

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**  
**NATIONAL EXAMINATION COUNCIL**  
**CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION**

**024**

**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

(For Both School and Private Candidates)

**Time: 2:30 Hours**

**ANSWERS**

**Year: 2000**

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**Instructions**

1. This paper consists of sections A, B, C and D.
2. Answer **TWO (2)** questions from section A and **ONE (1)** question from each of sections B, C and D.
3. All questions carry 20 marks
4. Cellular phones are **not** allowed in the examination room.
5. Write your **Examination Number** on every page of your answer booklet(s).

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1. Differentiate between prose, poetry, and drama with examples.

Prose is a form of written or spoken language that follows natural speech patterns without a specific structure or rhythm. It is used in novels, short stories, essays, and letters. An example is *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, a novel written in prose form that narrates the life of Toundi under colonial oppression.

Poetry is a form of literature that expresses ideas, feelings, and stories in a rhythmic and imaginative style, often using rhyme, meter, and vivid imagery. An example is *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, which uses powerful language and structure to convey a message of resistance.

Drama is a form of literature intended for performance before an audience. It uses dialogue and stage directions to tell a story. An example is *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka, a play that depicts the clash between tradition and modernity in a Nigerian village.

2. Explain five characteristics of oral literature.

Oral literature is transmitted through word of mouth rather than written texts. Its characteristics include:

It is performed live, involving an audience and often incorporating music, dance, or gestures.

It is communal, reflecting the beliefs, values, and traditions of the community.

It is flexible, allowing performers to modify, add, or omit details depending on the audience and context.

It uses language creatively, employing proverbs, riddles, metaphors, and songs.

It serves social functions, such as teaching moral lessons, entertaining, preserving history, and resolving conflicts.

3. Discuss the relationship between literature and history with examples.

Literature and history are closely related because literature records, reflects, and interprets historical events and social conditions. Through literary works, writers capture the experiences, struggles, and values of a particular period.

For example, *Kinjeketile* by Ebrahim Hussein dramatizes the Maji Maji Rebellion, an important historical event in Tanzanian history. Similarly, *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono portrays the effects of colonial rule on African societies, giving insights into the oppressive systems of the past. Literature preserves historical events, giving future generations a deeper understanding of their heritage.

## SECTION B: DRAMA

4. Examine the theme of tradition versus change in two plays you have studied.

In *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka, the theme of tradition versus change is explored through the conflict between Baroka, the village chief who represents tradition, and Lakunle, a schoolteacher advocating for modernity. Baroka resists modern developments like building a railway and insists on traditional customs, while Lakunle dismisses these customs as backward, especially regarding bride price and gender roles.

Similarly, in *Kinjeketile* by Ebrahim Hussein, the play contrasts African traditional beliefs and practices with the changes introduced by colonial rule. Kinjeketile uses traditional rituals to unite people against colonial oppression, showing the strength of cultural identity amidst external forces of change.

5. How do two playwrights portray the struggles of the common man in their plays?

In *The Swamp Dwellers* by Wole Soyinka, the common man struggles against poverty, natural disasters, and the effects of modernization. Characters like Makuri and Alu face harsh living conditions in the swamp, abandoned by their sons who seek better lives in the cities, reflecting the rural poor's hardships.

In *The Barbed Wire* by M. Rugyendo, the play highlights the struggles of people affected by war, displacement, and exploitation. Characters suffer injustice and violence from those in power, reflecting the suffering of ordinary people caught in political conflicts.

6. Discuss the role of comedy in any two plays you have studied.

In *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka, comedy exposes hypocrisy and corruption in religious institutions. Brother Jero, a cunning preacher, deceives his followers for personal gain. The humorous situations reveal serious social issues like exploitation and gullibility.

In *The Government Inspector* by N. Gogol, comedy is used to mock government corruption and incompetence. The mistaken identity of Khlestakov leads officials to expose their dishonest practices in a series of ridiculous situations, using humor to criticize the flaws of public officials.

7. Analyze the theme of identity in two novels you have studied.

In *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, the theme of identity is explored through Toundi, a young African boy who adopts the ways of colonial masters while struggling with his African identity. Toundi's role as a houseboy for the colonial commandant causes him to lose touch with his community and traditions. He is caught between two worlds — the African and the colonial — and this conflict leads to his eventual downfall, showing how colonialism distorts and weakens personal and cultural identity.

In *The Concubine* by Elechi Amadi, Ihuoma's identity as a beautiful and respected woman is central to the story. However, her identity is influenced by cultural beliefs about destiny and supernatural forces. The villagers believe that Ihuoma is spiritually married to a sea god, which results in the mysterious deaths of men who wish to marry her. This belief shapes how the community perceives her and how she perceives herself, showing how identity in traditional societies can be shaped by communal beliefs and fate.

8. Discuss how two novelists use setting to enhance the plot of their novels.

In *A Walk in the Night* by Alex La Guma, the setting of apartheid South Africa is crucial in shaping the plot. The urban slums, oppressive police presence, and racial segregation create a tense environment where characters like Michael Adonis experience poverty, injustice, and violence. The setting amplifies the themes of racial discrimination, crime, and hopelessness, driving the characters into desperate actions.

In *The Old Man and the Medal* by Ferdinand Oyono, the colonial African town setting highlights the oppression and humiliation faced by Africans under colonial rule. Meka, an old African man, expects to be honored for his loyalty to the colonialists, but instead experiences betrayal and mockery. The colonial setting exposes the hypocrisy and racism of the colonial administration, shaping Meka's tragic experiences and the plot's progression.

9. Compare the presentation of the protagonist in two novels you have read.

In *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* by Djibril Tamsir Niane, the protagonist Sundiata is presented as a heroic, destined leader. From childhood, Sundiata faces adversity due to his disability and exile but ultimately rises to fulfill a prophecy, uniting the kingdom of Mali. He embodies qualities like bravery, resilience, and wisdom, reflecting traditional African ideals of leadership.

In *Girls at War and Other Stories* by Chinua Achebe, protagonists like Gladys in *Girls at War* are portrayed more realistically, shaped by the harsh realities of civil war. Gladys, initially idealistic, becomes hardened and practical as the war progresses. Unlike Sundiata, whose journey is heroic and mythic, Gladys's character reflects ordinary people's struggle for survival, making her development tragic and grounded in contemporary issues.

#### SECTION D: POETRY

10. Discuss how poets use symbolism to communicate deeper meanings in poetry.

In *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, the poet uses the symbol of "hogs" to represent oppressed people, while "monsters" symbolize oppressors. The poem uses these symbols to convey the deeper meaning of resistance against injustice and the importance of dying honorably.

In *The Song of the Women of My Land* by Oumar Farouk Sesay, the “song” symbolizes cultural heritage and identity, passed down by generations of women. The poet uses this symbol to express pride in African traditions and to critique the erosion of cultural values by foreign influences.

11. Explain the importance of rhyme and rhythm in poetry with examples.

Rhyme and rhythm enhance poetry’s musicality, making it more engaging and memorable. They also emphasize key ideas and create mood.

In *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, the poem’s regular rhyme scheme (ABAB) and steady rhythm mirror the order and control the oppressed seek amidst chaos. This pattern reinforces the poem’s call for organized resistance.

In *The Vultures* by David Diop, the irregular rhythm mirrors the unpredictable nature of colonial violence, while repeated phrases and sounds create a somber, reflective mood. The rhythm and occasional rhyme give the poem a harsh, relentless quality that reflects the brutality it condemns.

12. Read the following poem and answer the questions:

The river flows in quiet grace,  
Carrying secrets through its face.  
It whispers tales of distant lands,  
With gentle waves and soft, warm sands.

No loud roar breaks its peaceful song,  
It hums a tune the whole day long.  
Reflecting skies both dark and bright,  
The silent river glides through night.

(a) What is the central idea of the poem?

The central idea of the poem is the calm, graceful, and continuous movement of a river, which silently carries stories and memories of distant lands while reflecting the changing skies as it flows through day and night.

(b) Identify and explain two poetic devices used in the poem.

Personification: The poet gives the river human qualities by saying it "whispers tales" and "hums a tune". This personification makes the river seem alive and capable of storytelling, enhancing its mystery and timeless presence.

Alliteration: The phrase "soft, warm sands" repeats the 's' sound, creating a smooth, soothing effect that mirrors the gentle flow of the river, contributing to the peaceful mood of the poem.

(c) How does the poet use imagery to describe the river?

The poet uses visual and auditory imagery to describe the river. Visual imagery appears in descriptions like "Reflecting skies both dark and bright" and "gentle waves and soft, warm sands," allowing the reader to picture the scene. Auditory imagery appears in "It hums a tune the whole day long," enabling the reader to imagine the soft, continuous sound of the flowing water.

(d) What mood does the poem create and how?

The poem creates a calm, peaceful, and reflective mood. This is achieved through gentle descriptions of the river's quiet grace, its soft waves, and its steady, unbroken song. The soothing language and serene imagery help to establish a tranquil atmosphere.

(e) Suggest a suitable title for the poem if it were to be changed, and explain your choice.

A suitable alternative title would be "**The Whispering River**". This title captures the essence of the poem by highlighting the river's quiet, mysterious, and storytelling nature, as it whispers tales while flowing gracefully through changing times and landscapes.