PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

BGCSE SETSWANA

2024

PAPER 1: CONTINUOUS WRITING

General Comments

The performance of the 2024 cohort was deemed to be slightly weaker than that of 2023 as observed through comparable question items that assessed similar constructs. Although candidates were able to access question 2 better, it was evident that the quality of their responses weaker, especially for questions 1a, c & e. Candidates' creativity levels were mostly low, characterised by poor sentence construction that had a lot of run on sentences, with disjointed paragraphs whose vocabulary was just average.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

This section was poorly handled by most candidates who performed below average and demonstrated deficiencies in sentence construction, creativity and vocabulary.

Candidates had problems with **Sentence Structure (SS)** as most of them could not construct sentences well. They mostly wrote very long sentences, most of which did not make sense as they were mostly not punctuated. Some relied on run on sentences. Most of the candidates were unable to vary the sentences. Only a few used different sentence types as complex sentences were visible here and there, this resulted in a lot of candidates falling into Band 4 and only a minute number falling into Band 5. It was rare for candidates to get Band 6. When it comes to **Vocabulary (V)**, only a few candidates used very good vocabulary and majority of them used vocabulary which was satisfactory. There was a lot of code switching and in most cases, some boldly used English words. They rarely used vocabulary which was wide. Some of them even abbreviated words. The candidates' performance was worse as compared to the previous year. With regards to **Punctuation (Pu)**, Candidates this time around struggled even with the use of capital letters which was not previously the case. Most of them this year had a tendency of quoting themselves, using brackets and slashes a lot. They attempted to use different punctuation marks though they were used inappropriately. However, with regards to **Spelling (Sp)**, the candidates had a lot of spelling mistakes which made it difficult for them to fall to Band 7. There was a slight decline on **Orthography (O)** as most of them did not use standard orthography. As for **Paragraphing (Pa)**, most candidates were able to write paragraphs which had unity but they had no link. Some of the candidates attempted to construct a paragraph using a very long sentence. Furthermore, with **Relevance (R)**, it was averagely done. Most of the candidates lacked creativity, a lot of them failed to address the heading given fully. Finally, with regards to **Figurative Language (FL)**, a lot of candidates coined their own figurative language especially proverbs. In most cases, they explained the figurative language used. A lot of figurative language used was uncertain as well as the use of unfinished proverbs.

Section B

In this section, all the candidates were to write a newspaper report. Most candidates knew how to write a report though most of them only focused their attention on writing the Heading (H) which they performed fairly on though most of them copied the question as it was. Most of them attempted Introduction (I) and only a few wrote the correct one. As for Selection of Ideas (SI), it was fairly done and the Presentation of Ideas (PI) was poorly done. With regards to Conclusion (Co), some attempted to conclude while some had no conclusion at all. And Language (La), was fairly done

Candidates had to choose one question out of the five that were given.

1   **(a)   *Kgaisano ya baithuti e tlisa maduo a mantle.***

This was the most popular question among the candidates but it was not well done by most candidates. Some of them did not explain in detail the *"kgaisano ya baithuti"* part as the question required. The candidates were to write facts stating how *"mowa wa kgaisano"* would bring *"maduo a mantle."* Most of them just stated the word *"kgaisano"* throughout the essay and did not explain the *''maduo a mantle"* in detail. A lot of them ignored the fact that it was a factual essay and instead, they narrated the events which resulted in them not doing well. Most of the candidates failed to come up with relevant points appropriate for addressing the question. Some of the candidates ignored the question as they talked about *''kagisano''* instead of *''kgaisano''*. A factual essay was the most popular this year as compared to previous years whereby narrative essay was the most popular. **(Factual essay)**

(b)   *Maranyane a latlhisitse batho ditsamaiso tsa ngwao ya bone. Dumalana kgotsa o ganetse.*

It was the third popular choice for candidates as most of them attempted it. This question was not well done by most candidates. Most of the candidates talked about *"maranyane"* only and not about *"ngwao"* while some talked about *"ngwao"* only and ignored *"maranyane"*. There was a lot of comparison with regards to *"ngwao"* on what was happening then and now. There was need for candidates to state *"gore maranyane ke afe"*, *"tsamaiso ya ngwao ke efe"* and *"go amile batho bao jang"*. Their responses were limited and the question was not addressed fully. **(Argumentative essay)**

(c)   *Go ne foo, ka lemoga ke sa bolelelwe gore e le ruri motho mongwe le mongwe o na le matlhakore a mabedi.*

It was the second popular question that was attempted by candidates. Even though most of the candidates attempted it, they did not perform well because a lot of them narrated about dilemma instead of being two faced. They failed to fully narrate "matlhakore a mabedi ao". The candidates were supposed to explain in detail and to show both the good and the bad side of an individual but only one side was mostly shown. The question was not well done as compared to recent years whereby candidates performed much better with regards to narrative essay. **(Narrative essay)**

(d)   *Mmabontle wa boditšhabatšhaba yo o gakgamaditseng Batswana ba le bantsi*.

It was the second least popular choice. A lot of candidates failed to describe in detail as the question entailed. There was a lot of narration instead of describing. The candidates were supposed to talk about *"mmabontle wa boditšhabatšhaba"* and to describe in detail and show the *"gakgamaditseng Batswana ba le bantsi"* part. The candidates failed to describe what happened or what the *"mmabontle"* did that made Batswana to *"gakgamala"* as the question suggested. **(Descriptive essay)**

(e)   *Fa ke sa dumela gore go na le metlholo ka letsatsi leo, ga ke ka ke ka tlhola ke dumela gore e le ruri e teng.*

It was the least popular question that was attempted by candidates. Most of the candidates were unable to show the *''metlholo''* part. Some of them did not fully narrate *"selo se se sa tlwaelesegang e bile se gakgamatsa"* but instead kept on rewriting the word "metlholo" time and again. A lot of them talked about miracles happening at church while some went as far as talking

about unrealistic things like *"go bona bomatholwane, go bona motho a fofa a palame leselo"* just to name a few. Compared to the previous years, narrative essays have always been the most popular ones and for the first time this year, it was the least popular. **(Narrative essay).**

2   **Candidates were all required to write a newspaper report as it was compulsory.**

The **Heading (H)** was fairly done and most of the candidates copied the question as it was from the question paper. They struggled to come up with a very good heading and only a few had no heading at all. The **Introduction (I)** however was averagely done as quite a number of them were able to state the place, time and the event. With regards to the **Selection of Ideas (SI),** most of the candidates were unable to select the ideas or the points to use. Most of them only talked about *"moletlo"* and failed to talk about *"go amogela mpho"*, the gift that was given as well as the company that donated the gift. Most of the candidates selected ideas fairly but poorly **presented ideas (PI)**. There were a few candidates who were reporting about prize giving instead of *"go amogela mpho"*. Some did not even expand on the ideas, the ideas were just listed and not fully explained which resulted in low performance. However, the **Conclusion (Co)** was fairly done and some opted not to write the conclusion of the newspaper report. Finally, most of the candidates used appropriate **Language (La)** which resulted in them falling on Band 3 and those falling on Band 4 were rare.

PAPER 2: COMPREHENSION, SUMMARY AND TRANSLATION

General Comment

Most of the candidates performed very well in this component, with the majority scoring more than 50%.

Comments on Individual Questions

1   Majority of candidates managed to score all marks allocated for this item.

2   The item was well understood by the majority of candidates and as such most of them performed very well.

3   The item was well structured as it led candidates to focus on a particular paragraph and not the whole passage. This helped the candidates identify answers easily. Therefore, they performed very well on the item.

4   This item was poorly performed as candidates failed to identify the author's bias-ness and therefore failed to give the reason. Below are some observations on the different elements.

5   The majority of candidates failed to identify coherence markers. Only a few managed to identify 1 coherence marker out of the 2 that were required. Instead of identifying them, they wrote punctuation marks.

6   The majority of candidates got this item correct. They managed to deduce the main idea of the paragraph.

7   Most candidates managed to score one mark for deducing the main point of the paragraph.

8   The majority of candidates managed to score 1 out of the 3 in this item. Instead of writing the functional slot, they named the part of speech.

9   The candidates performed very well in this item, identifying the author's intension and managed to identify the reasons to support their answer since they were directed to a particular paragraph.

10   The question was based on significance and was fairly performed. They however failed to get the significance of the interjective *"owaii"* as they provided *"lonyatso"* as their answer.as for part A and B, they fairly performed on it.

11   Most candidates got the topic sentence correctly even though the sentence was very long.

12   The candidates were to hypothesise the outcome of paragraph 2, and it was fairly done.

13   The candidates managed to identify the theme, and it was fairly done since most candidates scored 1 mark out of the 2 because they answered it partly.

14   The item expected candidates to identify and give reasons for the author's inconsistency and most of them performed above average.

15   Even though candidates were directed to a particular paragraph, most of them failed to deduce implicit meaning.

16   Candidates were supposed to pick 2 phrases used to persuade the readers, but they picked sentences. Hence, they failed.

17 For this item, candidates were supposed to use conjunctions in sentences, but they failed to muse the correct ones. Therefore, the item was poorly performed.

18 The candidates were supposed to summarise the given passage using their own words, but they fairly attempted it as some failed to use their own language and relied on constructed lifting. Even though they managed to identify the main points, they failed to condense them satisfactorily. Wholesale copying of the main points was minimal, evident as it was.

19 Generally, candidates did well on translation. Most of those who finished translating were above average though some did not do well as they failed to complete translating the whole text. They failed to translate numbers, time and certain words like "taxi", "deserted" and "ferrying." To those who considered cultural difference, it was an advantage as there were only two slots to use it.

PAPER 3: LITERATURE: DRAMA AND POETRY

General Comments

Most of the candidates showed analytical skills throughout the entire paper. The responses across all the sections proved the above statement. The most popular question was question 1 from Motswasele II which was about the author's handling of character development (degeneration + realisation). It was well attempted by the majority of the candidates. The performance was generally good. The least popular question was question 4, "*Ngwana o anywa mmaagwe a sule*."

Comments on Individual Questions

1   Most candidates did very well in this question. However, there were some who could not handle technical terms like *"kwelotlase, itharabologelo and kgolo"*. There are some who did not use them in their responses and some who just mentioned them without showing that they understand their meanings. In the analysis of *botho* (character traits) some candidates used wrong events as evidence, which affected the structure of the response. For example, *"mokwadi o supa Motswasele a le setlhogo"* (cruel), and the events picked to support this point would not correlate with cruelty.

Some of the candidates did not identify the character traits but rather mentioned the events instead, which ultimately affected the analysis.

2   *Maikutlo a mokwadi (mood and attitude of the author): Phuduhudu ga e tlhatlhelwe*
Some candidates' introduction showed understanding, but the body of the essay was a narration of the events. Other candidates did not show understanding of how the author portrays the mood and attitude. Other candidates did not fully portray the pillars or methods of the author's portrayal of the mood and attitude (they only mentioned the means without showing how they portray the mood). Some candidates confused the mood of the author with that of the poet.

3   *Conflict: Letlapa le le bolele*
The second popular question. Some candidates did very well on it. Some failed to identify the motivation and some stopped at the climax and disregarded the need to analyse falling action.

4   *Role played: Ngwana o anywa maagwe a sule*
This was the least attempted question. Most candidates who answered it did very well. They showed analytical skills.

5   *Cause and effect*
This item was attempted by roughly 40% of the candidates. Some picked minor events and this affected the structure and analysis. Some did very well but failed to include evidence.

6   *Theme*
This item was attempted by roughly 60%. Some candidates did very well in the analysis, but there are some who had multiple themes. Others just came up with an event and called it a theme. Some candidates only analysed one side of the theme.

7   *Mood of the poet*
This item was attempted by 20%, of which 95% failed to structure the response accordingly.

8   *Interpretation of the poem*

A popular item, in which most candidates did very well and scored above 7/15. Most candidates failed to appreciate the poet's use of poetic devices.