



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
THE NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA



CANDIDATES' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS REPORT FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVING EXAMINATION (PSLE) 2025

ENGLISH LANGUAGE



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FOREWORD

Candidates' Item Response Analysis (CIRA) is a report that systematically evaluates candidates' responses. The evaluation for candidates' performance in questions assessed in English Language Paper for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) administered in September 2025 was done so as to provide feedback to education stakeholders. The feedback is provided by identifying and analysing the factors that influenced candidates correct and incorrect responses to examination items.

Analysis of the candidates' responses indicates that those who performed well demonstrated adequate mastery of basic vocabulary and applied it appropriately across different contexts. They also showed competence in the application of grammatical rules, as well as in listening, reading, and comprehending both oral and written information. Conversely, candidates who responded incorrectly exhibited limited proficiency in these areas, which negatively affected their overall performance.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects this report will support education stakeholders such as teachers, school managers, school quality assurers and education administrators by giving them feedback and recommendations that guide effective teaching and learning of English Language in primary schools, thereby contributing to improved students' mastery of competences in this subject.

The Council extends its sincere appreciation to all individuals who contributed to making the preparation of this report possible.



Prof. Said A. Mohamed
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of candidates' responses to the English Language subject in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) administered in 2025. The English Language examination was developed in accordance with the 2015 English Language Subject Syllabus and the 2024 English Language examination format. It assessed candidates' competencies in listening to and comprehending orally presented information. It also assessed their ability in developing and appropriately using vocabulary through listening, reading, and writing; communicating simple ideas through writing; and reading and comprehending written texts.

The examination comprised three sections, namely Sections A, B, and C, with a total of seven (7) questions. Section A consisted of 20 items of one (1) mark each, making a total of 20 marks. Section B comprised 10 items, each awarded two (2) marks, making a total of 20 marks. Section C consisted of five (5) short-answer items, each worth two (2) marks, hence 10 marks for the section.

For each question, the analysis provides a description of the task to the candidate, the expected responses, an overview of candidates' performance, and explanations of common response patterns. Selected sample responses from candidates' scripts are included to illustrate typical answers to the examination items. In addition, the benchmarks for PSLE performance are categorised and presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Benchmarks for the PSLE Performance Grades
in English Language Subject**

Range of Marks	Grade	Remarks
41 - 50	A	Excellent
31 – 40	B	Very Good
21 – 30	C	Good
11 – 20	D	Satisfactory
0 - 10	F	Fail

Candidates' performance is categorised according to score ranges, whereby good performance falls between 60 and 100 percent, average performance between 40 and 59 percent, and poor performance between 0 and 39 percent. A summary of candidates' performance for each assessed competency is provided in the appendix.

A total of 1,172,324 candidates were registered for the English Language Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) in 2025. Of these, 1,146,128 (97.76%) candidates sat for the examination, out of whom 574,336 (50.11%) passed. Comparatively, in 2024, 1,356,286 (97.06%) candidates, of those registered, sat for the examination, and 523,811 (43.48%) candidates passed as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of Candidates' Performance in PSLE 2025 and 2024, English Language National Examination

Year	Sat	Passed (Grade A-C)		Grade D		Grade E	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2024	1,356,286	523,811	43.48	566,232	47.00	114,557	9.51
2025	1,146,128	574,336	50.11	422,048	36.82	149,744	13.07

Table 2 indicates an improvement in the general performance of candidates in English Language, with the pass rate increasing by 6.63 percentage from 43.48 per cent in 2024 to 50.11 percent in 2025. This upward trend suggests improvement in candidates' mastery of the English Language at the primary school level. This also implies that there is an improvement in teaching and learning of English Language subject at school level.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATES' RESPONSES IN ITEMS

The analysis of candidates' responses focused on their ability to answer specific questions correctly. In addition, it examines the factors contributing to both correct and incorrect responses. The overall performance for each question is presented using numerical values and corresponding percentages.

In this examination, candidates demonstrated strong performance on question 7 on Communicating Simple Ideas through Writing, with 62.30 percent attaining average to good scores. In contrast, question 6 on Reading and Comprehending Written Information

posed the greatest challenge, with only 17.43 percent of candidates providing correct responses.

2.1 SECTION A: COMPREHENDING ORAL INFORMATION, COMMUNICATING WRITTEN INFORMATION AND DEVELOPING AND USING VOCABULARY

This section comprised four questions, each containing five items. Each item was allocated one (1) mark, hence a total of 20 marks for the section.

2.1.1 Question 1: Multiple-choice Items

The candidates were required to choose the correct answer from the given alternatives (A-E). This question had items (i) to (v) which assessed candidates' ability to listen to and comprehend an oral passage read by the invigilator.

Question 1 was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 481,465 candidates scored between 0 and 2 marks, reflecting poor performance. A total of 279,443 candidates scored 0 marks, indicating an average performance, while 385,282 candidates scored between 4 and 5 marks, reflecting good performance. Overall, the performance on this question was of average, with 57.99 percent of candidates who scored between 0 and 5 marks. Figure 1 summarises candidates' performance on Question 1.

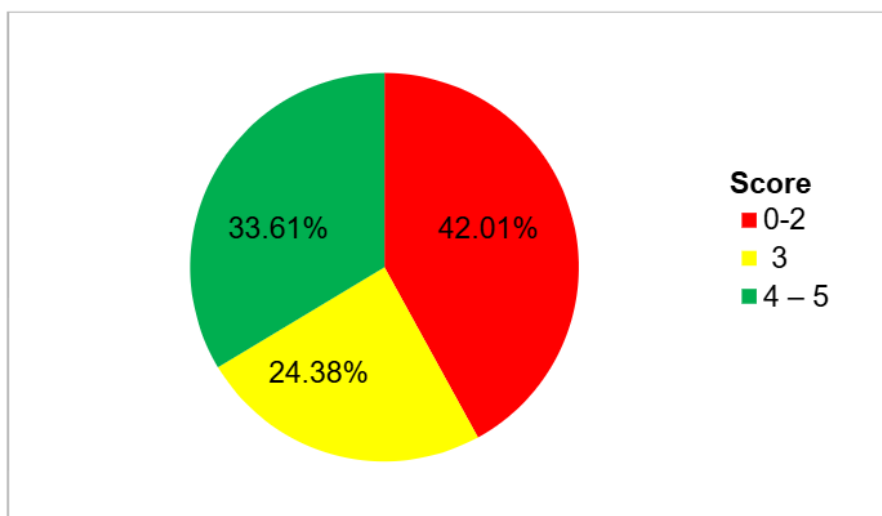


Figure 1: Candidates' Performance on Question 1

The oral passage was as follows:

Long time ago a cock, a hen, an owl, an eagle and a hawk lived in the forest. One day it was raining heavily. There was no cave nearby where they could hide. They were very wet and cold. The cock said, "Let us go and stay at the sides of the human house so that we cannot get wet anymore." The hen agreed, but the owl disagreed. The cock and the hen went to a nearby house and stayed at the sides of the house until morning.

In the morning, Rehema, who was the second born child among the three children in Mr and Mrs, Musa's family, saw the hen and the cock. He went inside and told his father. His father came out. When he saw the two creatures he ordered his two sons John and Amani to clean the chicken coop, then he ordered Rehema to take the two creatures to the coop. The cock and the hen were very happy. They

jumped here and there singing “Goodbye to the rain, goodbye to the rain.” That is how the hen and the cock started living with humans.

The analysis of candidates’ responses to items (i) to (v) is presented as follows:

- (i) Who live with humans?
- A A cock and a hen
 - B A hen and an eagle
 - C An owl and a cock
 - D An eagle and a hen
 - E A hawk and an owl

Item (i) required candidates to identify animals that lived with humans in the passage. Candidates who selected option A (A cock and a hen) demonstrated correct understanding of the text. Candidates who chose option B (A hen and an eagle) or option D (An eagle and a hen) likely confused wild and domestic animals, indicating misconceptions about animal habitats. Those who selected option C (An owl and a cock) or option E (A hawk and an owl) showed limited understanding, as these options consisted mainly of wild birds, suggesting difficulty in distinguishing between domestic and wild species.

- (ii) Who took the hen and cock to the chicken coop?
- A Mr. Musa
 - B Rehema
 - C John
 - D Mrs. Musa
 - E Amani

Item (ii) required the candidates to identify the name of a person who did something in the story. Those who selected option B (Rehema) demonstrated good understanding of the passage, reflecting effective listening and attention to key details. Those who chose option A (Mr. Musa) or option C (John) did not understand the passage especially the specific events that took place in the story. Candidates who selected option D (Mrs. Musa) or option E (Amani) did not understand the main actors and key information presented in the story.

- (iii) How many children are in Mr. and Mrs. Musa's family?
- A One
 - B Three
 - C Six
 - D Seven
 - E Four

Item (iii) required the candidates to identify specific numerical information from the story. Candidates who chose option B (Three) demonstrated correct understanding, indicating accurate recall of information and

effective processing of oral content. Those who chose option A (One), option C (Six), option D (Seven), or option E (Four) showed varying degrees of misunderstanding or inattention to detail, suggesting difficulty in extracting precise information from the passage.

- (iv) Why did the birds go and stay at the sides of the human house?
- A They wanted to take a look of a house.
 - B The cave was too small for them.
 - C It was too dark for them to see in the cave.
 - D They were tired to walk.
 - E They wanted to avoid getting wet anymore.

Item (iv) required the candidates to understand reasons or motives for birds to go and stay at the sides of human house as described in the passage. Candidates who chose option E (They wanted to avoid getting wet anymore) demonstrated correct understanding of the passage, reflecting the ability to understand causes as they were told in the story. Those who chose options A (They wanted to take a look of a house), B (The cave was too small for them), C (It was too dark for them to see in the cave), or D (They were tired to walk) showed wrong oral comprehension. They failed to identify the correct cause of the birds' actions from the oral information presented.

- (v) How did the hen and cock show their joy?
- A By jumping and singing
 - B By clapping their hands
 - C By staying nearby the house
 - D By crowing for some times
 - E By thanking Mr. Musa's family

Item (v) required the candidates to interpret actions done by hen and cock to show joy. Candidates who chose option A (By jumping and singing) demonstrated correct understanding, reflecting their ability to identify the actions that indicated joy in the passage. Those who chose options B (By clapping their hands), C (By staying nearby the house), D (By crowing for some times), or E (By thanking Mr. Musa's family) were unable to interpret the specific actions that conveyed the birds' happiness.

2.1.2 Question 2: Multiple-choice Items

The question consisted of five (5) multiple-choice items set to assess candidates' ability to communicate simple ideas in writing across a range of contexts. Candidates were required to complete each sentence by choosing the letter corresponding to the correct option (A–E) and recording it in the space provided. The candidates had to demonstrate their understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence construction according to the contexts provided.

Question 2 was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 760,587 candidates scored between

0 and 2 marks, reflecting poor performance. A total of 176,437 candidates scored 0, indicating an average performance, while 209,166 candidates scored between 4 and 5 marks, reflecting good performance. Overall, the performance on this question was poor, with only 33.64 percent of candidates scoring on the range of average to good. Figure 2 summarises candidates' performance on Question 2.

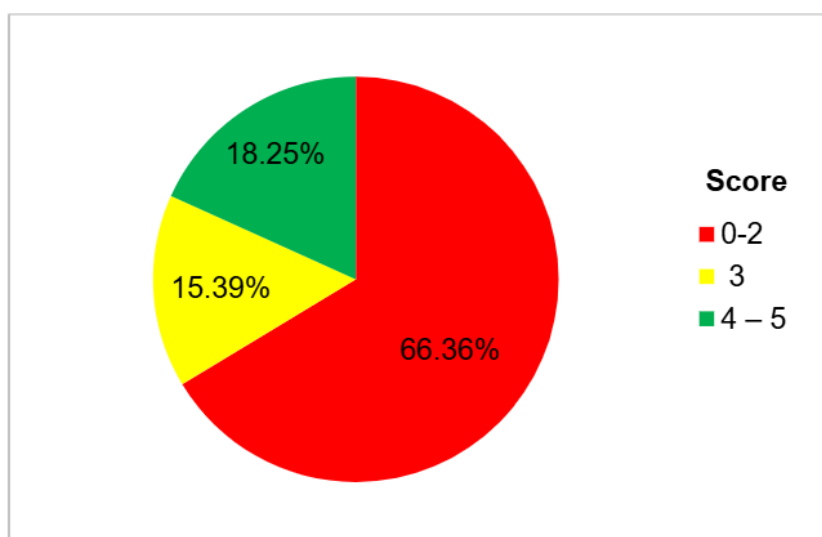


Figure 2: Candidates' Performance on Question 2

The analysis of candidates' responses in each item (i) to (v) is presented as follows:

(i) Maneno told his friends that he _____ a class monitor for a year before he was elected the head prefect.

- A has been
- B had been
- C is being
- D was being
- E have been

Item (i) assessed candidates' ability to use the correct tense in a sentence, testing their understanding of past events and appropriate verb forms. Candidates who chose option B (had been) demonstrated their competence on the use and form of the past perfect tense, reflecting accurate grammatical knowledge and contextual application. Candidates who selected option A (has been) used the present perfect tense, which is inappropriate in this context because it links a past action to the present. In the sentence, both actions occurred in the past, and therefore the present perfect does not accurately convey the time relationship. Those who chose option C (is being) applied the present continuous tense, which describes an action happening at the moment of speaking. This option is incorrect because the sentence refers to a completed role in the past, not an ongoing activity.

Candidates who chose option D (was being) used the past continuous tense, which indicates an action that was

ongoing at a specific time in the past. However, the sentence requires emphasis on the completed duration of one year before another past event, not an action in progress. Similarly, option E (have been) is incorrect because it is also in the present perfect tense and does not agree with the past-time reference established by the phrase *“before he was elected the head prefect.”* This shows that candidates who chose this option had difficulty linking verb tense choice to time markers in the sentence.

- (ii) Madam Julieth and Mr. John are our new teachers.
They _____ teaching us English next week.
- A will start
 - B would start
 - C start
 - D started
 - E were started

Item (ii) tested candidates' ability to use appropriate verb forms to express future actions, focusing on tense usage within a given context. Candidates who selected option A (will start) were able to determine the correct use of the future tense.

However, candidates who selected option B (would start) demonstrated their inability to determine the use of conditional or reported speech structures, as this tense is inappropriate in a direct statement referring to a definite future event. Those who chose option C (start) showed

limited knowledge regarding tense agreement. Candidates who selected option D (started) applied the past tense incorrectly, indicating their inability to distinguish between past and future actions. The selection of option E (were started) reflected weak grasp of verb voice and tense, as the passive form is grammatically incorrect and contextually inappropriate in this sentence.

- (iii) When Mr. Kajumulo asked about his car which had been stolen, I said, "I know the man _____ stole the car."
- A where
 - B whom
 - C whose
 - D who
 - E which

Item (iii) assessed candidates' comprehension on relative pronouns in sentence construction. Candidates who chose option D (who) demonstrated competence on grammatical knowledge by appropriately using a relative pronoun to refer to a person performing an action.

Those who chose option A (where) understood how the relative adverbs are used to refer to places rather than people. Selection of option B (whom) indicated misconception between subject and object relative pronouns, since **whom** is incorrectly used as the subject of the clause. Candidates who selected option C (whose)

demonstrated limited competence on the use of possessive relative pronouns, as it does not correctly complete the sentence. Those who chose option E (which) were unable to distinguish between relative pronouns used for people and those used for objects or animals.

- (iv) The sun rises in the east and sets in the _____.
- A west
 - B south west
 - C south
 - D north
 - E north west

Item (iv) evaluated candidates' knowledge of basic geographical facts and their ability to apply appropriate vocabulary in sentence completion. Candidates who selected option A (west) demonstrated their ability to express cardinal directions. Those who chose option B (south west) or option E (north west) showed partial understanding, as these are intercardinal directions that do not correctly complete the commonly known statement. Candidates who selected option C (south) or option D (north) exhibited limited understanding of basic directional concepts, indicating gaps in general knowledge required to accurately complete the sentence.

- (v) The Zebra sign is used by the people to _____.
- A cross the road
 - B start engines
 - C drive fast
 - D stop crossing
 - E stop walking

Item (v) measured candidates' understanding of commonly used public signs and their ability to apply appropriate vocabulary to complete a sentence.

Candidates who selected option A (cross the road) demonstrated their understanding of the function of a zebra crossing sign.

Those who chose option B (start engines) or option C (drive fast) could not correctly interpret road signs. Candidates who selected option D (stop crossing) or option E (stop walking) seem to have confused traffic and pedestrian safety conventions.

2.1.3 Question 3: Short Answer Items

This question had five (5) items (i) to (v). Candidates were required to complete the given sentences by selecting appropriate words from the box provided and filling in the blanks accordingly. This question assessed candidates' ability to develop and apply vocabulary appropriately across different communication contexts.

The question was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. On this question, 737,702 candidates scored between 0 and 2 marks, which was poor performance. A total of 136,877 candidates scored 0 marks, reflecting an average performance, while 271,611 candidates scored between 4 and 5 marks, which was a good performance. Overall, the performance on this question was poor, as only 35.64 percent of candidates scored within the average to good performance range. Figure 3 summarises candidates' performance on Question 3.

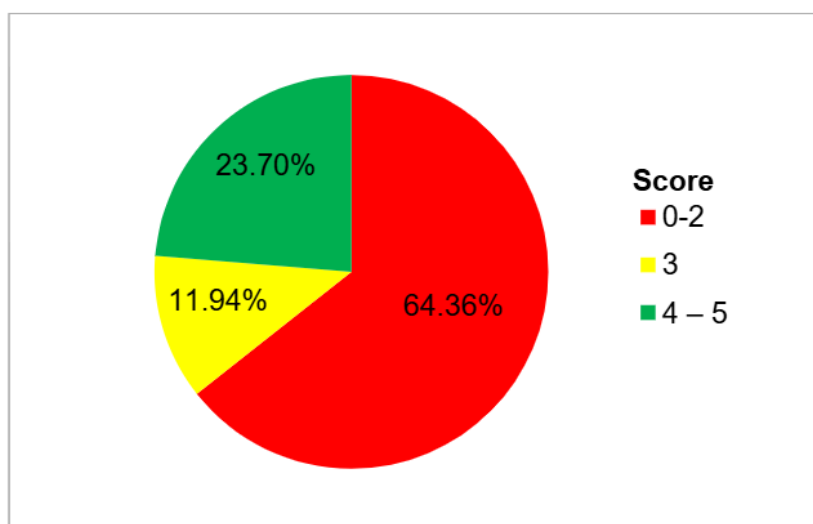


Figure 3: Candidates' Performance on Question 3

The following words were provided in a box for candidates to select from and write in the spaces provided for each item.

an accountant, by the side of, behave badly, silently, dinner, happy
--

- (i) Teacher Malota was very angry when Chuwa misbehaved in front of visitors. The underlined word means _____.

Item (i) required the candidates to work out the meaning of vocabulary used in the context, focusing on interpretation of phrases within a sentence. Candidates were required to identify the meaning of the underlined word *misbehaved* as used in the given context. The correct response was “behave badly,” which accurately reflects the action described. Candidates who provided this answer demonstrated adequate vocabulary knowledge and the ability to infer the meaning from context. Extract 1 illustrates a sample of correct responses to Question 3 (i).

- | |
|--|
| (i) Teacher Malota was very angry when Chuwa <u>misbehaved</u> in front of visitors. The underlined word means <u>behave badly</u> . |
|--|

Extract 1: A sample of correct responses to question 3 (i).

In Extract 1, the candidate wrote the meaning of the word “misbehaved” as used in the sentence. This demonstrates his/her adequate vocabulary knowledge.

On the other hand, some candidates provided incorrect responses such as “dinner,” “by the side of,” and “silently,”

thus, they misunderstood the word *misbehaved* as used in the context. For instance, the choice “silently” suggests that the candidate focused on the setting—considering how someone acted in front of visitors—rather than the actual behaviour being described. Extract 2 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 3 (i).

- | |
|--|
| (i) Teacher Malota was very angry when Chuwa <u>misbehaved</u> in front of visitors. The underlined word means <u>dinner</u> . |
|--|

Extract 2: A sample of incorrect responses to question 3 (i).

In Extract 2, the candidate wrote a name for a main meal of the day “dinner”. This response indicates that he/she did not understand the meaning of *misbehaved* as used in the context.

- (ii) Last night Debago was invited for _____ at Mlimahewa restaurant.

Item (ii) required the candidates to use common expressions related to social activities. The correct response was “dinner,” which accurately completed the sentence. Extract 3 illustrates a sample of correct responses to Question 3 (ii).

- | |
|---|
| (ii) Last night Debago was invited for <u>dinner</u> at Mlimahewa restaurant. |
|---|

Extract 3: A sample of correct responses to question 3 (ii).

In Extract 3, the candidate wrote “dinner,” demonstrating his/her ability to use context to determine an appropriate word. The candidate was able to associate the word “dinner” with a restaurant.

On the other hand, some candidates provided incorrect responses such as “behave badly” or “happy,” indicating limited understanding of vocabulary in context and difficulty in relating the sentence to real-life scenarios. Extract 4 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (ii).

(ii) Last night Debago was invited for <u>behave badly</u> at Mlimahewa restaurant.

Extract 4: A sample of incorrect responses to question (ii).

In Extract 4, the candidate wrote verb phrase instead of noun “dinner”. His/her response shows that he/she was unable to realise that the sentence context was about invitation *for dinner*, not behavioral issues.

(iii) The lion which killed our goat walked quietly to the goats’ shed. In other words, it walked_____

Item (iii) required the candidates to use synonym of the word “quietly”. The correct response was “silently”. The candidates who wrote correct answer showed the ability to understand and apply vocabulary in context. Extract 5 is a sample of a correct responses to Question 3.

(iii) The lion which killed our goat walked quietly to the goats' shed. In other words, it walked
silently.

Extract 5: A sample of correct responses to question 3 (iii).

In Extract 5, the candidate wrote the correct adverb indicating that the he/she was able to use descriptive words with relation to the action reported.

Some candidates, however, provided incorrect responses such as “dinner” or “an accountant,” indicating their inability to apply words correctly to describe the action. Those candidates could not realise that dinner is a formal evening meal, and an accountant is a person whose job is to keep, audit, and analyse financial accounts. Extract 6 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (iii).

(iii) The lion which killed our goat walked quietly to the goats' shed. In other words, it walked
an accountant.

Extract 6: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (iii).

In Extract 6, candidate wrote occupation instead of the synonym of an adverb “quietly”.

(iv) If you want to reach Mlimani school, walk
_____ Mazengo road until you see the
school at the end of the road.

Item (iv) tested the candidate's competence on directions. The correct response was *by the side of*, which accurately

conveyed the intended meaning in the context of the sentence. Extract 7 illustrates a sample of a correct responses to question 3 (iv).

(iv) If you want to reach Mlimani school, walk <u>by the side of</u> Mazengo road until you see the school at the end of the road.
--

Extract 7: A sample of correct responses to question 3 (iv).

In Extract 7, the candidate wrote the correct compound preposition to show direction to Mlimani school.

Some candidates, however, provided incorrect responses such as “dinner” or “happy,” indicating limited understanding of context and difficulty in selecting vocabulary that appropriately conveys location or direction. Extract 8 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (iv).

(iv) If you want to reach Mlimani school, walk <u>happy</u> Mazengo road until you see the school at the end of the road.

Extract 8: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (iv).

In Extract 8, the candidate wrote an adjective which neither agree with the sentence structure nor the context.

- (v) Amina's father is _____.
His job is to prepare and keep financial records.

Item (v) required the candidates to use vocabulary to describe occupations. The correct response was “an accountant,” which accurately identifies Amina’s father’s profession. Extract 9 is a sample of a correct response to Question 3 (v).

(v)	Amina’s father is <u>an accountant</u> . His job is to prepare and keep financial records.
-----	--

Extract 9: A sample of a correct response to Question 3 (v).

In Extract 9, the candidate wrote the amina’s father occupation as described in the sentence.

Conversely, some candidates, provided incorrect responses such as “happy” or “silently,” indicating their limited understanding of the context and difficulty in realising description of occupations. Extract 10 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 3 (v).

(v)	Amina’s father is <u>silently</u> . His job is to prepare and keep financial records.
-----	---

Extract 10: A sample of incorrect responses to question 3 (v).

In Extract 10, the candidate used an adverb instead of a noun to describe Amina’s father occupation.

2.1.4 Question 4: Matching Items

In this question, the candidates were required to match five (5) expressions describing places where specific activities are carried out in List A with their corresponding names in List B by writing the letter of the correct option in the space provided.

The question was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 532,203 (46.43%) candidates scored between 0 and 2 marks, indicating poor performance. A total of 142,497 (12.43%) candidates scored 0, reflecting average performance, while 471,490 (41.14%) candidates scored between 4 and 5 marks, indicating good performance. Overall, the performance on this question was average, as 53.57 percent of candidates scored within the average to good performance range. Figure 4 illustrates candidates' performance on question 4.

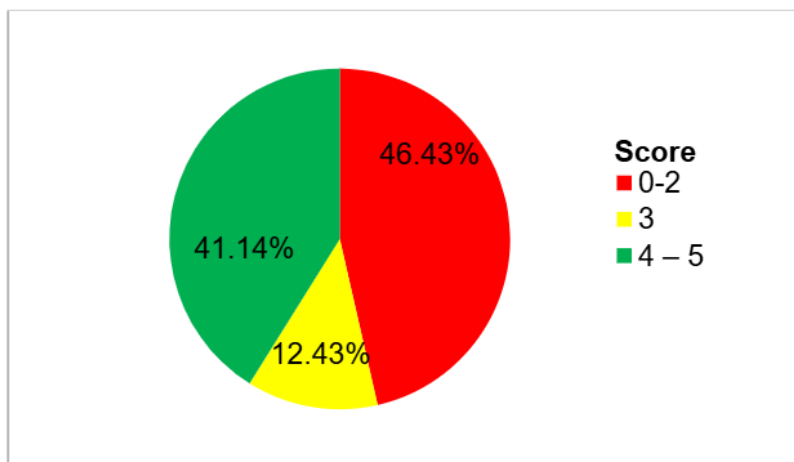


Figure 4: Candidates' Performance on Question 4

The question was as follows:

*Match the expressions in **List A** with their corresponding names in **List B** and write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.*

List A	Answer	List B
(i) A place where bread, cakes and biscuits are made and sold.	()	A Laboratory B Classroom C Hospital D School E Library F Bakery G Pharmacy
(ii) A shop that sells medicine and drugs.	()	
(iii) A building in which books, newspapers are kept for people to read, study or borrow.	()	
(iv) A room used for scientific research or experiments.	()	
(v) A room where students or pupils are taught.	()	

Candidates who responded correctly to question 4 demonstrated an understanding of common places and the activities associated with them. Their correct responses indicate adequate knowledge in using vocabulary and the ability to use functional language to describe everyday activities. These candidates were able to accurately match expressions with corresponding places by drawing on real-life experiences. Overall, their performance reflects familiarity with contextual language and the ability to apply it appropriately.

Item (i) required the candidates to associate a place where breads, cakes and biscuits are made and sold with its corresponding name. The correct response to this item was

Bakery (F). Candidates who responded correctly demonstrated their ability to relate common places within their environment and appropriate words. Candidates who chose incorrect options such as *shop* or *school* failed to distinguish between general places and specialised locations where specific activities are carried out.

Item (ii) assessed candidates' understanding of vocabulary related to health services and commercial facilities. The correct answer was Pharmacy (G). Correct responses provided by candidates indicate that they were able to relate health-related products to their appropriate place of sale. Incorrect responses, such as *hospital* or *laboratory*, suggest that some candidates confused places of treatment or experimentation with retail outlets for medicine.

Item (iii) required the candidates to identify place for educational and information-related facilities. The correct answer was, Library (E). Candidates who responded correctly demonstrated an understanding of the purpose and function of a library. Those who selected *school* or *classroom* showed moderate understanding, indicating difficulty in distinguishing learning institutions from specific facilities within or outside schools.

Item (iv) required the candidates to identify places associated with scientific activities. The correct answer was Laboratory (A). Correct responses provided by the candidates reflect their knowledge of scientific

terminologies and how they are used according to the contexts. Incorrect answers provided by candidates such as *hospital* or *classroom* indicate their inability to use language in scientific environments.

Item (v) required the candidates to identify school-related vocabulary and learning environments. The correct answer was Classroom (B). Candidates who selected this option demonstrated their understanding of common school and learning facilities. Candidates' incorrect responses such as *school* or *library* suggest confusion by those candidates regarding their understanding between a general institution which is school and a specific instructional space within it which is classroom.

Overall, the candidates' average performance observed in this question was largely attributed to candidates' moderate understanding of vocabulary related to common places and the activities which take place within the specific areas.

2.2 SECTION B: COMMUNICATING SIMPLE IDEAS THROUGH WRITING AND COMPREHENDING WRITTEN INFORMATION

This section consisted of two (2) questions, each comprising five (5) items. Each item carried two (2) marks, making a total of 20 marks for the entire section.

2.2.1 Question 5: Short Answer Items

Question 5 items (i) to (v), assessed candidates' ability to communicate simple ideas in writing through the appropriate use of English language structures.

The question was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 854,077 (74.51%) candidates scored between 0 and 4 marks, indicating poor performance. A total of 1,549 (0.14%) candidates scored 5 marks, reflecting average performance, while 290,564 (25.35%) candidates scored between 6 and 10 marks, indicating good performance. Overall, candidates' performance on this question was poor, as only 25.49 percent of the candidates managed to score within the range of average to good performance. Figure 5 summarises candidates' performance on question 5.

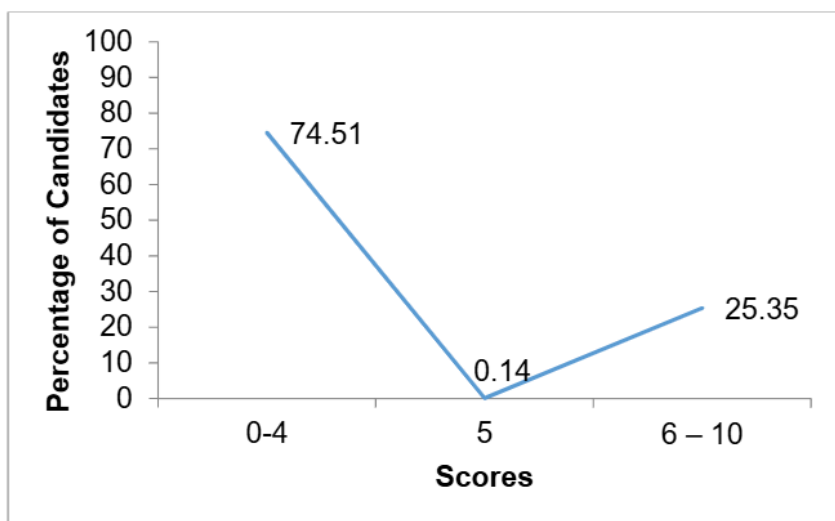


Figure 5: Candidates' Performance on Question 5

The question was as follows:

Complete the sentences in (i) – (v) by changing the verbs in brackets into an appropriate form.

- (i) Today we learnt that a fish (dive) _____
very deep in the sea whenever it wants to hunt for food.

This item tested candidates' ability to use the present tense correctly to describe habitual actions. The correct answer was *dives*. Candidates who answered correctly demonstrated their understanding of subject-verb agreement, recognizing that the third-person singular subject *a fish* requires the verb to take the -s ending. Extract 11 illustrates a sample of a correct response to question 5 (i).

(i)	Today we learnt that a fish (dive) <u>dives</u> very deep in the sea whenever it wants to hunt for food.
-----	--

Extract 11: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (i).

In Extract 11, the candidate managed to add “s” to the basic form of the verb “dive” to express the habit of the fish.

Those who provided incorrect responses often used the base form or other inappropriate tenses, for example, writing *dive* or *dived*, failing to correctly present subject-verb agreement. Extract 12 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 5 (i).

(i) Today we learnt that a fish (dive) dive very deep in the sea whenever it wants to hunt for food.

Extract 12: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (i).

In Extract 12, the candidate wrote the verb in its basic form without the agreement markers, thus making the sentence ungrammatical.

(ii) I have (be) _____ a pupil at this school for seven years now.

This item assessed the use of the present perfect tense to describe actions that began in the past and continue to the present. The correct answer was *been*. Candidates who responded correctly understood the structure of the present perfect tense, including the use of auxiliary verbs and past participle forms. Extract 13 illustrates a sample of a correct response to question 5 (ii).

(ii) I have (be) been a pupil at this school for seven years now.

Extract 13: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (ii).

In Extract 13, the candidate added “-en” at the end of the verb to be “be” so as to form past participle “been” which agrees with adverbial phrase “for seven years now”.

In contrast, incorrect responses included answers such as *being*, *was* or *am*, which reflected incompetence of candidates in identifying and using the targeted structure.

Extract 14 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (ii).

(ii) I have (be) being a pupil at this school for seven years now.

Extract 14: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (ii).

In Extract 14, the candidate incorrectly used the verb, thus failing to construct a passive structure.

(iii) Our friend told us that her brother (live)
_____ in Arusha currently.

This item tested candidates' knowledge of the simple present tense to describe habits, general truths and unchanging situations. The correct answer was *lives*. The candidates who provided the correct response were able to note that the context of the sentence demanded them to supply a verb in the simple present form with the present tense marker "s". Extract 15 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 5 (iii).

(iii) Our friend told us that her brother (live) lives in Arusha currently.

Extract 15: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (iii).

In Extract 15, the candidate could write the verb "lives" as correctly as it was supposed to be. The candidate

understood how tendencies habitual activities are expressed.

Some candidates, however, wrote incorrect answers such as *live* or *lived*, indicating their limited competencies in using past and present tenses. Extract 16 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (iii).

(iii) Our friend told us that her brother (live) live in Arusha currently.

Extract 16: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (iii).

In Extract 16, the candidate failed to correctly form the verb to express habitual action.

(iv) Our new teacher (introduce) _____ himself last Monday.

This item assessed the correct use of the past simple tense in describing past actions. The correct answer was *introduced*. Candidates who answered correctly were able to recognise the time marker *last Monday* and form the past tense appropriately by changing the verb into the right form. Extract 17 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 5 (iv).

(iv) Our new teacher (introduce) introduced himself last Monday.

Extract 17: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (iv).

In Extract 17, the candidate was able to change the verb into a correct form as the context demanded.

Conversely, incorrect responses included answers such as *introduce* or *is introducing*, showing candidates' inability to use tenses appropriately. Extract 18 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (iv).

(iv) Our new teacher (introduce) introduce himself last Monday.

Extract 18: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (iv).

In Extract 18, the candidate wrote 'introduce', failing to change the verb to express past experience.

(v) Derrick will (participate) _____ in the debate next Friday.

This item tested the correct use of the future tense. The correct answer was *participate*, as the auxiliary *will* is followed by the base form of the verb. Candidates who responded correctly demonstrated their inability to use future tense. Extract 19 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 5 (v).

(v) Derrick will (participate) participate in the debate next Friday.

Extract 19: A sample of correct responses to question (v).

In Extract 19, the candidates correctly used the given verb without changing its form to conform to the principle of

expressing future reality by keeping the verb in its basic form.

On the contrary, those who gave incorrect responses often wrote *participates*, *participated*, or *is participating*, reflecting inability in forming and using tenses. Extract 20 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (v).

(v) Derrick will (participate) participating in the debate next Friday.

Extract 20: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (v).

In Extract 20, the candidate used a progressing form to express the future incorrectly. The answer did not agree with the auxiliary “will” which precede the verb.

2.2.2 Short Answer Items

In this question, candidates were required to read a passage carefully and answer items (i) to (v) by writing the correct responses in the space provided. This question assessed candidates’ ability to read and comprehend written information accurately, focusing on their capacity to extract key ideas, interpret details, and respond appropriately in writing.

The question was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 946,366 (82.57%) candidates scored between 0 and 4 marks, reflecting poor performance. A total of 2,601 (0.23%) candidates were able to score 5 marks, indicating their average performance, while 197,223

(17.20%) candidates scored between 6 and 10 marks, demonstrating good performance. Overall, the general performance on this question was poor, with only 17.43 percent of candidates scoring within the average to good range. Figure 6 summarises candidates' performance on question 6.

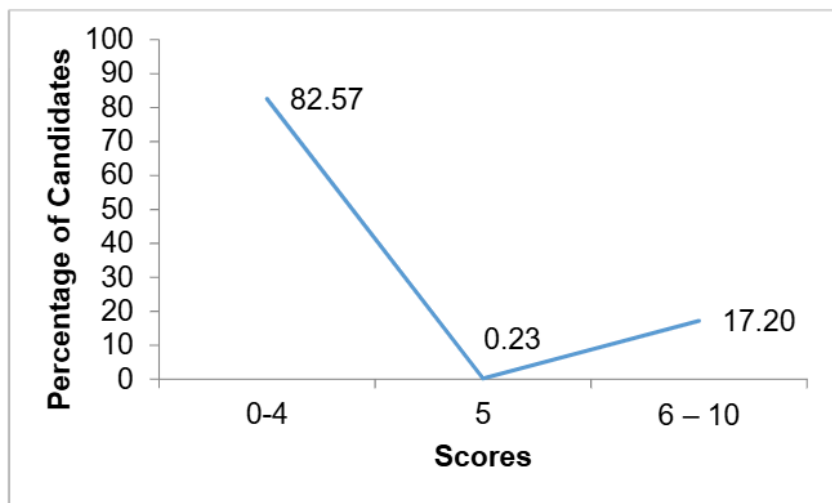


Figure 6: Candidates' Performance on Question 6

The passage read as follows:

My name is Anna, I am in Standard Six. Our class teacher came to our class. She told us that there would be a debate competition against Standard Seven. She told us to prepare ourselves by finding strong points with good examples. The motion was "Money is better than education." The day before the competition, the Standard Seven pupils came to our class boasting that they were going to be the champions. They were supporting the motion by saying, "Yes, money is better than education."

Finally, the day arrived. We gathered in the school hall for the debate for one hour. During the debate, Standard Six pupils were able to provide strong points with examples against the motion “Money is better than education.” However, Standard Seven had few points with no supporting examples for the motion. When the debate was over, the chairperson announced the results that Standard Six were the winners in the competition. Standard Seven pupils were not satisfied with the results as their faces were full of wrinkles. They started blaming each other. The Head Teacher, Mr. Hamisi, congratulated those who won. He also encouraged those who lost in the competition. He advised them to make sure that next time they should come with a lot of points with supporting examples.

Questions

- (i) *In which class is Anna studying?*

Item (i) assessed candidates' ability to identify explicit information directly stated in the passage. Candidates were required to determine the class in which Anna was studying. The correct answer was Standard Six, as clearly indicated in the opening sentence of the passage, “My name is Anna; I am in Standard Six.” Candidates who provided the correct response demonstrated the ability to locate and recall straightforward factual information from the text. Extract 21 illustrates a sample of correct response to question 6 (i).

(i)	In which class is Anna studying?
	<u>Anna is studying in class six</u>

Extract 21: A sample of correct responses to question 6 (i). In Extract 21, the candidate correctly wrote Anna's class. The candidate had developed comprehension skills. However, candidates who gave incorrect responses, such as other classes and irrelevant explanations, showed limited attention to detail or difficulty in extracting explicitly stated information from the passage and inability to understand the question demand. Extract 22 shows a sample of incorrect response to question 6 (i).

(i)	In which class is Anna studying?
	<u>she told us that there would be a debate</u>
	<u>competition against standard seven</u>

Extract 22: A sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (i)

In Extract 22, the candidate wrote a sentence from a passage which is irrelevant to the question. This candidate did not understand what the question demanded.

(ii) *According to the passage, in which class were the pupils who opposed the motion?*

Item (ii) assessed candidates' ability to understand roles and positions taken by different groups in the debate. Specifically, the item required candidates to identify the class of pupils who opposed the motion. The correct

response was Standard Six, as the passage indicates that Standard Six pupils argued against the motion “Money is better than education.” Candidates who answered correctly were able to comprehend the passage and distinguish between supporting and opposing sides. Extract 23 shows a sample of correct responses to question 6 (ii).

(ii) According to the passage, in which class were the pupils who opposed the motion?
Class six

Extract 23: A sample of correct responses to question 6 (ii).

In Extract 23, the candidate mentioned the class that opposed the motion in a debate competition demonstrating his/her ability to understand the written materials.

On the contrary, Incorrect responses, such as Standard Seven, suggest that some candidates did not comprehend the passage. Extract 24 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (ii).

(ii) According to the passage, in which class were the pupils who opposed the motion?
Standard Seven

Extract 24: A sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (ii).

In Extract 24, the candidate wrote the class which was supporting the motion instead of the opposing group.

(iii) *Who came with the idea of having a debate?*

Item (iii) assessed candidates' ability to identify specific information explicitly stated in the passage. Candidates

were required to determine who introduced the idea of conducting the debate. The correct response was *the class teacher*, who informed the pupils about the upcoming debate competition and instructed them to prepare strong points with examples. Candidates who answered correctly demonstrated their ability to locate key details from the text. Extract 25 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 6 (iii).

(iii)	Who came with the idea of having a debate?
	<u>The class teacher came with the idea of having a debate</u>

Extract 25: A sample of correct responses to question 6 (iii)

In Extract 25, the candidate identified the class teacher as an initiator of the debating competition. This indicates that the candidate had developed comprehension skills.

On the contrary, those who provided incorrect responses, such as mentioning *Standard Seven pupils*, *the Head Teacher*, or *the chairperson*, lacked comprehension skills. Extract 26 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (iii).

(iii)	Who came with the idea of having a debate?
	<u>standard six pupils</u>

Extract 26: A sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (iii).

In extract 26, the candidate mentioned the side that won the debating competition instead of the initiator of the idea.

(iv) *Why did Standard Six pupils become the champions in the debate competition?*

This item assessed candidates' ability to comprehend reasons and supporting details from the passage. The correct response was that *Standard Six pupils provided strong points with supporting examples*, unlike their opponents. Candidates who answered correctly demonstrated higher-level comprehension by being able to justify and compare ideas in the text. Extract 27 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 6 (iv).

(iv)	Why did Standard Six pupils become the champions in the debate competition?
	<i>Because standard six pupils were able to provide strong points with examples</i>

Extract 27: A sample of correct responses to question 6 (iv).

In Extract 27, the candidate gave the reason for standard six to become the champion in the debate competition. This candidate demonstrated higher-level comprehension.

Conversely, Incorrect responses often lacked reference to supporting examples or gave vague answers such as *they were lucky or they were many*, indicating inability by candidates to defend their ideas. Extract 28 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (iv).

(iv) Why did Standard Six pupils become the champions in the debate competition?

the chair person announced the results

Extract 28: A sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (iv).

In Extract 28, the candidate wrote irrelevant response. This candidate did not have comprehension and evaluation skills.

(v) *Which advice did the Head Teacher give to Standard Seven pupils in order to win competition in the future?*

This item tested candidates' ability to extract advice or recommendations given by the Head Teacher in the passage. The correct answer was that *they should come with many strong points supported by examples*. Candidates who responded correctly showed good comprehension of the written information and the moral lesson conveyed. Extract 29 illustrates a sample of correct responses to question 6 (v).

(v) . Which advice did the Head Teacher give to Standard Seven pupils in order to win competition in the future?

He advised them to make sure that next time they should
come with alot points with supporting examples

Extract 29: A sample of correct responses to question 6 (iv).

In Extract 29, the candidate correctly wrote the advice given by the Head Teacher to standard seven pupils for winning the competition in the future.

Candidates who provided incorrect responses, such as *to blame each other less* or *to practice more debates*, demonstrated partial understanding or reliance on inference rather than direct textual evidence. Extract 30 illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (v).

(v) Which advice did the Head Teacher give to Standard Seven pupils in order to win competition in the future?
Supporting the motion

Extract 30: A sample of incorrect responses to question 6 (v).

In Extract 30, the candidate wrote a suggestion to support the motion in the next debating competition. This response was incorrect showing the candidate's inadequate comprehension skills.

Overall, incorrect responses in Question 6 were largely attributed to poor reading comprehension skills, including failure to identify explicit details, confusion between opposing ideas, and their inability to infer meaning from supporting information.

2.3 SECTION C: COMMUNICATING SIMPLE IDEAS THROUGH WRITING

Question 7 had five (5) items. Each item carried two (2) marks, making a total of 10 marks for this section.

2.3.1 Short Answer Items

This question required the candidates to rewrite an invitation card by filling in the missing information using details provided in a given passage. The question assessed candidates' ability to extract relevant information from a text and apply it appropriately in a functional writing task. Specifically, it tested skills in reading comprehension, organisation of information, and writing accurately to communicate in a real-life context.

Candidates were expected to correctly identify and transfer details such as the invitee's name, the name of the celebrant, the date, time, and venue of the event, while maintaining the appropriate format of an invitation card.

This question was attempted by all 1,146,128 (100%) candidates. Of these, 432,188 (37.71%) candidates scored between 0 and 4 marks, which was poor performance. A small proportion, 990 (0.02%) candidates were able to score 5 marks, which indicates an average performance. In contrast, 713,012 candidates, equivalent to 34.32 per cent, scored between 6 and 10 marks, demonstrating good performance.

Overall, the performance in this question was good, as 62.30 per cent of the candidates achieved scores ranging from average to good performance. Figure 7 presents a summary of candidates' performance in Question 7.

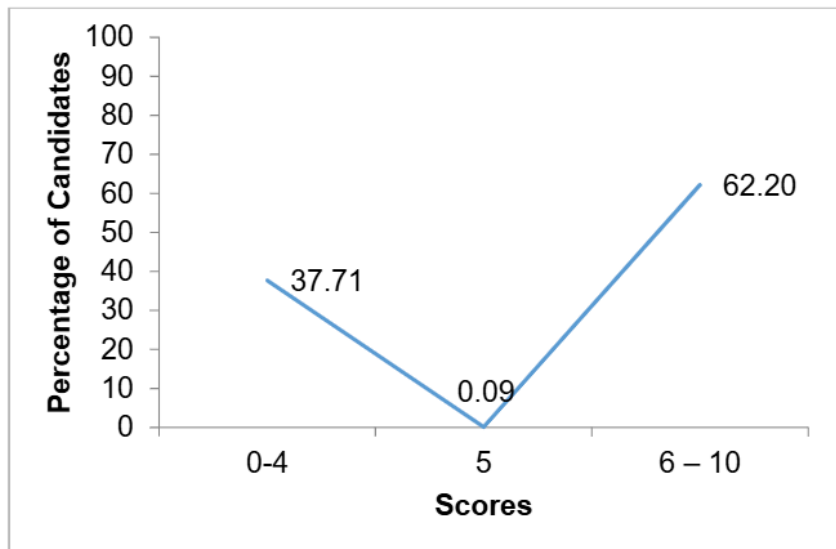


Figure 7: Candidates' Performance on Question 7

The question was as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Matata are expecting to have a birthday party for their child Sadiki Matata on Thursday 26th October, 2025. They have decided to invite their child's friend Hamisi Juma. The birthday party will be held from 3.00 pm at Wazawa hall. Rewrite the invitation card by filling in the gaps with the correct information.

Birthday Party

Mr. and Mrs. Matata invite

- (i) _____
to the birthday party of their lovely child,
(ii) _____, which will be held
on
(iii) _____ from
(iv) _____ at (v) _____

For more information, contact:

Mr. and Mrs. Matata: 0700123456/0700678900

Item (i) required candidates to correctly identify the name of the invited guest. This item tested candidates' ability to extract and transfer explicit information from a given functional text into an appropriate slot. The correct answer was *Hamisi Juma*, who was clearly stated as the invited friend. Candidates who answered correctly demonstrated their ability to read and accurately identify people's names in context. However, some candidates provided incorrect responses such as *Sadiki Matata* or *Mr. and Mrs. Matata*, failing to differentiate the host, the celebrant, and the invited guest.

Item (ii) tested candidates' ability to identify the celebrant of the birthday party from the text. The correct answer was *Sadiki Matata*, the child whose birthday was being celebrated. Candidates who responded correctly were able to relate the child, their parents and the birthday event.

Some other candidates provided incorrect responses such *Hamisi Juma* or left spaces unfilled.

Item (iii) assessed candidates' ability to correctly state the date of the event as presented in the stimulus text. The correct response was *Thursday 26th October, 2025*. Candidates' correct answers indicated that they could accurately use provided information about time of event and write it at correct place on invitation cards. In contrast, incorrect responses such as wrong days or altered years showed partial extraction of information or weak attention to detail.

Item (iv) required candidates to supply the starting time of the birthday party. This item tested understanding of time expressions and accurate transcription of numerical information. The correct answer was *3.00 pm*. Candidates who answered correctly demonstrated precision in handling time formats. Incorrect responses included *3.00 am*, *from 3*, or *afternoon*, indicating either misinterpretation of time notation or inadequate familiarity with formal invitation language.

Item (v) tested candidates' ability to identify the venue where the event would take place. The correct answer was *Wazawa Hall*. Candidates who performed well were able to recognise and correctly capitalise proper nouns related to places. Some candidates, however, gave incorrect answers such as *school hall* or *Matata's home*, which were not

supported by the text, suggesting guesswork or failure to rely strictly on the given information.

Candidates who performed well demonstrated careful reading, attention to detail, and familiarity with functional writing formats such as invitation cards. Extract 31 illustrates a sample of correct responses to Question 7 (i) – (v).

	<i>Birthday Party</i> Mr. and Mrs. Matata invite (i) <u>Hamsi Juma</u> to the birthday party of their lovely child, (ii) <u>Sadike Matata</u>, which will be held on (iii) <u>Thursday 26th October, 2025</u> from (iv) <u>3:00 pm</u> at (v) <u>Nazawa hall</u> For more information, contact: Mr. and Mrs. Matata: 0700123456/0700678900	
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Extract 31: A sample of correct responses to Question 7 (i) – (v).

In Extract 31, the candidate wrote correct information to complete the invitation card. This shows that the candidate had adequate communication and writing skills to convey the intended message.

In contrast, incorrect responses in Question 7 were largely attributed to poor reading skills, failure to determine the roles within the text (host, guest, and celebrant), and carelessness in transferring factual details. Extract 32

illustrates a sample of incorrect responses to Question 7 (i) - (v).

Birthday Party

Mr. and Mrs. Matata invite

(i) Sadiki Matata

to the birthday party of their lovely child,

(ii) Thimisi Juma, which will be held on

(iii) Wazawa hall from (iv)

26th October, 2025 at (v) 3:00 pm

For more information, contact:

Mr. and Mrs. Matata: 0700123456/0700678900

Extract 32: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 7 (i) - (v).

In Extract 32, the candidate wrote incorrect information in completing the invitation card. Each of the information he/she filled was put at the wrong place making the intended message to be unclear.

3.0 THE CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN EACH COMPETENCY

This section presents an analysis of candidates' performance across different competencies assessed in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) 2025. The analysis focuses on the specific skills and abilities tested in each question, highlighting areas of strength and those requiring improvement. It also provides insights into how candidates applied knowledge and language skills in various contexts, including listening, reading, writing, vocabulary usage, grammar and comprehension. The aim is to guide teachers,

pupils, and other education stakeholders in identifying effective strategies to enhance teaching and learning in primary schools.

The analysis of candidates' performance in English Language in PSLE 2025 indicates that the average performance across specific competencies was 40.12 per cent, showing an improvement as compared to 33.98 per cent recorded in PSLE 2024.

Candidates' performance in *listening and comprehending information presented orally* was 57.99 per cent, reflecting relatively strong skills in understanding spoken English. The performance in *communicating simple ideas through writing* was 40.47 per cent, indicating moderate proficiency in written expression. Additionally, the performance in *developing and appropriately using vocabulary through listening, reading, and writing* was 44.60 per cent, suggesting some mastery of word usage in different contexts. Conversely, performance in *reading and comprehending written information* was 17.43 per cent, highlighting it as the area with the greatest need for improvement.

A detailed summary of candidates' performance in each specific competency is provided in the Appendix.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The overall performance of candidates in the English Language subject in the PSLE 2025 was average. Out of 1,146,128 candidates, only 574,336 (50.11%) achieved passing grades ranging from A to C, indicating that half of the candidates were unable to meet the expected proficiency levels in the subject.

While candidates demonstrated relative strength in listening and comprehension skills, as well as some ability to develop and use vocabulary, challenges remain in areas such as reading comprehension and writing, which significantly affected candidates' overall performance.

These findings highlight the need for continued emphasis on enhancing teaching strategies, providing targeted support to learners, and reinforcing the integration of listening, reading, writing, and vocabulary development in English Language instruction. Effective utilisation of the feedback from this report by teachers, school administrators, and other education stakeholders is expected to contribute to improved candidates' performance in future examinations.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve candidates' performance in the English Language subject in future Primary School Leaving Examinations, it is recommended that teachers, school administrators, and other education stakeholders implement targeted strategies that address the specific competencies outlined in the 2015 English Language Primary School Syllabus. The syllabus emphasises listening and speaking, reading and comprehension, writing and vocabulary development as core areas of language learning. Based on the 2025 performance analysis, the following recommendations are proposed:

- (i) Enhancing reading comprehension abilities: Pupils should be exposed to diverse reading materials, including narratives,

informational texts, and dialogues. Teachers are encouraged to model reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and summarising to help learners identify main ideas and supporting details, thereby improving their ability to understand and interpret written texts.

- (ii) Improving writing and communication of ideas: Writing exercises should focus on enabling pupils to communicate simple ideas clearly and coherently. Teachers should emphasise sentence structure, correct verb forms, paragraph development and punctuation. Regular practice in completing exercises, writing short compositions, and peer review sessions can help learners strengthen their writing proficiency.
- (iii) Developing and applying vocabulary appropriately: Vocabulary development should be integrated across listening, reading, and writing activities. Teachers should encourage pupils to learn new words, understand their meanings and apply them in various contexts. Activities such as word games, vocabulary journals and sentence-completion exercises can help learners internalise and use words accurately.
- (iv) Strengthening listening and oral comprehension skills: Teachers should provide more opportunities for pupils to listen to a variety of spoken texts, including stories, instructions and conversations. Activities such as listening comprehension exercises, oral questioning and role-plays

can help pupils understand and respond accurately to information presented orally.

These recommendations, aligned with the English Language syllabus objectives, are intended to guide the design of teaching and learning activities that will improve candidates' overall competency and performance in future examinations.

Appendix

CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE BY SPECIFIC COMPETENCY IN PSLE 2024 AND 2025

S/N	Specific Competency	PSLE 2024				PSLE 2025			
		Performance on each Question		Average (%)	Remarks	Performance on each Question		Average (%)	Remarks
		Qn. Number	(%) Performance			Qn. Number	(%) Performance		
1.	Listening and Comprehending Information Presented Orally	1	44.53	44.53	Average	1	57.99	57.99	Average
2.	Developing and Using Vocabulary Appropriately Through Listening, Writing and Reading	3	18.03	26.35	Poor	3	35.64	44.60	Average
		4	34.67			4	53.57		
3.	Communicating Simple Ideas Through Writing	2	25.89	24.70	Poor	2	33.64	40.47	Average
		5	13.86			5	25.49		
		7	34.34			7	62.30		
4.	Reading and Comprehending Written Information	6	40.33	40.33	Average	6	17.43	17.43	Poor

