WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 2 — ESSAY / COMPREHENSION

2019

SECTION A

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

1. Your friend wants to travel abroad for university education. Write a letter expressing your views about his intention and advising him on what to do.

2. Write an article suitable for publication in your school magazine on the dangers of disobeying school rules and regulations.

3. As the Senior Prefect of your school, write a letter to the Chairman of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) pointing out the need for a computer laboratory and requesting the association to build and equip one for the school.

4. You are the main speaker in a debate on the topic: **Knowledge gained from experience is more important than knowledge gained from books**. Write your argument for or against the motion.

5. Write a story to illustrate the saying: **Forewarned is forearmed**.

SECTION B

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

Kola's parents were quite loving and kind. They wanted to bring up their only son well. They worked hard to make ends meet but provided him and his siblings with all their material needs. Also, they taught him to respect elders by never questioning their authority or looking into their eyes when they spoke. It was the height of disrespect to say an elder was wrong or stand head raised when being addressed by him. Heads must be bowed and nodded in respectful affirmation of the wisdom emanating from the lips of the elderly. A young person was not expected to be as knowledgeable as an elder. According to an adage, what an elder sees lying down, the young cannot see from the top of a tree. An infringement of these rules attracted instant reprimands.

Many people grew up in this atmosphere a few decades ago. The few recalcitrant ones who always broke the rules paid dearly for it and were labelled rude and incorrigible. Kola wanted to be termed good and well-behaved. He did all that was expected of him and enjoyed additional affection from his parents and elders. But he paid a price for it — fear. He was always afraid to express views that could be contrary to those of elders no matter how strongly he felt about them. The fear grew and spread even to his relationship with his mates. He was afraid of being pronounced rude or wrong. Gradually, he lost his self-confidence. This affected his speech as he started to stutter and stammer. The condemnation by his parents and elders, combined with the ridicule of his mates, worsened the matter.

At the end of his secondary school career, Kola realized that his strength was academics. He was among the best five in his class. He gained admission to a renowned university and applied himself to his studies. Apart from his textbooks, he read novels and biographies and listened to discussions on topical issues on radio and television. His lecturers soon recognized his academic prowess and encouraged him. His mates admired and sought after him especially when given difficult assignments in the courses they had in common. His speech improved, and by the time he graduated with a second class upper in English Language, he had become a powerful speaker who could also use eye-contact and body language to sway his audience.

Questions

a) In what two ways were young people expected to show respect when an elder spoke?

b) How does the writer show that the rules mentioned in the passage are no longer imposed?

c) What two factors gave rise to Kola's speech problems?

d) State two things that helped Kola to regain his confidence.

e) Contrast the attitude of Kola's mates in secondary school with that of his university mates.

f) '… to make ends meet …' What does this expression mean?

g) '… to be termed good and well-behaved.'

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 or phrases, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:

i) the height of;

ii) infringement;

iii) recalcitrant;

iv) renowned;

v) prowess;

vi) sway.

SECTION C

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

Why do most academics, with sound qualifications and technical know-how, hardly ever venture into business? One would have thought that with their vast knowledge and discoveries in the technical world, they would do well as founders and owners of businesses. But that is not so, and for good reasons.

To begin with, consider the university academic with a chain of degrees, living in staff quarters. His salary and allowances are fairly high and come in regularly. Thus, all things considered, he hardly has any cause to look outside. Besides, the environment in which he lives, located in a secluded area as it is, keeps him far removed from the real society and so may not have any cause to think of founding an outfit to solve any problem from which he can benefit financially.

Let us face it; the average entrepreneur thrives on loans, raised often from banks. So, he is a risk-taker who is ready to part with his properties used as collateral should the business fail. Most university academics are scared of taking loans. In any case, even if they want to take risks, academics hardly ever have the type of properties that banks demand for collateral. We have to realize that an academic spends a great part of his life acquiring qualifications, after which he tries to settle down in a rented staff apartment and save on a monthly basis to acquire a car, educate his children and manage to live comfortably. No bank would take a car, even if it is new, as collateral.

Then think of an academic who has spent most of his life researching into issues. Day by day, he thinks of how to address problems. With all these findings stored up in his brain, his one and foremost intent is to impart the wealth of knowledge at his disposal. That is where his joy lies, not in making millions in the business world. I know of a professor of Botany who lives virtually among plants and trees, the various botanical names ringing in his brain. He can tell you which species of trees would do well as furniture material, while pharmaceutical companies consult him on which herb would best cure what disease. But that is where it ends; he cannot be persuaded to go into lumbering, furniture making or drug production.

Then there are academics who do not believe that their discipline can fit into business. Consider a professor of language studies who insisted that his field could not lend itself to entrepreneurship. But he realized how wrong he had been when a girl who had earned her degree from his stable started part-time institutions in various parts of the city, and was living far more comfortably than he.

There are also some academics who tried to translate their research work into business enterprises without considering the reality in the larger society. Here was an academic who had earned his doctorate by studying goats. He tried his hands at raising goats for commercial purposes but discovered that his goats were not the type the marketers wanted. The goats were too beautiful to be slaughtered for meat and were too costly to be

considered by local restaurants. He soon beat a retreat and tried his hands successfully at piggery, which he did not study for his awards.

Questions

a) In five sentences, one for each, state the reasons why most academics do not venture into business.

b) In one sentence, state why some academics fail when they venture into business.