WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

JUNE 2024

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

THEORY PAPER

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

SECTION A – ESSAY

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. Write a letter to your friend in another school describing the end-of-year activities in your school.

2. A youth club is organizing a series of talks meant to stimulate members to prepare adequately for the future. As a youth leader, you have been invited to give a talk on "My dream for the future". Write your speech.

3. There is a public outcry against electoral malpractice in your country. Write an article to be published in one of your national newspapers discussing at least three ways of stopping the trend.

4. There has been a drastic fall in the quality of social amenities in your community. Write a letter to the Commissioner for Public Utilities, stating what inconveniences your people have suffered as a result of this.

5. Write a story that ends with the expression: **It was indeed my lucky day.**

SECTION B – COMPREHENSION

You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this section. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Alade was overjoyed. What had happened was very rare in the history of the institution. He was brilliant and did well in his studies but he was not the overall best in the college; at least, he knew about three of his coursemates whose grade points had been exceptional. Yet, here he was, being favoured above those students. He could not believe his luck.

But it was no dream at all! On that Monday morning, his head of department summoned him, and this was quite unusual. He was full of trepidation as he went to see the head of department who looked at Alade solemnly and enquired about his parents and his studies. "They are fine and my studies are going on quite well, sir".

"Well, I'm happy to hear that", replied the head of department. He proceeded, "I have been directed to inform you that you have been selected to attend an exchange programme which offers opportunities for participants to work together in solving shared problems that endanger the future of the youth. You will be leaving with other students from various institutions in a week's time. Do you have a passport?"

"Yes, sir, I do", Alade confirmed.

"Very well. Then get ready to leave for a six-month programme in Britain."

Alade received the news with a mixture of joy and surprise; he was virtually floating on air. In no time, the news spread round the college and gave him instant popularity. Those who liked him (his friends) were happy; others were envious that they had been ignored. They thought that such a prestigious award should have been given to more qualified students, since Alade was certainly not the overall best in his class.

Alade began his preparation in earnest. He had a number of things to discard – his furniture, electronic gadgets and the old car. There would be no place to keep all these as he would have to give up his accommodation as well. After all, he would be able to procure better ones by the time he returned home.

His coursemates, including the grudging ones, held a send-off party and wished him well. On the day of his departure, Alade had the greatest shock of his life. He got to the airport only to find out that he could not travel with the others. His institution did not send his transcript as requested and his offer had been given to another person. How would Alade face his coursemates after bidding them farewell?

(a) Why was Alade surprised at the news?

(b) What does Alade's reaction to the news tell you about him?

(c) What was the purpose of the exchange programme?

(d) How did Alade's coursemates receive the news about his nomination?

(e) How did the head of department feel about Alade's selection?

(f) Why was the award given to another person?

(g) *"What had happened was very rare ..."* State two events in the passage that support this.

(h) *"... as he went to see the head of department ..."*

(i) What is the grammatical name of this expression as it is used in the passage?

(ii) What is its function?

(i) *"... floating on air"* What figure of speech is used in this expression?

(j) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase that means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage.

(i) exceptional; (ii) summoned; (iii) opportunities; (iv) discard; (v) grudging; (vi) offer.

SECTION C – SUMMARY

You are advised to spend about 40 minutes on this section. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Ever since gold dealers from the big cities started buying gold in large quantities directly from the people of Osibua, the lives of the people there changed for the worse.

The dealers offered favourable and juicy prices for the nuggets. Soon, young men and women from the surrounding villages invaded the village of Mbebe to look for the precious metal. Hitherto, the villagers collected gold particles and small nuggets from the sand in the gullies after a heavy downpour. However, on Tuesdays, the villagers are allowed to look for gold in the small river called River Terra, their only source of water. They send the gold to an assayer who examines its particles and nuggets, and buys them.

The young men and women who invaded the village for the "gold rush" were not content with how the villagers collected gold from their small river. They therefore introduced more sophisticated equipment such as pick axes, shovels and bulldozers as well as other modern digging implements to mine the gold from River Terra.

This boomed the gold business. However, as a result of the frequent mining of gold in the river, the water became polluted. They used chemicals that were dangerous to aquatic and human lives. Thus, the villagers could no longer use the water from the river for their chores.

Some young men and women looked for gold from abandoned mining pits, which was risky. Most of the young men plunged to their deaths in the open pits. To avoid the frequent deaths, some of the miners sought protection from the gods by offering schnapps to make libation. Others offered sacrifices in the form of goats and mashed yam for the gods before they embarked on each operation. Unfortunately, they continued to die. The open pits, which were death traps, became sources of water-borne diseases such as bilharzia, cholera and typhoid fever.

Drug pushers selling hard drugs literally took over Mbebe. Children as young as eight years started abusing hard drugs such as marijuana, cocaine and heroin. These drugs destroyed the lives of many young men and women. Some school students, especially those in junior high school, abandoned school and joined the miners and drug dealers.

Some concerned citizens who were worried about the havoc gold mining had brought to the people of Mbebe, launched an educational crusade on the protection of River Terra, the only source of water for the villagers. The traditional leaders of the community introduced measures to curb the menace. Parents and guardians were fined heavily if their wards were found engaging in any of the social vices.

(a) In four sentences, one for each, state the negative effects mining had on the people of Mbebe.

(b) In two sentences, one for each, state measures that were taken to stop the negative effects of mining on Mbebe.

End of Theory Paper