

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE 2**

### **1. GENERAL COMMENTS**

The standard of the paper compared favourably with that of previous years. In general, candidates' performance was an improvement over last year's.

However, candidates from schools in the rural areas did not perform as well as those from private schools in the urban areas.

### **2. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS**

The following strengths were observed in the scripts of good candidates.

- (1) Majority of good candidates understood the questions and knew what was required of them content wise.
- (2) Essential elements of the essay such as good paragraphing, internal cohesion, correct use of transitions were reflected in the good essays. Formal features were correctly written especially for the letter (Question One).
- (3) Well-written stories with excellent plot contrivance and flashes of good idiomatic expressions were noted in the scripts of good candidates.
- (4) For the comprehension (Question 4) good candidates gave accurate answers to the contextual questions. The underlined words in the passage were precisely replaced and fitted perfectly into the context while the underlined expressions were explained as clearly as possible.

### **3. A SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES**

The following were observed in the scripts of weak candidates:

- (1) Some candidates deviated in answering Question One (the letter).
- (2) A few candidates did not know how to set out a letter. They omitted the formal features.
- (3) Essays of weak candidates reflected faulty paragraphing, misuse of punctuation marks and wrong amalgamation/separation of words among others.
- (4) Spelling and control of sentences and grammar were also work.

### **4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES**

- (1) Teachers should intensify the teaching of grammar. Attention should be given to tenses, subject-verb concord, syntax etc.
- (2) Different types of paragraph development should be taught.

- (3) Students should be frequently drilled in spelling and vocabulary; debates and quizzes should be encouraged.
- (4) Copious amounts of exercises should be given to students to make them perfect in grammar.
- (5) Candidates should read widely to acquire more vocabulary.

## 5. **DETAILED COMMENTS**

### **Question 1**

**Write a letter to your District Director of Education giving at least, two reasons why caning should be banned in schools.**

The topic was clear. However, some candidates mistook ‘caning’ for ‘canning’ and got the content of the essay completely wrong.

Some candidates advanced good and sound reasons to ban caning in schools; others just listed about four or five points in passing. They failed to discuss any two points in detail as required. Good candidates supplied all the formal features. Others omitted the following features: date, recipient’s address, title and signature.

A few candidates thought the topic of a ban on caning was open and therefore, wrote to oppose strongly that caning should not be banned, thereby deviating partially.

Weak candidates copied either the entire comprehension passage or part of it, and included the formal features of letter writing. This did not help them much.

### **Question 2**

**Write a story which ends with the expression: ‘..... what a dream!’**

The story could be the candidate’s own experience or that of somebody else’s, horrifying or pleasant.

Some candidates wrote good stories which tallied perfectly with the topic. Many others, regrettably the majority of them, wrote stories which had nothing to do with the topic. Some others wrote fables and scored zero in content.

### **Question 3**

**As secretary of the Friends of the Environment club, write the speech you would give to the students of your schools on the need to keep the environment clean.**

Few candidates answered this question. Some a candidate failed to supply the vocatives which are needed in a speech. Good candidates produced cogent reasons why the environment should be kept clean.

The weak candidates re-wrote the comprehension passage, presenting it as their essay.

### **Question 4**

This was based on a given comprehension passage. The passage was quite easy to understand and very interesting. It tried to elicit such responses from candidates as statements of facts, reading between the lines, statements of opinion and contextual meanings of words and phrases. Some candidates understood the passage and hence were able to answer the questions well. Several others just did not know what they were about. They indulged in wholesale lifting of sentences from the passage and this resulted in vague answers.