



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA



**PUPILS' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS
REPORT FOR THE STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL
ASSESSMENT (SFNA) 2020**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE



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FOREWORD

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania has prepared a report which gives feedback on the Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) 2020. The results of the Standard Four National Assessment are basically used to evaluate the pupils' competencies and mastery of the English Language. Generally, the pupils' performance in English Language subject was good since a total of 1,300,497 (76.38%) pupils passed.

This Pupils' Items Response Analysis Report (PIRA) for Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) in 2020, brings feedback to pupils, teachers, parents, policy makers and all education stakeholders on the pupils' performance in English Language subject. The analysis of pupils' responses describes the factors that made the pupils to perform well and the challenges they faced in demonstrating their competence. The analysis denotes that the pupils with good performance were able to identify the requirement of the questions. They also possessed writing skills, sufficient knowledge of grammatical rules, good basic vocabulary for use in different situations and were able to comprehend written information. On the other hand, the candidates who scored low marks failed to identify the requirement of the questions and lacked competence in the assessed areas.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects that, the feedback provided in this report will be useful for education stakeholders. The report will help them to identify challenges faced by the pupils and take appropriate measures in order to improve pupils' performance in English Language subject at this level. The report will also help teachers and pupils to improve the teaching and learning of English Language subject in schools.

Finally, the Council would like to thank examinations officers and all those who in one way or the other have made this report a reality.



Dr. Charles E. Msonde

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) was done on 25th November, 2020. The registered pupils for the assessment were 1,828,265, whereas 1,702,837 (93.16%) sat for the assessment and 1,300,497 (76.38%) passed. The performance has decreased in this year by 4.71 percent, when compared to the 2019 English Language Assessment, where a total of 1,786,729 pupils were registered for the assessment, among these, 1,664,426 (93.15%) sat for the assessment and 1,349,573 (81.09%) passed.

The English Language paper had five sections A, B, C, D and E with four (4) objective type of questions and one (1) short answer type of question which makes a total of five (5) questions. The paper tested different language areas in each section as follows: section A, five (5) dictation items; section B, five (5) vocabulary items; section C, five (5) grammar items; section D, five (5) composition items and section E, five (5) comprehension items.

The performance of the pupils in each question was categorised according to their scores as follows: scores from 0 to 2.5 marks were categorised as poor performance; from 3 to 6 marks as average performance; whereas from 6.5 to 9.5 marks were categorised as good performance and 10 marks were classified as very good performance.

Generally, each question in this assessment weighed a total of 10 marks whereby each item carried 2 marks. However, in question 1, each correct written word was awarded half a mark (0.5).

The presentation of analysis indicates the number and the percentage of the pupils who correctly answered the questions and those who responded with incorrect answers. In such instances, the percentage from 0 to 33 percent indicates poor performance, whereas 34 to 66 percent is an average performance, while 67 to 100 percent is good performance. In addition, charts and graphs have been employed to present the data which indicate the pupils' performance in each question. Moreover, colours in the graphs, table and charts have been used in such a way that they represent the pupils' performance. Red represents poor performance where as yellow stands for average performance, light green indicates good performance and green represents very good performance.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' ITEMS RESPONSES

2.1 SECTION A: DICTATION

In this question, the pupils were required to listen to dictation of five sentences with four words each. The invigilator read the sentences loudly while the pupils had to write them down. All five sentences were in the statement form as follows:

- (i) Today is my birthday.
- (ii) He speaks English well.
- (iii) It has stopped raining.
- (iv) They have two children.
- (v) She cooks nice meals.

This question tested the pupils' ability to listen and write the sentences read aloud correctly. In responding to this question, the pupils had to supply words that rhyme with read words.

In general, the pupils' performance in this question was poor. A total of 1,156,995 (67.95%) pupils scored from 0 to 2.5 marks out of 10 marks allocated to this question. These pupils managed to write from 0 to 5 words only correctly. The pupils who performed averagely (3 to 6 marks) were 321,703 (18.90%). These pupils wrote from 6 to 12 words only correctly. A total of 148,146 (8.70%) pupils had good performance as they scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks by writing from 13 to 19 words only correctly. However, 75,706 (4.45%) pupils wrote 20 words correctly and scored 10 marks which indicate a very good performance. Figure 1 illustrates the summary of performance of pupils in question 1.

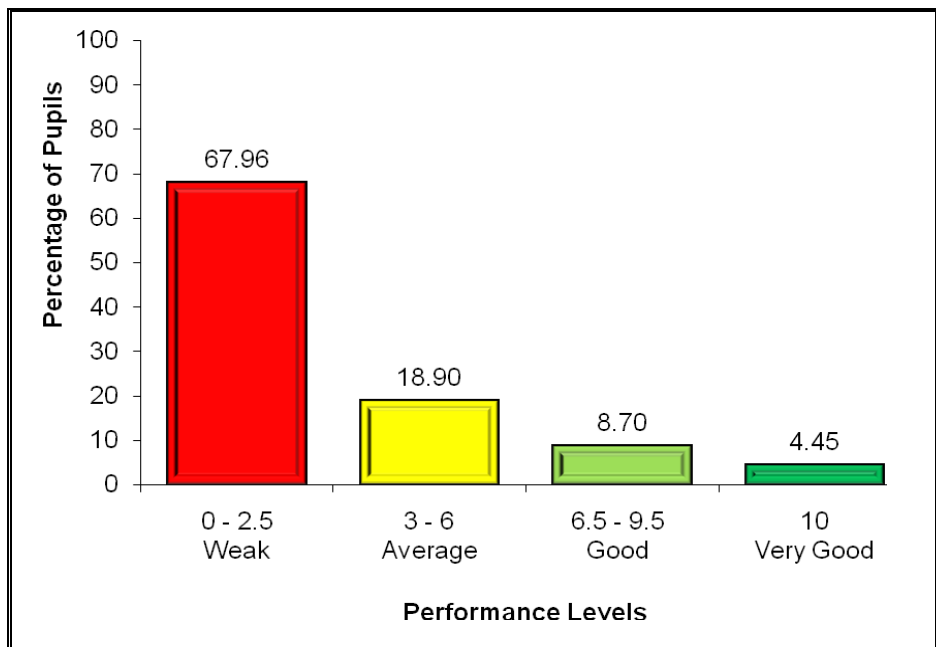


Figure 1: *Pupils' performance in question 1*

The analysis shows that the pupils who scored 10 marks could write all the five sentences correctly and put all the punctuation marks accordingly. Those pupils also were able to employ capital letters at the beginning of each sentence and full stops at the

end of each sentence. Extract 1 is a sample of a good response from a pupil who responded to this question correctly.

1.	Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) to (v) and then write them in the blank spaces provided.
(i)	Today is my birthday.
(ii)	He speaks English well.
(iii)	It has stopped raining.
(iv)	They have two children.
(v)	She cooks nice meals.

Extract 1.1: Sample of a pupil's correct responses to question 1

In Extract 1.1, the pupil wrote each of five sentences consisting of four words correctly. The pupil could also observe the punctuation marks such as full stops at the end of each sentence and capital letters at the beginning.

However, 321,703 (18.90%) pupils who had average performance were able to write between 6 and 12 words only correctly. Those pupils had inadequate listening and writing skills. The pupils faced the challenges of how to spell the words, hence they misspelled some words in the sentences. Extract 1.2 illustrates sample responses of a pupil who performed averagely in question 1.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) to (v) and then write them in the blank spaces provided.

- (i) Today is my birthday
- (ii) He speaks English well
- (iii) It has stopped raining
- (iv) They have two children
- (v) She cooks nice meals

Extract 1.2 Sample of a pupil's averagely performed responses in question 1.

In Extract 1.2, the pupil managed to write some words correctly but failed to write others. This pupil had problems in spelling words correctly as he wrote some words with wrong spellings. Other pupils in this category wrote words such as *Engilish*, *Sopd*, *rengring* and *hav*.

On the other hand, there were pupils who failed to write the sentences correctly. Those pupils wrote English words by basing on swahili pronunciation as in *tudei* and *naisi*; others wrote Swahili words such as *lami*. Other pupils wrote meaningless words such as *hardng*, *haz* and *mirzi*. These pupils lacked both Reading and Writing Skills. Extract 1.3 is a sample of a pupil's wrong responses for question 1.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) to (v) and then write them in the blank spaces provided.

(i) Tu deing is bathey

(ii) HeS pisksi ENGLISH weak

(iii) HeS Spopt Slaing

(iv) The yeing Chdilni

(v) Chikss no is mels

Extract 1.3: Sample of a pupil's incorrect responses for question 1

In Extract 1.3 the pupil misspelled some words, such as *Tu*, *deing*, *pisksi*, *Spopt* and *Chdilni*. In addition, the pupil failed to observe full stops at the end of each sentence.

2.2 SECTION B: VOCABULARY

This section had one question with five multiple-choice items. The pupils were given the choices (A - D) and they were required to choose the most correct answer and write its letter in the box provided.

Generally, the pupils' performance in this question was average. This owes to the fact that, a total of 1,016,609 (59.71%) pupils managed to score from 3 to 10 marks (Average - Very good). These pupils could identify the task of the question which required them to select correct answers and write their letters in the provided boxes.

Further analysis indicates that a total of 685,955 (40.29%) pupils scored from 0 to 2.5 marks which indicate poor performance. Those who scored from 3 to 6 marks were 695,381 (40.84%), and this indicates an average performance.

However, 212,499 (12.48%) pupils scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks which is good performance. The pupils who scored 10 marks (a very good performance) were 108,715 (6.39%) of all the pupils who sat for this assessment. Figure 2 is the summary of this analysis.

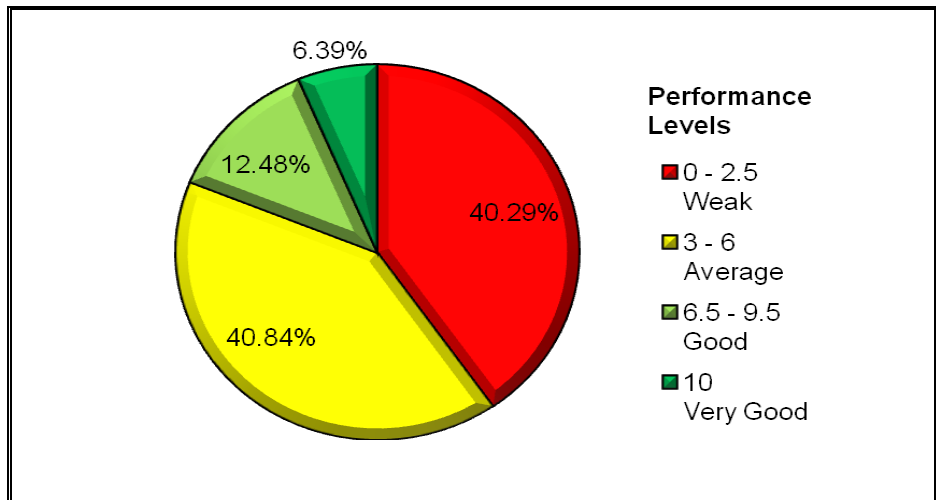


Figure 2: *Pupils' Performance in question 2*

The following are the multiple-choice items (i) to (v) which required the pupil to choose the most correct answer among the options provided.

- (i) The son of your uncle or aunt is
- A your niece
 - B your brother
 - C your cousin
 - D your nephew

In this item, the pupils were expected to show the ability to use various vocabulary to communicate in everyday simple related family transactions. The correct answer was C (*your cousin*). The pupils who opted for the correct answer understood that the term refers to a child of one's uncle or aunt. On the other hand, the pupils who chose A (*your niece*) did not realise that the name "niece" means a daughter of one's brother, sister, brother-in-law or sister-in-law. The pupils who selected B (*your brother*) could not recognise that the noun "brother" means a male sibling or a male offspring having both parents with another offspring. Other pupils who chose D (*your nephew*) did not realise that the term is used to refer to a son of one's brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

(ii) The opposite of the word 'after' is

- A before
- B next
- C now
- D later

This item tested the pupils' ability to identify words with opposite meanings. The correct answer in this item was A (*before*). The pupils who chose the correct answer understood that the word means forward or in front of something or time; this is the opposite of the word after which means behind in place or time. The pupils who opted for B (*next*) did not know that "next" means immediately adjacent (as in place, rank or time).

These who selected C (*now*) did not recognise that the word "now" means present time or moment. The pupils who chose D (*later*) did not understand that the word "later" means at some times subsequently to a given time. Therefore, the pupils who chose incorrect responses failed to identify the opposite of the given word and they lacked knowledge of vocabulary pertaining to identifying words with opposite meanings.

- (iii) My uncle makes tables, desks, chairs and doors with wood. He is
- A a plumber
 - B a carpet
 - C a carpenter
 - D a car painter

This item assessed the pupils' ability to identify occupation related vocabulary. The correct response was C (*a carpenter*). The pupils who selected the correct answer understood that the term means a person who repairs wooden structures or their structural parts as those mentioned in the item (tables, desks, chairs and doors). Those who opted for A (*a plumber*) did not recognise that the word "plumber" means a person who installs, repairs and maintains pipes, fittings and other apparatus of water supply, sanitation, or heating systems. Therefore, it is not correct to relate a person who deals with sanitary works with one who works on wooden materials. On the other hand, the pupils who chose B (*a carpet*) could not identify "a carpet" as a floor covering made of fabric. Moreover, the pupils who opted for D (*a car painter*) did not understand that the expression means one who paints cars.

(iv) The word 'fast' has the same meaning as

- A slow
- B quick
- C gentle
- D rash

This item tested the pupils' knowledge of identifying words with similar meaning (synonyms). In this instance, the pupils were required to choose the correct option B (*quick*). The pupils who chose the correct option understood that the word is used to mean acting with speed. Likewise, the word fast means moving or capable of moving at a high speed. On the contrary, there were pupils who opted for the incorrect options. Those who selected A (*slow*) did not realise that the word "slow" means acting at less than usual speed which is an opposite of the word 'fast'. The pupils who selected incorrect option C (*gentle*) did not understand that "gentle" means acting at moderate speed. Others who opted for incorrect alternative D (*rash*) did not know that the word "rash" means a large number of instances in a short period. With reference to such responses, those who chose incorrect options failed to demonstrate the competency in identifying words with similar meanings. The pupils who gave incorrect answer in this item faced difficulties in using synonyms.

- (v) The pupils were attacked by a _____
of bees.
- A flock
 - B crowd
 - C gang
 - D swarm

This item tested the pupils' ability to identify group or collective nouns for things. The correct answer was D (*swarm*). The pupils who selected incorrect response A (*flock*) did not know that "flock" means a group of animals such as birds or sheep herded together. The pupils who chose B (*crowd*) did not realise that the term "crowd" means a large number of persons especially when collected together. Moreover, those who opted for C (*gang*) could not understand that the word "gang" means a group of persons working to unlawful or antisocial ends. Therefore, the pupils who provided incorrect responses were unable to use collective nouns.

2.3 SECTION C : GRAMMAR

This section consisted of one question which had five incomplete sentences in (i) to (v). The question tested the pupils' ability to apply set of rules when using language. The pupils were required to complete each sentence by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentence meaningful.

The general performance for this question was average. This is due to the fact that 933,050 (54.80%) pupils scored from 3 to 10 marks (ranging from average to very good performance).

Further analysis shows that 769,500 (45.2%) pupils scored from 0 to 2.5 marks (Poor performance). The pupils who had average performance by scoring from 3 to 6 marks were 658,541 (38.7%). Furthermore, 189,017 (11.1%) pupils had good performance by scoring 6.5 to 9.5 marks. Lastly, 85,492 (5.0%) pupils scored all the 10 marks allocated to this question and this indicates very good performance. Figure 3 shows the pupils' performance in question 3.

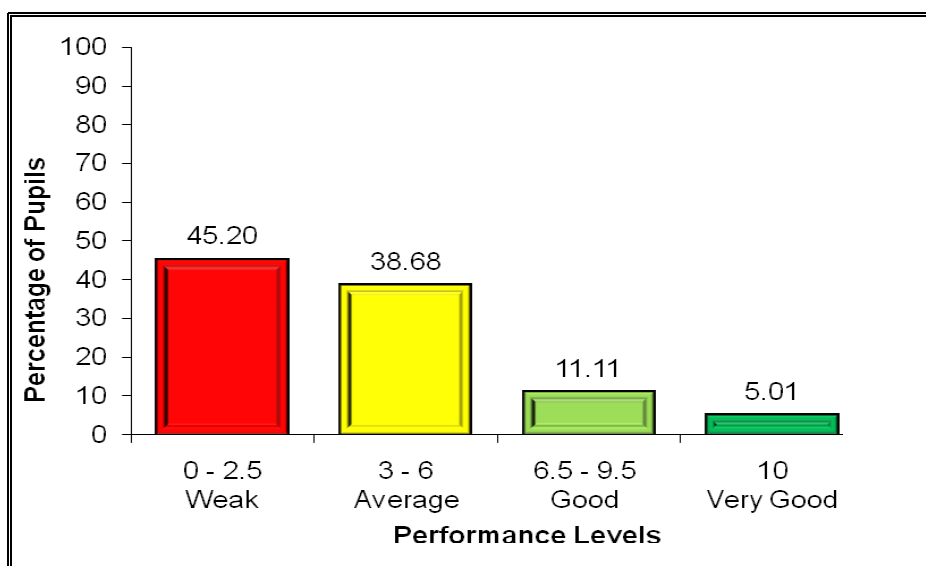


Figure 3: *Pupils' Performance in Question 3*

Figure 3 indicates that 54.80 percent of pupils performed averagely in this question by scoring from 3 to 10 marks. The pupils' performance indicates that they possessed required proficiency in the field of grammatical rules especially in applying them when using the English language. Extract 2.1 is a sample response from a pupil who answered the question correctly.

3. Complete sentence (i) to (v) by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.
- (i) Our country has many (many, much, any) industries.
 - (ii) My friend will come at (on, at, in) 8 o'clock in the morning.
 - (iii) Would (Would, Have, Has) you open the window for me, please?
 - (iv) The head teacher was (was, were, am) teaching us the national anthem.
 - (v) My sister and I go (goes, go, going) to school on foot every morning.

Extract 2.1: Sample of a pupil's correct responses to question 3

In Extract 2.1, the pupil responded to all five items correctly. The responses indicate that the pupil was competent in grammatical rules hence he/she applied them when constructing sentences.

However, other pupils had average performance in this question. These pupils were able to respond correctly to 2 or 3 items out of 5. Their responses imply that they faced challenges in answering the questions on tenses and other forms of grammar. This is the reason why the pupils scored from 3 to 6 marks out of the 10 marks allotted to this question. Extract 2.2 is a sample of responses from a pupil who performed averagely in question 3.

3. Complete sentence (i) to (v) by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.
- (i) Our country has many (many, much, any) industries.
 - (ii) My friend will come at (on, at, in) 8 o'clock in the morning.
 - (iii) Have (Would, Have, Has) you open the window for me, please?
 - (iv) The head teacher was (was, were, am) teaching us the national anthem.
 - (v) My sister and I goes (goes, go, going) to school on foot every morning.

Extract 2.2: A sample of responses from a pupil who performed averagely in question 3

In Extract 2.2, the pupil responded correctly to one item on other forms of grammar (item i) and one on tenses (item iv) making a total of two items out of five. In such situation, the pupil's responses indicate that he/she had partial knowledge of grammatical rules, hence he/she could apply it to just two sentences.

Pupils with poor performance in this question scored from 0 to 2.5 marks. These pupils had inadequate competency in applying grammatical rules when constructing sentences. Extract 2.3 is one of the examples.

3. Complete sentence (i) to (v) by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.
- (i) Our country has much (many, much, any) industries.
 - (ii) My friend will come on (on, at, in) 8 o'clock in the morning.
 - (iii) Have (Would, Have, Has) you open the window for me, please?
 - (iv) The head teacher am (was, were, am) teaching us the national anthem.
 - (v) My sister and I go (goes, go, going) to school on foot every morning.

Extract 2.3: Sample of a pupil's incorrect responses to question 3

In Extract 2.3, the pupil failed to respond to four items correctly as he/she responded to only one item (v) correctly. The responses supplied by the pupil to the question suggests that, he/she lacked competency in grammatical rules. That is why, the pupil wrote incorrect words which do not agree with the structures of the sentences provided in four items (i-iv).

The following is the analysis of the items (i) - (v) which required the pupils to fill in the blanks with the correct word chosen from among the words provided in the brackets.

- (i) Our country has _____ (many, much, any) industries.

This item tested the pupils' ability to use quantifiers to express quantity. The pupils who wrote the correct answer (*many*) understood that the word is used when describing countable nouns such as industries, tables, people and chairs.

Since the noun that was to be described was countable "industries", the correct quantifier had to be "many". The pupils who wrote incorrect answer (*much*) did not understand that the adjective "much" is used when expressing uncountable nouns such as water, juice and love. In such instances, the quantifier "much" cannot be used with countable noun "industries". Those who responded with incorrect response (*any*) did not understand that the adjective "any" is generally used in questions and negative sentences. In such instances, the adjective "any" cannot be used in a positive sentence as in "*Our country has many industries.*"

- (ii) My friend will come _____ (on, at, in)
8 o'clock in the morning.

This item tested the pupils' ability to use appropriate prepositions of time where the correct answer was (*at*). The pupils who wrote the correct answer understood that the preposition of time "at" is used to indicate hours as in "*at 8 o'clock*". On the contrary, the pupils who wrote incorrect preposition of time "on" could not understand that "on" is used to indicate days of the week as in "*Neema will come on Saturday.*" Moreover, the pupils who wrote incorrect preposition of time (*in*) did not realise that the preposition is used to describe the parts of the day or the year in the expressions such as "*We woke up early in the morning*" and "*I was born in 2010.*"

- (iii) _____ (Would, Have, Has) you open the
window for me, please?

This item tested the ability of the pupils to correctly use auxiliary functional words to express a request with which voluntary compliance is expected. The correct response was (*would*). The pupils who responded with the correct word could understand that the word "Would" was suitable to complete the part of expression "*you open the window for me, please?*" The pupils also realised that the word "Would" is used to indicate polite request which definitely correlates with the word "please" as it appears at the end of the question. Those who wrote (*Have*) and (*Has*) were wrong and did not understand that the auxiliary verbs they wrote are used with verbs in past participle form when asking a question such as "Have you watched a movie?" In this regard, the aforementioned words cannot be used with the verb in its basic form as in "Would you open the window for me, please?"

(iv) The head teacher _____ (was, were, am) teaching us the national anthem.

This item tested the pupils' ability to use the *verb to be* in expressing continuous events in the past. The correct response to the item was (*was*). The pupils who wrote the correct answer realised that the form of the *verb to be* "was" is used with the first or the third person singular to express continuous events in the past. Therefore, given that the sentence starts with "The head teacher" which is the third person singular, the correct word to be used with the phrase is "was" and the sentence should therefore read as "*The head teacher was teaching us the national anthem.*" Also, there were pupils who wrote incorrect response (*were*).

These pupils did not understand that the auxiliary verb "were" is used with the first, second and third person plural pronouns/nouns when expressing continuous activities in the past. The example of such sentences is "They were looking for Ashura." Those who responded with incorrect response (*am*) did not realise that the form of the verb to be "am" was incorrect. This is due to the fact that the aforementioned form is used in present continuous tense with the first person singular pronoun "I" to express continuous events as in "I am taking this money to my sister."

(v) My sister and I _____ (goes, go, going) to school on foot every morning.

This item tested the pupils' ability to use the correct verb form to express habitual activities by using simple present tense. The correct response to this item was (*go*). The pupils who responded with the correct answer were knowledgeable about the rules and structure used to form a sentence in simple present tense. Those pupils understood that the verb "go" is used with the first, second or third person plural pronouns to express habitual activities. The example of such sentences is "Aisha and I go to market every day."

On the other hand, the pupils who wrote incorrect response (*goes*) did not realise that the verb "goes" is used with the third person singular pronouns/nouns such as "he", "she" and "it". It is used with the aforementioned pronouns to express repeated actions as in "She always goes to town."

These pupils wrote incorrect answer (goes) because they were confused with the presence of "My sister and I" in the sentence. They did not know that the phrase means the same as "We" which should go with a verb in its basic form such as "go". Those who wrote incorrect response (*going*) did not understand that the verb is used in present continuous tense or past continuous tense.

2.4 SECTION D: COMPOSITION

This section had one question which had an incomplete letter. The question was assessing the competency on communicating orally and through writing. This question required the pupils to supply words which could complete the letter and make it meaningful.

The following are the words in the box and the composition.

Neema, visit, P. O. Box 412, alright, Dear

Mtaroni Primary School,

_____,'

ARUSHA.

20th November 2020

_____ *uncle,*

It is my hope that you are doing fine. I am _____ . I am writing to tell you that I will _____ you during the next holiday in December. I will stay there for two weeks. Later on, I will visit my aunt in Dodoma.

Pass my greetings to my grandmother. I hope to meet you there.

Your niece,

The overall performance for this question was average since 921,715 (54.13%) pupils passed by scoring from 3 to 10 marks. On the other hand, only 780,765 (45.87%) pupils failed by scoring from 0 to 2.5 out of 10 marks.

Further analysis indicates that, the pupils who performed averagely with scores from 3 to 6 marks were 481,977 (28.31%). These pupils could answer correctly 2 or 3 items only. A total of 62,232 (4.02%) pupils who answered correctly 4 items were in the category of good performance (6.5 to 9.5 marks). Moreover, 377,359 (21.80%) pupils scored 10 marks which was very good performance. These pupils were able to answer correctly all five items in this section. Figure 5 presents the summary of pupils' performance in this question.

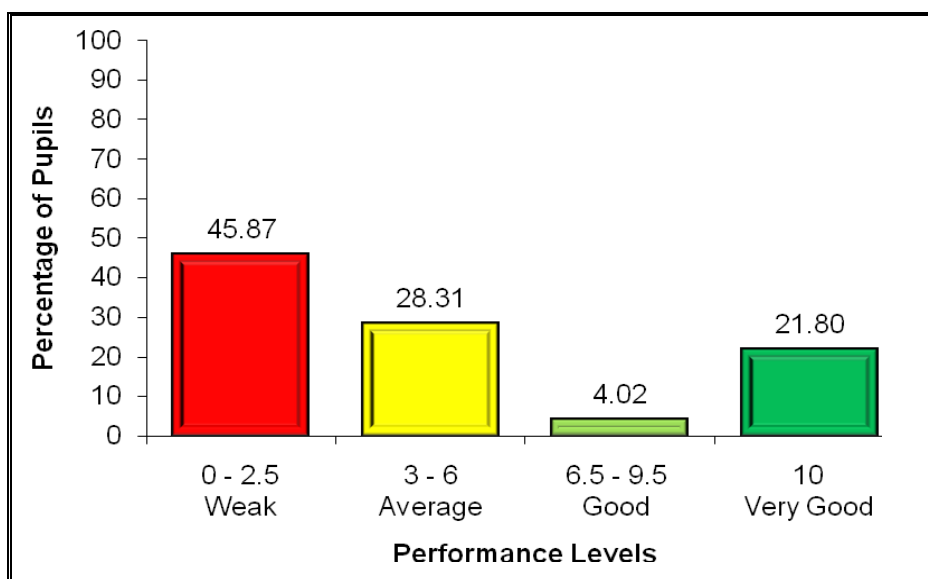


Figure 5: *Pupils' performance in question 4*

The analysis shows that the pupils who scored the marks which are considered very good performance (10 marks) in this question were competent in using words to create a meaningful composition. Those pupils used their competency on writing to pick appropriate words from the box and write them in the spaces provided to make the letter meaningful. Extract 3.1 is a sample of a correct response from a pupil who performed well in this question.

4. Complete the following letter by filling in the blank spaces with correct words provided in the box.

Neema, visit, P. O. Box 412, alright, Dear

Mtaroni Primary School,

P. O. Box 412,

ARUSHA.

20th November 2020

Dear _____ uncle,

It is my hope that you are doing fine. I am alright. I am writing to tell you that I will visit you during the next holiday in December. I will stay there for two weeks. Later on, I will visit my aunt in Dodoma.

Pass my greetings to my grandmother. I hope to meet you there.

Your niece,

Neema

Extract 3.1: A sample of a pupil's correct responses to question 4

In Extract 3.1, the pupil was able to write appropriate words in all the spaces that ought to be filled. The pupil's correct responses to this question are attributable to his/her adequate understanding of communicating through writing.

The pupils who had an average performance in this question answered correctly 2 or 3 items only, hence they scored from 3 to 6 marks. Extract 3.2 presents a sample of responses from a pupil who performed averagely to question 4.

4. Complete the following letter by filling in the blank spaces with correct words provided in the box.

Neema, visit, P. O. Box 412, alright, Dear

Mtaroni Primary School,

P.O. Box 412,

ARUSHA.

20th November 2020

Dear uncle,

It is my hope that you are doing fine. I am visit. I am writing to tell you that I will alright you during the next holiday in December. I will stay there for two weeks. Later on, I will visit my aunt in Dodoma.

Pass my greetings to my grandmother. I hope to meet you there.

Your niece,

Neema

Extract 3.2: A sample of responses from a pupil with average performance in question 4

In Extract 3.2, the pupil was able to correctly fill in 3 blanks only by using such words as *P.O. Box 412*, *Dear* and *Neema*. The pupil could not apply appropriate words in the right places as he/she wrote *visit* in the third blank space instead of *alright*. Moreover, the pupil did not understand that the second sentence was about how the writer is doing, therefore the phrase "I am" required the word "alright" to be meaningful. Furthermore, the pupil in the fourth blank space wrote *alright* instead of *visit*. In this case, the pupil failed to understand that the word "alright" is an adverb or adjective, hence it cannot be preceded by auxiliary "will".

On the other hand, the pupils whose performance was poor (0 to 2 marks) responded correctly to either none or only 1 item due to lack of proficiency on communicating through writing. These pupils were not competent in writing simple short texts which explain different events using guided text. Extract 3.3 indicates a sample of wrong responses from a pupil who performed poorly in this question.

4. Complete the following letter by filling in the blank spaces with correct words provided in the box.

Neema, visit, P. O. Box 412, alright, Dear

Mtaroni Primary School,
P O Box,
ARUSHA.
20th November 2020

Dear uncle,

It is my hope that you are doing fine. I am visit. I am writing to tell you that I will neema you during the next holiday in December. I will stay there for two weeks. Later on, I will visit my aunt in Dodoma.

Pass my greetings to my grandmother. I hope to meet you there.

Your niece,
neema

Extract 3.3 A sample of a pupil's wrong responses to question 4

Extract 3.3, shows a sample of the pupils' incorrect responses to Question 4. This pupil could answer correctly only 1 item out of 5. The responses reveal that the pupil did not understand the structure of a letter and its content, hence he/she wrote words without considering the logical flow of information in the given text.

For example, the word *Neema* written by the pupil cannot be used after the auxiliary "will".

2.5 SECTION E: COMPREHENSION

In this section, there was one question with five short answer items. The question assessed the pupils' ability to comprehend written information. The pupils were required to read the given passage carefully and answer the questions with reference to the passage they read.

The overall performance in this question was poor due to the fact that, 403,284 (23.65%) pupils had performance which ranged from average to very good (3 to 10 marks). However, 1,299,266 (76.35%) pupils failed by scoring the marks ranging from 0 to 2.5 (poor performance). Data analysis indicates that 328,613 (19.26%) pupils answered correctly 2 or 3 items hence they scored the marks ranging from 3 to 6 (average performance). In addition, 50,492 (3.05%) pupils scored 8 marks by writing correct responses to 4 items which indicate good performance. Moreover, 24,179 (1.34%) pupils scored 10 marks as they supplied correct answers to all the five items indicating a very good performance. Figure 5 illustrates the summary of the performance of pupils in this question.

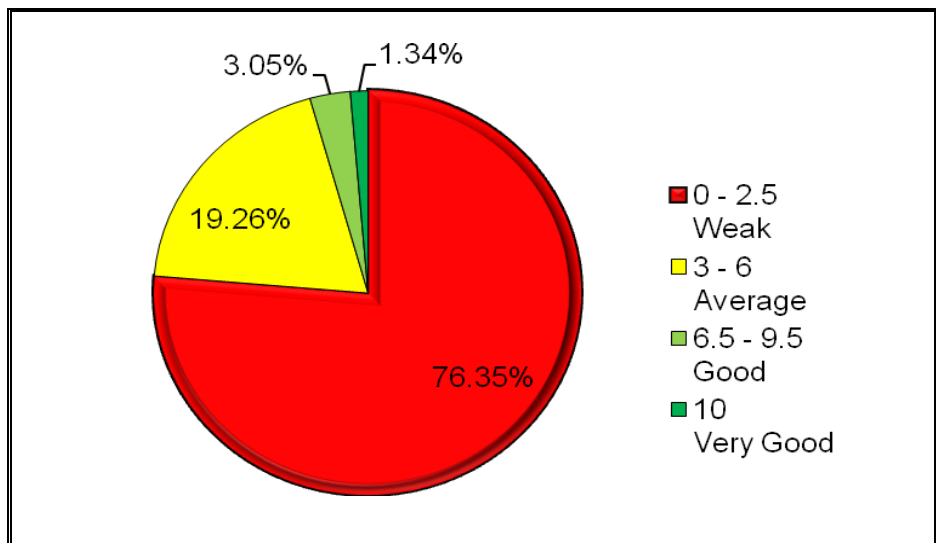


Figure 5: Pupils' performance in question 5

The following is the passage which was given.

My name is Hassan. I am in Standard Four at Jamhuri Primary School. I live in Tambe Village. Many people in the village are farmers. They cut down trees and grow crops. They also keep cattle. The weather around the village is very dry. There is little rain.

One day, our teacher took us to Mkombozi village. Mkombozi is a small village near Kazimoto town. My village is between Kazimoto town and Nela Village. The villagers of Mkombozi keep their environment well. They plant and protect trees. The village looks green with many trees. The weather around Mkombozi Village is cool with a lot of rain. Our teacher told us that trees help to get cool weather and a lot of rain. The visit was very good. It helped me to understand why my village is dry.

The following is the analysis of the five items that were given to the pupils to respond according to the passage they had read.

Questions:

- (i) Who is telling this story?
-

In this item, the pupils were required to identify a narrator of the story they had read. The correct response to this item was *Hassan*. The pupils who answered correctly were able to understand that the expression *My name is Hassan* describes the story teller. Therefore, they used that expression to identify the answer pertaining to the given question. Extract Na. 4.1 illustrates a sample of response from a pupil who answered this item (i) correctly.

(i) Who is telling this story? <u>Hassan</u>

Extract 4.1 Sample of a pupil's correct response to question 5 (i)

In Extract 4.1, the pupil could write the correct answer to the item. The pupil understood that the narrator of the story is called *Hassan*. This pupil could realise that the uses of the first person singular pronouns "My" as in *My name is Hassan* and "I" as in *I live in Tambe Village* indicate that the story is told by *Hassan* himself.

On the contrary, there were pupils who gave incorrect responses to this item. Those pupils could not identify the requirement of the question. For instance, instead of writing the name of the story teller, they wrote incorrect answers, such as (a) *my name*, (b) *rain keep*, (c) *teacher*, (d) *Tambe* and (e) *was very good it*

helped me to understand why. Extract 4.2 illustrates a sample response of a wrong response to item.

(i) Who is telling this story? <u>Kazimoto</u>

Extract 4.2: Sample of a pupil's incorrect response to question 5 (i)

In Extract 4.2, the pupil provided incorrect answer. The response written by the pupil indicates that he/she did not understand the requirement of the question. Therefore, the pupil ended up writing the name of town (Kazimoto) which was mentioned in the passage instead of the name of the story letter.

(ii) Where is Mkombozi village?

This item required the pupils to describe an area at which Mkombozi village is located. According to the passage, the correct answer was *It is Near Kazimoto town*. The pupils who wrote the correct answer had an ability to interpret the passage especially the part which states *Mkombozi is a small village near Kazimoto town*. Therefore, they connected that part of the passage with what has been asked in the item, hence they wrote correct answer. Extract 5.1 illustrates a sample response from a pupil who got the question right.

(ii) Where is Mkombozi village?

Mkombozi is a small village near Kazimoto town.

Extract 5.1: Sample of a pupil's correct response to question 5 (ii)

In Extract 5.1, the pupil managed to write the correct answer to the item. The pupil understood that according to the passage, Mkombozi village is located near Kazimoto town.

However, other pupils responded with incorrect answers to this item. These pupils did not realise that the second paragraph tells about the trip to Mkombozi village which is near Kazimoto town. Their responses indicate that they failed to identify the requirement of the question, hence they gave such incorrect answers as (a) *Mkombozi is a small village near* (b) *Mkombozi village Mkombozi is a small village* (c) *mkombozi* and (d) *took good trees*. Extract 5.2 indicates a sample of an incorrect response from a pupil who got the question wrong.

(ii) Where is Mkombozi village?

primary school

Extract 5.2: Sample of a pupil's incorrect response to question 5 (ii)

In Extract 5.2, the pupil did not realise that his/her response *primary School* is a place where pupils study. Therefore, instead of stating *Near Kazimoto town*, he/she just named the place *primary School*.

(iii) Why is Tambe village dry?

In this item, the pupils were required to give reason why Tambe village is dry. The pupils had to analyse facts in the passage and give the reason why the village was dry. The correct response to this item was *It is dry because the villagers cut down trees*. The pupils who responded correctly to this item were able to connect ideas in the passage and come out with a correct reason relating to what has been asked. In the first paragraph *Hassan* stated that in his village Tambe, people *cut down trees and grow crops* and also the village was dry. However, in the last paragraph *Hassan* stated that the trip to Mkombozi village which *looks green with many trees* helped him to understand why his village was dry. In such instances, the pupils identified the reason that made Tambe village to be dry. Extract 6.1 shows a sample of a correct answer from a pupil who got this item right.

(iii) Why is Tambe village dry?
Because farmers they cut down trees and grow crops.

Extract 6.1 Sample of a pupil's correct response to question 5 (iii)

In Extract 6.1, the pupil managed to state the reason for which Tambe village was dry. This pupil was able to interpret the passage and respond to the item accordingly.

The further analysis shows that the pupils who failed to answer this item correctly were unable to understand the requirement of the item. They also failed to interpret the passage and analyse it to come up with the reason sought in the question. Those pupils gave incorrect answers such as (a) *get cool* (b) *village* (c) *Jamhuri primary school in TAMBE* and (d) *Kazimoto*.

Extract 6.2 is a sample of the pupils' incorrect responses to this item.

(iii) Why is Tambe village dry? mkombozi

Extract 6.2: Sample of a pupil's incorrect response to question 5 (iii)

In Extract 6.2, the pupil failed to understand the requirement of the item. For that reason, this pupil did not know that the word *Why* in the item indicates the need to find a reason for something. Therefore, the pupil responded to the item by naming Mkombozi village instead of stating a factor that made Tambe village to be dry.

(iv) When did Hassan learn that trees are important?

This item tested the pupils' ability to describe the time when *Hassan* understood the importance of trees. The correct answer to this item was *When he visited Mkombozi village*. The pupils who wrote the correct answer could refer to the passage where *Hassan* said "*It helped me to understand why my village is dry.*" The pupils understood that the trip to Mkombozi village made *Hassan* learn the importance of trees, hence they wrote the correct answer. Extract 7.1 indicates a sample of a correct response from a pupil who got the item right.

(iv) When did Hassan learn that trees are important?
When teacher took him to Mkombozi Village

Extract 7.1: Sample of a pupil's correct response to question 5 (iv)

In Extract 7.1, the pupil responded by writing the correct answer. This pupil referred to the passage and understood the time when *Hassan* learned the importance of trees. The pupil managed to comprehend what has been written in the given passage. Therefore, it was easier for him/her to come up with the correct response.

On the other hand, there were pupils who failed to respond correctly to this item. Those pupils could not comprehend the given passage, hence they wrote irrelevant answers such as (a) *Village* (b) *Kazimoto* (c) *The weather around Mkombozi* (d) *help to get* and (e) *grow crops*. In addition, their responses indicate that they wrote answers by just copying some parts of the passage without considering what was asked. Extract 7.2 shows a sample of an incorrect response from a pupil who got this item wrong.

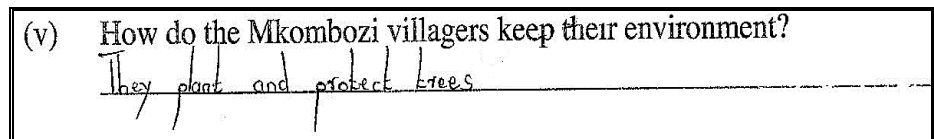
(iv) When did Hassan learn that trees are important?
I am in standard four at Jamhuri Primary

Extract 7.2: Sample of a pupil's incorrect response to question 5 (iv)

In Extract 7.2, the pupil wrote the education level of the story teller (*Hassan*). This pupil could read the passage but he/she failed to comprehend what was the passage about, hence he/she supplied incorrect response.

(v) How do the Mkombozi villagers keep their environment?

This item tested the pupils' ability to analyse and state ways through which Mkombozi villagers keep their environment. The correct answer was *They plant and protect trees/By planting and protecting trees*. The pupils who managed to answer the item correctly were able to comprehend the story and fulfill the requirement of the item. Extract 8.1 illustrates a sample of a correct response from one of the pupils.



Extract 8.1: Sample of a pupil's correct response to question 5 (v)

In Extract 8.1, the pupil analysed the passage and responded correctly to the item. This pupil understood the part of the passage in which *Hassan* expressed the method used by Mkombozi villagers to keep their environment. The pupil also realised that the reason behind Mkombozi village to look green with many trees was by planting and protecting trees. Therefore, the pupil had an adequate comprehension skills.

On the other hand, there were other pupils who wrote incorrect responses to the item. Their incorrect responses were attributed to the lack of comprehension skills and misunderstanding of the question requirement. Those factors led them to give incorrect answers such as (a) *small* (b) *many people in the village are*

farmers (c) green and (d) Mkombozi village. Extract 8.2 shows a sample of an incorrect response from one of the pupil.

(v) How do the Mkombozi villagers keep their environment? Mkombozi is a small
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Extract 8.2: Sample of a pupil's incorrect response to question 5 (v)

In Extract 8.2, the pupil misunderstood the passage and did not identify the requirement of the item. As a result, he/she responded incorrectly.

3.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH COMPETENCY

In English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) 2020, three competencies were assessed. The competencies were ability of pupils to *comprehend oral and written information, communicate orally and through writing, and acquire and use vocabulary through the three language skills*.

The general performance of pupils in each competency in this year's assessment was average by 47.34 percent. The pupil's competency of *acquiring and using vocabulary through the three language skills* which was assessed in question 2, had an average performance as 59.71 percent of pupils scored from 3 to 10 marks (from average to very good performance). The pupils' performance in *communicating orally and through writing* (question 3 and 4) was average as 54.46 percent of the pupils scored from 3 to 10 marks. In addition, the pupils' performance in *comprehending oral and written information* which was assessed in question 1 and 5 was poor as 27.85 percent of the pupils scored from 3 to 10 marks. The data for this analysis is presented in *Appendix A*.

4.0

CONCLUSION

The general performance of the pupils in the 02 English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) for 2020 was good. This is because a total of 1,300,497 (76.38%) pupils passed by scoring from 10 to 50 marks. Those pupils were able to understand the requirement of the questions and had ability to develop and use appropriately vocabulary, listening, writing, composition and comprehension skills.

On the other hand, a total of 402,230 (20.08%) had poor performance. The pupils faced challenges in showing ability to comprehend oral and written information, communicate through writing and use vocabulary appropriately in various situations. However, some of them could not understand the requirement of the questions, hence they provided irrelevant answers. In some cases, other pupils were unable to answer the questions because of their incompetency in reading and writing Skills.

Most pupils showed ability to *acquire and use vocabulary through the three language skills*. The pupils' performance in this competency was 59.71 percent making it one of the highest performed competencies when compared to *communicating orally and through writing* (54.46%) and *comprehending oral and written information* (27.85%).

5.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

The performance in the 02 English Language SFNA 2020 was good. Despite the pupils' good performance, some measures are recommended in order to improve more on the pupils' performance in the future assessments as follows:

- (a) Teachers should guide pupils to read simple texts on different topics, interpret and comprehend the contents. In addition, the pupils should be guided to listen to narration about general topics and list main ideas. As a result, the pupils will acquire skills pertaining to comprehending oral and written information in future assessments.
- (b) Teachers should guide pupils to use cards, pictures or letters with common topics to converse and interact in a simple way. By doing so, the pupils will be proficient in communicating through writing.
- (c) Teachers should guide pupils to read and use vocabulary related to familiar issues such as occupations, places, directions, menu and time. This will enable the pupils to acquire and use vocabulary through the three assessed language skills.

Appendix A

**COMPARISON OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE BY COMPETENCIES
IN THE SFNA 2019 & 2020**

S/N.	COMPETENCY	SFNA 2019				SFNA 2020			
		Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks	Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks
		Qn. Number	(%) Performance			Qn. Number	(%) Performance		
1.	Comprehend oral and written information	1	30.6	29.7	Poor	1	32.05	27.85	Poor
		5	28.8			5	23.65		
2.	Acquire and use Vocabulary through the four language skills.	-	-	-	-	2	59.71	59.71	Average
3.	Communicate orally and through writing	2	77.4	57.9	Average	-	-	54.46	Average
		3	59.1			3	54.80		
		4	37.2			4	54.13		

