

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

024

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

(For Both School and Private Candidate)

Time: 3 Hours

ANSWERS

Thursday 13th October 2011

Instructions

1. This paper consists of sections A, B, and C.
2. Answer **all** questions in section A and B and two (2) questions from section C
3. Section A carries **sixteen (16)** marks, section B carries **fifty four (54)** marks and section C carries **thirty (30)** marks
4. All writings must be in **blue** or **black** ink.
5. Communication devices and any unauthorized materials are **not** allowed in the assessment room.
6. Write your **Assessment Number** at the top right hand corner of every page.

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1. (a) Briefly comment on what the following literary concepts are:

(i) Short stories

Short stories are brief works of prose fiction that focus on a single event, character, or theme. They typically aim to evoke a specific mood or convey a concise message within a limited word count. For example, in *Girls at War* by Chinua Achebe, the short story format emphasizes the theme of survival and societal conflict.

(ii) Figurative language

Figurative language uses words and expressions beyond their literal meanings to create vivid imagery or convey complex ideas. Examples include metaphors, similes, and personification. In *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, phrases like "mad and hungry dogs" use metaphor to describe oppressors, enhancing the emotional impact.

(iii) Characterization

Characterization refers to the techniques a writer uses to develop and reveal the personality, traits, and motivations of characters in a literary work. For instance, in *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, Toundi is characterized as loyal and naïve, which underscores the exploitation he faces under colonial rule.

(iv) Setting

Setting refers to the time and place in which a story unfolds, as well as the cultural and historical context. It establishes the atmosphere and influences characters' actions. For example, in *A Walk in the Night* by Alex La Guma, the setting of apartheid-era South Africa underscores themes of racism and poverty.

(b) What is oral literature? State any five characteristics of oral literature.

Oral literature refers to traditional stories, songs, poems, and sayings passed down verbally through generations within a community.

Characteristics:

- It is transmitted verbally without written form.
- It is often communal, meant to be shared with an audience.
- It incorporates performance elements like song, rhythm, and gestures.
- It reflects the cultural and moral values of the society.
- It evolves over time, with each storyteller adding unique elements.

2. Using your own life experience, show how literature and language cannot be separated.

Answer: Literature and language are intertwined because literature relies on language as its medium of expression, while language derives its richness from literary works. For example, in my experience of reading novels like *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono, the narrative and the language used deeply reflect the colonial injustices and societal dynamics. Without language, these literary expressions would lose their

depth and significance. Similarly, oral literature such as folktales in my community conveys values and traditions through a language that resonates with our culture.

3. Writing literature in local languages is the only way to make sure that it reaches every individual in the society. Use eight points to argue for or against this statement.

Answer:

For:

- (i) Accessibility: Literature in local languages allows more people to access and understand the content, especially those who are not fluent in foreign languages.
- (ii) Preservation of culture: Writing in local languages helps preserve cultural identity and values.
- (iii) Emotional connection: Readers feel a deeper connection to stories written in their mother tongue.
- (iv) Educational benefits: Local-language literature supports literacy and education in native languages.
- (v) Diversity: It promotes the diversity of literature by incorporating various linguistic traditions.
- (vi) Representation: It ensures underrepresented communities see their voices and experiences in literature.
- (vii) Oral tradition: Local languages bridge oral and written traditions, preserving historical narratives.
- (viii) National identity: It fosters national pride and unity by celebrating native languages.

Against:

- (i) Limited audience: Local-language literature may not reach a global audience.
- (ii) Translation challenges: Important works might lose meaning in translation.
- (iii) Resource limitations: Developing literature in multiple local languages requires significant resources.
- (iv) Global communication: Writing in widely spoken languages facilitates cross-cultural exchange.

4. A playwright is different from other writers in that the play he/she writes serves both as an entertainment and an educating tool. Discuss this statement using one play.

Answer:

Using *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka:

- (i) Entertainment: The play provides humor through its witty dialogue, comedic situations, and exaggerated characters like Lakunle, whose obsession with modernity creates amusing conflicts. For example, his attempts to impress Sidi by rejecting traditional customs like the bride price result in comical exchanges.
- (ii) Educating tool: The play critiques the tension between tradition and modernity. Through Baroka, who represents traditional wisdom, and Lakunle, who embodies blind modernity, the audience learns about the value of cultural preservation and the dangers of rejecting tradition outright.
- (iii) Moral lessons: The play teaches the importance of compromise and understanding between opposing values, as seen in Sidi's decision to embrace her cultural identity.

(iv) Social reflection: The play highlights gender roles and societal expectations, encouraging the audience to reflect on their relevance in contemporary society.

Through its combination of humor and thought-provoking themes, the play entertains while imparting important lessons.

5. Use two main characters from two plays you have read (one from each play) to discuss how writers used these characters to make their work a perfect piece of art.

Answer:

From *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka:

(i) Brother Jero is portrayed as a cunning and manipulative character who exploits people's faith for personal gain. His characterization exposes the hypocrisy of religious leaders, adding depth and critique to the play.

(ii) Through his persuasive language and deception, such as when he convinces his followers to believe in false prophecies, Jero becomes a mirror of societal flaws.

From *Dilemma of a Ghost* by Ama Ata Aidoo:

(i) Ato Yawson represents the cultural conflicts between African traditions and Western influences. His marriage to Eulalie, an African-American woman, introduces themes of identity, belonging, and cultural expectations.

(ii) Ato's struggles to balance his family's traditional values with Eulalie's modern worldview create tension that drives the narrative. This duality enriches the play's exploration of post-colonial identity.

Both characters are central to their respective narratives, making the plays both engaging and thematically rich.

6. Elaborate on any seven central ideas of any one play studied and show the play's relevance to Tanzanian society.

Answer:

Using *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka:

(i) Tradition vs. Modernity: The conflict between Baroka and Lakunle reflects the struggle between preserving cultural heritage and embracing modernity, relevant to Tanzania's efforts to balance development with cultural identity.

(ii) Gender roles: The depiction of Sidi's empowerment challenges traditional gender norms, resonating with contemporary discussions on women's rights in Tanzania.

- (iii) Power dynamics: Baroka's manipulation of Sidi highlights issues of power and authority, reflecting leadership dynamics in Tanzanian society.
- (iv) Love and marriage: The play critiques societal expectations surrounding marriage, such as bride price, which is still debated in Tanzania.
- (v) Education: Lakunle's advocacy for modern education parallels Tanzania's emphasis on education as a tool for progress.
- (vi) Identity: The characters' struggles to define themselves within changing societal norms mirror Tanzania's journey of national identity formation post-independence.
- (vii) Community: The play emphasizes the importance of community and collective values, which remain central to Tanzanian culture.

The play's themes are deeply relevant as they address universal and specific societal issues that resonate with Tanzanian audiences.

7. Support the view that short stories are more effective in delivering their message to the readers than novels.

Answer:

From Tales of Amadou Koumba by David Diop:

- (i) Short stories focus on single, impactful events, making them easier for readers to grasp quickly. For instance, Diop's stories use concise narratives to highlight themes like colonial oppression and cultural heritage.
- (ii) The brevity allows readers to reflect on the message immediately without being overwhelmed by lengthy descriptions. For example, the story "The Mother Crocodile" conveys a powerful moral about tradition and respect within a few pages.
- (iii) Symbolism in short stories is often more concentrated, making the themes more impactful. In this collection, the crocodile symbolizes wisdom and continuity of African culture.
- (iv) The direct nature of short stories ensures that they remain accessible to a wide audience, making their message universally relatable.

From Girls at War by Chinua Achebe:

- (i) Achebe uses the compact format of short stories to address themes of war and societal conflict. For instance, the story "Girls at War" portrays the challenges of survival during the Nigerian Civil War in a poignant yet concise manner.
- (ii) The characters are vividly drawn within a short space, ensuring the reader quickly connects with their struggles.
- (iii) The use of satire in stories like "The Madman" critiques societal flaws effectively, leaving a lasting impression.
- (iv) Short stories allow for varied perspectives within a single collection, offering readers a comprehensive understanding of societal issues without the commitment of a full novel.

Short stories' brevity and focus make them powerful tools for delivering messages effectively.

8. Using two characters from one novel/short story read, show how they were affected by the conflicts in their society.

Answer:

From *The Old Man and the Medal* by Ferdinand Oyono:

- (i) Meka, the protagonist, is deeply affected by the betrayal of the colonial administration. Despite his loyalty and sacrifices, he realizes the emptiness of colonial rewards, leading to his disillusionment and loss of dignity. For example, the medal he receives becomes a symbol of humiliation rather than honor.
- (ii) Kondo, a fellow villager, represents the collective frustration of the community. His anger toward the colonialists reflects the broader resentment of exploitation and cultural erosion. The conflict between traditional values and colonial imposition leaves him feeling alienated.

Both characters illustrate the devastating impact of societal conflicts, such as colonialism and cultural suppression, on individuals and communities.

9. Literary writers portrayed the view of their society as it really is in their writings. Use two books read to support this view.

Answer:

From *A Walk in the Night* by Alex La Guma:

- (i) La Guma portrays apartheid-era South Africa with unflinching realism, capturing the struggles of marginalized communities. For instance, Michael Adonis's experiences reveal the dehumanizing effects of systemic racism and poverty.
- (ii) The detailed descriptions of the slums highlight the harsh living conditions of the oppressed, making the narrative a mirror of societal realities.
- (iii) The use of dialogue reflects the everyday struggles and resilience of the characters, grounding the story in authentic experiences.
- (iv) La Guma's exploration of themes like injustice and survival reflects the broader societal issues faced during apartheid.

From *Houseboy* by Ferdinand Oyono:

- (i) Oyono's depiction of Toundi's life under colonial rule reveals the exploitation and hypocrisy of the colonial system.
- (ii) The use of first-person narration makes Toundi's experiences deeply personal, illustrating the dehumanization of Africans.
- (iii) Symbolism, such as the diary format, emphasizes the silenced voices of the oppressed.

(iv) Oyono critiques the moral corruption of the colonizers, exposing the realities of colonial injustice and cultural suppression.

Both books provide a truthful portrayal of their societies, reflecting the struggles, resilience, and humanity of the oppressed.

Here is the continuation with Section D:

10. In writing poems, poets teach and/or criticize the society. Use two poems to show that what the poets want their readers to learn from them.

Answer:

From *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay:

- (i) The poem teaches the importance of resistance against oppression. The poet urges the oppressed to "face the murderous cowardly pack" with bravery, showing that dignity and self-respect are crucial, even in the face of death.
- (ii) It emphasizes unity and solidarity among the oppressed, as shown in the line "Oh kinsmen! We must meet the common foe." This teaches readers the value of standing together in adversity.
- (iii) The poet critiques passivity by rejecting the idea of dying "like hogs," highlighting the need for action against injustice.
- (iv) Through the theme of honor in death, the poet teaches that moral courage is more valuable than mere survival.

From *Eat More Fruit* by Joe Corrie:

- (i) The poem criticizes societal inequality by sarcastically suggesting that the poor should improve their health simply by eating more fruit, ignoring systemic barriers.
- (ii) It teaches the reader about the disconnect between the privileged and the underprivileged, emphasizing the need for empathy and structural change.
- (iii) By using irony, the poet critiques the unrealistic expectations placed on the poor, urging readers to reflect on societal flaws.
- (iv) The poem highlights the importance of addressing root causes of poverty rather than offering superficial solutions, teaching readers to think critically about social issues.

Both poems serve as tools for societal education and critique, addressing oppression and inequality.

11. Discuss the characteristics which make poetry different from other literary genres.

Answer:

- (i) Rhythm and meter: Poetry often uses a structured rhythm and meter to create a musical quality. For example, in *If We Must Die* by Claude McKay, the consistent rhyme scheme enhances its emotional impact.

- (ii) Compactness: Poetry conveys deep meanings in fewer words compared to prose. For instance, *Eat More Fruit* by Joe Corrie uses just a few lines to critique societal inequality effectively.
- (iii) Imagery and symbolism: Poets rely heavily on imagery to evoke emotions and create vivid mental pictures. In *If We Must Die*, the phrase "mad and hungry dogs" symbolizes oppressors.
- (iv) Emotional intensity: Poetry often focuses on emotions and personal reflections, as seen in *If We Must Die*, which expresses defiance and bravery.
- (v) Figurative language: Poetry uses devices like metaphors, similes, and personification to enhance meaning. In *Eat More Fruit*, irony and symbolism are used to critique societal flaws.
- (vi) Economy of language: Every word in a poem is carefully chosen to contribute to its meaning, unlike in prose where descriptions can be more elaborate.

These characteristics make poetry distinct, enabling it to convey powerful messages in an artistic and evocative manner.

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

Today I did my share

In building the nation
I drove a Permanent Secretary
To an important urgent function
In fact to a luncheon at the Vic
The menu reflected its importance
Cold Bell beer with small talk
The fried chicken with nineties
Wine to fill the hollowness of the laughs
Ice-cream to cover the stereotype jokes
Coffee to keep the PS aware on return journey.

I drove the Permanent Secretary back.
He yawned many times in back of the car
Then to keep awake, he suddenly asked,
Did you have any lunch friend?
I replied looking straight ahead
And secretly smiling at his belated concern
That I had not, but was slimming!

Upon which he said with seriousness
That amused more than annoyed me,
Mwananchi, I too had none!
I attended to matters of state
Highly delicate, diplomatic duties you know,
And friend, it goes against my grain,
Causes me stomach ulcers and wind.

Ah, he continued, yawning again,
The pains we suffer in building the nation!

So that PS had ulcers too!
My ulcers I think are equally painful
Only they are caused by hunger,
Not sumptuous lunches.

So two nation builders
Arrived home this evening
With terrible stomach pains
The result of building the nation
Different ways.

Questions and Answers:

(a) What three things can you learn from this poem?

(i) The inequality between the privileged and the common citizens is highlighted. While the Permanent Secretary enjoys luxurious lunches, the driver suffers from hunger.

(ii) The hypocrisy in leadership is exposed as the Permanent Secretary claims to suffer "ulcers" from delicate diplomatic duties, ignoring the actual struggles of common citizens.

(iii) The poem critiques the notion of nation-building, showing how leaders and ordinary people experience it in vastly different ways, with the latter enduring real hardships.

(b) Was the PS building the nation? Why?

No, the PS was not truly building the nation. His actions focused on indulging in luxurious meals and superficial matters rather than addressing the real needs of the citizens. This is evident in the sarcastic tone when the persona reflects on the PS's claim of suffering for the nation.

(c) Comment on the language used in the poem.

The language is conversational and sarcastic, effectively portraying the disconnect between the persona and the PS. Phrases like "Cold Bell beer with small talk" and "Wine to fill the hollowness of the laughs" use irony to emphasize the extravagance and insincerity of the PS's actions.

(d) What do you learn about the persona?

The persona is humble, hardworking, and observant. Despite his struggles, he approaches the PS's behavior with humor and restraint, reflecting his resilience and awareness of societal inequalities.

(e) Are there people like this persona in our society? Elaborate.

Yes, many hardworking individuals in society contribute to nation-building without recognition or reward. Drivers, laborers, and other low-income workers often bear the brunt of economic hardships while leaders enjoy privileges.

(f) What type of poem is this? Why?

This is a narrative poem because it tells a story about the daily experiences of a driver and his observations of the Permanent Secretary. It uses vivid descriptions and a clear sequence of events to convey its message.

(g) Relate the happenings in this poem to your society.

The poem reflects the societal reality where leaders enjoy privileges while the common people endure hardships. This is seen in many societies where public resources are misused for personal gain, leaving ordinary citizens to struggle with basic needs like food and shelter.