

**C A R I B B E A N      E X A M I N A T I O N S      C O U N C I L**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
MAY/JUNE 2007**

**GEOGRAPHY**

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**GEOGRAPHY**  
**GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**  
**MAY/JUNE 2007**  
**GENERAL COMMENTS**

This year 13 362 candidates wrote the CSEC Examinations. This was a slight decrease compared with 2006 when 13 851 wrote. Overall the performance in 2007 was better than that in 2006.

Seventy per cent of the candidates earned Grades I - III, an increase of 17 per cent over 2006.

**DETAILED COMMENTS**

**Paper 01**

Paper 01 consisted of 60 multiple-choice items. Some improvement was noted in the performance in 2007 with the mean score increasing from 57.8 per cent in 2006 to 63.5 per cent in 2007.

**Paper 02**

Question 1

Generally the overall performance of the candidates showed some improvement over last year.

Part (a) tested knowledge of grid references and this was generally well done. Errors included the use of punctuation marks between easting and northing and the reversal of the easting and northing.

In Part (b), while the performance was generally satisfactory, some candidates seemed not to understand the term "to the nearest 100 m".

In Part (c), many of the candidates were able to insert the features correctly on the grid. However, many lost marks because they did not label the features or use a key.

The majority of candidates wrote good responses to Part (d), however, in some cases candidates named features on the coast instead of off the coast.

Part (e) required candidates to calculate a gradient. While most candidates were able to give the correct formula, many did not convert the horizontal distance to feet, the same unit as the height.

For Part (f), approximately half of the candidates were able to give a correct bearing. Many lost marks due to inaccurate measurements or because they gave compass directions instead.

In Part (g), many candidates seemed not to understand the concept of distribution while some tried to 'explain' rather than 'describe'.

For Part (h), the majority of candidates were able to identify two landforms as required by the question. However, many did not earn full marks because instead of describing the features as observed on the map they gave textbook descriptions.

Part (i) required candidates to account for the distribution of tracks and footpaths on the map. Many were able to describe the distribution but could not account for it.

Performance on Part (j) was unsatisfactory. Candidates were required to suggest, based on map evidence, what physical features accounted for the growth of Basseterre. Many seemed not to understand the concept of a 'physical feature' and listed various services offered by the town as reasons for growth.

It is clear that map reading is a skill that many students have not mastered. It is suggested that this aspect of Geography be taught throughout the school (from first form to fifth form) and on a regular basis.

### Question 2

This question tested candidates' knowledge of plates, vulcanicity, drainage patterns and longshore drift. The overall performance was satisfactory.

Part (a) was generally well done although many candidates were unable to identify the Cocos Plate.

In Part (b) (i), most candidates were able to sketch the two drainage patterns but many had difficulty in differentiating between dendritic and trellis. In attempting to state where each type developed, some candidates either named countries or a section of the course of the river. The well-prepared candidates were able to identify the rock structure. Too many candidates were convinced that in dendritic drainage the "main river broke up into tributaries" or "flowed into tributaries".

Part (b) (ii) was generally poorly done. While most candidates were familiar with the terms 'swash' and 'backwash' too many were unable to describe the process of longshore drift.

Part (c) (i) was generally well done but weaker candidates were unable to establish the relationship between the type of lava and the shape of the volcano.

In Part (c) (ii), while most candidates were able to state the direction of movement of plates along transform margins, many were unable to explain the occurrence of earthquakes along these margins.

In Part (c) (iii), only a few candidates were able to give a proper explanation of how explosive volcanos were formed.

### Question 3

Although this was a very popular question, it was not well answered. The question tested Specific Objectives 6, 7, 8, 14 and 15 of the syllabus.

Part (a) of the question was generally quite well done. In Part (b), many candidates were unable to define the term 'denudation'. Most candidates were able to define 'weathering', although some confused it with weather. In (b) (ii), too many candidates were unable to describe adequately the process of freeze-thaw.

Parts (c) (ii) and (iii) presented the most difficulty. In (c) (ii), many candidates suggested that stalagmites and stalactites were formed from freezing of water seeping into the caves. Some were unable to differentiate between stalactites and stalagmites, and many did not explain the process of formation. In (c) (iii) which was also poorly done, too many candidates were unable to give an adequate explanation for the development of cockpit (karst) landscapes.

#### Question 4

This question tested candidates' knowledge on aspects of tropical continental climate, vegetation, soils, ecosystems and hurricanes.

While Part (a) was fairly well done, some candidates were unable to calculate the annual temperature range and many were unable to identify the climate type.

In Part (b), many candidates wrote about the conditions in the eye of the hurricane but did not address the conditions associated with the passage of the hurricane.

Part (c) on ecosystems was generally well done. However, some candidates confused producers and consumers with manufacturing and markets.

The majority of candidates were able to give good answers for Part (d) (i) which required them to explain how the vegetation associated with tropical continental climates is adapted to the climate.

Part (d) (ii) was poorly done. Most candidates were unable to explain how climate influenced soil development in tropical continental areas.

#### Question 5

Question five tested candidates' knowledge of urbanization, its associated problems and rural to urban migration. This was a very popular question and the overall performance was good.

Part (a) was generally well done although some candidates tried to explain or describe the graph rather than answer the questions asked.

In Part (b), candidates were asked to define 'urbanization'. Generally this was poorly done as many defined it as movement from rural to urban areas.

Part (c) was fairly well done. However, while most candidates were able to list problems associated with urbanization, many did not elaborate.

Candidates did well on (d) (i) which required them to explain why people move from rural areas to towns. However, (d) (ii) was poorly done as many candidates were unable to suggest how rural to urban migration could be reduced.

#### Question 6

This question tested knowledge of economic activities in the Caribbean, factors influencing location of manufacturing and challenges faced by Caribbean manufacturers in a global economy. Many candidates gave weak responses.

Generally, candidates were able to complete the graph in Part (a) (i), but (a) (ii) was poorly done.

Part (b) (i) was not well done. Many candidates were unable to give correct definitions and examples of primary and tertiary industries.

Candidates did well in Parts (b) (ii) and (iii).

In Part (c) (i), candidates were required to account for the widespread occurrence of either the garment industry or food processing in the Caribbean. Many interpreted this to mean the benefits gained rather than the factors influencing their development and thus scored poorly. Part (c) (ii) was also poorly done. While some candidates had some knowledge of the effect of globalization on Caribbean manufacturers, most were unable to present logical and unambiguous arguments.

#### Question 7

Most of the responses to this question on agriculture and ecotourism were poor.

Part (a) required candidates to read information from a table and this was done fairly well.

For Part (b) (i) many candidates wrote about tourism generally rather than about ecotourism.

In Part (b) (ii), most candidates were able to identify one problem associated with marketing that is faced by Caribbean farmers but many could not elaborate.

Part (c) called for a comparison between commercial arable farming in a Caribbean country and wheat farming in the Canadian Prairies. This was badly done. Many candidates did not have knowledge of the actual range of sizes of farms and so merely used the words 'big' and 'small'. In comparing climatic hazards, many attempted to describe the climates rather than the hazards. Generally, the comparisons for harvesting and labour were also poorly done.

#### Question 8

This question tested the candidates' knowledge of the impact of natural hazards and the precautions taken at the individual and governmental levels to reduce their impact. In addition, the question tested knowledge of how land-based activities could lead to coral reef destruction. This was a popular question and there were many good answers.

Part (a) (i) and (ii) were well done while answers to (iii) and (iv) were not so well done.

In Part (b) (i), candidates were required to define the term 'natural hazard', but many were unable to give adequate definitions. Some only gave examples.

Part (b) (ii) was well done as most were able to describe how one of the natural hazards given in the question could impact on Caribbean territories.

Part (c) (i) and (ii) were done satisfactorily. Weaker candidates were unable to distinguish between precautions taken at the level of the government and those taken at the level of the individual.

In Part (d), many candidates wrote generally about how coral reefs may be destroyed but failed to explain how land-based activities contributed to their destruction.

#### Question 9

This question tested the candidates' understanding of the impact of man's activities on the physical environment, and the measures employed to reduce this impact.

Generally, Part (a) was fairly well done although many candidates failed to label the axes or give a title to the graph. Most were able to draw the bars accurately using the scale provided. However, some ignored the incomplete graph provided and drew their own, resulting in poor graphs.

Generally, Parts (b) (i) and (ii) were well done. However, many did not use the terminology expected at this level, using terms like 'muck' to refer to car exhaust.

In Parts (c) (i), (ii) and (iii), most candidates identified measures but many were unable to fully expand on these.

In Part (c) (iii), many candidates wrote about sewage instead of solid waste, and thus did not earn full marks.

### Question 10

Question ten tested knowledge of the greenhouse effect, global warming, the impact of tourism on coral reefs and consequences of coral reef destruction. Responses were generally quite satisfactory.

In Part (a), the majority of candidates were able to construct the pie chart with an appropriate title and with labels. A few were unable to measure the angles accurately.

Many candidates were unable to give clear definitions of the terms 'greenhouse effect' and 'global warming' as required in (b) (i). However (b) (ii), requiring candidates to state effects of global warming on the environment, was well done as most gained full marks.

There were some good responses to Parts (c) (i) and (ii) which focused on the impact of tourism on coral reefs and the consequences of coral reef destruction. This part was well done.

Part (d) required candidates to explain how deforestation contributes to global warming. This was the most challenging part of the question as many were unable to give adequate explanations.

### **Paper 03/1 (School-Based Assessment)**

Topics chosen for the SBA were generally suitable, although some candidates chose topics that are not on the revised syllabus. Many teachers were too lenient and in some cases more marks were awarded for some sections than indicated in the rubric. More studies were within the required word limit this year. Many studies are still being submitted without the required documentation such as strategy sheets and individual mark sheets.

#### **Table of Contents**

In too many instances, the table of contents was not properly presented. In many cases, page numbers were missing or pages were incorrectly numbered.

#### **Aim of Study**

The majority of aims were satisfactory. However, some were too vague or general and did not allow for appropriate data collection and analysis. Proper field studies cannot be undertaken if aims are not clear and specific. Weak studies result if this critical aspect of the field work is not given sufficient thought. Guidance from the teacher is very important at this early stage.

#### **Location of Study Area**

Overall the quality of the maps produced was fair. However, many did not have the necessary elements of title, scale, key and north arrow. Many maps of the study area did not show enough detail and were often untidy and poorly presented. Maps should be finished in ink.

### **Methodology**

While this section was satisfactorily done, in many cases, enough detail was not given on how the data were collected.

### **Presentation of Data**

Many illustrations were not properly presented. Very often these were not given titles or labels. In some cases, the chosen illustrations were not suitable for the data that were being presented. Photographs were often overused and not relevant to the study. Ideally, presentation of data and analysis and discussion should not be separated.

### **Quality of Data**

In many instances, the data collected were not sufficient to achieve the aims of the study or was not relevant. It should be noted that 'quality of data' is an aspect of the rubric and not a section of the report.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

Discussion was often not well developed and coherent. In some instances, points were merely listed. In many cases, illustrations were not integrated into the report. It is important to remember that while candidates may undertake fieldwork as a group, the report should be done individually.

### **Conclusion**

Some conclusions were inconsistent with the aims of the study and at times were too lengthy. New data should not be introduced in this section. Here, as in the analysis and discussion, many candidates listed points rather than present a discussion.

### **Communication of Information**

This is an area of great concern. Far too many candidates are making grammatical and spelling errors. In some cases, writing was incoherent.

### **Bibliography**

In some cases, candidates did not write the bibliography in alphabetical order of surname.

## **Paper 03/2 (Alternative to School-Based Assessment)**

The general performance of candidates on this paper continues to be below the expected standard.

### Question 1

Most candidates were able to draw the sketch maps required for this part of the question.

### Question 2

Candidates were asked to frame a research question based on information given. Most of them were unable to perform this task adequately.

### Question 3

This question was generally poorly done. Many candidates were unable to adequately describe how they would conduct fieldwork.

### Question 4

Question four required candidates to draw a pie chart based on data given in a table. Many were unable to do the calculations needed for this task. Many used the protractors incorrectly or did not use them at all, thus producing inaccurate pie charts. Too many diagrams were untidy. The graph should be titled and appropriately labelled.

Question 5

Part (a) of this question was fairly well done as most candidates were able to draw the bar graphs. However, in Part (b), most candidates were unable to summarise the changes along the transect as shown in the table. Many were unable to comment on the significance of the changes.

Question 6

This question, which required candidates to present a bibliography, was poorly done.

**Recommendations**

Students should be given adequate practice in answering examination-type questions. Too many seem not to understand terms such as list, describe, explain, account for and compare.

Students should be encouraged to express themselves in clear, standard English and to avoid grammatical mistakes and misspellings.

Greater emphasis should be given to the understanding of basic geographical concepts .

Diagrams need to be tidy and to be given appropriate titles and labels.

Thorough preparation is needed for the sections on weather, climate, soils and map reading.