



CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT:	ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE P3
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1. ANALYSIS OF QUESTION BY QUESTION PERFORMANCE

QUESTION 1

SECTION A: GENERAL

The following common errors were identified:

- A few candidates thought they had to write a paragraph on each topic, instead of selecting ONE topic from each section.
- Candidates misinterpreted some of the topics
- Some responses were overly religious. Candidates should not preach to the marker. Example: "You need to change your life or God will punish you."
- Repeating the topic in the introduction
- Going off the topic after the first paragraph.
- A lack of introduction and conclusion
- A distinct lack of paragraphing
- Badly constructed sentences
- Sentences that are too long, leading to confusion
- A lack of punctuation
- Incorrect use of the pronoun, e.g. "One should do their work" instead of "One should do one's work."
- Sequence of tense: candidates change tense in mid-sentence and within the paragraph.
- Many clichés e.g. red letter day; once upon a time; lived happily ever after. (One candidate used six clichés in one paragraph and continued to use them throughout the essay)
- Lack of coherence, usually caused by a lack of planning
- Not adhering to the word limit
- "Me and my friends" at the start of a sentence
- Long complicated sentences lacking concord
- Apostrophe not used or used incorrectly
- Apostrophe used to form plurals
- No knowledge of how to punctuate direct speech
- Redundancy (I, as a person, / as a human being)
- Repetitive or generic essays which lack of originality
- Some responses were simply way over the top and completely unrealistic
- Commonly confused words: there / their; his / he's; where / were; every day / everyday; apart / a apart; live / leave; still / steal.
- Spelling errors ("alot" / lam" / "aswell" / "definitely" / "every time" / "in case" / "recieve" / "separate" / "in love" / untill / inspite off / infront / infact
- "Could of" instead of "could have"
- Incorrect degree of comparison: more happier
- Incomplete sentences or sentence fragments; participial phrases
- Conjunctions to begin sentences with no main clause to follow
- A comma on the next line instead of after the word on the previous line. For example: Although the learners were afraid of the teacher
 , they respected him.

QUESTIONS

- 1.1 This topic produced work of a good to a high standard. Candidates wrote many sincere, personal responses which were enjoyed and rewarded. Although the weaker candidates had a more narrow focus, they were able to produce satisfactory essays as it was a topic they could relate to. These essays were generally well structured as candidates produced coherent essays that provided detailed accounts of their love for sport in general or, usually, a particular sport or a memorable game. The topic was positive and relevant to grade 12 learners.
- 1.2 Few candidates attempted this topic. The stronger candidates produced essays of good quality. Many adopted a thoroughly enjoyable humorous approach. It was a topic that many learners were obviously able to relate to. It was misinterpreted by some candidates who focussed on a particular advertisement.
- A few candidates focussed on the “can / can’t live without it” part of the topic and neglected to refer to advertising. They focussed on possessions that we cannot live without.
- 1.3 This was another topic to which learners of varying capabilities could relate. The stronger candidates wrote excellent essays and were suitably rewarded for their efforts. Learners who focused on only one type of teacher were not disadvantaged.
- 1.4 A challenging topic - definitely aimed at the stronger candidates who produced brilliant responses. Learners used excellent analogies related to various aspects of life, resulting in impressive writing. One of these essays was awarded 100%, while others were awarded 85 – 90%. Unfortunately the weaker candidates were less successful, with many of them simply listing the various aspects of the seasons.
- 1.5 This was by far the most popular topic. It catered very well for the average / below average and weaker learners. Although some excellent responses were produced by stronger candidates, they should steer clear of a topic with such a narrow frame of reference which tends to produce a rather average and unoriginal essay. Many candidates were tempted to produce over-the-top essays which were totally unrealistic. Many learners focused to such an extent on the doom and gloom aspect that they neglected the attaining of success. It was only in the last paragraph that spectacular success was suddenly achieved in spite of a poverty-stricken existence, a lack of education and a lack of opportunities.
- 1.6 This topic produced satisfactory to excellent responses from learners of different levels. Many of the responses were mature and perceptive. A candidate was awarded 100% for his / her essay.
- 1.7.1 The picture was expressive and candidates were able to relate well to the spirit of “Ubuntu”. Those who responded to this topic did very well and provided insightful and sincere responses. Once again a candidate was awarded 100%. In some cases, however, the responses were similar to 1.5.
- 1.7.2 A very good illustration which led to a variety of responses, some really excellent. It was a pleasure to read the vast interpretations of this illustration. A candidate was awarded 100% for this topic.

QUESTION 2

SECTION B: GENERAL

Formatting was a serious problem in this section along with incorrect style, punctuation, limited vocabulary and poor sentence structure. Many textbooks differ with regard to format, but this is taken into consideration when marking and candidates are not disadvantaged. The Education Department should consider distributing standardized format guidelines to the schools.

2.1 Letter to the school

This was the most popular topic in Section B.

Both formal and informal letters were accepted; however, candidates were not consistent throughout. It was a perfect topic for grade 12 learners and it was well-answered. The candidates could relate to the topic as it is within the realm of their experience. The majority of the responses were genuine and sincere. Even the weaker candidates coped very well with this topic.

The use of slang is not acceptable. Too many candidates referred to the teachers as “you guys” or “you guys”!

Candidates must not write: “I am doing my matric.” Rather: “I am in matric.”

Learners should avoid writing: “I am writing because I just want to thank you.” Rather: “I am writing to thank you.” Or, “I wish to thank you.”

Candidates should not start a letter: “I greet you in the name of Jesus.” This was a common occurrence in certain centres.

2.2 Letter to the Editor

This is also a topic which is relevant to the learners. The stronger candidates coped well and referred to many of the summits and bills currently being mentioned in the news. Some candidates displayed an impressive knowledge of environmental problems and laws being discussed to address these issues.

Many candidates struggled with the style and format. Others misinterpreted the word “environment” as referring to aspects of service delivery: street lights, running water, potholes, lack of electricity. A few candidates referred to the state of the environment and omitted to mention South Africa’s role.

The use of slang or informal language is not acceptable: (“stuff” / “guys” / “things” / “cause” / “cos”).

Topic sentences were far too long, some spanning three lines.

Candidates should not expect the editor to do something about the problem. They must realise that the newspaper or magazine is merely a forum where they can express an opinion. It is not within the editor’s capacity to effect any change. Far too many used sentences similar to the following: “I hope that you will soon do something about it because the people in my community are suffering.”

The following critical aspects of the formal letter must be taught:

- ✓ The sender’s address must appear on the top right hand side of the page.
- ✓ An address must have the number of the house, the name of the street, the suburb, the city or town and the postal code.
- ✓ The date must be written out in full immediately below the postal code.
- ✓ Leave a line open before writing “The Editor” on the left-hand side.
- ✓ The institution’s name must appear below the person’s title.
- ✓ The name of the magazine / newspaper must be in inverted commas or be underlined: “The Weekly Report” or The Weekly Report
- ✓ The date must not be repeated under the recipient’s address.

- ✓ Leave a line open before writing the salutation.
- ✓ The salutation should be “Sir/Madam” (although “Dear Sir/Madam”, “Dear Editor”, “The Editor” were accepted).
- ✓ The use of “Dear: Sir “is incorrect.
- ✓ A **brief** topic sentence, outlining the purpose of the letter, must follow two lines after the salutation (no “RE” to precede the topic sentence). This sentence must start **next to the margin** and not in the middle of the page. Example: South Africa’s role in environmental issues
- ✓ The topic sentence must not be “Letter to the Editor”
- ✓ The letter should end with “Yours faithfully” (not “Yours sincerely” or any other informal ending).
- ✓ The sender’s signature should appear on the next line after “Yours faithfully”
- ✓ The sender’s title, their initials and surname must appear on the line after the signature.
- ✓ Learners must “get to the point” instead of writing about irrelevant details that do not comply with the requirements of the text.

2.3 Review

Very few candidates attempted this topic.

Some candidates had problems distinguishing between a review and an advertisement.

They also struggled with the appropriate style. A few candidates produced brilliant responses, referring to all aspects of the store, and were awarded very high marks. Once again, slang is not permissible.

2.4 Magazine article

Very few candidates attempted this topic. Most of those who did, struggled to cope with the style. The title was omitted and candidates tended to use a lot of slang. Many focussed on teenage problems instead of on materialism. A large number did not provide advice as specified in the topic.

QUESTION 3

SECTION C: GENERAL

Candidates who understood the requirements of the texts in this Section and who were able to use the appropriate language and style achieved outstanding levels. However, as was the case in the other Sections, basic vocabulary and knowledge of transactional writing was lacking amongst weaker candidates. It seemed that a few learners did not know how to respond to their chosen topic, resulting in some of the responses being far too short. Others padded their responses. Learners should be advised to respond to a topic that they can relate to.

3.1 Diary

The diary was an excellent topic and generally **very** well answered. It was a topic each learner could relate to and a pleasing variety of responses was received. The fact that it did not refer to a specific event was appreciated by the markers as candidates were able to cover a range of events.

Learners must remember that a diary entry needs to convey emotion and is not simply a list of what can be expected at the event.

Some candidates did not read the instruction and produced multiple entries instead of one. This problem was dealt with at the national memo discussion. Unfortunately the candidates who responded in this way disadvantaged themselves. They were marked down on “Content” but were credited fully for “Language and Style”.

Some candidates forgot to mention what “the event” was.

A few candidates wrote reflectively instead of in anticipation of the event. This problem was also dealt with at the national memo discussion: learners disadvantaged themselves in the “Content” category.

Even though a diary is a personal response, slang, swearing and sms language are not permissible! This is still a formal examination and candidates need to remember that they are writing for a marker. Full sentences are still required. Learners also need to avoid the use of “omg”, “omw”, “hahaha”, “lol”, “&” and excessive exclamation marks.

Explicit references to drunkenness and sexual activities are inappropriate.

3.2 Instructions

Since most schools have evacuation procedures, learners should have a fairly good idea of what is required; however, candidates struggled to cope with this topic. They found dealing with the different groups problematic. Imagining themselves to be head of security at a school is perhaps stretching reality. A few excellent responses were awarded full or almost full marks.

Criteria used for marking were the following: how well did the instructions work? / how coherent are they?

Unfortunately a number of candidates did not understand the meaning of “evacuate” and produced a set of school rules.

3.3 Advertisement

Not many learners attempted this topic. Those who did seemed confused as to what was expected and did not know how to approach the topic. The picture seemed to lead to confusion instead of being an aid. Some simply described the picture; others advertised a particular South African product. Very few used the appropriate emotive and persuasive language. Usually their style was also inappropriate. Even if their content mark was not good, learners were still able to score good marks for language.

Stronger candidates displayed an extensive to very good knowledge of the requirements of an advertisement. They used persuasive language and applied advertising techniques. One candidate was awarded 100%.

7. ANY ADVICE THAT YOU COULD GIVE TO EDUCATORS TO HELP LEARNERS TO REACH THE EXPECTED LEVELS.

- Paper 3 carries the most weight, yet it is usually given the least teaching time. Candidates need to be well instructed and coached in the writing of this paper as it is the one paper where they can score really well.
- Creativity and originality are rewarded and candidates must be given more opportunities to develop and improve their writing skills. In some cases it appears as though teachers have done no remediation throughout the year. Learners are not adequately prepared for the writing paper, a problem which is exacerbated by pre-existing language and comprehension problems.
- There was a significant improvement in the planning and editing aspects of the writing process. Planning produced essays that were presentable and well structured. Teachers must emphasise the importance of planning as part of the writing process, even if this planning is not detailed.
- Teachers need to focus on eliminating common errors which detract from the fluency of the writing.
- A focus on correct format, style and register for Sections A and B will be to the candidates' advantage.
- Unless candidates are particularly good at expressing themselves formally, they should be advised to choose the informal letter and the diary. These generally produced the best results.
- If candidates do not understand a word or words in the topic, they should not

attempt that topic to avoid misinterpretation.

- Candidates should respond to topics which are within their realm of experience to avoid responses which sound totally unrealistic. Sincere responses are always rewarded with good marks.
- Candidates need to read the topic carefully in order to avoid misinterpretation.
- Candidates need advice from teachers as to how to properly analyse a topic so that they cover the aspects required by the topic.
- Although there was a marked improvement this year, candidates must be warned to avoid the use of Tippex as they forget to rewrite the word.
- Do not use sub-titles in the essay, e.g. "Introduction", "Body", "Conclusion".
- Under no circumstances should candidates remove pages from their answer books, not even their rough work, as this can be regarded as an Irregularity.
- Handwriting which is difficult to read leads to words which cannot be deciphered being marked as errors.
- Candidates should please stick to using blue or black pens, not variations of blue ink pens.
- Writing is a disciplined process, so teachers must ensure that learners adhere to the word limit and indicate it below their writing. Although they were not disadvantaged during the marking process, a longer piece of writing does tend to ramble and there is an increase in the number of errors. It is also usually an indication that the candidate is unable to edit his work properly.
- Candidates must be made aware of certain topics which require a figurative response for the writing to be successful and original.
- Teach the various styles of advertisements and reviews. Some advertisements are wordier than others.
- Reviews need not only be on a CD, book or a film.
- Remind learners that a letter to a magazine or newspaper provides them with a forum to express their opinion. They should not be instructing the editor to do something about the problem.
- Encourage learners to be more aware of sequence of tense. This is an error which can be corrected by tense drills. The correct use of the Perfect Tense is absent in the candidates' writing.
- Weaker candidates should not use Direct Speech in their writing as they are unable to punctuate correctly, leading to confused sentences.
- Candidates must be taught how to use PUNCTUATION correctly: separating sentences full stops instead of commas; the use of the apostrophe for omission or possession; inverted commas for direct speech; titles in inverted commas or underlined.
- Paragraphing continues to be a problem. Candidates must be taught how to write a coherent paragraph. The basic rule for a paragraph is that a new idea requires a new paragraph. In a dialogue, a new speaker requires a new paragraph.
- Excessive use of clichés was a major problem, especially in certain centres. Teachers need to make learners aware that this is not good style.
- It appears that some learners have been taught vocabulary and they use these words in the wrong context or to excess. They should be reminded that "flowery" language is not good style.
- A number of candidates wrote long, confused sentences. The weaker learners especially, need to be taught to use two clauses.
- Switching between pronouns within a sentence is a common problem. For example: "One should do one's work."
- In certain centres, many candidates did not break words at the end of a syllable before continuing on the next line. It was as though they had been taught to utilise the paper to the maximum. This resulted in rather strange occurrences, for example: st
udents
- Learners must be taught concord.
- Learners should avoid using "e.g." or "etc." or "i.e." throughout their writing. If they do use these, they should abbreviate them properly.
- A common occurrence, especially in the diary, was the use of "omg" and "omw" as

well as an abundance of exclamation marks. Candidates need to keep these to a minimum

- Slang is not acceptable, not even in the diary: this is still a formal examination. There was a marked increase in the use of expressions such as “just wanna”, “gonna”, “ain’t” not only in the diary, but also in the two letters.
- Learners must be taught how to write the date correctly. For example, on 1 December instead of “on the 1st of December”.
- Capital letters are not used correctly – the pronoun I is often written as i while at times capital letters appear mid-sentence when they are not proper nouns.
- The split infinitive has become a chronic error. Example: “I want to really go.” Rather: “I really want to go.”
- SEE DETAILED QUESTION ANALYSIS ABOVE FOR FURTHER COMMENTS ON EACH SECTION.

8. ANY OTHER COMMENTS

In many cases it was clear that some candidates lacked a **basic language foundation**. They were unable to express themselves clearly and struggled to construct a coherent sentence. These candidates displayed no knowledge of the requirements of certain texts, particularly in Sections B and C in terms of format, style, tone and register.

As has been reported in previous years, these serious language barriers should be addressed **before** the candidate reaches Grade 12. Reports generated from the final examinations should not be scrutinised by Grade 12 teachers only; these problems must be brought to the attention of other teachers so that they can be addressed. Many candidates were not able to achieve the outcomes at a Home Language level and should not be attempting English as a Home Language.