

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2005**

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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GENERAL COMMENTS

Candidates' performance this year was generally good. There was an observable improvement in the performance in Paper 1A and Paper 1B. Performance on Paper 02 was somewhat below that of previous years, with a mixture of excellent responses and rather poor responses.

Comprehension, both aural and written, remains a cause for concern. Candidates appeared unable to critically listen/read passages and specifically respond to questions asked. There were fewer incidents of candidates using jargon indiscriminately, but there were still too many cases where candidates could not identify simple literary devices or examples of such.

DETAILED COMMENTS

PAPER 01 A

Generally, this paper was fairly well done by most candidates. However, Section A was much better handled than Sections B and C. Candidates often misread questions and therefore sometimes failed to gain marks.

Module 1-Gathering and Processing Information

The questions on this module referred to a scenario relating to a school research project in a remote area.

Question 1

Candidates generally did well on this question. The mean for this question was 4.88 out of a total of 8 marks. However, some candidates did not pay attention to the key phrase "this research" in question 1b. Responses focussed on general weaknesses in questionnaires rather than on the research project. Valuable marks were lost as a result of the generalised responses given.

Question 2

Candidates generally did well on this question as seen by a mean of 5.30 out of a total of 7 marks.

Module 1 was well done by many candidates as is illustrated by a mean of 10.18.

Module 2- Language and Community

Questions 3 - 4 referred to a monologue about the language that Susan uses.

Question 3

Again this year, candidates experienced some difficulty in answering a question that asks for Creole structures. Some candidates, however, were able to score quite well on this question. Teachers and candidates can refer to page 13 of the Syllabus for assistance in this area. Some time obviously needs to be spent on this component of the syllabus.

Candidates tended to be repetitive in answering this question. Teachers need to remind candidates to guard against this.

The mean for this question was 3.07 out of a total of 7 marks.

Question 4

Responses to this question were sometimes more appropriate for question 3. However, most candidates were able to gain marks for this question.

In spite of the fact that 'named' was in bold, some candidates failed to identify and further describe a specific territory, but wrote on the Caribbean in general.

Question 5

This question was generally well done which is borne out by a mean of 6.03 out of a total of 7 marks.

Question 6

This question was well answered. The mean for this question was 5.59 out of a total of 7 marks.

This question posed some difficulty for candidates who could not distinguish between 'technological devices' used in the question and literary devices. Many candidates apparently did not see the word 'technological' and so failed to respond correctly. Some candidates, however, did quite well on this question.

Section C

Module 3 – Speaking and Writing

Questions 7, 8 and 9 referred to a situation in which a newly formed Sixth-Form Association sought to embark on a recruitment drive.

Question 7

This question was fairly well done as can be seen by a mean of 3.93 out of a total of 7 marks.

Question 8

This question was answered fairly well. However, candidates need to ensure that they are not repeating themselves when they are required to give multiple answers.

Question 9

The term 'context of communication' appeared to be an unfamiliar concept for some candidates. Teachers and candidates can refer to page 20 of the syllabus for further clarification on this area of study. The better candidates, however, were able to score full marks for this question.

Question 10

Question 10 (a) as well as 10 (b) were answered fairly well by most candidates. However, it is important that candidates are able to differentiate between the Communication Process and the elements of the process. This information is detailed on page 19 of the Syllabus.

Paper 01B

There was some improvement this year in the performance of candidates on this paper. This year the mean score was 6.22 as compared to a mean score of 3.99 last year. However, there are still some concerns about the preparation of candidates for this paper. Candidates must be encouraged to utilize the five minutes given to read the questions. It is clear that many candidates did NOT use this time wisely and when the passage was read they did not know what to listen for. This can only be overcome if exercises of this type are done with greater frequency and students are asked to explain what they understand by each question before reading the passage. It appears as if a great deal of attention is not invested in this paper. Finally, grammar, spelling and sentence structure were poor in the candidates' presentation

of the responses in this paper.

Question 1

Many candidates performed poorly on this question. Again this year, they had difficulty in identifying the main idea. Many candidates focussed on the old dilapidated buildings and did not recognise that the writer spoke of the link between the different types of buildings and the history of Havana.

Question 2

This question was one that demanded a simple selection of detail. Candidates did well on this question.

Question 3

Candidates generally did fairly well on this question. However, some candidates did not seem to know some of the most basic literary devices, and if they did know the names they were unable to match name and example.

Question 4

This question posed the greatest difficulty for candidates. Candidates generally did not explain the significance of the devices. Rather, candidates gave definitions of the named devices as a response to question 4. There is a need for more practice in evaluating the writer's selection of devices. An example of a good response is given below:

The metaphor- "mossy threads"

The metaphor is highly effective since it efficiently highlights the weakness of the structure to the readers, as this is an inherent characteristic of moss.

Contrast- juxtaposition "cracked concrete blocks soar between elegant single-storey houses"

The juxtaposition too is effective since in appealing to the sense of sight, it emphasises the huge difference between the old and new buildings in the town.

Paper 02

The performance on this paper was moderate with mean scores for each question falling between 12 and 15. Candidates' writing skills remain a cause for concern though there was some improvement in this area.

Module 1- Gathering and Processing Information

Question 1

The mean score for this question was 12.36, and most candidates scored marks ranging from 6-19. There were virtually as many excellent responses as there were poor ones. Many candidates found the question challenging. They appeared to have difficulty distinguishing between the writer's purpose and the main point. Additionally, a significant number of them demonstrated a lack of understanding of the meaning of a number of literary devices. Many essays were laced with citations of literary devices, but the examples identified were often incorrect. There were also too many cases where the examples were given correctly but the discussion of use or effectiveness unsatisfactory.

A number of candidates also paraphrased the passage or cited discourse types that had no relevance to the question.

In evaluating the reliability of the information, most candidates did not deal with the doubt that could be cast on the information as a result of bias or with the lack of specific documentary support.

Many responses were inadequately developed. The responses lacked introductions and conclusions. In some cases, conclusions were written prior to the candidates' discussion of the last component of the question. Generally, candidates displayed an inability to write well-developed paragraphs.

Module 2 – Language and Community

Question 2

This question was the best done of the three, achieving a mean of 15.02. Most of the responses were awarded marks ranging from 10 to 20. Quite a few responses were excellent, achieving scores between 21 and 25. Not too many responses scored under 10 marks. Those candidates scoring from just above the mean downwards had difficulties particularly with a) identifying the context and matching it with the language behaviour of the characters, b) organising their content, and c) expressing themselves proficiently in Standard English.

Module – Speaking and Writing

Question 3

This question achieved a mean of 12.43, and most of the responses were awarded marks from 7 to 18. As in the case of Question 1, there were virtually as many excellent responses as there were poor ones, but these were a minority. Candidates who scored in the upper middle range (roughly, 14 to 18) could have ascended into the higher range had they been able to:

- a) discuss business and cultural opportunities that the wealthy elite traveller from Europe and North America was likely to be interested in rather than discussing general and popular opportunities, and
- b) separate their presentation part (b) well enough from the strategies suggested to enhance it part (c).

As in the case of the other two questions, better organisation of content and control of exposition in standard English would benefit candidates.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

On the whole, teachers should be commended on the marked improvement in this year's samples. Teachers are following the guidelines given, however, some weaknesses still need to be addressed.

The Reflective Component

A few candidates are still submitting expository pieces for this section. Candidates are reminded that the entries should be reflective and literary in nature. (For example, poems, short stories, dramatic pieces.)

Some candidates are not giving the rationale for the respective pieces while others are giving a long rationale. The rationale is intended to include a brief discussion of the inspiration, audience/situation, and purpose of the pieces. Too many candidates submitted pieces that exceeded the word limit of 1200 words and some teachers did not apply the penalty.

In the handling of the audience/situation, candidates are expected to be very specific. They are expected to specify not only the target audience but also the context/ situation in which the pieces will be presented. Examples of appropriate audiences/situations are:

- A concert in a particular community
- A town meeting
- A section in a particular newspaper/magazine
- A symposium
- A particular website

Some candidates experienced difficulty in the handling of the concept of 'literary genres'. For the purpose of this exercise, candidates are expected to submit original entries from two of the following broad literary genres: poetry, prose and drama. One reason for maintaining the traditional literary convention is for candidates to master the distinct literary elements of each genre.

Teachers need to be aware that the marks for creativity are both for literary creativity in the handling of the respective

genres and supporting design. Candidates should be encouraged to pay attention to creative use of narrative technique, stage directions, use of imagery and irony; exploration of different types of poetry/song; and creation and sustenance of a particular setting. If the pieces have particular designs or colour schemes, these should be linked to the content of the piece.

The Analytical Component

Candidates appear more familiar with the register, dialectal variations, attitudes to language and communicative behaviours but some weaknesses persist.

A few candidates are submitting analytical responses that do not have a discussion of these elements but offer a literary or general critique. Teachers should in fact assign zero for content in such cases and appropriate marks for expression and organization.

Identification of the features should be supported by discussion and analysis of these features in relation to the selected extract.

Some candidates did not submit the extract used for the analysis. Also, candidates should ensure that the extract selected for the Language Analysis is linked thematically to the portfolio.

In general this is the weaker of the two moderated components.

General comments on Internal Assessment

- No aspect of the Expository component should be submitted in the Portfolios submitted for moderation.
- Teachers should submit only five samples even when that teacher is responsible for more than one group.
- Only the names of the five candidates to be moderated should appear on form Comm-3.
- Profanity and graphic pictures/photos (bloody aborted babies/wounded bodies) should be discouraged.

PAPER 03B ALTERNATIVE PAPER

Module 1 Gathering and Processing Information

The number of private candidates increased this year.

Question 1

This question was generally not well done. The mean for this question was 9.37. Candidates did not recognise the importance of applying the word limit for the summary. Also there was too much evidence of lifting as opposed to summary skills being demonstrated. In part (ii) of the question, some candidates did not appear to understand the concept of evaluation and paraphrased the passage. Few candidates handled this question well.

Module 2 Language and Community

Question 2

This question was fairly well done with a mean of 11.13. Candidates are reminded that this question does not merely require a list of examples but a discussion of the purposes and effectiveness of those areas under discussion.

Module 3 Speaking and Writing

Question 3

This question was the best done question on this paper with a mean of 11.37. Most candidates appeared comfortable with the question and were able to address the various parts of it. Some candidates failed to pay attention to part (iv) of the question that asked for three contexts in which this piece would be considered appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Territories are encouraged to draw on the expertise of teachers who have some experience in teaching this subject. New teachers who may be unsure about aspects of the syllabus could benefit from collaboration with experienced teachers. Workshops and sharing of ideas will improve teaching and the performance of all candidates. Candidates must also be exposed to magazines and newspaper articles that encourage them to see how language is used in various settings. Some candidates appear somewhat limited in their knowledge of their history and community and that of the wider Caribbean.