

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

JANUARY 2012

**SOCIAL STUDIES
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

GENERAL COMMENTS

For January 2011, 4,093 candidates wrote the examination. Of this number, approximately 50 per cent achieved Grades I–III. This represents a decline over the previous year. The decline in performance was evident across all papers and profile categories.

Candidates continued to display weaknesses on questions which require detailed explanations. In cases where required, they also failed to provide relevant examples.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 01 – Multiple Choice

This paper consisted of 60 items distributed as follows: 30 on Individual, Family and Society and 30 on Sustainable Development and Use of Resources. The items tested various levels of difficulty in the knowledge and comprehension profile and provided adequate syllabus coverage. The mean on this paper was 33.88 or 56.47 per cent of the total score.

Paper 02 – Structured Questions and Extended essays

The paper consisted of three sections, labelled A, B and C, comprising 10 questions. Candidates were required to answer a total of five questions. Each question was worth 20 marks. The profiles tested were Profile 1, Knowledge and Comprehension and Profile 2, Application, Evaluation and Problem-solving. The mean on this paper was 33.92.

Section A: Individual, Family and Society

In this section, candidates were required to respond to two out of the three questions set. The quality of the responses ranged from outstanding to less than satisfactory.

Question 1

This was the most popular question in Section A and the most popular on the paper. It had the highest mean in the section and the third highest for the paper. It tested candidates' understanding of concepts such as matrifocal and matrilineal, traditional roles of adult male members of the family and reasons why traditional roles of adult male members are changing. It also asked candidates to suggest measures to assist children whose fathers have deserted them and why the measures will be successful.

In Part (a) most candidates lacked knowledge of the concepts of matrifocal and matrilineal and gave incorrect responses. Correct responses included:

Matrifocal: The family pattern in which the mother carries responsibility for the family.

Matrilineal: Inheritance system in which status is acquired through the mother or the line of descent is through the mother.

Incorrect responses included:

Matrifocal: when fathers live alone with the children

Matrilineal: when the mother lives alone with the children

Part (b) was generally well done and most candidates identified traditional roles of adult male members as *bread winner or disciplinarian*. Part (c) asked candidates to give two reasons why the traditional roles of adult male members of the family are changing. This was generally well answered. There were varying responses with popular ones ranging from economic to social issues. These included:

Men are no longer seen as the main breadwinner as in some households women share equal financial responsibilities for the home. There are also cases where the woman is the main breadwinner because of increased educational opportunities and high income earning jobs for women.

Based on economic realities of managing a household, feminist movements concerning women's rights and roles, there have been shifts in the stereotyping of gender roles. Modern views on decision making and income earning have superseded traditional ones.

Part (d) which focused on application, evaluation and problem-solving skills asked candidates to suggest to the Ministry of Social Services in their country, three measures social workers can put in place to assist children whose fathers have deserted them. The responses were varied and correct responses included:

Measure 1: Social workers can set up counselling sessions for parents and children to help them deal with the physical, social and emotional problems associated with abandonment. For some sessions, children will be placed in peer groups to discuss their feelings with their peers. Social worker will also arrange regular visits to the homes.

Measure 2: Social workers will make arrangements to assist children with food and clothing monthly. This will include school uniform and getting the family registered in programmes such as PATH (Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education).

The following is an example of a relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for Action 1. *Attending sessions will allow children and mothers to express their feelings about the father, and design coping strategies. Counselling will also assist in the healing process.*

Question 2

This question tested candidates' understanding of institutions such as forms of social control, types of recreational institutions and characteristics of institutions. Candidates were also asked to suggest actions governments may take to encourage people to participate in recreational activities and why each action will be successful. It was the second most popular question in the section.

The knowledge and comprehension section of Part (a) asked candidates to identify two forms of social control in institutions. Popular and correct responses included norms, mores and sanctions.

Part (b) asked candidates to name two different types of recreational institutions and to describe one way in which recreational institutions satisfy societal needs. Candidates correctly named institutions such as sports clubs, theatres, health and fitness clubs and hotel resorts. Some candidates had difficulty describing how the institutions satisfy societal needs. Correct responses included:

Such institutions help to relieve stress and thus result in a healthier population which would put less stress on health institutions such as the hospitals and clinics.

For Part (c), candidates were asked to give characteristics of institutions as organizations. Popular and correct responses included:

They perform a specific function, they have a hierarchical structure, they have rules and they endure over time.

Part (d) tested application, evaluation and problem-solving skills. Candidates were asked to suggest to the parliamentary representative three actions that the government can take to encourage people to participate in recreational activities. Responses revealed an awareness of the importance of promoting recreational activities in the Caribbean

Action 1: Establish parks or green spaces in various communities with facilities such as jogging tracks, netball, football and basketball courts. Citizens will partner with governments in volunteering their labour for the maintenance of the facility in exchange for using the facilities free of cost.

Action 2: Have a national recreational day similar to a Labour Day in which members of communities compete with each other in recreational sports. The proceeds will go to charitable organizations supporting worthy causes.

Part (d) (ii) asked candidates to justify each strategy given in Part (d) (i). The following is an example of a relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for Strategy 1:

Establishing parks and recreational facilities on the conditions stated will be effective because many people who could not afford to be members of recreational clubs or pay fees for gyms etc will now be able to do so.

Question 3

This question was based mainly on the provision of social services and the role of the ombudsman. It also asked for suggestions regarding ways in which the government could encourage citizens to assist in the provision of social services. This was the least popular question in this section and had the lowest mean score for the section. The stimulus depicted a peaceful protest by citizens and the advice to take their concern to the ombudsman.

The knowledge and comprehension section comprised Parts (a)–(c). Part (a) asked candidates to identify two social services that the government normally provides to a community. Most candidates responded correctly by identifying *provision of clean chlorinated water supply, health services such as clinics, regular collection of garbage*.

Part (b) tested candidates' knowledge of the how the ombudsman may assist citizens. Most candidates did not understand the role of the ombudsman. Correct responses included *investigating the complaints of citizens to help to solve disputes with government agencies and to present their findings and recommendations to government agencies to help solve their problems.*

Part (c) asked candidates to give two reasons why Caribbean governments provide social services for their citizens. Responses that were correct and well explained included the following.

Citizens pay taxes such as income tax, national insurance scheme (NIS), education tax and others for the provision of such services. Thus it is mandatory that government provides such services.

The private sector may be unable or unwilling to provide such services efficiently because they do not have the resources or finances to do so.

Part (d) (i), the application, evaluation and problem-solving section, asked candidates to suggest to government three ways to encourage citizens to assist in the provision of social services. The following are correct responses that were well developed and fully explained.

Way 1: Organize a neighbourhood watch to provide greater security for the residents. Members of the police force will provide guidance on safety measures and strategies and information on the responsibilities of the residents. The residents will collect money to erect warning signs and security cameras. Whistles will be used to alert members of suspicious activities in the community.

Way 2: Organize a fundraising effort such as a health fair in which doctors and nurses offer free medical service such as dental and optical checks, examinations for diabetes, and hypertension and provide information on the prevention of diseases.

Part (d) (ii) asked candidates to explain why each of the actions is likely to work. The following explains why a neighbourhood watch is likely to work.

With the establishment of a neighbourhood watch and the involvement of the police, citizens will feel more empowered to help in securing their communities. The concept of the whole community coming together to watch over each other is an incentive for community policing..

Section B: Sustainable Development and Use of Resources

This section was divided into two parts. Part I consisted of two structured questions and Part II of two extended essays. Candidates were required to attempt one question from each part of this section.

Question 4

This question tested candidates' interpretation of a table containing the percentage of the labour force employed in various sectors. It explored candidates' understanding of the importance of completing secondary education. This was a popular question and had the second highest mean for the paper.

Parts (a) (i) and (a) (ii) asked candidates to identify the industry employing the largest percentage of the labour force and the industry in which there was a steady decline in the percentage of labour force employed between period 2000 and 2008. The majority of candidates responded correctly.

Part (b) asked candidates to state two types of jobs that are available in agriculture. Many candidates answered correctly .For Part (c) candidates were asked to explain two reasons why employers prefer to hire persons who have completed at least secondary education. Many candidates gave responses such as:

Completing secondary education would provide the graduate with at least basic knowledge, skills and social values required for non-specialist jobs in the labour force.

Students completing secondary education will possess the attributes to be trained on the job and to attend seminars for upgrading qualifications and competences.

Parts (d) (i) and (d) (ii) assessed application, evaluation and problem-solving skills. Candidates were asked to suggest three actions which the Ministry of Education can take to assist students in completing secondary education successfully. An example of strategies included:

Action 1: To make secondary education free for all students. This would include free tuition, text books and other learning materials, lunch grants and bus transportation coupons for those who cannot afford lunch and travel.

Action 2: To provide schools with well-trained teachers in their specialist areas, well equipped schools with science computer laboratories, modern teaching resources and spacious well-ventilated classrooms where students can learn.

An example of a relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for the Action 1 included:

Many families are poor and cannot afford to pay even minimal fees for secondary education. Such children do not attend school regularly therefore missing lessons, some are hungry and unable to learn. They develop low self-esteem and do not perform well. Free education would allow them to successfully complete secondary education.

Question 5

This question tested candidates' knowledge of resources and the importance of non-renewable resources. It was the least popular question.

Part (a) tested candidates understanding of non-renewable resources. Many candidates answered correctly. Popular answers included non-renewable resources are those that cannot be replaced within a reasonable period of time after they have been used.

Part (b) (i) asked candidates to name the country in which bauxite is mined. Most candidates answered correctly and named Jamaica and Guyana. Part (b) (ii) asked about the use to which bauxite is put. Popular responses included *processed into aluminium products for pots and pans and in the construction of aircrafts.*

For part (c) most candidates were able to give two reasons why conservation of non-renewable resources is important. Popular and correct responses included:

We should conserve to prevent depletion of the resource. If this occurs the country would have to find alternative sources or import the resources from other countries. This may require increased spending especially in the short term and a worsening of the country's debt, Conservation of resources will extend the time for employment opportunities in the sector and in other related areas linked to the industry, not only for this generation but future ones.

Parts (d) (i) and (d) (ii) assessed application, evaluation and problem-solving skills. Candidates were asked to suggest to the government of their country three strategies it may use to encourage the conservation of non-renewable resources.

The following are examples of correct strategies which were well developed and clearly explained. These strategies indicated an interpretation of the functions of government.

Strategy 1: To review the mining and quarrying legislation of the country to ensure that such laws are in place and the punishment and fines for non-compliance will be significant to deter such acts.

Strategy 2: If the laws are already in place, government can set up a monitoring system with specially trained persons and environmental stewards to regularly visit sites to educate as well as to ensure proper use and conservation of resources.

The following is an example of a justification for Strategy I that was relevant, feasible and well explained.

If the laws are in place individuals and organizations will be wary of not adhering to the laws because they will be taken before the courts for violation. This may cause embarrassment, loss of professional integrity as well as enormous fines and legal costs.

Question 6

This question tested candidates' knowledge of CARICOM integration and global challenges which was reflected in the stimulus. This question was the more popular of the CARICOM questions but it had the lowest mean for the paper. Responses were unsatisfactory for most sections of the questions.

The knowledge and comprehension section asked candidates to give the meaning of globalization. Complete definitions should include concepts of interconnectedness, trade and world technology flows. An example of an accepted response was *the process in which countries of the world have become more connected through trade, capital and technology.*

The section continued by asking candidates to state two negative effects of globalization on manufacturers in CARICOM countries. Again this section was poorly answered. Most candidates completely ignored 'manufacturers' and gave general answers. Correct responses that were well developed and clearly explained to warrant full marks included:

The CARICOM countries have become a dumping ground for low-quality inferior goods such as foodstuff and manufactured products from the larger, more developed countries. This has resulted in unfair competition for the local and regional manufacturers and a reduction in demand for local and regional products.

Greater production costs such as labour and imported machinery and sometimes raw materials for CARICOM manufacturers result in local products being more expensive than the products from the larger, more developed countries with technology driven, mass production systems.

The section continued by asking candidates to describe two ways in which the CARICOM secretariat can inform CARICOM citizens about the integration process. Candidates lacked knowledge of the role and functions of the secretariat.

For the application and evaluation section, candidates were asked to suggest three strategies through which manufacturers may take advantage of globalization. Examples of strategies that were well developed and clearly explained were:

Strategy 1: Small manufacturers could form a co-operative thus pooling their resources including labour, expertise and capital to access loans to purchase raw materials in bulk, utilize labour among them more efficiently and increase output for trade.

Strategy 2: Manufacturers could organize a Manufacturers' Expo for international and local market. This would highlight the best of locally produced goods. Such goods would be displayed, with brochures explaining the production and patrons receiving free samples of goods. The Expo could also include educating on buying local products for national development as well as for export.

A relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for Strategy 1 was:

If small manufacturers pool their resources they will improve efficiency and productivity, create quality products and improve their bargaining power and trading relations. This will enhance their chances to compete globally.

Question 7

This question tested candidates' knowledge and comprehension of regionalism and an understanding of the factors that encourage and hinder regionalism. This was not as popular as question 6, but had a higher mean.

The candidates were asked to write an essay on the stimulus *Regionalism: The way forward to a prosperous Caribbean region*. The knowledge and comprehension section asked candidates to define regionalism. This created problems for many candidates. A complete definition is expected to include the following concepts: *a geographic region; cooperation with each other and to achieve a task or goal*. An accepted definition included: *nations situated in a geographic region or which share common concerns, cooperate with each other through membership in an organization to meet identified targets and to solve problems*. Candidates were then asked to identify two social factors that encourage regionalism. This section was poorly answered as candidates ignored the social aspect and mentioned political and economic factors. Correct responses included:

Most of the Caribbean territories speak English which makes it easier to communicate and thus enhance travel and the trading of goods and services which promote regionalism.

Most Caribbean territories have similar goals and values and thus tend to identify with each other. This shared identity promotes regionalism.

The knowledge and comprehension section continued by asking candidates to explain two ways in which unequal distribution of resources in the Caribbean may hinder regionalism. This section was also poorly answered. Candidates failed to make the link between unequal resources and regionalism. Few candidates answered correctly. One such response was that countries with resources such as bauxite and petroleum may be more concerned with using their resources to develop their own country rather than a concern for the development of the others.

The application, evaluation and problem-solving section asked candidates for three strategies that CARICOM countries may use to strengthen the integration movement. Examples of strategies that were well developed and clearly explained were:

Strategy 1: CARICOM countries need to acknowledge and implement the CARICOM skills certificate which is intended to allow free movement of specific type of labour across the Caribbean. Some Caribbean countries have discriminatory policies which prevent such movement.

Strategy 2: Improve transportation system across the region. This would include cheaper air fares and the use of small ships connecting the smaller islands to increase the movement of people, goods and services throughout the region.

A relevant, feasible and well explained justification for Strategy 1 was:

Implementing the CARICOM skills certificate would promote integration as citizens would not feel as if they are facing discrimination in their own region by preventing movement of labour and employment opportunities.

Section C- Options

There were three questions in this section and candidates were required to answer one. All questions were attempted.

Question 8

This question tested candidates' knowledge and understanding of the global media and its influence on cultural patterns in the region. This was the most popular question in the section. Many candidates performed unsatisfactorily.

The knowledge and comprehension section asked candidates to define mass media. Many candidates answered correctly by including the concepts of organizations using media such as print, radio or television and communicating with a large number of persons. This section continued by asking candidates to explain three ways in which the media may influence the lifestyles of Caribbean citizens. Popular and correct responses included:

Young people especially adopting foreign culture such as dress, for example boys who wear their pants below their hips, with their underwear being exposed, also the advent of fast food such as Kentucky Fried Chicken and Burger King and thus less appreciation for local food.

The application, evaluation and problem-solving section asked candidates to suggest three ways in which the artistic works of Caribbean artistes can be protected from illegal use. Examples of such strategies that were well developed and clearly explained were:

Strategy 1: Enforcing copyright laws which would stop illegal use such as piracy, this should include types of punishment such as significant fines and imprisonment for violation of the law.

Strategy 2: Embark on an island wide public education campaign about copyrights and patents using specialists in the area to deepen awareness and knowledge of what is illegal, the cases of piracy, punishment involved.

A relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for Strategy 1 was:

The enforcement of copyright laws will result in punishment being meted out to offenders... Therefore to avoid possible arrest and imprisonment persons would be less inclined to engage in such activities.

Question 9

This was the second most popular question in Section C and had the lowest mean. It tested candidates' knowledge and understanding of the black market and consumer's protection. The stimulus included a warning to consumers to avoid exploitation.

The knowledge and comprehension section asked candidates to explain the term *black market*. Most candidates did not understand the concept and gave incorrect responses such as goods being sold at cheap cost because the suppliers are unaware of the cost. Few candidates gave correct responses such as *the illegal selling of goods above the normal price*. The candidates were then asked to state two factors that contribute to the black market. Candidates who were unaware of the definition of black market responded poorly.

Popular and correct responses included:

When there is a scarcity of goods and a great demand for such goods, suppliers will obtain the goods and sell them at a higher cost on the black market.

When there are strict government regulations on the goods persons will disobey regulations and sell the goods on the black market.

The knowledge and comprehension section continued by asking candidates to state two ways in which consumer organizations protect consumers from exploitation. This section was well answered. Popular and correct responses included monitoring the quality of goods and services provided to consumers and investigating the operations of businesses.

The application, evaluation and problem-solving section asked candidates to suggest to consumers three actions they may take to protect themselves from exploitation. An example of a suggestion that was clearly explained was:

To organise themselves into a consumer group with the structure and policies of an interest group and invite experts to conduct seminars to develop consumer awareness and good practices, ways of empowering them as an organization.

A relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for the strategy was:

The larger group of consumers who have been educated about consumer exploitation and empowered to act will be a greater force to reckon with than a single consumer. They will be in a better position to get redress if a member's rights are violated.

Question 10

This was the least popular question in the section, but had the highest mean on the paper. It tested candidates' knowledge and understanding of economic leakage and benefits to be derived from tourism. This was reflected in the stimulus.

The knowledge and comprehension section tested candidates' understanding of economic leakage. Some candidates had difficulty defining economic leakage. Correct responses included *when a large percentage of foreign exchange earned in the tourist industry does not remain in the country.* Candidates who correctly defined economic leakage also gave correct responses for ways in which economic leakage occurs. Correct and popular responses included:

Foreign exchange earned in the industry is used to purchase foreign goods such as foodstuff to satisfy the desires of the tourist and that foreign ownership of hotels result in the foreign exchange earned being repatriated.

The knowledge and comprehension section continued by asking candidates to explain two ways in which citizens benefit from the tourist industry. Correct responses which were well developed included:

Employment of citizens directly in the hotel industry. Such jobs include entertainment coordinators, chefs, maids and accountants; others are indirectly employed such as farmers and taxi drivers.

Improvement and maintenance of infrastructure such as roads and services such as water, electricity and garbage collection in tourist areas. This benefits the citizens also.

The evaluation, application and problem-solving section asked candidates to suggest to hoteliers three strategies that may be used to encourage greater participation of residents in the tourist industry. The following are examples of correct, well developed and well-explained strategies.

Strategy 1: The hoteliers could arrange a day in which the residents are allowed to set up their booths on the hotel grounds and sell craft items and other goods to tourists as well as provide entertainment such as dancing and singing.

Strategy 2: Arrange special packages such as lower room rates for the family and day passes to encourage residents to use the facilities at the hotels...

A relevant, feasible and well-explained justification for Strategy 1 was:

Residents will see direct benefits from the tourist industry and will no longer believe that tourism is for the "rich". This will encourage greater appreciation for the industry and thus greater desire to participate...

Recommendations

Overall, the performance on this paper was less than satisfactory. This reflected a high level of unpreparedness and lack of knowledge to answer questions effectively. The candidates must understand that the questions require knowledge and understanding of concepts and the application and analysis of the information.

Candidates

Most candidates had low scores for the questions on CARICOM, especially Question 6. This reflects a lack of knowledge and understanding of issues pertaining to CARICOM. Candidates are advised to use the objectives for the regional integration section, the CARICOM website,

newspaper articles and other media reports on CARICOM to help to improve their performance on the questions.

The application, evaluation and problem-solving section requires that candidates use an informed position and principles based on fostering responsible behaviour and the promotion of democratic values and attitudes in proposing suggestions for social problems. The strategies should be relevant and feasible. Also, candidates must be aware that some suggestions may not be applicable to some groups.

The essay-type questions are structured to guide candidates in organizing their responses. There are too many cases where responses are disorganized and sections of the questions are located in various parts of the essay. Candidates are thus advised to organize their responses based on the format of the question.

The use of the word *suggest* implies that the strategy, measure or action recommended must be well developed and clearly explained. For the strategy, there must be a description as well as an explanation of how it will be implemented.

The definition of concepts continues to pose problems for candidates. Candidates are advised to use concept mapping techniques to develop an understanding and application of the concepts.

Paper 032 – Alternative to SBA

The aim of this examination was to test candidates' knowledge of the research process and their ability to apply research concepts and skills to respond appropriately to questions. The paper consisted of five structured questions. To be successful on this examination, candidates must be exposed to regular instruction relevant to research. The mean was 19.49 or 49.72 per cent of the total score.

Question 1 required candidates to select a research topic from the two that had been provided. The more popular choice was *Views of residents in my community towards criminal activity*.

In Part (b) the majority of candidates could not appropriately complete a problem statement that had been started. An example of an appropriate completion statement was: *This study will show what residents in my community think about criminal activity*. This is appropriate for a problem statement because the problem statement shows what the main focus of the research will be.

Candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge of the concept of *research instruments*; this was an improvement over past performance. In Part (e), the majority of candidates was able to identify possible problems a researcher could experience when conducting interviews.

Question 2

Candidates were unable to formulate/write one research question. Writing research questions, like any other skill, requires frequent practice to develop proficiency. It requires the researcher to think clearly about what he/she hopes to find out about the topic and to state these ideas in question form. These questions are expressed broadly as they focus on the general theme of the research.

An example of a well formulated research question supplied by a candidate was:

What are the effects of criminal activity on residents in my community?

Some research questions presented were not followed by a question mark.

When writing research questions consider the following:

- clarity — the question must be clearly stated
- question format should be used — there should be a question mark at the end
- avoid questions which may be answered by a yes/no response
- avoid asking personalized questions such as ‘What do you think about criminal activity?’

Question 3

This question tested candidates’ knowledge of sampling in research. Candidates did not know the concept. Very few were able to describe their sampling method and state the reason why they chose that method. Candidates could not give a valid reason for the chosen sampling method.

Some acceptable responses from candidates for sampling methods were as follows:

Random Sampling:

- *The names of each student will be written on slips of paper and placed in a bag; fifteen names will be pulled out of the bag. This is to ensure that each person has an equal chance of being selected.*
- *There are seventy five households in the community so I visited every third house to distribute a questionnaire. This is to ensure that each household has an equal chance of being selected.*

Purposive sampling — *select from the population only those who meet the necessary criteria to provide the necessary information.*

For Part (e), the majority of candidates could state two ways in which the researcher can protect information provided by the sample.

Question 4

This was a case study. Performance on this question was good as the majority of candidates could interpret the data provided in the case; they could also state two important findings.

Question 5

Generally, candidates were able to calculate the percentages to complete a table using data provided in the case study from Question 4. Many of them were also unable to answer Part (a) ii which required them to display the data in the table as a comparative bar graph.

The other area of poor performance on this question was the recommendations in Part (b). Recommendations are suggestions that can be made to solve a problem; therefore the

recommendations must be *relevant* to the findings of the study. To improve performance on this question the following guidelines could be considered:

- Read the entire case study carefully
- Note the problem statement in the case
- Pay close attention to the new information the researchers found (findings) about the problem being investigated
- Recommend or suggest/state the best ways to solve the problem/s.

Suggestions to Candidates

- Candidates can improve their performance on this examination. To do this they must prepare thoroughly for the exam. The performance on the paper demonstrated that candidates enter this examination unprepared.
- Candidates should engage in small, supervised research projects that will focus on the basic concepts being tested in the examination. As with any other skill, practice is necessary to achieve efficiency.
- Candidates must seek adequate tuition that will allow them to prepare thoroughly for the exam.
- Candidatesand should utilize the CSEC Manual for Private Candidates on the Alternative to School-Based Assessment component.