

INTRODUCTION

The **Bible Knowledge** paper is a comprehensive examination of the candidates' detailed study of the life and teaching of Christ as contained in **The Gospel According To St. Luke** (Chapters 1 – 24) as well as the birth and growth of the early Christian church through the acts of the Holy Spirit as recorded in **The Acts of the Apostles** (Chapters 1 – 28).

Texts required:

- 1) **Revised Standard Version** of the **Bible**. Other translations of the **Bible** are accepted in the candidates' responses in the answer scripts.
- 2) **Marshall's Notes on Acts and Luke**.

They provide useful, Bible background information which is required for some questions.

Length of study ideally, the syllabus on the two books of the Bible should be taught over a two-year period, with a two-hour weekly teaching-cum-study schedule.

Medium of instruction All questions and answers are in the English Language.

Examination time-limit 2 ½ hours

FORMAT OF THE QUESTION PAPER

The paper consists of 2 sections. They are:-

Section A There are **two compulsory** context questions (Questions 1 & 2) which are divided into 4 sub-set context questions, namely Questions 1(a), (b), (c) and (d) based on **The Gospel According To St. Luke** and 2(a), b, c and d based on **The Acts of the Apostles**. Brief responses are required and the marks awarded are duly indicated beside each question. Candidates are required to answer **all** context questions. Each sub-set of the context questions is awarded 5 marks (8x5=**40 marks**).

Section B Candidates are required to answer **four** out of the **six essay type** questions. Three questions are based on **The Gospel According To St. Luke** and another three questions based on **The Acts of the Apostles**. Each essay-type question is awarded 15 marks (4x15=**60 marks**).

GENERAL PERFORMANCE

In recent years, the candidates' performance has improved. The quality of answers given by top scorers has been encouraging. This shows that the candidates have been taught well and given sufficient exposure to the subject.

However, there are some candidates who gave very skimpy answers. A general knowledge of the texts is absolutely insufficient. Clearly, they have not spent sufficient time familiarizing themselves with textual details, analyzing, comparing and contrasting discourses and events. A superficial knowledge of both texts is inadequate.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES ACCORDING TO THEIR GROUPS

Candidates in the Highest Group

Candidates showed an understanding of the rubrics of the questions and answered them adequately. They displayed an excellent memory for factual recall of details as well as a sound interpretation of the significance of the events narrated. One or two candidates who attempted the more challenging questions also demonstrated skills of analysis and synthesis and presented their arguments in a coherent and cohesive manner. They reflected the fact that they have been given the proper guidance for this paper. Admittedly, these candidates also have a good command of the English Language.

Candidates in the Middle Group

Candidates left out significant chunks of relevant details for certain sections of their responses. Thus, marks could not be awarded and their total scores were affected. Some candidates also misread the questions and gave irrelevant details.

Candidates in the Lowest Group

Candidates displayed a poor command of the English Language and failed to recall significant details or relate events adequately. Generally, their extremely brief responses reflect that they had not studied sufficiently or lacked proper guidance to handle the context or essay-type questions.

DETAILED PERFORMANCE

On an average scale, the better candidates had accurate recall of relevant details and demonstrated the ability to make thoughtful comments on the significance of events. They were able to establish meaningful links for questions that require global understanding and/or contrast/comparison in a cohesive and coherent manner.

Generally, the average candidates are unable to recall significant details or relate important events accurately. Some of the candidates are weak in English and their answers reflected a lack of proper teaching/guidance.

There are also evidences of first language interference and confusion over the spelling of homonyms/homophones. The mixing up of the fairly similar narratives/discourses is quite frequent. The weaker candidates are unable to determine the scope and length of their responses. Clearly they showed an inadequate in-depth study of both texts.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Read the questions carefully and fulfill the tasks required adequately.
2. Attempt to read the **two** books of the Bible regularly so as to be familiar with the details of each significant event.
3. Enrich your understanding of the texts by reading **at least the Marshall's Notes on Acts and Luke**.

4. Obtain help and guidance from qualified **Bible Knowledge** teachers or successful students.
5. Review past year papers to examine the scope of the paper and the range of the questions.
6. Develop an eye and a memory for significant details where marks can be awarded.
7. The more you read and familiarize yourself with both texts, the more you can improve your command of the English Language. Then you will become fluent with the English sentence structures, spelling and vocabulary.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

1. Vary your lesson presentation. Make each lesson a memorable experience. Dramatize, if necessary.
2. Develop memory aids/strategies to help candidates to remember significant details within contexts. This will help to enhance your own as well as the candidates' understanding and appreciation of the texts.
3. Have short quizzes, poster pin-ups, recall exercises or show relevant snippets/graphics/maps from available CD ROM/atlasses/commentaries or downloaded from the internet to capture the minds of the candidates concerning the historical, cultural, political, economic and social backgrounds of Bible times.
4. Contact either the **Malayan Christian Schools' Council/MCSC** (Tel.: 0379565310) or the **Teachers' Christian Fellowship/TCF** (Tel: 03-56375623/Email: tcfmal.pc.jaring.my) for further enquiries/help or to purchase the relevant texts, notes and past year papers.
5. Challenge, encourage and be willing to guide/teach any student who wants to take up **Bible Knowledge** for the SPM examination. It provides opportunities to discuss current moral issues within the framework of Biblical literature.