

# PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The report is about the three Setswana components (1, 2 & 3) through which candidates were assessed as is the norm at every examination series for the syllabus. Unfortunately, many candidates submitted blank manuscripts without trying any questions and that compromised the assessment process.

### **Paper 1: Continuous Writing**

The paper has two sections: A & B. The first section of the paper requires candidates to attempt one question out of the five available. The second section of the paper comprise of one question which compulsory which could be a speech, dialogue, or report.

#### **Section 1: General Comments**

##### **Section A**

The section assesses candidates' ability to write creative pieces of work that keep readers engaged for a long time. In that regard, candidates are expected to display writing skills that include sentence structure, language use, punctuation, orthography, creativity, and use of figurative language.

At this series, the performance of candidates on sentence structure was different from last year as there was a slight decline in the construction of sentences. Most candidates wrote run-on sentences to write complex and compound sentences. Most Candidates were unable to vary sentences, but complex sentences were mostly used. In most cases, the sentences were influenced by spoken language. There were some who concentrated only on simple sentences throughout the essay. A sizeable number of Candidates failed to construct sentences accordingly to the extent that some opted to include English words in try to construct proper sentences. A lot of candidates, however, attained Band 4 scores, a few attained those of Band 5 and a minute number attained those of Band 6. failing to get to Band 7.

Overall, the candidates' performance on vocabulary was found to be lacking since many of them used inappropriate and or expressions. Nonetheless, some of the candidates used exceptionally good vocabulary. Many of the candidates used words which are normally used as short forms in social media especially on WhatsApp, words like *ela* instead of *fela*, *gr* instead of *gore*, *hlogo* instead of *tlhogo* just to name a few.

Candidates' use of punctuation marks was unimpressive. They over relied on the use of comma and full stop and ignored other punctuation marks. However, this year, candidates used semi colons, brackets, and colon a lot as compared to last year. Quotation marks were used when writing proverbs, which should not have been the case. Most candidates did not use capital letters properly; in most instances some were used even in the middle of sentences. Furthermore, for the first time, there were several candidates with sentence separation errors, resulting in them failing to attain Band 3 scores. There were a few who managed to use different punctuation marks appropriately.

Candidates performed better in spelling and orthography when compared with their work in other descriptors. However, this time around, it was rare for candidates to attain Band 7 scores. Most of the candidates were challenged by differentiation of words which are supposed to be separately written and vice versa according to the rules of orthography e.g. *seka* & *se ka*, *sena* & *se na*, *sale* & *sa le* etc .

Creativity was also a big challenge as most of the essays lacked creativity, some tried, but there were those who had no creativity. For example, regarding Question 1(c), instead of writing paragraphs, they wrote



exceedingly long sentences which resulted in them attaining Band 3 and 2 scores. Furthermore, most of their paragraphs had no unity and there was no linkage in between the paragraphs. The narrative essays, such as Question 1(b) and 1(d), saw a slight improvement in candidates with regards to unity and link. Some of the candidates were able to write well thought out paragraphs as expected.

Candidates were relevant to the topic, especially regarding Question 1(c), so it was mostly well performed. When it came to Question 1(d) and 1(e), a lot of Candidates had a challenge of relevance. Creativity was also a big challenge as most of the essays lacked creativity, some tried, but there were those who had no creativity.

Finally, regarding Figurative Language (FL), Candidates tried to use them, though sometimes some ended up explaining the figurative language used which rendered it invalid. The other pitfall for candidates was the use of translated English proverbs and idioms in their essays which resulted in them getting low marks.

## **Section B**

Candidates were tasked to write a Speech. Most candidates were aware of how a speech is written though there were some who had a challenge on writing the speech. The Candidates focused their attention on the following: Protocol which was mostly particularly good as Candidates were able to demonstrate a good presentation of protocol, resulting in most of them falling in Band 4 and 5. Opening was a challenge as a lot of Candidates were unable to capture the interest of the audience. Some candidates ignored including it, and it was mostly fairly done. A lot of Candidates' opening was not appealing as such being on Band 2. Most Candidates just copied the objective as it was from the question. Many of them included the objective in their speech even though they mostly fell into B3. Only a few Candidates were not included in the objective. Selection of Ideas was fairly done as a lot of them tried to produce ideas. Only a few of them were unable to select ideas. Most Candidates failed to present ideas. Some were able to present their ideas well. Overall, the presentation was fair. A lot of Candidates included audience in their speech. There was a fair understanding of the audience shown. Only a few of them did not acknowledge the audience. Most of the Candidates showed limited attempt to conclude, resulting in them being in Band 2. Some of the conclusions were fair. Language use was fair. Most of the Candidates used appropriate language which resulted in them falling on Band 3.

## **Section 2: Comments on Individual Questions**

### **Section A**

#### **1 (a) THUTO-PUISANO E KE SE KITLANG KE LEBALA MOONO WA YONE**

This was the third popular question, and it was not clearly understood by most of the Candidates. The Candidates were supposed to explain the events of the "Thuto- puisano e ba neng ba e tseneletse" but instead they treated it as a dialogue not a descriptive essay. They were also expected to include "moonno wa thuto-puisano" which they failed to do. Even though some were challenged, there were those who were able to address the question very well as they explained in detail. As the essay is a descriptive essay, Candidates were to describe in detail but most of them were unable to describe but rather, narrated the events which affected their creativity level. Their performance was fair. Some only discussed the first part of the question i.e. stating the "thuto-puisano" part but failed to address the "e ke se kitlang ke lebala moonno wa yone" part of the question. (descriptive essay)



**(b) FA A SEKASEKA SEEMO A LEMOGA GORE FA A SA ITSOLOPANYE BA TLAA MO FENYA MO KGAIANONG**

It was the most popular choice for Candidates as most tried it. This question was well performed. Most of the Candidates were able to understand what “go sekaseka seemo” means but failed to fully address the “fa a sa itsolopanye” part. A lot of Candidates were unable to state the competition or the “kgaisano”. Some of the Candidates just mentioned the “go itsolopanya” part and did not clearly narrate the story. Candidates did not write exceptionally long essays which resulted in them not making a lot of mistakes and as such their performance was mostly average. There were some Candidates who understood the question well and as such were able to address the topic with consistent relevance which made them fall into Band 5 and some even went to Band 6. (narrative essay)

**(c) TIRISO YA MARANYANE E MOSOLA FELA THATA MO LEFATSHENG KA BOPHARA. DUMALANA KGOTSA O GANETSE**

It was the second popular question that was attempted by Candidates. Many Candidates attempted the question, but it was not well performed. Candidates were expected to take side in support of or against the given statement. Many of them were in support of the statement given and only a small number were against. The Candidates were supposed to discuss “tiriso ya maranyane” in general but they mostly concentrated on social media. The points that were advanced were not addressed in detail. An element of digression was common in many essays as some would start the essay in agreement and eventually be against ignoring the fact that they should take a side. Some of the Candidates failed to fully explain the “e mosola thata mo lefatsheng” part instead they just listed or stated “maranyane”. Most of them scored marks in the Band 4 bracket. (argumentative essay)

**(d) TIRAGALO E, E NTEMOTSHITSE FA BA NE BA SA ITSE KA LENANEO LE.**

It was the second least choice. A few Candidates attempted the question, and they did not elaborate the “e ntemotshitse fa ba ne ba sa itse ka lenaneo le.” Most of them were unable to explain and discuss “lenaneo”. They instead talked about “mekete” such as weddings and parties. As such, their essays were more of reports than narrations. Regardless of that, there were a few Candidates who wrote exceptionally good essays whereby the question was fully addressed. (narrative essay)

**(e) MORERO KE SELO SA BOTLHOKWA MO BOTSHELONG.**

It was the least popular. A few Candidates attempted this question. Most were able to understand what “morero” was and were able to show the “botlhokwa mo botshelong” part. On the other hand, there were those who were unable to understand what “morero” was as they discussed “thero” at church by a pastor. A lot of Candidates narrated the story instead of stating the facts and explaining in detail. (factual essay)



## **Section B**

**2** Candidates were all required to attempt the question as it was compulsory.

The way in which the candidates' handled protocol was mostly good, which resulted in a lot of them being in the Band 4 and Band 5 brackets. Only a few did not have protocol. Some instead of "go dumedisa" opted "go leboga". There was mediocre performance regarding the opening. Most of them "ba ne ba ipolela gore ke bomang" in place of having a captivating opening. A lot of them fell into Band 2 while some did not have an opening at all. With regards to the objective, most of the Candidates included it in their speech. A lot of them copied it as it was from the question. Only a small number of Candidates failed to state the objective. There was an improvement in last year's performance of candidates regarding the selection of ideas. The Candidates were to include indicators, causes, effects, and solutions but it proved to be a problem for them. It was even more difficult to produce indicators as compared to the other 3. Most of the Candidates failed to have a good presentation of ideas which resulted in them not performing well. Some did not talk about "bogodu jwa go utswa dithoto tsa puso" as should have been the case but rather, they talked about "borukuthi" and "bogodu" in general. In addition, the performance of the candidates regarding the audience was fair. The Candidates mostly used "Betsho, Bagaetsho and Batswana Betsho" when acknowledging the audience. They failed to acknowledge attendees individually. A lot of Candidates failed to conclude. Some of them showed limited attempt to conclude while some just left the speech hanging. Quite a few Candidates concluded with just "ke a leboga" and had no words of encouragement. However, there were a few who had highly effective conclusions. Finally, most of the Candidates used appropriate language, which resulted in many of them falling for Band 3. A sizeable number of them used simple straight forward language and those falling on Band 4 were rare.



## **Paper 2: Comprehension, Summary and Translation**

### **Section 1: General Comments**

This is a compulsory paper for all candidates. Some candidates did not try any of the questions in the paper. There was use of unacceptable language as candidates vented out their frustrations about the compromised examinations.

### **Section A**

- 1 Most candidates managed to score at least two marks of what caused Boitshwarelo's happiness but failed to substantiate the answer they have given with all the reasons expected.
- 2 Almost all the candidates gave the correct answer.
- 3 Most candidates managed to score at least a mark. Those who did not score any marks copied the author's statement as it was from the passage.
- 4 Most candidates got the answer correctly as they understood the question. Those who did not get any marks portrayed mma Boitshwarelo's character in a positive way while the expectation was to portray her in a negative way.
- 5 (a) Most candidates understood the figure of speech and explained it correctly.  
(b) Half of the candidates were able to explain it correctly while the remaining candidates could not.  
(c) Most candidates gave the literal meaning of the statement resulting in an incorrect answer.

NB: Some candidates still use figurative language to explain meaning from the context resulting in an incorrect answer.

- 6 Most candidates did not do well in the question. They gave the usage of the parts of speech instead of the significance.
- 7 Most candidates did not do well in the question. Instead of giving the functional slot of the parts of speech, they explained. Some did not recognise the subject as it came at the beginning of the sentence and confused it for the object.
- 8 Most candidates did well in the question.
- 9 Most candidates did not use the correct conjunction for the first slot but managed to use the correct conjunctions for the second and third slots.
- 10 Most candidates did not do well on the action they would take but the majority managed to give the right reasons for the action they would take.
- 11 The question was fairly answered. Instead of answering the theme in general terms, some narrowed the theme to a specific character. Some gave a wrong answer because they did not use the main character to deduce the theme.

### **Section B**

- 12 Most candidates did well in identifying the topic sentence.
- 13 Most candidates performed poorly on the question as they could not deduce what the author was concerned about. They also failed to give the reasons for the author's concern(s).



- 14 Most candidates performed poorly on the question. It was difficult for them to see where the author digressed therefore could not give reasons for the digression.
- 15 Most candidates got the first part of the question correctly but performed poorly on the second part as they could not give the reasons to substantiate the first part.
- 16 The candidate's performance on the question was fair. Those who were marked down were due to them using extra textual ideas or wholesale copying of textual material. Some lack summation skills. Some candidates did not attempt the question at all.

### **Section C**

- 17 The performance of the candidates in the question was fair. Even though there were some difficult words, the candidates could get the gist of and failed to translate, but some ended up with partial distortion.





## Paper 3: Literature

The paper has three sections: prescribed literature texts, unseen text, and poetry.

### Section 1: General Comments

The observation made is that the candidates across all centres were well drilled in the drama texts recommended for all centres: Letlapa Le Le Bolele and Motswasele II. This is a commendable effort from teachers. The responses from most candidates across most centres clearly indicate this.

However, there were some weaknesses identified pertaining to analysis of 'seabe sa baanelwa' and 'molaetsa'. Most of the responses lacked full analysis which obviously limits the structure of the response. The responses neglected the 'how' part of the analysis. For example, in 'seabe' the candidates fell short of explaining clearly how the said character influenced the outcome.

### Section A

Motswasele o na le seabe mo go kgaoganeng ga morafe wa Bakwena ka makgamu a mabedi. Go ne ga nna le lekgamu la kgokgontsho la ga Motswasele le batlhanka ba gagwe; Molotlhani, Diratsagae le Leapeetswe le lekgamu la bo Moruakgomo, Maleke, Segokotlo le Sejo la balwela-kgololesego. Motswasele ke ene a bakileng go thubega ga morafe ka a ne a busa ka tshokamo; o ineeletse go reetsa batlhanka ba gagwe go na le go tsaya dikgakololo mo go ba bogosi le go rerisana le bone. Mo godimo ga moo o busa ka seroophata ka a bolaya batho le go ba gapela ditsabone jaaka a dirile Mogatsa Moilwe e bile re utlwa ka Moruakgomo fa a tseela batho basadi. Seemo se se tlama ba bogosi ba eteletswe pele ke Maleke go tsosolosa mephato ya kgololesego ka maikaelelo a go supa fa ba sa itumelele kgatako e ya ditshwanelo tsa batho.

In the analysis of 'molaetsa' the attempt to include 'how' was limited to a repeat of the event. For example: Modiri o dira tiro e e maswe fa a ratana le Tlhoriso ntswa a nyetse Khutsafalo. Se se maswe ka gore motho fa a nyetse ga a tshwanela go nna le mosadi wa sephiri. Ela tlhoko gore go nna le mosadi wa sephiri ke go ratana o nyetse. Ka jalo go botlhokwa gore motlhatlhabiwa a tlhalose gore go ratana o nyetse/go nna le mosadi wa sephiri go maswe jang.

In the other questions from Se Monate Se Ingwaelwa and Ngwana O Anywa Mmaagwe a Sule the smaller number of responses is a clear sign that very few centres discussed or have the texts. The few that attempted these questions did not do well. NB: Question 4 restricted candidates to time setting but they did not recognise that. Instead, they included place setting which negatively affected the structure of their responses. It is incumbent upon centres to ensure that candidates are made aware of these. Candidates must be exposed to all diverse ways of phrasing questions.

In poetry candidates struggled with appreciation of the way the poet used stylistic devices for effect. Centres need to emphasize this to their candidates: Stylistic devices have the 'how' part.

In Section B most of the candidates struggled to understand the rich Setswana used in the unseen text. It is therefore advised that candidates be exposed to 'high level Setswana use' to improve their language.





## **Section 2: Comments on Individual Questions**

### **Section A**

- 1 Seabe sa motshameki (Role played by individual characters in the development of the text).

This was the most popular question. It was answered by about 90% of the candidates. Out of the 90% around 75% of them did very well. Most of them got 18/25. However, some candidates did not show full analysis of the aspect. They neglected how the character influenced the events (the role played) which are crucial in the analysis. Failure to include that means the aspect is half answered. Other candidates forgot to include 'evidence' in their responses which impacts negatively in their knowledge of the text.

- 2 Molaetsa (Theme found in text)

This was the second popular question; answered by 5% of the candidates. More than half of the candidates did very well in this question.

However, some candidates lacked full analysis of the aspect. They did not include the 'jang' part in both the first and second part of the response and they could only attain the 'fair band.' Some candidates tried the 'jang part' but instead repeated the action of the character which limits both analysis and structure.

Some candidates from one centre included character traits ('botho') in their answer which was a bit strange because analysis of theme focuses mainly on character's actions and the results of those actions.

Another observed weakness in one of the centres was fragmentation of events which affected structure. The candidates used Modiri's activities which are part of his plan to eliminate Mofalotsi by killing him as different plans instead of treating it as one event and using the strategies to carry it out as evidence for the big plan. (Leano la go bolaya Mofalotsi le lengwefela. Go dirisa maepantlo, go dirisa Gotlhometse le go mo leka ka Ngaka Marumo ke ditselana tsa go diragatsa leano lone le.)

- 3 Maikutlo a mokwadi (Mood and attitude of the author)

It was answered by very few candidates (3%) and they did not perform well.

- 4 Ka fa paka e rotloetsang ka teng ditiro tsa baanelwa (correlation between actions of characters and time setting).

The least popular question and almost all the candidates performed poorly. Some of the responses justified the setting instead of showing correlation. Some candidates included place setting even though it was not part of the terms of the question.

### **Section B**

- 5 Ipee mo seemong sa moanelwa (pastiche).

Answered by 90% of the candidates. Most of the candidates focussed on BOTHO and failed to relate the character traits to other aspects of the analysis. Very few candidates did well in this question: 20% of the candidates. Most of the candidates did not understand the text and therefore performed dismally.

- 6 Thulaganyo ya ditiragalo (Development of the plot).

Attempted by 10% of the candidates. Almost all the candidates failed to get motivation. (kgwetlho) right. However, a lot of them managed to correctly analyse the type of conflict and the climax. But they



struggled to identify the events that formed the development of the conflict. Generally, the responses were below par and the fact that they did not fully understand the text exacerbated the situation.

### **Section C**

- 7** Interpretation of the poem; attempted by 95% of the candidates and most of them were able to interpret the poem and did very well.

NB; Areas of concern

Most candidates failed to group together similar ideas from different stanzas, and this resulted in repetition which affects structure.

Candidates struggle with quotations and how to appreciate the poet's use of poetic devices.

- 8** Mood of the poet. (Maikutlo a mmoki)

This question was attempted by 5% of the candidates. 98% failed to understand the terms of the question. They resorted to interpretation of the poem instead of addressing the question.