

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: 2009

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. Explain the following literary terms and provide an example for each from any literary work you have studied:

(a) Symbolism
Symbolism is the use of symbols to represent ideas, qualities, or concepts beyond their literal meaning. A symbol can be an object, character, or event that stands for something else. Example: In *The Concubine* by Elechi Amadi, the river god represents the unseen spiritual forces that control human destiny in traditional African societies.

(b) Flashback
Flashback is a literary technique where the writer interrupts the sequence of events to take the reader back to an earlier time. It helps provide background information about characters or events. Example: In *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, the narrator uses flashbacks to recount Toundi's life before he ended up in a Catholic mission and later under the French colonial administration.

(c) Foreshadowing
Foreshadowing is a technique where a writer gives hints or clues about what will happen later in the story, building suspense and preparing the reader for future events. Example: In *A Walk in the Night* by Alex La Guma, the hostile environment and tension between characters early in the story foreshadow the violence and conflict that eventually occur.

(d) Theme
A theme is the central idea, message, or underlying meaning explored in a literary work. It reflects human experiences, social issues, or moral lessons. Example: In *Girls at War* by Chinua Achebe, one of the themes is the suffering of civilians and the moral decay of society during wartime.

(e) Protagonist
A protagonist is the main character in a literary work, around whom the central conflict revolves. This character often faces challenges and undergoes change. Example: In *The Concubine*, Ihuoma is the protagonist whose beauty and tragic love life form the central focus of the story.

2. "Literature reflects the society in which it is created." Discuss this statement, providing five (5) ways in which literature mirrors societal issues, using examples from your own experience or readings.

Literature acts as a mirror of society by addressing its challenges, beliefs, traditions, and transformations. Here are five ways it reflects societal issues:

One, literature exposes social injustices. In *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, the novel reveals the harsh realities of colonial oppression, racial discrimination, and the exploitation of Africans under French colonial rule.

Two, literature preserves cultural traditions. In *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, the story of Sundiata Keita preserves the history, customs, and values of the Malian people, celebrating heroism and unity.

Three, literature highlights moral corruption and hypocrisy. In *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka, Baroka pretends to be a wise leader while he is cunning and manipulative, exposing the deceit in traditional leadership.

Four, literature addresses the impact of modernization. In *The Old Man and the Medal* by Ferdinand Oyono, the story shows how Westernization leads to alienation and loss of respect for African elders, reflecting the tension between tradition and modernity.

Five, literature raises awareness of war and its consequences. In *Girls at War* by Chinua Achebe, the short stories portray how war affects ordinary people, destroying families and moral values, a reality many African societies have experienced.

3. Oral literature remains a vital part of Tanzanian culture. Discuss its relevance today, highlighting four (4) forms of oral literature and their role in preserving cultural values.

Oral literature continues to play a crucial role in Tanzanian society as it preserves cultural identity, educates, entertains, and strengthens community bonds. Its relevance today is evident in various traditional ceremonies, social gatherings, and moral teachings.

One form is folktales. These are traditional stories passed from one generation to another, often with moral lessons. They teach children about honesty, bravery, and respect for elders while preserving historical narratives.

Second is proverbs. These are wise sayings that express general truths or advice. Proverbs continue to be used in daily conversations, counseling sessions, and conflict resolution, preserving wisdom and cultural norms.

Third is riddles. Riddles are question-and-answer word games that promote critical thinking and creativity. They are still used among children and adults during social gatherings, keeping traditional entertainment alive.

Fourth is traditional songs. Songs accompany rituals like weddings, funerals, and initiation ceremonies. They pass on cultural knowledge, values, and history, ensuring that important cultural practices remain alive in the modern world.

4. Betrayal is a common theme in many plays. Using two plays, discuss how betrayal affects the relationships between characters and the overall message of the play.

Betrayal is a powerful theme that damages trust and relationships, revealing the darker side of human nature. In *Kinjeketile* by Ibrahim Hussein and *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka, betrayal plays a central role in the characters' lives and the overall message of the plays.

In *Kinjeketile*, betrayal occurs when some of the African elders, who are supposed to support the Maji Maji rebellion, secretly collaborate with the German colonialists. Their actions weaken the unity of the rebellion, leading to its downfall. For example, characters like Kitunda betray the cause for personal safety and gain. This betrayal destroys trust among the African leaders and highlights the challenge of achieving unity against oppression. The overall message stresses that the disunity caused by selfish interests and betrayal leads to the defeat of just causes.

In *The Lion and the Jewel*, betrayal happens in the personal relationships between characters. Sidi, who initially promises herself to Lakunle, turns against him and chooses to marry Baroka for material gain and social status. Lakunle feels humiliated and betrayed by Sidi's actions. This personal betrayal exposes the conflict between tradition and modernity, showing how materialism and manipulation undermine genuine relationships. The play's message warns against the dangers of blind modernization and the betrayal of personal values for selfish interests.

In both plays, betrayal affects trust, creates conflict, and shapes the overall message about unity, morality, and societal values.

5. "The playwright uses conflict to reveal the weaknesses and strengths of characters." Choose two characters (one from each of two plays) and show how their responses to conflict shape their development.

Conflict exposes the true nature of characters and helps them develop. In *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka and *The Swamp Dwellers* by Wole Soyinka, conflict reveals the weaknesses and strengths of characters like Brother Jero and Makuri.

In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, Brother Jero faces conflict with the society around him, especially with people like Amope and Chume, who criticize his deceitful religious practices. Brother Jero responds with cunning and manipulation, maintaining a calm and smooth-talking personality while exploiting his followers. His ability to survive conflict by lying and deceiving others reveals his weakness as a hypocrite and a morally corrupt individual, while also showing his strength in controlling people's beliefs for personal gain. This conflict shapes him into a symbol of religious hypocrisy in society.

In *The Swamp Dwellers*, Makuri experiences conflict between preserving traditional values and the growing desire for modern development represented by his son Awuchike. Makuri remains calm, patient, and wise in the face of conflict. He advises tolerance and understanding, showing his strength in upholding family unity and traditional wisdom. His response shapes him into a character who represents resilience and the importance of cultural values in the face of change.

These characters' responses to conflict reveal their moral qualities and contribute to the themes of moral decay and tradition versus modernity.

6. Using one play, analyse how the playwright uses humour to address serious societal issues. Provide specific examples to support your answer.

In *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka, humour is effectively used to address serious issues like religious hypocrisy, gullibility, and corruption in society.

The playwright creates humour through the character of Brother Jero, a self-proclaimed prophet who exploits the ignorance and blind faith of his followers. For example, Brother Jero's description of how he inherited the beach from his master and how he manipulates Chume by pretending to see visions is comical but highlights the problem of religious leaders taking advantage of people's trust.

Another humorous moment is when Chume, eager to beat his wife Amope, seeks permission from Brother Jero, who continually avoids granting it. The audience laughs at Chume's desperation and Jero's clever evasions, but beneath the humour lies a critique of domestic violence and the manipulation of religion for personal control.

Through such scenes, Wole Soyinka uses lighthearted situations and witty dialogue to expose the moral decay of religious institutions and the gullibility of believers. The play's humour makes these serious issues more approachable while encouraging reflection and criticism of societal norms.

7. "Characters in novels and short stories often face moral dilemmas that reflect societal values." Using two texts, discuss how characters' decisions highlight key themes in the works.

In *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, Toundi faces a moral dilemma between loyalty to his colonial masters and loyalty to his African identity and people. Toundi serves as a houseboy in the Commandant's house, witnessing the injustices, hypocrisy, and cruelty of colonial officials. Despite the mistreatment, he struggles with his role, knowing that rejecting the colonial system could lead to punishment or death. His decision to remain silent about the immoral acts of Madame and the Commandant's cruelty highlights the theme of colonial oppression and moral decay. Through Toundi's internal conflict, the novel criticizes the corrupt colonial system and reveals how individuals were forced to abandon their values for survival.

In *The Concubine* by Elechi Amadi, Ihuoma faces a moral dilemma when she falls in love with Ekwueme, knowing that her previous lovers died mysteriously. Even though she desires a life with Ekwueme, she hesitates because of the traditional beliefs surrounding her being spiritually possessed by a jealous sea god. Ihuoma's decision to distance herself from Ekwueme to protect him highlights the theme of tradition versus personal happiness. Her moral struggle reflects societal values where individuals must respect customs and beliefs, even at the expense of personal desires. This decision illustrates the power of culture and fate in determining personal choices.

In both works, characters' moral dilemmas reflect societal expectations and the clash between individual desires and communal or colonial values, effectively advancing the central themes.

8. Examine how the setting in two novels or short stories contributes to the development of the plot and themes.

In *A Walk in the Night and Other Stories* by Alex La Guma, the setting of apartheid-era South Africa significantly shapes the plot and themes. The story takes place in the poverty-stricken townships of Cape Town, marked by racial segregation, poverty, and violence. The oppressive environment affects characters like Michael Adonis, whose experiences of injustice, unemployment, and racial discrimination push him toward rebellion. The setting of grim, lawless streets intensifies the themes of racial inequality, oppression, and resistance. The hostile environment not only influences the characters' decisions but also reinforces the harsh realities of the oppressed society.

In *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* by Djibril Tamsir Niane, the setting in ancient Mali, with its royal courts, villages, and battlefields, contributes to the development of the plot and themes. The traditional African setting, filled with kings, soothsayers, and customs, shapes Sundiata's destiny and challenges. The journey from exile to reclaiming the throne is closely tied to the cultural and geographical landscape of Mali. The setting highlights themes of destiny, leadership, and the importance of unity. The environment of oral traditions, community values, and heroic expectations drives the plot and reinforces the importance of heritage and bravery.

In both texts, the setting is not just a backdrop but an active force that shapes characters, conflicts, and themes.

9. "Titles of literary works are carefully chosen to reflect their content." Using two texts, discuss the relevance of their titles to the themes and messages conveyed.

In *The Old Man and The Medal* by Ferdinand Oyono, the title directly reflects the central event and message of the novel. The story revolves around Meka, an elderly African man who is promised a medal by the colonial government for his loyalty. The title highlights the irony of the situation: while Meka sacrifices his sons and land for the colonizers, he is humiliated and exploited. The title represents false colonial promises and the betrayal of loyal Africans. It effectively conveys the theme of colonial hypocrisy, exploitation, and the disillusionment faced by Africans who trusted colonial systems.

In *Girls at War* by Chinua Achebe, the title refers to both the literal and symbolic struggles faced by women during Nigeria's civil war. The title story centers on Gladys, a young girl caught in the chaos of war, showing how women endure exploitation, violence, and survival struggles in times of conflict. The title captures the experiences of ordinary girls and women whose lives are disrupted by war. It reflects themes of war's impact on civilians, the vulnerability of women, and the loss of innocence. Through its title, the collection emphasizes the overlooked narratives of women in conflict and societal upheaval.

10. “Poets use vivid imagery to make their poems more impactful.” Using two poems, discuss how imagery enhances the message and emotional appeal of the poems.

In the poem *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, the poet uses vivid imagery to describe the brutal conditions under which people are oppressed and the courage they must show. Phrases like “hunted and penned in an inglorious spot” and “mad and hungry dogs” create violent and threatening pictures in the reader’s mind. This imagery intensifies the emotional impact by placing the reader directly into the dangerous and humiliating situation. It strengthens the message of resistance, dignity, and bravery in the face of oppression.

Similarly, in *Africa* by David Diop, imagery vividly illustrates Africa’s suffering under colonial rule. The poem describes “this back trembling with red scars” and “the whip under the midday sun,” evoking a powerful picture of physical suffering and cruelty. Later, the poet introduces positive imagery with “that tree over there splendidly alone,” symbolizing Africa’s resilience and hope. This transition from painful to hopeful imagery enhances the poem’s emotional depth and message about Africa’s strength and eventual liberation.

11. Read the following poem and answer the questions:

- (a) What is the tone of the poem?

The tone of the poem is both mournful and hopeful. It mourns Africa’s painful history of slavery and colonization but also expresses hope for a better future through resilience and freedom.

- (b) Identify and explain two themes in the poem.

The first theme is colonial oppression and suffering. The poet talks about Africa’s history of slavery, forced labor, and humiliation, shown in lines like “this back that breaks under the weight of humiliation.”

The second theme is resilience and hope. Despite the pain, Africa is compared to “that tree over there splendidly alone,” symbolizing strength and future growth, showing that Africa will rise again and gain freedom.

- (c) Comment on the use of imagery in the poem.

The poet uses powerful imagery to portray both suffering and hope. For example, “this back trembling with red scars” creates a painful image of physical abuse, while “that tree over there splendidly alone” provides a hopeful image of Africa’s resilience and future growth. These images stir emotions in the reader and strengthen the poem’s message.

- (d) What is the poet’s message about Africa?

The poet's message is that although Africa has suffered deeply through colonization, slavery, and humiliation, it remains resilient and will eventually rise again to claim its freedom and dignity.

(e) How does the poet use contrast to convey his message?

The poet contrasts images of suffering, like "the whip under the midday sun" and "red scars," with positive images like "that tree over there splendidly alone" to show the shift from a painful past to a hopeful future. This contrast emphasizes both the cruelty of Africa's history and the unstoppable strength and hope for liberation.

(f) Is this poem relevant to contemporary Tanzanian society? Explain.

Yes, the poem is relevant to contemporary Tanzanian society as it reminds people of the country's colonial history and struggles for independence. It also encourages Tanzanians to value their freedom, continue striving for justice and equality, and remain resilient in facing modern challenges like poverty and corruption.

12. Discuss how poets use repetition and rhyme to enhance the musicality and meaning of their poems. Use two poems to support your answer.

In *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, repetition is used in the phrase "If we must die," which appears at the beginning and middle of the poem. This repetition reinforces the poem's central theme of dignified resistance and prepares the reader for the defiant message. The poet also uses rhyme, such as in "die" and "defy," to create a rhythm that strengthens the poem's emotional force and makes it memorable.

In *Africa* by David Diop, repetition appears in phrases like "Africa my Africa" and "Africa, tell me Africa," emphasizing the poet's deep connection and concern for the continent. This repetition adds a musical quality and highlights the importance of Africa's identity and future. Though the poem lacks regular end-rhyme, the rhythmic repetition of ideas and sounds helps to enhance its flow and emotional resonance.

In both poems, repetition and rhyme enhance the musical quality, emphasize important ideas, and make the messages more powerful and memorable.