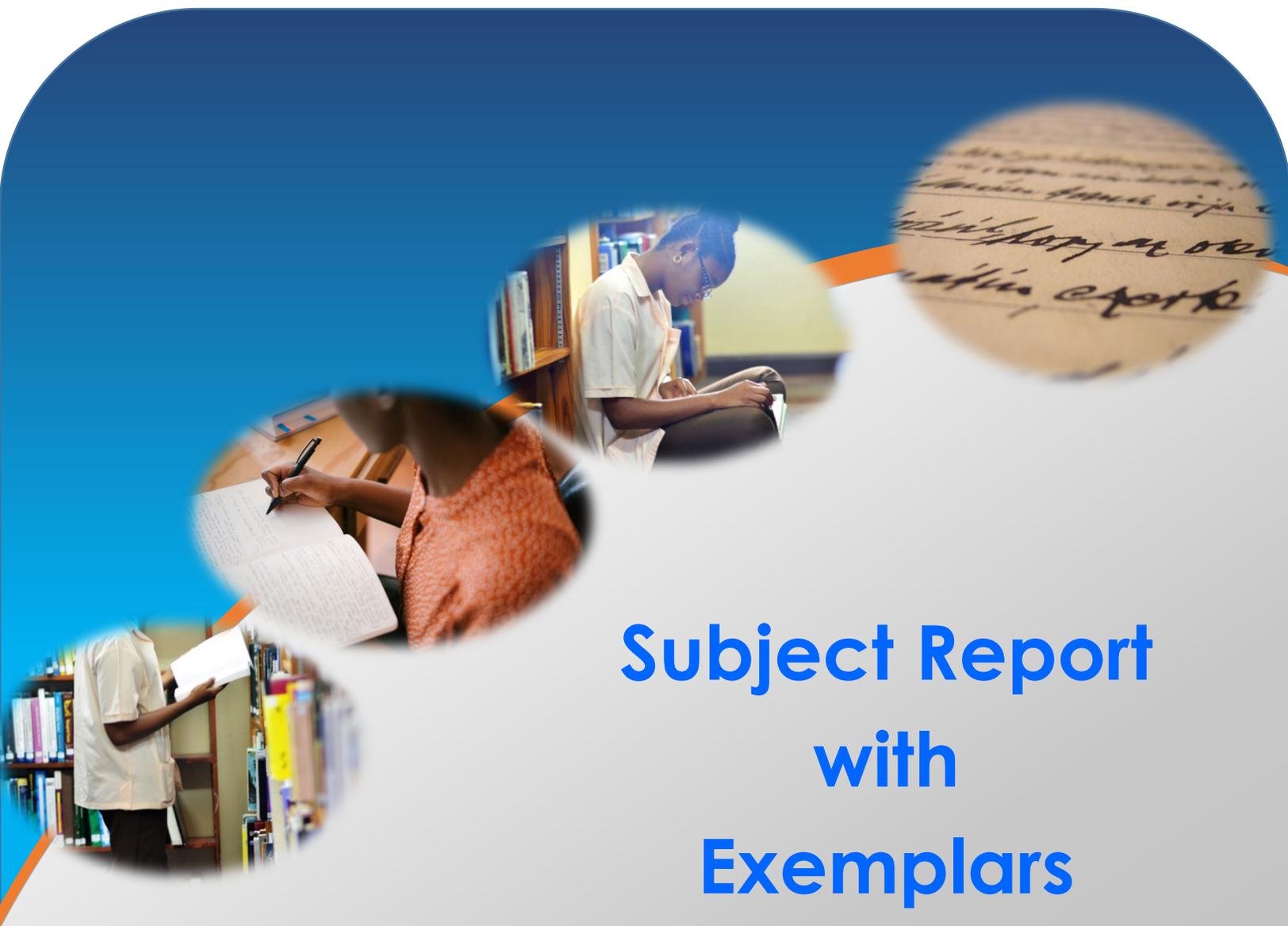




**CARIBBEAN  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL**

**CSEC<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH A**



**Subject Report  
with  
Exemplars**

*May/June 2024*

**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE<sup>®</sup>  
EXAMINATION**

**MAY/JUNE 2024**

**ENGLISH A  
GENERAL PROFICIENCY**

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## INTRODUCTION

This guide has been compiled using candidates' responses to the 2024 May/June examination in CSEC English A. The examination comprises the following papers.

- Paper 01: Multiple choice — This paper contributes 29 per cent to the total examination and assesses Profile 1.
- Paper 02: Structured essay — This paper contributes 50 per cent to the total examination and assesses both Profile 1 (15 per cent) and Profile 2 (45 per cent).
- Paper 031: the School-Based Assessment — This paper contributes 21 per cent to the total examination and assesses Profile 2.
- Paper 032: Alternative to the SBA — This paper is done by private candidates in lieu of the SBA.

In May/June 2024, approximately 68 008 candidates wrote the examination. Candidates' responses ranged from very weak to superior.

The skills and abilities to be developed and assessed in the study of English A are categorized under two profiles. These are

- Profile 1: Understanding — Understanding is defined as the decoding and interpreting of messages through the analysis of language structures and devices used in any given context.
- Profile 2: Expression — Expression is defined as conveying meaning through the selection of language structures and devices appropriate to a specific context.

The profile dimensions are comprehensively outlined on pages 3–5 of the syllabus.

## PAPER 01 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Paper 01 consists of 60 compulsory multiple-choice items worth one mark each. The paper is arranged into two sections; Section I consists of 25 discrete items while Section II consists of 35 reading comprehension items based on one of the following stimuli.

- One poem
- One literary extract taken from a novel, short story, biography, diary or letter
- One expository extract (for example, an encyclopedia extract, a report, instructions, a newspaper article, texts of a speech or a transcript of a conversation)
- One argumentative extract (for example, an advertisement, a speech or a letter to the editor)
- One visual extract (for example, a table, a chart, a form, a diagram, a map, a cartoon or an advertisement)

Profile 1: Understanding is assessed in Paper 01. In Section I, candidates are awarded marks for their ability to understand meaning conveyed through word choice, grammar, syntax, sentence structure, punctuation and paragraphing. In Section II, candidates are awarded marks based on their ability to

- obtain information accurately
- grasp insights from reading literature
- recognize and evaluate opinions expressed in various forms.

The mean mark was 38.2. Candidates are encouraged to pay particular attention to reading the stimuli presented to them in the examination, particularly the narrative and expository pieces, to ensure that they fully understand the material before they respond to the questions. They must also be encouraged to ensure that they refer to the stimulus for each question, especially in cases where line numbers are used.

## PAPER 02 — STRUCTURED ESSAY

Paper 02 comprises the following sections.

- Section A: Summary Writing
- Section B: Expository Writing
- Section C: Narrative Writing or Short Story Writing
- Section D: Argumentative Writing

Each section is used to assess both Profile 1 — Understanding (15 marks) and Profile 2 — Expression (90 marks).

### Section A

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#### Question 1

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This question was worth 25 marks and the mean score was 9.17. Scores ranged from 0 to 24. Five marks were allocated to Profile 1 and a total of 20 marks to Profile 2.

Overall, the performance of candidates continues to improve. It should be noted that summary writing is a critical skill that all candidates must develop because many aspects of their working life and other life experiences will require them to possess such skills.

Reading comprehension continues to be problematic for candidates and this problem needs to be addressed. Too many candidates are still unable to score the full five marks for identifying the relevant points from the passage. Further, candidates need to be reminded that the points must be presented as full sentences/ideas and not as topics. For example, a candidate should not write ‘teenage stress’ as one of the main points because there must be a specific aspect of teenage stress that the writer presents.

Many candidates were able to give the relevant points but they were unable to organize these points into one flowing paragraph. Some candidates presented responses that were longer than the stipulated one paragraph. Candidates were penalized for giving responses that were too long because there is a cutoff point (the 120<sup>th</sup> word). However, if the 120<sup>th</sup> word is in the middle of a sentence, the entire sentence will be considered.

The quality of the work of some candidates was affected by errors in how they used language. Errors included run on sentences, grammatical inaccuracies, spelling errors and punctuation lapses. In addition, candidates would benefit from planning their responses. If candidates adhere to the stipulated word limit, it is possible that they would have extra time to review/edit what they have written.

## Candidate's Response to Question 1

Read the following article on teenage stress carefully. List FIVE MAIN points discussed, then write a summary of the article in NOT MORE THAN 120 words in ONE PARAGRAPH. If this limit is exceeded, only the first 120 words of your answer will be read and assessed. You MUST include in your summary paragraph the five points you listed AND any other relevant points. A minimum of seven points is required in order for you to score full marks.

As far as possible, use your own words. Your summary must be in continuous prose. You may use the space on page 5 to jot down a plan.

In your answer, you will be assessed on how well you

- (a) identify the main ideas and opinions in the extract
- (b) organize and express these ideas and opinions in your own words
- (c) use appropriate grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

### Teenage Stress

Adolescence has always been a tricky, developmental period. It is characterized by fundamental yet somewhat difficult changes (physical, cognitive, and social) that are experienced by teens as they make their way from childhood toward adulthood. They are no longer children, but not yet adults, and this series of transitions not only impact the individual experiencing the transitions but also on parents, peers and society as a whole.

Adolescence has always been an awkward stage where teens struggle to build their own identity, seek autonomy and learn about intimacy. These things all cause a certain level of anxiety, but they are not really new.

What is new is the environment that we live in, and it is this fast-paced, perpetually plugged-in society that sets the tone for the messages and expectations that teens receive every day. Due to varying pressures around school, work, families, relationships, social media and the seemingly endless series of transitions involved in simply being an adolescent, teens today are indeed under more stress than ever before.

Today, teenagers are expected to know what they want to do — where they want to go to school and in which field they would like to work — earlier than ever before. They are also expected to do well, and are put on “success” tracks even in elementary school. They have to do well because it is assumed that all children will go to university. Further, they must get into the best university if they want to “succeed” and be competitive in today’s job market. This is a lot of pressure on teens.

### Sample Summary

The article "Teenage Stress" is about the challenging period of adolescence, which is characterized by significant physical, cognitive, and social changes as teens transition from childhood to adulthood. It discusses how this stage affects not only the teenagers but also their parents, peers, and society. Modern teens face increased stress due to societal pressures,

including early decisions about education and career paths, and the constant influence of social media. These factors contribute to higher levels of anxiety and the need to fit in and be accepted. The fast-paced, technology-driven environment exacerbates these pressures, making adolescence more difficult than ever before.

(100 words)

LIST OF FIVE MAIN POINTS.

1. Adolescence has always been a tricky development period.
2. It is characterized by fundamental yet somewhat difficult changes that are experienced by teens as they make their way from childhood to adulthood.
3. They are no longer children, but not yet adults, and this series of transitions not only impact the individual experiencing the transitions but also the parents, peers and society on a whole.
4. Adolescence has always been an ~~awkward~~ awkward stage where teens struggle to build their identity, seek autonomy and learn about intimacy.
5. Today, teenagers are expected to know what they want to do, where they want to go to school and which field they would like to work, earlier than ever before.

(5 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

In the exemplar, the candidate correctly identified the five main points. Therefore he/she earned five marks. Some candidates lost marks because they failed to separate points in their lists or because they combined two or three points under a single item. Additionally, some candidates copied points directly from the text. Although there is no penalty for doing such when listing points, significant marks are lost if this is done in the summary.

## Recommendations

In order to perform well, candidates need to do the following.

- Recognize the importance of reading the entire passage at least twice.
- Develop skills in identifying the main topic, key issues and supporting ideas.
- Understand various genres (argument, exposition, description) to effectively structure the final summary.
- Improve reading comprehension skills so that they can grasp the meaning and significance of the passage.
- Develop a stronger vocabulary so that they can relate to the content and understand it. This would also help them to convey the meaning of the passage.
- Practise organizing individual points into a coherent, grammatically correct paragraph.
- Learn to be concise in writing to avoid exceeding the word limit while still conveying all necessary information.

## Section B

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### Question 2

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This question was worth 30 marks and the mean score was 16.89. Scores ranged from 0 to 30.

**Study the situation presented below and then complete the task that follows.**

The youth group in your community are planning a fund-raising activity. As Public Relations Officer for the youth group, use the following information to write the notice which will be posted in the community.

- The activity will assist a fire victim.
- The event will be held on Saturday, 13 July 2024
- Time: 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Venue: Grounds of the community playing field.
- No admission fee.
- Fun activities for all ages.
- Local food will be on sale.
- A popular DJ will be present.

Write a **notice** that will be placed on the notice boards in the community.

**Your notice MUST be in continuous prose.**

**Your answer will be assessed on how well you**

- **format the notice**
- **select relevant and complete information**
- **organize and express the information**
- **use appropriate grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.**

**Total 30 marks**

**Content and Format**

While candidates were able to present the information requested, in many cases the incorrect format for a notice was used. Many candidates presented an advertisement or flyer. Most candidates were able to reproduce the expected salient points for the notice.

Many candidates presented the information using the correct tone and the required formal register. In some cases, candidates forgot which audience they were addressing and resorted to using slang. Some candidates paid attention to content but they did not organize it well. Therefore, there were lapses in coherence and conciseness of the information. The sequencing of the notice was accurate for most scripts. It must be noted that in some cases, candidates resorted to repetition of content or to writing a narrative.

**Language**

The formal register was used by many candidates. Candidates who created advertisements or flyers were heavily penalized under the language component of the mark scheme. Other errors included lack of subject and verb agreement, incorrect spelling and punctuation, and run on sentences.

St. John's Community Youth Group - Parson Trace Branch

NOTICE

Friday 1st July 2024

Community Fundraiser for Singh Family

FOR 3 REL-3 ACC-4

SEQ-2 COH-3 CON-2 AUD-2

LANG-4 MECH-2

The St. John's Community Youth is pleased to announce 'Fun Day', which will be held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2024, from 12 pm to 4 pm on the Parson Trace Community Playing Field. All monies raised will be directed <sup>towards</sup> assisting Mr. Arav Singh and his family whose home was unfortunately gutted by a fire <sup>last week</sup>, in recovering all amenities lost during that time.

There will be no admission fee, however there will be many scrumptious and local food items on sale. Additionally, there will be fun activities for all ages, such as <sup>rock climbing</sup> ~~face painting~~, lazer tag, and a relaxing sip-and-paint session. Entertainment will be provided by the world <sup>famous</sup> ~~renowned~~ 'DJ Ana' who will <sup>be</sup> present for the bazaar disco.

Feel free to contact the St. John's Community Youth group at (123) 456-7890 or stjohnyouthgroup@hotmail.com if any questions or suggestions arise. We hope to see you there!

### **Examiner's Comments**

The candidate gave an excellent response. He/she was able to capture the correct format of the notice and to accurately note the critical points. The candidate's writing was fluent and he/she utilized paragraphs. The essay was also well organized.

## **Recommendations**

For Question 2, teachers are reminded that the following areas may be tested.

- Letters (apology, complaint, application)
- Memorandum
- Email
- Notice
- Reports

As such, the formats of all the above-mentioned must be taught. In addition, the following should be noted.

- The process approach to writing must be used as part of classroom instruction.
- Good models of writing must be used in classes.
- Students need to be reminded that a sense of audience must be evident in the writing. As such, attention must be paid to the tone.
- Paragraphing needs to be emphasized in the teaching process. A student should not submit a response written in one paragraph.
- The mechanics of writing must be emphasized, especially in the editing phase of the writing process.

## Section C

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### Question 3

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For Question 3, candidates were required to write a story based on a picture of a lost, discarded or an abandoned cellular phone lying on a bed of grass. The question was worth 25 marks and the mean score was 11.05. Scores ranged from 0 to 25.

Most candidates used the stimulus as an important element in their stories. A few candidates produced very good and excellent stories with interesting and intriguing plots that were engaging in their refreshing narrative styles. Most stories, however, were written as a report and included some elements of a narrative incorporated (setting, dialogue, characterization). They reported about the characters and events in the story in a simple, pedestrian manner. This was an indication that most candidates still do not have mastery of this genre of writing. Some stories were devoid of the kinds of words that are effective for creating interesting characters, setting and general atmosphere of the story. A few candidates chose to write using the expository genre (including on the COVID-19 pandemic) and a few wrote descriptive pieces, failing to meet the basic requirement for narrative writing.

3. Write a story based on the picture below.



(25 marks)

Candidate's Response to Question 3

Like a puppy in the passenger's seat, Lucia sat in her once lively living room, eyes fixated out the window, impatient. The day had finally come; a package she yearned for all month was finally being delivered!

At the sight of a familiar black car turning the corner into her street, Lucia forcefully finished her morning coffee in a single swig and bolted towards the front door, <sup>phone in hand,</sup> with light feet. With a slightly disheveled appearance, Lucia opened the door anxiously and excitedly. Exhilaration and anticipation bubbled her blood as she fantasized about the contents of the parcel.

As the figure in green came approached her residence, a surge of fervour took over as Lucia ~~stiff~~ <sup>giddily</sup> ran like a preschooler towards the man, <sup>in demand of</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>little</sup> ~~patron~~ her property. <sup>Hesitantly</sup> ~~With~~ ~~hesitation~~, the delivery man ~~at~~ rummaged through his bag and revealed what seemed to be an envelope. ~~With~~ <sup>no</sup> patience left, Lucia grabbed the paper and tore it open. ~~The~~ ~~on~~ With shaky hands, she gripped the silver

pendant of ~~the~~ her necklace and ~~rose the letter so~~ <sup>began to read the paper to</sup> ~~the~~ her eyes. Suddenly, her breath hitched at the ~~The mere piece of paper she begged for was~~ simple—a letter from her letter supposedly sent by her drafted husband. ~~It~~

Upon being greeted by an unfamiliar handwriting, Lucia's breath hitched as her phone dropped from her small skinny hands. ~~What is the~~ <sup>shattered as it</sup> and <sup>fell onto</sup> the ~~lush~~ lush green grass of her yard. "What is the meaning of this?" Lucia whispered, a bit confused <sup>and terrified</sup> and terrified. "I am so sorry for your loss ma'am," she <sup>and terrified</sup> and terrified. The soldier replied solemnly with his head facing his toes, ashamed to meet her gaze. The second dose words penetrated her ear canals, Lucia's once expression of happiness and excitement transformed into agony as a concoction of emotions stirred in her now fragile body. Her once bright eyes grew dark and void, empty of joy. ~~It~~ Her legs grew weak as her bones buckled against each other like tectonic plates. Lucia collapsed to the ground, she prickly

sensation of the grass stimulated her skin as she slumped ~~knelt~~ down. The sun ~~o~~ morning sun shone <sup>brightly</sup> ~~beautifully~~ on her golden-brown skin as ~~the~~ salty waterfalls <sup>emerged</sup> ~~fell~~ from her eyes. The loud ~~peep~~ cries from her tiny mouth echoed through her neighbourhood as <sup>nosey</sup> neighbours ~~peeped~~ peeped through their windows observing the scene. The dogs of the street howled in tune with her sobs, ~~empath~~ sympathising sympathising with her sorrow. ~~In~~ ~~is~~ Similar to the cellular device adjacent to her, Lucia's heart shattered with disbelief. ~~Receiv~~ Receiving a letter of such nature was not on her bingo card.

Lucia reminisced ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> the times they spent together. Fond memories rushed into her <sup>synapses</sup> ~~synapses~~ as ~~st~~ nostalgia filled her soul. The multiple ~~stif~~ ~~stif~~ stifes they had come to mind. If she knew of his cruel fate, surely Lucia would appreciate his presence more, she would love him harder she will apologize for all the times she wronged him. If mother nature was kind enough to spare her one more second in his presence, she would appreciate him while she still can.

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate wrote an excellent narrative in which he/she utilized all the pertinent elements of an action structure. The candidate incorporated a compelling presentation of character and use of setting, and a fitting tone to complement the narrative. He/she organized the essay excellently and sequenced the events well, which added to the advancing of the plot and heightened the conflict. The candidate also used language well to depict emotion and characterization. He/she incorporated excellent word choice to create the atmosphere of the story.

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## Question 4

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Candidates were required to write a story based on the words “He was about to give up when the unthinkable happened.” This question was worth 25 marks and the mean score was 12.70. Scores ranged from 0 to 24.

### Candidate’s Response to Question 4

Write a story based on the sentence below.

“He was just about to give up, when the unthinkable happened.” **(25 marks)**

Except for the few candidates who hinted at or left the reader to infer where the stimulus was incorporated in the story, most candidates understood and utilized the stimulus appropriately in their stories. A few candidates blended the narrative voice and other elements of fiction with great facility to craft stories that were refreshing and exhilarating. However, as with Question 3, most candidates did not demonstrate a high level of imagination and creativity in incorporating the elements of fiction in their stories. Also, they lacked the choice of words necessary to craft engaging stories. These candidates used the reporting style to tell the reader about the characters, setting and events taking place in the story. Typically, the plots were predictable and mundane.

### Organization

Most candidates performed well on this component. Overall, there was effective sequencing and coherence of events in the stories. Some stories were refreshing and candidates successfully included intricate and imaginative structures.

### Effective Use of Language

As with the other areas, the comments on language usage are common to Questions 3 and 4. A few candidates used language effectively (choice of words, grammar and mechanics). However, most of them struggled with using language competently and effectively to write strong, imaginative stories. The stories lacked narrative voice and personal style. The words used did not create interesting conflicts, storylines, characters or settings. Overall, candidates did not craft stories that were pleasurable for reading. Most candidates did not include strong verbs, adjectives and adverbs, and they did not use figurative language to create story atmosphere.

Candidates also had issues with grammar and mechanics. These issues were related to persistent spelling errors, misuse of the comma and other punctuation marks, run-on sentences, the absence of paragraphs and the incorrect use of capital letters. There were also problems with subject and verb agreement, and how candidates used past tense markers.

Candidate's Response to Question 4 — Sample 1

After a week of inactivity from the killer, he was about to give up, when the unthinkable happened.

Mike Keoghan had just finished filling some documents at the station and was heading to his ~~car~~ car when he saw a white flyer tucked under one of the wipers. Curiously, he removed the flyer to read it and immediately felt his blood run cold. It was an address written by the killer and this he knew because their signature was signed beneath.

He wasted no time and was soon speeding down the street in the dark of the ~~night~~ night.

The address led Mike to <sup>an abandoned warehouse</sup> a warehouse abandoned decades ago. He spotted a light ~~on~~

shining dimly on the second floor and ensured that his revolver was in his hand before

he entered. The stairs to the second floor were old and broken through save a few

which the Detective used to reach the designated room. He could hear a lady humming

softly in the distance but it suddenly stopped and a voice called out: "Mr. Keoghan, do

come in. I have been expecting you." The Detective took a sharp turn before raising

his gun up at the woman, who was unfazed by his presence. "Oh, please," she said. "Put

that away, it does not scare me." "Why show yourself now?" he asked. "Because I

know I'm going to get away with it." the woman replied. "My name is Vicky Warren."

Mike immediately began connecting the dots: "wait... you're Victor's sister?" "Yes,

I'm glad someone remembers his name." "But why?" Mike asked confused. "Why are

you killing -" Vicky raised her hand <sup>stopping him</sup> ~~to stop him~~. "You should know, Mike. You were

there when those entitled heirs bullied him. But no one defended him because those

boys had influential parents. Not even the teachers cared." Vicky gestured for Mike to follow her. She led him to a furnace that was emanating intense heat <sup>and</sup> but it had a severely foul smell. "What is that smell?" he asked, covering his nose. "Take a wild guess, Mikey. What was it they did to him again, oh, I remember. They thought it was funny to burn him with acid." "That does not make what you're doing right!" Mike yelled. "Right, right," she said dismissively. "The <sup>aristocrats</sup> Smiths, Jones and Johnsons have been getting away with murder and illegal activity for way too long. Their wealth always gets them out scar-free which is ironic, because the my brother died with scars and burns. He was the only family I had." "So you waited twenty years for revenge?" Mike asked. "No, I waited twenty years to execute a plan so perfectly flawless. As ~~an incompetent detective with a conscience~~ Mike, ask yourself: Isn't it high time someone executes justice in this town?" "Go on," Mike said, narrowing his gaze. "I have proof that the Johnsons had your father killed when he found out a secret of theirs, wouldn't you like to know? Make them pay?" "It would be against my oath." Mike argued. "It is also against your oath to let people get away with murder. So, join me and cleanse this town of all it's evil. Or you can say no and meet the fate of my victims, it's a free country." Mike turned around and smiled to himself. It's not like he enjoyed his job anyways nor did he do well at it. And it did not pay extremely well, so why not go for an adventure?

"I'll say yet," Mike said. "But I'll be bringing you in for questioning later on."

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate wrote a very creative and effective response to the stimulus. He/she included intense conflict which was well developed, sustained and resolved. The candidate also included strong characters. The piece was written using an excellent narrative style; the story was short and the candidates used an effective narrative voice. Overall, the quality of writing was remarkable.

Candidate's Response to Question 4 – Sample 2

Growing up, I have always looked ~~by~~ up to my older brother, Jayden. He always looked out for me no matter what and was always there for me whenever I needed him. He was really the best brother anyone could ever asked for.

Suddenly, my whole world came crashing down when I got the call that my brother was in the hospital. As soon as I heard, I got there in a heartbeat, to find out that he had been diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer. This really broke my heart but I knew that I had to be strong, ~~for~~ and be there for him as he was for me growing up and throughout our lives. We decided to go ahead with treatment but found out that he had to undergo surgery to get as much of the tumor as possible before treatment. While he was in surgery I waited in his room pacing back and forth worrying about if he was going to make it.

Hours passed and he finally came out of surgery, the doctor said that there is a 50-50% chance that <sup>he</sup> I will wake up as it was a very risky surgery. I waited and waited and waited for about an hour, 30 mins for him to wake - but he didn't. The doctor checked on him every thirty minutes and this time she told me he was getting worse and not responding to any meds given - I started to cry, I thought I was about to lose my brother forever. The doctor then advised me to prepare

for the worst because she tried everything, and there is nothing more that can be done, ~~but I still had faith~~. I called our parents so they can be there in case he doesn't make it, but deep down I still had faith that he wouldn't leave us.

As we waited for hours and hours, my parents started to lose hope that he would ever come back to us, but I never did because I know he never did and will never lose hope in his little brother. Eventually, his doctor told us that the best option at that point was to pull the plug and let him go peacefully. My parents agreed but I pleaded and pleaded no, I wanted to wait a little while more because I know my big brother is fighting it, ~~and he wouldn't give up on me~~ and he would never give up on me - ever.

His vitals were getting worse by the minute. He was just about to give up when the unthinkable happened. He opened his ~~eyes~~ eyes! He gave me a weak smile and I immediately called for a doctor, when she came her eyes widened in shock, as a result of her being completely and totally surprised to see him awake. She was even more shocked that he was talking perfectly fine. ~~lived nothing ever happend~~ happened. "This is truly a miracle," she said as she was checking him for his temperature etc.

After some time recovering and undergoing treatment, he was finally able

to go home. He was not yet out of the woods but good enough to fully recover in the comfort of his own home. I helped nurse him back to ~~his~~ health, never leaving his side. He is now up and walking around, almost back to his old ways. I am so so relieved that I didn't lose ~~by~~ my big brother, my hero.

#### Examiner's Comments

Even though the candidate wrote the story using a straight-forward and linear plot, the elements of the narrative are evident and the first-person narrative account, because of its emotional content, gives an authentic appeal, thereby adding substance to the narrative. There is very good organization of the details. Good command of language — secure grammatical structures and mechanics though there were some inaccuracies.

## Recommendations

### Content and Relevance of Story

- Students require exposure to a variety of short stories to broaden their imagination and creativity.
- In writing classes, there should be more reading of stories and student-centered analyses of the writers' craft.
- Teachers should guide students to focus on specific elements during story writing sessions; for example, how to create a plot that presents significant challenges for the central character, which must be satisfactorily and interestingly resolved at the end of the story.
- Students should be exposed to different kinds of stories such as stories that showcase plot, stories that turn on character or setting, and reflection.
- Students should be given more stimuli, other than those in past papers, to assist with generating suspense, surprise endings, and/or ironic twists.
- Teachers should provide examples of stories in which characterization is a dominant element and examples of how to develop story characters through description and dialogue.
- Students must be helped to effectively inject the action of the story early in the writing rather than provide lengthy background details that add little to the plot of their stories.
- Teachers should encourage students to write stories that are short and that do not extend beyond two and a half pages.

### Language Usage

- Teachers should continue to use differentiated instructional strategies to provide students with the practice they require to effectively use the grammar and mechanics of Standard English.

- Exemplars must be provided for students to gain an understanding of how writers use diction to create characters, settings and atmosphere in their stories.

Teachers should note that stories must be written based on the picture or the sentence(s). There is no requirement for all the sentence(s) in Question 4 to be included in the story nor all the details of the picture. However, in the stories, candidates must demonstrate a clear relationship between the chosen stimulus and the narrative elements.

## Section D

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### Question 5

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For the argumentative piece, candidates were asked to present their views on the topic “Physical Education and Sports should be compulsory for all students.” This section of the paper proved to be the most problematic for candidates as they scored the lowest on this section. This question was worth 25 marks and the mean score was 8.14. Scores ranged from 0 to 23.

This question was age-appropriate and timely. Candidates presented a variety of good points and ideas. There was scope for easy development of the points chosen since information came from real-life situations. However, some candidates were unclear of the meaning of the word compulsory. As a result, in many instances, a position was taken but the supporting arguments contradicted the stance taken.

Additionally, candidates did not demonstrate that they understood the concept of the argument as a discrete genre. Candidates need to understand that the stimulus or claim gives a point of view on a topic with which they need to agree or disagree. A few candidates wrote narrative or expository pieces. The sequencing of events of events with words such as ‘then’ and ‘next’ are elements associated with narrative and not argument. In too many cases, paragraphs were sketchy.

Some candidates did not organize their essays well. The essays included an introduction, body and conclusion but they were not organized into paragraphs. Many candidates are not using paragraphs or using too few paragraphs to develop their points. Even when there was evidence of indentations candidates did not demonstrate the elements of the paragraphing such as using topic sentences with supporting sentences.

A significant number of candidates scored 0. At least one candidate gave a response that was completely unreadable.

Formal writing continues to be a problem for Caribbean students who struggle with acquiring Standard English because of the influence of dialects. This is increasingly compounded by the language used on social media. Several candidates seem to think that words such as ‘cause’ instead of because and ‘wanna’ and ‘gonna’ are now Standard English words. In addition to the above examples, there was increased use of abbreviations including don’t and etc.

In a fast-paced world such as ours, it is undoubtedly imperative that all humans are equipped with the energy ~~and~~, perseverance and sheer skill required for handling the stresses and demands of everyday life. As a result, I <sup>strongly</sup> believe it should be compulsory for all students to undertake the subject of Physical Education and Sport. From a young age, students ~~will~~ can become aware of the importance of leading a healthy life, improve their social health by meeting ~~new~~ and forging bonds with like-minded individuals, and develop core values such as teamwork.

Firstly, through Physical Education, students will learn the absolute importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, a trait that will carry into adulthood. Health is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as 'an optimal condition of physical, mental and social wellness, and not just the absence of infirmity.' By this definition, shouldn't we agree that living healthily is not only recommended, but necessary for survival in today's world? With 60 per cent of children under 16 living primarily sedentary lifestyles, and a large fraction of those children facing challenges such as social anxiety, <sup>addiction,</sup> depression and attention deficit disorders, the direct correlation between health and lifestyle choices can be seen. Physical Education and Sport presents students with the opportunity to ~~(improve)~~ make more appropriate lifestyle choices through education and exercise, ~~and~~ limiting the ills ~~that~~ <sup>commonly</sup> we see in the youth of our society.

Secondly, Physical Education and Sport ~~can~~ fosters the learning of core values such as communication, patience and teamwork. <sup>whether</sup> Through team sports or group projects, such values are taught and greatly developed throughout one's tenure of Physical Education and Sport study. Such values possessed by individuals ~~can~~ prove to serve them advantageously, as several studies have concluded that people who are 'team-players', patient and maintain good rapport with their comrades are twice as likely to obtain leadership positions in the workplace, often rendering them more successful than <sup>their counterparts</sup>. Additionally, values and skills are taught that can improve all facets of health, not just social. For example, first aid and injury management ~~is~~ often taught in Physical Education. Although the nay-sayer will state that Physical Education is just a class of sweat and wild-play, I ~~can~~ decree that most of the skills necessary for development and well-being hold roots within the Physical Education classroom.

Finally, Physical Education allows for students to forge bonds with new individuals, create memories, and provide an avenue of expression of emotion through sport. All <sup>of</sup> these advantages result in a student at peak mental health and strength. According to the Caribbean Netball Association, 80% of youth netballers <sup>in the Caribbean</sup> have reported building the strongest friendships with people they met on their <sup>respective</sup> teams or during competition. Athletes <sup>and students alike</sup> are able to regulate and show emotions such as fear, anger and anxiety through

sport and physical activity, often leaving them with a renewed sense of motivation, drive, and gratification in striving for excellence. Building confidence is integral for young minds, and through the warm sense of community created by Physical Education and Sport, this is a truly attainable reality.

In summary, I believe Physical Education and Sport should be compulsory for all students, as it promotes the physical, social and mental wellness of individuals. It also emphasises the balance between these various aspects of health and wellness and why it is necessary to have well developed traits of these aspects in order to survive <sup>and adapt to</sup> the quickly progression new-age world. Through learning new skills and values, physical activity and self-expression, it is guaranteed that Physical Education and Sport is critical to building healthy young people who are well-adapted and resilient to the stresses of day to day life.

#### Examiner's Comments

In exemplar, the candidate presents a point of view and gives three good reasons to support the position. In the conclusion, the candidate reiterates the ideas which support the point of view given in the introduction. The essay is well-organized and the candidate displayed excellent language skills.

## Recommendations

- It is important to establish a focus for the response, even if that focus is 'I agree with the statement'.
- Students need to be taught/reminded that organization should be within and across paragraphs.
- The concept of the line of an argument progressing from introduction to conclusion needs to be emphasized.
- Students could be taught to use graphic organizers to help them organize their arguments.
- Students need to practise accurate writing.
- Students need to understand that punctuation adds meaning to writing.
- Students could be given practice in rewriting jumbled paragraphs to raise their awareness about paragraph unity.
- More individual reading by students and examples given by teacher in the classroom could help them to see the distinctions between formal and colloquial language.

In May/June 2024, students did well in several aspects of the project. However, there were still a few areas to which teachers need to pay closer attention to the rubrics as set out in the syllabus.

### **Plan of Investigation**

Most students scored three marks out of five. Students should refrain from giving several reasons for choosing their topic as this method causes them to exceed the word limit. In addition, stating that my 'research', 'writing skills' and 'mood' will improve, were identified as benefits; however, these reasons are not considered to be English specific. They are too general or they cannot be described as benefits. Many students also tried unsuccessfully to incorporate the benefits of doing the project with the use of English skills. For example, 'I hope to increase my vocabulary and use my vocabulary skills to write ...', or other similar statements, are not considered to be correct.

### **Reflections**

Students should note that the reflections are three separate pieces of 150 words each. In Reflection 1, students are expected to state the titles of the artefacts, their previous knowledge about the topic, the issue in the artefact, what they had learned (new knowledge) as well how this new knowledge affected them. They should ensure that they have a similar discussion for each piece.

Overall, students did not do Reflection 2 well. Many of them gave a summary of each piece or wrote about the same strategy for each piece. In many responses, students identified devices or techniques but they gave no examples as support or they used incorrect examples. Sometimes, students did not illustrate in their discussions how the devices helped to achieve the author's purpose. Students should ensure that they have a similar discussion for each piece.

Reflection 3 continues to be done well. Some candidates linked the expected benefits from their plan to their personal growth with great success.

### **Written Report**

This section was not done well although there was much improvement over last year's submissions. Groups were to state the group's theme, sub-topics of each member, identify the three pieces used and the authors of the pieces, and why and how the pieces were chosen. This should have been followed by a discussion of each piece. The task of each member and the process of writing the report should also have been included. Groups that did not select the three pieces for discussion received a very low score.

Too many groups began with a discussion of the process from its inception with the teacher's suggestions for the project. Some students exceeded the word limit before they completely analysed the three selected pieces because their introductions/discussions were too lengthy. Many groups also used questions to guide their answer. In some instances, the answers based on the selected questions either did not include three pieces or included more than three pieces.

## **General**

Some projects are still being submitted with missing sections. This was most common with the written report. Teachers are asked to ensure that the project contains the sections for which marks were allocated on the cover sheet.

Teachers and students should take note of the following.

- The English SBA is not a group project. Only the Written Report is a group effort. There have been too many instances of teachers attaching the names of five or six students to the same project.
- Several aspects of the Written Report were not done well. For example, in some reports, there were no sub-topics or evidence to show how the three pieces were selected.
- The moderated report on each SBA will indicate which section, if any, exceeded the word limit, as well as the missing elements for each section. Even if all elements were present, marks would not have been awarded if those elements came after the word limit had been reached.

Many candidates still appear inadequately prepared to answer some questions. In many cases, candidates simply lifted chunks of information from the media given without showing clear understanding of the information.

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## **Question 1**

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### **Part (a)**

The three pieces were appropriate for treating the issue of mental health; however, too many candidates found difficulty determining the main idea of all three media. Even those who were able to glean the main idea did not score full marks as they failed to understand the requirement for the verb *outline* and therefore provided no supporting statements to outline the main idea. This year, many candidates were able to identify the benefits and disadvantages of homework as the main idea of the article; however, many focused on the disadvantages and failed to see that the article was discussing both sides of the issue. For the cartoon, most candidates simply relayed what was happening in the scene, while for the poem extract, many candidates failed to see the sarcasm and therefore stated that the main idea was to show how much the writer loved homework.

### **Candidate's Response to Part (a)**

- (a) In the article they spoke about the good and the bad side about homework in the good side. They stated that homework can help student to develop key skills and in the bad side, homework can be harmful to students.
- (b) The parents having a hard time finishing they kid homework meanwhile the kid is play game showing that the parents are doing the kid homework when he was the one suppose to do it.
- (c) The main issue presented in the poem, speaks about the diminishing return students receive from homework. It leads to insanity, stress and negative impacts on the mental health.

#### **Examiner's Comments**

The candidate captured the main idea of the article and included the supporting evidence. He/she also gave the main idea portrayed by the cartoon. In addition, the candidate grasped the sarcasm in the poem and highlighted the main idea that homework can have a negative effect on the mental and physical health of students.

The term *appropriateness* posed a problem for some candidates. They simply repeated the main idea without stating whether the chosen text was appropriate for conveying the information. In cases where candidates understood the question, they gave answers that were comprehensive and explicit.

### **Part (b)**

Candidates were asked to choose one of the three texts and assess its appropriateness for the purpose of communicating the idea or issue.

#### **Candidate's Response to Part (b)**

- (a) In the poem, "Homework, I love You", it's a comedic and rhythmic manner it clearly defines the negative effects of doing homework. To the likely audience of students and parents, it presents the issue in an easy and understand way. I believe it was an appropriate medium of communicating the issue.
- (b) I have chosen text two due to the idea that I believe a picture paints a thousand words. This cartoon image show vividly and clearly the idea of the message to any viewer, each detail adds meaning to the text quoted from the picture, " Son, we're stuck. Mind giving us a hand with your homework." This express the idea perfectly to all audiences.
- (c) Text 1 article – The article contains factual information which can be read from the website. It is accessible and it highlights the factors associated with both the negative and positive impacts but it gives the online readers who are more into computer world the information.

#### **Examiner's Comments**

The candidate understood what was required. He/she clearly showed why the poem is appropriate for conveying the issue. He/she clearly shows why the cartoon is appropriate for addressing the issue. In addition, the candidate carefully explained why the article is appropriate for addressing the issue of homework.

While students were, for the most part, able to identify one language technique from two of the media, most were unable to explain the effectiveness of these techniques. There were, however, too many candidates who were unable to name any language techniques and instead they gave quotations from the texts as techniques. The candidates continued to use words like 'generalities', 'persuasive' and 'poem' as language techniques. The concepts of appropriateness and effectiveness and the definition and explanation of language techniques will require greater attention in the classroom.

### **Part (c)**

Candidates were required to choose two of the texts, identify one language technique used in each and explain their effectiveness.

### **Candidate's Response to Part (c)**

Title: The Homework Divide

Technique used: factual information

Effectiveness: Factual information was used in the article to bring credibility to the different points the writer was making concerning homework. Furthermore, the use of factual statistical data and also helped credibility to each argument.

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## Question 2

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Candidates were asked to explain three factors a speaker must consider when making an oral presentation.

Most candidates seemed aware of considerations for oral presentations; however, several failed to provide the explanation for the factors which the speaker should consider, which formed the second part of the question. Too many candidates included considerations related to the content of the presentation.

### Candidate's Response to Part (a)

Factor 1: Eye Contact

Reason: eye contact is very important. It creates a sense of connection between the speaker and the audience.

Factor 2: Body language

Reason: The way you move our body while delivering a speech can affect the presentation. Depending on the body language, the presentation can be interesting and entertaining or boring to the audience.

Factor 3: Quality of voice

Reason: The quality of voice of the presenter deeply affects the presentation, Voice modulation is likely to have a greater impact on the audience, whereas monotonous voice will bore the audience.

Examiner's Comments

The candidate clearly explained three factors that must be considered when making an oral presentation.

### Part (b)

Candidates were asked to list three points they would use for an oral presentation on the subject presented in the texts. Most candidates were able to list three relevant points for an oral presentation based on the issues highlighted in the texts. Some candidates, however, included points that were too general and that could be applied to other issues other than the issue of mental health.

### Candidate's Response to Part (b)

- (1) I would outline the disadvantages and benefits of homework, as well as methods and practices to cope with and reduce stress cause by homework.
- (2) I would outline the disadvantages of written homework to kids and illustrate and outline methods and strategies to make homework exciting and effective.
- (3) I would discuss ways to maintain a healthy mind and physical body for students, despite the challenges and amount of homework.

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate provided three good points for the oral presentation.

### Part (c)

There was some measure of misunderstanding of this question. Candidates continue to be confused by the way the question is worded. They are still listing various groups as the features of the group. For example, parents, children, officials, etc. become features instead of groups. For this June's examination, especially, candidates performed unsatisfactorily on this question. Many scored 0 marks out of 6 and several others did not attempt the question.

### Candidate's Response to Part (c)

Characteristics of the group:

- (1) Educator or teachers who regularly distribute homework to students
- (2) Parents or guardians of students who receive homework.
- (3) Students who has experience to positive and negative sides of being given homework.

Techniques

- (1) Invite students to give their testimony or share their experiences.
- (2) Have an audio visual presentation to assist with communication.
- (3) Have an open mic question and answer segment.

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate demonstrated a clear understanding of what was required when providing a response.

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### Question 3

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This question was handled fairly well by the candidates who attempted it. Poetry seemed to be the genre of preference and some candidates, under examination conditions, were able to produce some competent and entertaining poems on the issues presented. Even when the vernacular was used, the candidates did so with a degree of comfort while using poetic language (similes, metaphors etc.) and rhyme and repetition. Many of the responses, prose, poetry and drama, reflected deep thought and candidates' awareness of the issues related to homework. In some cases, even when candidates performed poorly on Questions 1 and 2, they were able to manipulate the elements of writing and composing sufficiently to produce competent answers. What seemed deficient, however, was the organization and sequencing of ideas, as some candidates hardly used paragraphs in their prose responses.

#### Candidate's Response to Question 3

Homework, O Homework,  
You keep me up late,  
Sometimes until midnight, sometimes until eight.  
You teach me Science, English and Mathematics  
You provide me with skills, talents and crucial tactics.

Homework, O Homework  
You occupy me on weekends and holidays,  
You busy my minds and make me go in a maze,  
You keep me away from parties and dances,  
You keep me imprisoned and rarely gives me chances.

Homework, O Homework,  
You decorate my room with papers and books,  
You challenge me with teacher's angry books,  
You make me go blue,  
But even though I still love you.

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate wrote a poem in response to Question 3.

## Recommendations

- For Question 1 (a, b, and c), teachers should teach students about terms such as *main idea*, *appropriateness* and *effectiveness of treatment* and *language techniques*. When giving an answer for the main idea, students should be taught that the response should include the word ‘that’. When giving an answer for the purpose, the response should include the word ‘to’.
- For Question 2 (a), teachers must explain the meaning of the phrase ‘other than the composition of the audience’ to students as too many students are listing age/sex/race as factors to be considered when making an oral presentation. Students should also be informed that the factors required are those related to delivery and not content of the presentation.
- For Question 2 (c), teachers should ensure that students understand that they must provide characteristics of the groups they identify, that is, what features of the mentioned group would make the members interested in the particular presentation.
- For Question 3, the candidates who wrote poems seemed to be at a greater advantage than those who wrote prose. Attempts at prose, especially short story and argument, would be enhanced by effective paragraphing. Teachers need to ensure that the students are familiar with the basic elements of paragraph construction.
- It should be made clear that responses to Question 3 must be original.