

**S3021 June**  
**WASSCE 2010**  
**ENGLISH**  
**LANGUAGE 1**  
Essay  
2  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours

**1**

**Name:** .....

**Index Number:** .....

**THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**West African Senior School Certificate Examination**

June 2010

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 1

2  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours

ESSAY

Write your **name** and **index number** in the spaces provided at the top right-hand corner of this booklet.

Answer **four** questions in all: **one** question from Section **A** and **all** the questions in Sections **B** and **C**.

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SECTION A

ESSAY

[ 50 marks ]

*Answer **one** question **only** from this section.*

*All questions carry equal marks. Your answer should **not be less than 450 words.***

*You are advised to spend about **50 minutes** on this section.*

1. You have recently moved into a new neighbourhood with your parents. Write a letter to your sister who is studying overseas giving, at **least, three** reasons for disliking the new place.
2. Write an article for publication in a national newspaper on the topic: *Vocational Training is the answer to unemployment among the youths.*
3. Your country's Public Transport System is not functioning properly. Write a letter to the Minister of Transport highlighting the causes and suggesting, at least, **two** measures to remedy the situation.
4. You are the Chief Speaker in a debate on the topic: *The youths of today are more interested in the pursuit of pleasure than in academic work.* Write your speech for or against the topic.
5. Write a story to illustrate the saying: *A good name is better than riches.*

SECTION B

COMPREHENSION

[ 40 marks ]

*Answer **all** the questions in this section.*

*You are advised to spend about **50 minutes** on this section.*

6. Read the following passage **carefully** and answer the questions on it.

It was a little past 10 a.m. but the medium-sized hall that served as a prayer house was already brimming with people from different parts of the metropolis, who had come to seek cure or answers to their problems.

The majority of this lot were those with seemingly intractable mental health conditions. The superintendent of the prayer house in question was often spoken of in whispers as possessing uncanny spiritual powers to exorcise evil spirits. It was also believed that he had answers to numerous illnesses that defied orthodox medication. Wednesday of each week was set aside for these healing sessions.

On this particular Wednesday, noisy supplications to the Most High and ceaseless invocation of His name to free those supposedly held captive by alleged evil spirits had reached fever pitch. Suddenly, a middle-aged man broke loose from the crowd and ran as fast as his wobbly legs could permit. Some male workers from the prayer house gave him a hot chase.

At first, bemused by-standers rained curses on the fleeing man, wondering why a man in his right senses would in broad daylight rob a house of God. They obviously mistook the man for a robber fleeing from the scene of his crime. But he was not. Minutes later, he was caught and chained hands and feet, despite his struggle against his captors who intermittently lashed him with horse-whip. As he was being violently dragged along the street, the man ceaselessly muttered incomprehensible words that sounded like the muttering of a colony of baboons. Then, a clearer picture of the situation dawned on the on-lookers. The man, after all, was not a thief and had stolen nothing; rather, his ability to think and reason properly had taken flight of him. Simply put, he was mentally deranged.

The above incident is a common occurrence in many parts of the country. It aptly underscores the devastating mental health conditions plaguing a sizeable number of people in recent times. It also points to the unspeakable and inhuman treatment which people with such health disorders suffer at the hands of self-styled spiritualists. This is the usual lot of mental patients whose family members refuse to take advantage of orthodox treatment.

- (a) What brought the people to the prayer house?
- (b) State the functions of the superintendent of the prayer house.
- (c) What was wrong with the on-lookers' assessment of the run-away man?
- (d) Mention **two** instances of inhuman treatment in the passage.

- (e) What is the writer's attitude towards the treatment of lunatics at prayer houses?
- (f) "... like the muttering of a colony of baboons."  
What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
- (g) "... whose family members refuse to take advantage of orthodox treatment."  
(i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?  
(ii) What is its function?
- (h) For **each** of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:  
(i) \* intractable;  
(ii) supplications;  
(iii) wobbly;  
(iv) bemused;  
(v) intermittently;  
(vi) deranged.

7. Read the following passage **carefully** and answer the questions on it.

Miss Williamson announced in class one day that she wanted one of us to live with her to help her with her domestic work after school. There was a rush to volunteer which took her completely by surprise. When she recovered and had quietened our excited shouting, there was a moment during which none of us dared breathe, as she scanned the eager faces. What made her choose me I have never found out, but I had noticed before that she was partial to me. 'All right Karimu,' she said. 'You can come; but first run along and get your father's consent.'

My parents were only too glad to have one mouth fewer to feed and my brothers and sisters to see the back of one who inevitably had begun to assume an air of superiority in talking to them. Miss Williamson's bungalow was a stone's throw from the school. That very evening saw me installed on a mat in a corner of her back veranda. I was unable to sleep, excited at the thought of the good fortune that had come my way. To be within earshot of Miss Williamson's English all day, to have access to her books, to nurse the possibility, overwhelming even in thought, of going with her frequently to Rofunkti – all these visions kept my eyes wide open and my brain racing until very late that night. With my 'lapa' pulled

right over my head and happy beyond all description in my heart, I smiled myself to sleep.

I learnt a very great deal in Miss Williamson's bungalow. Apart from improving my English, I learnt about the world outside, and began to sense that there were barriers much higher and much less easily gauged than those of mere language and colour, between my own people and those from whom she sprang. The smiling teacher in the daytime often became the brooding, restless, ill-tempered spinster in the evening. Her bungalow was shared by another lady, a doctor, also a Scot, who travelled to and fro between the two villages on a bicycle. I noticed that when not at their work or talking about it, these two women showed no signs of being happy. As I grew up with them, I found myself wondering what had made them leave their own country and come to live this strange life among a people whose ways were totally different from theirs.

- (a) Why was Miss Williamson completely surprised?
- (b) Why was Karimu's family happy to see him go to stay at the bungalow?
- (c) State the overwhelming thought that kept Karimu awake.
- (d) What did Karimu find difficult to understand about the two ladies?
- (e) Mention the identical trait in these two ladies' behaviour.
- (f) "*What made her choose me...*"
  - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
  - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) "*I smiled myself to sleep.*"  
What is the meaning of this expression?
- (h) For **each** of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
  - (i) scanned;
  - (ii) inevitably;
  - (iii) nurse;
  - (iv) visions;
  - (v) gauged;
  - (vi) brooding.

SECTION C

SUMMARY

[ 30 marks ]

*You are advised to spend about 50 minutes on this section.*

8. *Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.*

No one can deny the fact that anyone who wants to be successful in learning the English Language needs a good English dictionary. Such a dictionary should be a source of information about the language — information that is not generally available in grammar books. It should not only contain a list of words and their meanings, but also a lot of information that can help a learner to speak and write good English.

In order to use a word correctly, the reader needs to know how to link it with other words in a sentence. He should also know the structures that often precede or follow it, and whether it is formal or informal. This will help him to choose what word is appropriate for a particular context. The dictionary is, therefore, an invaluable aid to reading as well as writing skills.

If the meaning of a particular word in a passage impedes the overall comprehension of the main ideas presented in it, then a dictionary should be used. Most teachers must have observed a widespread tendency among their students to attack a new passage by reading it word by word, stopping to reach for a dictionary whenever they come across a word they do not know. This is a wrong approach; the dictionary should be used only as a last resort. The main objective of reading a passage is not to define specific words but to understand the ideas and concepts of the passage. The frequent use of a dictionary tends to focus the reader's attention on words when he should be concentrating on understanding the main ideas of the passage. Efficient reading implies obtaining the greatest amount of information from the passage in the shortest time possible. The frequent use of a dictionary takes too much time — time that can better be employed in getting an overall understanding of the passage.

Instead of turning to the last resort, the reader should continue reading. Very often, the meaning of an unfamiliar word can be guessed from the

context in which it is used. The passage may give a definition, cite examples or describe the circumstances surrounding the use of such a word well enough for him to know what it means. After reading the whole passage, the reader may realize that he has understood the important ideas presented without knowing the meaning of every word. If, after reading the entire passage, the reader is still unable to guess the meaning of a word from the context, then he should study the structure of the word. The word may be a compound word which, when broken into its component parts, can be easily understood.

If after exhausting these approaches, the reader still does not understand the meaning of a word, and if this word is vital to the comprehension of the whole passage, then and only then, should he refer to a dictionary.

- (a) In **one** sentence state the purpose of a good dictionary.
- (b) In **two** sentences, **one** for **each**, state the **two** disadvantages of constantly referring to a dictionary when reading a passage.
- (c) In **three** sentences, **one** for **each**, summarize the **three** steps that a reader should take before referring to a dictionary.

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