

Candidates in the Average Achievement Group

Candidates displayed a good understanding of the task in Section A. However, performance was better where questions required only recall and understanding skills. Generally, students fared quite well in Section A, getting a least 8 items correctly attempted. Items which posed problems are 4, 5 and 10 while item 8 is the easiest.

Section B produced better-than-average performance. There were questions left unanswered in Sections C and D. Some candidates who used their own words to answer the comprehension questions inadvertently penalized themselves because their limited competency resulted in grammatical and spelling errors which sometimes caused distortion of meanings.

Candidates in the Low Achievement Group

Almost all the students attempted Sections A and B but most of them performed badly. Candidates displayed very poor reading skills. Lifting and over lifting for Sections B and C were evident and the candidates did not show understanding of the task or text. Some candidates did not even attempt Sections B, C and D.

DETAILED PERFORMANCE

SECTION A (QUESTION 1 – 15): MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Strength and Weakness of Candidates:

Question 1

A very high percentage of the candidates managed to draw the correct conclusion based on the map and keys given. They were able to link habitat of animals to “wild-life”. The distractors were distantly related.

Question 2

Most of the candidates were able to make the correct inference from the article to choose the correct answer. They were able to arrive at the answer from the first sentence ‘*to reduce crime*’ to mean ‘*to bring down*.’ The most popular incorrect option chosen by candidates is Option C. Candidates probably misread the word “request” as in its passive form, thus making the conclusion.

Question 3

Many candidates drew the right conclusion to get the correct answer. Candidates who understood the phrase “*I felt that someone had put his dirty hands all over my childhood*” could draw the conclusion that the writer could probably be angry or upset

Question 4

This is a tricky question for those who did not read carefully. Less than half of the candidates could infer correctly. Candidates managed to draw the correct conclusion based on two boxes found in the stimulus (a form) given. Option ‘A’ appealed to some candidates because in the text, the phrase “free gifts to new subscribers” was highlighted and thus they wrongly

concluded option A as the answer. Good candidates knew that the answer lies in the information given against the two boxes.

Question 5

This item on “vocabulary” is a good assessment tool and the key and distractors have been well chosen. This seems to be the worst fared item with less than half of the candidates getting it right. Questions like this really test the candidates’ word power and it is surprising that many did not know that courtesy has everything to do with politeness.

Question 6

This question is quite direct, requiring the candidates to link “get in touch with” with ‘can call’ and majority of the candidates could answer correctly. Very weak candidates chose Option A. This could be due to candidates’ life experience that they do not call the town council on issues like attending a talk, thus making ‘A’ a not probable option.

Question 7

This question requires the candidates to read for details and many could get the right information on what participants of the contest can do. The information in the given poster tells us that only option C contains the correct information. The other distractors contain inaccurate information. This could be due to the fact that candidates are familiar with the term “closing date” and its implications.

Question 8

The information given suggests that the male character in the comic is assuring his wife that he *can handle himself* even when he is sick. Candidates did not have any problem in identifying option ‘D’ as the key.

QUESTIONS 9 – 15 (Cloze Passage)

The items are based on a cloze text. They are all grammar items which evaluate the candidates’ knowledge of prepositions, verb forms, conjunctions, articles, connectors, adverbs and vocabulary. The context is an account of a boy named Khai whom doctors identify as an ‘elective mute’. This theme (people) and topic is within the curriculum specifications.

Question 9

...- he was what doctors call _____ ‘elective mute’.

Item being tested – the indefinite article. Almost two-thirds of the candidates were able to answer it correctly. Only two other distractors could be set for this item and that is why there are only three options. Majority of the candidates eliminated option A as they knew that for the word “elective” if an indefinite is needed, it should be “an” not “a”. Those who chose Option A could be very weak candidates.

Question 10

Although he talked _____ at home, he refused to speak at school.

Candidates needed to have some knowledge of adverbs to be able to answer this item correctly. Weak candidates were not able to get the correct answer probably because they were distracted by the common adverb that they are more familiar with for “talking”, i.e. to talk loudly. Only good candidates were able to get the clue as **to talk “freely”** from the main clause “*he refused to speak at school*” and the connector; “Although”.

Question 11

Unable to explain Khai’s problem, his teachers recommended music _____ a tool to help him.

Average and good candidates were able to identify the correct answer because of the flow in the sentence which means music is used as a method/means in the sentence, therefore “as” is the appropriate answer.

Question 12

_____ the school counsellor Diane met Khai, she presented him with a range of instruments.

Most candidates were able to answer correctly because this item is relatively easy and straightforward. If candidates understood the meaning of the preceding sentence, they should have been able to see that the logical connector needed is “when”.

Question 13

Khai liked the drum _____ he followed Diane’s drum beat.

Most of the candidates were able to identify “so” as the correct logical connector. The second part of the sentence should be a good help for the candidates to arrive at the correct answer that the connector needed must show a “cause and effect” situation to fulfil the idea in the preceding sentence

Question 14

He even _____ in a school play.

This question evaluates the candidates’ ability to use the right vocabulary to complete the sentence. Average and good students were able to identify the correct verb as “performed”. Weak candidates may choose “attended” as the answer mainly because the word “attended” is more familiar to them but good candidates will know that the accurate word is “performed”

Question 15

Now at seventeen, he _____ like a normal teenager.

This item evaluates the candidates' knowledge on the simple present tense. Weak candidates might have chosen "talked" as the answer mainly if they missed the word "now" in the beginning of the sentence.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Read widely to be familiar with structures and vocabulary as this helps in identifying the correct response in a cloze text.
2. Do a lot of writing practice to consolidate and reinforce vocabulary and structures.
3. Use the dictionary to understand not only the meanings of words but also how to use them correctly.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Teach and familiarize the candidates with cloze texts.
2. Teach candidates to identify syntax patterns and functional connectors.
3. Expose the candidates to new words especially those listed in the curriculum specifications.
4. Teach grammar items.

SECTION B (QUESTION 16-25): INFORMATION TRANSFER

Information on FIVE types of mushroom is given and for the first five questions (Questions 16- 20), candidates have to name the most appropriate mushroom for a given person. The remaining five questions test candidates' ability to use the information provided in the question to complete sentences.

STRENGTH

1. The majority of the candidates were able to understand the instructions and retrieve the relevant information that is required.
2. They were also able to lift the necessary portions of the text/stimulus to complete the sentences.
3. Almost all the candidates attempted this section but many did not attempt section C and section D.
4. Better candidates were more precise with their selection and were able to present concise and accurate answers.

WEAKNESSES

1. Candidates completed the sentences given but also offered another new sentence.
2. Candidates also tend to lift randomly and provide irrelevant response.
3. Candidates lifted extensively and so there was intrusion of other ideas which were irrelevant to the answer.

4. Spelling errors were evident and prevalent as some words are difficult to spell, like *syndrome, fluidity, carbohydrates* and *cholesterol*.
5. Punctuation, especially with upper case, is not always observed.

DETAILED PERFORMANCE

Question 16

Most candidates could give the correct answer as '*Dancing Mushroom*.' The most popular inaccurate answer was "*Woodear Mushroom*". Candidates could have used their background knowledge to conclude that people with high blood pressure would have problems with fluidity of the blood.

Question 17

Many candidates, even the weak ones were able to answer correctly. This is because the reading skills required is only "read and match" and the clue is "*pains in her back*"

Question 18

As in question 16, some candidates used their background knowledge that people with poor blood flow could mean having high blood pressure and thus wrongly identify "*Dancing Mushroom*" as the answer.

The better candidates who gave "*Woodear Mushroom*" as the answer were able to process the information that to cure poor blood flow means to improve in circulation.

Question 19

This is a very easy item as candidates needed only to look out for the word "*heart*" to get the answer. This might be the reason that almost all candidates could give the right answer.

Question 20

Like question 19, this is a very direct question. Candidates only needed to look out for the word "*cholesterol*" to get the answer. Hence, most of the candidates could give the right answer.

Question 21

Mushrooms with a lot of riboflavin and niacin help.....

It is easy to complete the sentence as candidates just could use the last two lines in the literature on "*Shiitake*" to complete the sentence accurately.

Question 22

Ling Zhi can be used to treat

Like question 21, candidates could easily arrive at the answer by zooming in to the word "*treat*" found in the first line of the text on "*Ling Zhi*" to give the answer as *...liver disorders and arthritis*.

Mistakes made:

- Many candidates completed the sentences with the extra information ... *for 4 000 years*, making the response inaccurate. (factually wrong)

22 Ling Zhi can be used to treat liver disorders and arthritis for 4000 years.....

- Some went on to write two sentences, e.g.

22 Ling Zhi can be used to treat liver disorders. It also strengthens the heart.

- Some gave extra information which is incorrect.

22 Ling Zhi can be used to treat liver disorders, arthritis, the heart and blood clotting..... [1 mark]

[Response is factually wrong because Ling Zhi does not treat blood clot]

Question 23

Oyster Mushroom is rich in

Like question 21, candidates could easily arrive at the answer by completing the sentence starting from the word *rich* as found in the first line of the text on "*Oyster Mushroom*" to complete the sentence with "*nutritional values*." Most of the candidates gave the right response.

Question 24

Eating Dancing Mushrooms controls

Like question 21, candidates could easily arrive at the answer by continuing from the word "*control*" found in the last line of the text on "*Dancing Mushroom*," to give the answer as *blood glucose level*. Candidates could also pick information from the preceding line to give "*tumour growth*" as the answer

Mistakes made:

- Some went on to write a new sentence after completing the first sentence.

24 Eating Dancing Mushrooms controls tumour growth. It also helps to control blood glucose level...... [1 mark]

- Some gave extra information in the same sentence but meaning is distorted e.g.

24 Eating Dancing Mushrooms controls tumor growth and has the
ability to activate immune function. [1 mark]

Question 25

Besides improving blood circulation, Woodear Mushroom helps people with

This question seemed to give a lot of problems to candidates. Many could not complete the sentence without distorting the idea.

Mistakes made:

- Some interpreted the word "with" as a means (to mean by; BM = *dengan*)

25 Besides improving blood circulation, Woodear Mushroom helps people with.....
increases the fluidity of the blood. [1 mark]

- Some completed the sentence wrongly whereby meaning is distorted e.g. ,

25 Besides improving blood circulation, Woodear Mushroom helps people with.....
patients suffering from problems of the arteries. [1 mark]

- Many candidates failed to note that the preposition "with" as owning it or having it.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Candidates should read the questions and instruction carefully and understand the task requirements.
2. Candidates should be aware of the task requirement which states "Complete the sentence ..." and should avoid giving two sentences.
3. Candidates should know the importance and significance of adjectives, prepositions, adverbs and nouns.
4. Candidates should refer to the dictionary regularly for accuracy in spelling.
5. Candidates should improve on their handwriting. Examiners may find it difficult to decipher the spelling because of bad handwriting.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. The accuracy in spelling should also be highlighted. Teachers should give more spelling and dictation exercises. Some candidates were careless in spelling but on the whole, there has been a marked improvement in this aspect.

2. Teach candidates to read the task requirements carefully before answering the questions.
3. Emphasize on the importance of transferring only the necessary information and not to copy mindlessly. Candidates need to be aware that the marks could be lost for mindless lifting.
4. Ensure that candidates transfer the relevant information correctly.

SECTION C

COMPREHENSION (Questions 26 – 30)

Question 26 (a)

From paragraph 1, what activity was carried out on that day?

Strength

- Understanding the word 'activity' helped the candidates to give direct answers, for example:
 - ❖ *Plant trees*
- Lifting part of the sentence intelligently, giving answers like:
 - ❖ *These Malaysian volunteers were united by a task which was to plant trees.*
 - ❖ *To plant trees on six hectares of land.*

Weakness

- Responding by lifting or copying irrelevant phrases or sentences, for example:

26 (a) From paragraph 1, what activity was carried out on that day?

volunteers united by a task to plant trees. [1 mark]

- A possible cause for not being able to answer this question was the failure to understand the word 'activity'.

Question 26 (b)

From paragraph 2, why was Kampung Dek Permai selected for the project?

Strength

- Understanding the word 'selected' in the question to mean 'chosen' as used in the first sentence of paragraph 2 and knowing that they had to give a reason to answer 'why', giving answers like:
 - ❖ *Its environment had been damaged*

- ❖ Or, the whole sentence was lifted "Kampung Dek Permai was chosen as its environment had been damaged as a result of indiscriminate logging."

Weakness

- Not understanding that a reason was to be given for the 'Kampung' being selected but gave a reason why the place was damaged/ gave a general aim of the activity. Common wrong answers were:

(b) From paragraph 2, why was Kampung Dek Permai selected for the project?

As a result of indiscriminate logging..... [1 mark]

(b) From paragraph 2, why was Kampung Dek Permai selected for the project?

The aim of this activity was to protect the ecosystem..... [1 mark]

Question 27

Which phrase from paragraph 4 suggests that the briefing was amusing?

Strength

- Understanding that the focus of the question was on the word 'amusing' and linking it with 'in stitches', thus giving answers like:
 - ❖ *In stitches*
 - ❖ *The crowd in stitches*
 - ❖ *Had the crowd in stitches.*

Weaknesses

- Not understanding the meaning of 'phrase', thus giving a one-word answer like:

27 Which phrase from paragraph 4 suggests that the briefing was amusing?

The phrase 'stitches' from paragraph 4 suggests that the briefing was amusing [1 mark]

- Not realizing that the focus of the question was on 'amusing' but interpreting it as 'the briefing was amusing', thus giving answers like:

27 Which phrase from paragraph 4 suggests that the briefing was amusing?

The crowd in stitches with his step-by-step guide to tree-planting [1 mark]

- Copying more than was required:

27 Which phrase from paragraph 4 suggests that the briefing was amusing?

Who had the crowd in stitches [1 mark]

- Very weak candidates did not attempt this question, most probably because they did not understand the words 'phrase' and 'amusing'.

Question 28 (a)

From paragraph 5, what did Ayub Musa mean when he said, "You would never dream of carrying a baby that way!"?

Strength

- Being able to understand that the person was using an analogy or figurative language, implying that a plant had to be handled carefully like one would handle a baby, thus giving answers using their own words or by lifting accurately:
 - ❖ *A plant also needs to be handled carefully*
 - ❖ *Hold the plant by the bottom*
 - ❖ *Never hold the plant by the stem*
 - ❖ *Ayub mentioned that the next step is to handle the young tree with tender, loving care so that it can grow healthily.*

Weaknesses

- Focusing the answer on 'baby' rather than 'plant' thus giving answers like:

28 (a) From paragraph 5, what did Ayub Musa mean when he said, "You would never dream of carrying a baby that way!"?

Do not carry the baby by its neck [1 mark]

28 (a) From paragraph 5, what did Ayub Musa mean when he said, "You would never dream of carrying a baby that way!"?

You must carry the baby by its bottom [1 mark]

- Lifting part of the sentence without changing the pronoun 'it' thus leading to ambiguity:

28 (a) From paragraph 5, what did Ayub Musa mean when he said, "You would never dream of carrying a baby that way!"?

Never hold it by the stem [1 mark]

- Using own words / replacing words which led to answers which were either vague or did not show the element of 'care':

- 28 (a) From paragraph 5, what did Ayub Musa mean when he said, "You would never dream of carrying a baby that way!"?

Carry the plant softly [1 mark]

- On the whole, this question was not well answered because it tested high comprehension skills, requiring the candidates to understand the analogy of the baby and the plant, and figurative use of language.

Question 28 (b)

From paragraph 6, why is it important not to damage the roots?

Strength

- Being able to relate 'damage the roots' to 'the plant may die', thus answering accurately by using their own words or by lifting:
 - ❖ *The plant will die.*
 - ❖ *This may cause the plant to die.*

Weakness

- Linking the word 'damaged' in the question and the text, thus lifting the sentence:

(b) From paragraph 6, why is it important not to damage the roots?

Now cut through the plastic bag, making sure that the roots are not damaged. [1 mark]

Question 29

From paragraph 7,

29 (a) what must be done just before removing the plastic bag completely from the plant?

Strength

- Being able follow the sequence of events and understanding the use of 'before':
 - ❖ *Place the young tree into the hole*

Weaknesses

- Not understanding the use of 'before', thus giving answers which are out of sequence like:

29 From paragraph 7,

(a) what must be done just before removing the plastic bag completely from the plant?

Cover the hole [1 mark]

29 From paragraph 7,

(a) what must be done just before removing the plastic bag completely from the plant?

Prepare the hole [1 mark]

- Linking the phrase 'removing the plastic bag' in the question and the text, thus lifting the sentence:

29 From paragraph 7,

(a) what must be done just before removing the plastic bag completely from the plant?

If the soil surrounding the roots breaks off while you are removing the plastic bag, do not panic! [1 mark]

29 (b) how can we provide nutrients for the young tree?

Strength

- Understanding that 'how' in the question requires a process to be mentioned in the answer, thus:
 - ❖ *By placing mulch*
 - ❖ *By placing wet mulch around the tree*
 - ❖ *Ayub added that the last step is to place wet mulch around the young tree. (Lifted)*

Weaknesses

- Giving the reason for adding mulch:

(b) how can we provide nutrients for the young tree?

The mulch will provide nutrients for the roots [1 mark]

- Linking the word 'protection' in the question to the text, thus lifting the sentence, giving the reason for adding mulch:

(b) how can we provide nutrients for the young tree?

The mulch will provide protection as well as nutrients for the roots. [1 mark]

29 (c) what does the word *it* in line 40 refer to?

Strength

- Understanding the use of the pronoun 'it', thus giving accurate answers like:
 - ❖ *Mulch*
 - ❖ *It refers to mulch.*

Weaknesses

- Not being able to relate 'it' to 'mulch' thus giving answers like:
 - ❖ *The roots*
 - ❖ *The soil*
 - ❖ *The plant*
- Not realizing that the answer should fit into the sentence in the text, thus including 'wet' in the answer:
 - ❖ *Wet mulch*

Therefore, the sentence would read: "The **wet mulch** must be wet"

Question 30

In your opinion, why were the participants pleased with the tree-planting activity? Answer in your own words.

Strength

- Being able to give their own opinion related to the text or from their own knowledge/experience:
 - ❖ *In my opinion, they were pleased because they had learnt to plant trees and at the same time done their part in protecting the environment and beautifying the village.*
 - ❖ *The participants were pleased because they had a great experience and had become closer to each other.*
 - ❖ *They were pleased because they could reduce global warming.*

Weaknesses

- Not understanding the question, thus were unable to give a valid reason why they thought the participants were pleased:

30 In your opinion, why were the participants pleased with the tree-planting activity?
Answer in your own words.

In my opinion, they were pleased because they can make the plants grow healthily [2 marks]

- Merely lifting from the passage, ignoring the instruction to use own words:

30 In your opinion, why were the participants pleased with the tree-planting activity?
Answer in your own words.

The participants pleased with the tree-planting activity because to protect the ecosystem [2 marks]

- 30 In your opinion, why were the participants pleased with the tree-planting activity? Answer in your own words.

As this activity involved teamwork.
.....
..... [2 marks]

- 30 In your opinion, why were the participants pleased with the tree-planting activity? Answer in your own words.

*It was clear from the smiles all around that something
lasting had been sown in their hearts.*
..... [2 marks]

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Make it a habit to look up the meaning of difficult words encountered. (A good dictionary is a must)
2. Read extensively.
3. Practise comprehension exercises.
4. Understand key words in the questions.
5. Attempt all the questions.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Candidates should be adept at a wide range of vocabulary
2. Expose candidates to the use of figurative language
3. Expose candidates to the key words such as 'word', 'phrase' and 'sentence' which are vital in answering some comprehension questions.
4. Expose candidates to various types of comprehension passages/reading materials other than in text/revision books.
5. Encourage candidates to read extensively, including newspaper articles and magazines.
6. Remind candidates to change the pronouns accordingly when lifting for answers.

SUMMARY WRITING

(QUESTION 31)

The summary question tests the candidates' ability to select and retrieve relevant information, and then organise the information coherently. The question also tests candidates' ability to paraphrase effectively and concisely. For this year's question, the candidates are required to summarise the steps that should be taken to plant a young tree. The question is clearly set out to achieve the intended assessment objectives.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE

On the whole, candidates performed fairly well. Candidates were able to select and retrieve the required information from the text. They were able to organise the information coherently. However, a large majority of the candidates relied heavily on the text. Hence, many candidates did not use much of their own words. So, the language was largely text-based.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES ACCORDING TO THEIR GROUPS

Candidates in the High Achievement Group

These candidates are proficient in the language and therefore were able to respond relevantly to the task. They managed to retrieve most of the information required and were also able to paraphrase effectively and concisely. They also presented their responses accurately, showing an ability to use original compound and complex structures.

Candidates in the Average Achievement Group

Candidates displayed a good understanding of the task, even though there was a heavy reliance on the text. There was some form of selective lifting and at times wholesale copying, but they were still able to get good marks for content and language.

Candidates in the Low Achievement Group

Candidates did not show understanding of the task. There were cases of more or less complete transcript of the text. There was also mindless lifting which led to fractured syntax. A small percentage of the candidates did not even attempt the question.

DETAILED PERFORMANCE

Strength

- Good candidates understood the requirements of the task and were able to select the relevant information to summarise the steps involved in planting a young tree.
- Competent candidates were able to identify all or almost all the content points.
- There were sustained and noticeable attempts at paraphrasing. Expressions were generally sound.
- Candidates were able to rewrite the ideas in the passive form, e.g. *Then use a trowel to dig a hole = a hole is dug using a trowel*
- Candidates were able to accurately substitute words and phrases, e.g. *soak the entire plastic bag = immerse the bag.*
- A large percentage of the candidates were able to do intelligent and selective lifting of the relevant sections of the text.
- Good use of connectors, especially since the task involved a sequence of steps that need to be taken to plant a young tree.
- The writing was clear, well-organised and coherent. Spelling and punctuation were accurate.

Weaknesses

- Many candidates were unable to paraphrase due to their low level of proficiency. At times when candidates tried to paraphrase, meaning was distorted. The expressions were not always secure.
- Candidates showed a heavy reliance on the given passage and resorted to wholesale lifting.
- Attempts to paraphrase were limited to single word substitution.
- Weak attempts to reorganise - dropping words indiscriminately.
- Very weak candidates resorted to do more or less a complete transcript of the text, i.e. they copied sentence after sentence without a clear break.
- Mindless lifting – different sentences or parts of sentences were put together and meaning was distorted.
- Intrusion of irrelevant sections
- Candidates included their own ideas and opinions
- Summary exceeded the word limit of 130 words
- Unable to grammatically complete the first sentence using the ten introductory words e.g. missing the verb for the first content point – *if you want to plant a tree, you need to all the things you require...*
- There was heavy frequency of serious errors or fractured syntax which impeded reading.
- The summary was poorly organised and lacked coherence
- Wrong spelling of words although lifted from the passage

Sample 1

if you want to plant a tree, you need to first gather all the vital items necessary. Next, the young tree that is to be planted must be handled extra carefully. After that, the entire plastic bag containing the plant needs to be soaked in a container of water. Then, a trowel is used to dig a hole in the ground for the young plant. Following this, the soaked plant is brought over and the plastic bag is cut ensuring that the roots are not damaged. The young tree is then placed in the prepared hole and the plastic bag is completely removed. After placing the plant in the hole, it is then covered with soil and is pressed firmly. Finally, wet mulch is placed around the newly planted tree.

Comments:

Strength

This candidate was able to select and retrieve the relevant information as required in the task that is steps taken to plant a young tree. Among the relevant content points mentioned are:

- *gathering the things required*
- *handling the plant with care*
- *soaking the entire plastic bag containing the young plant*
- *digging a hole*
- *carrying the plant over to the hole*
- *putting the planting the hole and removing the plastic bag*
- *covering the hole and pressing down the soil*
- *placing mulch*

The candidate was able to rephrase effectively by condensing the material to make it concise and also by reorganising the text and forming original sentence structures. The finished product is rather different from the original text, even though there are phrases from the text which are difficult to substitute. In rephrasing, the candidate hardly made any errors, and this has also contributed to the high mark obtained for this question.

Sample 2

ANSWER SHEET FOR QUESTION 31

If you want to plant a tree, you need to prepare all the things needed. Handle the young tree in a plastic bag with loving care. While holding it at the bottom, soak the entire plastic bag in a ^{large} container of water. It is put under water and ensure air bubbles are absent. After that, a hole is digged by a trowel and the soaked young tree is carried over to the hole. The young tree is cut through the plastic bag without damaging its roots. Then, place ^{the young tree} into the ~~hole~~ hole and the plastic bag is removed completely. Cover the hole with soil ^{by using trowel or hands} and press it firmly. Lastly, wet mulch is put around the young tree.

126 words.

Comments:

Strength

This candidate was able to select and retrieve the relevant information and thus obtained a high mark for content.

Weakness

There was limited attempt at rephrasing, at times the expressions were not secure. At the same time, there was considerable reliance on the original text. However, this is better than wholesale lifting and mindless copying of the text. In terms of accuracy, the candidate made a few errors, mainly because he attempted to use his own words. But, the candidate showed some ability to use original compound and original complex sentences. So on the whole, the marks for both content and language were quite high.

Sample 3

if you want to plant a tree, you need to gather all the things you require such as a young tree in a plastic bag, garden scissors and others. Next, handle the young tree with tender and loving care and hold it at the bottom. Then, soak the entire plastic bag in a large container of water. Keep it under water and check that all the bubbles are gone. Dig a hole where you want the young plant to grow using trowel. Ensure the hole is at the right depth to match the height of plastic bag. Carry the soaked young tree over to hole. Cut through the plastic bag without damaging the roots. Place the young tree into the hole. Plastic bag removed completely. Next, cover the hole with the soil that removed earlier. Press the soil firmly. Lastly, place wet mulch around the young tree.

Comments:

Strength

This candidate had successfully done selective and intelligent lifting. This enabled the candidate to obtain full marks for content. Eventhough the candidate relied quite heavily on the text, there is clear evidence of reorganising and reshaping. The candidate had also shown an ability to form original compound sentences. The writing is almost accurate. So, the candidate was awarded a high mark for use of English and a fair score for paraphrasing.

Sample 4

If you want to plant a tree, you need to gather a young tree in a plastic bag, a large water container, a trowel, garden scissors and some mulch, which is a mass of dead leaves and bark, spread around a plant for protection or to enrich the soil. To handle the young tree with never tender, loving care so that it can grow healthily and hold the plant at the bottom and never hold it by the stem. While holding the young tree into the hole that has been prepared. Remove the plastic bag completely. Cover the hole with the soil. The mulch will provide protection as well as nutrients for the roots, enough water for the plant to grow healthily over the next few months. After two hours, the whole area was covered with young plant.

Comments

Strength

This candidate had done wholesale copying. This enabled the candidate to obtain a considerably good mark for content.

Weakness

Even though the candidate relied quite heavily on the text, there are some parts which show mindless lifting. Errors become more frequent because of this mindless lifting and sentences are at times fractured. This affected the language mark.

Sample 5

If you want to plant a tree, you need to handle the young tree with tender, loving care so that it can grow healthily. Never dream of carrying a baby that way to stroke the plant gently as you handle. The young tree in the plastic bag, soak the entire plastic bag in a large container of water. It must not be too deep or too shallow. The soil surrounding the roots breaks off and removing the plastic bag. The mulch will provide protection as well as nutrients for the roots. The plant to grow healthy over the next months. It was clear from the smiles all around that something lasting sown in their hearts.

Comments:

Weakness

This candidate showed almost total reliance on the original text. The sentences were merely randomly lifted without any understanding of the requirements of the task. Only the early part of the response contained relevant information from the prescribed area of the summary. Hence, a low mark was given for content and the mark for paraphrasing was also low because of the mindless lifting.

Even though the candidate relied completely on the text, there were frequent serious errors. This was because of some fractured syntax as a result of the mindless lifting. However, some parts were accurately copied. So, on the whole the candidate received low marks for language.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Always keep in mind the task.
2. Use only text within the stipulated area as stated in the rubric. Drawlines to indicate the beginning and the ending of the summary area.
3. Do not exceed the word limit given.
4. Use the 10 introductory words given.

5. Complete the opening sentence using the 10 introductory words without any grammatical errors so that the first content point is not lost.
6. Build a wider vocabulary, so that paraphrasing is more effective and concise.
7. Learn to write using a variety of sentence structures.
8. Learn to use sequence and logical connectors.
9. Write a draft first and edit it before writing out the summary.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Train the candidates to read and understand the text and task.
2. Teach and train candidates to select and retrieve the main ideas in the passage.
 - Teach them how to differentiate between main and supporting ideas/details.
 - Teach candidates how to recognise the main clause so that they can select the main idea while leaving out the unnecessary details.
 - Teach them to select intelligently
3. Remind candidates to write in one paragraph
4. Remind candidates to use the given 10 introductory words and to use material within the stipulated boundary (lines)
5. Teach candidates to use suitable cohesive devices such as connectors.
6. Teach and train the candidates, especially those with good linguistic skills, to paraphrase effectively and concisely.
7. Teach and train candidates to write using a variety of sentence structures, focusing on ability to form original compound and complex structures.
8. Give more practice to develop summary skills.

SECTION D

QUESTIONS 32 AND 33

GENERAL PERFORMANCE

Comparatively the candidates performed better for Question 33 (Short Story) than Question 32 (Poem). There were more cases of candidates not attempting Question 32 than for Question 33. The answers for Questions 33 (a), (b) and (c) could be obtained directly from the given text. These questions seemed to be typical lower order comprehension questions. Very general answers were accepted for Question 33(d). It is obvious that some candidates do not understand the poem well. They could not use their own words to explain the poem.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES ACCORDING TO THEIR GROUPS

Candidates in the High Achievement Group

For both poem and short story, a majority of the candidates in this category managed to answer most of the questions. However, they faced some problems when attempting questions that involved candidates' use of own words like Question 32d and Question 33d.

Candidates in the Average Achievement Group

For candidates in this category, they seemed to be able to secure marks in answering questions that were direct in nature, for instance Question 32a, Question 33a and Question 33b, which are questions with answers that could be partially lifted. Other questions that were slightly indirect and demanded a shade of critical thinking seemed to be beyond their reach. However, some might be lucky enough to pull through for questions such as Question 33d. For poem, they might be able to answer if they were well-versed in the line-by-line meaning of the poem that could be learnt by heart without fully understanding the poem.

Candidates in the Low Achievement Group

For candidates in this category, they were handicapped in answering most of the questions. Quite a number did not even attempt to answer, especially Question 32. Some did show initiative to do something, but most of the time they lifted mindlessly from the prescribed texts.

DETAILED PERFORMANCE

QUESTION 32 (POEM)

For Question 32 (poem), candidates seemed to have problems in demonstrating an understanding of the lower order reading and comprehension skills and sub-skills at production level. This had caused the candidates to be unable to fulfill the very first assessment objective of Section D. They did not seem to be familiar with the very basics of the poem, which were the understanding of line-by-line meaning of the poem, which was directly required in Question 32b, Question 32c and Question 32d. These questions were very direct and should not have imposed any problem for the candidates if they were to comprehend the line-by-line meaning of the poem which could be learnt by heart and reference materials are in abundance in the market. Failure in attempting Question 32a illustrated the candidates' weakness in grammar, either in the understanding of pronoun reference or the difference between first person and third person pronouns.

QUESTION 32 (a)

In stanza ii line 3, to whom does the word they refer?

- Most candidates could lift precisely, *'mother and grandmother'* without including the pronoun *'my'*.
- They could qualify *'mother and grandmother'* with the correct pronoun, e.g., *'the persona's or the poet's or his mother and grandmother'*.
- Weaker candidates lift the correct line *'it's true i have growled at my mother and grandmother'* or phrase *'my mother and grandmother'* but without changing the pronoun.
- Qualifying *'mother and grandmother'* with incorrect pronouns, e.g., *'their'*.

QUESTION 32 (b)

In stanza iii line 2, what does si tenggang mean when he says, "I have brought myself home"?

- Better candidates could provide precise answers like, *He has returned to his country* or express the idea of coming back to his homeland
- Some candidates gave the wrong answer by using the Future Tense – i.e. *he will come home*.
- Candidates often showed lack of understanding by randomly lifting off the text.

QUESTION 32 (c)

Which line in stanza iii shows that si tenggang has not completely changed?

- Good candidates could zoom in on the correct line or lines.
- Weaker candidates extend their lifting beyond one line and those who misunderstood the question went to the extent of paraphrasing the line.

QUESTION 32 (d)

"the contents of these boats are yours too"

In your own words, what do you think si tenggang means by the statement above?

- Those who provide the correct answer know that the figurative meaning should be taken – and are able to give the idea of 'sharing'.
- Weaker candidates provide irrelevant answers related to the theme or setting. Some randomly lift from the text. Others did not attempt.

QUESTION 33 (SHORT STORY)

The sub-questions appear to be quite balanced in terms of the level of difficulty. Thus, they cater for a wide range of candidates in terms of their level of proficiency.

For Question 33a and Question 33b, a similar problem of the misuse of pronouns occurred. Answers could be lifted from line 3 and line 4 of the extract indicating their ability to apply lower order comprehension skills at production level. However, candidates' effort was futile if they failed to change the first person pronoun in the extract to the third person pronoun required when answering the questions.

QUESTION 33 (a)

What does Wilson do every time someone tries to speak to him?

- Better candidates lift precisely, *'runs away'*. while some lift the whole sentence and change the pronoun, *'He runs away when the writer goes near him'*.
- Weaker candidates lift the whole sentence without changing the pronoun 'I' or lift beyond permissible limits, e.g., *'He walks in the hills on his own. He runs away'*.

QUESTION 33 (b)

What was Assunta supposed to do with the money given to her?

- Most candidates could easily provide the correct answer, *'buy some tobacco for him'*.
- Less able candidates resort to lifting the whole sentence without changing the pronoun *'I'*, *'I give her some money so that she can buy some tobacco for him'*.

QUESTION 33 (c)

What was the writer's opinion of Wilson's life?

- Question 33c seemed to be a problematic one for the majority of the candidates. Good candidates managed to lift the word *"terrible"* from the extract or words that suggested *"unhappiness"* such as *"miserable"*, *"sad"*, *"unhappy"*, etc, others suggested words like *"crazy"*, *"poor"*, etc, which were not accepted.
- Quite a number attempted wholesale lifting from lines 8 to 9 *"He lives happily for twenty-five years"* or from line 6 *"What a terrible way to live," I said*, which were also unacceptable.

QUESTION 33 (d)

*If you were Wilson's friend, how would you help him solve his problems?
In your own words, suggest one way.*

- Most candidates could get the marks as a very wide range of answers are acceptable due to the nature of the question. They were able to suggest at least one way of helping Wilson personally. A majority managed to give a personal response that was somehow relevant to the task in relation to the prescribed literary text. Most candidates were able to give sensible answers like *"advise him"*, *"help him find a job"*, *"help him improve his living condition"*. However, the subjective nature of the question and the perceptive nature of the criterion *"sensible answer"* in the mark scheme posed a problem to the examiners in awarding marks for this question. For instance, *"asked Wilson to stay with me"* and *"talked to him and helped him to start all over again"* which could be a *"sensible"* suggestion but at the same time, could contradict with the logic and practical implementation of the suggestion in one's real life. In addition to this, the issue of how relevant the answer was to the extract given was another grey area. For instance, *"helped him to look for a job"* may not be applicable to Wilson who was portrayed as a person who seemed to have had lost his mind in this particular extract. However, candidates were given the benefit of the doubt whereby marks were awarded, without having to demonstrate their genuine understanding of the short story.
- Some answers were not accepted as the candidates merely stated the desire or moral duty to help Wilson but did not specify how.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Change their perception on literature component – it is actually simple and easy to learn as well as to score in the exam.
2. Learn the literary meanings of the words used in the poems.

3. Do as many exercises as possible to get enough exposure on different kinds of questions.
4. Learn how to express ideas/opinions in answering higher order type of questions.
5. Avoid direct/total lifting in answering questions.
6. Candidates need to be able to understand the question and what is required by the question.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Expose candidates to different kinds of questions for poems and short stories.
2. Expose candidates to literary elements in poems and short stories even though it's only 'small L'.
3. Give them the literary meanings of some of the words found in the poems for example in si tenggang's – the contents of the boat.
4. Teacher should also explain in detail the poem and short story – i.e. not just the meaning in general.
5. Give candidates more exercises and teach them how to answer the questions.
6. Teacher should also teach candidates on how to express their ideas and give opinions on the poem and short story by giving them higher order comprehension questions.
7. Try to make the lesson interesting by relating the poem/short story to our day to day life and to make it simple for candidates to comprehend.
8. Teach candidates how to lift answers correctly especially in changing pronouns.

Question 34

- Q34. *'It is important to have a person you look up to in your life.'*
From the novel that you have read, write about one character that you look up to.
Give reasons why you choose him/her.

STRENGTH

Some of the candidates were able to provide answers that were consistently relevant and convincing to the task specified. They were also able to provide detailed and well-developed textual evidence on reasons why they look up to the character chosen. The language used is also accurate, easily understood and very well -organised.

a) Introductory paragraph

Candidates were able to understand the task. They identified the character and gave reasons why they looked up to these characters. Most candidates identified either Kino or Juana from the novel 'The Pearl', Ravi or Periathai from 'The Return' and Pak Kia or Zaidi from the 'Jungle of Hope'. This was followed by the reasons for their choice and the textual evidence. Some candidates did give a brief background introduction before going into the details.

Even very weak candidates were able to give a satisfactory introduction such as, *'I choose the novel 'Jungle of Hope' by Keris Mas. I choose Pak Kia.'*

b) Length

The length was appropriate with reasons and supporting details given. It varied according to the language ability of the students. Good and average but ambitious candidates had a tendency to give longer answers. Some lengthy responses were mere characterization or memorized texts in parts.

c) Events

Most candidates were able to identify the events to support their reasons and these were accurate and relevant. They cited 3-4 relevant events from the novel to support their reasons. A few were able to give detailed textual evidence to support their arguments.

d) Shape of the arguments

Candidates usually stated their reasons at the beginning of the paragraph followed by the textual evidence from the novel. The evidence was thorough and supported with well-developed textual evidence. The textual evidence was clearly related to the reasons given. The arguments given showed some maturity of thought and they portrayed candidate's own personal response and were not memorised.

Many candidates were able to provide a good argument based on the themes of the novel like 'love' and 'family unity'.

Even weak candidates were able to give their reasons followed by the event. e.g.
Besides, I look up to Pak Kia because he courage when he was lost his baby. His baby was died.

e) Ability to prove points

Candidates were able to prove points by citing appropriate events to support the reasons given. For example:

Juana is a brave woman. She is brave to make a decision that will save her family from the evil doings of the pearl. This can be seen when Kino refuses to listen to her advise to throw the pearl back into the sea. She makes a brave decision to throw the pearl back to the sea by herself although she knows that Kino will be angry with her. She is brave to face Kino's wrath for the sake of protecting her family from the pearl's evil influence.

Candidates were also able to compare two characters to prove the point given e.g.

Juana is sensible. When Coyotito is stung by a scorpion, she immediately takes the baby in her arms and sucks out the poison from the wound. She then insists for a doctor to treat her son, even though she knows that no doctor will come to the brush houses as her people are poor and cannot afford the medical fees. Her reaction to this incident shows that this is the only way to save her baby unlike Kino. Kino can only think of destroying the scorpion to vent out his anger at it and after that he seems helpless and does not know what to do to save his crying son.

f) Citing right reasons

Most candidates were able to cite appropriate reasons to support the character chosen. The reasons given were logical and suitable.

As most candidates chose Juana as the character they looked up to, the reasons given were appropriate as they were the positive qualities Juana possessed. e.g.

Juana is wise.

Juana is brave.

Juana is loyal and patient.

Juana is a woman of great determination.

Juana is far-sighted.

g) Concluding paragraph

Not many candidates had a conclusion to their answer. Only a handful summarized their piece of writing.

Candidates mostly ended their arguments with a short conclusion especially summing up the reasons as to why they looked up to the character. For example:

As Juana possesses the qualities of being brave, strong-willed, loyal and patient, this makes her stand out from the other characters in the novel. That is why I look up to her.

Some candidates ended by relating the qualities Juana possessed are the qualities that they should possess in life.

Juana has taught me to be loyal, patient, rational, loving and caring especially towards family members. With the qualities I will be a better person and will be able to go through life successfully.

h) Language

Most candidates used language that was sufficiently accurate, while some were able to use largely accurate language. Sentences were secure and varied. Vocabulary used was enough to convey intended meaning. Some were able to use words and expressions that deserved merit. For example:

'Strong-willed'

'...not easily blinded by the dreams the pearl has to offer...'

'...the evil snare of the pearl...'

Mostly simple structures were used without much difficulty. The vocabulary used was relevant and precise.

WEAKNESSES

Though able to introduce the character and cite reasons for their choice, candidates did have problems selecting the details or rather the correct textual evidence. Some of the details given are not related to the reason given.

The response given was clearly taken or adapted from workbooks instead of evidence from the text read.

For example: *Ravi is from Sungai Petani.*

i) Introductory paragraph

Very weak candidates were unable to introduce the character properly. This was due to their poor command of the language. Some gave multiple characters which showed that they did not understand the rubric that is the task.

Most of the introductions were rather monotonous e.g.

The novel that I have studied in Form Five is The Pearl, written by John Steinback. The character that I look up to is Kino.

j) Length

Quite a number of candidates did not even attempt the question. Some students wrote one or two sentences only.

k) Events

Candidates wrote what they had learnt/memorized.

Some candidates wrote 3 or 4 events to support their reasons. However, these were short like a synopsis. The details given were not enough to enable them to get high marks e.g.

'In addition Juana also loving wife and mother. She will waked up early to make the breakfast for her family. She also tried to suck out the poison from Coyotito's body when her baby was stung by scorpion.

Juana is a brave woman. She dares to try to throw the pearl back into the sea without her husband's permission.

Juana is a loving mother. She does not complain when she has to care for her son Coyotito.

Some candidates could not relate the reasons to the events. They just listed some reasons and then gave a narration of the story.

Some events were distorted and others were factually wrong.

Some of the events cited were not convincing e.g.

Juana is a caring wife and mother. She wakes up early and cooks for them. (This is a common routine and in no way convinces us that Juana is caring.)

l) Shape of the arguments

Most of those who selected the details to support their reasons were unable to elaborate on them. They just stated the character and reasons.

Most candidates just gave a brief statement without developing the details. e.g.

He is also headstrong and proud. He is a brave man who is willing to sacrifice himself for his pearl and familys sake. He tells Juana he will protect the pearl even though problems come continuously.

Juana is also a very determined mother. This is shown when Coyotito is stung by a scorpion and she quickly gets the baby and sucks out the poison at Coyotito's shoulder.

m) Ability to prove points

Candidates were not able to provide textual evidence as they were unfamiliar with the plot and characters in the novel. There were cases where candidates gave a general statement with no mention of the characters. A few were actually talking about the short stories they had studied. For example, they cited Assunta as the character they looked up to.

Most candidates failed to develop their textual evidence. They were not thorough or just fell back on model answers from books. The weaker candidates gave evidence that were not relevant or related to the task e.g.

I admire Juana because she is wise. She is wise to prepare corncakes for breakfast every morning.

She is patient because she wants to throw the pearl back to sea by herself.

Some candidates were unable to provide suitable evidence due to factual errors. For example:

Juana tried to stop the scorpion using her hands from falling onto her baby, Coyotito.

Juana helps her husband from being killed by the attacker who wants to buy the pearl at a low price.

n) Citing right reasons

There were candidates who cited negative reasons for the candidates they looked up to. For example, '*Pak Kia is selfish.*'

Some of the reasons cited were not convincing based on textual evidence given e.g.

When her son Coyotito was killed by a gun shot, she remained calm.

o) Concluding paragraph

Most candidates did not conclude their piece of writing.

i) Another weakness that is prevalent is the inclusion of factual errors.

Example 1

Pak Kia escapes the attack when he was saved by **Zaidi**. **Zaidi** shoot the wild boar and caused the wild boar dead.

Example 2

Pak Kia is a strong man. He managed to explore the forest **without any follower behind him besides his own brothers**.

Example 3

Pak Kia helped his villagers and **provide them work in his farm, include Zaidi** when price of rubber decrease vigorously.

Example 4

Pak Kia stick to planting paddy than rubber planting because **he doesn't want to disobey the government and does not rebel the sultan.**

Example 5

After selling his land to Pendekar Atan, **Pak Kia became the richest man in hometown.**

ii) In some scripts, there is some confusion regarding the relationship between the characters, for example, "Zaidi is Pak Kia's son", "Karim, the brother of Pak Kia", "Juana is husband to Kino" and etc.

iii) Some candidates fail to understand the requirement of the task and expound on the flaws/weaknesses of the character chosen.

Example: Kino is described as someone who is fierce, ill-tempered and impatient. He abused his wife by punching and kicking her when Juana tried to throw the pearl back into the sea.

iv) Another common finding among the weaker candidates is that some provide the synopsis of the novel (most probably memorized) rather than giving reasons.

p) Language

Some were very weak candidates who responded to the task in the Malay Language.

Language is their biggest shortcoming. Candidates were unable to express their thoughts because their language was weak and often blurred e.g.

The peart is kill Kino.

When he found the pearl, family Kino is missing the moral loving in family because Kino is selfish.

The main grammatical errors identified are:

- Problems with tenses
She being hit by Kino.
She was strucked by her husband.
- Inconsistent use of tenses
When Jana tries to throw the pearl into the sea, Kino stopped her.
When they were chased by the trackers, Kino asks her to eave him.
- Subject-verb agreement
Juana take care of Coyotito nicely.
Kino find the pearl of the world.
She suck the poison from her baby.

OTHER COMMON MISTAKES

- Candidates wrote a synopsis of the novel and did not actually address the task.
- Some candidates were unable to construct even simple sentences.
- By giving several reasons, candidates lost marks as in the end they did not give detailed evidence.
- Inconsistent use of tenses. It was common to see candidates respond to the task in both the present and past tense e.g.
*When Juana **tries** to throw the pearl into the sea, Kino **stopped** her.*
*When they **were chased** by the trackers Kino **asks** Juana to leave him.*
- Errors in subject verb agreement:
- Errors in the use of pronoun, e.g.:
*Juana loves **their** son Coyotito.*
*Juana was beaten by **his** husband.*
*Juana is a determined person. **He** is determined to protect **he** family from the evil pearl.*
- Misspelling of names: e.g. Kino as *Kina*, Juana as *Juvana*, *Juono*, *Guana*, *Huana*, *Huna*, and Coyotito as *Koyotito*.
- Factual errors:
Most candidates stated that Juana prepared breakfast for her husband Kino and her son Coyotito;
Juana has son, name Kino.
- Common spelling errors e.g. *rasionally*, *struggle*, *to advice* Kino, *determine man*, *riffle churh*, *poinson*, *buffalos*, *jugle*, *ekonomical*, *adept*, *succeed*, *preserverence*, *arogan*, *pear(pearl)*, *stil* and *supertitious*
- Punctuation errors e.g. *Kino brush house*, *Juana baby and Pak Kia brother*, *follow it's teaching*
- Preposition errors e.g. *look up on Juana*, *look up for his family*, *On conclusion*, *depend on his brother for support his family*, *happen on him*
- Use of BM words e.g. *he not "tamak" like his brother*, *Zaidi want help Pak Kia become more "maju" and not so "kolot"*

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Read the novel and understand it well. Textual evidence is always important when responding to a task.
2. Read the rubric carefully and address the task relevantly.
3. Know the details of the main or significant events in the story so as to produce accurate and sufficient textual support.
4. Be familiar with the plot and characters in the story.
5. Do not memorise themes, plot, characters etc without any understanding. Learn to relate what has been learnt to the requirements of the task and give an appropriate response.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Ensure candidates read and comprehend the contents of the novel.
2. Teach candidates all the elements of the novel: theme, plot, character etc.
3. Do not encourage mere memorization.

4. Teach and train candidates to respond relevantly to a task, or to give their opinions on the elements in the story. This can be done through debates
5. Teach candidates to respond with textual support.
6. Remind and advise candidates to answer all the questions.
7. Allow candidates to view the CD provided by the Curriculum Development Centre to help them visualize and understand the story.
8. Teachers should encourage candidates to read the text and not the synopsis. Guide and teach the candidates on how to analyze the characters, events, themes and moral values. Candidates should be taught how to relate two elements such as characterization and theme, characterization and moral values and so on. For instance, teachers can do interesting activities on character analysis with the candidates (e.g. skits, "Guess Me", "Advice Column") during lessons to help them to get to know the characters.
9. Go through past year questions but do not encourage memorization. Get students to note down the events chapter by chapter or use a mind-map to map out the details.
10. Use cartoon versions to help candidates to understand the storyline, particularly candidates with low proficiency of the language.
11. Candidates must be taught and reminded to use the correct tense when answering this question i.e. the present tense. However, if they decide to use the past tense, they should be consistent and not mix up the tenses.
12. Candidates should not be too dependent on workbooks as it limits their own interpretations and hampers their own creative responses/opinions when answering questions on literature.

APPENDIX: Samples of answers

Sample1

Zaidi is the character that I look up to in the novel *Jungle of Hope* written by Keris Ma. I admire him because of his good personality and traits.

Firstly, he is a kind and responsible man. When his brother, Pak Kia's paddy field is flooded, he lends a helping hand by willingly supplies daily needs like food for Pak Kia's family from his sundry shop. He also brings three buffaloes for Pak Kia to help him in the paddy field. When Pak Kia went to Janda Baik, he lets his brother's family stay in his house. He knows that blood is thicker than water. He does not ask anything in return. He also helps the villagers by giving them jobs in his plantations when their farms are affected by the flood or pays them to collect bamboo for him. He is such a responsible and kind man who deserves our admirations.

Secondly, he is modern in his outlook, hardworking, business-minded and enterprising. Zaidi is described by the villagers as the "sharp one".

For instance, he employs local people to pluck jungle products in order to sell in his sundry shop. He is not only managing a sundry shop but also owns a rubber estate. He ventures into planting rubber when most people dare not. At that time paddy-planting is not profitable. Being a shrewd businessman, he knows the price of rubber would go up and he makes a profit from it. Besides, he also ventures into opening an orchard for planting easy-peeled rambutans. He becomes rich, he wears a 14 carat gold chain. He is not afraid to try something new and untraditional. I admire this quality in him.

Shows good understanding of the question by stating reasons as to why they chose the character.

Sample 2

The novel that I have chosen is *Jungle of Hope* by Kevin Mas. In this novel, the character that I look up to is Pak Kia. I look up to him because he is a determined person. For instance, he is determined to move to Jember and no one can influence his decision. Although his brother, Zaidi keeps persuading him to stay with him, Zaidi can't make Pak Kia change his mind. Pak Kia is also determined when he decided to bring Karim out of school. Although he got a blasting lecture from the principal, but Pak Kia still does not care and is very determined to take him out of school. He is determined to teach Karim to be a strong and wise rural man and not become slave to urban progress. He wants him to inherit the

best in the Malay way of life. He wants to teach him to sharpen knives, make nets and traps. He believes in keeping the Malay traditions so he is determined his children not lose their identity like "plants floating in water, no shoots above and no shoots below."

Besides, I look up to Pak Kia because of his bravery. He is said to be brave when he makes his decision to move to Janda Baik. Although he faces a lot of problems such as the heavy rain and economic changes but he is brave to overcome all these. Moving to Janda Baik, a new place to him, which is also an untouched forest, is not an easy task. But with bravery and assistance from his friends and family, Jusub, Karim and so forth, he finally successfully builds a new village in Janda Baik. He shows bravery during the clearing of the trees in the jungle and certain obstacles in planting paddy. For example, he has to fight off monkeys which are attacking his plantation and elephants that attack the village banana plants and sugar cane. While handling a wild bear that is destroying the paddy fields, he was attacked by the bear and injured.

Candidates who give a relevant response to the task provide reasons and textual evidence but without much detail, manage to score 7 or 8. The language proficiency of these candidates, in general, is average where meaning is not in doubt and there are frequent errors.

Sample 3

The character that I look up to is Zaidi. He is the brother of Pak Kia. Zaidi is a very generous man. He owns a sundry shop and he would give Pak Kia food when there is flood. Zaidi is also a very religious man. He is a Muslim. He follows the Kaum Mada group. He would study and understand the teachings of the al-Quran. He would also come against any activities that is not of Islam, for example on the day when the jungle was to be cut, Pak Kia and the witch doctor hold a ceremony saying that the jungle has ghost and should not be cut straight away. Zaidi did not agree. Zaidi is also a very friendly person. Even though he knew that Pendekar Aton was trying to trick him and use him, Zaidi still do business with him. Zaidi forgives him although he had did a lot of bad things to the village and he doesn't want to take revenge.

Candidates merely mention the reasons and provide some factual evidence. Although the response is relevant to the task, the evidence is not well-developed.

Sample 4

According to the novel *Jungle of Hope*, written by Kari Mes, there is one character that I look up to. He is Zaidi. Zaidi is Pak Kia's brother. He is a far-sighted man who cares for his future. Unlike Pak Kia, who is a stubborn old man who prefers to work in his paddy field in his whole life. He does not allow his son, Karon, to have education because he sees the modern way of life will affect his son's thinking just like Pendekar Aton.

Although Zaidi prefers to live in a modern way of life but he is hardworking and honest man. He earns his money by doing hard work and he has a sundry shop.

and rubber estate. Unlike Poydeker Aten, he is a bad guy who hopes to be a rich man. His way of earning money is to cheat and other dirty ways to get his money.

Sample 5

Based on the novel *The Pearl* that I have read, one character that I look up to is Juana, Kino's wife and Coyotito's mother. I like her because she is very loyal to Kino. She always with Kino in happy or sad. She is also very strong heart person. She fakes with open minded when Coyotito died. She still happy with her family although live in poor.

Sample 6

From the novel that I have read one character that I look up to is Juana, Kino's wife. This is because I like her character that always patient in everything that happens to her. For example, she very patient women when her son, Coyotito has been bite with scorpion. Juana also a faithful women. She always follow what Kino done and she not regret to be Kino's wife, however Kino not listening her say when she want him to keep only the pearl so that they can live happily. Another her character that I like is she show that she is a good and caring mother. The prove is she never leave her baby alone because she afraid someone can kill her baby just only want to have the pearl.

Sample 7

In the novel the pearl written by John Steinbeck, it is important to have a person I look up in my life is Guana. Guana is a brief woman and pretty. She work hard to gave a Coyotito at the hospital.

Sample 8

The main character I like in the pearl is Kino. Kino have a wife and son. Juana is a wife Kino and son is coyotito. Kino poor pearl. Kino strong. He very good in life. Kino loves his family Because I like Kino. Her very take care of Coyotito he son.

Weak candidates (Samples 4-8) give responses that are of little relevance or no relevance to the task. Very little textual evidence is given and many show no understanding of the task at all. The language proficiency of these candidates is very low.