

# PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

## BSSE SETSWANA 2025



## PAPER 1: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

Paper 1 was a Reading and Writing component with three (3) compulsory sections in all. Section A was a comprehension task that demanded short answers. It had Items, 1 and 2, which item 1 targeted candidates of level grade C to U. Such candidates performed well in most of the questions (1(a), (d), (e), (f), (i), (j), (k) and (l)). Item 2 targeted grade levels of A\*, A and B. Candidates performed well in 2(b), (d), and (e). Sections B and C, on the other hand, were essay questions. All the questions were set at the same level and made to be equally accessible to all candidates. Section B had only 1 item, item 3, which was an argumentative essay and was compulsory for all the candidates. It was generally well performed. Section C had two (2) essay questions – descriptive (Item 4) and narrative (Item 5). Candidates had to choose one (1) from the two (2). Item 5 was the most popular choice and the candidates performed better on Item 5 as compared to Item 4. Overall, the performance of candidates for this component was average.

### Comments on Individual Questions

Candidates were to read a comprehension passage, understand it, and answer short-answer questions that followed. The section was divided into two (2), i.e., the section had Item 1, which targeted different abilities of candidates (grades C to U), and Item 2, which targeted high performers (grades A\*, A and B).

The candidates performed fairly well in this section. The language used for all the questions was clear and straightforward. The questions were generally well answered, especially Item 1.

**1 (a)** *Ke eng se mooki mogolo le Neo ba neng ba dumalane ka sone?*

It was well answered. Most of the candidates understood what the question entailed. They were able to state what Mooki mogolo and Neo agreed upon. Only a few got it wrong.

**(b)** *Ke lebaka lefe le le dirileng gore mmaNeo a gane go amogela morwadie ka losea?*

It was fairly done. Some candidates failed to understand the reason why MmaNeo did not accept Neo into her home. Some of the wrong answers were “monna wa lekgoa,” “ngwana yo o buang sekgoa,” “mmaNeo ga a itse sekgoa” etc.

**(c)** *Seelana se se reng, “a gana go bona go tla go kumakumilwe ka diphatsane,” se dira gore o lemoge gore go amogela losea ga ga mmaNeo go ne go ka mo ama jang?*

It was not well performed. Most of the candidates focused on what the phrase meant instead of explaining mmaNeo’s emotions. Some explained the highlighted phrase only and gave a literal interpretation.

**(d)** *Morago ga go sa amogelwa ke mmaNeo, mooki mogolo o ne a dira jang ka Neo le losea kwa bofelong?*

Most of the candidates got it right. They were able to explain where Mooki mogolo took Neo after being chased away by her mother. Only a minute number of candidates got it wrong.

**(e) (i)** *Pharologanyo fa gare ga botho jwa mooki mogolo le jwa ga mmaNeo ke eng?*

It was fairly done. Some of the candidates could not get the question right because they failed to show the contrast between Mooki mogolo’s character and mmaNeo’s. Some just stated the character of mmaNeo ignoring mooki mogolo’s.



- (ii) *Netefatsa karabo ya gago ka lebaka.*  
Most of the candidates were able to explain the contrast between the two characters.
- (f) *Mokwadi a re, "Mma Smith a atlarela ka átla tsoo-pedi." (Temana 5)*
- (i) *Ke eng se Mma Smith a neng a se atlarela ka átla tsoo-pedi?*  
The candidates performance was above average. They were able to answer correctly that "o amogela Neo le losea lwa gagwe."
- (ii) *Go atlarela ka átla tsoo-pedi ga ga Mma Smith go supa gore o ne a ikutlwa jang ka Neo?*  
The candidates performed well. They were able to explain how Mma Smith felt about Neo.
- (g) *Kgakololo ya mooki mogolo ya gore Neo a kope maitshwarelo mo go mmaagwe, e go lemotsha eng ka seabe sa ga Neo mo seemong se a iphitlhelang a le mo go sone?*  
The candidates did not perform well on this question. They seemed not to have understood the question because they explained how Neo got herself into the situation rather than explaining Neo's role in the situation she found herself in.
- (h) *Ke eng se mooki mogolo a se kgalemelelang Neo ka Kangkangwane?*  
It was fairly done. Most of the candidates were able to state what mooki mogolo was reprimanding Neo for with regards to Kangkangwane and got the answer right i.e "nyalo ga se thutego."
- (i) *Ke eng se se ka lemotshang mmadi gore Neo ga a ka ke a ya go kopa maitshwarelo kwa go mmaagwe?*  
Only a few got it wrong. Most of the candidates understood the question and performed well. They were able to state the correct answer being "e seng mme tlhemma." etc.
- (j) *Fa mmaNeo a ka tsaya tshwetso ya go amogela maitshwarelo a ga Neo, ke kgato efe e e latelang e ene mmaNeo a ka e tsayang?*  
The performance was above average. The candidates understood the question well and were able to give the correct answers like "O ka kopela Neo maitshwarelo kwa batsading ba ga Modisa." Etc.
- (k) *Maikaelelo a ga Modisa ke go dira jang fa a sena go utlwa ka ga mathata a ga Neo?*  
It was well performed. They were able to state Modisa's intention. Most of the candidates responded well and as such scored marks.
- (l) *Inola seelana se se supang gore Modisa ga a rate se Kangkangwane a se dirileng Neo.*  
The candidates' performance was above average. Some wrote a sentence instead of a phrase.
- (m) *Ke seelana sefe mo Temana 7 se se supang gore mooki mogolo o utlwa botlhoko thata ka seemo sa ga Neo?*  
It was generally not well performed. Candidates were to identify and extract a phrase, but they failed to identify and extract the phrase from the sentence. They lifted the whole sentence and, as such, lost a mark. Even though it was a Grade G & U question, even the Grade As showed signs of weakness in understanding it. Most of the candidates did not attempt it, they did not write anything, leaving it blank.



- 2 (a) *Mokwadi fa a re, “a reetsa ka pelo e e rothang madi,” o kaya eng ka lorato?*  
The performance was below average. Some of the candidates explained “a reetsa ka pelo e e rothang madi” and ignored that “e kaya eng ka lorato” as the question demanded.
- (b) *Mafoko a mmoki mogolo a a reng “o tlaa bona o robalelwa ke ditlhokwa” a dira gore o akanye gore go ka diragala eng ka motho fa motsadi a sa mo itshwarela, (Temana 7)*  
It was well done by most candidates. Most were able to answer the question correctly. Some explained the phrase “o tlaa bona o robalelwa ke ditlhokwa” instead of stating what would happen to an individual when a parent does not forgive him/ her.
- (c) *Seelana se se reng, “e seng motho a intshitse setlhabelo mo botshelong jwa gagwe,” se kaya eng ka Neo?*  
Candidates did not perform well in this question. Some of them explained what the phrase meant ignoring to state that the phrase “se kaya eng ka Neo.”
- (d) *Mokwadi o supa eng ka Neo fa a re o kare o tlaa re “motho ke bone wena?”*  
The candidates’ performance was above average; some stated the theme while others explained “motho ke bone wena”.
- (e) *Bolela molaetsa wa polelo e, o itebagantse le Neo.*  
It was well performed. Most of the candidates stated the theme as the question demanded.

## Section B & C

It comprised **three (3) essay** questions, which were an argumentative essay, a descriptive essay and a narrative essay. A marking criterion with different descriptors was used, and annotations were also used throughout the essays during marking. The annotations that were used were put into two (2) tables which were:

Table A - **Style & Accuracy** comprising Vocabulary, Sophisticated Expressions, Sentence Structure, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar.

Table B - **Content & Structure** comprising Ideas, Structure & Relevance.

### Table A

It comprised Language Mechanics, which was used for all the three (3) types of essays. **Vocabulary (V)** was fairly used. No outstanding words were used. Most of the candidates used simple and basic words. Some used borrowed, informal, and slang words. In a few instances, they opted for English words. There were isolated cases where a wide range of vocabulary was used. Most of the candidates fell on Level 3. With regards to **Sophisticated Expressions (SE)**, it was rarely used. Most of the candidates did not use it in their essays. Some of the expressions used were either coined or did not make sense. Some of the candidates had figurative slips when using proverbs and idioms, while some were uncertain. A sizeable number of candidates were able to use different expressions in their work. As for **Sentence Structure (SS)**, candidates did not use a variety of sentences. Some sentences used were repetitive, while some had a lot of errors in tense. Most of the candidates used run-on sentences. A lot of them attempted complex sentences, some with success, and most failed to construct them. Only a few were able to use a range of



sentences. When it comes to **Spelling (Sp)**, candidates performed really well. They were good at spelling and got Level 4 and 5. In addition, when it came to **Punctuation (Pu)**, candidates did not perform well. Most of the candidates over-relied on the comma and full stop. Some of the candidates misused capital letters. There were instances where commas and conjunctives were used at once. Some over used quotation marks unnecessarily, especially when using proverbs. Furthermore, with **Grammar (Gr)**, some of the candidates failed to write words well using /tl-/ and /tlh-/. There was not much of a challenge with regard to disjunctive and conjunctive.

### Table B

This table was about Content and the Structure was specific to a particular essay. Each type of essay had each own relevant content and structure. It comprised of the following:

There were **Ideas (Id)**, where candidates were to come up with different ideas. Some of the candidates repeated ideas while some could not select ideas well. Some had limited ideas and could not address the question fully. In some instances, candidates were able to select ideas and express them well. Furthermore, candidates struggled with **Structure (St)**. Most were unable to develop ideas well and the paragraphs were not perfectly formed. Most of the paragraphs had no unity while some of the paragraphs had no linkage. Some of the candidates formed paragraphs using very long sentences. In addition, some candidates had clear and well balanced structures. They constructed paragraphs well which had unity and were appropriately linked. Finally, with regards to **Relevance (Rel)**, the candidates performance was average. Some struggled to stay relevant to the topic. At times some answered part of the question and could not explain fully. Most times, candidates were able to stay relevant to the topic and most were able to write creative pieces of work.

The essays were as follows:

### Section B

3 It was compulsory for all candidates.

*Go rutega go mosola mo botshelong jwa segompieno. Dumela kgotsa ganetsa mogopolo o.*

It was an argumentative essay. It was generally well performed. Candidates were to either agree or negate that being educated is important “mo botshelong jwa segompieno.” Most of the candidates were on the affirmative and their explanations showed that they had understood the question well. Only a few negated the statement. Some of the candidates confused being educated with being rich. A few were not able to write the importance of education. In some instances, some of the ideas selected did not address the topic well and were not well developed while some were unable to consistently develop an argument as the question demands. Most of the paragraphs used had unity but were lacking with regards to linking. Some of the candidates were able to present convincing arguments in a logical way. A few candidates narrated their points.

### Section C

It had two (2) essays being a descriptive and narrative essay. Candidates had to choose one out of the two.



- 4 *Tlhalosa lefelo le o le ratang thata le o neng o etetse kwa go lone wena le tsala ya gago. Tlhaloso e akaretse se o se boneng, se o se utlwileng, ka fa o neng o ikutlwa ka teng le menko mo lefelong leo.*

It was a descriptive essay. Candidates were to describe a place they loved that they had visited with a friend. Some of the candidates could not describe well. They could not give vivid images while describing. Some were able to give a detailed description of an interesting place they once visited with their friends. For some, there was more narration than description on what was seen, heard and felt.

- 5 *Fa mpho a tswa ka kgoro o ne a re, “go bua thata ruri go ntsentse mo mathateng.” Kwala polelo ya kanelo ka se se mo diragaletseng ka letsatsi leo.*

It was a narrative essay whereby Mpho had to narrate a story and state that “Go bua thata ruri go ntsentse mo mathateng.” It was the most popular choice for candidates. Some candidates did not state clearly what Mpho did to get her into trouble and some of the ideas were continuously being repeated. Some were able to narrate “go bua thata ga ga Mpho” but were unable to show “go tsena mo mathateng ga ga Mpho.” Even though some essays showed little or no creativity, in most instances, candidates were able to creatively narrate well and ideas selected were well developed, well explained and very clear. Unity of paragraphs and linkage were clear most times



## PAPER 2: WRITTEN PAPER

### General Comments

General Comments: Most of the candidates' responses showed understanding of the questions and the requirements of the syllabus. Most of the candidates showed a deeper understanding and/or critical analysis. In most of the responses there was a wide coverage of events of the story in the novel and drama. A large portion of the candidates appreciated the author's style of writing and how the author achieves their effects. Most of the candidates had a personal response. A low percentage of candidates did not attempt the questions or just wrote one paragraph in each section (about 1%).

### Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 The question was understood, and candidates applied themselves very well. Their responses showed independent thinking, maturity, and critical analysis. Most of the candidates showed understanding of the author's style and how they achieve their effects. A large portion of the candidates (80%) aligned their responses to what their question required and most of them managed to get 3 /5 for structure because it was easy to follow their responses.
- 2 Some candidates struggled to accurately unravel the meaning of the name Tlhoriso and link it well with the events of the story. However, many candidates showed understanding of the text, deeper implications, and how the writer achieves their effects. A larger percentage of them touched on characterisation and its impact and that worked for them on the descriptor; analysis of writer's technique (AWT). Most of the candidates' structuring of their responses was easy to follow, mostly because they showed understanding of the events of the text and did not struggle with communication.
- 3 Poetry: A well-handled question. The phrasing of the question, since it asked about their mood, made it easier for them to understand and respond accordingly. Another advantage to the candidates is that the poem is about "Education", a subject they relate to easily. On top of that, since the syllabus allows them to analyse the poem critically and express their viewpoints (PR) about the subject matter, the candidates' responses were varied and showed how much they liked the subject matter of the poem. Most of the candidates (85 %) showed understanding of different poetic devices, and 60% of the candidates showed appreciation of how the poet achieves effects. The candidates did very well in this section.

The candidates applied themselves very well to the tasks. Most of them showed critical analysis and creativity. They showed understanding of the tasks and the texts. It was only a low percentage of candidates who were general (not using specific events of the text) in their presentation. This shows proper guidance from facilitators and commitment from the candidates.

One thing worth noting is that there was one or two centres where candidates confused personal response with personal experience. The candidates from these centres cited examples from relatives or neighbours. It should be noted by educators that personal response refers to evaluation, how the candidate views situations they are discussing. For example: How they feel about marriage wrecking.

Sekai: ***Bomme ba ba tshwanang le Tlhoriso jaana ga ba a tshwanela go nna mo setšhabeng kgotsa go tshela le batho ka go bo ba tsisa mafutsana mo go ba bangwe. Go maleba go bo a otlhailwe botlhoko jaana e bile go a intumedisa go mmona a galaotega go se na se a yang go***



***duela katlholo ya dikgomo tse di robang bobedi ka sone ka a se na pelo. A a tlhomole a le utlwe.  
Ke mogadira yo o di ikgoetseng.***

It was good to notice that most responses in poetry showed awareness of poetic devices and how they are used to achieve effect. However, there were some candidates who did failed to pick the obvious feature of the poem: that the standout poetic device is personification (mothofatso).