



**BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL**

2024 PSLE

DIAGNOSTIC REPORT ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE

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1.0 Introduction

The Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) is not only designed to measure achievement but also aims to provide diagnostic feedback to support teaching and learning. This report takes a step toward giving teachers and other education support systems information that can improve future methods. The data was collected based on learner performance results for the 2024 exam. Therefore, this report is intended to highlight both strengths and areas of concern across different subjects, based on the performance of the 2024 candidates. Suggestions for improvement have also been provided, and it is expected that report users will review and utilize the information to benefit learners. This report must be read alongside the 2024 question papers since specific references are made to tasks for the different syllabuses.

1.1 Scope & Purpose

PSLE is a diagnostic examination testing a total of seven (7) syllabuses consisting of nine (9) components. There are six (6) multiple-choice components and three (3) constructed response components. To support the diagnostic nature of the examination, each syllabus is divided into content domains of learning called Dimensions. The table below outlines the Dimensions for the different subjects.

SUBJECT	DIMENSION 1	DIMENSION 2
Setswana	Knowledge & understanding	Communication
English	Comprehension & Language Use	Communication
Mathematics	Computation	Application & Reasoning
Science	Knowledge & understanding	Application
Social Studies	Knowledge & understanding	Skills
Agriculture	Knowledge	Understanding
REME	Knowledge	Understanding

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide feedback on candidates' performance by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses across ^{the} different dimensions, going further into the actual topic areas where learners were challenged.

The report will focus on Multiple-Choice components for Setswana, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Religious & Moral Education, as well as the written components; Setswana 2, English 2, and Agriculture, as in the previous year. The written components will provide observations made by Principal Examiners during marking. Hence, providing schools

with feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of learners in composition and letter writing for both Setswana and English, as well as in Agriculture for this particular year.

1.2 General Observations

Generally, this year, the Candidates' performance on the Knowledge Dimension across the different syllabi declined, except in Social Studies and Setswana, where there was a significant improvement. The deficit in knowledge acquisition in the different syllabi is concerning, as the Dimension serves as a base for high-order ability skills. It is advised that teaching and learning should target the development of this Dimension to prepare learners for acquiring high order thinking skills in the future. In the Setswana and English languages, there has been a slight improvement in the communication Dimension this year. In Mathematics and Science, on the other hand, candidates perform better in the Dimensions where they are expected to apply mathematical and scientific concepts & principles, while they are challenged when they are expected to display basic knowledge of those concepts and principles. Similarly, in Agriculture and REME, there has been an improvement in the Understanding Dimension, whilst performance in the Knowledge Dimension declined. This showed that candidates were limited in basic concepts and processes.

1.3 Overview of Learner Performance by Syllabus

This section summarizes the performance of learners in each dimension, culminating in the provision of a comprehensive analysis of candidate performance at the syllabus level. It outlines the generic areas of good performance or weaknesses and presents possible suggestions for improvement.

2.0 Setswana

The Setswana syllabus consists of two components, which are component 1 and component 2. Setswana component 1 is composed of tasks that require candidates to display knowledge and understanding of the different concepts and attributes that make up the Setswana language. These include concepts such as punctuation, capitalization, orthography, tense, kinship terms, issues of courtesy & culture, as well as the use of different parts of speech. The paper also assesses candidates on their understanding of a variety of texts, including literary texts, comprehension passages, reports, notices, directions, and instructions. All these areas have been classified under the Knowledge & Understanding Dimension, referred to as Dimension 1.

- Setswana Component 2, on the other hand, requires the candidates to demonstrate communication skills through writing by combining the vocabulary and syntax to form meaningful wholes (i.e., coherent and effective written communication), applying what they have learnt to demonstrate effective and appropriate communication. All these areas have been classified under the Communication Dimension, referred to as Dimension 2.

2.1 Setswana Component 1

The performance of candidates in this component has generally improved in 2024 as compared to that of 2023. There was a clear indication that the candidates have acquired/learnt several concepts that constitute the Setswana language. Better performance was displayed in the following areas: orthography, tenses, conjunctive, sequence, capitalization, translation of a paragraph, poetry, literature passage, instruction, and directions. However, areas that required identification of aspects relating to the appropriate use of culture, translation of a sentence, report, notices, figurative language, as well as some areas of comprehension (main idea, inferences, and headings) were a challenge. This was indicated by the low P-values for many tasks under these topics, which ranged between .24 and .46.

2.1.1 Texts:(Comprehension and variety of texts)

Unlike in the previous year, this year the general understanding of the passages where candidates were required to identify specific information from the text was a major challenge, let alone where they were expected to provide a bit of reasoning. The challenge became prominent in tasks that required them to determine the contextual meaning of different expressions, deduce meaning, make inferences, and draw conclusions based on a given text or situation, where P-values ranged between .24 and .46.

2.1.2 Report

While students demonstrated a basic understanding of reporting, their performance in this area showed a slight decline compared to the previous year. P-values for reporting questions in 2023 showed a higher positive response, with values of .28, .69, and .73. The P-values, however, dropped to .30, .46, and .63 in 2024.

2.1.3 Notices

Questions were poorly answered in both 2023 and 2024, with P-values indicating low performance. The P-values in 2024 were .50, .24, and .25, but in 2023 they were .43, .43, and .44. Two-thirds of the questions demonstrated a decline in performance over the prior year, despite one question showing a minor improvement (P-value = .50).

2.1.4 Poetry

Candidates showed significant improvement in their understanding and interpretation of poetry from 2023 to 2024. While the previous year's performance was low (P-values ranging from .27 to .57), the 2024 cohort demonstrated better comprehension of poetic devices, mood, and stanza interpretation. Five out of seven poetry questions had high P-values, ranging from .57 to .79, indicating strong performance in these areas. The remaining two questions with P-values of .27 and .44 suggest that some improvement is still needed in poetry analysis and understanding.

2.1.5 Literature text

There was a noticeable improvement in candidates' ability to interact with literary content, especially with the literature passage, where they had to identify the theme, climax, and characters. In contrast to the previous year, when outlining the plot and causal sequence of events was challenging, candidates showed significant improvement in these areas. P-values for literature questions ranged from .29 to .46 and .83, indicating a better understanding of literature. Most candidates were able to identify the main character, setting, and explain why they liked or disliked certain characters.

2.1.6 Suggestions for Improvement

- ✓ Teachers can enhance students' understanding and summarization of information by incorporating exercises involving identifying and extracting important information from various sources, including texts and audio materials.
- ✓ Learners should be encouraged to create their notices and analyze real-life examples to reinforce the structure and language of these documents
- ✓ Poetry can be enhanced by introducing advanced literary devices like symbolism or irony and offering more guided practice in interpreting poems.

- ✓ Use graphic novels or picture books to introduce difficult literary ideas like theme or character development. Younger students can better understand literary stories and aspects with the use of these visual aids.
- ✓ Giving students the chance to act out passages from the literature they are studying can aid in their internalisation of the themes and characters in a more dynamic and captivating way.
- ✓ Cultural practices need to be given some attention, even though they form a small portion of the syllabus, because they play a key role in moulding the behavior of the candidates for the future.
- ✓ Reading texts for understanding requires emphasis on skills of reading, such as skimming and scanning, reading between the lines, inferring, and making conclusions based on the content of the text.
- ✓ The teaching and learning process should provide learners with an opportunity to interact with different types of texts when teaching both comprehension, poetry, and literature to broaden their understanding of the different genres.
- ✓ Learners should be exposed to varied question types across different levels of difficulty during class activities, tests, and internal examinations.

Table 1: P-Values for the Different Tasks: Knowledge & Understanding Dimension

The table below shows p-values for the different tasks about the topic areas.

Key: Q(q)- Question number

Topic & Questions	P -values					
	2023 low	2024 Low	2023 Average	2024 Average	2023 Slightly high to high	2024 Slightly high to high
Comprehension Passage <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Understanding (Q 1-3,9-15)○ Figurative Language (Q. 4-8)○ Link/coherence (Q.5)○ Main idea (Q.12)○ Inference (Q.11,13)○ Heading (Q. 14)	.25,.28,.28, .34,.35,	.27(q.8);.27(q.12). .27(q.14);.40(q.11) .43(q.9); .45(q.10) .46(q.15)		.50(13);.55(q1) .57(q.4);.58(q.6)		.62(q.2);.73(q.5) .79(q.7)
Capitalization (Questions 16-17)	.39, .45	.36(q.16)				.65(q.17)
Punctuation	.26, .47		.51 .57		.61	

Orthography (Questions 18-24)	.26, .41		.55		.78	.61(q.23);.65(q.18) .79(q.19);.82(q.24) .84(q.22);.85(q.20) .89(q.21)
Conjunctivitis (Questions 25- 28)	.16, .43				.67 .86	.72(q.26);.75(q.28) .81(q.27); .90(q.25)
Tenses (Questions 29-30)					.77 .86	.83(q.30);.91(q.29)
Kinship (Questions 31-32)			.50	.51(q.31)	.73	.74(q.32)
Culture (Question 33)	.36	.38(q.33)				
Translation o Sentence: (Questions 34 -35) o Paragraph: (Question 36)	.26, .35	.38(q.35) .42(q. 34)	.59	.51(q.36)		
Sequence (Questions 37-39)	.12, .36, 47,	.46(q.37)		.58(q.39)		.68(q.38)
Report (Questions 40- 42)	.28	.30(q.40); .46(q.41)			.69, .73.	.63(q.42)
Poetry	.30, .32, .47	.40(q.44)	.53			.62(q.43)

(Questions 43-45) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mood-Q.43 ○ Simile -Q. 44 ○ Interpretation- Q. 45 						.68(q.68)
Instructions & Directions (Questions 46-48)	.30, 38, 47	.42(q.48); .46(q.46)	.53(q.47)			
Notices (Questions 49 – 51)	.43, .43, .44	.24(q.49) .25(q.51)		.51(q.50)		
Literature Passage (Questions 52-60) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Main character Q.52 ○ Character Q. 54 ○ Conflict Q. 55 ○ Theme Q.56 ○ Climax Q. 57 ○ Cause & effect Q. 58 ○ Likes & dislikes Q. 59 ○ Plot Q. 60 	.29, .30,.30, .36, .37,.48	.29(q.56) .36(q.57) .46(q.54)	.51, .59	.50(q.58) .53(q.60) .58(q.55)	.81	.62(q.59) .65(q.53) .83(q.52)

2.1.7 Comments on the Different areas with low P-values

2.1.7.1 Capitalization

For 2024 Questions 16 and 17 had P-values of 0.36 and 0.65, respectively while in 2023 p-values for the same were .39, .45. This suggests that for 2024 there was some improvement in learner performance on capitalization questions, with one question rated in the low P-value range and one in the slightly improved P-value range. However, the improvement is not satisfactory; hence, schools should provide more practice and instruction in this area to better prepare students for future exams.

2.1.7.2 Orthography

In terms of orthography (questions 18-24), there was significant improvement compared to the 2023 cohort. The P-values for these questions were 0.61, 0.65, 0.79, 0.82, 0.84, 0.85, and 0.89, respectively. In contrast, the 2023 cohort had significantly lower P-values (0.26, 0.41, 0.55, and 0.78) for these questions. Students' understanding of orthography has improved, but some areas still need improvement. Schools should consider adding more orthography exercises to lesson plans and providing practice in various contexts, such as writing exercises, games, or quizzes.

2.1.7.3 Sequencing

Questions related to sentence coherence showed improvement over the previous year's score, indicating that candidates had improved their ability to identify sentence coherence. For 2024, certain questions had comparatively low P-values, demonstrating a need for more practice and training in sentence coherence. Schools can think about introducing more sequencing tasks into the lesson plans and emphasising the value of understanding the logical flow of ideas within sentences to address this.

2.1.7.4 Report

In the area of the report, there was a slight decrease in performance compared to the previous year. Questions targeting the report had P-values of 0.28, 0.69, and 0.73 in 2023, respectively. However, in 2024, the P-values for these questions were 0.30, 0.46, and 0.63, indicating a slight decline. This suggests that while students still could comprehend the report, there is still a gap in responding to the questions assessing this area. This calls for more practice in this area.

2.1.7.5 Notices

Given that for the 2023 and 2024 cohorts, the P-values for these questions remained relatively consistent, there was no noticeable increase over the prior year in the notifications section. For these questions, the P-values were 0.43, 0.43, and 0.44 in 2023 and 0.24, 0.25, and 0.51 in 2024. This suggests that students are still having trouble accessing questions on notices; hence, more training on effective comprehension and analysis of notices to questions on the same is required.

2.1.7.6 Comprehension passage

There is evidence that the candidates showed a level of proficiency with some items under this topic. This topic received more items compared to other topics. However, candidates demonstrated limited understanding of some items, as shown by the low P-value. There is a modest increase in items rated at higher P-values in 2024 compared to 2023.

2.1.7.7 Poetry

In 2024, P-values for poetry tasks improved from the low to the slightly high range, indicating a slight improvement. P-values for simile (0.44), mood analysis (0.62), and interpretation (0.68) increased from their 2023 counterparts (0.30, 0.32, 0.47, and 0.53). Despite this improvement, poetry should be emphasized more in classrooms. To enhance students' knowledge of poetry, teachers could:

- Incorporate poetry analysis exercises into lessons, helping students recognize similes, metaphors, moods, and personification in various poems.
- Showcase examples of diverse poems to give students a broad understanding of poetry's range and depth.
- Encourage students to develop their poems or short stories that are influenced by poetry by using poetry as a starting point for creative writing projects.

2.1.7.8 Instructions and Directions

In 2023, P-values for Instructions & Directions ranged from .30 to .47, indicating some difficulty. In 2024, P-values were slightly higher, ranging from .42 to .53. While there was a slight improvement, students still had some difficulty interpreting instructions and directions. Schools could use the following strategies to enhance students' understanding of instructions and directions:

- Provide practice exercises that involve following step-by-step instructions to complete tasks (e.g., assembling Lego models, baking cookies).

2.1.7.9 Performance

While there have been some improvements in certain areas, such as poetry and understanding of literary content, there is still room for further growth in other areas, like reporting and notices. It is also essential to focus on providing additional instruction and practice in the areas where students have struggled (reporting, notices, culture, translation, figurative language & general understanding of instructions and directions) using the strategies and activities we've discussed (e.g., more hands-on activities, visual aids, and exposure to real-life examples).

Reporting: Students need more practice in extracting and summarizing information from various sources.

Notices: Students need to better understand the structure and language of notices, as well as practice writing their notices.

Poetry: Students could benefit from additional instruction and practice in interpreting and analyzing poems, particularly regarding advanced literary devices. By focusing on the comprehension and understanding of these key elements of the PSLE curriculum, teaching and learning can be improved.

2.2 Setswana Component 2: Composition and Letter

In general, the 2024 cohort appears to be significantly better at answering the questions than the one before it. It was determined that the composition and letter were clearly defined and well-structured, with the assumption that nearly all students would be able to compose them without any issues. Despite the switch to a formal letter format this year, the subject matter was manageable. It is concerning, though, that the same issues that are brought up year after year continue to surface, and this year's performance on communication, especially letter writing, where they have been performing better in prior years, continues to drop significantly. In comparison to the previous year, most candidates displayed improved performance and quality of work in composition writing. However, some centres continue to exhibit low performance in this area, which raises concerns about the utilization of the feedback provided in this report. As the report is intended to provide teachers with valuable insights into student performance and to help students improve, its findings must be fully implemented to maximize its effectiveness and contribute to future candidates' success.

Candidates' difficulty in distinguishing between stating and explaining, as outlined in the rules, remains a significant issue in both composition and letter writing. Many forget that explaining involves not just stating but also elaborating or supporting key ideas. As a result, they often produce skeletal responses that lack depth and detail. Instead of thoroughly discussing a single point, they may list various unsupported major arguments within one paragraph. This problem continues to limit candidates' ability to provide facts and well-structured arguments in their writing.

The format of both the letter and the essay is another issue. Candidates must follow the specific rules for each writing style. Handwriting remains a major problem; many students struggle to write legibly and clearly, shape letters correctly, or distinguish between capital and lowercase characters. These issues can make writing difficult to read and lower the quality of the work.

Although some centres have shown significant progress, candidates' overall communication performance remains inadequate, and this year's issue is worsened by letter writing. However, it is important to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of a few students from centres who successfully applied the creative criterion. Teaching candidates how to effectively articulate and sequence ideas in their writing should be a top priority going forward to help them produce cohesive and well-organized writing. Prioritizing these skills will better prepare candidates to generate excellent written work.

In summary, the 2024 cohort appears to have a better understanding of the questions compared to the previous year. The overall difficulty level of both exams was comparable, despite minor variations in the number of items across certain aspects. This balance maintained a similar level of challenge between the two papers, ensuring a fair evaluation of students' understanding of the Setswana syllabus.

2.2.1 Composition Writing

Candidates were tasked with writing an essay titled “**LETSATSI LE KE NENG KA LEMOGA BOTLHOKWA JWA GO REETSA DIKGAKOLOLO TSA BATSADI**” using the provided guidelines to structure their subject matter. Adhering to these guidelines was crucial in demonstrating an understanding of the essay writing process. Additionally, the candidates' communication and writing skills were expected to be showcased through various aspects of the Setswana language to maintain the reader's interest. Some observations were made about essay writing as outlined below.

2.2.1.1 Confinement to the Guidelines

Despite the guidelines being provided to direct the essay's structure, many candidates continued to view them as questions requiring direct responses. This led to narrow and underdeveloped presentations that failed to meet the expected standard. Instead of offering thorough, well-supported ideas, most candidates provided brief, two-sentence responses for each guideline, which does not fulfill the requirements of effective essay writing. Candidates must strive to enhance their points, demonstrating their mastery of the Setswana language and communication skills to produce engaging and informative essays.

2.2.1.2 Communication

Candidates were expected to elaborate on the importance and justification for following elders' advice as evidence of their understanding of the essay topic. Candidates were expected to use the Setswana language effectively to inform and fascinate the reader, as well as appropriately portray the essential issues. This required them to demonstrate their command of language, syntax, and rhetorical strategies, all of which could be used to create an essay that was detailed and persuasive. Candidates could create an engaging written piece that conveys their views and knowledge by combining their language skills with a thorough understanding of the issue at hand.

Observations

- ✓ In general, some learners were able to give adequate justifications, whereas others had challenges.
- ✓ Several candidates separated their main points from their explanations in different paragraphs, which weakened the organisation of their responses. Teachers should emphasize staying focused on the core topic and providing logical, structured evidence to address this issue.
- ✓ Some candidates deviate from the subject at hand, discussing irrelevant issues before getting back to it in the paragraph that follows.
- ✓ Even though some candidates tried to explain what had occurred, they were only able to come up with vague words that didn't go into enough detail about any incidents.

Candidates must distinguish between stating/mentioning and explaining, as explaining requires more than merely mentioning. A response that demonstrates a thorough understanding would include stating the main idea, followed by supporting points that serve to elaborate on the main idea, focusing on the specific incident that prompted the elders' advice and the resulting benefits. Candidates must remember to begin each paragraph with a topic sentence, followed by supporting sentences or examples that illustrate or reinforce the main

idea, as demonstrated in the previous paragraph. Supporting the main concept is critical for writing cohesive and well-developed paragraphs that improve the overall structure of the essay. In the context of this essay, it would be beneficial for candidates to highlight specific instances that led to the elders' advice, detailing how adhering to their wisdom resulted in positive outcomes.

2.2.1.2.1 Mentions the time and place of the incident.

Candidates were expected to indicate the time and place of the incident described in their essays, providing context for their explanations and contributing to the overall coherence of their responses.

Observations

- ✓ Most of the candidates showed that they understood the context by correctly indicating the incident's time and location. However, a small percentage of candidates merely mentioned the time or location without explaining their significance.
- ✓ Several candidates provided general information about the time and place of the incident without specifically connecting it to the event that prompted the elders' advice.

The responses shown that most of the candidates had a strong understanding of the criteria and could comprehend and respond to them effectively.

2.2.1.2.2 Explain an incident that prompted the elders to advise them.

Candidates were required to provide a detailed account of the event that led to the elders' advice.

Observations

- ✓ Many of the candidates were able to provide a thorough explanation of the event that led to the elders' counsel.

2.2.1.2.3 Explains how they benefited from the elder's advice.

The guideline required candidates to provide a detailed explanation of how they derived benefits from the elders' advice. To meet the requirements of the guideline, candidates needed to select at least one specific benefit of the advice and fully elaborate on its impact, rather than merely listing multiple benefits without providing sufficient detail. This would show that they are aware of the advantages of following the elders' advice and that they can effectively and clearly explain these advantages.

Example

Dikgakololo tsa bagolo di ne tsa nthusa fela thata, ke ne ka simolola go tsaya dithuto tsa me ka tlhwaafalo. Maduo a me kwa sekolong a ne a tokafala le tsone ditlhatlhobo ke feta ka tse ditsididi. Ke ne ka dira go tlala ka diatla.

Observations

- ✓ Most candidates were able to provide a thorough justification of how the elders' advice had helped them.
- ✓ Some candidates lost points since they failed to elaborate on the benefit.
- ✓ Some of the candidates merely listed the advantages without even trying to choose one and provide a convincing explanation.

NB: As previously mentioned, teachers need to emphasise the difference between stating and explaining. The candidate's inability to explain calls for interventions to assist learners in acquiring the techniques for elaboration.

2.2.1.2.4 Creativity

Show some creativity in their writing.

Creativity is a major challenge for many candidates. Most candidates lose a creative point. Candidates must demonstrate their ability to synthesise knowledge and deliver it coherently in this area. This entails combining the essay's primary components to create a cohesive work of writing. They were also supposed to combine the essay's primary components to create a coherent work of writing with coherence within and between paragraphs. To ensure that the essay stimulates the reader's interest and maintains a flow of ideas, it requires the use of ideas in a cohesive manner, a variety of sentence structures, and creative thinking beyond the confines of the given topic. In addition, creativity involves the skilled application of language elements, including ideophones, interjections, collective nouns, descriptive words, punctuation, and rich diction/vocabulary with a specific impact. Creating an engaging piece of work also requires the capacity to experiment with Setswana words.

NB: Teachers must prioritize the development of creativity in writing among learners. To address this pressing need, teachers should integrate creative writing skills into their lesson plans, provide ample opportunities for practice and feedback, and encourage students to experiment with language and explore the possibilities of Setswana in their written work.

2.2.1.3 Command of Language

This section evaluates candidates' understanding of grammatical structures and their appropriate usage, assessing the following attributes:"

2.2.1.3.1 Capitalization and Punctuation

Most of the candidates perform well in punctuation and capitalization. They still have the problem of not punctuating the demonstration, too. Moreover, many candidates tend to misuse commas, employing them where a pause is unwarranted or failing to utilize commas when a pause is necessary. This resulted in grammatical errors and awkward sentence constructions, highlighting the importance of teaching Setswana punctuation with a focus on effective communication.

2.2.1.3.2 Descriptive vocabulary

To improve their essay, candidates must include descriptive words and phrases, and /or both. These should be exceptional words or phrases that paint a clear image of the subject matter. The reader should be able to visualise what has been described because of these impressions.

Examples

Ke ne ke tsamaya le basimane ba maepantlo masigo kwa maitisong.

Re ne re nna re gobeya masigo, re tlhorontsha batho ka go ba tseela ditsabone.

Examples of language aspects that can be used as descriptive vocabulary.

Language aspects	Example
Collective nouns	Matlakana a bana Boidiidi jwa batho Maphatšhaphatšha a metsi.
Ideophones (maetsisi)	Palakata! Tu! Thu! Pote! Thi! Phatsi!
Assonance (poeletso medumo)	Matsetseleko, magasisigasi, tshetlhatshetlha

2.2.1.3.3 Figurative language

To write an exceptional essay, candidates must employ figurative language in the right context. This involves using idioms, proverbs, and poetic devices like personification, metaphor, and simile appropriately. These can enhance the essay's depth, emotion, and beauty. By using metaphorical language to create a rich, emotive composition, candidates can set their writing apart from simpler responses.

Observations

Many candidates missed a great opportunity to express their originality by not using metaphorical language in their essays. Candidates who attempted to use proverbs and idioms misused them, demonstrating how important it is to completely understand and apply these components correctly.

NB: To help candidates better understand and use these skills in their writing, teachers should incorporate figurative language in their lesson plans and teach in context. A greater understanding of the Setswana language and its expressive possibilities may result from this method.

2.2.1.3.4 Compound and complex sentences

Candidates continue to struggle with using complex and compound sentences in their writing, just as they did in prior years.

Observations

- Some candidates write brief, simple sentences.
- Some candidates overuse conjunctives, employing more than one in a single long statement.
- Incorrect use of both conjunctives and commas to construct compound sentences, leading to grammatical errors.
- Some candidates tend to produce run-on sentences, which force them to employ many conjunctives to maintain clarity and cohesion.

2.2.1.4 Content Management 1

This section's goal is to determine if candidates have mastered the ability to take every aspect of composition writing and combine them to create a coherent work of writing. The following elements are considered when assessing the candidates' integration of these skills:

2.2.1.4.1 Coherence of ideas within the paragraphs

It is crucial to remember that paragraphs must be written according to the format.

Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and supporting ideas that establish the main idea of the paragraph, followed by supporting sentences that provide details and examples related to that idea. It is not appropriate to separate the topic sentence from the supporting sentence. To help candidates write effective, coherent essays, instructors should emphasize the crucial role of this organizational structure in essay writing.

Paragraph = Topic sentence + supporting sentences

Batsadi ba me ba ne ba nkgakolola ka bodiphatsa jwa go tsamaya masigo. E ne e re bosigo batsadi ba sena go isa marapo go beng

nna le tsala ya me Tumelo re bo re ngwega re ya maitisong. Fa re tsena kwa maitisong, re ne re inaakanya le dilo tse di sa

tlhamalalang jaaka go itshiela dinotagi le go goga metsoko.

Topic sentence = Batsadi ba me ba ne ba nkgakolola ka bodiphatsa jwa go tsamaya masigo

Supporting sentences = - nna le tsala ya me Tumelo re bo re ngwega re ya maitisong.

- Fa re tsena kwa maitisong, re ne re inaakanya le dilo tse di sa tlhamalalang

Observations

In comparison to previous years, there was a notable improvement in the coherence of candidates' paragraphs, although some learners still struggled with this aspect of writing.

While some candidates demonstrated the ability to construct cohesive paragraphs, others struggled with logical progression and thematic continuity within their essays

In addition, lengthy sentences continued to be present in some essays, reflecting a need for further instruction on sentence structure and organization.

2.2.1.4.2 Introduction and conclusion

A strong introduction is essential for setting the scene for the rest of the essay. While some candidates wrote only a single sentence or paragraph as an introduction, this was deemed acceptable. The conclusion, on the other hand, should provide a summary or thoughtful reflection on the key points of the essay. This helps to serve as a closure and to reinforce the main ideas for the reader, as well as demonstrate the candidate's ability to integrate information and draw meaningful insights from their writing.

Observations

Generally, most candidates wrote strong introductions and conclusions, setting a solid foundation for their essays and concluding them with a clear and brief note. This reflects an overall understanding of the importance of these components in the essay structure and demonstrates the necessary skills to organize their ideas into an effective framework and summary.

NB: Effective introduction: To ensure that students develop strong essay writing skills, teachers should emphasize the importance of crafting a well-written introduction consisting of several meaningful sentences, rather than a single statement. This approach promotes critical thinking and effective writing, ultimately leading to improved exam performance.

2.2.2 Letter Writing

For this task, candidates were expected to write a formal letter to the School Head, informing them about instances of bullying or maltreatment among students and expressing a desire to assist the victims. Unlike the previous year when they were tasked with an informal letter, this year they had to write a formal letter.

This was not supposed to pose a problem because the syllabus covers formal letters, which candidates have been tested on in prior years. The topic was appropriate for their level and easy to understand because bullying is a common issue encountered by students and is addressed in Guidance and Counselling lessons. However, the letter format proved challenging for some candidates, as reflected in the following observations:

2.2.2.1 Content Management 2

2.2.2.1.1 Address and date

Candidates were required to include a correctly formatted address and date at the start of their letter, ensuring that the date was written in Setswana.

Observations:

Most candidates were successful in formatting the address and date correctly. However, several candidates lost marks for this criterion due to errors such as punctuation mistakes in the address, the absence of a title case, and failure to include the Department in the recipient's address. These mistakes reflect a need for greater attention to detail when formatting formal letters in Setswana.

The following are examples of incorrectly formatted addresses from candidates' responses:

Mogokgo wa sekolo P O Box 4 Gaborone	Mogokgo Setlhareng Primary School P o Box 45 Serowe
Mogokgo Letlhabile Primary School P O Box 4 Lentswethebe	

2.2.2.1.2 Opening and closing salutations:

For the opening salutation, candidates were required to address the recipient as 'Rra/Mma' and to include a line break after the recipient's address.

Opening salutation

Although most candidates correctly used the opening salutation, some made errors, such as writing it as follows:

- a) Rre/Mme b) Mma/Rra

2.2.2.1.3 Closing salutation

The closing salutation was "Ka boikokobetso" The candidates were expected to write it as follows:

Ka boikokobetso

Lesego Tumedisio

The following errors were identified in some candidates' writing:

i) Ke le

ii) Ka boikokobetso

iii) Ka boikokobetso

Lesego Tumedisio

Lesego

Lesego Tumedisio.

i) Ka boikokobetso

LESEGO TUMEDISO

➤ In some cases, candidates punctuated the closing salutation with full stops, rather than omitting punctuation, as required.

➤ After the final sentence, a few candidates skipped two lines.

If a learner chooses to cancel a line of writing in their formal letter, they should be encouraged to rewrite the salutation on the same line as the cancellation, without skipping any lines. Skipping lines in this scenario could result in a mark being deducted, as it does not conform to the appropriate formatting for a formal letter.

NB: It's important to remember that the salutations and address are rather simple components of a formal letter, so candidates shouldn't have any trouble getting them right. However, it is concerning that some candidates made mistakes in these areas, as it implies that they might not fully understand Setswana's formal letter-writing rules.

The disparity in competence highlights the necessity for teachers to emphasise these abilities in the classroom, reinforcing the importance of regular practice in developing mastery.

2.2.2.2 Communication 2

Candidates are expected to show that they comprehend the subject under this profile. They are supposed to discuss the topic in a direct, conversational style that avoids assuming or speculating.

2.2.2.2.1 Mentioning the learners who maltreat/ bully others.

Candidates were required to provide specific and detailed examples of learners engaging in bullying or maltreatment, whether it was directed at peers, younger classmates, seniors, or carried out by groups or gangs. This aspect of the criterion evaluated the candidates' capacity

to understand and accurately describe instances of bullying or maltreatment, which served as the basis for their proposed solutions and recommendations in later parts of the essay.

Observations

Most candidates successfully identified the individuals or groups responsible for bullying and maltreatment, earning them marks for this part of the criterion. This has shown that most candidates had a solid understanding of the types of bullying behaviors and the individuals involved in perpetrating them, allowing them to address the problem effectively and propose solutions.

2.2.2.2.2 Explaining what they intend to do to assist/ help the victims.

Candidates had given detailed information about the strategies or plans they would use to assist those who have been bullied or mistreated. Candidates were asked to thoroughly explain at least one of the techniques they specified, using appropriate ideas and examples to support the viability and effectiveness of their selected strategy.

EXAMPLES 1: Explaining the main idea with ideas/supporting points:

Ke eletsa go ka biletswa batsadi ba bone kwa sekolong. Mo bokopanong jo, batsadi ba ka lemotshiwa ka boitsholo jo bo sa amogelesegeng jwa bana ba bone. Bana ba supile maitsholo a a sa siamnang a go betsa bana ba bangwe, go ba tseela ditsabone le go kgagpola dibuka tsa ba bangwe.

Ntlha ya botlhokwa:

Ke eletsa go ka biletswa batsadi ba bone kwa sekolong.

Katoloso ka mogopolo:

- Mo bokopanong jo, batsadi ba ka lemotshiwa ka boitsholo jo bo sa amogelesegeng jwa bana ba bone.

- Bana ba supile maitsholo a a sa siamnang a go betsa bana ba bangwe, go ba tseela ditsabone le go kgagpola dibuka tsa ba bangwe

EXAMPLE 2: explaining main idea with examples

Ke eletsa gore go ka bidiwa badiri ba maphata a a farologaneng jaaka ba sepodise, bokaedi le bogakolodi go tla go gakolola bana

ba, ka maitsholo a a sa amogelesegeng.

Observations:

Most candidates were able to propose solutions related to the problems they had identified earlier in their essays. However, some offered statements that they deemed solutions, but were not directly connected to the issues discussed. A few candidates failed to propose a solution, leaving the problems unresolved.

Observations:

Even in this case, candidates made mistakes, just like in composition writing. They were able to develop strategies to assist victims of bullying and provided more details about their ideas.

2.2.2.2.3 State how their assistance will improve the situation:

Candidates were required to explain how the help provided would improve the current condition of affairs.

Observations:

Numerous candidates provided clear answers to the question. Some, however, made claims they believed would be helpful for their recommended assistance, which lacked specificity and logic supported by facts. This suggests that applicants should improve their ability to write effectively and logically.

2.2.2.3 Command Of Language

In addition to demonstrating their understanding of the subject matter, candidates were assessed on their ability to use various aspects of the Setswana language effectively. This involved proper use of tenses, adherence to the appropriate register for the context, accurate spelling and orthography, and a diverse range of sentence openings.

The candidates' proficiency in written Setswana and their ability to compose a well-structured, compelling essay were evaluated by assessing these elements.

2.2.2.3.1 Tense

There was a notable improvement in the candidates' ability to use the correct tense. It was expected that candidates should consistently apply the appropriate tense throughout their writing, ensuring consistency with the context of the topic. It was expected that candidates would accurately use the correct tense by the context of the topic, and most candidates successfully met this expectation, indicating an overall increase in their mastery of this linguistic feature.

2.2.2.3.2 Register

Candidates had to choose a language appropriate for the task and utilise Setswana consistently throughout the essay, particularly when naming subjects, to register. Since foul

or vulgar language is not appropriate for professional, academic writing, it was not allowed. Following the customs of Setswana culture and society, this criterion placed a strong emphasis on the value of appropriate etiquette and decency in written communication.

Observations

In terms of the register, there was a significant improvement in candidates' performance. Almost all candidates used proper language, adhering to the requirements of formal, academic writing and demonstrating an understanding of the appropriateness of Setswana in all aspects of their written work. This suggests that candidates are becoming more aware of the importance of choosing language that aligns with the expectations and norms of written communication in a Setswana context.

2.2.2.3.3 Spelling

Despite improvements in some areas of language usage, many candidates continue to lose marks due to spelling errors. It is crucial to emphasize the importance of proofreading to candidates, as a simple review of their work can help them identify and correct errors. These mistakes, which appear to be a result of carelessness or a lack of attention to detail, often indicate that candidates do not thoroughly review their work before submission. Encouraging candidates to develop a habit of proofreading can help them improve their spelling accuracy and thereby strengthen their written work.

2.2.2.3.4 Orthography

Numerous candidates still have trouble telling the difference between conjunctive and disjunctive word forms, despite continuous efforts to resolve this problem. To solve this issue, candidates need to be trained to correctly identify the correct spelling by considering the words' pronunciation and the related sounds (flh/g, tlh, and th/tlh). Teachers should prioritize instruction on correct orthography, as regional dialectal differences have been shown to influence vocabulary usage, potentially leading to mistakes in written work.

2.2.2.3.5 Sentence opening

There was a notable improvement in the use of varied sentence openings by the candidates, reflecting a growing awareness of the importance of diverse sentence structures. To sustain this progress, candidates should be exposed to a wide range of sentence openings in their learning experiences, to help them develop the habit of using different structures and thus avoid repetition or monotony in their writing.

2.3 Conclusion

Teachers and centers are strongly encouraged to carefully review the feedback provided in this report, paying special attention to the areas of creativity, elaboration of guidelines, and correct use of formal letter format and salutations. These qualities are crucial in demonstrating a candidate's skills in communication and creative writing. By considering and implementing these suggestions in their teaching and learning practices, teachers can help their students to significantly enhance their written work and thereby improve their overall performance in examinations.

3.0 Social Studies

The assessment of the Social Studies syllabus has been classified into two content domains of learning being Knowledge & Understanding Dimension and Skills Dimension. This is assessed by 60 Multiple-Choice questions, of which 40 fall under the Knowledge & Understanding Dimension and 20 under the Skills Dimension. Performance has remained almost the same as that of the previous year. Almost all the candidates (99.99%) met the minimum requirements for the award of a grade at the syllabus level. The performance reflects a significant improvement of 2.03% at Grade C or better while all other grades remained almost the same as in 2023.

The Social Studies syllabus is aggregated into 5 modules: Economy, Governance, Society & Culture, the Physical Environment, and Our Past (Our History). These ideas are evaluated on two levels: knowledge and understanding as well as skills. It is assessed using 60 multiple-choice questions, of which 20 are on the skills and 40 are on the understanding. A summary of how the 2024 cohort performed in these 2 dimensions follows.

3.1 Knowledge And Understanding

Candidates are expected to demonstrate their understanding of various Botswana-related topics, including Society & Culture, Physical Environment, Our Past, Governance and Citizenship, and Economy. These modules cover aspects such as culture, population and migration, physical environment, natural resources management, weather and climate, people of Botswana, pre-colonial Botswana, governance, citizenship, peace, economic development, agriculture, transport & communication, and more.

These modules and their respective topics are assessed through 40 items in the "Factual Knowledge" dimension. The P-value showing performance in items under this dimension ranged from 0.27 to 0.85 in 2024 compared to 0.20 to 0.87 in 2023. This is indication that performance was relatively comparable in both years with the 2024 cohort slightly better in the lower ability learners and the 2023 cohort being better in the higher ability learners. The P-values are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 categorized by areas assessed. In 2024 Candidates performed better in items from all topics except in topic of physical environment while in 2023, the performance was better in topic of governance.

Centres are encouraged to keep evaluating the Factual Knowledge dimension while concentrating on item-level analysis to identify knowledge domains that require greater attention in the syllabus. To improve the learning process and learners' engagement, think about implementing creative instructional methods for these ideas, including role-playing, simulations, or interactive case studies. To provide learners feedback on how well they

comprehend these ideas and provide immediate support, when necessary, encourage frequent formative evaluation.

3.2 Skills

There was an improvement in this dimension compared to the previous year. The improvement this year was observed in items across all topics. Despite the improvement observed this year, Candidates are encouraged to improve in high order skills as the skills are required as they transit to high education levels. The P-value showing performance in items under this dimension ranged from 0.26 to 0.86 in 2024 compared to 0.20 to 0.90 in 2023. Table for P-values across topics is displayed in Table 2 for 2024 and Table 3 for 2023.

Table 2: P-Values for the different tasks: Knowledge & Understanding and Skills Dimensions in 2024

Physical Environment			Society & Culture			Our Past			Governance			Economy		
Item no.	dim	p-value	Item no.	dim	p-value	Item no.	dim	p-value	Item no.	dim	p-value	Item no.	dim	p-value
18	K&U	.68	2	K&U	.80	5	SK	.70	22	K&U	.55	7	K&U	.55
19	K&U	.62	4	K&U	.85	6	SK	.86	23	SK	.79	8	K&U	.37
45	K&U	.61	5	K&U	.49				28	K&U	.72	24	K&U	.82
46	SK	.26	6	K&U	.51				29	K&U	.48	25	SK	.63
47	SK	.63	7	K&U	.56				33	K&U	.43	26	K&U	.75
48	SK	.60	11	K&U	.40				34	K&U	.35	30	SK	.69
49	K&U	.49	14	K&U	.44				35	K&U	.64	58	K&U	.27
50	K&U	.47	15	K&U	.46				36	K&U	.52	59	SK	.37
53	K&U	.42	27	K&U	.72				37	K&U	.63			
54	K&U	.66	34	K&U	.64				38	K&U	.84			
57	K&U	.42	45	SK	.74				39	SK	.68			
13	K&U	.27	52	K&U	.38				40	SK	.58			

14	SK	.56							41	SK	.42			
15	K&U	.30							42	K&U	.41			
16	SK	.57							43	K&U	.59			
17	SK	.71												
18	K&U	.68												
19	K&U	.62												
21	K&U	.43												
27	K&U	.76												

Table 3: P-Values for the different tasks: Knowledge & Understanding and Skills Dimensions in 2023

Physical Environment			Society & Culture			Our past			Governance			Economy		
Item no	dim.	p-value	Item no	Dim	p-value	Item no	Dim	P-value	Item no	Dim	p-value	Item no	Dim	P-value
16	skill	.27	2	KU	.80	1	KU	.87	3	KU	.83	22	KU	.27
17	skill	.44	4	KU	.85	13	KU	.20	8	KU	.59	30	KU	.54
18	skill	.54	5	KU	.49	28	KU	.77	9	KU	.77	31	KU	.81
19	skill	.66	6	KU	.51	29	KU	.21	10	KU	.66	33	KU	.66
20	skill	.54	7	KU	.56	53	KU	.35	12	KU	.40	35	KU	.27
21	skill	.47	11	KU	.40	54	KU	.38	25	KU	.73	37	KU	.44
23	skill	.90	14	KU	.44				26	KU	.48	38	KU	.70
24	KU	.47	15	KU	.46				36	KU	.44	39	KU	.67
32	KU	.49	27	KU	.72				59	skill	.20	40	skill	.64
44	KU	.47	34	KU	.64				60	skill	.41	41	skill	.55
46	KU	.49	45	skill	.74							42	skill	.20
47	KU	.32	52	KU	.38							43	KU	.43
51	KU	.33										48	KU	.43
												49	skill	.53
	skill	low								skill	low	50	skill	.50
		.27		.							.20	55	KU	.21
		high		skill	high						high	56	KU	.30
		.90			.74						.41	57	KU	.37

	KU	low		KU	low		KU	low		KU	low	58	KU	.46
		.33			.40			.21			.40			
		high			high			high			high		skill	low
		49			.85			87			.83			.20
													KU	high
														.81

3.3. Suggestions for Improvement

The significance and value of Social Studies should be made clear to students.

By emphasizing the importance and relevance of Social Studies to students, teachers can help them appreciate and value the subject, realizing why it is essential to study it and how it affects their lives. Consequently, the knowledge component and skill will receive a boost. Teachers must assess their methods while delivering classes, in addition to emphasising to students the value of studying social studies. Instead of lecturing, teachers should adopt learner-centred strategies. As a result, students will become more engaged in their learning experiences.

Below are some tactics the teachers can use:

- ✓ Revisit teaching strategies: Review the teaching strategies used for these modules to ensure that they effectively engage students and promote learning. This could involve incorporating more interactive methods, such as simulations, role-plays, or group discussions, to enhance students' understanding of the concepts.
- ✓ Emphasise weak areas and improve knowledge and comprehension: Teachers must identify topics or subjects in the modules that students are having difficulties with and offer extra guidance and materials to help them grasp the material better.
- ✓ Targeted intervention: To ensure that students in need receive the assistance they require, consider targeted interventions such as extra instruction, remedial classes, or personalised support.
- ✓ Hands-on learning: To deepen students' understanding, teachers should provide them with first-hand experiences by arranging field trips or inviting external experts to demonstrate practical applications of the concepts being taught.
- ✓ To fill in the knowledge and understanding gaps, make sure that students are ready for the tests; these steps ought to be applied to every module.

4.0 English

The English syllabus is divided into two components: Component 1 and Component 2. Component 1 includes exercises from both content domains that measure candidates' abilities to understand and apply language effectively. Component 2, on the other hand, requires candidates to write extensively, using a variety of techniques to communicate effectively, such as in a composition or a letter.

4.1 English Component 1

Component 1 focuses on comprehension and language use skills, while Component 2 assesses communication skills. Component 1 is a multiple-choice paper, whereas Component 2 involves extensive writing, such as letters and compositions. This is where candidates' communication skills are thoroughly tested.

Candidates demonstrated significant improvement in Dimension 1 (Comprehension & Language Use) in both the 2023 and 2024 exams, as reflected by most p-values over 0.50 and 0.62, respectively. While 2023 performed well across 45 tasks, 2024 showed better performance on 48 tasks, and the improvement was entirely driven by the successful processing of the two texts used as stimuli.

In addition to answering factual questions based on the passages, candidates had to demonstrate their comprehension of the language by generating opinions about the characters and narrating events in their own words. The tasks were generally well-executed, indicating that candidates found them engaging and accessible. In addition to comprehension skills, Dimension 1 also assesses other elements of the English language, such as: Punctuation, Dictionary use, Sequencing sentences, Different aspects of the language, like correct use of tense, adverbs, and reported/direct speech, Poetry skills and Awareness of differences between spoken and written language. Collectively, these elements allow for a comprehensive assessment of students' English language abilities.

While students have shown strong performance in many areas of Dimension 1, there were notable weaknesses. In 2023, students struggled with questions that required reasoning and higher-order thinking rather than simply selecting answers from the text. In 2024, language use tasks related to grammar, syntax, and recognition/use of verbs, nouns, and prepositions were challenging. These areas are highlighted by the lowest p-values obtained from these questions:

- Use of correct word(s) to complete blank spaces: P-values ranged between 0.15 and 0.40.

- Inference and analysis tasks to form an opinion: Only 28% of candidates selected the correct answer.
- Sequencing of events in a story: Only 15% of students selected the correct option.

These findings suggest that students may require additional support in developing higher-order thinking and language skills to succeed in these aspects of the Dimension 1 assessment.

Table 4: Items with the lowest p-values (below 0.40) as well as their topic areas

Item number	p-value	Topic Area
18	0.28	Passage: comprehension
37	0.39	Language Use: use of correct words
38	0.23	Language Use: use of correct words
44	0.37	Language Use: use of correct words
48	0.37	Language Use: use of correct words
53	0.15	Language Use: comprehension
54	0.33	Language Use: comprehension/application
56	0.32	Language use: understanding/application

Table 5: Items with the lowest p-values (0.50 and above) as well as their topic areas

Item number	p-value	Topic Area	Item number	p-value	Topic Area
1	0.89	Language use: comprehension/application	17	0.81	Language use: comprehension/application
2	0.85	Communication & Language Use	19	0.74	Language use: comprehension/application

3	0.67	Language use: Grammar/syntax	20	0.73	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
4	0.77	Communication & Language Use	21	0.72	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
5	0.69	Language Use: use of correct words	22	0.78	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
6	0.92	Communication: writing & punctuation	23	0.76	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
7	0.86	Language Use: comprehension/application	24	0.61	Language Use: use of correct words
8	0.86	Language use: understanding/application	25	0.60	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
10	0.51	Language use: dictionary use	26	0.65	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
11	0.82	Language Use: comprehension/application	27	0.62	Communication & Language Use
12	0.75	Language Use: comprehension/application	28	0.60	Communication & Language Use
13	0.93	Communication & Language Use-reading/inference	29	0.68	Communication & Language – dictionary Use
14	0.78	Communication & Language Use reading/inference	30	0.58	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
15	0.74	Communication & Language Use reading/inference	31	0.68	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
16	0.74	Communication & Language Use reading/inference	33	0.68	

34	0.62	Language use: comprehension/application	17	0.81	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
35	0.71	Language use: comprehension/application	43	0.68	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
36	0.67	Language use: comprehension/application	45	0.58	Language Use: punctuation
39	0.76	Language use: comprehension/application	46	0.66	Language use: application & punctuation
40	0.83	Language use: comprehension/application	47	0.80	Language use: application & punctuation
42	0.63	Language use: comprehension/application	58	0.54	Language use: comprehension/appli cation
49	0.60	Language use: comprehension/application			
50	0.68	Language use: comprehension/application			
52	0.69	Language use: comprehension/application			
49	0.60	Language use: comprehension/application			
50	0.68	Language use: comprehension/application			
52	0.69	Language use: comprehension/application			
55	0.85	Language use: comprehension/application			
57	0.77	Language use: comprehension/application			
58	0.69	Language use: comprehension/application			

55	0.85	Language use: comprehension/application
57	0.77	Language use: comprehension/application

The table above shows that items in the Language Use: Comprehension/Application topic area had relatively high P-values, indicating that most students considered them accessible and simple to comprehend. However, P-values varied across items, showing how the candidates were accessing the items.

4.1.1 Suggestions for improvement

- ✓ Emphasize critical thinking: Enhance students' higher-order thinking skills by incorporating more activities that involve inferences, analysis, and deductions. This will prepare them better for the questions that demand deeper understanding and application.
- ✓ Target Language Use: Conduct targeted intervention sessions to address students' weaknesses in using correct words, comprehension, and application in Language use. This could be done through dedicated lessons or language skills workshops.
- ✓ Encourage learners to read for pleasure to cultivate a deeper understanding of the language and expand their vocabulary.

NB: Implementing these approaches emphasises the interconnected nature of language and comprehension skills, inspiring students to become engaged learners by creating a sense of relevance and understanding.

4.2 English Component 2: Composition And Letter Writing

4.2.1 General Comments

In comparison to the previous year, candidates' overall performance this year was significantly better, particularly in their responses to both the composition and letter writing tasks. The questions or assessment activities proved to be adequate for all levels of achievement, allowing more candidates to respond to the questions correctly than in the previous year. However, some of the weaknesses previously identified remain. This suggests that recommendations from the 2023 report may not have been implemented in teaching and learning practices, impacting learning outcomes.

Writing Creatively remains a significant challenge for candidates. Learners must be taught how to write creatively and how to develop ideas. Additionally, candidates continue to struggle with handwriting. They should write clearly and neatly. They must also be able to differentiate between capital and lowercase letters properly. However, the 2024 cohort's writing was significantly better because they were more legible. Furthermore, candidates should structure their work to ensure they can write coherently.

Composition Writing

4.2.1.1 The Topic

The composition topic this year, “**THE ANIMAL I LIKE MOST,**” was concise and accessible, allowing for a broad range of responses from candidates. Unlike last year's topic, it was free from ambiguity and appropriate for all levels of cognitive development, enabling candidates to express themselves without limitations. From the topic, candidates had to focus on:

- a) What the animal is and where it lives
- b) What the animal looks like
- c) What people think about animals
- d) Why do they like animals

In contrast to the previous year's topic, this year's topic did not discriminate against candidates according to moral and religious grounds and was also accessible to all candidates, given their academic abilities.

4.2.1.2 The guidelines

The guidelines provided were clear, guiding candidates to produce a descriptive piece of work coherent and appropriate to the topic. Most candidates responded to the guidelines, but there were instances of factual inaccuracies and creative or spiritual attachments that limited the descriptive value of some pieces. Some of the examples about inaccuracies include instances where some candidates would write about a cow as their “favourite animal that stays in the river”.

Overall, high-achieving candidates handled the guidelines well, while others struggled with logical flow, coherence, and fluency in their writing. Nevertheless, creativity and elaboration were notable in some responses, highlighting the potential for improvement with continued guidance.

4.2.1.3 Profile 1: Layout

(a) Address and Date

Most candidates followed the correct format for the writer's address. However, some candidates made errors with the date format, which should be written as "5 November 2024", not "05 November 2024".

(b) Recipient address

The recipient address should have four aspects. These are the position of the recipient, his or her office, the box number, and where the post office is located. For this year, candidates were expected to mention the position of the officer they are addressing. Compared to the previous year, this aspect posed challenges to a significant candidates.

(c) Opening and closing salutations

While most candidates matched their opening and closing salutations correctly, some made mistakes with the use of capitalization and word choice. Here are examples of incorrect salutations and their correct alternatives:

INCORRECT

Dear Sir/Madam

Yours Sincerely

Dear Mr. John,

CORRECT

Dear Sir/Madam

Yours Faithfully

Dear Mr. John

4.2.1.4 Profile 2: Communication

Under this section, candidates were expected to effectively communicate about the given topic. Most candidates succeeded in naming their favorite animal and its habitat, but some struggled with the singular focus required and inaccurately stated animal habitats. Candidates either did not know their animals that well or were not familiar with 'habitats'.

a) Stating what the animal was and where it lives.

Most candidates successfully named their chosen animal. However, some were challenged to state where the animal lives, to the point that others stated that animals like cows stay in the water.

b) Stating what the animal looks like.

High-achieving candidates excelled in this area, while those with limited vocabulary struggled. This highlights the importance of emphasizing descriptive vocabulary in classroom instruction.

c) What people think or feel towards the Animal

Candidates did well on this criterion. They were able to describe people's feelings towards the animal they chose.

d) Why do they like the Animal

Candidates did well on this criterion. They were able to express themselves regarding why they liked the animal. They referred to the appearance and that they got the animal as a token or gift.

e) Creativity and Originality

Just like previous years, creativity remains a major challenge for most of the candidates in composition writing, in that a lot of them continue to respond to guidelines as if they were just questions instead of using them as a prompt to jolt their line of thought. Most candidates failed to expand and elaborate on their ideas. This is an indication of a lack of resourcefulness, which is also evident in the inappropriate use of adverbs and adjectives. Most candidates had ideas, but to elaborate using appealing descriptive vocabulary related to the guidelines is still a challenge. Guidelines in this topic did not limit the candidates to building comprehensive stories about a chosen animal. Therefore, more practice on creativity and originality is still needed.

4.2.1.5 Profile 3: Command of Language

In this section, candidates were expected to display an understanding of the critical aspects of composition writing and use them to produce a congruent piece of writing. This was assessed through:

(a) Coherence and fluency

While run-on sentences were less prevalent this year, coherence and fluency still posed challenges. Inadequate punctuation and lack of substantiation within paragraphs resulted in disjointed ideas and reduced readability. More practice in these areas is recommended to fully address these issues.

(b) Introduction and conclusion

Candidates demonstrated improvement in composing introductory paragraphs, though some struggled with brevity. Conclusions continued to be a challenge, with new ideas inappropriately introduced. Emphasis on the appropriate length and function of introductory and concluding paragraphs is needed.

4.2.2 Letter Writing

For this task, candidates were required to write a letter to their school principal as class monitor, telling him or her how they think pupils could be stopped from doing wrong things in the school.

4.2.2.1 The Topic

While the topic was accessible, some points could have been more inclusive, such as using "class monitor or monitress" or the word "informing" instead of "telling" to maintain formality. Additionally, the phrase "in the school" was potentially ambiguous, with candidates unsure if they should only mention wrongdoings within the school premises or also include incidents outside of school.

4.2.2.2 The guidelines

Candidates were provided with three guidelines to guide their responses to the letter-writing task. These were: where and when pupils do wrong things, what wrong things pupils mostly do, and what action should be taken to stop pupils from doing wrong things. While they performed well in some areas, there were still instances of inconsistencies and errors that needed to be addressed.

4.2.2.3 Profile 1: Layout

(a) Address and Date

Most candidates followed the correct format for the writer's address. However, some candidates made errors with the date format, which should be written as "5 November 2024", not "05 November 2024".

(b) Recipient address

The recipient address should have four aspects. These are the position of the recipient, his or her office, the box number, and where the post office is located. For this year, candidates were expected to mention the position of the officer they are addressing. Compared to the previous year, this aspect posed challenges to a significant candidates.

(c) Opening and closing salutations

While most candidates matched their opening and closing salutations correctly, some made mistakes with the use of capitalization and word choice. Here are examples of incorrect salutations and their correct alternatives:

INCORRECT	CORRECT
Dear Sir/Madam	Dear Sir/Madam
Yours Sincerely	Yours Faithfully
Dear Mr John,	Dear Mr John

4.2.2.4 Profile 2: Communication

(a) Stating where and when the pupils do wrong things:

Candidates were expected to identify the locations and times when pupils engage in wrongdoing. While some candidates successfully identified actions taking place within the school premises, others described incidents occurring outside of school hours. Although these actions were relevant to the class monitor's duties, they did not fully meet the criteria's requirements. Additionally, some candidates specified a specific date for wrongdoings rather than noting that these actions occur frequently. This limitation impacted their ability to fully address the criterion.

(b) Stating what the wrong things done by pupils are:

While most candidates successfully identified the wrong things pupils do, some limited themselves to a single incident, failing to meet the criterion's requirement for multiple examples. A correct response would have included two or more incidents, for instance, "writing on the walls at the toilets and being rude to teachers when confronted."

(c) Stating their suggestions to stop the behavior:

Most candidates managed to provide suggestions for corrective measures, though some limited themselves to stating generic punishments rather than suggesting specific measures.

(d) Demonstrate the correct tone in a formal letter:

Candidates were expected to maintain a formal tone in their letters despite the informal instructions to "tell" the principal. Some candidates veered too far into casual language, forgetting the brief, to-the-point nature of a formal letter.

4.2.2.5 Profile 3: Command of Language

Candidates were expected to display mastery of different aspects of language, such as spelling, tense, and variation of sentence structure.

(a) Consistent use of the correct tense

Most candidates demonstrated proficiency in using appropriate tenses, although some academically challenged candidates struggled with this criterion.

(b) Variation of sentence structure

Candidates were required to use a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences to achieve variety in their writing. While simple and compound sentences were generally used correctly, complex sentences proved challenging for most. This is largely due to the misuse of conjunctions, resulting in run-on sentences and convoluted structures. More practice and emphasis on different sentence types in continuous writing could address this.

(c) Spelling

While there was improvement in this area, candidates still showed errors in spelling and omission of letters. Proofreading skills should be emphasized to reduce such errors.

(d) Correct use of conjunctions

Although candidates demonstrated knowledge of conjunctions, incorrect usage led to the derailment of the message. Teachers should highlight appropriate usage of conjunctions for different situations to enhance candidates' writing skills.

4.3 Conclusion

To enhance creativity and writing skills, candidates should be encouraged to engage in more creative writing throughout their learning. Additionally, fostering a culture of reading for fun could broaden their vocabulary base and improve their creativity and descriptive abilities. By engaging with a wide range of topics that interest them, candidates could develop a more diverse writing style and enhance their sentence structures.

5.0 Mathematics

This report summarises what was observed in the performance of the 2024 cohort. It attempts to highlight the composition of the paper, the calibre of responses given by candidates, and a proposal for possible interventions.

The table below depicts the composition of the mathematics paper concerning key domains and dimensions in mathematics.

Table 5: Classification of items by Dimension

	DIMENSION 1 COMPUTATION	DIMENSION 2 APPLICATION AND REASONING
NUMBER AND OPERATIONS	1,2,3,4,5,10,11,13,17,18,19,20,22,27,43	6,12,28,30,31,32,33,34,59
GEOMETRY	7,25,26,38,39,41,42,60	23,24,40,44,45,56
MEASURES	9	
STATISTICS	46,47,	48,51,52,53,54,55
ALGEBRA	15,21,37	8,14,16,29,35,36,58
PROBLEM SOLVING	49	50,57

The spread of questions within the dimensions of computation concerning application and reasoning was quite balanced.

However, many questions were largely in the Number and Operations, Geometry, Statistics, Algebra, problem solving, and Measures, respectively. There were almost no questions on Measures.

Table 6: Summary of the P-values by Items:

Topic	Low P-value ($x < 0.50$)	Average P-value ($x > 50$ but less than or equal to 59)	Slightly high to High P-value ($x >$ or equal to 60 but less or equal to 0.95)	Comments
Number and Operations	Q5 (0.44) Q11 (0.30) Q12 (0.35) Q13 (0.40) Q19 (0.43) Q27 (0.41) Q30 (0.40) Q59 (0.23)	Q 6 (0.52) Q10 (0.63) Q22 (0.59) Q28 (0.50) Q31 (0.56)	Q1 (0.84) Q2 (0.76) Q3 (0.84) Q4 (0.86) Q17 (0.80) Q18 (0.78) Q20 (0.85) Q32 (0.76) Q33 (0.68) Q34 (0.82) Q43 (0.70)	-The items seem to have generally evenly spread relative to the P-value. -However, for number and operations, candidates seem to have been able to access most items - Candidates also for the low P values seem to have had challenges accessing questions on percentages and other questions that sought recall, rather than actual computation. -Candidates need more practice on questions requiring recall and knowledge.
Geometry	Q7 (0.44) Q24 (0.27) Q25 (0.14) Q26 (0.35) Q38 (0.40) Q42 (0.41) Q44 (0.14) Q45 (0.41) Q56 (0.16)	Q40 (0.56) Q41 (0.64)	Q23 (0.70) Q39 (0.65) Q60 (0.83)	-Most candidates were challenged in this area; hence, they could not access most items, thus recording a significantly low p-value. -Candidates seem to have been challenged to read, comprehend, and apply their knowledge in this area. -More practice and emphasis are required to assist

				candidates in grasping geometrical concepts. Real-life objects and models may be brought in to contextualise learning, with understanding.
Measures	Q9 (0.43)			-There was almost no item on Measures, hence, the p-value in this respect will most likely not be as informative
Statistics	Q48 (0.18) Q52 (0.37) Q53 (0.27) Q54 (0.36) Q55 (0.30)		Q46 (0.84) Q47 (0.80) Q51 (0.83)	-Most candidates did not access items in this area. -It appears as if candidates had limited knowledge on this area, and may have also confused the meaning of some concepts, such as mean and median -Candidates also did not access items that required them to interpret graphs and tables. -Teachers should ensure candidates have a full grasp of the concepts in this area, especially since it may not be used much in real life, although a part of people's lives.
Algebra	Q14 (0.15) Q16 (0.30) Q21 (0.16) Q29 (0.39) Q37 (0.48) Q58 (0.26)	Q8 (0.55) Q35 (0.57)	Q15 (0.70) Q36 (0.70)	-The p-value for this area is mostly low. -Candidates seem to be challenged mainly by the "abstract" nature of the items that they had to access. -Candidates need to be assisted more to read with

				understanding, and then deduce the applicable mathematical approaches and knowledge, so that they can access more questions on Algebra, which are abstract.
Problem solving		Q49 (0.54)	Q50 (0.81)	-There were very few items on problem-solving -The P-value indicates a rather average to a better performance.

The following is an account of the different mathematics domains:

5.1 Geometry

In general, candidates performed fairly on the geometry items. The performance was even better for the computation dimension. However, item/question no 44 was not accessed by many candidates. The candidates did not seem to comprehend the concept of “equilateral”. Most of them did not relate the kite to the equilateral triangle. They rather possibly assumed that the two equal sides of the kite were the same and equal to those of the triangle. They also needed to understand the concept of “perimeter” as the distance around a shape, in this case.

Geometrical shapes remain critical in the development of mathematical concepts and skills at an early age. Beyond interacting with and handling concrete objects to learn about their environment, learners also need to develop the ability to conceptualise and visualise aspects of 2-D figures represented on flat surfaces. The analysis shows that learners were noticeably deficient in solving problems that required them to mentally visualise real objects and the application of mathematical concepts.

Proposed interventions

- Demonstrations should be performed for learners to be able to internalize viewing an object from different positions.
- Teachers should use visual aids
- Learners should be provided with many diagrams in which they can identify shapes within shapes.
- Spatial awareness of learners can be enhanced by using practical activities.

- Teachers are advised to use tangible objects to illustrate concepts, such as perimeter, parallel, and equilateral.

5.2 Numbers And Operations

Most questions on this domain were well done. The questions on numeracy and operations were also mainly on the computation dimension. It would appear the candidates were generally competent and able to answer questions on numeracy and operations.

The response to question 59 poses a challenge that needs to be addressed by centres. Candidates do not display competencies to handle “composite shapes”, even if they display some understanding of area. The question comprised a composite shape made up of a triangle and a rectangle. Candidates just needed to add the areas of the two shapes. However, candidates instead took the shape as if it were a “rectangle” and simply multiplied the two sides.

The item/question, despite having no solution/answer, was a good one overall. There seemed to be a mistake in the units written in the possible answers. It should have been expressed in meters squared.

Numbers and operations constitute an integral component of Mathematics. This being a technical aspect and always requiring accuracy, calls on teachers and learners to apply such precision and competency.

Proposed interventions

- Teachers need to spend more time on the area and volume/capacity examples with learners and teach them conversions. More practical examples will enhance the learning process, e.g., using concrete objects and thus showing the relationship between the instruments and units.
- Learners should be given more practice on simple composite shapes to compute the perimeter and area.

5.3 Algebra

In this domain, candidates were asked mostly to deduce meaning and construct equations or some computation from what was set up as a scenario. The questions were mainly on equations, percentages, and money. It appeared as if candidates did not comprehend the word scenario or situation posed, hence, creating and working out computations or equations that were not correct concerning what was asked.

One example concerns a situation where a buying price and a percentage profit were all given, and the candidates were to find out the selling price. Seemingly, this percentage profit was taken as the actual profit by most candidates. This is with respect to question 21.

In general, candidates were either constrained to read with understanding or they could not formulate correct formulae and computations, from the word problems or scenarios set.

A good understanding of mathematical functions, patterns, and algebraic expressions is critical to doing mathematics. Not only should candidates be able to identify patterns and functions, but they should also be able to formulate equations that represent real contexts.

Proposed interventions

- Learners need to develop the skill of translating words into number sentences, which will assist them in how to tackle word problems
- Learners should be exposed to different word problems involving other topics in mathematics, such as money, percentages, and the general basic construction of equations.

5.4 Problem Solving

The application of different techniques in solving problems is a critical skill not only for learning mathematics in school but more so in daily experiences throughout life. Basic concepts, such as fractions and percentages and their computations, need focused practice in the daily experiences in the teaching and learning situation.

Candidates did relatively better in these types of questions. Although there were not many questions on problem solving, the few that were there did not pose many challenges to candidates. Candidates were able to depict what was required and found a way to solve the problems.

5.5 Measures

There were relatively few questions or almost no questions on measures, thus rendering no conclusive feedback about how candidates respond to questions on Measures.

5.6 Statistics

Very few candidates were able to access these questions. It appeared as if candidates had challenges interpreting graphs, as well as not being able to grasp statistical concepts and terms. They were unable to distinguish between median and mean. They were also not able to access the question on probability. It may be due to their inability to comprehend the word problems dealing with probability.

Proposed Interventions:

- Centres to work more on graphs and how to interpret graphs
- Give candidates more practice on the distinction between key statistics terms, such as mode, mean, and median.
- Candidates should emphasize understanding and comprehension of probability. This will assist learners to develop competence to read, comprehend, and finally apply the right and basic computations in probability questions.

5.7 Conclusion

While mathematics deals more with computation and arithmetic at this level, it is still very important for centres to give candidates more practice on other key skill areas in mathematics. Candidates should be assisted to read with understanding, to be able to apply the right and relevant mathematical concepts and rules. For this paper, candidates seemed challenged more in statistics, problem solving, and geometry.

6.0 Science

This report summarises what was observed and noted as key limitations from the 2024 cohort. It attempts to highlight the composition of the paper, the calibre of responses given by candidates, and a proposal for possible interventions.

The table below depicts the composition of the Science paper concerning the dimensions assessed in Science.

Table 6: Classification of items by Dimension

DIMENSION 1 KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	DIMENSION 2 APPLICATION
1,2,3,6,7,8,9,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,22,25,26,27,28,30,31,32,34,36,37,38,40,41,42,43,44,47,49,50,51,53,55,58,59,60	4,5,10,11,12,20,21,23,24,29,33,35,39,45,46,48,52,54,56,57

The spread of questions within the two dimensions is consistent with the past year's examination, with the knowledge and understanding dimension accounting for approximately 67%. However, many questions were largely in the areas of electricity, electromagnetism, as well as Heat and Cooling.

The following is an account of some of the questions that posed more challenges to the 2024 cohort:

6.1 Question 8

This question was based on the topic of Force. The question required candidates to identify the force applied to the rope when a donkey is pulling a log with a rope. The expected response was Tension. Some possible reasons for the candidates to have mostly given Friction could be that:

- Candidates are more familiar with friction. So, possibly candidates may have incorrectly associated the friction between the log and the ground with the force in the log.
- Maybe candidates are not familiar with tension, which is a concept that may be a little abstract and may challenge candidates.

Possible Interventions:

- ✓ In classrooms, teachers may give definitions and descriptions of these types of forces.
- ✓ In classrooms, more illustrations and real-life examples are needed to facilitate the learning of these types of forces.
- ✓ Facilitators need to train learners more, to learn to read questions carefully. For example, this question needed candidates to focus on the rope rather than on the log.

6.2 Question 30

This question focused on cooling. It sought to establish the concept of cooling hot liquids in different containers. Primarily, it was more about how quickly the cooling will take place on clay, metal, plastic, or wooden containers. Here, the correct response was a Metal cup. However, most candidates responded by answering a plastic mug.

This may be:

- Candidates thought plastic was a better insulator. This is despite knowing very well that plastic is a poor conductor of heat, but it remains a poor insulator. Hence, candidates may have thought that tea would cool off faster in a plastic container.
- Candidates probably did not have a full grasp of the concept regarding the rate at which a material transfers heat (Thermal conductivity).
- Those candidates needed to understand that metal is a good conductor of heat; hence, it will cool tea rapidly.

Possible Interventions:

- ✓ The concepts of cooling and heating need to be explained thoroughly by teachers.
- ✓ Further, teachers need to carry out experiments where candidates are mostly more involved, based on the concepts of cooling and heating.

6.3 Question 48

This is another question that addresses cooling. A picture of a car moving on a hot day was shown. The picture also showed a slightly porous canvas sack filled with water and hung on this moving car. Candidates were asked to identify the process that cooled the water in the sack, because they were also told that after some time, the water in the sack became cool.

For this question, the correct answer was Evaporation, but most candidates thought it was convection.

This could be that:

- Since both convection and evaporation involve the movement of heat, candidates may have confused the two. However, the specifics to distinguish between the two could have made the difference. Convection involves the movement of heated molecules within a fluid; evaporation, on the other hand, involves converting liquid water into vapour, which requires energy by way of heat.
- Candidates thought of what was happening inside the sack. That, perhaps, water molecules were rising and mixing with cooler air, and that this process could result in cooling water in the sack.

Possible Interventions:

- ✓ Candidates need to be taken through the processes of conduction, convection, evaporation, and radiation, by way of explanations and descriptions.
- ✓ Candidates also need to experience simple illustrations and experiments to understand these important concepts. In doing this, specific distinctions need to be highlighted, especially in processes that seem similar and may be confused.

6.4 Question 52

This question was about why a spark underground coal mine can cause an explosion. The expected response was that “The coal powder underground increases the rate of reaction, but most candidates responded by “the air trapped underground supports burning”. Overall, this question was more demanding and highly accessible to high achievers.

This question was tackled this way, maybe:

- Because indeed, coal powder is highly combustible and can easily ignite a spark in an open flame. So, it was too close a response that candidates could go with, believing that coal powder would cause that explosion.
- That most candidates know that underground there are a lot of other combustible gases such as methane and carbon monoxide, both of which are necessary for combustion to take place. Thus, they may have thought that the air trapped underground was the main factor, rather than the coal powder itself.

Possible Interventions:

- ✓ Teachers need to spend more time explaining challenging concepts, such as an environment conducive for sparks and/or explosions, as well as the concept of combustion.
- ✓ Teachers also need to practice assessment of questions that address areas such as combustion, and to assist candidates in responding to such questions.

6.5 Question 56

This question was about food types and weight gain. The question required candidates to apply their knowledge of protective, bodybuilding, energy giving and supplementary food. They were to respond to what needed to be reduced in the food that was taken by boarding students, who were said to be extremely overweight. For this question, the expected response was energy-giving food, but the most common response was body-building food.

Below is a set of possibilities for the answer body building:

- Candidates tend to associate weight gain with building muscle.
- Candidates may not have understood that being overweight is usually because of consuming more calories compared to what the body burns, and not necessarily due to increased muscle mass.
- Candidates could also have thought that protein-rich foods (mostly regarded as body building) could lead to weight gain.

Possible interventions

- ✓ There is a need to connect the concepts of weight gain/loss versus types of food.
- ✓ Teachers should explain what causes weight gain or loss or maintenance of weight, and attribute these to calories and how the body burns these.

6.6 Question 57

The human nervous system question was more about the order in which reactions happen when a body is exposed to specific conditions, such as heat, as in the case of this question. Candidates needed to respond to this question that sought to establish the order in which the response happens when a human hand accidentally touches a hot pan. Specifically, the question was “how do electrical impulses travel for the hand to be moved away quickly”?

The correct response was sensory neurone to spinal cord neurone to motor neurone, but instead most candidates responded by indicating that the order is: motor neurone, then sensory neurone the spinal cord. This was a generally tricky question, requiring not guess work but understanding the human nervous system.

Candidates responded this way may be:

- That they were not aware that the sequence of sensory neuron to spinal cord to motor neuron allows for quicker reflexes, hence, the hand moves quickly.
- Those candidates may have thought the movement of the hand comes first, followed by the sensation of the pain. Hence, the response they mostly gave.
- Learners might not have understood the sequence of effects in the Central Nervous System in the Classroom

Possible interventions:

- ✓ More practice questions on the Human nervous system will help address such deficiencies and limitations by candidates.

6.7 Conclusion

The 2024 paper had a lot of questions covering Electricity and/or Electromagnetism. Where one domain of the subject matter is set in an examination, in one examination year, this may result in candidates failing who are not as competent in that area. Further, it has been noted that questions on cooling and heating posed challenges to the 2024 cohort. Teachers are therefore advised to work on exposing candidates to real-life situations and experiences, especially given that science is generally an abstract subject.

7.0 Religious and Moral Education

In 2024, most items had higher p- p-values, indicating that candidates displayed the knowledge and understanding required by the items. The items with high P-values were 48 out of 60 items (80%), while the low P-value items were 12 out of 60 items (20%).

7.1 Knowledge Dimension

The Knowledge Dimension has 30 elements this year (2024), up from 29 in 2023. Nineteen (19) of 30 knowledge dimension questions were freely accessible, accurately testing students' grasp of diverse religions and beliefs (p-values > 0.50). Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion items were typically easy to access, with high p-values (for example, item 32 had a P-value of 0.95). This demonstrates that students have a good understanding of these religions, which is beneficial in a multi-religious country like Botswana, and that these items were successful in distinguishing between high and low performers.

7.1.1 Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion

Candidates continue to do well on items based on Christianity, struggling only with a few. It has been shown that, while students generally perform well on Christianity-related items, there are certain areas where they may struggle, particularly in understanding the roles of different organizations in Christian practices. This is valuable information for educators to use when planning future lessons or assessing student learning.

The Islamic-related items were popular with students and showed excellent reliability. Most of these items demonstrated their effectiveness in testing the students' comprehension and familiarity with Islam. They also showed that certain items were effective in differentiating between high and low performers, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Islamic religion-related items in assessing students' understanding of the field.

The items focusing on African Traditional Religion (ATR) appeared to be well-constructed and helpful in assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the topic. Several of these items had high p-values, indicating that they were accessible for most of the candidates.

7.1.2 Hinduism, Sikhism, Baha'i Faith, and Buddhism

The results show that students had less access to information about faiths such as Sikhism, Buddhism, and the Baha'i Faith, as evidenced by lower P values for these religion-related items. This could be due to a variety of factors, including limited exposure to information about

these religions or a lack of emphasis on them in the school curriculum. The educational system's overemphasis on Christianity, African Traditional Religion, and Islam may hinder students' understanding of other religious ideas, potentially compromising religious harmony and tolerance.

7.1.3 Moral issues

A significant number of morality-related items (27) were included across both the Knowledge and Understanding dimensions. Most of these items (19) were in the Understanding Dimension, with 8 in the Knowledge Dimension. Out of these 27 items, 11 were difficult to access, with p-values less than 0.50, indicating that students may have trouble with some aspects of morality, such as applying moral principles in practical circumstances or grasping moral concepts. This challenge suggests that educators may need to strengthen their teaching and examination of morality.

7.2 Understanding Dimension

7.2.1 Religions

The Understanding Dimension had 30 elements in 2024, compared to 31 in 2023. Candidates had easy access to items based on Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion; however, Hinduism and Buddhism presented a significant obstacle. It is worth noting that the Understanding dimension is vital for evaluating students' higher order thinking abilities, which are required for their growth as responsible citizens. The number of items in this dimension suggests that the PSLE places a high value on assessing pupils' cognitive capacities in terms of religious and moral education.

7.2.2 Morality Items

This year (2024), 27 items focused on morality issues, with 19 items in the Understanding Dimension. It tested students' understanding and application of moral principles in practical situations. While most items showed good reliability, some had lower P values (between 0.25 and 0.49), suggesting they may have been more challenging due to complexity or students' understanding. It is important to properly evaluate such factors to find potential areas where teaching and learning practices may need to be improved to ensure that students are appropriately equipped to deal with moral issues.

Students struggled with moral dilemmas in the Understanding Dimension. These issues, which included "doing what is right" (questions 34, 43, and 53), "moral courage" (questions 15, 26, and 35), and "responsibility" (questions 5, 11, and 21), required students to understand complex concepts such as ethical decision-making, standing up for one's beliefs, and

acknowledging the effects of one's actions on others. This suggests that more emphasis should be placed on these areas of moral education to ensure that students are well-prepared to deal with difficult moral challenges in real life.

Table 7: The Items with Low P-Values

Religious Items			Morality Items		
Question	p-value	Level	Question	p-value	Level
1	.29	Knowledge	41	.43	Knowledge
14	.33	Understanding	42	.48	Knowledge
18	.29	Knowledge	49	.28	Understanding
24	.24	Knowledge	57	.49	Understanding
27	.32	Understanding	60	.46	Understanding
28	.49	Knowledge			
50	.25	Knowledge			

7.2.3 Suggestions for improvement

- ✓ To foster a greater appreciation and tolerance for diversity, educators should expose students to a wider variety of religions, especially those that are less common in Botswana.
- ✓ To improve students' awareness and respect for different religions, educators should actively seek opportunities for people from various religious backgrounds to come into classrooms and give presentations. This real-world experience can provide pupils with a greater, more authentic understanding of many faiths and behaviours. Incorporating this type of firsthand information and exposure can help make religion classes more interesting and dynamic, potentially increasing student interest and learning.

- ✓ To effectively assess students' knowledge of ethical decision-making, standing up for convictions, and accountability, teachers should review and refine morality questions in the Understanding Dimension.
- ✓ Incorporate more practical examples in teaching and evaluation materials to help students relate abstract concepts to real-life circumstances.
- ✓ Encourage learners to read and understand questions before responding.

8.0 Agriculture

An analytical summary of the 2024 PSLE candidates' performance in agriculture is given in this report. It looks at how well candidates performed overall on all the assessment items, showing that their scores were comparable to or better than those from the prior year. The data in this report sheds light on possible areas for development and offers an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates' responses.

8.1 General Comments

The 2024 Agriculture paper was friendly and accessible to most candidates, like in previous years. It had two sections, A and B.

Section A consisted of 7 knowledge questions and 5 comprehension questions requiring short responses.

Section B had 11 knowledge questions and 13 comprehension questions requiring long responses, all stimulus or scenario based.

Despite the differing numbers of items in each section, the paper strikes a balance between knowledge-based and comprehension-based questions. With both sections carrying the same weight of 30 marks, the exam presents a fair assessment for all candidates, ensuring that they are equally evaluated on their understanding of Agricultural concepts and their ability to apply this knowledge.

Short answer questions were generally well-done; however, several candidates lost points for failing to understand the connection or order of the long response questions in Section B. This highlights the need for candidates to cultivate their ability to recognize patterns and relationships in Agricultural concepts and to apply this knowledge in their responses. Focusing on this skill during preparation can significantly improve their performance in the exam.

Attempt to answer questions:

Section A

8.2 Question 1.

a) Most candidates provided thoughtful responses to Question (a), with the majority correctly identifying the tool and its purpose.

b) Received strong responses from most candidates, who successfully stated the correct use of the tool. However, some candidates had trouble understanding terminology and confused cultivating instruments with weeding tools.

This indicates that further instruction on the distinct functions of various agricultural tools may be beneficial for candidates to avoid similar errors in the future.

8.3 Question 2

A sizable percentage of candidates showed that they understood how vaccines work to boost the immune system. Additionally, many candidates were able to describe how these vaccines might affect agricultural productivity economically.

This demonstrates a solid understanding of the relationship between animal health and successful agricultural practices, which is crucial for responsible and sustainable farming.

8.4 Question 3

Most candidates showed that they understood the fundamental role that soil plays in agriculture. Despite valid responses from candidates, some lack specificity to the agricultural context, highlighting the need for centres to address this issue.

This suggests that schools should address the tendency for candidates to provide generalised responses, helping them to focus on answering the specific question and demonstrating their depth of knowledge in the field of agriculture.

8.5 Question 4

Most candidates successfully answered the task, providing clear explanations and answering specific questions, earning full marks for their strong understanding of the agricultural context.

8.6 Question 5

Candidates performed well and demonstrated a thorough understanding of the main advantages of protecting wild animals. Because students were able to recall and articulate these benefits with clarity, most of their responses obtained the highest possible score.

This strong performance shows that candidates possess a solid understanding of the importance of wildlife conservation and its benefits for the environment and society.

8.7 Question 6

Most candidates performed well on this question, accurately recalling and articulating a variety of indicators of poor chicken health. However, a small percentage of candidates included indications unrelated to chickens; thus, their answers received partial credit.

This suggests that they have a solid understanding of how to identify potential health issues in poultry.

8.8 Question 7

Most candidates demonstrated strong reading comprehension skills by correctly identifying internal parasites in the scenario, but few respondents named external parasites instead, suggesting they may have misunderstood the scenario or have a weaker grasp of the difference between internal and external parasites.

This indicates a need for further instruction on these important distinctions in livestock health.

8.9 Question 8

Most candidates gave accurate and successful answers to this question because they showed a thorough understanding of the factors to consider while choosing land for crop production. These answers received the highest possible score.

This demonstrates that candidates would be well-equipped to make informed judgements in agricultural settings and shows that they have a solid understanding of the crucial factors to consider when choosing crop-producing land.

8.10 Question 9

Most candidates correctly remembered the requirements for germination and successfully understood the stimulus given for the Question. As a result, many answers received maximum points.

This indicates that candidates have a solid understanding of the fundamental factors that drive seed germination, which is a crucial aspect of successful farming.

8.11 Question 10

In this Question, the majority of candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of the scenario by performing the necessary mathematical operations and obtaining the correct answer. The need for more attention to detail is shown by the fact that some responses did not include units.

This issue can be fixed by teaching students the importance of writing numbers correctly and using the right units. Accurate measurement is very important in agriculture because it helps farmers make good decisions.

SECTION B

8.12 Question 11

The stimulus was well-understood by most candidates.

a)

- Fairly performed item
- The stimulus was clear, leading to successful responses from many candidates.
- Structure named by some candidates, while others struggled to differentiate a kraal from a shed.

b)

- Difficulties naming structure led to difficulties identifying features of a good kraal.
- Candidates experienced challenges with this part.

c)

- Stimulus assisted candidates in providing successful responses.
- The structure's benefits to farmers are communicated by most candidates.
- Easy management activities are a common response.

Candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of agricultural concepts, but areas for improvement include structure identification, scientific notation, and distinguishing between internal and external parasites. Teachers should emphasise accuracy and differentiation.

8.13 Question 12

a)

- Stimulus effectively used by candidates to identify crops in pictures.
- Most candidates successfully named crops.

b)

- Candidates effectively communicated crop benefits for HIV AIDS patients.
- Understanding of crop benefits demonstrated by many candidates.

c)

- The question is clear and easy to understand but poorly performed.
- Limited knowledge of sunflower harvesting caused difficulties for many candidates.
- Difficulty explaining how to cut the crop hindered responses.

Teachers should educate students on crops, their health benefits, and harvesting sunflowers through visual aids like pictures and diagrams.

8.14 Question 13

a)

- Varying levels of understanding among candidates.
- Some candidates struggled to name the activity depicted.
- Centres may need to address this issue.

b)

- Fairly attempted by many candidates.
- Many candidates correctly described the reasons for destumping/stamping.
- Some candidates confused reasons with those for weeding.

c)

- A clear stimulus led to successful responses.
- Many candidates received marks.

Assist candidates in realising that they need to describe the activity in addition to naming it. Explain to learners the significance of destumping/stamping and weeding, as well as the distinctions between these tasks. Students will study more effectively and be able to provide accurate responses in this manner.

8.15 Question 14

The question was well-attained, with candidates effectively utilising the stimulus provided.

a)

- Soil structure was accurately identified by most candidates.

b)

- Stimulus is clear and easy to understand.
- Many candidates performed well.
- Some candidates misinterpreted the question layout, resulting in rubric violations.

Part c)

- Relied on accurate response from part b).
- Challenging for many candidates.
- Connections between parts are not always recognised

The teachers ought to urge candidates to utilise all the exam's stimulus materials, stressing the value of using the visual data to inform their answers. Particularly when the questions are interdependent, teachers should assist students in carefully reading and comprehending the question structure. This will lessen the possibility that pupils will give inaccurate answers because of misunderstandings or confusion.

8.16 Question 15

a)

- Fairly done, but some candidates struggled to provide tool care methods, instead describing storage methods.
- Misunderstanding of question requirements is apparent among some candidates.

b)

- Many candidates successfully utilised the stimulus to communicate the advantages of tool care.
- Strong performance by many candidates on this part.

c)

- Most candidates who recalled additional tool care methods performed well.
- Some confusion between oiling and greasing was observed.
- Centres should clarify the difference between oiling and greasing for candidates.

Teachers should emphasise the importance of proper tool care beyond storage, distinguishing between maintaining and storing tools. They should also emphasise the value of referencing stimuli and clarifying the difference between oiling and greasing tools.

8.17 Question 16

a)

- Stimulus enhanced candidates' ability to answer questions accurately.
- No confusion in responses observed among most candidates.

b)

- Most candidates effectively utilised the scenario to identify soil structure.
- Strong performance observed on this part.

c)

- Stimulus is effectively used by most candidates to identify soil type.
- High level of accuracy in responses demonstrated on this part.

Teachers should use visual aids, thoroughly read scenarios, and emphasise understanding soil types to help students comprehend questions and respond accurately. They should also emphasise the impact of soil type on agriculture and plant growth.

8.18 Question 17

a)

- Stimulus was successfully used by most candidates to provide correct responses.
- Minor confusion in some responses was observed, with some candidates explaining the activity instead of naming it.

b)

- Most candidates failed to achieve full marks due to insufficient detail when explaining branding management activity.

- Candidates struggled to explain the heating of the branding iron, likely due to a lack of visual reference in the stimulus.
- Centres should encourage candidates to think beyond the scope of the stimulus.

c)

- Stimulus successfully utilised by candidates to recall and name the tool for management activity.

The importance of correctly interpreting stimuli, training learners to differentiate between activity titles and explanations, and developing critical thinking abilities to deduce more information should all be emphasised by teachers. Additionally, they must assist learners in comprehending every facet of management tasks.

8.19 Question 18

a)

- Stimulus is effectively utilised by most candidates to sort information for farm records.
- Strong performance observed in this part.

b)

- The general nature of the question facilitated successful responses from most candidates, who were able to select 2 appropriate reasons for sheep injection.

For reliable farm records, teachers should stress the significance of carefully examining stimuli and organising information. They should support learners in making decisions, setting priorities for important details, and efficiently organising and understanding data.

