

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: 2007

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).

maktaba.tetea.org



1. Define the following literary concepts and explain their significance in literature:

- (a) Plot
Plot is the sequence of events that make up a story or a literary work. It involves the introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The plot is significant because it provides structure to the story, keeps the audience engaged, and drives the narrative forward by showing how characters face and resolve conflicts.
- (b) Allusion
Allusion is a literary device where the writer refers indirectly to a person, event, place, or another literary work. Its significance lies in enriching the meaning of a text by connecting it to broader cultural, historical, or literary contexts, which deepens the reader's understanding and appreciation.
- (c) Satire
Satire is a literary technique that uses humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize human vices, folly, or social issues. Satire is important because it encourages reflection and often promotes social change by highlighting flaws in individuals or society in an engaging way.
- (d) Point of view
Point of view is the perspective from which a story is told (e.g., first person, third person). It is significant because it shapes how the reader experiences the story, influencing what information is revealed and how readers connect emotionally with characters and events.
- (e) Tone
Tone refers to the author's attitude toward the subject or audience as conveyed through their writing style and word choice. Tone is important because it affects how readers perceive and emotionally respond to a literary work, setting the mood and enhancing meaning.

2. "Literature is a tool for social change." Using six points, argue for this statement:

First, literature raises awareness of social injustices by portraying the struggles of marginalized groups, as seen in novels like "Girls at War" by Chinua Achebe, which addresses war and ethnic conflict. Second, it challenges existing norms and encourages critical thinking by presenting alternative viewpoints, such as in "The Lion and the Jewel" by Wole Soyinka, which questions tradition versus modernity. Third, literature preserves cultural identity and history, helping communities understand their roots and inspire pride. Fourth, it motivates action by inspiring readers to seek justice or reform, for example, "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay encourages resistance against oppression. Fifth, literature fosters empathy by allowing readers to experience others' lives, promoting social cohesion. Finally, literature serves as a record of societal issues over time, enabling future generations to learn and avoid past mistakes.

3. Discuss the differences between written and oral literature, highlighting four characteristics of each and their impact on Tanzanian society:

Written literature is recorded in permanent form, allowing it to be preserved over time, studied, and disseminated widely. It tends to have fixed texts and formal language. It promotes education and literacy in Tanzanian society by making knowledge accessible in schools and libraries. Its permanence also allows for critical analysis and cultural preservation.

Oral literature is performed and transmitted verbally from generation to generation. It is often flexible, with variations in stories or songs depending on the performer or audience. It uses simple language, proverbs, and repetition to aid memory and engagement. Oral literature fosters community bonding and preserves indigenous knowledge, customs, and moral values in Tanzanian society, especially where literacy rates are low.

Characteristics of written literature: fixed text, permanent record, formal language, and accessibility through print.

Characteristics of oral literature: performed live, flexible and adaptive, uses repetition and mnemonic devices, and communal participation.

SECTION B: PLAYS

4. "Plays often reflect the tension between tradition and modernity." Using two plays, discuss how this conflict is portrayed and its significance to the audience.

In "The Lion and the Jewel" by Wole Soyinka, the tension is portrayed through the characters of Lakunle, who represents modernity and rejects traditional customs, and Sidi, who embodies tradition. Their conflicting views on marriage and cultural practices highlight the challenges of adapting to change. This tension engages the audience to reflect on the value of cultural heritage versus the benefits of modernization.

In "Dilemma of a Ghost" by Ama Ata Aidoo, the conflict arises between traditional Ghanaian beliefs and Western influences brought by the diasporic character, Ato. The play portrays the struggle of identity and cultural assimilation, revealing the personal and societal challenges faced during cultural transition. This resonates with audiences experiencing similar cultural tensions, promoting understanding and dialogue.

5. Choose one play and explain how the playwright uses dialogue to reveal character traits and advance the plot. Provide specific examples.

In "The Trials of Brother Jero" by Wole Soyinka, dialogue is central to revealing character traits and advancing the plot. Brother Jero's speeches show his cunning, hypocrisy, and self-serving nature, as he manipulates his followers. For example, his persuasive and sometimes pompous language exposes his desire for power rather than true spirituality. The interactions between Jero and the other characters reveal conflicts and move the story forward, such as his rivalry with the young preacher, showing the theme of deception.

6. “Greed and corruption are destructive forces in society.” Using two plays, analyse how these themes are explored and their impact on the characters.

In "The Government Inspector" by Nikolai Gogol, greed and corruption are portrayed through the officials who panic upon hearing about the inspector's visit. Their corrupt behavior leads to absurd attempts to bribe and deceive, highlighting how corruption causes chaos and moral decay. The officials' downfall and humiliation reveal the destructive effects on society and individuals.

In "The Barbed Wire" by M. Rugyendo, greed manifests in the exploitation and oppression of the weak by those in power. Characters who seek personal gain at the expense of others create conflict and suffering. The play exposes how corruption undermines social justice and trust, leading to the erosion of community values and the characters' eventual disillusionment.

Both plays demonstrate that greed and corruption harm social cohesion and individual integrity, resulting in personal and societal damage.

7. “Writers use minor characters to enhance the development of major characters.” Using two texts, discuss how minor characters contribute to the story.

In "Houseboy" by Ferdinand Oyono, the minor characters such as Madame and Monsieur contribute to the development of Toundi, the major character. Madame's cruel and exploitative behavior towards Toundi reveals his innocence and helplessness. Through their mistreatment, the reader sees Toundi's gradual realization of the colonial system's hypocrisy. Similarly, Father Gilbert, a minor character, initially offers kindness, showing Toundi's hope in humanity before disappointment sets in when the priest turns a blind eye to injustice. These minor characters help to shape Toundi's understanding of his world and move the narrative towards its tragic end.

In "The Concubine" by Elechi Amadi, minor characters like Emenike and Agadi play crucial roles in developing Ihuoma's character and fate. Emenike's death introduces conflict and positions Ihuoma as a tragic figure destined for misfortune. Agadi, the medicine man, warns Ekwueme of the supernatural forces around Ihuoma, revealing her connection to the sea god. Through these minor characters, the reader better understands Ihuoma's character, the societal beliefs, and the larger forces at play, which shape her destiny and enrich the story.

8. Analyse how two writers use irony to critique societal issues in their novels or short stories.

In "The Old Man and the Medal" by Ferdinand Oyono, irony is used to expose the betrayal of colonial subjects. Meka, a loyal African elder, believes that by adopting European customs and serving the colonial rulers, he will gain respect and reward. Ironically, after being decorated by the colonizers, he is humiliated and beaten by the same authorities he trusted. This cruel twist highlights the insincerity of colonial rule and critiques the injustice and exploitation faced by Africans under colonialism.

In "A Walk in the Night" by Alex La Guma, irony emerges through the character of Michael Adonis, a young man fired from his job by a white supervisor. As he seeks revenge and justice in a racially oppressive society, irony arises when his attempt to stand up for himself leads him into deeper trouble, being wrongfully accused of murder. The story critiques apartheid-era South Africa, showing the irony of a system where the oppressed are blamed for crimes they did not commit, and justice is denied.

9. "Conflict is the driving force of a good story." Using two texts, show how internal and external conflicts shape the narrative and characters.

In "Girls at War" by Chinua Achebe, both internal and external conflicts shape the story. The external conflict between the Nigerian government and Biafran rebels creates a setting of war and instability. This war affects characters like Gladys, who struggles internally with her role as a soldier and her compassion for civilians. The tension between duty and morality shapes her character, while the external war drives the narrative toward its tragic ending.

In "The Concubine" by Elechi Amadi, internal conflict is seen in Ekwueme, who battles between his love for Ihuoma and his fear of the supernatural curse surrounding her. This conflict affects his decisions and emotions. The external conflict involves societal expectations and traditional beliefs, which forbid their union. These conflicts propel the story, determine character fates, and reveal the influence of culture and destiny on human relationships.

10. "Poetry is a powerful medium for expressing emotions." Using two poems, discuss how poets convey emotions through language and structure.

In the poem "Your Pain" by Armando Guebuza, the poet expresses deep empathy and solidarity with the oppressed. The language is emotive and personal, using words like *your pain is my pain* to show emotional connection. The poet's choice of direct address makes readers feel the intimacy of shared suffering. Structurally, the poem uses short, simple lines to reflect the heaviness and seriousness of oppression, allowing each emotion to stand clearly on its own.

In "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay, strong emotions of defiance and courage are powerfully conveyed. The poet uses commanding language like *If we must die—let it not be like hogs* to inspire bravery in the face of injustice. Structurally, the poem follows a sonnet form, building tension from the opening to a powerful resolution. The tight structure mirrors the controlled yet intense emotional plea against oppression.

11. Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow:

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

The central theme of the poem is social inequality and hypocrisy in leadership. It highlights the contrast between the suffering of ordinary workers and the luxurious, careless lives of high-ranking officials under the pretense of serving the nation.

(b) How does the poet use irony to convey his message?

The poet uses irony when the Permanent Secretary complains about suffering while attending a lavish luncheon, pretending to sacrifice for the nation. The persona, who did not eat at all, sarcastically compares his real pain from hunger to the official's supposed pain from overeating, revealing the absurdity and hypocrisy in leadership.

(c) Comment on the tone and mood of the poem.

The tone is satirical and mocking, especially towards the Permanent Secretary's insincere complaints. The mood is light and humorous at first but gradually reveals bitterness about social injustice and class inequality.

(d) Identify two poetic devices used and explain their effect.

Repetition: The phrase *building the nation* is repeated to stress the irony between the supposed national service of the elite and the actual contribution of the common people.

Imagery: The description of the menu, *Cold Bell beer, fried chicken, ice-cream*, paints a vivid picture of luxury, emphasizing the unfairness of the situation.

(e) How does the poem reflect challenges in Tanzanian society?

The poem reflects issues like class divisions, corruption, and empty rhetoric from leaders who pretend to work for the public good while exploiting resources for personal comfort. It criticizes leaders who are disconnected from the struggles of ordinary citizens.

(f) What is the persona's attitude toward the Permanent Secretary?

The persona is mocking and amused by the Permanent Secretary's fake concern and hypocrisy. He secretly smiles at the official's belated, insincere remarks, indicating disbelief and quiet contempt.

12. Using two poems, discuss how poets address the theme of social injustice and its relevance to modern Tanzanian society.

In "Song of the Worker" by Richard Nturu, the poet addresses social injustice through the depiction of the exploitation of workers by the wealthy elite. The poem shows how laborers toil under harsh conditions while the benefits of their work are enjoyed by a few. This is relevant to modern Tanzanian society, where income inequality persists, and ordinary workers continue to struggle while officials live in luxury.

In "The Song of Lawino" by Okot p'Bitek, the poet tackles the injustice of cultural oppression and the alienation of African traditions in favor of Western values. Lawino criticizes her husband for abandoning African customs. This poem remains relevant in Tanzania, where postcolonial struggles with cultural identity and Western influence still shape social debates and policies.

Both poems use powerful language and imagery to expose inequality and injustice, encouraging awareness and resistance in society.