WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 2 — ESSAY / COMPREHENSION

2017

SECTION A

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

1. Your friend has not been attending classes regularly; write a letter to his/her parents informing them of his/her behaviour and the likely consequences.

2. Many articles have appeared in various newspapers about the increase in crime rate. Write your contribution condemning the situation and suggesting ways of tackling the problem.

3. Write a letter to the District Chief Executive thanking him for the construction of new roads and telling him of at least three ways in which the community will benefit from it.

4. A new principal has just been posted to your school. As the Senior Prefect, write a welcome address on behalf of the students, pointing out three areas of need in the school.

5. Write a story to illustrate the saying: **Once bitten, twice shy**.

SECTION B

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

Five decades ago, my classmates lured me into a trap that taught me a lesson of a lifetime. As the class monitor, I was informed that the class had decided not to do the homework given to us by the Geography teacher. The decision was based on three grounds. First, she had not taught us anything substantial since her arrival in school. Second, we must let her know that in this all-male institution, a female should not push us around. Also, she seemed forever inaudible when teaching us.

So, my mates mandated me to convey the decision to her. Thus sent, I confronted her with our decision. All she said was, 'Noted'. I assumed we had won the day. Alas! How wrong I was. When she came to class the following Monday, she demanded the homework. As I stood up to restate our stand, behold, all my mates took out their notebooks and submitted them. I was the odd one in the class of thirty-five boys! This act of betrayal left me speechless. Any protest now was out of the question.

The teacher led me to the overgrown part of the football field, measured out a large portion and ordered me to clear it before returning to either the class or dormitory. I realized I had been stabbed in the back, as I heard my mates laugh sarcastically in the classroom. I bent down with my sharpened cutlass, determined to finish the work within the day and regain my freedom in good time. How wrong I was!

My father had chosen that day of all days to pay me a visit. He rarely did so, as the school in Tamale was far from Accra, his base. Not finding me in class, he asked after my whereabouts. My mates described to him my heinous crime and directed him to my punishment post. When he arrived, he took the cutlass from me, cut a big cane and gave me the flogging of my life. He then went to the bursar's office, paid the balance of my fees, and returned to Accra with all the provisions he had brought for me.

I finished the task just before the last school hour, went to the lady teacher, prostrated myself, and tearfully apologized to her. But for the rest of the week, and indeed many more days, I stayed aloof from my mates.

Questions

a) How did the class betray their monitor?

b) State two forms of punishment the monitor received.

c) What coincidence is there in the narration?

d) In what two ways did the monitor show remorse?

e) What was the reaction of the monitor to his mates after the incident?

f) 'When she came to class the following Monday…'

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

ii. What is its function?

g) '… I had been stabbed in the back…'

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

ii. What does it mean?

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) mandated;

ii) assumed;

iii) betrayal;

iv) sarcastically;

v) heinous;

vi) tearfully.

SECTION C

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

Scientific interventions are known and used in all parts of the globe; in ultra-modern buildings in the cities, as well as in huts in the remotest areas. The impact of scientific discoveries on humans is felt most particularly in the home where people derive immense pleasure and happiness from various means of entertainment. Sound systems and gadgets produce melodious music loud and clear to entertain music lovers. Modern television sets and home theatres show films to lighten moods, dispel boredom and help overcome depression.

The capacity of science to do good to humans seems to be infinite. People were thrilled when science carried man to the moon and outer space. Over time, chemists, physicists and physicians have developed clinical aids and drugs that have been used to cure hitherto incurable diseases. Thanks to science, there have been vast strides in medicine and medical practices.

What decades ago were in the realm of science fiction has now become reality. The vast distances which separated the continents have been bridged. Now it is possible to send and receive messages to and from all parts of the world via satellite within seconds. What is more interesting is that familiar voices can be heard and faces seen from thousands of miles away. Indeed, science has built the communication network, improving on it by leaps and bounds. However, science has its attendant ills. Scientists can and have created abominable things which have served as means to destroy humanity. A United Nations boss hinted that the world was sitting on a keg of gunpowder which could explode with dire consequences. That was many years ago; surprisingly, the warning went unheeded. Now scientists in many countries of the world are working overtime to produce more and more devastating bombs.

The explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki did much more than shake and decimate these two towns; they shook the entire scientific world. Horrible accidents on roads, at sea and in the air continue to claim lives. In the world of cosmetics alone, thousands of animals and plants are destroyed in experiments to produce creams and substances to beautify the skin. Some of these substances may be toxic. These reckless scientific pursuits have led to loss of human lives, thus reducing the population. Not less significant is the enormous waste of natural resources. For example, atomic bombs have been deposited in large quantities in water bodies which render the water undrinkable. Wars, as has been pointed out, reduce whole cities to rubble and a lot of the resources that would otherwise improve living standards are channelled into the production of weapons of mass destruction.

In the modern world, machines have replaced manual labour, thus relieving man of long hours of strenuous work. Machines are engaged to do almost everything — for example, farming, road construction, industrial work and cooking. Work which could have taken humans years to complete is now done in a few months by

high-powered machines. These machines are effective but have put humans out of jobs, causing unemployment on an unprecedented scale.

However, scientists are worried because no one is sure of what the future holds for humans, not even the scientists themselves. Science has gone too far; too fast!

Questions

a) In three sentences, one for each, state the benefits of science to man.

b) In three sentences, one for each, state the harmful effects of science.