WASSCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE 2014

PAPER TWO (THEORY)

SECTION A

*Answer **one** question only from this section. Your answer should be about 450 words long.*

1. A friend of yours who has been living in Europe for some years has written to invite you to join him. Write a reply to his letter giving, at least, three reasons why you would rather remain in your country.

2. Write an article suitable for publication in your school magazine on the need to inculcate good moral values in the youth.

3. Write a letter to the Minister of Education in your country, discussing at least three ways by which the quality of education could be improved.

4. You are the main speaker in a debate on the topic: *Technology has made the world a better place.* Write your arguments for or against the motion.

5. Write a story to illustrate the saying: *The devil makes work for idle hands.*

SECTION B

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

6.

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

The case of David Akide drives home the point that nobody should be written off as a failure as long as he has not died. As far as I can recall, he was one of the weakest in class throughout our primary school career. Right from the second grade, he was the butt of most of our jokes. Indeed, whenever the teacher referred a question to him, most of us waited eagerly to have a good laugh. But we all admired him for two things. For one thing, he was the only one who never wrote with the right hand as he was a complete southpaw. Then, he endured all jokes cheerfully and indeed referred to himself as “Mr. Why Hurry”. Forever sociable, he was a friend to everybody who came close enough.

Not surprisingly, we left him behind in the primary school as he could not get admitted to any of the secondary schools to which he took an admission examination. That was why, from the time I entered the secondary school, I lost contact with him. Nor did any of my mates whom I closely associated with ever mention meeting him anywhere. As far as most of us were concerned, David had faded away into obscurity. I imagined that he must have ended up in one of the low-grade vocations since he was at least good in handcraft.

Then, a few months ago, thirty-eight years after I last saw him in the primary school, while I was watching a 9 o’clock television network programme, I saw David being interviewed by a team of reporters. He was introduced as a specialist surgeon who had made his mark in heart surgery in the nation’s leading teaching hospital. The questions were on his recent feat in his successful correction of an abnormality in the heart of a patient who had been written off by most other specialists. The patient fully recovered and was now back in his vocation as a mechanic. I was amazed. I was pleasantly surprised. From the interview, it became clear that he had experienced a surge in intellectual prowess late in his secondary school career and zoomed into and through the university as a medical student. Thereafter, it had been one major achievement after another for him in his chosen field.

Questions

a) What evidence is there that the writer is not a young person?

b) For what two things was David Akide admired by others in the primary school?

c) Why could he not move into a secondary school along with the others?

d) What did the writer assume had been the fate of David after leaving the primary school?

e) What is established by the fact that David Akide was being interviewed by a panel of reporters on the nation’s network programme?

f) Why was the writer amazed?

g) '…while I was watching a 9 o'clock television network programme…'

i) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?

ii) What is its function?

h) '…zoomed into and through the university…'

i) What figure of speech is used in this expression?

ii) What does it mean?

i) 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) cheerfully ii) sociable iii) imagined iv) vocation v) achievement

SECTION C

7.

Read the following passage carefully and answer, in your own words as far as possible, the questions on it.

Have you ever considered the vast differences between the conventional desktop telephone and the modern handset telephone? The desktop telephone has one distinct function: that of making and receiving calls. Apart from that, perhaps the other use is aesthetic – adding some beauty to the furniture pieces in the room. The conventional telephone set was a status symbol, as only the rich and highly privileged could afford it. To obtain it, one had to fill many forms and have three well-known citizens to attest to one's sterling qualities as a highly responsible member of the society. Then, after paying several fees, one had to wait for several months before the telecommunications department officials would come to install the wires, in order to get one's set connected to the national grid. After that, the applicant might count himself among the privileged ones in the community. But he must not heave a sigh of relief yet: his problems may just be beginning. The inclement weather may remind him that his use of the facility is at its mercy. A rainstorm or even a strong wind can destroy some of the wire-bearing poles, thus cutting him off from other telephone users. Besides, a vehicular accident may knock down a pole or several of them. It is not even uncommon for termites to render wooden poles useless. Finally, there are the problems of the communications department officials who are noted for bringing bills late, and cutting off wires for failure to pay up promptly. Most often, the bills bear little resemblance to actual consumption. Thus, the telephone is not always there at one's service.

Like the conventional desktop telephone set, the handset has the primary function of making and receiving calls. Beyond that, there are vast differences between them. To begin with, the small handset is not much of a status symbol now. It is very easy to carry about and it can be used everywhere by all and sundry. The telephone service providers have flooded the market with lines at very low prices, such that most users can boast of two or more lines. Gone are the days when one had to apply for a set and wait for months. Today, all that it takes is to purchase the handset, which could be very cheap or very costly depending on one's preferences and purse. Once it is purchased, its user could have access to dozens of functions. Apart from making and receiving calls, one could send text messages and receive responses within minutes. The set could be used to take pictures which could be as clear as any taken with a professional camera. One could also connect to the internet to read newspapers and send mails. Besides, the set could be used to store songs; it could also be used as a radio receiver. One could use the handset to programme schedules of activities. The reliable timepiece on it could be used as a watch. Young ones play games on their handsets and store pictures of loved ones on them. However, with all these advantages, the handset has one obvious shortcoming: it can easily be lost or stolen. This is where the conventional desktop telephone is not vulnerable.

Questions

a) In three sentences, one for each, summarise the problems associated with owning the desktop telephone.

b) In three sentences, one for each, summarise the advantages which the handset telephone has over the desktop telephone.