

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

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

MAY/JUNE 2014

HOME ECONOMICS: MANAGEMENT

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Caribbean Examinations Council administered the 32nd examination of the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate in Home Economics: Management at the General Proficiency in May 2014. The examination consisted of three components: Paper 01 – Multiple Choice, Paper 02 – Structured Essays and Paper 03 – School-Based Assessment.

Paper 01 — Multiple Choice

This paper comprised 60 questions designed to test all areas of the syllabus and tested knowledge (Profile 1) and Use of Knowledge (Profile 2) in equal proportions. Candidate performance on this paper improved over the period 2012 to 2014. The mean score this year was 36.27 compared with 32.82 in 2013 and 33.03 in 2012. The maximum score obtained was 57 marks and the lowest score was 8.

Paper 02 — Structured Essay Questions

Paper 02 consisted of two sections. Section (A) comprised three compulsory questions while Section (B) consisted of four questions from which candidates were required to choose two. Each question was allocated a total of 16 marks, 6 marks for Knowledge and 10 marks for Use of Knowledge. The mean mark was 35.67 out of a maximum mark of 80; the highest score obtained was 71, and the lowest score was 0. Approximately 62 per cent of candidates achieved Grades I–III.

DETAILED COMMENTS

The current syllabus requires that the compulsory questions on Paper 02 be based on Modules 5, 7 and 10. Although this is the norm, which provides guidance and transparency to support candidates' examination preparation, it has had little impact on the quality of the candidates' responses. Performance this year indicated that candidates generally possessed a moderate grasp of the subject matter tested. However, there was evidence that some concepts were better understood than others.

It was apparent that candidates identified closely with some of the concepts being tested, for example, in Question 4. The popularity of this optional question confirms the notion that Home Economics: Management is a subject that helps students to better understand themselves in the context of everyday living and learn to make critical decisions for the improvement of family life. While many candidates demonstrated a weak command of appropriate language to be used in the context of responding to examination questions, their creativity in expressing their responses indicated their clear understanding of the objectives being tested and the content and context of the question.

Candidates showed awareness of the subject matter tested, much of which they appeared able to relate to their personal experiences. This is good evidence of the relevance of the subject in their everyday lives. However, where candidates gave fulsome responses showing a good command of the content, they often continued to be disorganized in the presentation of their answers. Responses for the most part were not logically laid out and therefore posed a challenge for the examining team as they often had to seek out relevant content amidst irrelevancy and lack of coherence.

Content organization terms like “guidelines”, “procedures/ steps”, “roles”, “effects” and “factors” are terms that are not well understood. However, these are part of the vocabulary in the syllabus and the textbooks. Teachers have a responsibility to develop a good repertoire of the language of the subject and to communicate this to candidates. The use of colloquial language to express technical concepts and content specific to the subject simply diminishes its value as a verifiable body of knowledge on the school curriculum. A consequence of this weakness is that candidates often give examples of core ideas in relation to the subject matter that are often unrelated to the specific concept being tested. A case in point is that some candidates wrote on **precautions** instead of stating the **guidelines** as was asked of them in Question 2.

Candidates continue to misinterpret key action words in the examination questions such as “describe”, “suggest” and “explain”. They also show lack of discrimination in their interpretation of terms like “list factors” or “list steps”. These terms should be used by teachers in coursework tasks to give the candidates the necessary familiarity with their meanings and should be checked by teachers for accuracy of interpretation before the examination is attempted.

There continues to be the need for greater evidence of mastery of the subject by a greater number of candidates and at least reasonable competence by the majority of the candidates across the region. It is desirable that regions and schools again take note of these limitations, and collaborate to plan workshops and other activities, in an effort to facilitate a greater understanding of the content among the candidates. There is an urgent need for mastery of the important areas of the curriculum. As a consequence, teachers need to make greater use of activities such as cases, scenarios, simulations and role plays. These strategies help to concretize key concepts. In addition, practitioners should seek opportunities to participate in revising and updating the texts and other resources used in the teaching of the topics. What is clear is that teachers need to take active steps to improve the academic value of the Home Economics: Management curriculum.

Candidates continue to demonstrate a lack of knowledge of test-taking strategies and often write two or three lines of information on a single page of the answer booklet, with incorrect responses, and as result present answer booklets with a significant amount of wasted space. There has been a very visible tendency for candidates to answer all seven questions, thus earning very little marks, if any, for some questions, instead on focusing on the five questions required and maximizing the marks earned for each question.

It is important to stress again that there must be concerted efforts for teachers to help candidates learn how to read and interpret the essay questions and provide reasonable responses that will earn the assigned marks. The low scores of some candidates who took this examination suggested that some candidates did not study the subject, or at best did not prepare well. If this observation is correct, and some teachers can identify with this phenomenon, then action should be taken by school administrators to preserve the reputation and integrity of the Home Economics: Management curriculum in schools.

Question 1

Question 1 was compulsory. It consisted of three parts.

Part (a) required candidates to list three benefits of work. All candidates attempted this part of the question and most of them were able to give accurate responses. However, some candidates provided responses that overlapped with each other, for example:

- “Providing needs and wants”
- “Paying bills”
- “Providing family needs”
- “Paying expenses”

The correct responses for this question included:

- *Providing basic needs and wants*
- *Providing income*
- *To confer status*
- *Providing work experiences*

One mark was given for each of the three correct answers.

Part (b) of this question required candidates to state three different factors that can influence a person’s level of preparation for a career.

This part was poorly done, since most candidates misinterpreted the word “factor”. They stated actions that can influence a person’s level of preparation rather than factors, for example:

- “Getting a knowledge of the career choice”
- “Having money to pursue the career”
- “Having work experiences”

The correct responses for this section included

- *Economic factors*
- *Time in terms of academic preparation*
- *Peer influence*
- *Personal and family goals*

Only a few candidates were able to score maximum marks in this part of the question.

Part (c) required candidates to recommend five actions that Form 5 (Grade 11) students should take to prepare themselves for these careers. This section was fairly well done. However, some candidates gave responses which were very vague, such as:

- “Study hard”
- “Go to college”
- “Ask questions”
- “Socialize with friends and interact with other people”
- “Get experience”

In addition, some candidates reproduced key terms provided in the question as their answers, for example:

- “Work experience”
- “Computer skills”
- “Social skills”

In many instances, candidates used the management and decision-making processes as responses to the questions. In addition, they misinterpreted the scenario, which required them to recommend actions to be taken to prepare themselves for careers for which requirements were given. Instead, candidates gave responses such as, “Get recommendations from teachers for

- work experiences
- classes, incorporated skills and social skills
- going to university”

Some required responses were:

- *Find out where the desired degree is being offered and the requirements for entry into the programme*
- *Seek a holiday job to gain relevant work experiences*
- *Get involved in groups where social skills may be developed, for example, Red Cross, religious youth groups, 4-H clubs.*

Most candidates wrote “choose relevant subjects for the career”. However, it should be noted that the Grade 11 students would have already chosen the required subjects.

Two marks were given for each correct action.

The mean mark obtained on this question was 7.09, and marks ranged from 0 to 16.

Question 2

This question tested candidates' knowledge of money management and budgeting. This was a compulsory question.

Part (a) (i) of the question required the candidates to outline three ways in which they could earn money legally without asking their parents. The majority of the candidates were able to answer this part correctly. However, there was still a significant portion who misinterpreted the term "legal" and wrote on illegal means of obtaining money without working, such as scamming, stealing, prostitution, killing and begging.

Part (a) (ii) was very well handled by the candidates. The candidates were able to supply the correct reasons for making a budget.

Part (b) asked the students to read a scenario about Herbert who would be starting college. His tuition and text books would be paid for by his parents but he would have to get a part time job that covered all his daily expenses.

Part (b) (i) required candidates to outline four items that Herbert would include on his budget. This section was generally well done. The majority of the candidates gave suitable answers for this section.

Part (b) (ii) posed a significant challenge, as this section required candidates to analyse the scenario and explain important guidelines for Herbert to consider in prioritizing a list of items for a monthly budget for his first year in university. Most candidates misinterpreted the question and instead outlined guidelines for shopping, for example, "compare prices of items", "make a shopping list", "buy in bulk", "buy the cheapest items", as well as "know the amount of income to be able to decide on how to spend it". The minority of candidates who attempted to give the correct responses were more inclined to list the points without providing an explanation as required.

Candidates who scored highly on this section of the question displayed an ability to write clear guidelines with their appropriate explanations, for example:

1. *Include savings on your budget. This is necessary as it provides a source of income in case of emergency.*
2. *Determine his values - he is able to decide on what is more important so he will direct most of his attention to that particular aspect of the budget.*

In summary, most of the candidates scored within the range of 6 to 11 marks. The mean mark obtained on this question was 7.93.

Question 3

This question was designed to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of disaster preparedness, safety and first aid. It was a compulsory question. The mean mark obtained on this question was 5.49, and marks ranged from 0 to 15.

Part (a) was fairly well done. Most candidates had a clear understanding of the steps that should be taken in the event of a flood. However, many had difficulty differentiating between the general disaster preparedness steps and steps to be taken after the flood warning. Many candidates, therefore, gave answers indicating what should be done before an expected hurricane or after the hurricane or flood had passed, even though the question clearly stated that the flood warning was during the hurricane.

The misunderstanding of the question was evidenced in responses as candidates wrote steps to prepare for a hurricane or rainstorm. Some responses were as follows:

- "Stock up food, batteries and water"
- "Buy and store things"
- "Secure roof"

- “Do not go outside”
- “Drains to be cleared”
- “Batten/strap down roofs”
- “Cutting down trees”
- “Water purification”

The expected responses were:

- *Evacuate to a ‘safe place’ or ‘higher ground’*
- *Package important documents in plastic bags*
- *Listen to news for updates/instructions*
- *Have an evacuation plan if there is need to move to a new location*
- *Cover furniture and appliances with plastic and put on blocks/higher ground*

Part (b) posed a great deal of challenge for candidates. Candidates did not know the steps required to treat a fractured leg. None of them were able to score the maximum points in this part. Candidates clearly lacked the knowledge of dealing with a fracture and, as such, addressed issues such as cuts, bruises, sprains and unconsciousness.

Some correct responses given were:

- *Keep her calm and comfortable*
- *Use two pieces of flat board on either side of the leg to straighten it*
- *Stay with her until the ambulance arrives*
- *Write a report to be given upon arrival of the ambulance*
- *Do not move her*

Some incorrect responses given were:

- “Use RICE method (R-rest, I-ice, C-compression, E-elevation)”
- “Elevate and bandage”
- “Give pain killers”
- “Massage and wrap leg”
- “Lift patient and stretch out leg”
- “Put pillow under the foot”
- “Use alcohol”
- “Wrap with gauze”
- “Give injection”
- “Fix bone back in place”

Part (c) was fairly well done. It required candidates to explain safety precautions to be taken to avoid similar accidents as referenced in part (b). Candidates demonstrated relative competence in this section; however, repetition of responses prevented many from receiving the maximum six points allocated. In addition, some misinterpreted the computer cable to mean raw electrical wire. Likewise, some focused on the computer rather than the computer cable.

Some correct responses were as follows:

- *Do not stretch cables across pathway*
- *Tidy/bundle cord under the computer*
- *Pass cord under computers, furniture or tape or tack on the wall*
- *Make signs alerting visitors of the danger*
- *Remove objects, toys and water from floor*
- *Use mats with non-skid backing*

Incorrect responses were as follows:

- “Remove wire so that it does not cause electrocution”
- “Look where you are walking”
- “Don’t carry objects that block your vision”
- “Put rails on steps”
- “Never put rugs or mats on the floor”
- “Do not study in the computer lab”

Many candidates who understood the question stated that the cable should be taken from the walkway but failed to indicate some possible options for placement to prevent trips and falls.

Question 4

This was an optional question that tested candidates’ knowledge and understanding based on Module 1, Objectives 4 and 5, and Module 4, Objective 13 of the syllabus.

This question was the most popular optional question. The mean mark obtained was 10.22, and marks ranged from 0 to 16.

Part (a) of the question required candidates to list three functions of the family. This part was well done by most candidates. However, some candidates misinterpreted the question and gave responses which included inappropriate elements such as:

- Definition of the family
- Management processes
- Types of family
- Stages of the family life cycle
- Educational function
- Recreational function
- Writing one function in three parts; for example, providing food, providing shelter, providing clothing.

Expected responses from candidates included the following examples:

- *Procreation/reproduction*
- *Providing basic needs*
- *Socialization*
- *Conferring status*
- *Nurturing*
- *Preventing incest*
- *Transmitting culture*

Part (b) of the question required candidates to list one role to be performed by the following members of the family:

- Mother
- Father
- Adolescent teenagers

Some candidates provided inappropriate responses to this section. They provided answers that spoke to the needs of the toddler rather than the general roles usually performed by individual family members. Some of these responses included:

- “Breastfeeding the baby/toddler”
- “Bathing the toddler”
- “Disciplining the toddler”

- “Working for the toddler”
- “Watch the baby”
- “Wash the toddler’s clothes”

In addition, some candidates did not differentiate individual roles performed by mother, father and adolescent teenager, but gave a general list of roles performed by all family members.

Other candidates did well in responding and gave the expected answers. Some of these responses included:

- *Mother: caregiver, nurturer*
- *Father: provider, caregiver, breadwinner, role model, protector*
- *Adolescent teenagers: companion, helper, caregiver, learner*

Part (c) (i) of the question required candidates to describe different roles that could be performed by each of the three family members listed at (b) while caring for a 90-year-old grandmother. Most candidates attempted this part of the question. However, some candidates did not describe the roles of the family members, but gave one-word answers. Some candidates gave inappropriate responses such as:

- “Breadwinner”
- “Caregiver”
- “Chores”
- “Disciplinarian”
- “Work”
- “Helper”
- “Housekeeper”
- “Mother washes”
- “Mother cleans”
- “Cook”
- “Protection/security”

Candidates gave a similar response in answering this part of the question as they did for part (b). They did not describe the roles that the mother, father and adolescent were expected to perform for the diabetic grandmother. They gave general roles that might be performed by the mother, father and adolescent teenager.

The responses the candidates were expected to give were, for example:

- *Mother: caregiver, ensures that she eats and takes medication*
- *Father: helps with mobility needs of grandmother*
- *Adolescent teenager: provides companionship and helps grandmother to take her medication on time.*
- *Mother: Plans and prepares nutritious, well balanced meals for grandmother*
- *Father: Provides financial support to make sure her medication is available*

Part (c) (ii) of the question required candidates to describe two roles that the 90-year-old grandmother could perform in the daily activities of the family. Some candidates did not attempt this section at all, while others responded poorly. Many candidates made inaccurate recommendations for the grandmother’s diet and some made it appear as though the grandmother was the mother figure in the home. Some of the responses given were:

- “Grandmother should show appreciation”
- “Grandmother should not complain and eat what she gets”
- “Grandmother should clean”
- “Grandmother should cook”
- “Grandmother should wash”
- “Grandmother should water the garden”
- “Grandmother should shell peas”

- “Grandmother should use her pension and help out financially”
- “Grandmother should take her medication”
- “Grandmother should make cushion for the home”
- “Grandmother should work to provide for the family”

Responses that candidates were expected to give included the following:

- *Grandmother could play the role of being a babysitter for short periods*
- *Grandmother could share stories or family history and past events.*
- *Grandmother could be a conflict mediator*
- *Grandmother could be a counsellor*
- *Grandmother should be a role model and mentor*

Some candidates made it appear as though the grandmother was a paraplegic rather than a diabetic as indicated in the question.

Question 5

This question was designed to test candidates’ knowledge of goals and values.

Part (a) tested candidates’ ability to define the terms: ‘values’, ‘management’ and ‘goal’.

Part (b) tested candidates’ understanding of how to analyse the information given in a scenario. Candidates were expected to:

- (b) (i) state one goal and one value of the family,
- (b) (ii) outline two important steps the family should take to achieve its goals, and
- (b) (iii) state two important qualities the children need to demonstrate in order to achieve their goals and give one reason why each quality is important.

Part (a), in particular, was fairly well done, as most candidates were able to accurately define the terms. However, some of candidates gave incorrect or partially correct responses to the terms ‘values’ and ‘management’. Most candidates gave appropriate responses for the term ‘goal’. Some of the incorrect responses included:

- “Values are desires and plans that you would hope to achieve.”
- “Management is the process of controlling money or a business.”
- “Goal is a want or value.”

Part (b) (i) was generally well done as the majority of candidates were able to give the correct responses. It was found that most candidates were able to state an appropriate goal. However, it was noted that many candidates also provided the same response for the goal as they did for the value, which prevented maximum scores from being awarded. Values were identified incorrectly as:

- “Children going to university after completing secondary school”
- “Mother obtaining a nursing degree”
- “Burying the dead father”

Even in instances where the goal was stated correctly, it was repeated as a value in this part of the question. This indicated that some candidates were not able to distinguish between goals and values.

Part (b) (ii) was poorly done. Candidates encountered difficulty with the interpretation of the stem as indicated in some of the responses given. In a number of cases, candidates’ responses focused on the ‘death of the father’ instead of outlining the steps to achieve the family goals. Thus they provided inappropriate responses such as:

- “Mother should get over husband’s death.”

- “Not allowing the husband death to stress them out.”
- “Concentrate on achieving goals and not the husband’s death.”

Nevertheless some candidates were able to give partially correct responses.

Part (b) (iii) was poorly done as most candidates could not explain the importance of the qualities stated, as was required to earn full marks. The qualities for most part were not highlighted, and when given, a weak explanation of the importance of the qualities was supplied.

Expected responses were:

- *Perseverance: necessary sticking to the goal and the plans to achieve it as there are usually challenges that tend to act as deterrents.*
- *Patience: it may NOT be always possible or feasible for everyone to embark on their plans at the same time – need to wait their turn as decided by the family.*
- *Cooperation: all need to work together to pool resources so that all the family members can complete their education. Members need to help each other after achieving goals.*

Overall the candidates’ performance on this question was unsatisfactory. The mean mark obtained on this question was 5.56, and marks ranged from 0 to 15.

Question 6

This question, which tested candidates’ knowledge of the factors that affect the population of a country, was moderately popular.

The question also tested their knowledge of the effects that the death of two industries would have on a community, and the actions that could be taken to reduce the negative impact of the situation.

In Part (a) of the question, candidates were required to explain three factors that could affect the size of the population of a country. Most candidates handled this section well but some of the candidates gave the definition of the factors instead of an explanation. In some instances one- or two-word answers were given, for example:

- “Birth rate”
- “Death rate”
- “Migration”

Some candidates, on the other hand, showed no knowledge of the factors. They offered incorrect responses such as overgrown trees, deforestation, and garbage disposal as factors that could affect the size of a population.

Part (b) (i) required candidates to explain three effects the death of the sugar and coconut industries and resulting migration, especially by males in the 17–30 age group, to search for job opportunities would have on the community if the industries were not revived.

This part of the question was poorly handled. The majority of the candidates repeated what was in the stem of the question as their responses. This part was also linked to Part (a), with candidates giving answers on the population of the country. Candidates’ responses focused on the country instead of the community that was affected.

Incorrect responses included:

- “The community will be under populated”
- “People will migrate to other places”
- “Sugar will be scarce”
- “People are going to die of hunger and starvation”
- “The community will become non-existent”
- “The community will become a ghost town”

Candidates were required in Part (b) (ii) to state two possible actions the community could take to reduce the negative impact of the death of the sugar and coconut industries. Most of the candidates’ responses referred to reviving the industries but they did not say how. Others wrote that new industries should be started. This section was fairly well done by most candidates.

The majority of the candidates scored between 3 and 9 marks of the maximum 16 marks. The mean mark obtained was 5.44 and no candidate gained full marks.

Question 7

This question tested candidates’ knowledge and use of knowledge in the following areas:

- ways of legally acquiring housing in one’s country
- methods of obtaining potable water for use in the home
- safety concerns and related precautionary measures for families with young children

Part (a) of the question was generally well done by the candidates.

The more popular responses were:

- *Purchasing/buying*
- *Renting*
- *Inheritance*
- *Leasing*

However, some candidates misinterpreted “legally acquiring” to mean mortgage, title from the lawyer, loans from financial institutions, assistance from the government (housing development) as well as from winning a lottery.

Part (b) of the question was fairly well done, as some candidates correctly responded by answering:

- *Pipeline from the local water company*
- *Buying bottled water from supermarkets*
- *Collecting rain water*
- *Collecting water from rivers, streams, springs, wells and reservoirs*

The uses of water as well as water treatment were also given as methods of obtaining water. For example, bathing, cooking and washing; the use of chlorine/bleach, boiling, filtration and sterilization were among the inappropriate responses provided.

Part (c) (i) required candidates’ use of knowledge of safety concerns of a family with small children as they relate to an advertised property for rent.

A few candidates responded correctly by stating:

- *Children may fall off the balcony*
- *Children wandering off to the nearby beach and drowning*
- *Children running off to the highway and getting knocked down*

- *The type of entertainment is not child-friendly*

However, most candidates responded by re-writing the description of the advertised property as the safety concerns.

Part (c) (ii) required candidates to describe steps in making the property safe for young children. Most of the candidates correctly described the steps and gave accurate responses such as:

- *Rail/bar/grill on the balcony to prevent children climbing and falling over*
- *Lock all doors leading to the balcony to prevent children entering without adult supervision*
- *Fencing property to prevent easy access to the highway so that children would not be knocked down.*
- *Teach children safety rules and to practise them*
- *Ensure that life guards are on the beach to prevent children drowning*
- *Install security/alarm system to monitor children's safety.*
- *Install child-proof locks to prevent easy access from the property*

The mean mark obtained on this question was 6.25 and marks ranged from 0 to 15.

Paper 03 — School-Based Assessment

This component was done at the school level and moderated on site. Candidates were required to complete three practical assignments. These assignments tested the skills of planning and preparation, manipulation, evaluation and presentation. Candidates could score a maximum of 60 marks.

Candidate performance on the SBA was consistent with the performance over the previous two years. This year 96 per cent of candidates gained grades I–III compared to 94 per cent in 2013 and 93 per cent in 2012.