

THE NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA



**CANDIDATES' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS
REPORT FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVING
EXAMINATION (PSLE) 2019**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Published by

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania,
P.O. Box 2624,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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FOREWORD

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania has a pleasure to give feedback on the evaluation of a seven-year primary education in Tanzania for the year 2019. The results of the Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLE) Examination are used as basic qualifications for the selection of pupils who join secondary education.

This Candidates' Item Response Analysis (CIRA) for the year 2019 provides feedback to pupils, teachers, parents, policy makers and the public in general on the candidates' performance in English Language subject. The analysis of candidates' responses highlights the factors that contributed to good performance of the candidates and the challenges faced by some of the candidates in answering questions correctly. The analysis indicates that the candidates who performed well were able to identify the tasks of the questions, they had sufficient knowledge of grammatical rules, good basic vocabulary for use in different situations and were able to read and interpret concepts in the comprehension passage. On the other hand, the candidates who scored low marks lacked competence in those areas.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects that the feedback provided in this report will enable teachers and other stakeholders to take applicable measures to improve the teaching and learning of the English Language subject in primary schools. Besides, it is expected that the skills which will be acquired from this analysis will improve the performances, not only in the Primary School Leaving Examination but also in other NECTA examinations at higher levels.

Finally, the Council would like to thank those who participated in making this report a reality.



Dr. Charles E. Msonde

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The English Language Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLE) was done on 11th September, 2019. The candidates who were registered for the examination were 947,077; among these, 933,274 (98.54%) sat for the examination and 495,948 (53.21%) passed. There was an increase in this year's performance by 3.58 percent, when compared to the 2018 English Language Examination, where a total of 957,904 candidates were registered for the examination, among these, 944,155 (98.56%) sat for the examination and 468,092 (49.63%) passed.

The English Language paper consisted of four sections A, B, C and D, with forty (40) objective type of questions and five (05) short answer type of questions making a total of forty five (45) questions. Different language areas were examined in each section as follows: section A, thirty (30) grammar items; section B, six (6) vocabulary items; section C, four (4) composition items; and section D, five (05) comprehension items.

The analysis of candidates' performance in each item and topic has been done to show areas where the candidates were able or unable to show their competences. The analysis is presented by indicating the number and the percentage of the candidates who correctly answered the items and those who responded with incorrect answers. In addition to that, a star (*) in the tables and graphs signifies a correct response and the term "others" has been used to show the number and percentage of candidates who did not respond to the question and those who responded without following the given instructions.

The candidates' performance per question has been grouped into three categories. The performance from 60 to 100 percent is categorised as *good*, from 40 to 59 percent is *average*, and from 0 to 39 percent is *poor*. In presentation, three basic colours have been used to represent the performances: *green* signifies good performance, *yellow* indicates average performance and *red* represents poor performance.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF THE ITEMS

2.1 Section A: Grammar

The grammar section tested the candidates' ability to identify and use correctly grammatical sentence constructions.

Question 1: The visitors _____ a few hours ago.

- A left
- B leave
- C leaving
- D will leave
- E shall leave

The question tested the candidates' ability to use the simple past tense. The overall performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 1

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	434,669	172,471	161,625	115,596	46,006	2,907
% of Candidates	46.6	18.5	17.3	12.4	4.9	0.3

Table 1 shows that the candidates' performance in this question was average. This owes to the fact that the candidates who chose the correct response A (*left*) were only 434,669 (46.6%). These candidates realised that a verb form required in the given context is the simple past tense "left". This shows that they had sufficient knowledge of how to form the simple past tense verb form with the adverb "ago".

However, 495,698 (53.1%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*leave*) did not realise that *leave* cannot be used in a statement which ends with the adverb "ago" indicating the past but it could have been used if the sentence was in question form as in "Did the visitors *leave* a few hours ago?" Moreover, the candidates who chose option C (*leaving*) did not realise that the verb in the "-ing" form must be used after the verb "be" (is/am/are + -ing). They also did not know that the simple past tense cannot be formed by using the verb in the "-ing" form. Furthermore, the candidates who chose the incorrect options D (*will leave*) and E (*shall leave*) did not realise that the auxiliary verbs "will" and "shall" are used with the main verb in the simple present form to express activities that will take place in the future.

Question 2: A large snake _____ into our room when we were asleep.

- A crept
- B has crept
- C creep
- D creeps
- E is creeping

The question required the candidates to correctly use the simple past form of the verb to show an action that took place in the past and was completed.

Table 2: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 2

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	271,323	215,228	162,196	113,091	167,138	4,298
% of Candidates	29.1	23.1	17.4	12.1	17.9	0.5

The data presented indicate that the candidates' performance in this question was weak since only 271,323 (29.1%) chose the correct option A (*crept*). These candidates knew that the simple past form of the verb "creep" was the correct word to be used to show something that happened in the past. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*has crept*) did not realise that the snake entered the room sometime in the past. Those who selected option C (*creep*) and D (*creeps*) did not know that the verb creep/creeps is in the simple present form. Other candidates who opted for E (*is creeping*) misunderstood the action of the snake as an action that is taking place in the present time while it happened in the past.

Question 3: The parents _____ mosquito nets but they did not use them.

- A was given
- B were given
- C is given
- D were giving
- E were gave

This question tested the candidates' ability on the proper use of the passive form of the verb *give* in the simple past tense where the simple past forms of the verb to be (were/was) are used together with the verb in the past participle form.

Table 3: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 3

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	158,355	354,392	145,202	187,844	82,214	5,267
% of Candidates	17.0	38.0	15.6	20.1	8.8	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was poor, as those who selected the correct response which is B (*were given*) were 354,392 (38.0%). These candidates knew that the object "parents" is in the plural form, thus it needs to take the plural form of "are" in the past with the verb *give* in the past participle form.

On the other hand, 17.0 percent of the candidates who wrongly chose option A (*was given*) and C (*is given*) did not realise that the word "parents" is in the plural form. The verb therefore, cannot be used with "was" or "is". The candidates who opted for D (*were giving*) misunderstood the concept of the question that the parents are the ones who were giving while in the actual sense the parents are the ones who received. Those who selected option E (*were gave*) did not have enough knowledge on the proper use of grammar.

Question 4: Mr. Ali _____ talking when the guests came into the room.

- A is
- B was
- C were
- D will be
- E shall be

The question required the candidates to show their skills in using the right form of the verb to be in the past continuous tense in relation to the subject. The subject Mr. Ali is in singular form, hence "was", the singular form of the verb to be was the correct response.

Table 4: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 4

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	234,039	458,634	80,606	110,268	45,714	4,013
% of Candidates	25.1	49.1	8.6	11.8	4.9	1.32

The performance of the candidates in question 4 was average, as seen in Table 4. This owes to the fact that the candidates who chose the correct response B (*was*) were 458,634 (49.1%). These candidates realised that the verb form required in the given context is the past continuous tense (*was talking*). This means that they had sufficient knowledge of forming the past continuous form of the verb in the question.

However, 474,640 (45.5%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who opted for the incorrect option A (*is*) did not realise that the verb (*came*) in the sentence shows that the action took place in the past time and so required the helping verb to be in the past tense singular form. The candidates who selected C (*were*) did not know that Mr. Ali is in singular form and therefore the helping verb cannot be in plural form. The candidates who chose D (*will be*) and E (*shall be*) did not realise that "will" and "shall" are in future time while the sentence was in the past.

Question 5: We never _____ to school when it is raining.

- A goes
- B gone
- C went
- D going
- E go

This question tested the candidates' ability to use the simple present tense in negative habitual activities. The question also intended to assess candidates' ability to understand that "we" is in the first person plural form, hence it needs the verb to be in its basic form when expressing habitual events.

Table 5: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 5

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	101,931	90,104	133,961	190,321	411,790	5,158
% of Candidates	10.9	9.7	14.4	20.4	44.1	0.6

The performance of the candidates in this question was average, since those who selected the correct response E (*go*) were 411,790 (44.1%). These candidates realised that the plural subject "We" needs the verb to be in its basic form when expressing events in the simple present tense. They knew the correct use of verb patterns in forming negative sentences in the simple present tense which is "subject + never" + verb in the present form or infinitive. Therefore, they identified the correct verb form, which is "go".

The general performance of the candidates in this question was average, since those who selected the correct response E (*go*) were 411,790 (44.1%).

Further analysis shows that 521,475 (55.9%) candidates did not choose the correct response. Those who chose the incorrect option A (*goes*) did not realise that "goes" is used with the third person singular and not with the first person plural. Moreover, the candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*gone*) did not know that "gone" is in the past participle form and cannot be used in an active sentence

which is in the simple present tense. Furthermore, the candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*went*) which indicates a past event did not know that it could not be used in the sentence which is in the simple present form. The candidates who selected the incorrect option D (*going*) did not know that “going” is used to express ongoing activities and not habitual activities.

Question 6: He _____ English very well.

- A has speak
- B speak
- C speaking
- D speaks
- E spoken

This question tested the candidates' ability to use the simple present tense in the sentence whose subject is in the third person singular. The performance of the candidates in the question is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 6

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	176,869	273,304	138,222	281,610	58,951	4,318
% of Candidates	19	29.3	14.8	30.2	6.3	0.5

The data presented above indicate that the candidates' performance in this question was poor. This owes to the fact that the candidates who chose the correct response D (*speaks*) were only 281,610 (30.2%). These candidates had sufficient knowledge of the use of Subject-Verb agreement (-s form) in the simple present tense.

However, 651,664 (69.8%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*has speak*) lacked knowledge on the structure used to form sentences in the simple present tense. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*speak*) did not realise that the subject “He” which is in the third person singular can only be used with the verb in “-s” form, to form the simple present tense and so "speak" needs to have an “-s” form to make the sentence meaningful. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*speaking*) did not know that the sentence is in the habitual form and so cannot be used in ongoing activities that is the “-ing” form. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*spoken*) did not understand that the verb “spoken” which is in the past participle form cannot be used with facts that stay the same for a long time.

Question 7: The news I have received _____ good.

- A are
- B were
- C is
- D had been
- E was

This question tested the candidates' ability to use the present perfect tense "have received" to talk about the present result "is good" of a past action.

Table 7: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 7

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	219,774	165,430	274,065	119,407	148,798	5,800
% of Candidates	23.5	17.7	29.4	12.8	15.9	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was weak, considering that the candidates who selected the correct option C (*is*) were only 274,065 (29.4%). These candidates realised that the word "is" agrees with the subject "the news" which is in the singular form expressing a fact.

On the other hand, 659,209 (70.6%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*are*) did not realise that the auxiliary verb "are" is used with the plural form. Similarly, the candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*were*) did not know that the verb is used when expressing an activity in the past. Moreover, the candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*had been*) lacked knowledge of language use as "had been" cannot be used in the sentence because it is in the past perfect tense. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*was*) did not know that the word "was" is used in the past form while the state of the news is factual.

Question 8: I usually _____ my holidays in Arusha.

- A spend
- B spending
- C spent
- D spends
- E have spend

This question required the candidates to use the simple present tense with activities that happen repeatedly. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 8

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	360,177	148,983	125,477	196,943	96,212	5,482
% of Candidates	38.6	16.0	13.4	21.1	10.3	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was weak, since only 360,177 (38.6%) candidates chose the correct option A (*spend*). These candidates realised that the sentence required a verb in the simple present tense that agrees with the subject "I" which is in the first person singular form.

However, 573097 (61.4%) candidates selected incorrect options. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*spending*) did not know that the verb in an "-ing" form cannot be used to express repeated activities. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*spent*) could not realise that the verb "spent" which is in the past form cannot be used in activities which happen frequently. The candidates who selected the incorrect option D (*spends*) did not realise that the verb "spend+s" is used with the subjects which are in the third person singular (he, she and it). The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*have spend*) lacked knowledge of sentence structures which led them to opt for a verb which cannot be used with activities that happen frequently.

Question 9: David _____ form one at Mashujaa Secondary School next year.

- A joined
- B joining
- C will join
- D have joined
- E has joined

This question required the candidates to express an action expected to take place in the future. The candidates' performance is presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 9

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	90,199	125,057	521,546	89,721	101,650	5,101
% of Candidates	9.7	13.4	55.9	9.6	10.9	0.5

The performance of the candidates in this question was average, since those who selected the correct response C (*will join*) were 521,546 (55.9%). These candidates knew the correct use of verb patterns in forming future sentences. They were able to use "will join" to talk about something which will happen in the future.

On the other hand, 411,728 (44.1%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*joined*) did not know that "verb + ed" is used to express events that happened in the past and not in the future as implied in "next year". The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*joining*) did not realise that the subject plus verb "joining" in the future sentences cannot stand on its own without an auxiliary verb. The candidates who chose

the incorrect option D (*have joined*) and E (*has joined*) did not realise that the present perfect form cannot be used with the future time.

Question 10: John _____ when it started to rain.

- A work
- B was working
- C worked
- D had worked
- E works

This question tested the candidates' ability to express something happening at a time in the past while another thing was taking place at the same time. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 10

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	136,704	500,633	122,201	85,134	83,269	5,333
% of Candidates	14.6	53.6	13.1	9.1	8.9	0.6

The performance of the candidates in this question was average, considering that the candidates who chose the correct response B (*was working*) were 500,633 (53.6%). These candidates knew that in order to express continuing actions in the past there must be a structure *was/were + verb in the "-ing" form*.

However, 432,641 (46.4%) candidates chose incorrect responses. The candidates who selected the incorrect options A (*work*) and E (*works*) could not realise that the verbs are used to express events that happen repeatedly. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*worked*) did not know that the verb with -ed form is used to

express events that happened in the past (simple past tense) and not continuing events in the past as it is in the question. Moreover, the candidates who selected D (*had worked*) did not realise that the past perfect form is used to express completed actions in the past.

Question 11: Peter came _____our village two years ago.

- A into
- B at
- C to
- D under
- E on

This question tested the ability of the candidates to use the target prepositions correctly. The performance in this question is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 11

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	204,335	253,640	314,287	74,410	81,050	5,552
% of Candidates	21.9	27.2	33.7	8.0	8.7	0.6

The data presented above show that the candidates' performance in this question was weak, considering that those who selected the correct response C (*to*) were only 314,287 (33.7%). These candidates realised that the given sentence expresses the movement in which preposition *to* had to be used following the implication of the verb "came".

On the other hand, 618,987 (66.7%) candidates selected the incorrect options A, B, D and E. The candidates who selected the

incorrect option A (*into*) did not realise that the preposition “into” is used to indicate the destination or the movement inside and not the place, a person or something moves toward as required in the sentence.

The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*at*) did not know that the preposition "at" is used to indicate the place where someone or something is. Moreover, the candidates who selected the incorrect option D (*under*) did not know that the preposition is used to indicate a position that is below or beneath something. Similarly, the candidates who opted for the incorrect option E (*on*) did not understand that the preposition "on" indicates the top part or object by which someone or something is supported.

Question 12: All children have the right _____ education.

- A to
- B for
- C in
- D at
- E into

The question intended to test the ability of the candidates to use relevant prepositions. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 12

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	201,331	375,777	184,783	90,584	74,721	6,078
% of Candidates	21.6	40.3	19.8	9.7	8.0	0.7

The performance of the candidates in this question was poor, since the candidates who chose the correct response A (*to*) were only 201,331 (21.6%). These candidates recognised that the preposition "to" is used to indicate the condition *to get* something as it was required to be used in the sentence.

However, 731,943 (78.4%) candidates chose incorrect responses. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*for*) could not realise that the preposition "for" is used to indicate the purpose and not the condition of getting something as needed in the question. The candidates who selected the incorrect option C (*in*) did not understand that the preposition "in" is used to indicate a location or position within something and so it is not relevant to the context of the sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*at*) failed to realise that the preposition "at" is used to indicate the place where someone or something is located and not the condition stated in the sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*into*) did not have knowledge that the preposition "into" is used to describe the direction when hitting or touching inside something.

Question 13: Our aeroplane flew _____the tower of the church.

- A on
- B under
- C at
- D over
- E in

The candidates were supposed to use the preposition of position "over" to indicate the place that is higher than something. The candidates' performance in this question is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 13

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	175,174	169,055	136,303	321,546	125,449	4,487
% of Candidates	18.8	18.1	14.6	34.5	13.4	0.5

The candidates' performance in this question was weak, since those who selected the correct response D (*over*) were only 321,546 (13.4%). These candidates recognised that the sentence required a preposition of position denoting "the place that is higher than something".

On the other hand, 611,728 (65.5%) candidates selected incorrect responses. The candidates who selected the incorrect option A (*on*) could not realise that the preposition "on" is used to indicate a position that is supported by something; for example, "on the table". The preposition, therefore, cannot be used after the verb "flew" to mean "the place that is higher than something". The selection of the incorrect option B (*under*) by the candidates shows that they did not know that the preposition "under" is used to indicate a position that is below or beneath something, hence, it does not mean "higher". The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*at*) did not realise that the preposition "at" is used to indicate the place where someone or something is located. Therefore, it does not agree with the verb "flew" as implied in the sentence. The candidates who selected the incorrect option E (*in*) did not realise that the preposition "in" means a location or position within something, therefore, it cannot be used

after the verb “flew” to indicate “the place that is higher than something”.

Question 14: The teacher was angry _____ him.

- A for
- B on
- C with
- D in
- E of

This question required candidates to show their ability in using prepositions to talk about an action or activity in which another person is involved. Table 14 presents a summary of the candidates' performance in this question.

Table 14: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 14

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	301,696	77,817	372,705	55,846	120,732	4,478
% of Candidates	32.3	8.3	39.9	6.0	12.9	0.5

The data presented above show that the candidates' performance in this question was average, since those who chose the correct response C (*with*) were 372,705 (39.9%) candidates. The candidates who opted for the incorrect option A (*for*) did not realise that "for" is used to indicate the purpose of doing something as in "She did it for money" or period of time, as in "He was sick for two weeks." The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*on*) did not understand that the preposition "on" is used to indicate the top part by which someone or something is supported. On the other hand, those who chose D (*in*) failed to realise that preposition "in" is used

to indicate the position within something and not an involvement of two or more people. Moreover, the candidates who opted for the option E (*of*) did not know that the preposition "of" is used to indicate that someone or something belongs to a group of people or things. Therefore, "of" cannot be used in the context of the given sentence to indicate the involvement of two or more people.

Question 15: The TV programme which Musa watched was _____ AIDS.

- A at
- B in
- C about
- D for
- E by

The question tested the ability of the candidates to use relevant prepositions relating to a particular subject. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 15

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	73,698	100,713	504,041	126,728	124,140	3,954
% of Candidates	7.9	10.8	54.3	13.6	13.3	0.4

The candidates' performance in this question was average because those who opted for the correct answer C (*about*) were 504,041 (54.3%). These candidates had adequate competence to use the preposition *about* to relate the subject AIDS. The candidates who chose B (*in*) did not know that the preposition "in" is used to indicate a position within something. The candidates who selected the

incorrect option D (*for*) did not realise that the preposition "for" indicates duration of time as in "She kept silent for two hours." On the other hand, those who chose E (*by*) failed to know that the preposition "by" is also used to indicate the means of achieving something. Therefore, it has no relation to the sentence "*The TV programme which Musa watched was about AIDS.*"

Question 16: Collect the pencils _____ are on the table.

- A whom
- B what
- C whose
- D who
- E which

The question tested the ability of the candidates to use correct relative pronouns. Table 16 indicates the performance of the candidates.

Table 16: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 16

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	99,906	104,979	191,068	127,335	404,666	5,320
% of Candidates	10.7	11.2	20.5	13.6	43.4	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was average because those who correctly chose option E (*which*) were 404,666 (43.4%). These candidates were aware that the word "which" is applicable to things and in this case it is the pencils.

However, 56.6 percent of the remaining candidates opted for the incorrect options A, B, C and D. The candidates who chose A (*whom*) failed to know that the word "whom" refers to people and not non human beings. However, other candidates who chose B (*what*) could not understand that the pronoun "what" is used as a subject or object to indicate the things we need to know. Those who chose C (*whose*) did not know that the relative pronoun "whose" is used to show possession and since the sentence does not talk about the owner, possession is irrelevant. Moreover, those who opted for D (*who*) did not realise that the relative pronoun "who" is used to show which group of people is being talked about and not things.

Question 17: We arrived _____ the village at night.

- A on
- B by
- C over
- D at
- E of

This question required the candidates to show their ability in using prepositions to show position. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 17

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	179,677	212,359	103,697	316,030	114,186	7,325
% of Candidates	19.3	22.8	11.1	33.9	12.2	0.8

The candidates' performance in this question was weak. This performance owes to the fact that the candidates who chose the correct response D (*at*) were only 316,030 (33.9%). These candidates knew that the preposition "at" is used to show a place where someone or something is located as it was required in the sentence.

However, 617,244 (66.1%) candidates chose distractors A, B, C and E. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*on*) did not realise that the preposition "on" refers to a top surface. Therefore, it cannot be used in the context of the given sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*by*) did not realise that the preposition "by" is used to indicate an agent who does something or how it is done or should be done. Besides, the preposition "by" is used before the verbs "go" or "pass" to imply "going past". Therefore, given these meanings, it cannot be used in the given context of the sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*over*) did not realise that the preposition "over" is used to denote a place which is higher than something without touching it. Hence, it cannot be used with the verb "arrive" to talk about a place such as a village. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*of*) did not realise that the preposition "of" does not come after the verb "arrive", but can be used when talking about a feature or quality that something has as in "the price of sugar"

Question 18: We have been living in Tanga _____ 2006.

- A in
- B for
- C from
- D since
- E on

This was one of the highly performed questions in this paper. The question required the candidates to show their ability in expressing duration using "since". The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Number and Percentage of Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 18

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	39,399	67,038	85,842	713,351	23,636	4,008
% of Candidates	4.2	7.2	9.2	76.4	2.5	0.4

The analysis of the candidates' performance in this question was good because 713,351 (76.4%) candidates chose the correct response, D (*since*). These candidates had enough knowledge in expressing duration using "since". They knew that the word "since" is used to mark the starting point of time in the past.

On the contrast, 219,923 (23.6%) candidates chose incorrect options. The candidates who selected the incorrect option A (*in*) could not realise that the word "in" is used to indicate time as in "I joined the school in 2017". Therefore, it cannot be used to express duration. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*for*) did not realise that the word "for" is used to indicate the period of time at which an event has taken place as in "I have been waiting *for a long*

time." Therefore, the word "for" cannot be used when indicating the starting point of an event in the past. The candidates who selected the incorrect option C (*from*) could not know that the word "from" is used to indicate the starting point of a physical movement or action. The candidates who selected the incorrect option E (*on*) could not realise that the word "on" is used with the days of the week to indicate the time during which something takes place as in "A parade *on Monday*." Therefore, the word "on" is irrelevant to the sentence since it expresses the starting point of something.

Question 19: Are you coming with _____?

- A myself
- B me
- C I
- D my
- E ourselves

The candidates were supposed to demonstrate the correct use of pronouns. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 19

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	208,085	392,394	106,875	66,655	152,696	6,569
% of Candidates	22.3	42.0	11.5	7.1	16.4	0.7

The data presented above show that the candidates' performance in this question was average, since those who chose the correct option B (*me*) were 392,394 (42.0%). These candidates realised that the

objective pronoun “me” should appear at the end of the given sentence.

On the contrary, 540,880 (58%) candidates failed to choose the correct answer. The candidates who chose the incorrect options A (*myself*) and E (*ourselves*) did not realise that the reflexive pronoun is used to talk about the same person or thing that was mentioned in the subject of the sentence as in "I teach myself English." In addition, the candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*I*) did not recognise that the pronoun "I" is used as a first person singular subject. Therefore, it is irrelevant to be used in the sentence. Moreover, the candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*my*) failed to realise that the possessive pronoun “my” cannot appear before a question mark in the sentence but before a noun as in "Are you coming with my brother?".

Question 20: This pen belongs to Anna. It is _____.

- A his
- B her's
- C she
- D hers
- E her

The candidates were supposed to demonstrate correct use of possessive pronouns. The candidates' performance in this question is summarised in Table 20.

Table 20: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 20

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	54,404	209,914	315,708	219,168	137,084	4,996
% of Candidates	5.8	21.6	33.5	23.5	14.7	0.5

The data presented above show that the candidates' performance in this question was weak, since those who chose the correct option D (*hers*) were 219,168 (23.5%). These candidates realised that the possessive pronoun "hers" is placed at the end of a sentence to show that something belongs to a female human being.

On the other hand, 219,168 (33.5%) candidates failed to choose the correct answer. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*his*) did not realise that the possessive pronoun "his" refers to male gender possession. The name Anna is female and so using the word "his" is irrelevant. Moreover, the candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*her's*) could not realise that the word "her's" does not show possession. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*she*) failed to realise that the pronoun "she" is the third person singular pronoun which does not show possession. In addition, the candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*her*) failed to realise that the possessive pronoun "her" cannot be used to indicate something that belongs to the subject "it+her".

Question 21: Our uncle _____ name is Masanja is a good tailor.

- A who
- B which
- C whose
- D whom
- E where

The question intended to test the ability of the candidates to use relative pronouns correctly to show possession. The performance of the candidates in this question is summarised in Table 21.

Table 21: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 21

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	168,767	134,587	456,358	81,256	86,646	5,660
% of Candidates	18.1	14.4	48.9	8.7	9.3.	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was average because those who correctly chose option C (*whose*) were equivalent to 48.9 percent of all the candidates. These candidates were aware that the word "whose" shows possession, thus in this case, the name "Masanja" belongs to the subject Uncle.

However, 51.1 percent of the remaining candidates opted for other choices A, B ,D and E. The candidates who chose A (*who*) failed to know that the word "who" is used after a noun or pronoun to show a person or group of people being talked about. However, other candidates who chose B (*which*) could not understand that "which" is applicable to things and animals but not human beings as in the sentence. Those who chose D (*whom*) did not realise that it is used

to indicate an object in the sentences but not possession as it was required in the question. The candidates who selected E (*where*) did not understand that "where" is used to refer to a place and not a person.

Question 22: The shirt that John wears is not _____

- A her's
- B hers
- C he
- D she
- E his

The question required the candidates to demonstrate the correct use of possessive pronouns. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 22

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	121,737	104,392	267,273	135,199	298,462	6,211
% of Candidates	13.0	11.2	28.6	14.5	32.0	0.7

The data show that the candidates' performance in this question was weak, since those who chose the correct option E (*his*) were only 32.0 percent. These candidates realised that the possessive pronoun "his" is placed at the end of a sentence to show that something belongs to a male human being.

Conversely, 68.0 percent of all the candidates failed to choose the correct answer. The candidates who opted for the incorrect option A (*her's*) could not realise that the word "her's" does not show

possession but it is a misspelling of "hers". On the other hand, the candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*hers*) did not understand that the possessive pronoun "hers" refers to a female human being, therefore, it is irrelevant in the context of the sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*he*) did not know that the word "he" is the third person singular pronoun which cannot be placed at the end of the sentence to show possession. Moreover, the candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*she*) failed to realise that the pronoun "she" is the third person singular pronoun which does not show possession.

Question 23: Mary and _____ friends went to town yesterday.

- A he
- B his
- C there
- D her
- E their

In the above question, the candidates were required to show the correct use of possessive pronouns. The candidates' performance in this question is shown in Table 23.

Table 23: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 23

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	127,007	162,946	142,783	325,588	168,591	6,359
% of Candidates	13.6	17.5	15.3	34.9	18.1	0.7

The data indicate that the performance of the candidates in this question was weak, since those who chose the correct option D

(*her*) were only 325,588 (34.9%). These candidates realised that the possessive pronoun “her” is used to refer to a certain woman as the object of a verb as in the sentence "Mary and *her* friends went to town yesterday."

The analysis shows that 607,686 (65.1%) candidates opted for the incorrect answers. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*he*) did not recognise that the word "he" is the third person singular pronoun and in that case it cannot be used to indicate possession. Moreover, the candidates who opted for the incorrect option B (*his*) did not understand that the possessive pronoun “his” is used to refer to a male human being and not female as it was in the sentence. The candidates who selected the incorrect option C (*there*) did not understand that the word "there" is used to describe a place but not possession. On the other hand, the candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*their*) did not know that the pronoun “their” is in the plural form and so it is not supposed to be used to refer to a single person as in the question.

Question 24: Rhoda is _____ beautiful girl in her class.

- A the most
- B the more
- C most
- D more
- E much more

The question tested the candidates' ability to use appropriate adjectives to express superlative degree. Table 24 shows the candidates' performance.

Table 24: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 24

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	441,815	132,790	174,904	134,554	43,768	5,443
% of Candidates	47.3	14.2	18.7	14.4	4.7	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was average, since 47.3 percent chose the correct answer A (*the most*). These candidates were aware that the appropriate superlative adjective that could match with comparing Rhoda with all the other girls in class would be "the most."

However, about 52.7 percent of the candidates chose B, C, D and E which were wrong options. Those who chose B (*the more*) D (*more*) and E (*much more*) did not know that the comparative degree they chose cannot be used to compare more than two things. Those who selected C (*most*) did not realise that the word "most" when used in the superlative degree has to go with "the" to be meaningful.

Question 25: We eat meat _____ a week.

- A one
- B every
- C two
- D three
- E twice

This question required the candidates to use the correct word to express frequency. The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 25.

Table 25: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 25

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	127,982	343,850	145,616	70,249	239,389	6,188
% of Candidates	13.7	36.8	15.6	7.5	25.7	0.7

The data presented above indicate that the candidates' performance in this question was weak, since only 239,389 (25.7%) candidates opted for the correct option E (*twice*). These candidates realised that the word "twice" is used to show the frequency in doubled quantity or degree.

On the other hand, 74.3 percent of all the candidates selected incorrect responses A, B, C and D. The candidates who selected the incorrect option A, *one*, C, *two* and D *three* failed to realise that the choices were just the numbers which do not indicate frequency. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*every*) could not realise that the word "every" cannot be used before an article "a". It seems the candidates did not consider the article "a" before the adverb "week."

Question 26: The goods were all bought and _____ was left.

- A nobody
- B no one
- C nothing
- D any one
- E everything

The candidates were supposed to use the correct quantifier to express quantity. The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 26.

Table 26: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 26

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	167,590	105,013	382,109	99,232	172,086	7,244
% of Candidates	18.0	11.3	40.9	10.6	18.4	0.8

The analysis of the candidates' performance in this question indicates that the performance was average with 40.9 percent of the candidates opting for the correct answer C (*nothing*). These candidates recognised that the quantifier "nothing" is in singular form therefore it agrees with the auxiliary verb "was" as in "*....nothing was left.*"

On the other hand, 59.1 percent chose the wrong options A, B, D and E. The candidates who chose A (*nobody*), B (*no one*) and D (*any one*) could not understand that the quantifiers are used with reference to human beings but not things. On the other hand, the candidates who chose option E (*everything*) did not realise that with all goods being bought, we do not expect anything to remain.

Question 27: There are many story books in the library. Have you read _____ of them?

- A more
- B any
- C both
- D a little
- E little

The question tested the candidates' ability to use correct quantifiers to express quantity in asking the questions using the word "any." Table 27 shows the candidate's performance in this question.

Table 27: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 27

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	89,903	324,806	180,643	244,428	878,820	5,674
% of Candidates	9.6	34.8	19.4	26.2	9.4	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was weak with only 34.8 percent of the candidates opting for the correct answer B (*any*) which is usually used in questions.

On the other hand, 65.2 percent chose incorrect options A, C, D and E. The candidates who chose A (*more*) did not know that the word "more" is used to show comparison between two things or people. On the other hand, those who chose C (*both*) could not understand that the word "both" is used with "and" to stress that two things are included. The candidates who chose D (*a little*) and E (*little*) failed to know that the words are used to describe uncountable nouns.

Question 28: There is _____ food for everybody in the house.

- A enough
- B a few
- C many
- D most
- E plenty

The question required the candidates to use the adjective "enough" to express quantity. The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 28.

Table 28: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 28

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	321,967	162,820	234,016	110,609	98,913	4,949
% of Candidates	34.5	17.4	25.1	11.9	10.6	0.5

The candidates' performance in this question was poor, as only 321,967 (34.5%) candidates selected the correct response A (*enough*). These candidates realised that the adjective "enough" is used positively to describe the quantity.

Moreover, 65.5 percent of all the candidates chose incorrect options B, C, D and E. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*a few*) and C (*many*) did not realise that the adjectives are used when describing the quantity of countable nouns. The candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*most*) failed to realise that the determiner "most" is used to show that nearly all of the people or things in a group. Hence, it does not make sense in the sentence. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*plenty*) did not realise that the pronoun "plenty," cannot be used in a sentence without adding "of" after it to mean enough quantity.

Question 29: Travelling by air is _____ than by road.
 A best
 B better
 C good
 D more good
 E nice

The question tested the candidates' ability to use the comparative form "better" to show a higher standard or quality. The overall

performance of the candidates in this question is summarised in Table 29.

Table 29: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 29

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	125,281	495,317	161,465	90,625	55,530	5,052
% of Candidates	13.4	53.1	17.3	9.7	6.0	0.5

The data presented above indicate that the candidates' performance in this question was average, considering that 53.1% percent of the candidates chose the correct option B (*better*). These candidates recognised that the comparative "better" has been used in the sentence to show a higher quality of goodness.

Conversely, 883,743 (46.9%) candidates chose incorrect options. The choice of the incorrect option A (*best*) by the candidates shows that they failed to realise that the superlative cannot stand on its own without the definite article "the." Moreover, candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*good*) and E (*nice*) did not realise that the adjectives do not indicate comparison degree. The candidates who selected option D (*more good*) did not know that the structure in "more good" is not grammatically correct.

Question 30: That is the boy _____ came to church yesterday.

- A where
- B which
- C whom
- D whose
- E who

The question tested the candidates' ability to use relative pronouns appropriately. The performance of the candidates is indicated in Table 30.

Table 30: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 30

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	115,423	162,774	117,060	196,371	334,361	7,285
% of Candidates	12.4	17.4	12.5	21.0	35.8	0.8

The data presented above show that the performance of the candidates in this question was weak because those who chose the correct option E (*who*) realised that the relative pronoun "who" is used after a noun or pronoun to show a person or group of people being talked about.

On the other hand, 64.2 percent of all the candidates opted for the incorrect choices A, B, C and D. The candidates who chose A (*where*) did not know that the word "where" is used to show a place or location. However, the candidates who chose B (*which*) failed to understand that the word "which" is applicable to things and animals but not human beings. The candidates who opted for C (*whom*) did not know that "whom" is used to refer to the object in the sentence

as in "She is the woman whom I trust." Moreover, the candidates who chose D (*whose*) did not recognise that the word "whose" shows possession and not relation.

2.2 Section B: Vocabulary

This section required the candidates to show the ability to use correct words to identify meaning of the given words.

Question 31: A person who flies an aeroplane is called.

- A a builder
- B a hawk
- C a carpenter
- D a pilot
- E an air hostess

This question tested the candidates' ability to identify how people of different occupations are called. Table 31 shows the performance of the candidates in this question.

Table 31: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 31

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	71,451	81,316	115,176	591,499	67,931	5,901
% of Candidates	7.7	8.7	12.3	63.4	7.3	0.6

The candidates' performance in this question was good, since 591,499 (63.4%) candidates opted for the correct response C (a *pilot*). These candidates identified the meaning of the given word.

However, 36.6 percent of the candidates selected incorrect responses A, B, C and E. The candidates who selected the incorrect option A (*a builder*) did not know that a "builder" is a person who builds or repairs things such as houses and ships. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*a hawker*) did not understand that "a hawker" is a person who breeds, trains or hunts with hawks. The candidates who selected the incorrect option C (*a carpenter*) did not know that "a carpenter" is a person whose work is to make or fix wooden structures. The candidates who chose the incorrect option E (*an air hostess*) did not realise that "an air hostess" is a woman whose job is to help and entertain people on an airplane.

Question 32: A garden or park where animals are kept for study or to show to the public is called

- A a shed
- B a reserve
- C a den
- D a zoo
- E a game

This question tested the candidates' ability to use language to show different names of places associated with animals. The performance of the candidates in this question is summarised in Table 32.

Table 32: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 32

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	112,813	191,596	102,339	413,839	104,723	7,964
% of Candidates	12.1	20.5	11.0	44.3	11.2.	0.9

The analysis shows that the performance was average because 44.3 percent chose the correct answer D (*a zoo*). This owes to the fact that the candidates were aware that "a zoo" is a place where many kinds of animals are kept so that people can see them.

However, 42.2 percent of the candidates opted for the incorrect alternatives A, B, C and E. The candidates who chose A (*a shed*) did not realise that "a shed" is a slight structure built for shelter or storage. Those who selected B (*a reserve*) did not know that the word "reserve" is used to refer to an area of land where animals and plants are given special protection and it is not a small area as a zoo.

Moreover, those who opted for C (*a den*) were not aware that "a den" is a home of some kinds of wild animals which is different from a place where animals are kept. The candidates who opted for E (*a game*) did not realise that the term is used to mean wild animals hunted for sport or food.

Question 33: Cholera, malaria and tuberculosis are _____.

- A medicines
- B vaccinations
- C diseases
- D parasites
- E tablets

This question tested the candidates' ability to use collective nouns. The candidates were required to identify the collective noun for "cholera", "malaria" and "tuberculosis". The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 33.

Table 33: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 33

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	204,877	154,234	392,301	91,725	82,933	7,204
% of Candidates	22.0	16.5	42.0	9.8	8.9	0.8

The candidates' performance in this question was average, since 42.0 percent of all the candidates chose the correct response C (*diseases*). These candidates recognised that the things in the list were all called "diseases".

However, 58 percent of candidates selected incorrect responses A, B, D and E. The candidates who chose the incorrect response A (*medicines*) did not know that "medicines" are the substances in the form of a pill or liquid which are used in treating diseases or relieving pains. The candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*vaccinations*) did not know that "vaccinations" are the substances injected into a person or animal to protect against diseases. Moreover, the candidates who chose the incorrect option D (*parasites*) could not realise that the term is used to refer to an organism living in or on another organism which can cause diseases. In addition, the candidates who opted for E (*tablets*) did not understand that the term "tablets" refers to small pieces of medicine used to treat diseases.

Question 34: A place where books are kept for people to read and borrow is known as

- A a library
- B a classroom
- C a cupboard
- D a shelf
- E a store

This question tested the candidates' ability to identify the names of places. The performance of the candidates in this question is summarised in Table 34.

Table 34: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 34

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	495,500	167,704	88,805	96,446	77,928	6,891
% of Candidates	53.1	18.0	9.5	10.3	8.3	0.7

The data presented shows that the performance of the candidates in this question was average. This is due to the fact that the candidates who chose the correct response A (*a library*) were 495,500 (53.1%). These candidates knew that "a library" is a place where books, magazines and other materials such as videos and musical recordings are available for people to use or borrow.

On the contrary, 46.9 percent of the candidates chose incorrect options B, C, D and E. The candidates who chose the incorrect option B (*a classroom*) misunderstood that "a classroom" is a room where students are taught in a school, college or university and it is possible to have a library within those areas. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*a cupboard*) did not realise that "a

cupboard” is a piece of furniture or place with shelves used for storage of things such as books, dishes or food. The candidates who opted for the incorrect option D (*a shelf*) did not realise that "a shelf" is a flat board which is attached to a wall and on which objects such as books can be placed. Therefore, a shelf can be found in a library with the books placed on it. The candidates who selected the incorrect option E (*a store*) did not realise that the terminology means a large building in which something is kept for future use.

Question 35: How do you call your sister’s husband?

- A Sister-in-law
- B Brother
- C Young brother
- D Brother-in-law
- E Nephew

This question required the candidates to use nouns correctly to express family relation. The performance of the candidates in this question is shown in Table 35.

Table 35: Number and Percentage of the Candidates’ Choices in Each Option in Question 35

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	196,870	104,811	89,773	402,182	133,083	6,555
% of Candidates	21.1	11.2	9.6	43.1	14.3	0.7

The performance of the candidates in this question was average since 402,182 (43.1%) candidates chose the correct response D (*Brother-in-law*). These candidates had enough knowledge about

family relation and therefore they realised that "Brother-in-law" is the brother of your husband or wife.

On the other hand, 56.9 percent of all the candidates chose incorrect options which were A, B, C and E. The candidates who selected the incorrect option A (*Sister-in-law*) failed to understand that their choice is irrelevant since the husband cannot be a female as the response suggests. The candidates who opted for the incorrect option B (*Brother*) did not realise that "Brother" is a boy or man who has the same parents, group, country or religion as you. The candidates who chose the incorrect option C (*Young brother*) did not recognise that the term refers to a relation of a boy to an elder brother. The candidates who selected the incorrect option E (*Nephew*) did not understand that "Nephew" is a son of your brother or sister.

Question 36: What is the opposite of the word queen?

- A palace
- B princess
- C president
- D prince
- E king

The question required the candidates to demonstrate their ability to use vocabulary to express antonyms. The performance of the candidates in this question is presented in Table 36.

Table 36: Number and Percentage of the Candidates' Choices in Each Option in Question 36

OPTION	A	B	C	D	E*	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	80,707	191,811	136,015	124,263	391,677	8,801
% of Candidates	8.6	20.6	14.6	13.3	42.0	0.9

The candidates' performance in this question was average, since the candidates who selected the correct response E (*king*) were 42.0 percent of the candidates. These candidates realised that "queen" is a female ruler of a country and so "king" is the opposite.

Further analysis shows that 541,597 (58%) candidates selected incorrect responses A, B, C and D. The candidates who chose the incorrect option A (*palace*) did not know that "palace" is the official home of both king and queen and therefore it does not indicate opposite. On the other hand, the candidates who selected the incorrect option B (*princess*) and D (*prince*) did not understand that the name is used to refer to the children or grandchildren of a king or queen. Therefore, it has nothing to do with the opposite of the word "queen". The candidates who opted for the incorrect option C (*president*) did not understand that the term is used for both queen and king to indicate the head of the government in some countries.

2.3 Section C: Composition

The candidates were given four mixed sentences and they were required to arrange them in chronological order to make the information meaningful.

Question 37: This year our parents did a birthday party for us.

The candidates were required to arrange the sentence numbered 37 so that it appears as the second sentence, hence giving it letter B in the sequence in order to form a meaningful composition. The candidates' performance is shown in Table 37.

Table 37: Number and percentage of candidates' choices in each option in question 37

OPTION	A	B*	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	110,521	487,200	179,161	134,150	16,478	5,764
% of Candidates	11.8	52.2	19.2	14.4	1.8	0.6

The performance of the candidates was average because ,many of them (52.2) percent were able to write B to show that it was the second sentence. They realised that "This year our parents did a birthday party for us" should follow the fact that the two brothers had reached a certain age in their lives. However, the 0.6 percent of the candidates who selected E did not understand the requirement of the question because the question needed them to give only letters A-D.

Question 38: Peter is sixteen years old and I am thirteen years old.

In this question, the candidates were required to arrange this sentence as the first in the sequence by giving it letter A in order to form a meaningful composition. Table 38 represents the performance of the candidates in this question.

Table 38: Number and percentage of candidates' choices in each option in question 38

OPTION	A*	B	C	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	588,133	137,450	101,125	87,618	13,335	5,613
% of Candidates	63.0	14.7	10.8	9.4	1.4	0.6

The analysis shows that the performance of the candidates was good. The candidates who were able to identify the sentence 38 as

the first sentence were 588,133 (63.0%). These candidates realised that the sentence was the stem of the main topic of the composition 'Birthday Party.' Another marker of the first sentence was that it starts with the names of the people being talked about in the composition (Peter and I). However, 1.4 percent of the candidates who selected E did guess work because the option E was not part of the given options A-D.

Question 39: We took photos before the party was closed.

In this question, the candidates were required to realise that this sentence was the last (D) in the sequence. Table 39 is the analysis of the candidates' performance in this question.

Table 39: Number and percentage of candidates' choices in each option in question 39

OPTION	A	B	C	D*	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	109,714	130,391	205,933	462,575	19,195	5,467
% of Candidates	11.8	14.0	22.1	49.6	2.1	0.6

The data presented above shows that the candidates' performance was average. This owes to the fact that 49.6 percent of the candidates identified the sentence as the fourth sentence in the sequence and so they gave it letter D.

These candidates understood that the use of the word "closed" indicates that the party was approaching an end and therefore the sentence had to conclude the party issues. The candidates who selected the incorrect letters A, B and C did not identify the right position of the sentence in a given chronological order.

However, the 2.1 percent of the candidates who opted for E failed to understand the requirement of the question since the question needed them to choose letters A - D only.

Question 40: They invited many of our friends and we ate, drank and enjoyed a lot.

The candidates were required to identify this sentence as the third sentence and so it should be given letter C in the sequence to make a meaningful composition. The performance of the candidates is indicated in Table 40.

Table 40: Number and percentage of candidates' choices in each option in question 40

OPTION	A	B	C*	D	E	OTHERS
No. of Candidates	107,472	160,838	427,674	210,396	22,121	4,773
% of Candidates	11.5	17.2	45.8	22.5	2.4	0.5

The data above suggest that the performance of the candidates in this question was average because 45.8 percent of the candidates gave the sentence letter C as the third sentence in a given chronological order. The sentence according to the arrangement of the events shows that it had to be the third after sentence number 37 which talks about doing a party. Therefore, these candidates realised that the actions of eating, drinking and enjoying took place during the party that is said to be done by the parents.

However, 2.4 percent of the candidates who chose E misunderstood the requirement of the question because they were required to choose only among options A-D.

2.4 Section D: Comprehension

The candidates were required to read the passage carefully and answer five questions that followed by using the information from the passage. The passage was:

Mosquitoes are probably the most known insects in Africa and Asia. They are very small but very dangerous. The female mosquitoes feed on blood. The person who is bitten by the female mosquito can become ill from malaria. One of the symptoms of having malaria is high fever. Other symptoms of this illness include headache and backache.

In order to prevent people from being infected by the mosquito, they should sleep under mosquito nets and use anti-mosquito sprays which kill mosquitoes. When spraying a room with anti-mosquito spray, the windows and the doors must be closed. It is not safe to stay in a room which has just been sprayed. Many of these anti mosquito sprays are harmful to man. So after spraying in a room, it is better to stay outside for some time.

Question 41: What happens when a person is bitten by a mosquito?

The question assessed candidates' comprehension ability while referring to the passage to identify consequences to a person who has been bitten by a female mosquito. The candidates were supposed to write *He/she can become ill from malaria*. The analysis of the candidates' performance in this question is shown in figure 1.

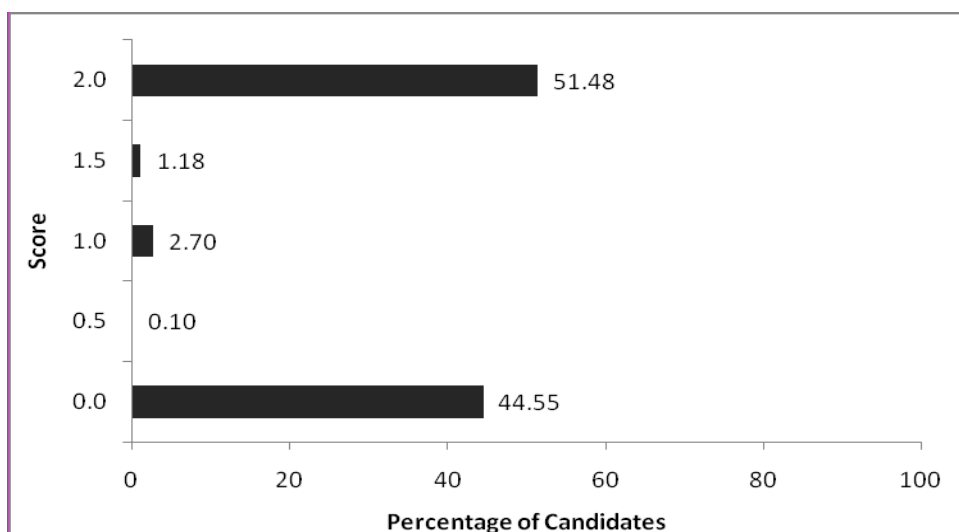


Figure 1: *Trend of the Candidates' Performance in Question 41*

The analysis shows that the performance of the candidates in this question was average, since 55.36 percent of the candidates performed well by scoring from 01 to 02 marks. Extract 1.1 is a sample of a correct response from a candidate.

41. What happens when a person is bitten by a mosquito?
When a person is bitten by a mosquito
he can become ill from malaria

Extract 1.1: *Sample of a correct response.*

On the other hand, 44.64 percent of the candidates performed poorly (0 to 0.5 mark). Their responses suggest that they did not understand the requirement of the question. Extract 1.2 is a sample of an incorrect response provided by a candidate.

41. What happens when a person is bitten by a mosquito?
One of the symptoms of having malaria is high
FEVER

Extract 1.2: *Sample of an incorrect response.*

Question 42: What should be done when spraying a room with anti-mosquito?

The question required the candidates to state what people should do when the room is being sprayed with anti mosquito. The correct response was *windows and doors must be closed*. The analysis of the candidates' performance is presented in Figure 2.

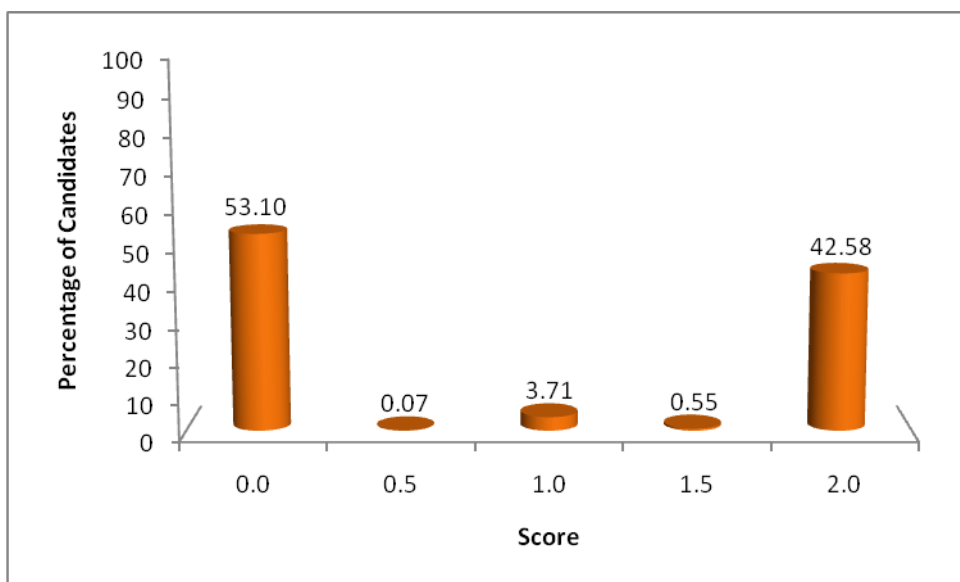


Figure 2: Trend of the Candidates' Performance in Question 42

The data presented indicate that the candidates' performance in this question was average, since 46.84 percent of all the candidates had good performance in the question by scoring from 1 to 2 marks. Those candidates demonstrated the ability to understand the procedures required when spraying a room with anti-mosquito. Extract 2.1 is a sample of a good response from a candidate.

42.	What should be done when spraying a room with anti-mosquito?
	When spraying a room with anti-mosquito, the windows and doors must be closed.

Extract 2.1: Sample of a correct response.

Conversely, 53.16 percent of the candidates provided incorrect responses and wrote *irrelevant statements to the question*. They scored from 0 to 0.5 mark. The candidates whose responses were incorrect lacked a good understanding of the question which led them to provide incorrect answers as seen in Extract 2.2.

42.	What should be done when spraying a room with anti-mosquito?
	In order to prevent people from being infected by the mosquito.

Extract 2.2: Sample of an incorrect response.

Question 43: What are people advised to do to prevent themselves from being bitten by mosquitoes?

The candidates were required to write ways of preventing people from being bitten by mosquitoes. According to the passage, the correct answer was *to sleep under mosquito nets or use anti mosquito spray*. Figure 3 presents a summary of the candidates' performance in this question.

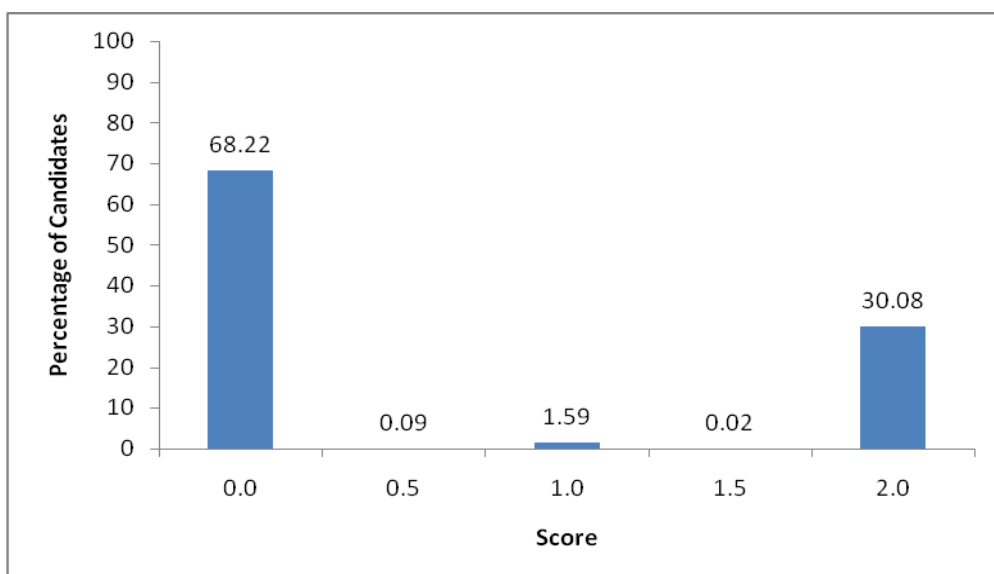
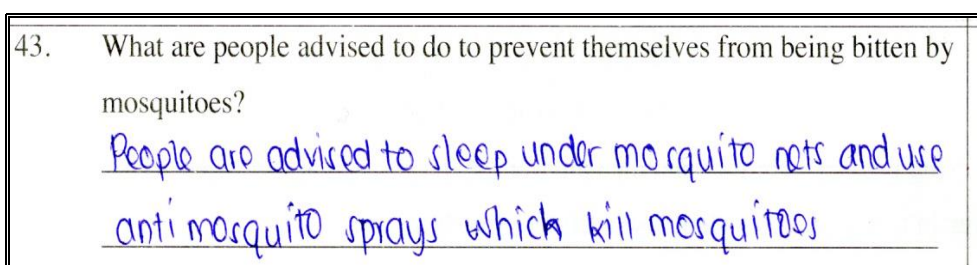


Figure 3: *Trend of the Candidates' Performance in Question 43*

The general performance of the candidates in this question was poor, considering the fact that those who performed well were only 31.69 percent. These candidates had adequate knowledge on the subject matter together with a good understanding and interpretation of the question with the connection to the passage. Extract 3.1 shows a sample of a correct response from a candidate who performed well in the question.



Extract 3.1: *Sample of a correct response.*

Moreover, 68.31 percent of the candidates performed poorly by scoring from 0 to 0.5 mark. The responses from the candidates indicate that they were unable to interpret the question with the

connection to the passage. That might have been contributed by poor mastery of the English language which led them into copying sentences from the passage which do not answer the question. Extract 3.2 is a sample of an incorrect response from a candidate who performed poorly in this question.

43.	What are people advised to do to prevent themselves from being bitten by mosquitoes? <u>A probably the most know insects in Africa and Asia.</u>
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Extract 3.2: *Sample of an incorrect response.*

Question 44: Why don't we apply anti-mosquito spray in the presence of people?

The question required the candidates to state a reason why anti-mosquito spray is not applied in the presence of the people. With reference to the passage, the correct answer was, "*because it is harmful*". Figure 4 is an analysis of the candidates' performance in this question.

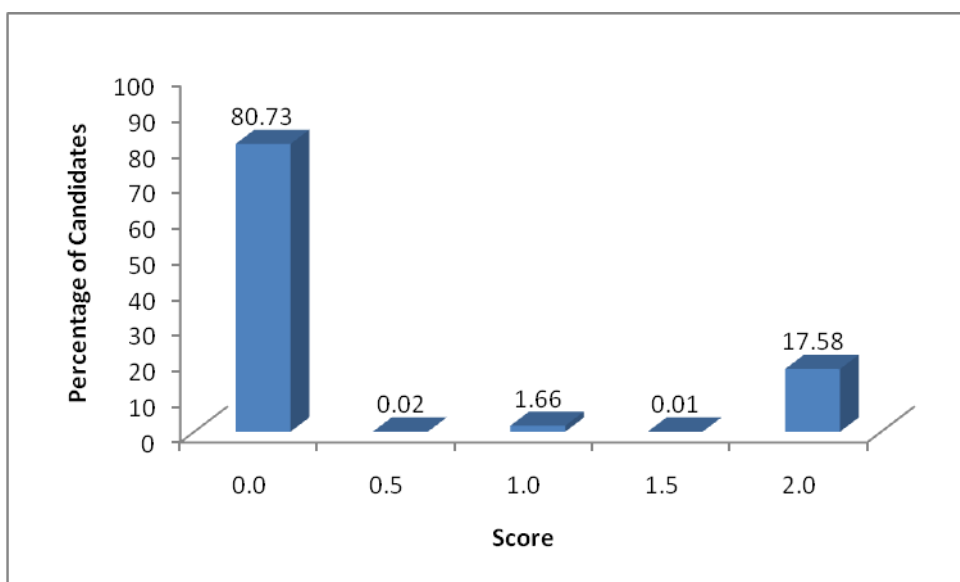
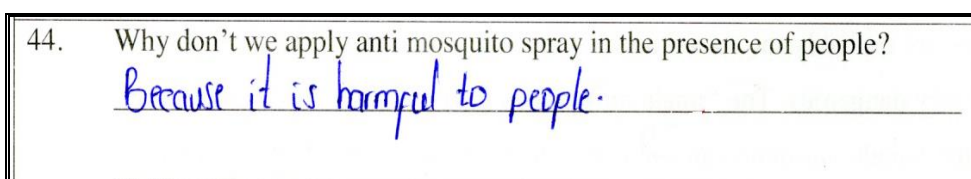


Figure 4: *Trend of the Candidates' Performance in Question 44*

The general performance of the candidates in this question was weak since the candidates who managed to answer the question correctly were only 19.25 percent. The candidates with such a good performance in the question understood the requirement of the question and had enough knowledge of the subject matter. Extract 4.1 is a sample of a correct response from a candidate.



Extract 4.1: *Sample of a correct response.*

Further analysis shows that 80.75 percent of the candidates performed poorly in this question by scoring from 0 to 0.5 mark. Their responses denote that they had poor comprehension skills. Extract 4.2 is a sample of such incorrect answers.

44.	Why don't we apply anti mosquito spray in the presence of people? Because we don't use mosquito sprays and we shouldn't sleep under mosquito nets.
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Extract 4.2: Sample of an incorrect response.

Question 45: What harm does the mosquito spray bring to mosquitoes?

In this question, the candidates were required to explain the harm that mosquito spray brings to mosquitoes. According to the given passage, the correct answer was, *It kills the mosquitoes/It brings death.*

The analysis of the candidates' performance in this question is summarised in Figure 5.

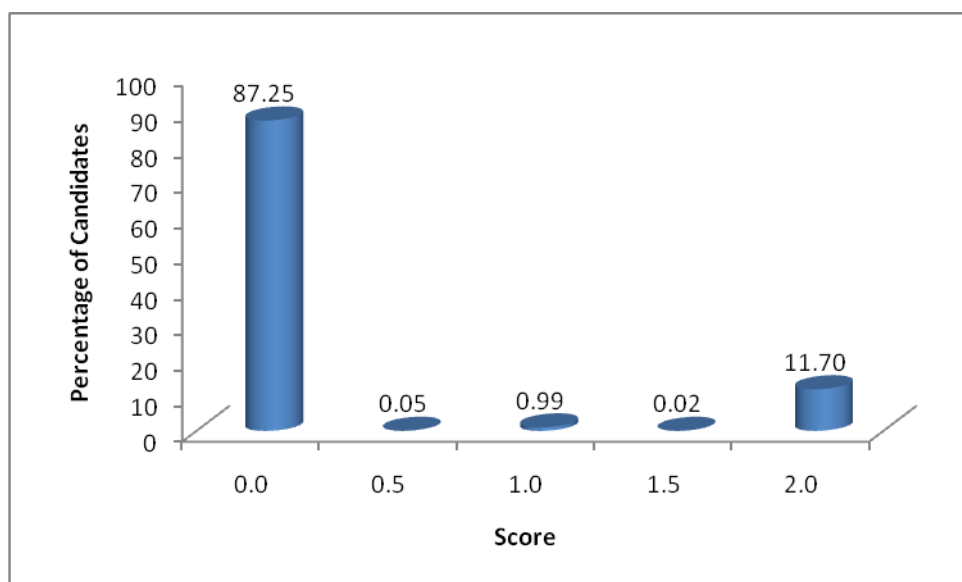


Figure 5: Trend of the Candidates' Performance in Question 43

The data presented in the figure above show that the candidates performed poorly in this question. This is due to the fact that the candidates who wrote the correct answer were only 12.71 percent of all the candidates. The answers from these candidates suggest that they were able to analyse the passage and use the information to respond to the question correctly. Extract 5.1 is a sample from the candidates who responded correctly.

45.	What harm does the mosquito spray bring to mosquitoes?
	<u>The harm that is brought to mosquitoes by mosquito sprays is death of mosquitoes or killing mosquitoes</u>

Extract 5.1: *Sample of a correct response.*

Further analysis indicates that 87.29 percent of the candidates provided incorrect responses to the question. This is because they did not understand the question. Extract 5.2 is a sample response from a candidate who gave an incorrect response.

45.	What harm does the mosquito spray bring to mosquitoes?
	<u>After spraying in a room, it is better to stay outside for some time.</u>

Extract 5.2: *Sample of an incorrect response.*

3.0 PERFORMANCE OF THE CANDIDATES IN EACH TOPIC

The analysis of the candidates' performance in each topic in 02 English Language in the PSLE for 2019 shows that the performance in the topic on *Composition*, has increased by 10.55%, from 42.1% in 2018 to 52.65% in 2019. Similarly, performance in *Vocabulary* has increased by 8.78 percent, from 39.2% in 2018 to 47.98% in 2019. On the other hand, the performance in *Tenses* has decreased by

5.53 percent, from 46.99% in 2018 to 41.46% in 2019. In *Other Forms of Grammar*, the performance has decreased by 5.82 per cent, from 45.37% in 2018 to 39.55% in 2019. Moreover, the performance in *Comprehension* has decreased by 12.39%, from 45.1% in 2018 to 32.39% in 2019. The candidates' performance in each topic is summarised in the Appendix.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Statistical data analysis shows that the general performance of the candidates in the 02 English Language subject in the PSLE for 2019 was average. This is because 53.21% of candidates passed the Examination. The analysis of the candidates' performance in each topic indicates that they had average performance in *Composition* (52.65%), *Vocabulary* (47.98%), *Tenses* (41.46%) and *Other forms of Grammar* (39.55%). Moreover, they had weak performance in *Comprehension* (32.39%). The analysis of the performance in each question shows that the candidates had good performance in question 18 (76.4%), 31 (63.4%) and 38 (63.0%). However, the candidates performed poorly in 19 questions, in which question 44 (19.25%) and 45 (12.71%) were the most poorly performed questions.

The analysis also shows that the candidates failed to choose correct responses because of inadequate knowledge of tenses and grammatical rules as well as inadequate knowledge of basic vocabulary.

The candidates faced difficulties in answering *Composition* and *Comprehension* questions since they had inadequate composition skills and they misunderstood the requirement of the questions in comprehension. On the contrary, there were candidates who scored high marks in the examination. These candidates demonstrated

sufficient knowledge of tenses and grammatical rules. In addition, they had adequate mastery of the basic vocabularies, composition skills and they were able to identify the requirement of the questions.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the performance of the candidates in future 02 English Language subject, the following are recommended: -

- (a) Teachers should guide pupils to read the recommended readers using different activities to enable them acquire comprehension skills. This will eventually enable them answer questions on what they have read.
- (b) Teachers should use illustrations to present the meaning of different forms of grammar. The pupils should watch, listen, imitate and practise. This will help the pupils master the use of forms of grammar and hence answer correctly the questions asked in the examination.
- (c) Pupils should be encouraged to use English Language in their daily activities. This will increase their vocabulary which will enable them to perform better on examinations.
- (d) Teachers should create the situations happening in different given times according to the syllabus. From the situations, the teachers should make sentences which describe the activities taking place while pupils participate. This will enable pupils to be competent in tenses/grammar and therefore improve their performance in future examinations.

COMPARISON OF CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE BY TOPIC IN PSLE 2018 & 2019

S/N.	TOPIC	PSLE 2018				PSLE 2019			
		Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks	Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks
		Qn. Number	(%) Performance			Qn. Number	(%) Performance		
1.	Tenses	1	48.7	46.99	Average	1	46.6	41.46	Average
		2	61.9			2	29.1		
		3	31.6			3	38.0		
		4	64.0			4	49.1		
		5	49.9			5	44.1		
		6	53.7			6	30.2		
		7	17.8			7	29.4		
		8	43.7			8	38.6		
		9	44.6			9	55.9		
		10	54.0			10	53.6		
2.	Other Forms of Grammar	11	67.9	45.37	Average	11	33.7	39.55	Average
		12	45.3			12	21.6		
		13	44.1			13	34.5		
		14	50.1			14	39.9		
		15	29.9			15	54.3		
		16	42.4			16	43.4		
		17	43.6			17	33.9		
		18	64.4			18	76.4		
		19	40.6			19	42.0		
		20	46.8			20	23.5		
		21	44.6			21	48.9		
		22	31.8			22	32.0		
		23	57.5			23	34.9		
		24	58.5			24	47.3		
		25	64.3			25	25.7		
		26	34.6			26	40.9		
		27	33.1			27	34.8		
		28	31.44			28	34.5		
		29	22.4			29	53.1		
		30	35.3			30	35.8		
3.	Vocabulary	31	49.4	39.2	Weak	31	63.4	47.98	Average
		32	38.0			32	44.3		
		33	33.0			33	42.0		
		34	47.7			34	53.1		
		35	32.0			35	43.1		
		36	35.3			36	42.0		
4.	Composition	37	36.4	42.1	Average	37	52.2	52.65	Average
		38	44.2			38	63.0		
		39	56.9			39	49.6		
		40	31.0			40	45.8		
5.	Comprehension	41	35.8	45.1	Average	41	51.48	32.39	Weak
		42	24.5			42	46.84		
		43	80.2			43	31.69		
		44	66.2			44	19.25		
		45	18.7			45	12.71		

