline

O-Level results out

Siphiwe happy

Promises to be a doctor

Goes lower sixth

School fees very expensive

Gains interest in Boyfriend

Drops out of school

Exam fees paid

Elopes with boyfriend to South Africa

Surprise at Steel and Paper delivery

Discovers boyfriend is a thief

Broken promises

Re-organisation of ideas

At this stage the ideas noted above are placed in a chronological sequence in paragraphic units

The narration introduction

An introduction gives an insight into what is to come, with this in mind we note the point that the introduction is a very important component of any composition.

In planning an introduction, learners are encouraged to desist from usual, monotonous overused styles, but come up with creative openings.

Now we shall briefly discuss the main aspects of discursive writing.

1. Content

A discursive composition is based on knowledge of the subject under discussion. Never attempt a discursive topic without sufficient knowledge of facts.

2. Supporting evidence

Since the discursive composition is factual there is need to have backing evidence to support the facts we would have raised for or against the topic.

Language Usage

The discursive compositions need very mature writing skills. Approach knowledge and usage of discourse matters will certainly lead to the writing of s good compositions.

Logical sequencing of facts

There is a need for a logical arrangement of ideas in order for an argument to be sensible. Generally a student should exhaust points on one view before writing a counter argument.

The discursive plan

The main attributes of the discursive plan are briefly discussed below.

Question interpretation! There is need to analyse and interpret given topics so as to avoid writing off topic. With appropriate interpretation, we are able to bring facts that support or are against point for discussion.

Making a stand: Decide whether you are for or against the topic. As this will enable you to avoid making unnecessary positional shift in stand in the course of your writing.

Points for the topic! Against the topic. At this point you should make a list of points. Starting with the side that you are supporting. Remember that your points should be based on factual evidence. Thus we re-enforce the point we stated earlier that a discursive composition is based on factual information.

Re-arrangement of ideas into paragraphic units. It is very important to arrange ideas into a logical sequence that will enhance the development of your composition. Each of the point you have raised for or against the essay should be supported by your personal opinion or evidence. As such each paragraph should be based on one well developed point.

A demonstrated answer.

Topic: grandparents are the most important people in the society. Do you agree?

Question Interpretation: Are grandparents important in society? Note that by rephrasing the question we are able to refocus the question.

Stance: In agreement, be sure of what you shall discuss.

Stance: In the introduction you should exhibit your stand. After reading through the introduction, one should be convinced that you are for or against the topic.

Your introduction should be of moderate length.

CHAPTER 4

Chapter Objectives

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Listen to a reading of a passage and give the gist of it orally.
- Read a passage quickly and draft the gist of the passage
- Read the passage under given time and finish (5 minutes)

COMPREHENSION SKILLS 1

The comprehension component forms an important aspect in any language examination world over. Regrettably, from an early age, learners are tested on comprehension skills they have not really mastered. There is, in this regard, a general pattern of simply giving learners comprehension exercises that have been already set by textbooks or module writers. The result generally is failure by most learners to respond appropriately to comprehension work. This module in this section seeks to provide for a developmental approach into the teaching and learning of comprehension. The basic observation is that the majority of English Language learners at 'O' Level are rich e.g. confident with situations involving the use of English Language. The phobia can only be overcome through the development levels of a learner from Junior to senior 'O' level classes. Teachers and instructors may adopt or adopt the methods outlined herein. To suit their differing environmental cognitive development needs of their learning. The fullness of the teacher's resources is the basic key to the effective learning of comprehension skills. Hence particularly one is encouraged to also think outside the box and better use a variety of study material in their comprehension lessons. In this regard traditional textbooks and teachers' guides can be used while the teacher would seek other reading material with content suitable for the development stage of their learners.

A comprehension passage primarily tests for pupils' understanding of written matter. The depth of questioning increases with difficulty, from simple to complex level. If simple, it moves from simple recall questions to independent evaluative questions. These questions require different skill-development levels as well as application mechanisms. These skills are outlined in their development sequence in the work below.

Listening comprehension

The art of listening forms an important foundation for comprehension skill development. Active listening involves the development of condition skills necessary for full application of comprehension skills. Active listening builds up the ability of a student to listen to his inner voice. Reading, even when silent, makes use of a passive voice within the individual. This is usually noticed in non competence learners through silent lip movements when reading silently. Therefore listening skills need plenty of practice and drilling. Teacher resourcefulness is highly encouraged and the following drills serve to give general guidelines on what can be done.

Practice

The teacher should read aloud thrice the following passage adapted from Dickens novel Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. As the teacher reads this passage students should listen to the story attentively. The teacher then reads the passage omitting some main words or phrases. A teacher does so and students attempt to correctly fill in the missing text from memory. These practice can be employed through the use of various instructional media that may be available within a particular environment.

Mr Ralph Nideby was not, strictly speaking, what you would call a merchant, neither was he a banker nor an attorney, nor a special pleader, nor a notary. He was certainly not a tradesman, and still less could he lay any claim to the title of a professional gentleman; for it would have been impossible to mention any recognized profession to which he belonged. Nonetheless, as he lived in a spacious house, a golden square, which in addition to a brass plate upon the street door, had another brass plate, two sizes and a half times smaller upon the left hand door post.

After the teacher has read the passage to the class, the class is instructed to complete the same passage on their own or in groups putting missing words.

Passage

Mr _____ Nickleby was not _____ what you would call a _____, neither was _____ a banker, nor an attorney, nor a _____ pleader, nor a notary. He was certainly not a tradesman, and still less could he lay any _____ to the title of a professional _____; for it would have been _____ to mention any recognized profession to which he _____. Nevertheless as he lived in a _____ house, a golden square, which in addition to a plate upon the street _____, had another brass _____, two and a half times smaller upon the left hand door post.

Lessons from the above practice

The above practice train active listening as well as simple recall as well as general comprehension skills. The teacher may read only a few lines in initial practice sessions depending on the academic ability of a class. As the students improve on word recall from a few lines the teaching and learning increases the length of the next passage. Once this skill is fully mastered the teaching learning of comprehension would be a much simpler task.

N.B Listening exercises should be done at regular intervals so as to give the learner continuous practice and reinforce comprehension skill development.

Reading Comprehension

Reading is a very, complex skill that requires sequential development from the simple to complex skills. Many a time learners are subjected to pre-developed comprehension passages which focus on the cognitive needs within a single framework. This means that at most times a new student studying from basic O level classes at form 3 is expected to perform at the level of a form 4 graduate about to sit for the exam. While with gifted classes performing may be within a similar range but generally speaking, language learners in the majority of Zimbabwean schools require a separated comprehension skill development, when a particular comprehension

lesson focuses on the development of a particular skill. Once a lower order skill has been effectively mastered a higher order skill is sequentially built into the comprehension lesson. The result is that students will be able to gradually adjust to a higher order skill till a point is reached where they can display mastery of all skills. At this stage learners can then be exposed to the model examination type approach by most language practice resources.

Skimming

At most times learners are subjected to the instruction “Read through the passage quickly twice...” Most learners still lack basic skills development and hence need to be directed on how to read through the passage and what to look for during the so called fast reading session.

Skimming basically involves 3 aspects concentration, comprehension and speed. The learners should have sufficient concentration to effectively go through the comprehension text. Listening skills practice discussed earlier develops basic concentration skills are useful in this aspect of comprehension skills development. Comprehension entails basic understanding of the subject matter of the text and this requires ample drilling in basic language structures and a wide reading on the part of the learner so as to acquire basic language proficiency levels.

Initially the learner should be exposed to passages at a minimal length. This will enable them to read through quicker and reduce the fear of long passages which may destroy the concentration level. Once sufficient reading speed has been grasped, the length of the passage is gradually increased until it is also at the examination standard. In addition the passage chosen should be simple in nature to make progress with the acquisition of skill. The learner should be initially exposed to writings they are familiar with. The crisis of reading enjoyment at the initial passage will be comprehended with little difficulty and learning will gradually adjust to more difficult situations. The fundamental objective of skimming is to obtain the main idea of the passage. As such learners should be able to respond to basic questions that require simple recall or basic understanding of text.

The following exercises aim at developing the art of skimming in learners and gives instructions in a track and operational framework on which to develop further comprehension practice.

Exercise i

Read the following passage and answer questions that follow

Read the following passage very carefully, and answer the following questions in good English. Answer the questions in the order set.

Ra- Thaga, in order not to be attacked by wild animals, was wont to sleep in the top branches of some large tree, where he would weave a hammock of ramblers and ropes of inner barks, tying it up with twigs. In this manner he spent many nights alone in different woods. This was a wise precaution, for occasionally his sleep and the stillness of the night were disturbed by the awful roar of the king of beasts, making thunder in the forest. One morning, at the end of another restless night when the wood pigeons began to address one another in their language, after the dawn of day had caused the whining of the hyenas to cease, the sun rose slowly and Ra- Thaga,

descending from his late solitary nest, commenced the misery of another day. Each of his mornings was but the resumption of his fruitless search for the company of human beings, which it seemed he was never to find in this world. As he dragged his feet through the dewy grass he seemed to have no particular destination in view. He wondered how much longer this solitude would last. With a drooping spirit he mused over the gloom of existence and asked himself if he still could speak his own language, or if, supposing he met anyone and was addressed, he could still understand it.

1. Which word in this passage tells us that it had become customary for Ra-Thanga to sleep in a hammock in the top branches of large trees?

Analysis: this question seeks for a student understanding of the passage. A student who has read through the passage with understanding will be able to give an accurate answer: The most appropriate word is ‘manner’ which shows us the way he used to sleep on the tops.

2. How would he prepare his sleeping area?

Analysis: This question also basically needs simple recall of textual events as they are. The answer is clearly stated in the second line of the paragraphs that reads ‘he would weave a hammock of rambles and ropes of inner bark.’

3. Which word in this paragraph shows us that he moved slowly?

Analysis This question requires general understanding of the text as well as sufficient knowledge of language once the learner has comprehended the passage. The answer is dragged. The word dragged therefore show us the moving action.

Exercise ii. Time Practice:

Pupils should read the passage in about 10 minutes and answer the questions that follow. The teacher may set his/her own questions that may be answered. This develops the aspect of speech that is very necessary for effective comprehension practice. Initially a lot of learners will find difficulty in reading the passage within the given time frame. The teacher may adjust the time according to class ability; i.e. reducing the time for fast learners and increasing initial times for slow learners.

PASSAGE 5

Read the following passage very carefully and answer the following questions in good English. You are advised to answer them in the order set.

1. Close to three million years ago on a campsite near the east shore of Kenya’s spectacular Lake Turkana, formerly Lake Rudolf, a primitive human picked up a water- smoothed stone, and with a few skilful strikes transformed it into an implement. What was once an accident of nature was now a piece of deliberate technology, to be used to fashion a stick for digging up roots, or to slice the flesh off a dead animal. Soon discarded by its maker, the stone tool still exists, an unbreakable link with our ancestors; together with many others, that tool is preserved in the

National Museums of Kenya in Nairobi. It is a heart – quickening thought that we share the same genetic heritage with the hands that shaped the tool that we can now hold in our own hands, and with the mind that decided to make the tool that our minds can now contemplate.

2. There is an inescapable and persistent element of excitement in the search for the origins of humanity. It affects everyone, professionals and non- professionals alike, because there appears to be a universal curiosity about our past, about how a thinking, feeling cultural being emerged from a primitive ape – like stock. What evolutionary circumstances moulded that ancient ape into a tall, upright highly intelligent creature that, through technology and determination, has come to dominate the world? This is the question we ask about ourselves. And it is not mere idle curiosity because, without doubt, the key to our future lies in a true understanding of what sort of animal we are.

3. Ever since the first signs of self – awareness flickered in the minds of our distant ancestors the human (or pre-human) mind has pondered on its relationship with the world outside. We can guess that early humans, say a million or so years ago, were conscious of themselves as an integral part of the environment in which they lived: they were hunters and gatherers and they survived only if they respected the world in which they lived. And yet they may have already begun the age – old human practice of attempting to secure more favourable treatment for themselves by appealing in diverse ways to the greater natural forces that rule the world. Time marched on and eventually modern humans – *Homo sapiens* - emerged, creatures who, to an extraterrestrial observer, must seem to be more than a little perverse. Like no other animals, we wage war among ourselves. We knowingly exploit limited resources in our environment and seem to expect that our profligacy can go on forever. And we choose to ignore deep chasms of injustice, consciously inflicted both between nations and within nations. In a sense it is humans who now rule the world: our extraordinary creative intelligence gives us the potential to do more or less anything we want. But, an extraterrestrial observer may wonder, isn't the ruler just a little bit crazy?

4. If we are not crazy, and we will assume we are not, why is it that humanity seems determined to spiral ever faster towards self – made destruction? Perhaps the human species is just a ghastly biological blunder, having evolved beyond a point at which it can thrive in harmony with itself and the world around it. That must be a possibility. In recent years scientists, playwrights, and others have attempted to explain why mankind finds itself faced with the prospect of self – annihilation. The idea was proposed that man is unswervingly aggressive, an idea that was given scientific credence by proponents such as Professor Raymond Dart and Dr Konrad Lorenz, and successfully popularized by Robert Ardrey.

5. The core of the aggression argument says that because we share a common heritage with the animal kingdom we must possess and express an aggressive instinct. And the notion is elaborated with the suggestion that at some point in our evolutionary history we gave up being vegetarian ape- like creatures and became killers, with a taste not only for prey animals, but also for each other. It makes a good gripping story. More important, it absolves society from attempting to rectify the evil in the world. But it is fiction – dangerous fiction.

6. Unquestionably we are part of the animal kingdom. And yes, at some point in our evolution we departed from the common dietary habits of the large primates and took

to including a significant amount of meat in our menu. But a serious biological interpretation of these facts does not lead to the conclusion that, because once the whole of the human race indulged in hunting as part of its way of life, killing is in our genes. Indeed, we argue that the opposite is true, that humans could not have evolved in the remarkable way in which we undoubtedly have unless our ancestors were strongly co-operative creatures. The key to the transformation of a social ape – like creature into a cultural animal living in a highly structured and organized society is sharing: the sharing of jobs and the sharing of food. Meat eating was important in propelling our ancestors along the road to humanity, but only as part of a package of socially – oriented changes involving the gathering of plant foods and sharing the spoils.

7. This being so, why then is recent human history characterized by conflict rather than compassion? We suggest that the answer to this question lies in the change in way of life from hunting and gathering to farming, a change which began about ten thousand years ago and which involved a dramatic alteration in the relationship people had both with the world around them and among themselves. The hunter – gatherer is a part of the natural order: a farmer necessarily distorts that order. But more important, sedentary farming communities have the opportunity to accumulate possessions, and having done so they must protect them. This is the key to human conflict, and it is greatly exaggerated in the highly materialistic world in which we now live.

From: *Origins* by R. Leakey and R. Lewin

Answer all questions briefly. Omit a line after finishing a part question, and three lines after a full question.

From Paragraph 1

1. What was once an accident of nature was now a piece of deliberate technology (line 4). Find two words in paragraph one to complete the following:
 - (a) (i) “Accident of nature” is referring to...
 - (ii) “A piece of deliberate technology” is referring to..... [3]
 - (b) Explain why, according to the author, there is “an inescapable and persistent element of excitement in the search for the origins of humanity” (line 13). [2]

From Paragraph 2

2. (a) Why is it important to discover “what sort of animal we are? (line 22) [1]

From Paragraph 3

- (b) Quote the reason the author has for believing that early humans “were conscious of themselves as an integral part of the environment in which they lived” (line 26). [1]

- (c) Briefly explain three reasons an extraterrestrial observer might have for believing homo sapiens are “more than a little perverse” (line 33).
[3]

From Paragraph 4

3. “Perhaps the human species is just a ghastly biological blunder” (line 44).
- (a) (i) Why is it possible for some scientists and writers to believe this. [1]
(ii) What does “blunder” mean? [1]
- (b) Write down a word from paragraph 4 that means the same as “Annihilation”. [1]
- (c) Is Robert Ardrey read by many people? Quote a word or phrase from the passage to substantiate your answer.
[2]
- (d) (i) Why is the “aggressive argument”, “dangerous fiction”?
[2]
(ii) In what ways were early human ancestors “co-operation creatures”? (line 69)
[1]
4. (a) (i) Explain the differences between hunter – gatherer societies and settled farming societies, according to the author. [3]
(ii) “This is the key to human conflict and it is greatly exaggerated in the highly materialistic world in which we now live” (line 84). Explain this sentence and pay particular attention to the underlined words. [4]
- (b) Choose six of these words and explain them in not more than seven words.
- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| (i) Spectacular | (ii) Contemplate |
| (iii) Persistent | (iv) Pondered |
| (v) Diverse | (vi) Transformation |
| (vii) Spoil | (viii) Compassion [6] |

Task 1

The teacher gives pupils about a minute to discuss in pairs the general sense of the passage. The teacher then creates general class discussion. This background gives the teacher an insight into the comprehension levels of the pupils of which the passage may be re-read to enhance pupil understanding. Basic knowledge based questions can then be designed.

Questions

1. What object was picked next to Lake Turkania
2. This question needs a general understanding of textual content. If a student has deeply understood the passage to identify the point thus water smoothed stone was picked.
The student has to skim through the first paragraph in order to identify the actual word derived from the phrase Lake Turkania, formerly, Late Radolf

3. Summarise the main question, that is by referral to paragraph 22.
4. Quickly read through paragraph 6 and outline the main point therein.

Concluding Statement

The art of skimming forms the foundation for our meaningful understanding of comprehension work. It is the primary skill that lays a foundation of other higher order skills necessary for total comprehension skill development, where possible practice of skimming until the skill is effectively mastered must continue.

STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION PAPER 2

The paper consists of a comprehension passage, comprehension questions, a summary question, and a section on registers or speech- styles. The comprehension carries 20 marks, while the summary carries also 20 marks and the registers carry 10 marks. The paper has duration of 2 hours.

Analysis of aspects

The Comprehension:

Usually a fairly long passage is given. Read the passage twice before answering the questions. There is no need to read through all the questions because on each question you are told the paragraph where the answer can be obtained from. The questions attract one or two marks at most. It therefore means that the answers are short answers. Your answers must be precise. Do not repeat the words of the question in your answer. Number your answers accordingly.

Introduction to comprehension skills

- The purpose of learning comprehension work is to cultivate the skills of understanding a text.
- The following steps should be complied with when reading a passage for comprehension practice.
 - ❖ Read the title of the passage (if it is there) and get the gist of the passage. A gist is a rough picture of the text).
 - ❖ Read through the passage fast for the first time.
 - ❖ Scan through the first five questions quickly without looking for their answers.
 - ❖ Read over the passage for the second time, slowly but thoroughly.
 - ❖ Underline any new words and phrases as you recall the questions you scanned through.
 - ❖ After the second reading go straight to the questions.
 - ❖ Follow the directions of the question as to the paragraph and line where the answer is to be found.
 - ❖ Write the answer briefly without reciting the words of the question.

- ❖ The number of marks usually indicates the number of points in the answer.
- ❖ Do not waste much time on one difficult question which, for that matter, carries only one mark
- ❖ As much as possible try to put the answer in your own words when the question says so. But if difficult, extract the answer in the very words in the passage.
- ❖ Do not leave any question unattempted.
- ❖ Revise each answer you have just written to check its accuracy.

SECTION A [40 MARKS]

Read the following passage very carefully before you attempt any questions.

Answer all the questions. You are advised to answer them in the order set.

Mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalised in any part of the paper.

(Adopted from ZIMSEC NOV 2004)

(In the passage an old school photograph helps Don Makatile mourn for his once active school friend, whose life is now slowly wasting away from AIDS.)

1. The picture in the photo album makes me cry in a way I have never wanted to cry about anything before. It shows three schoolboys, as happy and carefree as life in the 1980 Form 2 class could allow. The faces are clean and healthy, untouched even by the teenage scourge of acne.
2. The school uniform in the picture shows the elegant dress of the time: grey trousers worn together with sky-blue long-sleeved shirts. The shoes were the fashionable Pathfinder, black, that revealed a modest glimpse of the famed nylon socks. The scholar in the middle, wearing a navy – blue blazer, is someone I have known almost all my life – and right now he is slowly wasting away – succumbing to the ravages of AIDS.
3. He lies in bed waiting for the proverbial call from Heaven. We have all been waiting with him, for eight long painful months. Once or twice I have thought about the wisdom of the Dutch government in legalising euthanasia or mercy killing. There is no denying that my dear friend would be better off dead. Just the other day I witnessed his sister, another good friend of mine, trying to feed him a bowl of soft porridge. It was a futile exercise. His mouthy made movements that had nothing to do with eating. The white stuff dribbled out of his mouth and some of it came back a nauseating yellow colour.
4. This is the same companion who used to feast on greasy potato chips – junk food. I remember the particularly liked avocado squashed inside a half-loaf of bread. He was the type who spoke with food in his mouth. This picture of him I particularly find difficult to erase from my memory.
5. Now, because of the ruthless affliction, he cannot chew a meagre bowl of maize-meal soft porridge. I tried to bath him the other day. It was a scary

experience. Each time I put the damp cloth anywhere on his frail body, an animal-like sound escaped his mouth. Do I call it a mouth? There is no word to describe it, for his mouth has become a place for the gathering of every type of blister. It is pitiful.

6. This is the friend we went to the golf course with to make a few extra cents. He is the athlete we swarm with in the stream formed by the murky water flowing after a heavy rainfall. We almost always incurred the wrath of our parent. He is the fellow who, with the rest of us, forked out ten cents to bribe an unscrupulous cheap thug who would not admit us through an opening in the perimeter fence made of corrugated iron, at Orlando Stadium. I recall once we went to Parkie with him for the first time in our young lives and were taken aback by the magnificence of the roofing. Other railway stations had no such luxury.
7. I walked the length and breadth of downtown Johannesburg with him, especially Market Street, in search of cheaper stores. I went to Fordburg with him to the movies. We played amateur soccer together long before the advent of international soccer in South Africa. We were always top of the noise-makers list at school.
8. He is the same person, Lord. How do we reminisce when all he does is grunt? How do I tell him I love him, so he can take that with him wherever he is headed? Like the rest of the careless city boys, he had a multiple of casual relationships, especially in the so-called safe days, when the worst that could happen to anybody was venereal disease. Yes, there is nothing for me to hide any more. His were more of freelance relationships. An educated man, he later heard about HIV/AIDS and the folly of casual relationships. I vividly remember the time we had Education for Living Lessons. Every aspect of life was genuinely treated in these lessons – HIV / AIDS included. Now AIDS is killing my friend. Could there be some strange and obscure way he could have contracted the deadly disease? All I want now, and desperately, is that he should die. I do not think that makes me a bad person. He should depart so the merciless gossip can go with him. He should die so the picture I am left with should be the one in my treasured photo album, and leave me memories of how good a soccer player he once was.
9. Everyday of my life something within me dies when I visit him. I see how cruel AIDS can be. My heart bleeds for the youngsters who still think parties and casual relationships are best things to have happened this century, when the reality is that people are dying alone in back rooms, in terrible pain and humiliation. I have slept in his naked a few times and though he was naturally slender, he has not always been this skeletal.
10. I have devoured almost every newspaper article I have found on HIV/ AIDS and I am tired. I long to read something as light as a love story, preferably one before the days of AIDS. Nothing heavy. Is it a sin to want a funeral this badly? I hope God understands.

11. I keep the photo of my friend in a special album, bought just after the big day in April 1998, already has a few dog-eared pages – not this one! Someone told me that one day when a museum is built in Kagiso, the growing township on the West Rand where I come from, this album should be among the items on display. He observed that it was full of dead people. I do not keep it for this reason, though it is true that the bulk of the faces that smile at me as I page through are dead. I keep it to immortalise the cherished years of my youth. Sometimes I use it to remind my troublesome nephew I have not always been thirty-six. I was streetwise once and, like him, I deluded myself into thinking I had answers to most of the world's problems. I think it is good for him to know I did not have the answers, just as today's young folk do not have the answers either. No one has any easy answers to the challenge of HIV / AIDS.
12. But what the young folk need to know is that while the road to AIDS starts at the wild funky parties and leads all too easily to quick senseless, casual relationships, it ends where my friend is now; in darkness, pain and ugliness. The photo is now wet with my tears. It fascinated my son to see his macho dad also has a weak side. Has he already intimated to his friends his newly discovered interesting story, I wonder? No matter – with one thousand six hundred new HIV infections everyday, mine are far from being the last tears that will be shed on the subject.

Adapted from: 'Please die, old friend'; an article by Don Makatile in Drum, 11 January, 2001.

Answer all the questions

It is recommended that you answer them in the order set.

From Paragraph 1

- 1 (a) How does the picture affect the author? [1]

From Paragraph 2

- (b) (i) 'the scholar in the middle....' To what does the word 'middle' refer? [1]
- (ii) Explain in your own words the meaning of 'succumbing to the ravages of AIDS.' [2]

From Paragraph 3

- (c) (i) '.... Waiting for the proverbial call from Heaven.' What is he waiting for? [1]
- (ii) What does the expression 'futile exercise' (line 16) tell you about the attempt to feed the author's friend? [1]

From Paragraph 4

- (d) Why does the author find it difficult to erase from his memory, the picture of his friend speaking and eating at the same time?
[1]

Total [7]**From Paragraph 10**

- 2 (a) 'Is it a sin to want a funeral this badly?' Give the two reasons that the author advances earlier on in the passage for wishing his friend dead. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). [2]

From Paragraph 11

- (b) (i) Explain in your own words the major reason given by the author for keeping the photo album. [2]
(ii) Find the other reason why the author keeps the album. [1]
(c) What similarity does the author draw between himself in his youth and his nephew? [1]

From Paragraph 12

- (d) The passage ends on a despairing note. Give two reasons for the despair. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). [2]

From the Whole Passage

- (c) Choose five of the following words or phrases. For each of them give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage.

1	scourge	5	taken aback
2	elegant	6	advent
3	particularly	7	intimated
4	scary		intimated [5]
		Total	[13]

3. The passage describes the writer's anguish over his friend, whom he has known for almost all his life, now dying from AIDS.

Write a summary to clearly bring out the contrasting situations between the present sad condition in which his friend is and the good times they had together.

Use only material from paragraph 5 up to the end of paragraph 9.

Your summary, which should be in continuous writing (not note form), must not be longer than 160 words including the 10 words given below.

Begin your answer as follows:

My friend's present ruthless affliction does not allow him to

Total [20]

SECTION B [10 MARKS]

Answer all the questions.

4. Described below are five situations. Read the description of each situation carefully and then answer briefly the questions, which follow.

- (a) You are a class monitor in charge of a Form 4 class. When a fire suddenly breaks out on the roof of your classroom, you say:
- (i) "Oh no! We are all going to perish in this fire. There is nothing that can be done."
 - (ii) "Please remain seated. Do not run. Leave in an orderly manner through the fire escape, beginning with Memory in the front row."

What kind of feelings are likely to be generated by each of your statements among the students?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). **[2]**

- (b) You ask your cousin if you can borrow his new jersey. Your cousin replies:
- (i) "Anytime! When do you want it?"
 - (ii) "I do not share clothes with anybody."

What does each statement reveal about your cousin's character?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii) **[2]**

- (c) Your father is very keen to spend a sum of money on a new car. Your mother says:
- (i) "A car is a good idea, but don't you think we should not spend so much money at this stage?"
 - (ii) "This is long overdue. We can hardly wait to see the make."

What would be the purpose of each of your mother's statements?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). [2]

- (d) After repairing a bicycle that his friends could not fix, a boy stands with his hands on his hips and declares:
“What would you fellows do without me?”

Give two different interpretations that his friends could make of this statement.

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii). [2]

- (e) Match the following utterances in A below against the appropriate intentions in B. Write down the number only of each of the utterances and against that number, write out the intention appropriate to it.

A

- (i) “Of course, I expected to win. I don’t play to lose. I am the best.”
- (ii) “There is no-one who can bake biscuits like you! Please, let me have some. Pretty please!”
- (iii) “Go on! Give it a try! You can do it! Go on!”
- (iv) “Give us money, otherwise we will break you leg!” **B**
- (a) Intimidating
(b) Reassuring
(c) Warning
(d) Bragging
(e) Wheedling
(f) Showing spirit
(g) Begging
(h) Encouraging

Demonstration

1. (a) The question requires the effect that makes him cry.
(b)(i) “Middle” refer to the sick friend.
(ii) This is the most challenging question to pupils. Pupils normally overlook the key words in the question, which are in your own words. “This means that pupils should give their own words, pupils should make sure that they have replaced every key word in the given sentence or phrase without losing the meaning. The key words in this case which are “succumbing” and “ravages” may mean “severe

damages”. So when the two are combined, we come up with “giving in to severe damages”.

- (c) (i) Death
 (ii) The key word in this question is “futile” – This means that the attempt is useless/ fruitless.
- (d) It reminds him of the friend’s love for food and the sharp appetite.
2. (a) Pupils should take note of the fact that the question requires two reasons. The tendency is to overlook the two and also to combine reasons. Pupils are advised to desist from that. To help pupils to avoid combining the reason, the question requires them to number them separately as:
 (i) and (ii). What should guide the pupil to the answer is that the reason should have been advanced earlier on in the passage that leads us to lines 51-55
- (i) So that the merciless gossip would end with the death of his friend.
 (ii) So that he would remain with a good or positive image of his friend.
- (b) (i) Is another question that needs pupils to be very careful. The words in “your own words” are critical just in 1 (b) (ii). This is meant to test the pupil’s perception and ability to use their own words. The tendency by pupils is to lift reasons as they are in the passage. There is no credit for such answers, as the pupil will not have answered the question. Pupils should replace the key words, for example the reason given in the passage is to “immortalise the cherishes years of my youth” so the candidate has to substitute “immortalise” and “cherished”.
 “Immortalise” can mean to keep alive eternally, “cherished” can mean treasured/ loved dearly. So when combined it gives us to keep alive eternally the treasured days of youthful times.
 (iii) Pupils should not lift sentences as they are, but should show an understanding/ comprehension e.g. as a reminder to his nephew that he was once young too.
- (d) Both thoughts had answers to most of the world’s problems, but reality showed that they did not.
- (e) (i) Great number of new infections.
 (ii) The emotional effect of the increase to continue which means continuation of trouble.

Word meanings

Pupils need to be reminded that the meanings that they should give are supposed to be contextual meanings and not the dictionary meaning.

Pupils are to choose five words each with 1 mark.

Scourge	–	affliction
Elegant	–	fashionable

Particularly	-	especially
Scary	-	terrifying
Taken a back	-	astonished
Advent	-	dawn
Bulk	-	majority
Intimated	-	told

The word that should replace the given word/phrase is also supposed to be in the same tense.

For example “intimated” is past tense, so is the word “told”, the phrase “taken a back” is also past those, so is astonished. “This means that if a student would give “tell” for “intimated” and “astonishing” for “taken a back”, this would be wrong.

Pupils are also advised to test if the words they would have given are correct by using the words in the sentences and check if the meaning remains the same.

Possible Responses

4. (a) (i) Fear, fright, panic
(ii) Composure, calmness
- (b) (i) Helpful, generous
(ii) Unhelpful, unwilling to help
- (c) (i) Discourage
(ii) Encourage
- (d) (i) Sees himself as indispensable
(ii) He is joking
- (e) (i) Bragging (D)
(ii) Wheedling (E)
(iii) Encouraging (H)
(iv) Intimidating (A)

THE SUMMARY

This aspect arises from the comprehension passage. It is a shortened version of a part of the passage. Generally, a summary is an account of the main issues in a text. Guidelines are given in the summary question on what to summarise, how to start the summary and the number of words of the summary. It is an offense to violate stipulated guidelines such as the number of words, where to begin and end searching for points. A summary is not given a heading. You only indicate the word “Summary” on the answer sheet. Your summary is in continuous writing, without paragraphs.

Summary

1. What is a summary?
It is a miniature of a larger text.
2. It is a brief account of the larger text.
3. Usually a specific aspect in the passage has to be summarized.
4. The number of words of the summary is always prescribed.
5. It is an offence to exceed the limit or to go below the limit.

-The issue to be summarized is always given.

-The summary always carries 20 marks. This suggests that the number of points in the summary may be twenty. But this is not a hard and fast rule.

Approach

-Read the area of summarization carefully.

-Underline any relevant point you come across.

-Write a rough draft of the summary on a rough sheet.

-Prune the words on the rough draft down to the required number.

-Write the final summary on a clean sheet of paper copying from the rough draft.

-Write the truthful number of words underneath your summary.

-Always finish the summary.

Examination Practice 2

English Language Paper 2

This chapter pays particular attention to the comprehension examination. All main comprehension skills have been outlined in various chapters dedicated to their development. The main focus of this chapter is to consolidate all aspects that have been developed and reinforced in this module, in our attempt to prepare for the examination at the end of the course.

You are advised to refer to principles of English Language discussed in the previous Chapters. We shall then apply the same principles to the comprehension examination because it has a number of aspects that need to be done. The main ones are outlined below.

1. Extensive practice on Examination standard passages definitely gives a strong advantage to learners. A strong reading culture trains the mind responding fast to what is being read. As such learners are highly encouraged to have strong extensive reading practice focusing on a variety of texts and genres.
2. Time is a very important aspect of any examination it is essential to stick to the time limit recommended for each section. Regular timed practice of comprehension work develops the capacity of the mind to think relatively fast.
3. Coming to the actual comprehension, it is recommended that you read the passage at least 3 times before attempting any question. The reason is quite simple. When you meet a stranger for the first time you are not sure on how to behave, however as time goes on you will get used to the stranger and discover a lot of things. In

short you would have gained the confidence to relate with the person. The comprehension passage can then be likened to a stranger meeting us for the first time. We cannot get all information pertaining to the context of the passage after going through the passage once. However as we go over the passage again, we are but more confident as we now have a general ideas on the subject being presented.

Basic comprehension skills have been discussed extensively in the module. Mastery of such skills is very essential if one is to do well in comprehension work. Question interpretation of various comprehension aspects has been discussed at length. Therefore it is important to understand the demands of the questions before making any meaningful attempt to answer. Good understanding of question requirements, improves your presentation as you will be aware of what to respond to instead of transferring whole sentences from the passage into your answer script! It is important to take note of mark allocation for individual questions. It is certainly wasting time and effort to write two sentences for a question requiring a simple one word answer. Teachers are thus highly encouraged to use the standard answering approach from an early level (Form 3). It has been practitioners attempt to spoon feed learners on examination skill a few days before the paper is written. Many may understand but few will be able to apply these examination tips appropriately for they would have come a little too late.

Another important aspect of the comprehension paper is the ability to learn to lay out their work as per examination Instruction. Let us refer to the student's examination instructions that are used by most examination boards.

Answer **all** questions: This means that an attempt should be made to respond to all questions, not only the ones you think you know. Therefore never leave a question unanswered.

Leave a space of a line between each part to a question e.g. between 1 (a) and (b) and a space of at least three lines after you complete your answer to each entire question.

This is a general instruction, however very few teachers seem to be aware of its importance. This is evidenced by a higher number of conditions not sticking to the recommended presentation outline. This needs strong evidence that during normal lessons this instruction is not enforced. Therefore the teaching of English Language at O-Level should prepare the student in being able to sit for the examination at the end of the course, and being in a position to follow examination instructions in the book.

Lastly neatness of presentation and clarity of work is highly advised. This is an English Language examination, therefore as the exam instructions reads, mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalized in any part of the paper.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter Objectives

By the end of the chapter the student should be able to:

- understand the concept of scanning and applying it in studying a passage.
- read a given passage quickly and apply the scanning skills to answer questions.
- build understanding of a passage by identifying some key elements in it.
- locate quickly specific areas of a passage where an answer is contained.
- Answer questions using scanning techniques as demonstrated in the chapter.

COMPREHENSION SKILLS 2

Introduction

The section places a particular emphasis on the practice of summary. This is a very important aspect of the comprehension process and it is hoped that the recommendations outlined herein will provide a comprehension frame work for the development of effective scanning skills within our learners.

What is scanning?

Read the brief situations below.

A

The fish eagle survive primarily on fish. It shows high up above the waters of the lake and circles the air above. Its very sharp eye scans the water surface for any movements. Once a fish is detected it swoops towards the surface of the lake, and with a lightning speed grabs the poor fish out of the water. With its powerful talons and flies up again to enjoy another delicious meal.

B

A great movement finally arrived. They have waited for a good five years for this accession. She was finally pregnant, and soon an heir to the royal throne was to be born. The greatest question that vibrated in the minds was, "It is a boy or a girl". To settle this, they went to the gynaecologists who recommended a scan to determine the sex of the unborn child. To their joy it was a boy!

Scanning is paying particular concentration to an area or object in order to find out something. In passage A. The fish eagle scans the surface lake. This means it pays particular attention in order to locate something, (fish). In the passage B, the doctor recommends a scan to determine the sex of the unborn child. These passages show a concentration of energy to bring out an initial outcome.

Therefore scanning is a very important aspect of the English Language comprehension for a number of reasons, some of which are outlined below.

-There is need to locate actual paragraphs that are being examined. The English exam gives an outline of the paragraph or line reference of where to obtain information required by the examination.

-There is need to quickly locate specific areas of the passage where the answer is enriched. There is need to quickly pick out relevant points for the purposes of summary writing.

In everyday language usage, effective scanning skills combined with skimming skills reduce the time taken to read through articles. This means that main texts can be read within a short time period. Thus a learner can be exposed to a variety of texts thereby improving general language efficiency.

In short, scanning helps the learner to identify the main points within a passage. This will enhance understanding of the passage leading to effective and accurate responses to questions.

The scanning process

How do we scan a given passage? Many a time learners are instructed to scan the passage without being given instruction on what really is to be done. The result is general failure by the learner to effectively tackle comprehension questions.

Scanning involves the reading of a text and identifying the key elements that make up the passage. As we skim through the passage, we discover that there are some elements of the passage that we still remember, hence we build our understanding of such passage on the few basic interpretations that we have obtained. Then we are able to recall some of the information from memory. And we are able to locate the paragraphs without the aid of line references.

All comprehension questions require the scanning of a passage to locate specific details. The details may be asking about what, which, why, how, aspects of the passage. Therefore it requires strong connection and location skills. Some questions require an extraction of a word or phrase from the passage while some need a deeper understanding of the text so as to write answers in words.

Therefore the scanning process and the skills required for it are part and parcel of the comprehension process.

Practice One

Read through the passage and answer the following questions that follow.

1. Omovo had experienced a hardening within of a different sort the day his brothers left home. Now that he looked back he saw something of a pattern. His two brothers had grown up alienated from their father. This alienation had existed as gestures, unspoken words, looks; but when their mother died the whole mood became dangerously explicit. Omovo gathered that his brothers had screamed at and accused the man of killing their mother with his hatred and his beatings. They had then left

home and did not show up till the day of the funeral. Omovo was at school; all this time and only pieced this information together from the various things he had heard.

1. In their different ways Umeh and Okur had become rebels in what was left of the home. They wore their hair long, blown – out, smoked ‘ugbo’, drank a lot, fought and stayed out late. They hung around the house like an unbearable presence of menace. They seldom spoke to their father- and when they did it was with the holes in their lives. It must have been agony for the man as he stared at them and recognized himself in their self- destruction.
2. They came to be like that gradually. They had always stood by their mother when she was being beaten and ill- treated by him and their detachment grew into something secretly frightening to Omovo. He often overheard them saying when they were young that they would get together and fight the man; but they never did.
3. Their bitterness grew when the man refused to sponsor their education in the university. Both of them were very bright and had done well in their A levels. Their father was always ready with such pep – talks as: ‘Fight for yourself. That was what I did. You think I would have become the person I am today if I kept on waiting for someone to fight for me? I did not even go to university myself. Fight for yourselves!’
4. As they could not go to the university, and found it very difficult to get a job, they grew gradually embittered and restless. A gulf widened in the house daily. In their excitable and depressed state the two young men often did desperate and wild things. It seemed as though what they did was their weird way of punishing their father for the kind of life he had made them live. They hardened and withdrew into themselves.
5. Then they came up with a new passion. They wanted to go to America. It was every young man’s passion then. But for them it was an escape. They talked and planned about it with an overt ‘we- will – manage – on – our- own’s defiance. Omovo knew they were deeply troubled by their mother’s death; they had lost a fulcrum, something had been wrenched from them and they were whirling aimlessly.
6. Things took a turn for the worse when to their consternation their father told them that he was taking a new wife. The following day she was led into the house. Thereafter they all felt shut out from the man’s life, they felt like strangers. The house soon became too small and they began stepping on one another’s toes. Everybody’s temper was frayed, taut. It was disturbing to Omovo to see Okur brush past their father and not a word would pass between them. It became almost impossible to breathe in the house.
7. Somehow, strangely, Omovo was able to reach the man in this welter of raw emotions. He could see him and could touch him through his brothers’

indifference. Any act of his which was less angry than his brothers' was defined in the house as something positive.

8. Although Omovo knew that relationships in the house were thread bare he was not prepared for the dimensions the frayed emotions assumed, for the exposing of raw nerves that happened explosively that morning, that Saturday morning.
9. Noises of a quarrel woke Omovo up. He dashed to the sitting – room and saw his father standing near the door. There was a belt in his right hand and it was stained with blood at the buckle- end. He was convulsed with uncontrollable anger. Umeh stood by the bookshelf, his head bent forward. Omovo could see the heavy belt- mark on the side of his face below the ear. Umeh was tall and now he stooped, his fair, light brown face had flushed a muddy brown, his hair was scattered and his white polo- neck was torn at the back. At the kitchen door was Blackie, pretending to blow husks from rice that was on the tray. Omovo caught her eye as she watched the whole scene with calculating sideways glances. The old centre table was tumbled over on its side, one leg wrenched out of shape.
10. Umeh raised his lean, hard, good – looking face. Tears streamed down them. The tears seemed so out of place. Omovo knew he was not crying: the tears were involuntary. On the floor beside his arched tense body was his travelling bag. It was stuffed full. Then it suddenly struck Omovo that Umeh was leaving home.

From: *The Landscapes Within* By B. Okri

Answer the following questions:

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) Omovo changed the day his brothers left home (line 1)
 - (i) Quote the phrase from paragraph one that tells us this. [1]
 - (ii) Explain in what way he changed. [1]
- (b) (i) What does the word 'alienated' tell us about the relationship between the brothers and their father? (line 3)
- (ii) Explain in your own words how this 'alienation' was shown.
- (c) ' Omovo gathered... '
 - (i) Explain gathered (line 6)
 - (ii) Quote another phrase from the first paragraph which means the same as gathered.

From Paragraph 2

- (d) Explain in your own words why Umeh and Okur were seen as rebels.
- (e) 'they delighted in shocking him with the holes in their lives' (line 15)
 - (i) Explain: the holes in their lives.
 - (ii) Why was their father so upset by their behaviour? [1]

From Paragraph 3

2. (a) They came to be like that gradually.’ (line 9)
- (i) What does ‘that’ refer to?
- (ii) When did their resentment of their father begin?

From Paragraph 4

- (b) From the evidence in the fourth paragraph, Explain in your own words what ‘pep – talks are’
[2]

From Paragraph 5

- (c) ‘A gulf widened in the house daily’ (line 31)
- (i) Explain what this gulf is [2]
- (ii) Quote two phrases from the same paragraph as evidence of his gulf. [2]
- (d) (i) Why was going to America so important to them? [2]
- (ii) Was their father aware of their plans? [1]
- (iii) Quote one word from paragraph 6 to support your answer above. [1]

From Paragraph 7

3. (a) In paragraph 7 we have many phrases that are not meant to be taken literally (they do not mean what they seem to mean). Quote one such phrase and explain it in terms of the passage. [2]

From Paragraph 8

- (b) (i) Explain in your own words why Omovo’s presence in the house was helpful. [2]
- (ii) What is Blackie’s (the new wife) attitude to the beating of Umeh? (from paragraph 10) [1]
- (c) Choose three of the following words. For each of them give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning as each has in the passage.
- (i) Explicit (ii) insolent
- (iii) Fulcrum (iv) Thread bare
- (v) Convulsed

Questions

1. Which phrase in line 2 shows us that Omovo thought about his past

Demonstration

Firstly there is an aspect of location. The learner has to identify the line 2 within the given passage. Secondly there is a sense of industry. The learner has to get the basic idea of the story. It may need some learners to read through the first few lines once again. Thirdly there is an aspect of phrase identification which is the final aspect that answers the question. An important point to quote in this regard is that the art of scanning also needed to be developed. The phrase required by the questions.

“Now that he looked back”.

The emphasis of the question is found in the 2 words: Looked back.

2. Briefly describe the alienation that is discussed in the first paragraph

Similarly this question calls for the skill of location. The learner has to identify the part of the first paragraph where alienation is discussed. Then he has to build up understanding of the general meaning of alienation on the context of the passage. Thirdly the learner then has to phrase his view on the presentation of alienation. In the passage in a simple straight forward manner.

Alienation father discussed in the passage is the gradual loss of love and respect by his 2 brother to their further, resulting in them leaving home.

NB: It is observed from this demonstration that in the process there is need to develop in the learner a sense of location. This makes it easier and quicker for them to locate given lines, words or phrases in different parts of the passage. The learner has to have basic comprehension skills. That enables him to grasp the content of the passage. The learner has to develop presentation attributes that enables him to present information in line with the question requirement.

Demonstration

- a) (i) The instruction requires the learner to quote the phrase. Please note that a phrase is an incomplete sentence. Learner therefore should read paragraph one scanning for a phrase can be stated as: “experienced a hardening within”.
- a) (ii) This question requires a high order analysis. This is because it requires an explicit understanding of the whole paragraph. Again the learner has to explain in what way he changed in their own words, but firstly we have to scan for the part of the passage where we can get some information that answers our questions. Let us read the first paragraph. Now the question is what change is being highlighted here. Teachers may guide learners on interpretation of the first 2 lines to give us an idea that Omovo’s attitude to his father changed as a result of his brothers leaving. This is shown by the hardening of a different sort and the statement, he saw something of a pattern. At this instance the scanning skill has been used to locate the ideas in the first paragraph that may show us how Omovo changed.

The class may attempt the following questions either in pairs or small groups. This gives the teacher the time to monitor pupil grasp of skill, before individual exercises can be given.

- b) (i) What does the word alienated tell us about the relationship between the brothers and their father (line 3)
- (ii) Omovo gathered
- (ii) Explain (gathered) (line 6)
- (ii) Quote another phrase from this paragraph that was the same as (gathered)

Comment

As the above exercise is being carried out, the teacher evaluates the ability of students to scan for specific information. Weak areas can then be reinforced through re-directing questions or giving interpretations where necessary.

Practice 2: Timed practice

Read through the following passage at least twice within 15 minutes and attempt the questions that follow: You are recommended to answer in order set.

Passage 4

Read the following passage very carefully, and answer the following questions in good English. Answer the questions in the order set.

1. Ra- Thaga, in order not to be attacked by wild animals, was wont to sleep in the top branches of some large tree, where he would weave a hammock of ramblers and ropes of inner barks, tying it up with twigs. In this manner he spent many nights alone in different woods. This was a wise precaution, for occasionally his sleep and the stillness of the night were disturbed by the awful roar of the king of beasts, making thunder in the forest. One morning, at the end of another restless night when the wood pigeons began to address one another in their language, after the dawn of day had caused the whining of the hyenas to cease, the sun rose slowly and Ra- Thaga, descending from his late solitary nest, commenced the misery of another day. Each of his mornings was but the resumption of his fruitless search for the company of human beings, which it seemed he was never to find in this world. As he dragged his feet through the dewy grass he seemed to have no particular destination in view. He wondered how much longer this solitude would last. With a drooping spirit he mused over the gloom of existence and asked himself if he still could speak his own language, or if, supposing he met anyone and was addressed, he could still understand it.
2. These thoughts tormented him for the sixtieth time, when he suddenly saw a slender figure running softly towards him. It was clear that the maiden was frightened by something terrible, for she ran unseeingly towards him and as he arrested her progress the girl stood panting like a hunted fox. It was only after some moments that with a supreme effort she could utter the short dissyllable, tau (that is, a lion).
‘Where?’ asked Ra- Thaga.

3. 'Oh, stranger,' gasped the girl, recovering her voice, 'how good of you to appear just when my succession of misfortunes has reached a climax. I almost stumbled over a huge lion just beyond that ridge, not far from here I am afraid he will hear us if we speak above a whisper. I did not notice the brute at first because his hair looked just like the tops of the autumn grass. He must have been eating something, for straight in front of me I heard a sound like the breaking of a tree. I think he was crushing the leg of a cow – oh, how silly of me to forget that there are no cows in this wilderness. Anyway,' continued the girl between her grasp, 'I noticed that in front of me there was, not a tuft of grass, but a living animal feeding on something. So I stepped quietly backward, without turning round, until I was at some distance, and then I turned and ran.'
4. Ra- Thaga, successfully concealing his own fears, asked, 'You were not then, observed by the animal, were you?'
'No,' she replied, 'I believe that he is still devouring his prey.'
Ra- Thaga did not know what to do, for if there were two things he was against meeting, they were a Matabele and a lion. 'But here is an awkward position,' he thought, 'a young woman fleeing to me for protection. What is best to be done?'
5. His native gallantry urged him to go after the beast; the young woman persisted in following close behind him. Vainly he tried to persuade her to remain where she was, but she was obdurate. 'Nay,' she replied, in a loud whisper, 'I dare not remain alone.'
6. Ra- Thaga thought he knew what was passing through her mind before she spoke. She added: 'I have wandered through this lonely wilderness for days and nights, since my people were scattered at Kunana; I have lived on roots and bulbs and wild berries, yearning to meet some human being, and now that I have met you, you cannot leave me again so quickly. In fact, I am quite certain that you are a man, but if you are a dream, I will stay with you and dream on while the vision lasts; whether you are man or ghost I have enjoyed the pleasure of a few words with you. I am prepared to see ten other lions with you rather than stay behind of my own free will. Walk on to the lion, I will follow you.'
7. Ra- Thaga heard this with a shiver. He believed that women were timid creatures, but here was one actually volunteering to guide him to where the lion was, instead of commanding him to take her far away from the man-eater. How he wished that he might find it gone! However, he summoned up courage and proceeded, his companion following. At times he felt pleased that she had not obeyed him, for her presence stimulated his bravery. As they proceeded, 'however,' he said to himself, 'lions were usually hunted by large companies of armed men guided by a strange girl.'
8. Suddenly their extreme peril struck him, and before he had time to ponder it, the maiden touched his shoulder and pointed to what looked like a moving tuft of grass, some fifty meters ahead – it was a black – manned lion.

9. The king of beasts was leisurely gorging himself with chunks of meat torn from the carcass of an eland which he had recently killed. Ra-Thaga, realizing that not only his own safety depended upon his prowess, but also that of the young woman who had appeared as if from the clouds and commended herself to his Care, hid fears varnished, yelling at the top of his voice and waiving his cloak of skin in the air, he rushed at the feasting lion, the girl doing the same. This violent interruption of his meal caused the lion to jerk his head, whereupon he took fright and darted off as hard as he could go with his tail between his legs. The lion ran through the trees across the grassy plain and never stopped till he was out of sight.
Ra- Thaga was able to rejoice; but his pride was not greater than the joy of the girl who realized that her trust in him had not been misplaced.

From: *Mhudi* By Sol T. Plaatje.

Answer all questions

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) (i) Quote one word in the first paragraph that tells us that it had become customary for Ra- Thaga to sleep in a hammock in the top branches of large trees. [1]
(ii) Quote another word from the first paragraph that tells us that Ra- Thaga thought deeply about his life. [1]
(b) Why does Ra-Thaga think that he may not be able to speak or understand his own language? [1]

From Paragraph 2

- (c) Why did the maiden speak only after some moments? [1]

From Paragraph 3

- (d) ‘Oh, stranger,’ gasped the girl recovering her voice, how good of you to appear just when my succession of misfortunes has reached a climax. Explain each of the underlined words only. [3]
(e) (i) ‘I am afraid he will hear us if we speak above a whisper.’ Explain the underlined word. [1]
(ii) Why does the girl walk backwards after seeing the lion? [1]

From Paragraph 4

2. (a) Why do you think Ra- Thaga asks if the lion had seen the girl? [1]
(b) Who or what had scattered both Ra-Thaga and the girls’ peoples? [1]

From Paragraph 6

- (c) 'Ra –Thaga thought he knew what was passing through her mind before she spoke. What do you think the girl's thoughts were? [1]
- (d) Why is Ra-Thaga surprised that the girl wanted to lead him back to the lion? [2]
- (e) Explain why Ra-Thaga is pleased that the girl did not stay behind. [1]

From Paragraph 7

- (f) How are lions hunted in Ra- Thaga's country? [2]
3. (a) 'Suddenly their extreme peril struck him, and before he had time to ponder it...' . What does the 'it; refer to? [1]
- (b) What phrase in the last paragraph tells us that the lion was enjoying his meal? [1]
- (c) What causes Ra-Thaga's fears to vanish? [2]
- (d) Explain
- (i) Why Ra-Thaga was proud. [2]
- (ii) Why the girl was joyful. [2]
- (e) Choose five of the following words and give their meanings. Use a short phrase of not more than seven words.
- (i) Precaution (ii) Drooping
- (iii) Tuft (iv) Volunteering
- (vii) Awkward

Concluding Statement

The preceding chapter has attempted to pay particular focus to the art of skimming and scanning. These form the fundamental core of the comprehension process. Indeed practice work given in these chapters is not exhaustive. Therefore educational practitioners are strongly encouraged to teach comprehension skills following guidelines given herein, as well as their self-innovativeness. Once skills have been fully mastered, the skills can then be tested.

CHAPTER 6

Chapter Objectives

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Identify varieties of situational compositions.
- Follow the rules of writing each of them accurately.
- Present the technical formalities on each type of situational composition.

THE SITUATIONAL COMPOSITIONS OR CONTROLLED COMPOSITIONS

The situational composition is another component of paper one. It is a compulsory question. It is a guided composition with specific hints to follow. It is a specialized type of composition. This type of composition is mainly concerned with the technicalities of doing it accordingly. The situations that may be presented for this type of composition may be in various forms.

Some examples of these are:

- (i) The situation may be presented in words in the form of hints or points, not necessarily in a chronological manner. In this case the candidate is expected to study carefully the hints and picture-out the situation they are portraying. There may also be a need to re-arrange the points to suit the chronology and sequence of the situation.
- (ii) The situation may be presented in the form of pictures; photographs, graphs, piechart; statistical table or diagram. What is of importance in this type of composition is to analyse the information or the figure very carefully. Study the picture carefully and come up with the full story that is being portrayed. This full story must then be presented in your words as a composition.
- (iii) This type of composition normally comes in the form of a report or an ordinary guided composition in which case the hints may be a mixture of words and pictures, diagram or graphical tables. The format of the report should be the usual accepted one. There is no need to re-draw any diagrams. Write your whole answer in words. But where figures are involved, you can write the figures when required.

The ordinary letter/ Informal letter

- Ordinary letters are usually written to friends, relatives, parents.
- The issues are usually of a social nature
- We classify the letter under ordinary compositions.
- But if the limits or points are given, the letter is meant to be a situational composition, but not a business letter.

Rules

- ❖ There must be one address of the writer of the letter in the margin line.
- ❖ Omit a line and then write the date in full.
- ❖ Omit a line and write the salutation. Use a title or the exact name of the person you are writing to.

- ❖ Do not indicate the reference.
- ❖ The letter should begin with greetings to the recipient, especially if he or she is a close relative or friend.
- ❖ The conclusion expresses a vote of thanks as a matter of courtesy and good morals. The letter may end with good wishes for the recipient and all others.
- ❖ The conclusion may be: Yours sincerely.
- ❖ Do not put the signature, but write your name only (without surname because the person already knows you).

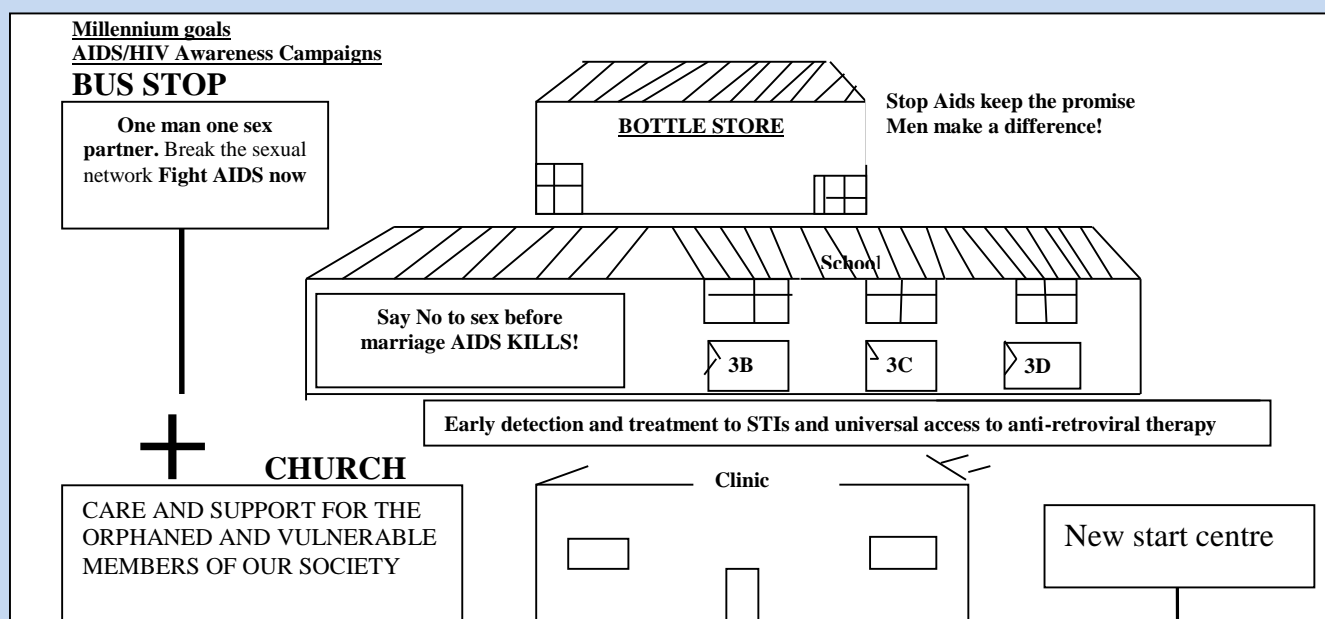
NB: The ordinary letter may begin with greetings. From a Zimbabwean tradition point of view, when we are intending to communicate with someone in the first instance, we greet them first, and then proceed to say other things after the greetings. In this regard, we advise that an ordinary letter should begin with greetings.

In other cultures, perhaps, a greeting may come at the end of everything else in a letter. But, for purposes of clarity, we advise that whichever way you choose to put the greeting, the cultural norms must guide you on what is more appropriate. In some foreign cultures it is possible to put the greetings at the end of the letter, but in Zimbabwean culture we greet other people first before we talk to them.

Types of Situational Compositions

- The guided composition or an account
 - The report
 - A formal or informal letter
 - A speech
 - Graphs, photographs, pie charts, diagrams, pictures
- The Guided composition:

This type can best be analyzed with a specific example.



Question

Your country has adopted the millennium goals on HIV/AIDS resolution at the last United Nations conference. Write an account of the steps on the efforts that your country has so far put on the resolution, basing on the picture above and additional points given below. You may include any other relevant information.

Millennium goals

- Fight against stigma and discrimination
- Access to voluntary counseling and testing
- Early detection and treatment of opportunistic infections
- Care and support for the affected
- Affordable and universal access to antiretroviral therapy
- Multi-sectoral approach to HIV –AIDS care and prevention

Demonstrated answer

Millennium goals on HIV/AIDS

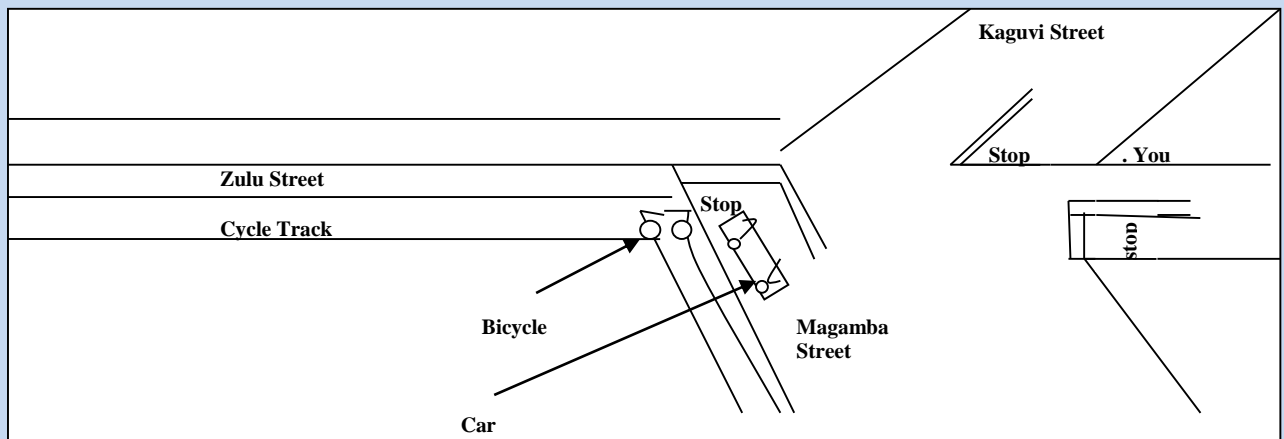
The last United Nations conference was mainly focused on the agenda of millennium goals. Some of the prominent issues were the AIDS pandemic, the Environment Management, and the Democratic Process in governance. Our own country adopted all the resolutions passed at the conference and came home to implement them. The diagram that has dominated the local media in the previous week has shown that our country has started tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic seriously. The first and foremost measure the government has taken is the awareness campaign. The programme of conscientising the people is not an easy one. It is costly in terms of financial resources and also in terms of energies required to carry out the exercise.

Our own government has organised outreach programmes to cover both rural and urban areas. The main instrument to be used in this campaign are placards and sign posts. These are distributed and placed at conspicuous places where all people can see them. Sign posts are posted on the road sides with marked words such as “One man, one sex partner. Fight AIDS.” These sign posts are found almost along every major road in town or in rural districts. Pedestrians and drivers can all see these sign posts when ever they travel along such a road.

The other places that have been used to display the AIDS related information are: shops, schools, clinics and even church buildings. Placards and charts are pinned on the doors and walls of buildings at stores, clinics, schools and churches. At one bottle store at Murambinda growth point, an inscription is put on the door reading “STOP AIDS” Whenever anyone comes into this busy store, he/she will see the message. At several schools in Magunje district there are large charts on the walls of school blocks conveying the message that AIDS actually kills and so everybody must fight it away. The message is even more popularized by clinics and hospitals in both rural and urban areas. Walls of buildings are covered by numerous charts and placards disseminating information about AIDS and HIV. There is emphasis on fighting against the stigma which AIDS carries which results in discriminations in society. Patients who attend to these clinics are ever reminded about the disastrous effects of the pandemic. They are urged to frequently go for counselling and testing in order to

obtain an early detection and early treatment of opportunistic infections. Even buses are awash with placards. The government has set up New Start Centres countrywide to offer voluntary counselling and testing for members of the public. This is an amenity of care and support for the affected. A multi-sectoral approach to HIV and AIDS care and prevention buttresses the campaign. The government has also set aside a fund to facilitate an affordable and universal access to antiretroviral therapy. This is a thorough approach to the AIDS awareness campaign in our country. One can easily see how seriously our country has taken the millennium goals propounded at the last United Nations conference.

Question for practice



You are the only witness of an accident between a cyclist and a motor car early one Sunday morning. You have to write a report for the police. Use the diagram above and the notes below for your report. Add whatever details you would like to make the report as clear as possible.

- 7 'O' clock Sunday 3rd January
- Standing eastern corner Kaguvi and Zulu streets
- Cyclist came off cycle track without looking
- Cyclist turned right into Zulu street
- Screech of brakes
- I rushed across street
- Cyclist lay motionless in the middle of the intersection
- I phoned the police and called for an ambulance.

Further question for practice

The ministry of education recently conducted a study on the relationship between the use of Turn-Up College Study Packs and A level results in Malole province. The results of the survey revealed that there was a direct relationship between the use of the study packs and academic results .The results of the survey are presented in the diagram below .Using the information on the diagram and the points given below write a report to the minister of education bringing to light the relationship between Turn-Up study packs and academic results in Malole province. You may add any other relevant details.

- Turn-up study packs have an effect on academic results
- The study packs are user friendly
- Staff and Turn-up study packs complimenting each other
- Home grown solution to a national resource availability problem
- Improved results at schools using them
- Very handy for newly trained and untrained teachers
- Urge all schools in the province to use them.
- They improved reading culture in schools

	% of qualified teachers	% of newly trained teachers	% of Untrained relief teachers	% of convectional textbooks in relationship to total resources	% of Turn up study packs in relationship to total resources	Advanced level results as a %
School A	80	20	0	100	0	82
School B	65	15	20	70	30	85
School C	40	5	50	55	45	92
School D	20	0	80	30	70	87
School E	15	65	20	45	55	90

Question

- ❖ You were the captain of your school team at the inter-schools athletics competition held at your school. Many participants including yourself, were clearly disappointed with the lack of organization on the day.

Using the notes provided below, write an account of the observations that you made, making suggestions for improvement in the future. You may add any other details of your own.

- ◆ Late start to the opening events
- ◆ Poor attendance from parents and friends
- ◆ Badly marked lanes
- ◆ In-adequate organisation for some field events
- ◆ Widespread cheating in the age groups
- ◆ Unfair, incompetent officials
- ◆ Rowdy spectators
- ◆ Poor prizes for winners
- ◆ Disorderly end to the competition

The above question is the basis of our analysis and explanation of this type of composition.

You notice that the guide line is given firstly as a summary outline of the situation, “An inter-schools athletics competition,” at your school; disappointment due to lack of organisation.

What is important is that the candidate is part of the whole situation. He is familiar with everything that transpired at the games. Certainly the account must show any eye-witness style with the possible use of the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘We’ in the account.

Further guidelines are given as points or hints to be included in the account. Please understand that these points are not necessarily in the correct chronological order. You can re-arrange them in the order that suits your plan. It also does not mean that these are the only points to include in your account. You can add your own other ideas. In fact, it is to your credit to raise additional points, but it is not a must because the question says “----- you may add -----.

You shall notice that this composition is just an account. It is not a report. It is not a letter. Therefore there is no need for any signatures. But your account has to be in paragraphs.

Let us demonstrate a re-organised plan of the above account which includes some additional hints:

- Evidence of poor organisation visible from the start, even before the games.
- No shades or tents
- No ushers to guide visitors

Additional points.

NB. Take note that the question requires you to add recommendations, yet there are no hints that have been provided as recommendations.

❖ **Recommendations** build on or arise from the weaknesses. Here are some recommendations you could use here:

- A committee composed of teachers and parents to be created to prepare for such shows.
- Schools to fund rise towards better prizes
- Venues to be chosen in time to allow for preparations.

Actually these recommendations are meant to counteract those weaknesses that made the show poor.

We conclude our analysis of this type of composition by stressing that candidates must be cautious that the guidelines that are given may not cover everything that is required in the question, as we have seen above.

The Business letter/ formal letter

The second type of a situational composition is the Business Letter. A business letter is a formal document. This means that the letter is written following a certain format, and a certain form of language. The language has to be courteous and faithful all times. The letter must have two addresses. The letter must have a salutation. It must

also have a subject matter or reference. The letter has the body. It must also have a conclusion and two signatures.

Clarifications

1. Courteous and faithful language:

In business we deal with each other. Issues arising from business dealings may be good or bad. The standing ethic is that stakeholders must remain respectful to each other. This must be revealed in the language they use as they communicate to each other. Another standing ethic is FAITH in each other. This must also be revealed in the mode of conclusion. Some common moral terms that are used are: Sir; Madam; Mr.; Mrs.; Please; May; kindly; sincerely, and yours faithfully.

The two addresses

The first address is the address of the author of the letter. It may be his residential address or the address of his place of business. It must be in a vertical profile, situated immediately in the margin of the page (see this in the demonstration). A line is omitted before the date of writing. It must be written in full.

The second address is the address of the recipient of the letter (the addressee). This address lies just below the first address, but after omitting a line. It is also immediately in the margin and is in a vertical profile. The professional title of the recipient is the first thing on that address e.g. The Manager; The Medical Superintendent; The Director e.t.c. The address is the place of business address of the recipient. No date is put on this second address.

The Salutation

This is the call to attention of someone in the business either male or female. In business we always regard them as our dear partners, hence we salute as follows: Dear Sir, or Dear Madam, or Dear Mr. X or Mrs. X.

The Subject matter of Reference

The reference is the subject of the correspondence i.e. the business issue that is being communicated on. It may be an order of goods, or a complaint, or an application for a job. This aspect appears just after omitting a line after the salutation. Immediately in the margin the denotation Re: is written. Just about a centimetre from this denotation, but in the same line, the issue is written in brief e.g. Application for a vacancy. The reference is always underlined. A line is omitted and the body of the letter begins. And we usually write the reference in block letters.

The Body

The body is a precise presentation of the issues of business that precipitated the writing of the letter. There is no time or room for socialisation in this letter.

Expression must be simple, clear and precise on the issue. But courtesy must be maintained throughout even if the letter may be a complaint. You may break the contents of the body into paragraphs depending on the nature or number of issues in question. Or it may be a one-paragraph body. After the presentation of message, the line is omitted and a statement of thanks is written. This statement is a must in business communication.

The Conclusion

The conclusion is the end part of the letter. The ending style is very formal. After the statement of thanks, a line is omitted. Immediately in the margin the phrase 'YOURS FAITHFULLY' is written. The ethic of faith in each other is further stressed here at the end. No punctuation mark is put after it. A line is omitted and the shortened signature is given. A further line is omitted and the signature of the author is written in full. These are the two signatures we refer to in business letters full-stop. After the name, a full-stop is put to mark the end. Your 'official capacity' may be endorsed under your signature e.g. Secretary, or Sportsmaster. But this last aspect is not a hard and fast rule in business letter writing.

Which are the Business Letters?

In English Language examinations it is sometimes not clear whether a letter has to be a business letter or just an ordinary letter. The question may just say 'write a letter -----', without mentioning expressly that the letter has to be a business letter. In this problem we recall Principle 9 'The pass by tricks.' Let your trick be this: If it were just an ordinary letter it should have appeared under ordinary compositions (ii) situational compositions are specialised aspects. An ordinary letter could rarely belong to this category. Therefore the letter has to be a business letter (iii). If the letter is to be addressed to someone with an official title e.g. Headmaster or The Manager, then certainly this is a tip that the issue is classified under business. These are tips to be considered in the event that the question does not mention expressly that you should write a business letter.

The following are the commonest issues classified as business letters:

- Letters of complaint.
- Letters of applications
- Letters of orders
- Letters of acknowledgement.

The Assessment Criterion on business letters:

As already mentioned above the business letter is a very formal document. The right format has to be followed. In examinations, the examiner is not concerned with the sweetness of the language nor the accuracy or credibility of the information. They are more concerned with the formality and ethics of business letter-writing. Each time a particular formality is well done a certain allocation of marks is granted. The overall structure, at face value should show that the letter is a business letter. Therefore, the structural components of your letter must be perfectly laid out.

Demonstration:

We demonstrate the skill of presenting a business letter once and thereafter give some questions for your practice. The purpose of the demonstration is to give you a reference point as you practice on one or two questions in this module.

Question:

You ordered a variety of groceries from a certain wholesaler. You paid cash for the goods including the cost of delivery to your shop. The goods are delivered two days later than the agreed date. Some of the goods are in bad state. You need to get good replacements. Write a letter to the dispatching Manager complaining about the bad goods and the delays. Express your wish to obtain replacements within a day.

No. 1310 Rowland Road
Box 2260
Melridge

10 July 2005

The Dispatching Manager
Marathon Wholesalers
Box 900
Adeberlon

Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: LATE DELIVERY AND BAD GOODS

The above matter refers. Please note that the order we made from you on the 6th of this month has not been carried out accordingly. Our order reference number 1002/06/05 was fully paid up, including the delivery charges for it. Our agreed date of delivery was the date of the order, 6 July 2005. Your delivery was effected two days later and the following goods and their quantities were in bad condition: 10 x 1 kg bars, blue soap; 10 x 100g Kapenta dried fish and 20 x A4 exercise books. We have since refused to accept them in that condition. But we are willing to accept replacements. Your timely delivery of the goods will be greatly appreciated. We remain very faithful to you.

We thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully



Obelin Charuma

An analysis of and some observations from the letter

The above letter serves as our demonstration of a typical business letter. It demonstrates the structure; language and precision of contents.

Firstly, the addresses are laid according to the Block Style. In the past, addresses were situated on the right upper part of the sheet. Sometimes addresses were written in a slanted style. The modern trend has changed that. Addresses are brought to the extreme left, in the margin, in a vertical style only when the letter is typed. There are no punctuation marks at all on the addresses. The salutation; the subject matter and the signatures are clearly indicated. Secondly, the message is very precise. Nothing else, except the subject matter, is the purpose of this correspondence. Please take note of the beginning statement. A brief factual history of the matter is given i.e. the order, its date, payment and delivery terms. The actual problem is also made clear i.e. the delay and the spoilt condition of goods. Accurate descriptions of the goods in question are given. Faith and respect are maintained even though a bad thing has happened. A sincere hope for replacements is expressed, and the faith that such a hope will be accomplished is clear. It is ethically appreciated that when you expect your business partner to meet certain obligations in a future time, you must thank them in advance. These are moral ethics in business dealings.

NB There are no socialisations or generalisations in our business letter- no greetings or jokes.

Practice questions:

Study the following questions and practice answering them following the demonstration we have given.

1. You went shopping with your friend and you think you were treated rudely by an employee at a local shop. Write a letter to the shop manager complaining about the incident.
2. You are a resident of New Jersey City where delivery of services has been deteriorating in recent months. Using the notes below and adding any relevant points of your own, write a letter to the City Council Chairman, drawing his attention to the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the city.
 - inadequate housing
 - Poor street lighting
 - inefficient sewerage system
 - unreliable water suppliers
 - piling rubbish
 - incompetent municipality

The report

The third type of a situational composition is the report. A report is a formal document. This means that there are some specified formalities to be observed when writing a report. These formalities are the main concern for the examiner.

Why is it important to learn to write a report?

The almighty purpose of going to school is to achieve a professional qualification. This qualification will enable one to join a professional career. When you get into a professional job you will be held accountable for some behaviour or event, either of yourself or of others. In such a situation you may be asked to give a “Report” to somebody else. A report is a formalized way of communicating. Therefore all professionals must learn and be able to write a report, hence the reason why we study report writing.

The fundamental facts about a report are that:

1. The person writing the report in most cases is an eyewitness to the issue he is reporting on.
2. The report is written for the attention of someone, who is not an eye-witness to the issue.
3. A report is informative.
4. A report should have a title e.g. Report on an accident
5. A report should have full details depending on the situation given e.g. If you have been out in the game-park as game ranchers and one of you got hurt, you have been asked to write a report on the incident.

You would include the following details:

Time –: when it happened

Place –: where it happened, preferably name of the Game Park and the exact place.

Details of the person hurt, you may supply name and age, condition of the injury you can also include the details of what you were doing there and how the man was rescued.

Note: Because a report is supposed to be informative, it is important to give full details and adequate coverage, so as to make it real. Pupils are reminded to read carefully the situation given and respond appropriately.

It is important to indicate who wrote the report. Sometimes it may be necessary to state your position for example in the given situation of a Game Ranger one would sign.

Mandla Ndlovu (Game Ranger).

This enables the recipient of report to tell from whom the report is coming.

Examples: Using the situation given in point 5.

Demonstration

A report on an attack

It was on Thursday morning around 8 am when John Vundla, the victim, Siphon Moyo and I were in Holenholen Game Park on our usual check up errands. Still on

our errand, John excused himself. He wanted to relieve himself. Within two minutes we heard a cry for help. We ran to the spot. When we got there, we found John bleeding profusely. He had sustained a wound on the neck and the limbs were almost mutilated. We bandaged John and took him to Tolehole hospital where he is reported to be in a stable condition the victim (John) is aged 42.

After we had taken John to hospital, we tracked the lion. We found it five kilometers away from the spot of attack. We discovered that the lion was old and wounded. This made it difficult for it to run after prey, thus it posed danger to human life, so we shot the lion.

Mandla Ndlovu (Game Ranger)

Note: There is no need to be wordy and to use flowery language because the report is meant to inform. The language should be simple, clear and concise. The report should be structured organised and be logical in a way that would be easy for the reader/recipient to understand.

Caution

We repeat quite sternly that there are no two ways of writing a report. Any deviation from the above laid procedure will result in loss of marks. Principle 1 is applicable to report writing.

Aspects of a Report

We identify four (4) aspects of the report. We examine and analyse them for a fuller understanding of a report.

1. **The reference or Title** – A report must have a title. The title is the reference of the issue to be reported on. The title is visibly written on the face of the report. Usually the student improvises the title, not by the examiner. Different students may word their titles differently though the question is the same.
2. **The introduction** – The purpose of the introduction in a report is to outline the terms of reference of the report.
3. **The conclusion** – is a succinct summary of the position of the reporter or his overall feeling about it all is given. The reporter expresses his vote of thanks to those for whom the report is prepared.
4. **Signature** – The report must be undersigned. If the reporter holds some official position, he may endorse his official title just under his signature. A report without a signature of its author is not a report at all. Most candidates forget to sign for their reports. This omission is very fatal, hence we stress that you must undersign your report.

Analysis of the Question

Take note that you are the supervisor of operations, but you were not present at the incident. So you are going to investigate the incident in order to get information.

The Speech

The speech is one form of a situational composition. Presentation of a speech is done in a formal way. The speech is always given to an audience at a meeting or a rally. The person giving a speech always holds a certain capacity. He or she can be the chairperson, or a member of the audience.

1. In what capacity are you giving the speech? Are you the chairperson or you are a member of the audience?
2. Whom are you addressing?
Are you addressing an honourable official or the public audience?
3. Be respectful and begin by using titles of honour and respect e.g. Mr. Chairman, Secretary, Ladies and gentleman, comrades and friends.
4. Follow the protocols of the audience.
5. Express your pleasure to have the opportunity to speak.
6. Allude to what they already know and proceed to give your own views.
7. End with closing remarks persuading them to consider your opinions.
8. Express a vote of thanks at the end.

Procedure of Presentation of a speech

- ❖ Observe rules of etiquette or titles.
- ❖ Be respectful
- ❖ Follow the protocols i.e. the line of authority and status. Usually you start by addressing the most important person at that meeting going downwards to the lowest.
- ❖ Express your pleasure to be given the opportunity to speak.
- ❖ Allude to what they already know and proceed to give your own views.
- ❖ End the speech with closing remarks persuading them to consider your opinions express your vote of thanks at the end of your speech.

Here is an example of a speech.

Question:

Your community is worried about a number of things at their primary school. Among other things, there hasn't been any development at the school for the past years; there are no qualified teachers and results are poor. It is believed that the poor accommodation is scaring away teachers and indiscipline at school is rampant. There are also several cases of theft in the school.

Your community meets at the school to discuss the problems affecting the school and to suggest the way forward. Write a speech you would make at the meeting.

Answer:**A Speech**

Mr. Chairman; Comrades, friends, ladies and gentleman, I have great pleasure to have this opportunity to give my views at this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the rest of the people that our school has not been developing for the past three years. It is a fact that there hasn't been any new structures at the school since 2001. It is also true that our results for Grade 7 have not been so good. I also repeat what the former speakers mentioned about the shortage of qualified teachers; text –books and proper houses for teachers. It is also true that a lot of theft has occurred in the school. All these problems need our immediate attention to keep the school going.

Mr. Chairman, may I suggest that we immediately select a school- Development Committee that will oversee matters of the physical development of the school. The committee should be chaired by a Headman of reputable standing. Secondly may I suggest that the Headmaster be a local person who has our community at heart, who can remain at the school all times. I also propose that the Headmaster should look at ways of attracting qualified teachers. He should also be thorough on supervision of his teachers. Discipline has to be monitored for both teachers and students. I believe that if these measures are taken our results shall improve.

Mr. Chairman, I agree that the quality of houses for our teachers is deplorable. This is perhaps why we cannot get qualified teachers. May I suggest that all parents pay a levy fee, which shall be used to upgrade and renovate all the teachers' houses. Coming to the issue of theft, Mr. Chairman, may I suggest we create a Neighbourhood Watch Committee that would look after the school, especially in the night. I also suggest that all school doors and windows should be fitted with burglar-bars. I believe that these measures will go a long-way towards solving the problem.

Mr. Chairman, Comrades and friends, may I again express my thanks for the opportunity to speak out my views at this meeting. I hope that you will consider these views for the good of our school.

Thank you.

Analysis of the Speech:

We observe that the speaker is only a member of the community (i.e. capacity). He begins by addressing the chairman followed by the audience (i.e. etiquette). He then makes an outline of the problems (i.e. what they know). After that he gives his views in a sincere manner (i.e. persuading them to consider). The speaker frequently addresses the chairman each time he gives a new view. Finally the speaker makes a plea that the Chairman and the audience consider his submissions. He closes by expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to speak, which he had expressed at the very beginning.

CHAPTER 7

Chapter Objectives

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Identify elements of a situation or register.
- Analyze a given register according to the guidelines in this chapter.
- Understand the objective terms or key words in register questions.
- present register answers in the right format.
- Choose appropriate words in registers.

INTRODUCTION TO REGISTERS OR SPEECH STYLES:

(PAPER 2) SECTION B

This aspect came into the 'O' Level syllabus in the early 90's. Prior to the early 90's this aspect was not part of the examination. When this aspect appeared for the first time both teachers and students were not too sure what its objective was. Teaching it was not easy because:

- i. The existing teachers had not been trained on that.
- ii. There was no teaching material for it. The traditional textbooks did not have this aspect.

But one thing was clearly noticeable:

- The questions demanded a very specific human attribute e.g. attitude; manner; feeling; reaction; behaviour.
- It became clear that the registers were about human attributes in a speech style during a given situation.

The task ahead of both the teacher and the student was to define accurately each of these terms. After defining the terms there is a need to come up with a systematic analysis of each situation and its elements in order to arrive at the correct judgement on the human attribute that is attendant to the situation.

Understanding appropriate register

Behaviour is controlled by societal expectation. Each society has a set of values and norms that govern behaviour. Each society is therefore able to judge conduct as good or bad based on standards set by that society. Murder, rape, and theft are behaviours that are not acceptable worldwide. However some societies may accept same sex

marriage and commercial sex (prostitution) as being normal. Appropriate register therefore deals with the training of good communicative conduct amongst learners. It gives them a foundation on which to practice and also evaluate moral ethics as being good or bad.

Teaching and learning of registers should not be divorced from everyday life. Every human being has the capacity to make a sound judgment on behaviours around us. Hardly a day passes without one being forced to make a judgment on the behaviour of the next person. Imagine waking up each morning fighting with your family members on who should be the first to take a shower, or being forced to eat all your breakfast. Certainly we make both conscious and unconscious judgments on other people's behaviours and or utterances. Therefore success in registers is not like in memorizing model answers or situations, but on developing sound reasoning and judgment skills that go beyond the register questions, into being able to critically examine the world around us. When we are able to identify good moral virtues from those generally unacceptable, then we are in a better position to relate positively with people we associate with in different spheres of society.

EXERCISE 1

Discuss in pairs different situations where you have made judgment on human behaviour, both positively and negatively. Write down brief notes on these situations, identify the actual parts of speech or elements of behaviour such as gestures and facial expression.

The way she answered me was rather rude

This statement makes reference to the way she answered. Due to the fact that society generally expects some form of communication that will be considered appropriate, any deviation from the societal standard is considered inappropriate and such may be seen as rude. Your teacher may engage in a whole class discussion calling for examples of positive or negative behaviours from within the immediate school and home environment. When learners are able to identify various aspects of behaviour from their common surrounding, teachers may then give examples that may be abstract to pupil general exposure.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF REGISTERS

Register exercises are based on typical actual human behaviours at different places or situations. The following are some aspects that may influence a person to behave in a particular manner.

- 1) **Relationship:** The degree of closeness between people privy to situations influences the formality of association or vice-versa. A student may greet the head of school in a non formal manner if there is a non formal relationship that may exist from outside the school setting. However such a greeting may be inappropriate in a formal school setting but may be deemed to be appropriate in a command setting. e.g good morning baba Jon instead of 'morning sir'
- 2) **Environment:** The location of a situation greatly influences a number of issues. We shall make reference to the example outlined above. The student may be at liberty to greet his head by some other semi-final method if they

share the same neighbourhood, but that does not give the student liberty to do the same, if he meets the head along a school corridor

3. **Degree of formality:**

This refers to a level of respect or courtesy present in a situation. It is generally noted that when 2 students are communicating with each other the level of their speech is very informal, however when communicating with a person of higher authority a lot of respect is evidenced by using very formal speech.

4. **Manner of Articulation:**

This refers to how a particular message is communicated. For example, The old woman passed away in sleep, and, ‘That ancient hag finally kicked the bucket’ definitely bring different impressions about the 2 speakers. Therefore the choice of words and their manner of articulation greatly influences one’s judgment or presentation of a particular situation or circumstances.

N.B When analyzing given situations it is important to take particular note of the aspects outlined above. Their interaction or relatedness leads us into coming up with judgments. It is also very prudent to note that in registers there are no wrong or right judgments, but we take note of the fact that our judgment on a particular situation may be deemed appropriate or inappropriate to the given situation.

Also raw memorizing of potential responses by learners is highly discouraged. This creates a blinkered vision leading to an inability to respond to new situations, which may not have been examined in the past, examination episodes. Learners are expected to develop independent skills of situational analysis and evaluation. This will enable learners to critically analyze various aspects of situations. However learners are encouraged to read widely so as to enrich their knowledge of vocabulary.

Elements in a situation

In addition to aspects outlined earlier, the following is a general explanation on some elements of registers

Please note that the above explanations are not and do not necessarily cover all aspects that may be examined. Human relationships are so complex that it is impossible to classify them into rigid groups. As such registers deal with day to day experiences and resultant behaviours and re-actions to such experiences.

Approach to Registers

When confronted with register situations the following step by step approach is recommended.

1. Read and understand the situation. This places one on a better position to make judgment of the situation under study.

2. Determine the relationship that exists between the parties involved. This enables one to verify the degree of formality that exists between the parties.
3. Examine the Environment
4. Make sure you are able to identify the question statement in a given situation. A basic situation is structured as follows.
 - a) Situational component: This involves a brief description of the situation e.g
 “It is your mother’s 40th Birthday.” One of your relative says:
 - i) Forty gone, a good forty more to go.
 - ii) Forty gone, only a few left.
 - b) The re-action or response! This is the response by a person or persons to the situation. It is usually in this section of the situation that two different re-actions and responses are given. At times only one response will be given e.g
 - c) This section of the register questions, directs us on what to respond or evaluate. In other words it gives the instruction on what human behavioural trait is being examined in a particular situation e.g. In case (a) above, say how your mother would feel. Number your answers separately

This is perhaps the most crucial aspect of a situational analysis. This is because one has to initially comprehend the situational statement and then such an understanding is exhibited through giving of appropriate answers that give testimony to good situational analysis skills.

Answering Techniques

Answers should be brief and straight to the point. In most situations one word responses that answer the requirement of the question would be enough. In instances where learners are required to elaborate such answers, be brief.

Elements of a situation: Analysis

1. **Morality:** There are moral constraints in human relationships. Certain language, certain mannerisms and certain behaviour may apply and may not apply to certain people in a given situation. It is unwritten down but is known in human societies.

A simple example is that a son-in-law cannot hiss at his mother – in-law. Another example is that a son cannot comment on the appearance of his mother’s lap. In speech styles we check whether the attendant moral restraint in the situation is well handled, then we choose the right word to describe the speech style.

2. **Age:** Age is a key factor in human associations and interactions. People of the same age find themselves in a free atmosphere and so can communicate at their

appropriate level. They are not bound by any constraints. They exchange at equal level. But age difference may curtail certain freedoms in a situation.

A simple example is that a young person cannot exchange bad words with an elderly person, especially vulgar.

3. **Authority:** Authority exists between or among human beings, at work, in organizations or in social institutions such as a home. There is a social gap between a person in authority and his subordinates. This gap is even present in the manner they exchange either behaviour or speeches. This underscores the aspect of relationship as a determinant of speech behaviour. A simple example can be that a student has a restrained atmosphere in his speeches with his headmaster.

In any given register or situation we must analyse these elements first and determine the relationships first, then the constraints and liberties that are attendant. After this you can choose your appropriate word.

Before we can do practical demonstrations we want to define the objective terms in the questions on registers.

- 1) **Attitude:** means a mental view after seeing or hearing. Words that can describe an attitude have to be adjectives e.g. attitude can be good or bad; e.t.c.
- 2) **Manner:** means a way a thing happens or is done. Manner can be proper or improper; appropriate or inappropriate; suitable or unsuitable, polite, impolite e.t.c.
- 3) **Behaviour:** means a physical disposition or conduct. Behaviour can be acceptable or unacceptable, appropriate or inappropriate; bad or good e.t.c.
- 4) **Feeling:** means an inward perception. Feeling can be pleasant or unpleasant, joyful; sorrowful e.t.c.

Please take note that there are always two sides to every attribute i.e. positive or the negative side. You are expected to have a wide horizon of adjectival words. It is possible for students to give different words in their answers yet they will all be right.

We emphasize that you think carefully and choose carefully your words that suit the human attribute in the situation as depicted by the statements they make.

Let's demonstrate the skill of answering registers.

REGISTERS

DEMONSTRATIONS

Described below are five situations. Read the description of each situation carefully and then answer the questions, which follow, briefly.

- a) It is your mother's 40th birthday. One of your relatives says:
 - i. "Forty gone; a good forty more to go".

Another says:

- ii. “Forty gone, only a few left”.

In each case say how your mother would feel. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

Let us analyze this situation

First we take note that **FEELING** is the human attribute in question. Feeling may be positive or negative, but there are various words that can be applied in the positive domain as well as in the negative domain of feeling.

Second we take notice that the parties involved in the situation are Kinsmen or relatives. Relatives expect good wishes and hopeful things from each other.

Therefore the words we expect to use in describing the feeling should be in line with the moral expectations of Kinsmen.

- b) A farm worker asks his employer for time off work. He says:

- i. “May I have two days of work?”
- ii. “You owe me time off. I want to go tomorrow.”

What does each statement show about his **ATTITUDE** to the employer? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

Analysis

Attitude is the attribute in question. It can either be positive or negative. The parties in the situation are a master and his servant. There is the element of authority in this situation. So there are some ethical restraints in their relationship.

In (i), the word “May” shows curtesy and respect. It already gives the hint of a positive atmosphere. In (ii) there is no show of curtesy or respect.

- c) You walk into a clothing shop and ask for the sports wear department. An assistant in the shop says:

“I will come with you”.

Give two different reasons why the assistant says so.

Number your answers (i) and (ii).

Analysis

Here we notice that two different interpretations of one statement are needed. The parties to the situation are a customer and the shop attendant. We expect curtesy and kindness in the situation. The shop attendant has to be helpful to customer. But a different reason can only come as the opposite to this relationship.

- d) You are celebrating the completion of your father’s new house. Your friend arrives and after an inspection of the house, he says:

“ So this is the house your father built!”

Give two different reasons why your friend should say this.

Number your answers (i) and (ii).

Analysis

The parties to this situation are friends and probably of the same age. There are no restraints in their relationship. They can say anything to each other, whether good or bad.

Please take notice of the exclamation mark (!) in the statement. This punctuation mark is used to show surprise. But the surprise may be in the positive or negative.

e) Match each of the following emotions with one of the statements from the list below:

Emotions

- A Despair
- B Triumph
- C Admiration
- D Relief

Statements

Phew! That was a close shave.

Compliments of the season, and all the best for the New Year.

Oh no! My dress is ruined.

Yes! I made it!

You look terrific!

I did alright in the examination, but I had hoped for a better mark.

Write down the letter only of the emotion, and against the letter, write out in full, the appropriate statement.

Analysis

On this question there are no human relationships. But the statements portray a person's state of mind. This may be indicated by the punctuation marks in the statement e.g. Question marks and exclamation marks may show misunderstanding; wonder; and surprise.

About the words under "emotions" you must know their meanings in order to match them with the statements.

Remarks

So far we have explained and analyzed Registers. We have demonstrated answering them. Study the following situations and practice answering them.

- Please note that on the last question we gave reasons for matching the words and the statements. But you are not expected to give the reasons in your answers.

Practice questions

Listed below are **five** situations, which are described briefly. Read the description of each situation carefully and then answer the questions which follow, briefly.

1. As you walk along the street you meet a friend of yours who exclaims “Gee! You look very smart in that outfit.” You reply:
 - (i) “Thank you very much for the compliment.”
 - (ii) “Of course. That’s why I bought it.”

What does each statement show about your manner? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

2. A friend of yours is worried because she cannot find her textbook. Listed below are two possible remarks you could make.
 - (i) “That means you will not come first again in that class.”
 - (ii) “Don’t worry. I am sure the book will soon turn up.”

What does each remark reveal about your attitude to your friend? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

3. You think you are good at swimming but the swimming coach leave you out of the school team. You complain to your friend and he says:
 - (i) “Are you sure the coach hasn’t made the right decision? The competition at team level is very stiff, you know.”
 - (ii) “You thought you were very good at swimming, didn’t you?”

What is the tone in each of your friend’s replies? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

4. Your grandmother tells you a story. You say: “How very interesting!”
Give two different reasons why you would say this. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

5. Listed below are four situations and eight possible responses. Match each of the situations with one responses which you thin is most appropriate to it write down the number only of the situation and against the number write out in full the appropriate response.

Situations

- i. Asking for extra writing paper from your teacher during a lesson.
- ii. You are in the school office when the telephone rings. The secretary asks you to answer it. You pick up the receiver and speak.
- iii. Responding to someone who has just introduced himself to you.

- iv. Responding to a relative who has sent you a birthday gift, which you do not like.

Responses

- “Pleased to meet you. My name is Siphon Ndlovu.”
 - “Thank you very much. Aunt Flo.”
 - “Hello, what can I do for you?”
 - “I want paper to finish, Sir.”
 - “Good morning. Ruvuzhe School here.”
 - “Hi! Siphon is my name.”
 - “Thank you, Aunt, but I had hoped you would send something else.”
 - “Excuse me, Sir, could I please have some more paper?”
6. A friend of yours borrows your English textbook, but does not return it on the day he promised to. You desperately need the book and when you ask him about it he says:
- (i) “Look, I have not yet finished with it.”
 - (ii) “I am sorry, let me go and fetch it now.”
- What does each of these statements reveal about your friend’s character?
- Number your answers (i) and (ii).
7. You have taken your clothes to the dry cleaners’. When you go to collect them you find that your blazer is missing. You say:
- (i) “Don’t give me that! You people have been stealing customers’ clothes for a long time.”
 - (ii) “I shall come back tomorrow and check again.”
- What does each statement reveal about your attitude towards your loss?
- Number your answers (i) and (ii).
8. You are studying for an examination while your elder sister is listening to the radio. She tells you to go to the market to buy some fruit. You say:
- (i) “You can see I am busy. Can’t you go yourself?”
 - (ii) “OK, but just let me finish this page.”
- Say in each case how your sister will interpret your reply.
- Number your answers (i) and (ii).
9. You have just finished writing the ‘O’ Level examination. One Friday evening you ask your mother to allow you to attend a party for young people which ends late at night.
- Your mother says:
- “I don’t like this idea. Just because you have completed your ‘O’ Level doesn’t mean you can stay out late at night.”
- Give two different reasons why your mother should say this.
- Number your answers (i) and (ii).
10. You want to ask for permission to go home before the end of the school day. The following is what you say to the class teacher.
- i. “I need to go home early, please.”
 - ii. “May I be allowed to leave early today?”

- iii. "Could I leave early today?"
- iv. "I would like to leave early today."
- Which of these statements or questions is the most appropriate way of making your request? Write down the statement in full and give a reason for the answer.
11. You arrive back home from school and find the meal not yet ready. You say:
- "I'm starving. Is there anything to eat?"
 - "What? Am I expected to starve around here?"
- How will your mother feel in each case?
Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
12. You tell your friend that your grandfather whom you loved dearly has died. He says:
- "The one who used to tell you interesting stories? I am sure you will miss him terribly."
 - "Don't look so miserable. He was quite old, wasn't he?"
- What does each response reveal about his attitude towards your loss? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
13. Your parents send you to the shops to buy bread and some sugar. You walk up to the counter and say:
- "Give me a loaf of bread and some sugar."
 - Your friend walks in and says to the shop assistant, "May I please have a loaf of bread and some sugar?"
- What makes your words sound rude and those of your friend polite? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
14. You are playing with your friend at break. He trips you up and you fall. He walks over to you and says:
- "Are you alright?"
- Give two different reasons why he should say this. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).
15. You are arguing over a point with a friend. You, make the following statements:
- "The facts speak for themselves."
- "I get your point, but the truth of the matter is ----"
- "I will check this out again."
- "I do not think that is relevant."
- Each one of the sentences below corresponds in sense with one of the statements given above.
- You believe you know the truth.
 - You understand your friend's views though they are wrong.
 - You think your friend has missed the point.
 - You are prepared to revise your ideas.
- Now write down the original statements.
Give each one the number that will match it with the sense of one of the sentences.

Remarks

The key issue in this exercise is the skill applicable to registers. Do not study these practice questions as if you intend to cram their answers. There is no possibility whatsoever that a register that was once brought in some previous examination can be brought back again. Master the analytical skills that we have given on this section and be able to apply them in the examinations.

CHAPTER 8

Chapter objectives:

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Master the formalities and ethics of writing each type of situational composition.
- Identify key words in the question.
- Write answers in the stipulated 40 minutes.
- Identify errors from written given demonstrations in the chapter.

SITUATIONAL COMPOSITIONS AND PASSAGES FOR PRACTICE

Practical Demonstrations

Work along, see if you can identify some of the errors

A SPEECH

Demonstration 5: Being the original speech from student Y.

Question:

Your community is very worried about the increase in the cases of housebreaking that have occurred in your area in the last few weeks. A meeting has been organized to discuss this problem and to suggest some possible solutions. You have been asked to give your views at this meeting. Using the notes provided below, write the speech you will give. You may add any other relevant details of your own.

- Several houses broken into
- Valuable items stolen
- Some people attacked
- Co-operation among neighbours important
- Kept watch for suspicious strangers
- Police advice on criminals operating in the area
- Identity marks on property
- Proposed security measures for buildings

Speech

Mr. Chairman, Secretary, Ladies and Gentleman, Comrades and friends, we are gathered here today to discuss the problem of the increase in cases of housebreaking. I know that all of us are not comfortable about this issue that has occurred in this area.

Comrades and friends we should organize what is supposed to be done in order to live comfortably. The problem on this bad situation is that it seems as if it is going on.

It is therefore my hope that we should encourage to note that we, as neighbours, have decided to meet and put our heads together, so that we save the problem in order to protect ourselves and to protect our property. The police have also been advised but no action is taken. We should protect our property by having security guards, fencing our houses and putting razor wires so that no-one can get inside.

It is my hope that we can assist each other as a community as we fight crime in our neighbourhood in order to protect our property and ourselves each and everyday.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Secretary, Ladies, gentlemen, comrades and friends.

Attention:

Before we can analyse the attempted answer above, let us analyse the key elements of the question. We identify some six important elements in the question VIZ.

1. **“Your community is very worried”**
According to this element the main issue at the meeting is “a big worry”. So the worry needs a solution.
2. **“A meeting”**
This element draws our attention to a come together or a gathering that is presided by a chairman or some official, with a secretary perhaps and the audience.
3. **“You have been asked”**
This element suggests that the permission to speak is given by the presiding official at the meeting – probably the chairman.
4. **“Write the Speech”**
This element suggests that you put down in writing those words you would otherwise present orally at the meeting.
5. **“You may add---- relevant details of your own”**
This element suggests to you that it is not a must that you should include details of your own or details other than those limits given in the question. However it gives you credit to add your own details, but provided they are relevant to the agenda of the meeting.

After all this analysis, we advise quite strongly that the ethics of speech presentation must be present on your answer. These are (i) you begin by addressing the chairperson or his secretary, and the honourable audience who may be called “ladies and gentlemen” or “comrades and friends” after this you express your vote of thanks to them for giving you the opportunity to speak at their meeting. After this you give a summary of the issues of the agenda or the summary of the problems. You are now stringing up the hints or points that are provided by the examiner. But at this stage what is important is the skill of arranging or re-arranging or co-coordinating the points in a logical, chronological and coherent manner. If you have any other details of your own you may add them but without disturbing the balance of other points.

After this stage you should express the hope that the chairperson and his/ her audience shall consider your submissions. At last you express your thanks to the chairperson and the audience at large. This marks the end of your speech.

- NB.- Please you do not sign any signature on a speech.**
- **You indicate the word “Speech” at the top of the page.**
 - **If the above ethics are not observed then your presentation is not a speech.**

Let us now analyse the speech from Student Y.

1. In deed the speech begins with the word “SPEECH” on top of the page, but this word has to be placed at the centre of the top line of your page.
2. The speech rightly begins with a salutation of the chairman, the secretary and the audience. This is what is known as the protocol. If the meeting is a political rally, the salutation must comprise of the words “The Honourable” and Comrade, in the Zimbabwean context.
3. Unfortunately the speaker does not thank the chairperson for the opportunity that she has been given to speak at this meeting. This vote of thanks should always be given because the permission to speak at a meeting is always given by the chairperson.
4. Quite correctly this writer starts her speech by stating what people at the meeting already know. This is in conformity with the rule that when giving a speech you proceed from “the known” to “the unknown”. In a speech at intermittent stages the speaker must address again the Chairperson or the Honourable official. This has been done in our demonstration speech only at paragraph 2.
5. The main weakness in this speech is that the student does not use the hints or the points given by the examiner in the question. This is the worst mistake you can make in a situational composition. You do not have the option to leave out completely the points or hints given. You can only re-arrange them and add any other points of your own. If you do not include all the points then you are compromising the content of your speech. In the case of Sibongubuhle’s speech the speech has just become too short because of this shortfall.
6. In a speech it is quite embarrassing to make a vague statement, either by reason of grammar or any other language problem. If such an error is made then the audience will not understand it. In our demonstration speech at paragraph 3, the student wrote:

“It is therefore my hope that we should encourage to note that we, as neighbours, have decided to meet and put our heads together so that we save the problem.
 *(This does not make sense).

7. The tense of your speech is the simple present and present continuous tense because you are just speaking now. But you may also use the past tense form of verbs when you are referring to matters of the past.
For example: -
“Thieves have broken into our houses and some people have been attacked and property stolen”
8. At conclusion, the speech must express an appeal to the chairperson and the audience to consider the views or suggestions given by the speaker and then close down with a vote of thanks again to the protocol (the chairman. Comrades and friends).

(PRACTICE QUESTIONS. TO SPEND 40 MINUTES ON THIS QUESTION)

Question 1:

You are one of the members of a co-operative that makes furniture. It is the end of the year and the co-operative has made fairly good profits. There is to be a meeting about how the profits should be used. Some of the members feel that it should be divided among the members and others feel that the profits should be re-invested in the co-operative. You belong to the latter group.

Using the points below give your views on the subject

- Co-operative only two years old.
- Much of the machinery and many of the tools ought to be replaced.
- Better working conditions could be provided, for example, a canteen.
- Members all received a monthly salary and it is not necessary to receive a portion of the surpluses on top of a salary.
- Re- investment at this stage will mean even more efficiency and therefore more surpluses in years to come.
- New kinds of equipment means co-operative make more types of furniture.
- Very few furniture factories – great potential for expansion.

Question 2:

You have been asked to speak in a debate entitled “Smaller Families for Progress”.

Use some or all of the notes below in your speech for the motion.

- Less financial burden on times when money is short.
- Women remain healthy and strong as they are not always pregnant.
- Easier to accommodate small family
- Easier to travel with small family
- Closer relationships between family members
- Can spend money on what would otherwise be luxuries.
- Children develop fully as parents able to spend more time with them when there are fewer children.
- Easier to educate two or three children properly than nine or ten.
- Well- rounded, educated people are an asset to the society.

Question 3:

Due to the hard work of the parents the financial assistance of the Ministry of Education and the encouragement of the community as a whole, your school has now got a library. As a representative of the students the head teacher has asked you to address the gathering on the day the library is officially opened. Use all or some of the following points for your speech.

- Difficulties faced by everyone
- The lack of books for the students
- The co-operation of the parents
- The aid of the Ministry
- The minor and major mishaps
- The beautiful modern building
- Thousands of books bought and contributed
- Appreciation of all the students
- The expectation of better results.

Start your, speech as follows:

Head teacher, staff, parents, boys, and girls....

THE BUSINESS LETTER

The modern business letter is highly formalized. The common features are:

1. the two addresses in block style
2. the salutation
3. the reference
4. the two signatures

We stress once again that in this specialized aspect of your ‘O’ level language examination, length is not of importance. As long as the content of the letter is complete the letter can either be short or long. Nobody can penalize the student for size of the letter as long as the content is covered.

In this module we are not repeating the demonstration on business letter- writing. The demonstration at page 18 of this study pack and the clarifications at pages 16 and 17 are sufficient. Now using the guidelines at pages 16 to 18, practice on the following examination type questions.

Question: 1

You bought a garment from a well – known clothing shop in town. You paid quite a lot of money for it and to your astonishment after a week the garment looks shabby. Using the notes below write a letter to the shop complaining about the item. Choose what kind of garment it is, that is, a dress, or a pair of trousers. Add any additional information you wish to.

- Garment only a week old
- Dye ran out when washed
- Seams coming undone

- Hem a lot
- Most unimpressed
- Tell friends
- Any compensation

Question: 2

Your school is trying to raise money for a school bus. You have got the job of writing to various companies in Zimbabwe and asking them for donations. Use some or all of the points below in your letter to the local shoe company.

- Necessity of bus
- Parents have already contributed \$8 000 000
- Students have had fund raising projects
- Many companies most generous
- Bus approximately \$20 000 000
- School bus will have list of company that have contributed sign – written on bus

Question: 3

Your school cultural club is going on a two- day expedition to some famous historical sites. Write a letter to the boarding school in the area asking them to accommodate you for one night. Use some or all of the notes below in your letter. Add additional information if you wish to.

- Arrive at the school at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.
- about 150 students
- Would like separate dormitories for boys and girls.
- Could an evening meal be organized
- A light breakfast
- Five members of staff
- Costs involved

Start like this:

To the Headmaster /teacher/ and /Matron of

RE: Accommodation

Pupils from..... School are very keen to see the famous.....

Question 4:

You have been offered scholarships to further your education at three educational Colleges. You have to choose one and also give your second and third choice. Study the information below and write your letter to the Scholarship Board giving your first, second and third preferences and your reasons for choosing as you have done. You may add any information that is relevant to your subject choice and financial position.

College A

This is a large college of about 5 000 students. It is situated in a town approximately 200 kilometers from where you live. Many well – known lecturers are there and the academic standard is high. You do not know anybody in the town, nor have you ever met anyone from the college.

College B

This is a small college in a neighboring country. Your uncle went there ten years ago and said that the students and staff were friendly and hard – working. The college does not have the range of courses to offer like that at college A has, but it could suit you if you change your subject choice a little.

College C

This college is overseas and you do not know anything about it except that it is in a big city and has exceptionally good facilities.

The guided composition.

Strictly speaking this aspect is just a composition. It can be any of the types of composition we know. The unique thing about this composition is that it has guidelines on what to include. These guidelines are what are known as “Hints”. These hints are always given in a guided composition.

Refer back to chapter 1 of this study pack to see the analytical skills that you need when tackling a guided composition. The question at page 15 is being answered in this module as a demonstration. After the demonstration we give several examination type exercises for your practice.

Please remember that in the subject of English Language, it is only practice that can make a student ready for the examination.

Question 1:

You were the captain of your school team at the inter- schools athletics competition held at your school. Many participants including yourself, were clearly disappointed with the lack of organization on the day.

Using the notes provided below, write a composition on your observations that you made, making suggestions for improvements in future. You may add any other details of your own.

- late start to the opening events
- poor attendance from parents and friends
- badly marked lanes

- Inadequate organization for some field events.
- Widespread cheating in the age groups
- Unfair, incompetent officials
- Rowdy spectators
- Poor prizes for winners
- Disorderly end to the competition

Demonstrated Answer

The long awaited inter- schools athletics competition finally took place at our reputable school on a Saturday, the 4th of July 2006. Though the competitions had been widely publicized, the attendance was generally poor. Very few parents, and some of our invited friends, turned up. The reasons remained unclear to us.

It is sad to mention that the competitions started late. The unexplained delays caused great anxiety and much disappointment to many participants. As the captain of my school I continued seeking explanations from our own members of staff, who also were not sure. Finally I realized that there was no adequate preparation.

Perhaps I am right to observe that the officials in charge of the competitions were incompetent and very unfair. The major evidence for their incompetence was clearly visible on the track. Lanes were badly marked. On the field – events display – board some field events were missing. These weaknesses made communication between captains and their competitors difficult. Due to lack of proper planning schools tended to cheat in their presentations of age groups. As a result spectators became rowdy, and went short of exchanging fists. Actually there was utter chaos. The competitions ended in a disorderly manner. The most embarrassing thing was the poor prizes that were given to the winners. We had expected something better than the wooden cups polished with varnish.

I suggest that in future such competitions should be conducted by a committee made up of representatives from all schools. Letters of announcement and invitation should be sent to all parents well before the date of the competitions. The committee should source donations from the business community and use the donations to acquire better prizes for winners. The venue must be chosen well before the competitions, at least two weeks before the date, to allow for preparations of the grounds. The hosting school should appoint ushers who will assist participants and parents to find their way around the place. Programme papers should also be made available. I hope these suggestions may improve the organization of such important events in future.

Please take note that guided compositions are not given a topic.

Examination Type Questions Practice

Question 1

You have been the editor of the school magazine for the past two years and you are now leaving school. Write a composition from the notes below in which you give your successor as much advice as you can about how to continue with the annually published magazine.

- Start early in the new year
- Ask teachers for contributions such as essays, poems and short stories from their classes.
- Send notices round to club and team captains reminding them of their reports.
- Look through old magazines to see what companies have advertised before in the magazine
- Seek new advertisers
- Contact the printers at “Printing co-op, 9 Hama Street, Setu”.
- Arrange for team, club, class and staff photographs to be taken.
- Remind the headboy and headgirl of their reports
- Think of effective ways of selling the magazine

Question 2:

Ruzengwe Secondary School, which opened twenty years ago, organized a day’s reunion for its pioneer students. As one of its first students you gladly attended the reunion and met old friends.

Write an account of the day and what you and your friends talked about.

Use the following points, but also add others that can give extra interest to your account.

- Memories of schooldays
- The sight of familiar faces still around the school
- The atmosphere of the old buildings
- The contrast with the new buildings and developments
- The changes you and your friends notice in one another.
- The different careers you have all followed.
- Your present interests
- Your family backgrounds.

Question 3:

You were doing some shopping at the market when you spot a suspicious character weaving in and out of the crowds. You watched him for a moment and then you saw him pick pocketing an old man. You ran after him and eventually caught him.

Write an account of the incident.

Use some or all of the points below

You may add any other ideas

- Busy Saturday morning
- Slim young man wearing sunglasses
- Bumps deliberately into an old man.
- Slips quickly through the crowds
- Run after him shouting
- Crowd excited
- Catch up with him near the main road.
- Brief scuffle
- Policeman arrives

Question 4:

You are a newly resettled farmer in an area that was previously a wildlife conservatory. The newly resettled farmers are destroying vegetation and trapping wild animals. You feel worried about this destruction of the natural resources.

Write an account of your observations and experiences in this area. You should include suggestions on what can be done to curb this problem.

Use the following hints in your composition.

- People coming from different places
- No responsible authority
- People settling at random
- Random cutting down of trees
- Burning grass and forests
- Setting traps for animals
- One drinking place for both animals and people
- Environmental degradation at a terrific rate.
- Hedges around homes and fields made of branches of trees.

Question 5:

You are one of those people who were given plots under an irrigation scheme near a dam built in your area. You were surprised to be told that the amount of water in the dam is not going to last for the next six months, yet you see the dam full of water. You realize that the capacity of the dam has been affected by siltation.

Write an account of the problems and inconveniences caused by the siltation. You should make your own suggestions on what can be done to avoid the problem in the coming years.

Use the following points and any other points you may add.

- Construction of the dam a major development in the area.
- Piped water made available
- Diet of people improved by fishing.
- The good rains in the current year
- Gold panning upstream
- Siltation
- Irrigation projects getting affected
- Development retarded

The ordinary letter/ informal letter

Ordinary informal letters include letters to friends, to relatives and to parents. Issues covered in these letters are usually of a social nature. This kind of letter has.

- (i) Only one address (ii) address may be put on the upper right end of your paper. There is also nothing wrong in bringing the address to the margin, but this is not desirable at ordinary level (iii) the letter should have a salutation which is

specific for example Dear parents, Dear Jane; Dear Uncle Joe; Dear Mr Jones etc.

- (ii) Its body should cover all social ethics for example greetings; wishes; jokes; and the actual purpose of the letter. (v) the letter ends formally with a conclusion with sincerity; affection or faith for example “Yours sincerely”, “Yours Affectionately,” or “Yours faithfully.” (vi) The name of the writer is usually without a surname especially in letters to relative\; but an exception to this rule applies in letter s to people who are not your relatives: You write your name and surname.

Question 1: Your aunt has moved to her new house in an area with which you are unfamiliar. She invited you to a party there but unfortunately you got lost trying to find the place.

Write a letter to her apologizing for not arriving. Use some or all of the notes below and you may add any details to make the letter more interesting.

- Thank you for the invitation
- Left home at 2.00 ‘O’clock in the afternoon
- Caught a bus to town
- No buses to Avondale
- Tried to get a lift
- Got a lift for 8 kilometers
- Walked fro about two hours
- No-one could give direction
- Decided to go back home

Question 2: Your eldest brother has been paying your school fees. He has received your report from school which is most disappointing. He has written to you demanding an explanation.

Use the notes below for your letter.

- I have only been at the school for a term
- Teachers’ methods are unfamiliar
- There has not been a science teacher this term.
- The history teacher only started three weeks before the end of term.
- Compulsory sports practices every day like boarding school but find many differences to a day school.
- Try harder next term
- Will not happen again.

Start your letter like this:

Dear Tendai

I have been waiting several days for your letter. I can’t blame you for being so annoyed about my results.....

Question 3:

Your friend lent you his/her bicycle for the holidays. Unfortunately you had an accident with it and it is quite damaged. Write to him/her using some or all of the points below.

Add any details you wish to.

- Enjoyed having the bicycle
- Accident happened a week after school ended.
- Dog ran after bicycle
- Got very nervous
- Car approaching
- Dog bit foot
- Kicked dog
- Swerved into pavement
- Damaged front wheel

Question 4:

Your sister is returning from England and she has offered to bring you something. Write a letter to her asking her to bring you a radio – cassette player. Use some or all of the points below.

- Portable radio – cassette player
- Battery and electricity operated
- Stereo if possible
- Either have an attachable microphone or an in- built one.
- Preferably with tone – control
- Minimum two- wave band radio
- Some blank cassette tapes as well.

Question 5:

A very famous writer is visiting Zimbabwe and giving a series of public lectures. The O' level pupils at your school are interested in this writer's novels. Write a letter to him inviting him to the school to give a short lecture. Use some or all of the points listed below. You may add any additional points.

- Students never had the opportunity of meeting any writer before.
- Deliver a short speech to about 200 pupils
- Subject matter of speech entirely up to him
- Great admiration for this works from both staff and pupil population.
- Transport to be provided by school

Start your letter like this:

Dear

It was with great excitement that we learnt about your arrival in Zimbabwe...

The Comprehension

The ethics on tackling comprehension are:

- (1) Read the passage two times before answering the questions
- (2) Scan the questions quickly
- (3) Answer briefly but sensibly
- (4) Do not re-write the words of the question in your answers.
- (5) Obey carefully the spacing instructions
- (6) Do not spend too much time on one question.
- (7) Seek to answer all questions

The above ethical values serve or help to put the student into the right approach to the comprehension examination. The common problems that candidates have in the comprehension examinations are:

- (i) Candidates rush to answer questions without having understood the passage.
- (ii) Candidates spend too much time on one question at the expense of other questions thereby failing to finish the examination.
- (iii) Candidates waste time re-writing the words of the question in their answers.

Practice

Using the guidelines we have given, practice comprehension work on passages in this module. The passages and questions are set to the Cambridge Schools Examinations standard and the Zimbabwe Schools Examination standard.

Examination Type Comprehension Passages

Passage 1

Read the following passage carefully and answer the following questions in English. You are advised to answer them in the order set.

1. At the road junction Mr. Biswas had still not decided where to go. Most of the traffic moved north: tarpaulin – covered Lorries, taxis, buses. The buses slowed down to pass Mr. Biswas, and the conductors, hanging out from the foot board, shouted to him to come aboard. North lay Ajodha and Tara, and his mother. South lay his brothers. None of them could refuse to take him in. but to none of them did he want to go: it was too easy to picture himself among them. Then he remembered that north, too, lay Port of Spain and Rameland, his brother- in- law. And it was while he was trying to decide whether Ramchand’s invitation could be considered genuine that a bus, its engine partially unbonneted, its capless radiator steaming came to a stop centimeters away with a squeal of brakes and a racking of its tin and wood body, and the conductor, a young man, almost a boy, bent down and seized Mr. Biswas’s cardboard suitcase.
2. As a conductor of Ajodha’s buses Mr. Biswas had seized many wayfarers, and he knew that in these circumstances a conductor had to be aggressive

to combat any possible annoyance. But now, finding himself suddenly separated from his suitcase and hearing the impatience in the conductor's voice, he was cowed, and nodded. 'Up, up, man,' the conductor said, and Mr. Biswas climbed into the vehicle while the conductor stowed away his suitcase.

3. Whenever the bus stopped to release a passenger or kidnap another, Mr Biswas wondered whether it was too late to get off and make his way south. But the decision had been made, and he was without energy to go back on it; besides, he could get at his suitcase only with the co-operation of the conductor. He fixed his eyes on a house, as small and as neat as a doll's house, on the distant hills of the Northern Range; and as the bus moved north, he allowed himself to be puzzled that the house didn't grow any bigger, and to wonder, as a child might, whether the bus would eventually come to that house.
4. It was the crop season. In the sugarcane fields, already in parts laid low, cutters and loaders were at work, knee – deep in trash. Along the tracks between fields mud stained, grey- black buffaloes languidly pulled carts carrying high, bristling loads of sugarcane. But soon the land changed and the air was less sticky. Sugarcane. But soon the land changed and the air was less sticky. Sugarcane gave way to rice – fields, the muddy colour of their water lost in the flawless reflections of the blue sky; there were more trees; and instead of mud huts there were wooden houses, small and old, but finished, painted and jalousied, with fretwork, frequently broken, along the eaves, above doors and windows and around fern – smothered verandas. The plain fell behind, the mountains grew nearer; but the doll's house remained as small as ever and when the bus turned into the Eastern Main Road Mr. Biswas lost sight of it. The road was strung with many wires and looked important; the bus moved westwards through thickening traffic and increasing noise, past one huddled red and ochre settlement after another, until the hills rose directly from the road on the right, and from the left came a smell of swamp and sea, which presently appeared level, grey and hazy, and they were in Port of Spain, where the stale salt smell of the sea mixed with the sharp sweet smells of cocoa and sugar from the warehouses.
5. He had feared the moment of arrival and wished that the bus would go on and never stop, but when he got down into the yard next to the railway station his uncertainty at once fell away, and he felt free and excited. It was a day of freedom such as he had had only once before, when one of Ajodha's relations had died and the rumshop had been closed and everybody had gone away. He drank a coconut from a cart in Marine Square. How wonderful to be able to do that in the middle of the morning! He walked on crowded pavements beside the slow, continuous motor traffic, noted the size and number of the stores and cafes and restaurants, the trams, the high standard of the shop signs, the huge cinemas, closed after the pleasures of last night (which he had spent duly at Aewacas) but with posters, still wet with paste, promising fresh gaieties for that

afternoon and evening. He comprehended the city whole; he did not isolate the individual, see the man behind the desk or counter, behind the push – cart or the steering – wheel of the bus; he saw only the activity, felt the call to the senses, and knew that below it all there was an excitement, which was hidden, but waiting to be grasped.

6. It wasn't until four, when stores and offices closed and the cinemas opened, that he thought of making his way to the address Ramchand had given. This was in the Woodbrook area and Mr. Biswas, enchanted by the name, was disappointed to find an unfenced lot with two old unpainted wooden houses and many makeshift sheds. It was too late to turn back, to make another decision, another journey; and after making inquiries of a Negro woman who was fanning a coal pot in one shed, he picked his way past bleaching stones, a slimy open gutter and a low open sewer and a low clothes-wire, to the back, where he saw Dehuti fanning a coal pot in another shed, one wall of which was the corrugated iron fence of the sewer trace.
7. His disappointment was matched by their surprise when, after the exclamations of greeting, he made it clear that he intended to spend some time with them. But when he announced that he had left Shama, they were welcoming again, their solicitude touched not only with excitement but also with pleasure that in a time of trouble he had come to them. 'You stay here and rest as long as you want,' Ramchand said. 'Look, you have a gramophone. You just stay here and play music to yourself.' And Dehuti even dropped the sullenness with which she always greeted Mr. Biswas, a sullenness which, no longer defensive, held no meaning and was only an attitude fixed by habit, simplifying relationships.

From: A House for Mr Biswas by V.S. Naipaul

Answer all questions. Omit one line after completing a part question and three lines after completing whole question.

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) (i) Why did Mr. Biswas not go south? [1]
 (ii) Why did Mr. Biswas consider going south? [1]
 (iii) Briefly explain how Mr. Biswas found himself on the bus bound for Port of Spain. [2]

From Paragraph 2

- (b) (i) "He knew that in these circumstances a conductor had to be aggressive to combat any possible annoyance" Give another word or short phrase for each of the underlined words. [4]
 (ii) Find the three reasons that Mr Biswas had to continue his journey northwards. [3]

From Paragraph 3

2. (a) “In the sugarcane fields, already in parts laid low .
Explain what “laid low” means.
[1]

From Paragraph 4

- (b) What words or phrases in paragraph 4 tell us:
(i) The buffaloes did not work quickly
(ii) The rice workers had better accommodation than the sugarcane workers. [2]
- (c) “The Plain fell behind, the mountains grew nearer” Explain in your own words what was happening. [2]
- (d) “He drank a coconut from a cart in Marime Square. How wonderful to be able to do that in the middle of the morning”.
What does this tell us about how Mr. Biswas usually spent his days?
[2]

From Paragraph 6

- (e) Why was Mr. Biswas disappointed in the Woodbrook area? [2]
3. Choose five of the following words. For each of them give word or short phrase of not more than seven words which has the same meaning as the word from the passage.
(a) Junction
(b) To picture
(c) Stowed
(d) Frequently
(e) Huddled
(f) Comprehended
(g) Makeshift
(h) Sullenness [10]

Question 4

Imagine that you are Mr Biswas. Write a summary of not more than 160 words about what you did, saw and felt. Your summary must be one paragraph of 160 words. It must be written in the first person.

Begin your summary as follows:

I had still not decided where to go by the time.
[20]

PASSAGE 2

Read the following passage carefully before you attempt any questions. Answer all the questions in the order set. Mistakes in spellings, punctuation and grammar may be penalized in any part of the paper.

1. I crossed into EL Salvador from Guatemala at the Anguitau border post, on a quiet road linking the Guatemalan backwater of Esquipulas with the Salvadoran backwater of Metapan. There were once silver mines in this part of Salvador but the metal ran out as it did in all the precious mines of Mexico and Central America. It was a Saturday afternoon. It was very hot. The bus dropped us on the Guatemalan side of the border, and we carried our bags through the heat towards the luxuriant blue and gold uniforms of the Salvadoran border guards.
2. The town I had left, Esquipulas, is one of those places famous to Central Americans and ignored by the rest of the world. It is a little town, almost a one- street town, which lives off the ‘Black Christ’ guarded there since it was carved in 1594. My guide book described Esquipulas as a ‘tourist centre’. In fact it is a place of pilgrimage, a rather different matter. Walking up the main street I met a lawyer who said that he had seen two Italians in Esquipulas eight months before, otherwise no Europeans or *gringos* in three years. He was from Guatemala City but had come to Esquipulas ‘to get away from the death squads.’ It was safe in this part of Guatemala. ‘There are few Indians, so few comunistas.’ He was speaking humorously. The lawyer lived with a beautiful girl. He introduced her as his wife, and then told me, rather proudly, that they were not yet married, they were ‘living – in- sin’. It seemed the sort of sin that might escape God’s attention on the Guatemalan- Salvadoran border.
3. Earlier I had watched the pilgrims, whom the lawyer distinguished from tourists, at work in the Benedictine church. At six- thirty in the morning the monks sat on chairs scattered along the nave hearing confessions amid the bustle of family groups arriving from all over Guatemala, as well as from EL Salvador and Honduras. There were Indians kneeling on the flagged floor setting up little shrines with candles and rosaries. Some knelt holding a candle in each hand, others returned from the communion rail wearing a smile.
4. The women’s costumes showed that they came from all the villages of the Highlands. Having travelled up there I recalled that it had been hard to think of the Indians as anything but political people. Whose side were they on? Were they sheltering guerrillas? Would they join the Civil Guard? How would one persuade them to talk about the army? Here, out of journalistic context, they were just people on pilgrimage, excited and happy. Some of them had babies, carried in white cloths across their backs from head bands, but suspended horizontally so that the babies lay as though in hammocks. To soothe them the mothers, many of whom were teenagers, tossed their babies in the air, swinging them from the hips in semi- circles. This did not soothe the babies. The noise of children crying during Mass was extraordinary but not

distracting. It was not urgent, it just drifted up to the roof of the church like incense, and failed to rebound.

5. After Mass there was a benediction, a local rite. The Indians lined up outside the church, and the monks, mostly from Louisiana, walked past them carrying large brushes and plastic buckets full of holy water. Something similar used to happen at High Mass before the Church reformed its liturgy. There was a chant taken from Psalm 50 *Asperges me*: 'Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, lord, and I shall be cleansed; thou shalt sprinkle me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' At school we used to duck to avoid being soaked. But at Esquipulas the monks had to give each pilgrim and all their belongings – which were spread out on the ground in front of them – a thorough dousing. The Indians became agitated if anything remained dry. To them the holy water was a medicine: it had to be administered in the correct dose.
6. The previous evening I had watched as the shrine, abandoned by the monks for the night, was enthusiastically taken over, like shrines all over the world, by the faithful. The blaze of candles around the 'Black Christ' could be seen for half a kilometer down the street, framed in the gloom of the nave. The family parties arrived, knelt across the west doorway, and started singing the shrine's hymn. The old women wailed it like *muezzins*, then advanced on their knees into the building. Inside some wandered around chatting, others made directly for the ramp behind the altar which led up to the silver and crystal casket around the image. This they touched and kissed and emptied their pockets before. When they left it after a few moments of prayer, patiently observed by those to come, they walked backwards down the ramp, eyes still fixed on the *Cristo Crucificado*. Such devotion can be seen all over Latin America – a region which, according to its priests, contains a church in crisis.
7. It happened that the bus to the border carried a number of pilgrims, not Guatemalan Indians but Salvadorans returning after one night in Esquipulas. El Salvador has only ten per cent pure Indian people and less than ten per cent white. Its eighty per cent *mestizo* majority is by far the largest in Central America. Its present troubles are said to be due to its recent history. The country seceded from Guatemala in 1849 shortly after coffee was introduced to the region I was about to pass through. At that time the population was only a few hundred thousand. But the coffee led to prosperity and the population, that is the *mestizo* population, grew fast. By 1930 there were one and a half million people, by 1966 three million, by 1979 nearly four and a half million. There are now one hundred and fifty – seven people to square kilometer which makes El Salvador the most densely populated country on the American continent. Furthermore, the land is mountainous and much of it is useless. Traditionally the country has been owned and run by fourteen families. It is not hard to see how the trouble started.
8. At the border I lost my pilgrims. They were waved through and on to another bus, leaving me to face Salvadoran immigration for the second time in twelve months. On my previous journey I had entered El Salvador not by a back door

but from Honduras by the Pan American Highway and – though I did not know this at the time – by a customs post which had been destroyed on the previous day. The few soldiers on duty had fled into Honduras when the guerrillas. Eight border guards had stayed at their posts and had all been killed. The buildings and bridges had been blown up. All traffic along the pan America highway had ceased, it had been one of the guerillas’ most spectacular coups for many months. The Honduran army had opened up with artillery from their side of the river. Later it was rumoured that most of the Salvadoran troops detailed to guard the bridge had been absent rehearsing a parade for the national ‘Day of the Soldier.’ For members of the immigration service it must have been their worst experience for many years. Quite unaware of any of this, I approached a burly female who started to search my baggage.

From: *The Border* by Patrick Marnham

Answer all questions briefly. Omit one line after completing a part question and three lines after completing a whole question.

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) (i) In which countries are the Central American towns of Metapan and Esquipulas situated respectively?
[2]
- (ii) Quote a word from the first paragraph which is used to describe the fact that both these towns are influenced by outside events.
[1]
- (b) (i) What makes Esquipulas famous to the Central Americans? [1]
- (ii) Esquipulas lives off the “Black Christ” what does this mean?
[1]
- (c) What does the lawyer say to indicate that Esquipulas is not a tourist centre?
[2]
- (d) The lawyer has one definite reason for preferring to live in Esquipulas – it is safe. The author humorously hints at a second reason. What is it?
[1]
2. (a) (i) ‘Earlier I had watched the pilgrims whom the lawyer distinguished from the tourists Explain this sentence paying particular attention to the underlined words.

From Paragraph 3

- (ii) ‘The women’s costumes showed that they came from all the villages of the Highlands’ (line 32)
What are costumes?

From Paragraph 4

- (b) (i) What is the author's profession?
 (ii) Quote a word or phrase from the fourth paragraph that substantiates your answer. [1]
- (c) Why was the crying of the children not distracting?
- (d) Why did the Indians like everything to get wet?

From paragraph 5

- (e) 'The previous evening I had watched the shrine, abandoned by the monks for the night, was enthusiastically taken over...' Explain this sentence paying particular attention to the underlined words.

From Paragraph 6

3. (a) (i) Quote the sentence from paragraph 6 which tells us that the author does not believe that the church is losing its place in Central Americans life'. [1]

From Paragraph 7

- (ii) In Zimbabwe what do you think a person similar to a Mestizo would call himself or herself? [1]
- (iii) Access to land could be said to be a major cause of the troubles in El Salvador. Briefly outline three reasons why there is this limited access. [3]

From Paragraph 8

- (b) (i) Why had it been easy for the author to get into El Salvador a year before?[1]
 (ii) Why was it thought that the bridge was blown up on that particular day? [1]
- (c) What do you understand by:
 (i) Precious Mines (line 4) (iii) Recalled (line 33)
 (ii) Prosperity (line 80) (iv) Detailed (line 100)
 [4]

Question 4

Part of the passage describes the activities that take place at the Benedictive Church. Write a summary using Material from line 41 to 70, describing the activities that take place at the Benedictive Church Included in your summary must be the reasons why people go there, do at different times of the day and what priests do.

Your summary, which should be in continuous writing, should not exceed 160 words including the ten words given below.

Begin your summary as follows:

At six – thirty in the morning the monks sat on chairs.....

[20]

Passage 3

Read the following passage very carefully and answer the following questions in good English.

You are advised to answer them in the order set.

1. Omovo had experienced a hardening within of a different sort the day his brothers left home. Now that he looked back he saw something of a pattern. His two brothers had grown up alienated from their father. This alienation had existed as gestures, unspoken words, looks; but when their mother died the whole mood became dangerously explicit. Omovo gathered that his brothers had screamed at and accused the man of killing their mother with his hatred and his beatings. They had then left home and did not show up till the day of the funeral. Omovo was at school; all this time and only pieced this information together from the various things he had heard.
2. In their different ways Umeh and Okur had become rebels in what was left of the home. They wore their hair long, blown – out, smoked ‘ugbo’, drank a lot, fought and stayed out late. They hung around the house like an unbearable presence of menace. They seldom spoke to their father- and when they did it was with the holes in their lives. It must have been agony for the man as he stared at them and recognized himself in their self- destruction.
3. They came to be like that gradually. They had always stood by their mother when she was being beaten and ill- treated by him and their detachment grew into something secretly frightening to Omovo. He often overheard them saying when they were young that they would get together and fight the man; but they never did.
4. Their bitterness grew when the man refused to sponsor their education in the university. Both of them were very bright and had done well in their A levels. Their father was always ready with such pep – talks as: ‘Fight for yourself. That was what I did. You think I would have become the person I am today if I kept on waiting for someone to fight for me? I did not even go to university myself. Fight for yourselves!’
5. As they could not go to the university, and found it very difficult to get a job, they grew gradually embittered and restless. A gulf widened in the house daily. In their excitable and depressed state the two young men often did

desperate and wild things. It seemed as though what they did was their weird way of punishing their father for the kind of life he had made them live. They hardened and withdrew into themselves.

6. Then they came up with a new passion. They wanted to go to America. It was every young man's passion then. But for them it was an escape. They talked and planned about it with an overt 'we- will – manage – on – our- own's defiance. Omovo knew they were deeply troubled by their mother's death; they had lost a fulcrum, something had been wrenched from them and they were whirling aimlessly.
7. Things took a turn for the worse when to their consternation their father told them that he was taking a new wife. The following day she was led into the house. Thereafter they all felt shut out from the man's life, they felt like strangers. The house soon became too small and they began stepping on one another's toes. Everybody's temper was frayed, taut. It was disturbing to Omovo to see Okur brush past their father and not a word would pass between them. It became almost impossible to breathe in the house.
8. Somehow, strangely, Omovo was able to reach the man in this welter of raw emotions. He could see him and could touch him through his brothers' indifference. Any act of his which was less angry than his brothers' was defined in the house as something positive.
9. Although Omovo knew that relationships in the house were thread bare he was not prepared for the dimensions the frayed emotions assumed, for the exposing of raw nerves that happened explosively that morning, that Saturday morning.
10. Noises of a quarrel woke Omovo up. He dashed to the sitting – room and saw his father standing near the door. There was a belt in his right hand and it was stained with blood at the buckle- end. He was convulsed with uncontrollable anger. Umeh stood by the bookshelf, his head bent forward. Omovo could see the heavy belt- mark on the side of his face below the ear. Umeh was tall and now he stooped, his fair, light brown face had flushed a muddy brown, his hair was scattered and his white polo- neck was torn at the back. At the kitchen door was Blackie, pretending to blow husks from rice that was on the tray. Omovo caught her eye as she watched the whole scene with calculating sideways glances. The old centre table was tumbled over on its side, one leg wrenched out of shape.
11. Umeh raised his lean, hard, good – looking face. Tears streamed down them. The tears seemed so out of place. Omovo knew he was not crying: the tears were involuntary. On the floor beside his arched tense body was his traveling bag. It was stuffed full. Then it suddenly struck Omovo that Umeh was leaving home.

From: *The Landscapes Within* By B. Okri

Answer the following questions:

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) Omovo changed the day his brothers left home
 - (i) Quote the phrase from paragraph one that tells us this. [1]
 - (ii) Explain in what way he changed. [1]
- (b) (i) What does the word ‘alienated’ tell us about the relationship between the brothers and their father?
- (ii) Explain in your own words how this ‘alienation’ was shown.
- (f) ‘Omovo gathered...’
 - (i) Explain gathered
 - (ii) Quote another phrase from the first paragraph which means the same as gathered.

From Paragraph 2

- (g) Explain in your own words why Umeh and Okur were seen as rebels.
- (h) ‘they delighted in shocking him with the holes in their lives’
 - (i) Explain: the holes in their lives.
 - (ii) Why was their father so upset by their behaviour? [1]

From Paragraph 3

2. (a) They came to be like that gradually.’
 - (i) What does ‘that’ refer to?
 - (ii) When did their resentment of their father begin?

From Paragraph 4

- (b) From the evidence in the fourth paragraph, explain in your own words what ‘pep – talks are’ [2]

From Paragraph 5

- (c) ‘A gulf widened in the house daily’
 - (i) Explain what this gulf is [2]
 - (ii) Quote two phrases from the same paragraph as evidence of his gulf. [2]
- (d) (i) Why was going to America so important to them? [2]
- (ii) Was their father aware of their plans? [1]
- (iii) Quote one word from paragraph 6 to support your answer above. [1]

From Paragraph 7

3. (a) In paragraph 7 we have many phrases that are not meant to be taken literally (they do not mean what they seem to mean). Quote one such phrase and explain it in terms of the passage. [2]

From Paragraph 8

- (b) (i) Explain in your own words why Omovo's presence in the house was helpful. [2]
 (ii) What is Blackie's (the new wife) attitude to the beating of Umeh? (from paragraph 10) [1]
- (c) Choose three of the following words. For each of them give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning as each has in the passage.
- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| (i) Explicit | (ii) insolent |
| (iii) Fulcrum | (iv) Thread bare |
| (v) Convulsed | |

Question 4

Summarize in 160 words the reasons Umeh might have had for leaving home.
[20]

Begin by the words Umeh has several reasons for leaving

Passage 4

Read the following passage very carefully, and answer the following questions in good English. Answer the questions in the order set.

1. Ra- Thaga, in order not to be attacked by wild animals, was wont to sleep in the top branches of some large tree, where he would weave a hammock of ramblers and ropes of inner barks, tying it up with twigs. In this manner he spent many nights alone in different woods. This was a wise precaution, for occasionally his sleep and the stillness of the night were disturbed by the awful roar of the king of beasts, making thunder in the forest. One morning, at the end of another restless night when the wood pigeons began to address one another in their language, after the dawn of day had caused the whining of the hyenas to cease, the sun rose slowly and Ra- Thaga, descending from his late solitary nest, commenced the misery of another day. Each of his mornings was but the resumption of his fruitless search for the company of human beings, which it seemed he was never to find in this world. As he dragged his feet through the dewy grass he seemed to have no particular destination in view. He wondered how much longer this solitude would last. With a drooping spirit he mused over the gloom of existence and asked himself if he still could speak his own language, or if, supposing he met anyone and was addressed, he could still understand it.

2. These thoughts tormented him for the sixtieth time, when he suddenly saw a slender figure running softly towards him. It was clear that the maiden was frightened by something terrible, for she ran unseeingly towards him and as he arrested her progress the girl stood panting like a hunted fox. It was only after some moments that with a supreme effort she could utter the short dissyllable, tau (that is, a lion).
‘Where?’ asked Ra- Thaga.
3. ‘Oh, stranger,’ gasped the girl, recovering her voice, ‘how good of you to appear just when my succession of misfortunes has reached a climax. I almost stumbled over a huge lion just beyond that ridge, not far from here I am afraid he will hear us if we speak above a whisper. I did not notice the brute at first because his hair looked just like the tops of the autumn grass. He must have been eating something, for straight in front of me I heard a sound like the breaking of a tree. I think he was crushing the leg of a cow – oh, how silly of me to forget that there are no cows in this wilderness. Anyway,’ continued the girl between her grasp, ‘I noticed that in front of me there was, not a tuft of grass, but a living animal feeding on something. So I stepped quietly backward, without turning round, until I was at some distance, and then I turned and ran.’
4. Ra- Thaga, successfully concealing his own fears, asked, ‘You were not then, observed by the animal, were you?’
‘No,’ she replied, ‘I believe that he is still devouring his prey.’
Ra- Thaga did not know what to do, for if there were two things he was against meeting, they were a Matabele and a lion. ‘But here is an awkward position,’ he thought, ‘a young woman fleeing to me for protection. What is best to be done?’
5. His native gallantry urged him to go after the beast; the young woman persisted in following close behind him. Vainly he tried to persuade her to remain where she was, but she was obdurate. ‘Nay,’ she replied, in a loud whisper, ‘I dare not remain alone.’
6. Ra- Thaga thought he knew what was passing through her mind before she spoke. She added: ‘I have wandered through this lonely wilderness for days and nights, since my people were scattered at Kunana; I have lived on roots and bulbs and wild berries, yearning to meet some human being, and now that I have met you, you cannot leave me again so quickly. In fact, I am quite certain that you are a man, but if you are a dream, I will stay with you and dream on while the vision lasts; whether you are man or ghost I have enjoyed the pleasure of a few words with you. I am prepared to see ten other lions with you rather than stay behind of my own free will. Walk on to the lion, I will follow you.’
7. Ra- Thaga heard this with a shiver. He believed that women were timid creatures, but here was one actually volunteering to guide him to where the lion was, instead of commanding him to take her far away from the man-eater. How he wished that he might find it gone! However, he summoned up courage and proceeded, his companion following. At times he felt pleased that

she had not obeyed him, for her presence stimulated his bravery. As they proceeded, 'however,' he said to himself, 'lions were usually hunted by large companies of armed men guided by a strange girl.'

8. Suddenly their extreme peril struck him, and before he had time to ponder it, the maiden touched his shoulder and pointed to what looked like a moving tuft of grass, some fifty meters ahead – it was a black – manned lion.

9. The king of beasts was leisurely gorging himself with chunks of meat torn from the carcass of an eland which he had recently killed. Ra-Thaga, realizing that not only his own safety depended upon his prowess, but also that of the young woman who had appeared as if from the clouds and commended herself to his Care, hid fears varnished, yelling at the top of his voice and waiving his cloak of skin in the air, he rushed at the feasting lion, the girl doing the same. This violent interruption of his meal caused the lion to jerk his head, whereupon he took fright and darted off as hard as he could go with his tail between his legs. The lion ran through the trees across the grassy plain and never stopped till he was out of sight.
Ra- Thaga was able to rejoice; but his pride was not greater than the joy of the girl who realized that her trust in him had not been misplaced.

From: *Mhudi* By Sol T. Plaatje.

Answer all questions

From Paragraph 1

1. (a) (i) Quote one word in the first paragraph that tells us that it had become customary for Ra- Thaga to sleep in a hammock in the top branches of large trees. [1]
- (ii) Quote another word from the first paragraph that tells us that Ra- Thaga thought deeply about his life. [1]
- (b) Why does Ra-Thaga think that he may not be able to speak or understand his own language? [1]

From Paragraph 2

- (c) Why did the maiden speak only after some moments? [1]

From Paragraph 3

- (d) 'Oh, stranger,' gasped the girl recovering her voice, how good of you to appear just when my succession of misfortunes has reached a climax' (line 26). Explain each of the underlined words only. [3]
- (e) (i) 'I am afraid he will hear us if we speak above a whisper.' 29) Explain the underlined word. [1]
- (ii) Why does the girl walk backwards after seeing the lion? [1]

From Paragraph 4

2. (a) Why do you think Ra- Thaga asks if the lion had seen the girl? [1]
 (b) Who or what had scattered both Ra-Thaga and the girls' peoples? [1]

From Paragraph 6

- (c) 'Ra –Thaga thought he knew what was passing through her mind before she spoke (line 49). What do you think the girl's thoughts were? [1]
 (f) Why is Ra-Thaga surprised that the girl wanted to lead him back to the lion? [2]
 (g) Explain why Ra-Thaga is pleased that the girl did not stay behind. [1]

From Paragraph 7

- (f) How are lions hunted in Ra- Thaga's country? [2]
3. (a) 'Suddenly their extreme peril struck him, and before he had time to ponder it...' (line 68). What does the 'it; refer to? [1]
 (b) What phrase in the last paragraph tells us that the lion was enjoying his meal? [1]
 (c) What causes Ra-Thaga's fears to vanish? [2]
 (d) Explain
 (i) Why Ra-Thaga was proud. [2]
 (ii) Why the girl was joyful. [2]
- (e) Choose five of the following words and give their meanings. Use a short phrase of not more than seven words.
- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| (i) Precaution | (ii) Drooping |
| (iii) Tuft | (iv) Volunteering |
| (vii) Awkward | |

Question 4

Imagine that you are Ra- Thaga. Write a summary of 160 words describing how you felt and what you did after you asked the girl if she had been seen by the lion.

Your summary should start like this:

I hid my fears and asked her... [20]

Passage 5

Read the following passage very carefully and answer the following questions in good English. You are advised to answer them in the order set.

1. Close to three million years ago on a campsite near the east shore of Kenya's spectacular Lake Turkana, formerly Lake Rudolf, a primitive human picked up

a water- smoothed stone, and with a few skilful strikes transformed it into an implement. What was once an accident of nature was now a piece of deliberate technology, to be used to fashion a stick for digging up roots, or to slice the flesh off a dead animal. Soon discarded by its maker, the stone tool still exists, an unbreakable link with our ancestors; together with many others, that tool is preserved in the National Museums of Kenya in Nairobi. It is a heart – quickening thought that we share the same genetic heritage with the hands that shaped the tool that we can now hold in our own hands, and with the mind that decided to make the tool that our minds can now contemplate.

2. There is an inescapable and persistent element of excitement in the search for the origins of humanity. It affects everyone, professionals and non-professionals alike, because there appears to be a universal curiosity about our past, about how a thinking, feeling cultural being emerged from a primitive ape – like stock. What evolutionary circumstances molded that ancient ape into a tall, upright highly intelligent creature that, through technology and determination, has come to dominate the world? This is the question we ask about ourselves. And it is not mere idle curiosity because, without doubt, the key to our future lies in a true understanding of what sort of animal we are.

3. Ever since the first signs of self – awareness flickered in the minds of our distant ancestors the human (or pre-human) mind has pondered on its relationship with the world outside. We can guess that early humans, say a million or so years ago, were conscious of themselves as an integral part of the environment in which they lived: they were hunters and gatherers and they survived only if they respected the world in which they lived. And yet they may have already begun the age – old human practice of attempting to secure more favourable treatment for themselves by appealing in diverse ways to the greater natural forces that rule the world. Time marched on and eventually modern humans – *Homo sapiens* – emerged, creatures who, to an extraterrestrial observer, must seem to be more than a little perverse. Like no other animals, we wage war among ourselves. We knowingly exploit limited resources in our environment and seem to expect that our profligacy can go on forever. And we choose to ignore deep chasms of injustice, consciously inflicted both between nations and within nations. In a sense it is humans who now rule the world: our extraordinary creative intelligence gives us the potential to do more or less anything we want. But, an extraterrestrial observer may wonder, isn't the ruler just a little bit crazy?

4. If we are not crazy, and we will assume we are not, why it is that humanity seems determined to spiral ever faster towards self – made destruction? Perhaps the human species is just a ghastly biological blunder, having evolved beyond a point at which it can thrive in harmony with itself and the world around it. That must be a possibility. In recent years scientists, playwrights, and others have attempted to explain why mankind finds itself faced with the prospect of self – annihilation. The idea was proposed that man is unswervingly aggressive, an idea that was given scientific credence by proponents such as Professor Raymond Dart and Dr Konrad Lorenz, and successfully popularized by Robert Ardrey.

5. The core of the aggression argument says that because we share a common heritage with the animal kingdom we must possess and express an aggressive instinct. And the notion is elaborated with the suggestion that at some point in our evolutionary history we gave up being vegetarian ape- like creatures and became killers, with a taste not only for prey animals, but also for each other. It makes a good gripping story. More important, it absolves society from attempting to rectify the evil in the world. But it is fiction – dangerous fiction.

6. Unquestionably we are part of the animal kingdom. And yes, at some point in our evolution we departed from the common dietary habits of the large primates and took to including a significant amount of meat in our menu. But a serious biological interpretation of these facts does not lead to the conclusion that, because once the whole of the human race indulged in hunting as part of its way of life, killing is in our genes. Indeed, we argue that the opposite is true, that humans could not have evolved in the remarkable way in which we undoubtedly have unless our ancestors were strongly co-operative creatures. The key to the transformation of a social ape-like creature into a cultural animal living in a highly structured and organized society is sharing: the sharing of jobs and the sharing of food. Meat eating was important in propelling our ancestors along the road to humanity, but only as part of a package of socially – oriented changes involving the gathering of plant foods and sharing the spoils.

7. This being so, why then is recent human history characterized by conflict rather than compassion? We suggest that the answer to this question lies in the change in way of life from hunting and gathering to farming, a change which began about ten thousand years ago and which involved a dramatic alteration in the relationship people had both with the world around them and among themselves. The hunter – gatherer is a part of the natural order: a farmer necessarily distorts that order. But more important, sedentary farming communities have the opportunity to accumulate possessions, and having done so they must protect them. This is the key to human conflict, and it is greatly exaggerated in the highly materialistic world in which we now live.

From: *Origins* by R. Leakey and R. Lewin

Answer all questions briefly. Omit a line after finishing a part question, and three lines after a full question.

From Paragraph 1

1. What was once an accident of nature was now a piece of deliberate technology
Find two words in paragraph one to complete the following:
 - (a) (i) “Accident of nature” is referring to.....
 - (ii) “A piece of deliberate technology” is referring to..... [3]
 - (b) Explain why, according to the author, there is “an inescapable and persistent element of excitement in the search for the origins of humanity” (line 13). [2]

From Paragraph 2

2. (a) Why is it important to discover “what sort of animal we are?” [1]

From Paragraph 3

- (b) Quote the reason the author has for believing that early humans “were conscious of themselves as an integral part of the environment in which they lived” [1]
- (c) Briefly explain three reasons an extraterrestrial observer might have for believing homo sapiens are “more than a little preserve” [3]

From Paragraph 4

3. “Perhaps the human species just a ghastly biological blunder”
- (a) (i) Why is it possible for some scientists and writers to believe this. [1]
- (ii) What does “blunder” mean? [1]
- (b) Write down a word from paragraph 4 that means the same as “Annihilation”. [1]
- (c) Is Robert Ardrey read by many people? Quote a word or phrase from the passage to substantiate your answer. [2]
- (d) (i) Why is the “aggressive argument”, “dangerous fiction”? [2]
- (ii) In what ways were early human ancestors “co-operation creatures”? (line 69) [1]
4. (a) (i) Explain the differences between hunter – gatherer societies and settled farming societies, according to the author. [3]
- (ii) “This is the key to human conflict and it is greatly exaggerated in the highly materialistic world in which we now live” (line 84). Explain this sentence and pay particular attention to the underlined words. [4]
- (c) Choose six of these words and explain them in not more than seven words.
- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| (i) Spectacular | (ii) Contemplate |
| (iii) Persistent | (iv) Pondered |
| (v) Diverse | (vi) Transformation |
| (vii) Spoil | (viii) Compassion [6] |

Question 5

In a summary of 160 words outline the “aggression argument” and explain why it sounds so reasonable. Describe also why the authors Leakey and Lewin reject the aggression argument and how they explain modern day aggression. [20]

CHAPTER 9

Chapter Objectives:

By the end of this chapter the student should be able to:

- Understand the objective words or words used in register questions
- identify the characters in each register and their relationships
- Choose the correct word to describe the register.
- Present the answers in the correct format for registers

REGISTERS OR SPEECH STYLES

Practical Exercises

Examination type questions

Brief Introduction

The motive or purpose of registers in the ‘O’ level curriculum is to impart the skill of applying and using correctly the human qualities of Attitude; Manner; Behaviour; Feeling and Reaction in Communication. Very few people perhaps would pause to think what actually is contained in the words they speak. In words there is certainly more things than just their ordinary meanings. The user of words must be conscious of the implications of their words when they are judged or received by others.

Below are register questions which are intended to give the student ample practise on the aspect of registers.

Exercises

Read each of these registers carefully and briefly answer the questions which follow:

- (1) Two women are in a cooperative garden
 Woman A says:
- (i) I wish I had grown my personal garden
 - (ii) Woman B says:
- (ii) This is fantastic, cooperatives are usually a noble idea.

What character is revealed by each of the two women?

Number your answers (i) and (ii) [2]

(2) Two men are discussing ZESA’s unpredictable load- shedding during the World Cup soccer tournament.

One says:

This is unfair. How do they think we are going to enjoy this important tournament?

Another says:

The residents must suffer the consequences of not paying up their ZESA bills.

What attributes is revealed by each speaker towards his community?

Number your answers (i) and (ii) [2]

(3) Two boys are fighting and among the on-lookers one says.

Lets stop those boys. It is irresponsible to encourage them to fight.

The other says:

They must fight so that the loser will respect the winner

What character is revealed by each speaker. Number your answers (i) and (ii) [2]

(4) You are late for school and you approach the teacher on duty for an apology, you say to your colleague.

“What a beginning of the new day!.”

What could be the two different reasons for you to speak that way to your colleague?

Number your answers (i) and (ii) [2]

(5) Your school’s senior soccer team is playing and has already lost 4 goals to nil; it is 30 minutes to stoppage time. The following comments are made by some of the supporters from your side.

- 1) There is nothing we can do now, we have already lost
- 2) They did not have enough time to prepare, they are a good team.
- 3) We still have 30 minutes. They are certainly going to equalize and lead by 2 more goals.
- 4) Our boys are a disgrace. They are proud for nothing

Write down the number of each of the comments and against the number write out the reaction most appropriate to it from the ones given below.

(a) Supportive (b) Optimistic

(c) Blaming (d) Resignation

(e) Pessimistic. [2]

(6) As you are walking down the street an old man knocks into you. He falls down. You say to him:

(i) “Why don’t you look where you are going?”

(ii) “Sorry, Sir, I hope you a re not hurt.”

In each case what will the old man think about your manner? Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (7) The teacher is introducing a new topic to your class. You do not understand. You say:
- (i) "Excuse me, Sir, I did not get what you said."
 - (ii) "Repeat what you said"

What will the teacher's reaction be to each of these statements? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

- (8) A friend borrowed some money from you, but does not return it as promised. You need the money and ask for it. He says:

- (i) "I haven't got it. You will just have to wait".
- (ii) "I am sorry, I completely forget. Here it is".

What does each of the statements tell you about your friend's character? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

- (9) Your teacher is trying to lift something heavy, but with little success. You stand watching him. He says:

"Cant you help?"

Give two different reasons why your teacher should say this. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

- (10) A friend of yours is in tears because he failed English his recent examination. Listed below are eight possible remarks that you could make to him:

- "I will lend you my notes if you like".
- "I am sure you tried your very best".
- " But I always thought you were good at English."
- "Poor you, what a shame!"
- "I did not have any problems with the paper."

Choose four statements from the list above which most appropriately show that you are:

- (i) Sympathetic
- (ii) Surprised
- (iii) Unconcerned
- (iv) Encouraging your friend to keep trying.

Write only the four numbers above and against each of them write out one appropriate statement in full from the four statements you have chosen. Do not use any of the statements twice.

- (11) You are at the end of your second term in your final ‘O’ level year and you ask your teacher why only half of the syllabus has been covered. He says:
- (i) “Do not worry. I will conduct holiday classes to catch you up. You’re in good hands you know.”
 - (ii) What’s this? Are you trying to be the teacher here?”
 - (iii) In each case, say what the student will feel about the teacher’s response to the question. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
- (12) You have bought a bus ticket, but on boarding the bus you find there are no seats left. A number of other passengers are in the same situation. You say to the conductor:
- (i) “Another bus had better be provided for those of us with no seats, immediately!”
 - (ii) “Excuse me, some of us have no seats. Can you tell us what the situation is?”
- In each case, what do your remarks to the conductor reveal about your attitude? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
- (13) After defeating a neighboring school in a drama competition, you say to the chairperson of the drama committee.
- “Well, that’s what I call a miracle of organization!”
- Give two different reasons why you would say this. Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).
- (14) After a plumber has repaired a leaking pipe for her, the housewife says:
- “Is that really the bill?”
- What two different reactions of the housewife are revealed by her remark? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii)
- (15) Listed below are four situations and eight possible responses. Match each of the situations with one response which you think is most appropriate to it. Write down the number only of the situation and, against the member, write out in full the appropriate response.
- Do not match more than one response to any one of the situations.
- (i) Asking for directions
 - (ii) Expressing an apology
 - (iii) Greeting your headmaster at a soccer game on a Sunday afternoon.
 - (iv) Expressing your appreciation.

Responses

“Hello there! And how are you today?”

- “Some dress! Is it new?”
 “Where’s the Post Office?”
 “Shame I had to miss your party.”
 “What a lovely dress you are wearing!”
 “Excuse me. Can you tell me the way to the Post Office?”
 “I am sorry I couldn’t be at your party; the bus broke down on the way.”
 “Headmaster, what a surprise! How do you do, Sir?”

(16) Joseph spends the day away from home and both parents do not know where he has been. When his parents ask him, he says:

- (i) “I am not a baby any more. I can look after myself.”
 (ii) “I am sorry if I caused you any unnecessary anxiety. I will not do it again.”

In each case, say what kind of a person Joseph is. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii)

(17) In Mathematics test, a girl comes top of the whole class of boys and girls. The Mathematics teacher says:

- (i) “That was excellent, Sophie. Congratulation.
 (ii) “Hey, boys, how can you be beaten by a girl?”

In each case, say how the girl would feel. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

(18) You are on a shopping trip with your mother. You pick out a pair of shoes, but she objects to your choice. You say:

- (i) “But mother, all my friends are wearing shoes like this. You wouldn’t want me to look out of place, would you?”
 (ii) “If I can’t have these shoes, then forget the whole thing. You don’t know what young people are wearing these days.”

In each case, say what tactic you are using to get your mother to buy the shoes. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

(19) At the end of a keenly – fought soccer match, your coach approaches you and says:

“Brilliant” I don’t know what we would have done without you, Johnes.”

What would have been the coach’s reasons for saying this if:

- (i) Your team had lost
 (ii) Your team had won?

Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii)

(20) Each of the following sentences has a different purpose:

1. "How about a cup of tea?"
2. "Your children make a lot of noise, don't they?"
3. "Mr. Moyo wants all of us to go to the school Hall."
4. "Don't you think would be better to discuss things over with your friend?"

Match each of the sentences above to one of the purposes listed below:

Purposes

Advising
 Informing
 Inviting
 Complaining

Write down the number only of the sentence, and against the number write out in full the appropriate purpose.

(21) Two residents are discussing their new neighbours.

- (i) One says: "Our new neighbours appear to be full of themselves."
- (ii) The other says: "The new neighbours are down to earth, aren't they?"

What does this tell about the relationship these people have made with their new neighbours? Number your answers (i) and (ii).

(22) You get into a bank as the security guard is closing the doors and he says:

- (i) "Can't see you I'm now closing the doors?"
- (ii) "I am sorry sir, we close at three 'o'clock".

How would you interpret the guard's manner in each case?

Number your answers (i) and (ii).

(23) Your friend asks you why you are silent, and you reply:

- (i) "I don't know. Things are just falling apart."
- (ii) "Oh, please leave me alone."

What does each of these utterances reveal about your mood?

Number your answer (i) and (ii).

(24) Your sister visits a friend in Victoria Falls. She writes the following on her post-card home.

- (i) "I wish I could stay here forever. The view is magnificent!"
- (ii) "I saw the waterfalls. They are okay I guess."

What does each of the above her feelings about the falls?

Number your answers (i) and (ii)

- (25) Four customers in a record bar listen to one of the latest records by a popular artist, Jackson, and make the following statements.
- (i) "I like what Jackson is releasing these days."
 - (ii) "Hmm, I can't say yet. I need to listen to it again."
 - (iii) "Wow! That is a real gem!"
 - (iv) "I can't stand it. It's jarring to the ear."

Match the above statements with the following emotions that they convey.

- A Excitement
- B Disgust
- C Appreciation
- D Indifference

Acknowledgement: ZIMSEC JUNE 2004

- (26) At times you like to play the clown. You turn up at a formal birthday party in overalls. Two of your friends say:
- (i) "Hey! Don't you look smart today!"
 - (ii) "This is a formal party!"

For what reason might each of the statements have been uttered?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

- (27) Your exercise book is used up and you need a new one. You go to the teacher and say:
- (i) "I want a new book."
 - (ii) "My book is used up Ma'am. Could I please have a new one?"

What do your requests show about your manner in each case?

Number your answers (i) and (ii).

- (28) Your father has recently bought a new tool kit and he comes home one day to find you playing with it. He says:

- (i) "What are you doing?"
- (ii) "You are playing with my new tool kit!"

In each of the statements, what does your father's tone reveal about his feelings towards what you are doing?

Number your answers (i) and (ii)

- (29) You receive your school fees invoice with gross errors on it. Walking into the Bursar's office, you say:
- (i) "I think you have made mistakes on my invoice. Would you mind checking it?"
 - (ii) "What's this? How can a Bursar make so many mistakes?"

How will the Bursar react to each of these statements?

Number your answers (i) and (ii).

- (30) The utterances given in A below are aimed at achieving certain intentions stated in B. Write down the number only of each of the utterances and against that number, write out the intention appropriate to it.

A

- (i) "May you please cash this cheque for me?"
- (ii) "James, I think you are the best driver around."
- (iii) "It is too cold to take the baby outdoors."
- (iv) "You thought you could play for the first team! You must be joking!"

B

- (a) To advise
- (b) To plead
- (c) To hurt
- (d) To flatter

(Acknowledgement Zimsec June 2001)

- (31). You arrive home suddenly from school, complaining of stomach pains.
- (i) Your father says: "It must be something you had for lunch. You'll feel better soon."
 - (ii) Your father says: "What is it this time?"

What is the attitude of

- (i) Your father?
- (ii) Your brother?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii)

- (32). Your school soccer team loses a match against another local school. As editor of the school magazine, you receive the following comments from two contributors.

- (i) "We were unlucky".
- (ii) "We were demolished".

What does each comment reveal about the performance of your team? Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

- (33) One of your friends is finding Mathematics very difficult. He tells you about it. You say:

- (i) "Why don't you drop it?"
- (ii) "Why don't you ask your teacher for help? I've heard he's very understanding."

In each case say what your friend's reaction will be to your reply. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (34) Your uncle asks his employer for a pay rise. The employer says: "What makes you think you deserve a pay rise?"

Give two different reasons for the employer to say this. Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (35) Each action described in column A matches column B.

Rewrite column B in the correct order to match column A.

Column A	Column B
Ask	manager's office
Interrogate	bus station
Query	classroom
Interview	police station

- (36) Your younger brother comes home crying because he has failed a math's test.

You say:

- (i) "It serves you right. You spend too much time playing."
 (ii) "Never mind. Next time you will pass because I will help you with your homework."

What does each statement show about your attitude to your brother? Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (37) You are walking down the road when you meet your form – teacher, Mr. Moyo. You stop to greet him and say:

- (i) "Hi there, old Topi. How are you getting on?"
 (ii) "Good morning, Mr. Moyo. How are you?"

What will be Mr. Moyo's response to each of these greetings? Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (38) A new student has just joined your class from another school. You go up and say to him:

- (i) "Hey, you! What's your name?"
 (ii) "Hello. My name is Fungai. What's yours?"

What kind of reception for the new student does each of the above greetings show? Number your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

- (39) You have bought some new clothes. You show them to your friend who comments:

- (i) "You'll look like a scarecrow in them."

(iii) “They are lovely. You’ll be a hit when you wear them.”

How would you react to each of your friend’s comments? Number your answers (i) and (ii).

(40) A friend of yours has no bus – fare home. You give him the money and he says: “Thank you very much. I will repay you tomorrow.”

You say:

(i) “Don’t worry about it. That’s what friends are for.”

What two different sides to your character does this reply reveal?
Number your answers separately (i) and (ii)

(41) You have applied for the same job with your friend, but only your friend is invited for an interview. He tells you about it and you say:

- (i) “Lucky you!”
- (ii) “There must be a mistake.”

How would your friend interpret each of these statements?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

(42) Your uncle goes to a police station to report that his Wallet has been stolen. The officer – in- charge says:

- (i) “Weren’t you rather careless?”
- (ii) “We’ll certainly do our best to recover your stolen property.”

What does each statement reveal about the policeman’s attitude towards your uncle’s loss?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

(43) A parent speaking to a daughter who has received Ordinary Level results says:

- (i) “You couldn’t have done any better.”
- (ii) “Couldn’t you have done any better?”

In each case, how is the parent reacting to the girl’s results?

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

(44) A maid is wiping kitchen utensils. A cup falls down and breaks into pieces. Her employer says:

- (i) “Do you still like the job?”

Give two different reasons why she made this statement.

Number your answers separately (i) and (ii).

(45) Your mother had expected to find the garden cultivated on her return from a week's visit. When she asked why the garden is not cultivated you say:

- (i) "It's none of my business."
- (ii) "I am sorry, mum. I had a strain on the finger."

What does each response reveal about your manner?

Write your answers separately, (i) and (ii).

CHAPTER 10

Chapter Objectives

By the end of the chapter the student should be able to

- Understand the factors that are considered in composition writing.
- Appreciate the importance of proof reading own work to check for errors.
- Apply writing skills carefully in composition writing.

PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

Introduction

The first part of the study pack presents an excellent macro outline of the principles, and expounds on the relevant methods of study on different aspects of the English Language curriculum for 'O' level. After this stage we undoubtedly see the need to tackle the aspect of Demonstrations extensively, so that the student is taken to the practical visual activities of the study of the subject. A practical demonstration and analysis is done for each aspect of subject in the syllabus. The compositions we are going to use in this section are original compositions which were written by some 'O' level students. Actually the exercises were done by selected students in a certain school.

Our interest is on the original essay or exercise done by the students before it is corrected by the marker. Mostly we preferred those that were not done well, so that we analyse them, pointing out the hindrances and other shortfalls and then correct them so that the student learns from something visible. Thereafter a number of questions or exercises are given for practice, where the student has to apply the skills and precautions that have been stressed in the analysis of written compositions.

In all forms of composition writing the following aspects should be evident: (a) **Relevance and originality** (b) **spelling and legibility** (c) **tense** (d) **paragraphing** (e) **punctuation** (f) **appropriate length content and** (i) **linguistic ability**.

Explanation of the above factors:

(a) **Relevance and originality**

This applies primarily to composition writing. First and foremost candidates should come up with genuinely composed essays that match the selected topic. Guard against the danger of going off – topic or reproducing some work done before; you risk losing relevance and originality.

(b) **Spelling and legibility**

Incorrect spelling of any word, big or small, spoils the quality of many essays. Illegible handwriting is most embarrassing. Shorthand and stylistic handwriting are unacceptable. This applies in all aspects of language.

(c) Tense

Candidates should strive to be conversant with the three simplest tenses – the simple Past Tense; simple present and the Future tenses. Most essays are dominated by either of these tenses. It is obviously worrying for an ‘O’ level candidate to display ignorance of tenses or time. Caution over this issue must be exercised even in summary writing and registers.

(d) Paragraphing

This is one other aspect that needs attention. A good essay is made up of units called paragraphs. These are made up of topic sentences, developers and terminators or concluding sentences. Paragraphs may not be necessarily of the same length but they should be clearly and logically linked with one another (coherence).

(e) Appropriate length:

Compositions (essays) and summaries have a length stipulation (350 – 450 words) for ordinary compositions and 160 words for summaries. This stipulation suggests that a good essay should neither be too long nor writing compositions that are overly long, yet full of errors and dull. By the way it is quality and not quantity that matters. But content has to be sufficient. Content means all that which must be included under a given topic in order to produce a comprehensive essay. These are ideas thoughts, views and opinion. They must be given in simple clarity which but includes complex sentences and challenging vocabulary for example in descriptive compositions.

It is therefore this insight on writing skills that takes us into further practical demonstrations and analyses of the students’ language skills.

Compositions

The assessment criteria or factors of consideration in our analysis of composition essays, is composed of the following factors:

- 1) What is the type of composition?
- 2) What is the time mode or tense of the composition?
- 3) Is the nature of the introduction impactful?
- 4) Are the topic sentences valid?
- 5) Is there coherence of ideas and paragraphs?
- 6) Are the ideas relevant to the topic?
- 7) Are tenses, spellings and punctuations proper?
- 8) Is there a conclusion?
- 9) Is the content and length up to standard?

More Practical Demonstrations

For all demonstrations in this section, work along and see if you can identify some of the errors.

Our first composition is based on a statement which reads:

Some things are hard to forget.

Let us look at this composition.

The composition was adopted from Student AQ, a form 4 student.

Demonstration 1

Some things are hard to forget

I remember the last day I gave the last salute to my brother.

It all started during the term, my brother came home from work. He was a teacher. He was looking like he was not feeling well.

We tried everything for him to see the doctor. After a week he was now recovered and he returned to work. Since he was working in the rural areas.

After a month he came back home since it was the end of the month. We were all happy, but it was looking like he was losing weight.

He again returned to work, but his headmaster sent him back to see the doctor. During that week he went to the doctor alone and the doctor gave him the prescription but it was looking like he was no longer getting any better.

On fiday night he was now in a critical condition. We did not sleep on that night. We even called the pastor to pray for him.

On saturday my morning he asked some water to drink he wanted to split and black spots in the water. We saw it after he was already drunk some water.

We called our big sister's and neighbours, but they all failed to recognize the black spots. My brother was now seriously ill.

Later my father realized that the black spots was the rat killer. Then they took him to the Gullen House clinic but it was too late, because when the reached the Gullen house he was already late.

The big brother informed us that our brother was no more. I sweated profusely and I fainted.

On Monday they operated him and they found that it was drunken a poison which was a rat killer. On Tuesday he was buried at Luveve.

This took us by a shock because it all happened in a sudden way. Even today I am still remembering my brother's death. I think these are other things which are no easy to forget.

(Adopted word for word from AQ)

Analysis

General Observations on the above composition.

This composition is heavily infested with mistakes of all sorts. It is not possible for it to score a good mark.

According to our criteria of assessment, all underlined portions are mistakes.

1. This topic is a narrative composition.
2. The tense of the composition is the Past tense. This is so because the unforgettable incident happened sometime ago. Both the simple past and the Past Continuous tense – forms are applicable in this composition.
3. The introduction is not impactful. It is fragmentary. What the student puts as the first paragraphs should actually be one paragraph. The paragraph introduces the gloomy day when she saw her beloved brother for the last time. This saddest moment was sparked off by an unexpected illness of her brother which forced him to leave his job as a teacher. At the earlier stage of the composition, the student displays the problem of verbiage. This refers to waste of words or putting too many words unnecessarily e.g:

He was looking like he was not feeling well.

This should simply be
He looked ill.

The actual problem of this student is that she is thinking in her vernacular language and translating it word for word into English: i.e.

“Wayekhanya engani kezwa kuhle” (Ndebele)

“Waitaridzika sokuti haanzwi zvakanaka” (Shona)

One effective way of solving this problem is to practice speaking in English in most of your communication; so you think in the English way.

“We tried everything for him to see the doctor”. This should be

“We made all the necessary arrangements for him to see the doctor.”

From 3rd Paragraph: She writes:

“After a week he was now recovered and ...”

This is wrong because there is no concordial agreement between the verb “was” and the adverb “now”. It should be:

“After a week he had then recovered....”

Still in the third paragraph a serious problem is created by the carelessness of putting a fullstop at a place where it is not supposed to be. It has had the effect of separating parts of one sentence resulting in a phraseology without sense. She writes:

“Since he was working in the rural areas.”

The fullstop and the capital letter ‘S’ in “since” are not deliberate punctuation but careless errors. These can easily be checked by proof reading in whisper.

In paragraph 4 of the original composition, the problem of verbiage appears again as indicated by the underlining. However the 3rd and 4th paragraphs are too tiny to stand as paragraphs. It would be reasonable to join them into a single paragraph.

In paragraph 5 and 9 of the original composition of the student shows the tendency of writing extended sentences, too long sentences that have the effect of spoiling the overall sense of the statement. These long sentences are created using joining words or conjunctions such as “And”, but; since; if, because etc. the aspects that are joined are usually sentences on their own which can stand as short sentences, but with a full meaning. Students are reluctant or unsure to write these short sentences, yet we recommend that the best writer uses short sentences because they minimize the chances of grammatical errors.

4. The topic sentences on what are purported to be paragraphs in the original composition are alright. The developers, though scanty, are logical. There is coherence in the ideas and in the relationships between the paragraphs (5) Relevance is clear. The essay has the correct focus of an incident that is unforgettable. The incident definitely takes a tragic trend and ends in a baffling manner (the loss of a beloved brother is unforgettable).
5. Grammar is generally appalling. Punctuation errors are just a matter of carelessness. A form 4 student cannot fail to realize that “Friday” and “Saturday” and “Headmaster” have to be written with a capital letter because they are Nouns or names.

A trend is evident that as the essay progresses towards the end the volume of grammatical errors increases. This is common. Its cause is fatigue or tiredness. But experts advise that it is important to start well and end well. So candidates should practice to remain vigorous throughout. This degree can only be achieved by constant practice.

6. Strictly speaking the composition under analysis here has no conclusion. The topic sentence at the last paragraph entices the reader to feel that more details are coming about the shock, yet the writer feels she has come to an end. A conclusion must summarise the key issue of the incident for example

“The death of our brother left us in a
State of shock. It cut a permanent
Mark of sorrow in our family. I will
Never forget this incident. Truly some
Things are difficult to forget.”
7. The content of the composition is fair. But there are missing details which must link the first problem of the brother which caused him to come back home and the taking of rat poison. It is not clear whether he took the poison after he was already ill or it was after taking the rat poison that he became ill If so what could have caused him to think of eating rat poison? All these questions should be answered clearly in the composition.

The length of an ordinary composition should be in the range of 350 words to 450 words. This composition has 338 words. So it is slightly below the length requirement. But let the student know that he/ she is not required to write the number of words. Depending on the size of handwriting, compositions of 2 pages to 3 pages are estimated to be of the right length.

With the above precaution and guidelines in mind practice on the following narrative topics:

1. It is folly to count your chickens before they are hatched.
2. One good in turn deserves another.
3. Write a story that ends as follows: I will never escort a friend.
4. An occasion when I helped two people forgive each other.
5. It was a result of social disintegration.
6. Crime does not pay.
7. It just resulted in a draw.
8. My life nearly came to an end that day
9. “Some day things will be different” write a story with these words in it.

Demonstration 2

The Discursive Compositions

(Written by Student BQ)

TOPIC: Is money a blessing or a curse?

As we all know that there are some things which lead us to do bad and good things in this world.

In these hard times of life every one wants money. Even small children. Every thing is now money. You should also know how to use it carefully, because it is hard to get. To have money, you should have a source of income.

Money is a very good thing. It plays an important role in this world. It is a gift from the lord. It is also widely used billions of people use it each and every day. You cannot survive without money. It buys anything in this world, expect life. Money makes people rich. It is used to buy many different things, cars, houses, clothes, food and etc. If you have too much money you can live a luxurious life. People in the society also respect you when you have a lot of money. Some rich people are helping the needy through donations of money. You can also open businesses and have workers. Money never end, get finished, it is always available.

Money is a blessing but on the other side it is bad. People are being forced to do bad things by money. People are using bad methods of searching for it. Others are doing prostitution thereby spreading diseases robbing people and banks at gunpoint and stealing. It has also created hatred between people. Others are killing each other over money. If you so not have money you can't survive in this world. You need to buy clothes food and shelter which also needs to be paid.

As far as I am concerned money is bad. It makes people do bad things and it also hard to get. Money has so far ruined the world and its people. Even small children think of money. We should have continued using the barter system. But on the other side it is a blessing. You can do or have anything you want with money. It is also important to budget your money wisely. And you should always have it because everything is money now.

(Adopted from Student BQ)

Analysis

General Observations

This composition is badly done. The major problem here is that the composition is full of confusion. The reader cannot know what exactly is the position of the writer. The skill of discussion is totally missing. Sentences lack vividness. There is neither an introduction nor a conclusion.

Following our assessment criteria on previous pages,

1. This topic is a discursive composition. It needs an examination of issues on both sides of the issue (the pros and cons of the matter). An evaluation of the issues has to be done and a conclusion has to be drawn stating the position of the writer.
2. On aspect 2 of our criteria the tense of a discursive composition is the simple present tense. The discussion is an ongoing thing at the time of writing.
3. According to aspect 3 of our criterion, we notice that the so-called introduction is senseless, and worse still, inappropriate. An impactful introduction in this topic should state the two-sided nature of the discussion and perhaps include a tentative judgement of the writer. Actually the introductory paragraph in the demonstration is vague and embarrassing to the marker. It is not impactful.

Consider the following introduction.

“Money is a means of exchange. It is sometimes known as currency. When applied to its uses, one sometimes sees both good and bad things coming out of it. However, the fairest thing to say is that money is more of a blessing than a curse.”

Comment:

This is a comprehensive and concise introduction. It defines money and it also makes an appreciation of its impact in human life. At last a tentative judgement is given that the good things outweigh the bad things. Such an introduction impresses the reader right from the beginning.

4. Coming to the aspect of topic sentences in the demonstration composition, only paragraph 3 has a proper topic sentence. The sentence is followed by

supporting views or developers. The first glimpse of relevance is seen in this paragraph.

In other paragraphs, particularly paragraph 1; 2 and 4, there is utter confusion. What the topic sentence says is immediately opposed or contradicted in the same paragraph. This underscores lack of coherence of ideas. For example, in paragraph 2, the topic sentence reads:

“In these hard time of life, every one wants money.”

The next statement reads:

“You should also know how to use it carefully, because it is hard to get.”

Strictly speaking, there is no relationship or agreement of logic between these two statements and the topic. The writer could have put it this way:

“In these hard times of life every one wants money, but they should have an obligation to guard against the bad uses of that money.”

This would be a very good statement that supports the opinion that money is actually a blessing rather than a curse.

In paragraph 4, the topic sentence is self - contradicting. At first it announces the opinion that money is a blessing but immediately the writer outlines a series of bad things about money.

The last paragraph attempts to take a firm stance by declaring money to be a bad thing, but no later the writer regards it a good thing:

I quote the following contradicting statements in the last paragraph:

“As far as I am concerned money is bad.”

“But on the other side it is a blessing.”

This is not discussing but confusion. In a discussion give as much support as a you can to a view, but if you feel that the view is heavily challenged by opposing views, you should use such language as:

“However on the contrary...”

“Another school of thought argues that....”

This is relevant vocabulary in discursive compositions.

7. The aspect of tenses, spellings and punctuations or grammar in short, is fairly represented in this composition except for some poor expressions and Malapropism (misuse of words) for example:

“It buys anything in this world, expect life” instead of except

“And you should always have it because everything is money now.”

It should be:

“And you must always have it because everything you need requires money.”

8. Is there a conclusion in this composition?

NO! None at all. A conclusion should summarize the tentative judgement that was made in the introduction. The conclusion should tie- up issues of the discussion. It should put “Humty Dumty up again”, eg:

Though the discussion pointed out both good and bad things about money, a stronger case is made in favour of the view that money is actually a blessing rather than a curse.

9. What about content and length of the composition?

The length is alright because the essay has 352 words. This falls within the required range of 350-450 words. But the content is not adequate. This means that the ideas are not exhaustive of the topic. For example it would be amazing for a form 4 student to omit to say something about how money has made international trade possible. It has made exchange between people more convenient unlike in the barter system. It would be inconvenient to take a goat to a bus operator in order to be offered a ride. But with the advent of money, this has become very easy.

Such ideas should have been carefully articulated in the discussion.

Exercises

With the above precautions and guidelines in mind practice writing discursive compositions on the following topics:

1. Grandparents are the most important people in society. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your opinion.
2. Dress is entirely a matter of personal opinion and no body should try to dictate it to us. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion
3. Living among backward people is an irreparable setback to life.
4. Land is the key issue to economic development. Do you agree.
5. Women should be restricted to the kitchen and childrearing. Do you agree or disagree with this statement.
6. The media should serve the interests of the nation rather than betray them. Discuss this opinion.
7. Literacy for all means advancement of the nation. Discuss how you would achieve this and how a nation’s development depends on it.
8. Scientists are the heroes of the twentieth century. What do you think?
9. Soldiers should be better paid than doctors and teachers. What do you think?
10. There should be maternity benefits as well as maternity leave benefits for women. Discuss this opinion.

SITUATIONAL COMPOSITIONS

Work along and see if you can identify some of the errors.

Demonstrations and Analyses

Assessment criteria

In the earlier chapters in this study pack the situational compositions are defined as a specialized component with its focus on the technical know-how rather than content and facts. The Zimbabwe schools Examinations Council revision booklet for June 1999 to November 2001 examinations at page IV, states that:

“The use of relevant register to the subject under discussion also helps to come up with a good essay.”

Our interpretation of this statement is that “relevant register,” refers to use of the appropriate language, or the technical formalities required in particular type of a situational composition. You are reminded that the length of the composition is not prescribed.

In our analysis of this aspect, or this type of composition rather, we will use the following aspects:

1. What is the type of the situational composition?
2. What is the applicable tense?
3. Is the nature of the introduction correct?
4. Are tenses, spellings and punctuations proper?
5. Is the conclusion proper?

Demonstration 4

A Report

Our first demonstration on situational compositions is based on a report that was written by Student B.

The question reads as follows:

You had gone out for swimming together with your neighbour’s daughter or son. During the swimming your neighbour’s child got drowned. You could not help the situation, so the friend died under the water. Write a report to the parent of the child explaining the incident. Your sorrow over the death of your friend.

The report was presented as follows:

Report on an unfortunate neighbour’s child.

This report seeks to inform the child's parents on the incident.

On the 20th May, 2004 I had gone out for swimming with your child. We had everything arranged and left home at about 9.00 in the morning. At the terminus we caught a bus to water-world, arriving there were many children different colours black and white and coloured, out side it was a little sunny and tongues anyone needed to swim. We removed our clothes, anyone needed to swim. We removed out clothes, put on swimming costumes. In a pool there are three categories which are depend, shallow, and a baby pool. I went to the shallow but he chose the depend and we argued about the depend but he insisted he knew how to swim, we had a great time playing volleyball in water until the pool started to be filled up by people. Suddenly, we lost each other realizing that I informed the one who was in charge of us while we were swimming. Everybody was told to come out of the pool, we just stood there for a miracle to happen, soon after five minutes he was floating on top of water and to boys went in to dog him out of the water. I was terrified seeing him lying there was the last day of my life, only I could think about, his parents unfortunately many questions came to my mind.

An ambulance was informed earlier, so they took him to Materdei hospital and I had accompanied him there. He woke up when we reached the hospital, I thanked God for that and I apologized to the parents about the matter. And today we still go there sometime with our parents not alone.

This report is made in good faith. Thank you.

(Adopted from Student B)

Analysis

What are the lessons to learn from this report?

1. Very poor expression
2. Lack of clarity
3. No knowledge about presentation of a report.

Now, for these in detail:

A report should have one clear/ precise heading. We notice that the report we are analyzing here has two headings. This is wrong. This could have been given a short heading as follows:

A Report on Drowning

- Your report title needs to mention the actual issue in brief.
- On the statement of purpose of the report you need to be very specific. In this report we are analyzing, the student should have mentioned the specific names or particulars of the parents of the child, like this:
- “This report seeks to inform Mr. And Mrs. Jones about the incident in which your daughter drowned.”

The report has to be very clear especially in the presentation of facts. Vague statements or bad grammar will make the report incomprehensible for example.

“At the terminus we caught a bus to water – world arriving there were many children different colours black and white and coloured.”

This sentence is just horrible and incomprehensible. Firstly the name of the place is written with a small letter instead of a capital letter Water world: the rest of the statement does not make sense.

More over a report should state its facts using the past tense verbs because the reported issue is a past event.

A report should not be taken to be the same as a narrative composition. The information in a report must be factual. That is why at the end it is important to declare that the information is given in good faith.

Please take notice that in the report we are analyzing here the last paragraph has turned into a narrative composition.

We also stress that every report must include the name of the person writing it: But at the bottom end.

The above report is not signed, so it is not a report at all.

For Practice

Taking the guidelines and precautions we have given in the analysis of a report, practice writing a report using the following questions: you should spend 40 minutes on each situational composition.

1. You are the only witness of an accident between a cyclist and a motor car early one Sunday morning. You have to write a report for the police. Use the notes below for your report. Add whatever details you would like to make the report as clear as possible.
 - 7 o'clock Sunday 3rd January.
 - Standing eastern corner Ton and Buma Streets.
 - Cyclist turned right into Buma Street
 - Cyclist came off cycle track without looking
 - Screech of brakes
 - I rushed across street
 - Cyclist lay motionless in the middle of intersection
 - I phoned the police and called for an ambulance.

2. You are a reporter for the daily newspaper. Your editor sends you to report on a soccer match between the two popular teams, Gold and United. Fans have squeezed themselves everywhere into the stadium. Suddenly you notice that one of the stands is shaking. Use the notes below as the basis of your newspaper.

- Great crowds
- Teams playing to their best
- Stand full of people starts shaking
- Screams as people jump off
- Stand shakes violently
- Nearly everybody off when stand collapses
- Nurses and doctors asked to help
- Ambulance arrive
- Match continues

3. You arrive home unexpectedly one day and find the house all locked up. You try to get in through a window and as you are doing so a neighbour rushes up to you and takes you to the police station. Using some or all notes below, write a report for the police explaining your side of the story.

- Wrote to family
- Coming home from boarding school
- Perhaps letter didn't arrive
- Arrived home late afternoon
- All locked up
- One small window open
- Piece of wire
- Standing on box with wire
- Strange man grabs
- Taken to police

4. You are doing some shopping at the market when you spot a suspicious character weaving in and out of the crowds. You watch him for a moment and then you see him pick pocketing an old man. You run after him and eventually catch him. Write your report for the police using some or all of the points below.

- Busy Saturday morning
- Slim young man wearing sunglasses
- Bumps deliberately into an old man
- Run after him shouting
- Crowd excited
- Catch up with him near the man road
- Brief scuffle
- Policeman arrives

5. You are the head- prefect at your school. It is customary for the head prefect to help the head teacher and staff in choosing a vice – head prefect. There are three possible candidates. Write a report to the head teacher and staff saying which one of the three you would like to work with and why. Also indicate who would be your second choose and why and who would be your third choice.

Candidate A

A quiet studious boy who gets good marks in class. He does not socialize much but his opinion is generally respected by the other students. He belongs to a number of school clubs and is a regular church - goer.

Candidate B

A talented soccer player and above average scholar. He tends to be a big -headed but is generally well liked. He is ambitious both for himself and the soccer team. He has a forceful personality and can get his ideas across to students and teachers alike.

Candidate C

As well liked friendly girl whose biggest interest is the debating society. She is academically very gifted and is always eager to help less able pupils with their work. She avoids confronting people and always adopts a reconciliatory approach when dealing with difficult people.

Start like this:

To the head teacher and staff

I have given much thought as to whom I would like as a vice - head -prefect.....

6. The eight-year-old son of an MP has been kidnapped. This ransom note below is what the MP received from the kidnappers.

MP – we have your son. If you want him back, meet us at 10p.m. on Monday night Corner of Main and Nkrumah Streets, bring \$20 000.00. Do not contact police.

MP did contact the police and the newspapers. You are a reporter for one of the daily newspapers. Write your report using some or all of the points below.

- Well known MP's son kidnapped
- Police arrived three hours before kidnappers
- Hid themselves
- Kidnappers arrive
- MP goes to meet them
- Police surround kidnappers
- Kidnappers give information about where boy is
- Police go to hide – out
- Other kidnappers surrender
- Boy safely united with father
- Kidnappers arrested.

7. Your school is planning new building projects. The students feel that the construction of a separate building for a library is a priority and they have asked you to represent their views to the school administration.

Write a report to the Headmaster, incorporating the following points, but also add others that can highlight the importance of the library project.

- Opportunity for quiet study
- Development of reading habit
- Improved examination result
- Increased variety of books for borrowing
- Research opportunities for pupils and teachers
- Provision of a specialist information room – media access
- Advertisement of library facilities to private students and adults – possible source of income.

[20]

(Adopted from UCLES, G.C.E. O' LEVEL JUNE 1999)

The descriptive Composition: Demonstration.

Describe a place ravaged by war.

(Adopted from Student X)

I wakened to hear the rain lashing against the windows. During the night the south west wind had strengthened to some 50 kinds, the temperature had fallen to 4⁰C and the sky was almost covered.

I suddenly jumped from my bed and went straight to the toilet. After a moment I heard some noises outside, this was an unusual noises as there was in Sovient of screening people and sound of guns. I walked to my mother's bedroom to tell her about the situation which was taking place outside.

There was dully noises produced by guns. Within a moment we realized how bad was the situation. Off course we managed to squeezed ourself under the beds for protection, as there was the shaking of the buildings. The situation outside was extremely bad as a result the sky was completely covered with black clouds hanging in the atmosphere.

Meanwhile the village was in flames, fires spread all over the village that many village life was disrupted. This was a result of a conflict between the South Africans and Zimbabweans. The Zimbabweans thought that were ill-treated by the South Africans as a result they declared war on them and looted their resources, destroyed roads, railway lines, industries and killing many people.

This, however destroyed friendship between the two countries and therefore the South Africans were very angry that they entered Zimbabwe and declared war to replaced and regained what they lost. During this conflict, many village life was disrupted and

lost. Those who survived were the ones who had dugged themselves into trenches which was protected by barbed wires and electric wires. This conflict took four to five weeks dominating the country. I was very ashamed of many people who were dead in trenches not as a result of bombed but because of the conditions in the trenches.

People had died painfully during the war because of diseases in trenches, they also developed trench feet and there was scorching heat. The homes and villages were completely wiped out, schools and bridges, clinics, roads, railway lines were all destroyed. The smelling of dead bodies prevailed all over the country as a result many human lives again were lost because of diseases and gases which prevailed as a result of war.

The occasion eventually reduced the country's population and it disrupted many village life.

Comment

Language is very important in a descriptive composition. A good command of English is essential. For further details see chapter 3 of this module on descriptive compositions.

The above response by student "X" is filled with a lot of errors ranging from grammatical, spellings, tenses, sentence construction, punctuation to wrong use of words. The aim of this analysis is to help pupils eradicate or minimize errors as error density in the composition determines the mark.

The error density is high in this composition as shown by the density of the underlining. This is an indicator that student "X" will score a poor mark.

Students should take note that language takes precedence over the story, therefore language is key or central if the student is to score higher marks.

The introduction of student "X" is made ineffective by errors. The first sentence would read better if it was "I woke up". The word "lashing" in the introduction is quite promising. The word "strengthened" is not appropriate. The introduction is incomplete as the student does not pursue it further to say what covered the sky. The introduction has potential, but it is only that the student has not taken her time. Let's improve it to I woke up with a start as torrents of rain lashed against the windows of my bedroom. There were furious gusts of the wind. Outside thick darkness enveloped the sky like a blanket.

Note the vocabulary introduced here. Note "torrents" which is suggestive of violence. This aspect is also carried in "furious gusts". The thick darkness that enveloped the sky integrates with the violent atmosphere created by the rain and the wind. This kind of atmosphere and setting fits the message of disruption of a town or village life by war.

The first paragraph is spoiled by grammatical errors such as "this was an unusual noises." There is not agreement between the use of the word "this" and "noises". It

would make sense to say “these were unusual” or this was an unusual noise.” The next line is not clear. It is difficult to make sense out of the words or phrase “in sovent.” The next word is spelt wrong, it should be “screaming.” This is an oversight on the part of the student may be following the logic of reward “screen.” This is a challenge to most pupils, so you need to pay particular attention and not use logic of particular words. The last sentence seems to be a direct translation “the situation which was talking place outside.” Perhaps the cause of this is that the student was thinking in her mother language. The advice in pupils is that they should always put themselves in the position of first language speakers (that is English speakers).

The second paragraph is also marred by a lot of errors. The very opening is grammatically wrong “There were dull noises.” This has even led to the loss of the meaning. Note also in this paragraph wrong positioning of words for example “We realized how bad was the situation” Instead of “we realized how bad the situation was.” “Off course” instead of “of course.” This is the use of wrong word. Grammatical errors seem dominant in this composition, one example of such is “we managed to squeezed ourself” This should read “we managed to squeeze ourselves”. Other examples are that “many village life was disrupted” in paragraph 3, “declared war to replaced and regained what they lost”, “were the ones who had dugged themselves into trenches”, “as a result of bombered “all in paragraph 4. These errors reveal that the student has a critical problem not only with her grammar but tenses as well. She tries to use past tense and in the end she ends up with wrong words, some of the words that do not exist for example “bombered”, the intended word is “bombed.”

Characteristic of the presentation is the use of wrong words. For example in paragraph 4, the use of the word “ashamed”, use of “prevailed” in paragraph 5.

Though the stance taken by the student is narrative, there is an attempt to describe in some instances, but unfortunately the effort is rendered ineffective by poor grammar, spellings and many other errors. Some of the mistakes shown in this composition are careless mistakes showing a carefree attitude.

Students are advised to use or consult dictionaries if they are not sure about words. This is the only way they can improve their work. Pupils should read other works by other writers paying particular attention to how they write. Only practice will help pupils to improve their work.

Compare student “X”s work with the following composition.

A place ravaged by war

A thick, oil smoke erupted from the ground sending dust and soil particles into the air pregnant with poisonous fumes as an explosion rent the sky. Screams tore the sky as people scurried for life.

A thousand metres away from the place where the explosion had occurred, stood an army tank and lorry with soldiers armed from foot to the teeth. These continued with firing of missiles which razed buildings. Some vicious and furious gusts of fire could be seen from a distance of few metres consuming buildings and the grass. On the

ground thousands of people sprawled covered in pools of blood. Animals lay scattered like leaves in a dense forest.

There were times when only the hungry tongues of fire could be heard devouring the forest, but barely would five minutes pass without the thunder and rumbling of the machine gun belting out the poisonous bullets. The deadly combination left the ground littered with human corpses.

On the same ground littered with human corpses, some lay writhing in agony, some had one leg, some one eye, some one ear some had lost both limbs. The land was enveloped by thick smoke from the fumes, and filled with countless groans and moans. These groans and moans received no response.

The people alive seemed pale, ghostlike and like scarecrows some were ragged and in tatters as if were brand plucked out of the grave. Covered by thick and oily dust, some could be seen trudging out of the rubble. Some could be seen struggling to come out of the debris that covered them. The situation on the ground was pathetic. The once breathtaking place had been reduced into a heap of ruins. The angular and towering buildings had been razed down turning the land into a desert where nothing would ever grow. No tree, or grass could be seen in the land. The fumes had left the land poisoned. The water, stagnant in some trenches had a green colour producing fetid odour which left one's bowels ill at ease.

Some few metres away from the trenches lay carcasses of dogs burnt mercilessly by the blazing hot sun which seem to have connived with the forces that exterminated human and animal life.

Such was the situation on the ground. A lonely traveller could not avoid staring at the debris, then glance at the victims and then shake his or her head in sympathy. Surely it was a pathetic state.

Comment

The above composition has been given as a model. Let's take a close look at it.

The introduction sets an atmosphere filled with violence for example the eruption, the explosion and screams – all these are relevant to a situation where there is war. Note the vocabulary in the introduction for example “thick oily”, “pregnant”, “rent”, “tore” and “scurried”. This is a brilliant introduction. I chose the words carefully because I wanted them to have an impact in my composition.

The strength of his composition lies in its use of good English which captures the situation vividly for example the fire is seen as “vicious” and “furious” “gusts”, people lay “sprawled”, the ground was “littered” with human corpses.

Senses of sight and sound are explored. The descriptive language creates a picture of a land filled with corpses of human beings and carcasses of animals. It also creates a picture of a land devoid of life as a result of the effect of the war. The appearance of those who have survived is also graphically depicted. The “tatters”, “scarecrows” and “ghostlike” appearance are all explorations of the sense of sight. The sense of sound is

explored through the use of explosions, screams, groans, moans, the thunder and rumbling – all capture the sound.

The sense of smell is explored through the description of the fetid odour and the poisonous fumes. These are some of the strengths of this composition

However one major weakness is repetition of key words. You may only repeat nouns, names of people, places, but you are penalised for using main words you have already used. The following words should not have been used for the second time in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5. You rather use Synonyms or words with similar meaning.

<u>Repeated Word</u>		<u>Synonym</u>
Explosion	-	destructive sound
Buildings	-	structures
People	-	victims
Fire	-	heat
Human corpse	-	the dead
Groans corpse	-	painful cries
People alive	-	living
Buildings	-	Sky scrappers
Land	-	Soil

Avoid such repetition in all your essays and score better marks. You need a good vocabulary store to overcome this.

As you read the above model, compare this with the work of student X. Write your own composition on this topic, and see how you will fare. Remember the topic is “describe a place ravaged by war.”

Practice the following compositions

1. Describe a busy city.
2. Describe an occasion that you enjoyed.
3. Describe the worst day of your life.
4. Describe a joyous party you attended
5. Write a composition describing the day of your life you would like to live over again.
6. Describe a soccer match that you watched.

Narrative

Demonstration

Question:

Write a story entitled “A Narrow Escape”

A Narrow Escape

The night air in the thickest was clammy. Even though there was nothing disturbing the night's tranquility except for the sounds of crickets and other insects, the silence itself was ominous and disturbing.

Being on it again for the umpteenth time, I was dazed to realize that I would never get accustomed to this kind of environment – the thicket and the lake, a mile away. I glanced at my watch using a torch, then peered into the thick darkness with a longing desire and uncertainty. Heavens knew what had eaten the “Devil’s Advocates.”

I let my hand run down and felt my rifle strapped to my belt. A sigh of relief heaved in me. Many times I had been caught in thick and thin, but my rifle had always been faithful and dutiful to whisk me out. Still lost in thoughts and longings, a low soft whistle rang in my ears. I could not help it, a smile loomed on my face. I heaved out of the thicket. The golden opportunity had come; in no time I was to be rich.

In few moments, the transaction was done and covenant sealed smiles on my part and the “Devil’s Advocates”, though one of them had a menacing smile. I brandished my briefcase and like a victorious soldier after a battle dashed to where I had parked my car. I had made a few strides when hoots and siren blew the sky. I made a few more strides and reached my car. A leprosy of shock seized me as I realized that the car tyres were flat. My stomach knotted and my knees became jelly. In a twinkle of an eye, I recovered from the leprosy of shock and skidded for life

Still clutching my briefcase, I pelted through the thickets as bullets razed the bushes and grass around me. One bullet missed my head by an inch. The ‘Devil s Advocate were breathing fire and right on my heads. After the bullet missed my head by an inch energy was re- invigorated in me and like a bullet I bolted away towards the dead point in front of me.

They pelt left the “Devil s Advocates “dazed. While they were still dazes I dived into the dead point- the lake and like an eel knifed into the deepest point. I could hear the “Devils Advocates” madly cursing. I kept on splashing and kicking with my briefcase now tied to my belt. As I swam across the lake to the other side, I could see on the sun. A new day was coming to life. I was ready to greet it with a smile for I had narrowly escaped- this time thanks to my feet

Comments

The story shows some imagination and creativity. Note how the plot of the story unfolds. Some of the strengths of this story are (a) the ability to create a relevant atmosphere which is premonition of danger for example the air is clammy, presence of a thickest, of words ominous and disturbing. Note how the tranquility is strange linked to this is also the ability to create an atmosphere associated with hope – Note the end of the story , the sun and its rays , new day all suggestive of hope.

(b) Use of suspense- the reader is left to imagine and ponder what the narrator is up to until the last part of the 3rd paragraph – “ I was to be rich but still the reader is further left in suspense as to how the narrator was to be rich.

© Creativity – Note how words leprosy and knifed are used. Note also the good command of language through the composition.

Demonstration (2)

Question

Write a story based on the words “Crime does not pay”

The tap on the window jolted me back to life. I switched off the television that I had been glued to and immersed in for the past two hours. I dashed into my bed room to collect my jacket and in a flash I was out.

Companions greeted me with a pat on the back and I nodded in response. We set off in a south- easterly direction heading to where enormous buildings sprawled along numerous tarred roads resulting in a complex pattern for industrial areas. I had agreed to escort Chongpong to collect some “stuff “. This was not our first time, neither was it our second nor third.

We walked for ten minutes, then I became conscious of the environment around me. It was now dark that for a moment I thought the darkness would engulf us.

The place was strange and scary, almost gothic. Everything was still; even the wind seemed to have stopped blowing. My eye sight seemed to play tricks on me. Now and then when my eyes darted to the sides I saw dark, fierce shadows moving towards us.

Instinctively, I knew there was danger lurking in the dark alley- ways that were filled with rotten garbage that produced a horrible stench that left nausea spirally through one’s body. My hair stood and I felt goose bumps all over my face. I glared at my friend, but he remained relaxed. He only gave me a rebuff.

My friend fished keys out of his pocket and darted into a metal coated building that was looming in front of us. I stood by the gate. As I stood there, thoughts haunted me. Was this worthy it? “What about the market? While I was lost in these thoughts I felt a pair of sturdy hands grabbing me. Panic stricken I tried to scream, only to be hit by what could have been a cricket bat. I felt my head shatter into million pieces as I staggered and with a thud fell on the ground

From a distant subconscious, I heard yells and shouts. Slowly I regained consciousness and truth dawned on me as like two sacks of dry bones, Chongpong and I were banded led into the police van. The truth of the statement “crime does not pay was indelibly engraved in the air.

Comments

The story shows creativity and imagination and has a logical plot and sequential development. Some of its strengths are :

- (a) The ability to create a sense of urgency in the story. Note the urgency in the introduction – given through the words “dashed” and “in a flash”. Note this urgency elsewhere in the story.
- (b) The ability to create a relevant atmosphere – Note the darkness, strange, scary and gothic place, the shadows.
- (c) The ability to explore senses and feelings for example fear or fright that the narrator feels. Note sense of smell horrible stench”, Note sense of hearing- sound for example “ thud ,”yells and shouts”.

- (d) Use of carefully chosen vocabulary for example “lurking, escort, sprawled, gothic, looming. In terms of language use, this is a rich composition.

Description

Demonstration

Describe a market place

Bambazonke is a beehive. The streets are always packed to the brim. This congestion has left the one tarred street threadbare and reduced them to some dustful narrow paths in some God-forsaken village.

Heaps of uncollected garbage and broken sewer pipes are an eyesore. Worse still the streets are also littered with all kinds of litter yellow maize and banana peels, rotten guavas, rotten tomatoes all combine to produce a stench smell that leaves one’s bowels ill at ease.

All over the streets people mill with assortments of market produce and wares ranging from fruits, vegetables, nuts and some small household wares. All people are engrossed in their business. From time to time there are chants and yells that greet you which are meant to persuade or win customers. There are also shrieks, no joys and peals of laughter as jokes are shared. Once in a while honks and hoots tear the sky as drivers struggled to find their way through the packed streets.

The bustle and hustle seem to gather momentum with the rise of the sun. Early in the morning only a handful of people are usually there, but as rays of the sun pierce the sky, people turn into a thick dark mass of ocean covering a vast place. One is tempted to think that may be the whole city is here. The largest proportion of the mass is made up of women. Most of the women seem to have babies striped to their backs. The smaller proportion is of men, most of whom push pushcarts popularly known as “scantias” These pushcarts are usually full to the brim with market produce, wares ready to be dispatched to various locations.

As the sun sets people trace their ways home leaving the market place deserted like an ancient hollow building. With each deepening shade of darkness, a lump of the mass moves away. Slowly the bustle and hustle dies down, screams, shout, shrieks and laughter fade away. The misty air softens though still the stench from the rubbish remains.

After sometime the market place is adorned in a new garment, the air moves freely, streets are empty but still the garment is patched with rubbish and leaking water pipes. You can smell negligence and abortion of dusty in the air. The responsible authorities seem to cast a blind eye.

Comment

The strength of this composition is in its use of good language to create or paint vivid pictures note some of the vocabulary beehive thread bare, eye sore littered mill

engrossed, mass, ocean thick, strapped, adorned and many others. Note also the use of senses of smells for example stretch, must air and sense of hearing shown through words that are suggestive of the s sound made example chants, yells shrieks, peals, honks, and hoots. This is a good composition showing a good command of the language.

Demonstration 2

Describe a traditional ceremony you know.

Eight boys clad in their traditional kilts dawdle in a single file. Solemnity and calmness sit on their faces. The bright rays of the morning sun make their rays of the morning sun, making their rays of the joys of being born into the world of man hood.

A stone throw away stands a cluster of huts thickly and splendidly thatched with grass. Next to the huts is a large dry and sun-baked crust where a sea of people surges with their eyes stark on the new born.

In the arena some girls in their morn of youth and covered in traditional kilts dance provocatively. These angles have sharp pointed breasts that stand firm like pairs of peas. Their shades of c completion vary from creamy chocolate, coconut brown to caramel black. Most have banana shaped bodies, one or two have avocado or pumpkin bodies. All the jewels have an assortment of sports on their faces with white chains being the dominant one.

Ululations, whistles, shouts and traditional praises break out from the mass but the initiates remain calm. As they draw closer to the jewels, a man with silver grey hair and caramel in completion darts forward and by hook leads the boys to a nearby hut. A pack of elders already lie in wait for the initiates. They all have grey hair, some have toothless gums, some rivulets and gulleys engraved on their faces – a testimony of battles fought against time.

The repositories and sages once more break the bread of wisdom while the new born like nestlings fed by their mother chew to their fill. This session leads to feasting. All traditional dishes are brought to the initiates who are let to graze on any until stomachs knot and mouths suffer from fatigue.

The sages then pace to the arena where they take turns in duels with knobkerries. One elder threatens the other, lungs forward ready to pounce while the other stands firm rooted and looming like a baobab tree and without blinking. As the opponent tries to strike, he springs up like a panther and hits the opponent sending him down with a thud. Laughter and ululations tear the sky as the opponent stands up with a stormy face.

Once more after the last pair of elders the jewels take the centre stage to serve their best dish. This time the dance is more spirited as they face the new initiates – the dream of each jewel is to snatch one heart from the new born. Ululations, whistles and shouts continue to rent the sky into the heart of the night.

Comment:

The topic is complex. It needs some care. The strengths of this composition are (a) the ability to create an atmosphere of joy and merriment. Note the sun and its rays in the introduction, note the dancing, note also how sense of hearing (sound) is used to create the atmosphere of joy for example the ululations, whistles and shouts.

- b) The language used is also good. It is language that gives extra detail about the ceremony. It leaves the reader with a vivid picture of what is happening.

Discursive**Demonstration (1)**

Question: “Media is an essential tool but needs to be censored” Discuss.

Media refers to channels of communication or the means through which the message is passed from a transmitter to a receiver. It takes various forms such as the print media examples being newspapers and pamphlets or books. The other form is electronic. The examples of electronic media are television, radio and the internet.

Considering the role that the media plays in society, it is an essential tool. Media is a tool for information dissemination. It makes the passing of important information from a source to a receiver possible. Today information about health, H.I.V. and AIDS, business, Global warming and changes is passed to people through media helping them to plan and make sound decisions. Today’s business, be it on a local, regional or international scale thrives on media especially the electronic one. It enables companies to market themselves to any place in the world.

Media is an essential tool as it has also made possible world integration. As a result of electronic media in the form of internet, the world has been turned into a small place where people from all parts of the world integrate. Related to this, media plays an essential role of educating and entertaining people. People are entertained through sports, music and movies which are all made possible by media.

Considering all these aspects, no doubt media is an essential tool, but just like all good things when media is given free reigns it can be dangerous especially in the hands of dangerous people. Thus to some extent media needs to be censored to make sure that what is communicated is not destructive.

When media is not censored cultural values and norms are eroded. In some cases wrong values are carried and communicated through media for example nudity which is associated with pornography which is common in electronic media. So this needs to be censored.

Some films which are shown through the media if not censored may encourage violence, abuse of drug, use of coarse, rough or unrefined vulgar language. At one time there was an uproar about EMINEM’s use of vulgar language. Media was called to play a role of importing right values and not wrong ones. The same call was made

about a slayer group of music that was churning death metallic music which made teenagers to commit suicide. Thus media was supposed to be censored about what it carried to the world.

If media is not censored it can also be a dangerous weapon to fuel racism, tribalism, nepotism, regionalism and hatred among the people. To avoid a situation where media would destroy people culturally, socially, and politically it should therefore be censored.

All in all media is an essential tool as shown by the important role it plays in society, but at the same time it needs to be tamed through censorship so as to keep away the destructive elements.

Comment:

This composition shows or demonstrates knowledge of the subject under discussion. The position or stand taken is an informed one as it is based on facts known to the writer. Ideas are also supported with specific examples and illustrations so as to make the argument forceful and convincing. The argument is built up from one paragraph to the next. The conclusion is also a balanced summary of the argument presented.

Demonstrations (2)

Question:

“It is essential to breach the generation gap between parents and their teenage children.” What is your view?

Generation gap is the difference in ideas, perceptions, interests and feelings between old and young people. The gap results in discord between parents and children. The discord in turn leads to malfunctional relationships which are degrading to development.

Development takes place if relationships are functional, thus for healthy and harmonious relationships to exist there is need to breach the gap. The importance of breaching the gap is even made more acute by the dangers posed by H.I.V and A.I.D.S. Parents need to break out of the bog of traditions and taboos and create a conducive platform to speak freely to their children about sex. The tendency by most parents is to shy away from the subject while children tend to be inquisitive and adventurous. Children should also on the other hand cast away their all-knowing tendencies and listen to their parents.

Children also need guidance from parents about values and norms. These values and norms have been sources of constant conflicts. Issues of ethics and morals for example in forms of dress, language and what children see or view from the internet are some of areas of conflict. In order to create a generation with norms and values, it is essential to breach the gap between parents and children. If the generation gap is not breached more and more teenagers would seek for answers in wrong things such as drugs, alcohol and sex. Parents need to be open and show that they are not just being prescriptive but have reasons. On the other hand children should not always

look at parents with suspicion. Rampant abuse of print and electronic media to churn pornographic material to young children makes it essential to breach the gap between parents and teenagers. If the gap is not breached more and more teenagers will turn into worshippers of pornography.

The generation gap has also resulted in parents and children getting frustrated and disappointed. Many parents force children to take up courses which parents think are the up courses which parents think are the best yet children may feel they are not capable. In the end there is a clash of expectations resulting in some conflicts and ultimately disappointment when the child does not succeed. There is a need to breach this gap. It is essential for parents to accept and value children's expectations. In relation to this, it is also essential for parents to be dynamic and not to remain rigid and static.

All in all, it is essential to breach the generation gap between parents and their teenage children. The development of nations and the preservations of future generations can only be ensured by breaching the gap between the two.

Comment:

This is a complex and challenging question that needs to be handled with care. The argument reveals knowledge of what generation gap is. The writer is also abreast with the current trends in Parenting and Childhood or Teenage challenges. Note also how the writer has taken a stand but does not personalize the issues he raises. Note also an attempt to balance the argument. For such questions as these (Discursive) the candidate should make sure that he or she knows a lot about issues in question and that he or she is abreast with current trends or debates on the issue.

Closing Remarks

The revised version of the English Language Study Pack is a superior text, both in terms of syllabus coverage and skills articulation. Users will certainly be comfortable with the subject because the whole preparation for the exam can now be done just at your desk without any further research. Acquisition of skills in this subject is only by way of constant practice on language aspects. This study pack is the best text for the 'O' Level Student. So use it.