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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Swahili (4SW1) Paper 01: Reading, Writing and
Translation

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Principal Examiner Report 2020, Swahili

This was the second time for candidates to sit this new exam. The performance has been better than last year. Below in the Principal examiner report for the two papers.

Reading and Writing – 4SW1

Question 1

This is a word drop question. Candidates are provided with a passage and twelve words in a box (plus an example). They are expected to fill in six statements from the stimulus text. The words must fit logically and grammatically. This question was more challenging than expected for many candidates.

There was still elimination and guessing by guessing by students this year. They seem to struggle with this question. For example 1e. Kutoka jahazini watu wanaweza kuona vivutio. This answer comes from 'majumba' that can be seen. Candidates use any word that fit 'ulinzi', 'mapishi' etc. They need to get the words from what is in the passage and not guess.

Question 2

This is a multiple matching exercise. This passage was one of the most accessible questions. Once again, it is important to understand what is said in the speech bubbles to do well in this exercise. I would recommend that candidates keep their good work in regards to this question.

Question 3

This is a Note taking exercise. The candidates must remember that the question demands short words responses. Candidates should not try to fit in entire sentences – some of which are lifted from the passage. During the marking, examiners mark question-by-question, when candidates lift an entire passage it becomes very hard to mark. This question was also quite accessible.

Question 4

This question is made up of a passage from a literary text that requires short answers. Again, candidates should avoid lifting entire paragraphs from the given passage. Candidates should remember to answer in the third person. Candidates must read the question and respond accordingly. For example, 'umuhimu wa zulia kwenye habari' – the response cannot be that it is a nice carpet. The relevance is that it shows wealth. This response is given when the passage notes that 'zulia lingeweza kumfariji maskini kwa siku na miezi'.

I would advise teachers to adapt literary passages from the Swahili body of literature, formulate questions and practice for this part of the exam.

Question 5

This is a short writing exercise requiring only 70 words. Candidates need to remember the word count limit and not waste time writing long passages. This year many more wrote perfect short texts than last year. In addition, some students underlined the words they had used from the boxes, which was brilliant. There were many very creative essays.

Question 6

Extended writing requiring 130 words. The most popular choice was Question 6A. It must be remembered that missing out a bullet point translates as missing points. Once again, candidates should avoid writing long essays. Candidates need to work on their grammar. Points to remember are:

1. Swahili is an agglutinating language – candidates should NOT separate grammatical structures such as 'ninapo tazama' and should instead use 'ninapotazama',
2. It must be stressed that candidates need to read good Swahili works by authors and use Standard Swahili dictionaries so they may differentiate slang from standard.
3. Using appropriate idiomatic expressions in their work and using it moderately.
4. Avoid non grammatical use of '-enye', 'kwa', 'aje'
5. We also recommend that candidates be proud of their handwriting and produce clear and concise pieces of writing. Ineligible writing may lead to loss of mark when an examiner cannot make out what has been written.

Question 7

This question was a challenge to many candidates. Vocabulary seems to be a big problem. Translation passage requires that candidates use good grammar. It is highly recommended to centres to teach and help candidates master the Swahili noun classes and to pay particular attention to Swahili object marking, prefixes and various tenses. Candidates struggled with the words 'international film festival', 'talent', 'screened', 'theme', 'competition', 'celebrated'. It will be useful for the vocabulary list provided for this syllabus to be well studied.

