

**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION  
MAY/JUNE 2006**

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

**FRENCH**

**CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS**

**MAY/JUNE 2006**

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

Ten thousand two hundred and thirty-seven (10,237) candidates sat Communication Studies this year as compared to six thousand and eighty (6080) last year. Their performance was overall quite good; in fact, mean scores were better than last year's in Papers 1A and Paper 2, on par in Paper 3 (Internal Assessment), appreciably lower in Paper 3B, and slightly lower in Paper 1B. The percentage of candidates performing acceptably was 99.38 as compared to 97.70 in 2005. The percentage of candidates obtaining Grades I and II increased this year respectively as follows: from 8.84 to 20.59 and from 21.49 to 32.94. The vast majority of the candidates (79.62%) were clustered at Grades I to III as compared to 58.94% per cent last year. This welcome change in performance is related to better performance in Modules 1 and 2 this year. Performance in these Modules moved respectively from 7.50 per cent to 22.89 per cent and from 6.12 per cent to 21.02 per cent, but did not surpass performance in Module 3 which was 28.63 per cent in 2005 and 29.03 per cent this year. Candidates performed best on Paper 1A and worst on Paper 1B. This year's overall better performance seems attributable critically to teachers' increasing familiarity with the syllabus and greater experience teaching the subject.

While more candidates showed that they are writing and comprehending better, there is still much room for improvement in the acquisition of knowledge, the manipulation of the mechanics, grammar and syntax of academic English, the coherent composition of information and ideas, and adherence to what questions are focused on.

**DETAILED COMMENTS**

**PAPER 01A**

The mean score in this paper was 64 per cent, up from 58.63 per cent last year, which indicates that performance improved this year. The mean on eight of the ten questions was no lower than 4 (out of 8), with the highest mean (6.28) on question 7.

**Module 1-Gathering and Processing Information**

Question 1

The mean for this question was 5.95, with most of the candidates scoring in the range 4 to 8; in fact, over twenty-five hundred candidates earned full marks or 8. The question was well done.

### Question 2

The mean here was 3.7, with most candidates scoring in the range 2 to 5. No candidate scored full marks, but over 600 scored 7 marks; the score with the highest number of candidates (2,304) was 3. This is the question on which candidates' performance was the poorest.

## **Module 2- Language and Community**

### Question 3

The mean for this question was 3.97. This was the second lowest mean. Most candidates scored in the range 3 to 6.

### Question 4

The mean for this question was 4.01, with most candidates scoring in the 2 to 6 range.

### Question 5

The mean for this question was 4.11, with most candidates scoring in the 2 to 7 range.

### Question 6

The mean for this question was 5.53, with most candidates scoring 4, 6, and 8.

## **Module 3 – Speaking and Writing**

### Question 7

This question had the highest mean (6.28), with most candidates scoring in the range 5 to 8. Many candidates scored 8.

### Question 8

The mean for this question was 5.15, with most candidates scoring in the range 4 to 8.

### Question 9

The mean for this question was 5.49, with most candidates scoring in the range 4 to 7. Candidates performed well on this question.

### Question 10

The mean was 4.11, with most candidates scoring in the range 3 to 6.

## **Paper 01B**

Candidates performed worst on this paper; their mean score was 38 per cent - down from 41.40 per cent last year.

### Questions 1 & 2(a)

Generally, candidates performed poorly on these questions, which respectively sought the main idea and the main purpose of the passage. They had difficulty both identifying and differentiating them. Needless to say, teachers need to focus more on both the concept of 'main' and the difference between 'idea' and 'purpose'.

### Question 2(b)

Many candidates had difficulty determining and expressing the writer's main strategy, some giving more than one strategy and others not using the word 'contrast' even while indicating that they recognised the use of contrast in the passage.

### Question 3

Most candidates were able to present details about Tobago and Trinidad but many failed to select contrasting details.

### Question 4

Many candidates were unable to accurately identify metaphors, giving other figurative devices instead. Where comment on metaphorical effectiveness was concerned, they typically presented an explanation of their selected metaphor rather than a comment on how it was used in relation to the writer's purpose or intent or to the evocation of images or symbols that contributed to the listener grasping that purpose / intent.

## **Paper 02**

The mean score here was 61 per cent - up from 52.93 per cent last year.

### **Module 1- Gathering and Processing Information**

#### Question 1

The mean score for this question improved from 12.36 (out of 25) to 15.50, and most candidates scored marks ranging from 10-19, with the bulk of them achieving in the range 15 to 18. Many scripts were well-written, with students demonstrating possession of a superior vocabulary and equally superior use of language and organisation of material.

But while most of the responses satisfactorily addressed the question (requiring statement of the author's main point and an essay on the author's purpose, strategies and language techniques, and tone), there were weaknesses. Some candidates showed a lack of understanding of the difference between strategies and linguistic techniques, and identified techniques and strategies along with examples without giving explanations. Many candidates had difficulty with the notion of 'tone', confusing it with pitch and stress through descriptions such as 'high', 'low', 'soft', and 'loud'.

Other weaknesses were: confusion of 'main point' and 'purpose'; essays with neither introduction nor conclusion; undeveloped ideas / paragraphs; absence of transitional devices from paragraph to paragraph; misspellings; mispunctuation; incoherent text; provision of a linguistic analysis of communicative behaviours rather than of a discussion of the strategies used; rewriting rather than analysis of the passage; misinterpretation of the question, resulting in the writing of a short story that incorporated details from the extract together with their opinions on them. In addition, some responses were too short while others exceeded the word limit. A response of under 250 words is not likely to be adequate while one over 500 is likely to be too long.

## **Module 2 – Language and Community**

### Question 2

This question continues to be the best-done of the three, with candidates achieving a mean of 16.14 (out of 20) as compared to 15.02 last year. Most of the responses were awarded marks ranging from 14 to 19, with the bulk of them achieving in the range of 15 to 19. Quite a few scripts were excellent, achieving scores from 20 to 24; and not too many scripts scored under 10 marks. In general, candidates found the extract stimulating and responded fairly well though there were weaknesses in organisation and expression in some scripts, especially those falling below the mean. Many students scored full marks for content but lost too many for organisation and expression.

Too few candidates provided introductions, transitional devices, or conclusions, and many paragraphs were incoherent. Candidates should be advised to pay attention to sentence structure, paragraphing, punctuation, and spelling.

It should be noted that the question required continuous writing and that the sections were meant to guide the students to write a continuous response and not one broken up into lettered / numbered sections.

Section (d) continued to be challenging for students. Too many candidates simply transferred the jargon of the Internal Assessment paper – like 'chronemes', 'proxemics', and 'artifacts' – without making a connection with the given extract. Other candidates simply regurgitated all the details about language / a language, dialectal variation, registers, and completely disregarded the extract or the question (for the section as well as the question as a whole). Conversely, few candidates indicated, for example, that they would focus on Andrea's laughter, which conveyed surprise at Natasha's career choice, or present the tension between Mrs. Jackson and Andrea when the latter code-switched to accommodate the former. Other candidates suggested that they would include / portray the sharp contrast between Natasha's use of Standard English and Mrs. Johnson's failed attempt to produce that language.

If these specific details were mentioned, then the other features, like the use of lighting and special sound effects (in the handling of the details) could have been accommodated by the examiners.

Generally, candidates need to plan their essays, edit their work, and improve their penmanship if they are to significantly enhance their performance.

### **Module 3 – Speaking and Writing**

#### Question 3

This question achieved a mean of 14.12 (out of 20) as compared to 12.43 last year. Most of the responses were awarded marks in the range 12 to 17, with the bulk of them clustered around 13 to 16. The question posed the greatest difficulty to the candidates and, accordingly, their performance was lowest in it. Too many candidates manifested weaknesses as follows: sentence fragments; awkward syntax in excessively long sentences; re-use of the wording of questions in the body of the response; misuse of communication studies jargon and, relatedly, provision of unnecessary, excessive information; non-provision of a rationale; gratuitous and disturbingly graphic references to the genitalia and the sex act; and composition of letters, speeches, drawings and posters, which the question did not call for, rather than identification of the features of an address they would focus on and why.

### **PAPER 3A – INTERNAL ASSESSMENT**

#### **General Comments**

The mean score in this paper was 67 per cent, virtually the same as last year's (67.95) – showing that candidates continue to do reasonably well. Most of the samples submitted followed the criteria set out by the syllabus, and many of them were so creative and thoughtful that they were a joy to read. But there is still room for improvement. Some themes needed to be delimited more narrowly for greater explicitness in the presentations. Teachers should ensure that the pieces submitted are of two different literary genres and that their students more thoroughly edit them to reduce the incidence of markers being distracted by errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Finally, they should insist that the pieces are type-written as far as possible for easier and faster reading by markers.

#### **The Reflective Component/Portfolio**

This component requires candidates to produce original pieces in TWO of the three broad literary genres and to use styles characteristic of the chosen genres. Some candidates satisfied the requirements creditably but too many disappointed the examiners. Perhaps largely because of insufficient care in the selection of themes and composition of rationales, too many pieces were dull, unimaginative, and almost completely devoid of figurative language. There is a strong need for teachers to help.