

GENERAL COMMENTS

Some good essays were presented. A large group of mediocre essays, however, was also presented. All the topics were chosen, but the narrative topics were more popular than the rest. There was a significant improvement in the use of writing techniques and with enough practise this can become a strong point.

The topics were mostly analysed correctly. In the narrative topics, however, some candidates did not focus on what was really expected. The introductions were too long and candidates often forced their own stories in without considering the real topic. Choosing the right topic (enabling the candidate to write between 350 – 500 words) is of the utmost importance. There was overall an improvement in structure as well as language skills. The lack of factual knowledge unfortunately led to poor marks in topics 2, 5 and 8.

The following matters should get attention:

- 1 poor language skills and oversimplified vocabulary. This leads to poor marks in the language category.
- 2 sentence construction, especially the word order and the length of the sentences.
- 3 structure, especially the introduction and conclusion. The most common problem was too lengthy introductions. Some candidates also struggle with paragraphing.
- 4 the use (and learning) of the correct **prepositions**, especially the difference and correct use of “na”, “van”, “deur” and “aan”, as well “saam met” – not “saam my ma”.
- 5 rules concerning the use of the comma, the comma-colon (;), the ellipsis and the apostrophe.
- 6 the use of direct speech.
- 7 the length of the essays.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 Practise the analysing of **all the types** of topics. Candidates especially struggled with the narrative essays this year.
- 2 Thoroughly explain the difference amongst the terms/styles: descriptive, argumentative, narrative and discursive.
- 3 Emphasize the principles of the narrative essay – the development of tension from the exposition to the climax, characters, etc.
- 4 Encourage candidates to make quite sure of the meaning of every word in the topic. Misunderstanding of one word can have a disastrous outcome – even for a very strong candidate - as it is then classified as “misinterpretation of the topic” and leads to a very low mark in the content category.
- 5 Give attention to factual themes as part of lessons. It can even be incorporated as oral exercises.
- 6 **Candidates should pay attention to the following aspects when writing an essay:**

General:

- **Write the number and the title** in full at the top of the page.
- Do not change the topic.
- Stick to the prescribed length of the essays.

Language and structure:

- Form and structure: Only 4 paragraphs for a First Language essay are not acceptable. Practise the principle of one core idea per paragraph. The connection with the topic, as early as possible in the essay, is very important.
- Practise the writing of different types of sentences as well as the variation in the length and structure of sentences. The use of a question, for instance, can be very effective. Shorter sentences are better (maximum 10 – 15 words per sentence). Only one core idea per sentence.
- Practise the correct use of punctuation marks. Discourage the extensive use of the comma-colon as well as the ellipsis. It seems as if too many candidates do not fully understand the use of the comma-colon.

The ellipsis can be effective but should be used with a specific purpose, otherwise it is meaningless and rather influences the marks negatively.

- The use of direct speech can also be very effective, but should be understood and practised properly. The correct use of quotation marks needs attention. Candidates must also realise that it is ineffective if large parts of the essay consists out of direct speech.
- Develop vocabulary. Learners should learn the use of one word instead of describing. (“besoekers” i.p.v “mense wat ons land kom besoek”). Vocabulary of ‘n high standard is needed, but avoid “mooiskrywery” or forced language on purpose.
- The use of oversimplified expressions is quite problematic and part of the lack of proper vocabulary skills. For instance, “skool klaar maak” should be “skoolloopbaan voltooi”, “... help om iets beter te maak” should be “... moet iets verbeter”, “moed opgee” should be “moed verloor/tou op gooi”.
- The use of slang and especially English terms are unacceptable - except when effectively used as a style technique.
- Writing in the negative form needs attention – the use of the double “**nie**” is important.
- Avoid meaningless phrases like “*vandag se lewe*” and “*ons as mens*”, “*ek persoonlik*”.

The following general grammar mistakes need attention:

- *mees belangrikste* instead of *belangrikste*
- the wrong use of, for example, *opwat* instead of *waarop* (*betrekklike voornaamwoorde*)
“Die man **MET WIE** – nie waarmee - ek praat”
- *familie i.p.v gesin*
- *ek’t, iet’s, kinder’s, trug i.p.v. ek het, iets, kinders, terug*
- *als i.p.v. alles*
- *daai i.p.v. daardie*
- *nodig (liefde) i.p.v. het (liefde) nodig/benodig.*
- *se i.p.v. sê*
- *te groot i.p.v. te groot*
- *gevoelings i.p.v. gevoelens*
- *nie ...nie (dubbele “nie” is noodsaaklik in Afrikaans)*
- difficulty in the meaning/difference in using of words like:
beskou/aanskou
anders/ander
as gevolg van/ ter wille van
is/wees/was
self (Ek kan dit self doen)
selfs “even” (Selfs ek kan dit doen.)
- the wrong use of “wat” i.p.v. “toe” – bv. “Wat ek daar kom ...” (verkeerd)
- the repeated use of “gaan” i.p.v “sal”
- The wrong use of:
“rondom” - “rondom mense” (verkeerd). Should be - “Hy is skaam by/voor mense.”
Of “Ek kyk rondom my en...” (verkeerd). Should be – “Ek kyk om my en ...”
- The wrong use of “nommers” i.p.v. “getalle” bv. Die getalle neem toe (nie “nommers” nie.)
- The wrong use of “hierdie” i.p.v “dit” bv. “Hierdie (??) lyk toe nie vir my reg nie.” (verkeerd) i.p.v.
“Dit lyk toe nie vir my reg nie.”

COMMENTS ON THE SPECIFIC TOPICS

- 1 Daardie dag het ek geweet ek is by omdraai verby. Vertel wat gebeur het. (I knew that day that I had reached the turning point.)** This was a popular topic. In general, little creativity was found in the essays. In too many cases, the topic sentence was merely forced into the story as a last thought.

Most essays lacked conflict (internally or externally) and a strong crisis and climax that was necessary for a good story. Some of these essays, however, obtained the best marks.
- 2 Bespreek waarom die herwinning van huishoudelike afval noodsaaklik vir elke gesin is. (Discuss the necessity of recycling household waste in every household.)**

This was one of the least popular topics. Unfortunately, many candidates did not focus on meaningful content that showed the bigger picture. Marks for these essays were mediocre.
- 3 Watter gevaar hou kuberboelies in en hoe kan jy jou teen hulle beskerm? Bespreek. (What is the dangers of cyber-bullying and how can you protect yourself against it? Discuss.)**

Very few candidates chose this topic. Facts were sufficient, but again it was over-simplified and without creativity. In some cases, it was only the mentioning of one or two incidents instead of a discussion.
- 4 'n Klein liggie in die verte het my soos 'n magneet gelok. Toe ek nader kom, sien ek dat dit uit 'n rotsskeur kom. Net toe ek die groot klip vat om dit weg te rol, word dit deur 'n onsigbare hand weggerol en bevind ek my eensklaps in 'n heel ander wêreld. Vertel. ('n Small light attracted me like a magnet. When I got nearer, I saw that it came from a crack in a rock. When I touched the big stone to roll it away, an invisible hand removed it, and the next moment I found myself in a whole new world.)**

This was a very popular topic. Very few entertaining essays were produced. Some essays were too unrealistic and sometimes one long, seemingly unplanned, description of nature or incidents. There was a clear lack of development (cause and consequence) to the climax. Very few candidates could master the skill of telling an imaginary story.
- 5 Word daar te veel tyd en geld aan die bewaring van bedreigde dierspesies bestee? Wat is jou opinie? (Give your opinion about whether too much time and money are spent on the protection of endangered animal species.)**

Very few candidates chose this topic. Strong opinions came forward. In general, marks given for this topic were good.
- 6 Die hoërskooljare het vele hoogte- en laagtepunte gehad. Watter ervarings sal jou altyd bybly, en hoekom? (High school years had many highs and many lows. Which experiences will always stay in your mind and why?)**

This was a popular choice. Essays were mediocre and lacked creativity. In general, essays were merely a report of the whole high school experience, without enthusiasm for either the highs or the lows. Or else, it was a lengthy discussion of friendships as the focus point.
- 7 Beskryf wat jou eie omgewing spesiaal vir besoekers uit ander streke en wêrelddele maak. (Describe what in your environment is special and attracts people from other areas and around the world.)**

Few candidates chose this option. Interpretation of the topic and focus were on the spot. Good to above average essays were written.
- 8 Die mensdom leer nie uit die verlede nie. Bespreek jou opinie. (Humanity does not learn from the past. Discuss your opinion.)**

The strong candidate would discuss several incidents and mistakes from the past that impacted humanity negatively and which should have been avoided in future. The lack of factual knowledge handicapped these essays. Some candidates discussed the mistakes of individuals like friends and clearly did not fully analyse the topic. Poor marks were obtained.
- 9 Ek was nog nooit in so 'n benarde posisie nie. Ek was raadop. Vertel wat gebeur het. (Nerver before did I experience such a predicament. I did not know what to do. Tell what happened.)**

As in topic 1 some candidates tended to force their own (pre-prepared?) story into the topic and merely add the topic sentence as an afterthought. Many essays lacked a strong crisis and climax that connected strongly with the topic. Very few essays obtained a good mark.