



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



PUPILS' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS REPORT ON STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL ASSESSMENT (SFNA) 2024

ENGLISH LANGUAGE



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



**PUPILS' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS
REPORT ON STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL
ASSESSMENT (SFNA) 2024**

02 ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Published by:

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania

P. O. Box 2624

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

@ The National Examinations Council of Tanzania, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iv
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS	2
2.1 SECTION A: DICTATION	3
2.2 SECTION B: VOCABULARY	6
2.3 SECTION C: GRAMMAR	12
2.4 SECTION D: COMPOSITION	17
2.5 SECTION E: COMPREHENSION	21
3.0 ANALYSIS ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH COMPETENCE ...	29
4.0 CONCLUSION	30
5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	30
Appendix: COMPARISON OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE PER COMPETENCE IN SFNA 2024 AND SFNA 2023	32

FOREWORD

This report presents the findings of the Pupils Item Response Analysis (PIRA) on Standard Four English Language National Assessment that was conducted in October, 2024. The Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) is used as an evaluation and a tool to monitor pupils' learning in primary education. This report intends to provide feedback to all education stakeholders on the pupils' performance in the English Language subject assessment.

This report shows pupils' strengths and weaknesses in attempting assessment questions. The pupils who got high scores were competent in comprehending oral and written information, communicating simple ideas through writing, and developing and using vocabulary. These pupils were able to understand the requirements of the questions. However, pupils who got low marks were incompetent in assessed areas, and some of them did not understand the requirements of the questions.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects that the feedback provided in this report will be useful to teachers and pupils for taking appropriate measures to improve teaching and learning of the English Language subject. As a result, skills and competencies will be transferred to pupils as stipulated in the syllabus and so, the pupils' performance will be improved in future assessments and examinations.

The Council appreciates the contribution of all who made this report a success.



Prof. Said A. Mohamed
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report provides analysis on pupils' performance in the English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) which took place in October, 2024. The assessment was set according to the 2015 English Language Syllabus and the 2018 English Language format.

A total of 1,633,272 pupils were registered for the SFNA in 2024 whereas 1,530,199 (93.69%) sat for the assessment. Moreover, data indicate that 1,053,654 (68.86%) passed the assessment. According to the statistics, pupils' performance in SFNA 2024 decreased by 3.68 per cent when compared to the performance in 2023. In 2023, a total of 1,693,438 pupils were registered for the assessment whereas, 1,545,208 (91.24%) sat for the assessment and 1,120,760 (72.54%) passed.

The English Language assessment paper consisted of five (5) sections: A, B, C, D and E. Sections A, B, C and D consisted of objective questions, and section E, comprised a short answer question, making a total of five (5) questions.

This paper tested various language areas in each section, as follows: Section A, five (5) dictation items and Section B, five (5) vocabulary items. Moreover, Section C had five (5) grammar items while Section D had five (5) composition items and Section E had five (5) comprehension items.

Pupil performance in each category was classified into three performance levels: weak (0-33 marks), average (34-66 marks)

and good (67-100 marks).

Specifically, each item weighed 02 marks, making a total of 10 marks for each question. However, in Question 1, each correctly written word was awarded 0.5 marks. The number and the percentage have been used to show pupils who correctly answered the questions and those who incorrectly answered them. In that case, for questions 2, 3 and 4, the marks from 0 to 2 indicate weak performance; 4 to 6 marks indicate average performance, 8 marks indicate good performance and 10 marks indicate very good performance. For questions 1 and 5, the marks from 0 to 2.5 were classified as weak performance; 3 to 6 as average; 6.5 to 9.5 as good and 10 marks as very good performance. Charts and graphs were used to illustrate the pupils' performance on each question.

Moreover, each colour in graphs, tables and charts represents pupils' performance. Red indicates weak performance, yellow stands for average performance, light green for good performance and green for very good performance.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS

This part presents the analysis on the pupils' responses to each question. The presentation indicates pupils' performance based on four levels namely weak, average, good and very good. Their performance levels are categorised in Table 1.

Range of Marks for Questions 2, 3 and 4	Range of Marks for Questions 1 and 5	Remarks
0-2	0-2.5	Weak
4-6	3-6	Average
8	6.5-9.5	Good
10	10	Very good

Table 1: Performance Level in the English Language Subject

2.1 SECTION A: DICTATION

This section comprised a single dictation question with five sub-items (i) to (v). The invigilator carefully and audibly read five sentences aloud and pupils were instructed to listen attentively and write them down into the provided spaces. The five sentences were as follows:

- (i) The baby is crying.
- (ii) We are going home.
- (iii) It will rain tomorrow.
- (iv) Dora studies very hard.
- (v) She came here yesterday.

This question tested pupils' listening and writing skills by writing the sentences read loudly. In responding to this question, the pupils were required to observe punctuation marks such as full stop (.).

The question was attempted by all 1,530,196 pupils (100%). The general performance in this question was average

because 38.89 per cent of the pupils had performance that ranged from average to very good. A total of 935,125 (61.11%) pupils scored from 0 to 2.5 marks out of 10 indicating weak performance. Moreover, 402,229 (26.29%) pupils scored from 3 to 6 marks indicating average performance. Other 138,482 (9.05%) pupils scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks indicating good performance. However, those who scored 10 marks were 54,362 (3.55%) pupils indicating a very good performance. Figure 1 illustrates the summary of pupils' performance on Question 1.

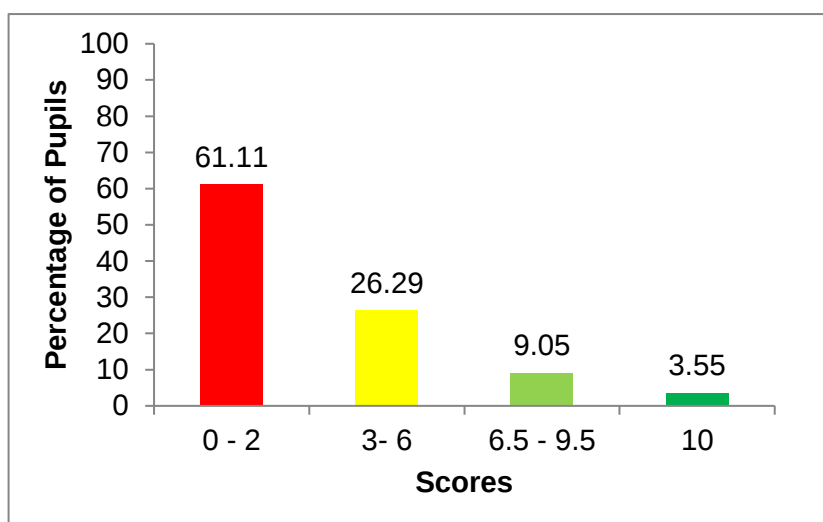


Figure 1: *Pupils Performance on Question 1*

The analysis shows that the pupils who scored 10 marks could correctly write all the five sentences and put the punctuation marks accordingly. These pupils demonstrated a strong understanding of fundamental grammatical rules, such as capitalising the first letter of each sentence and recognising that all five sentences were declarative statements. A declarative sentence is a type of sentence

that states fact, information, or an argument. It always ends with a full stop or period (.). Extract 1.1 serves as a sample of the pupils' correct responses to this question.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) - (v) and write them in the spaces provided.

(i) The baby is crying.

(ii) We are going home.

(iii) It will rain tomorrow.

(iv) Dora studies very hard.

(v) She came here yesterday.

Extract 1.1: A sample of pupils' correct responses to Question 1.

In Extract 1.1, the pupil wrote all four words correctly in each item. He/She observed punctuation marks correctly, such as capitalising the beginning of each sentence and using full stops at the end. This pupil demonstrated good listening and writing skills.

Furthermore, some pupils achieved average marks on this question. These pupils did not write all the words correctly as dictated by the invigilator. They struggled to observe correct punctuation, capitalisation, and spacing between words in some sentences. This resulted in some pupils scoring only half of the marks allocated to this question.

However, some other pupils failed to write the sentences correctly. Some misspelt words, while others wrote English words using Kiswahili spelling conventions. These pupils did

not understand that English words are not always spelt as they sound. Other pupils copied parts of the assessment instructions and submitted these as their responses to the dictation. Those mistakes made them incorrectly write words such as *cry* instead of *crying*, *learn* instead of *rain* and *studys* instead of *studies*. Extract 1.2 is a sample of pupils' incorrect responses to this question.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) - (v) and write them in the spaces provided.	
(i)	Correct answer is
(ii)	choose the
(iii)	The opposite of the word
(iv)	questions in this section
(v)	letter in the box provided

Extract 1.2: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 1.

In Extract 1.2, the pupil wrote parts of instructions from the assessment paper. Therefore, the sentences written were irrelevant.

2.2 SECTION B: VOCABULARY

This section consisted of one (1) question with five (5) multiple-choice items (i) to (v). Each item consisted of four (4) choices A to D. The pupils were required to choose the correct answer from the given alternatives and write its letter in the box provided.

This question was attempted by 1,530,196 pupils (100%). Among them, 801,972 (52.41%) scored from 0 to 2

marks indicating weak performance. Furthermore, 592,462 (38.72%) scored from 4 to 6 marks which is average performance while 71,883 (4.70%) scored 8 marks which is good performance.

A total of 63,879 (4.17%) pupils scored 10 marks indicating very good performance. The general performance in this question was average because 47.59 per cent of the pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks (Average to Very Good Performance). Figure 2 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 2.

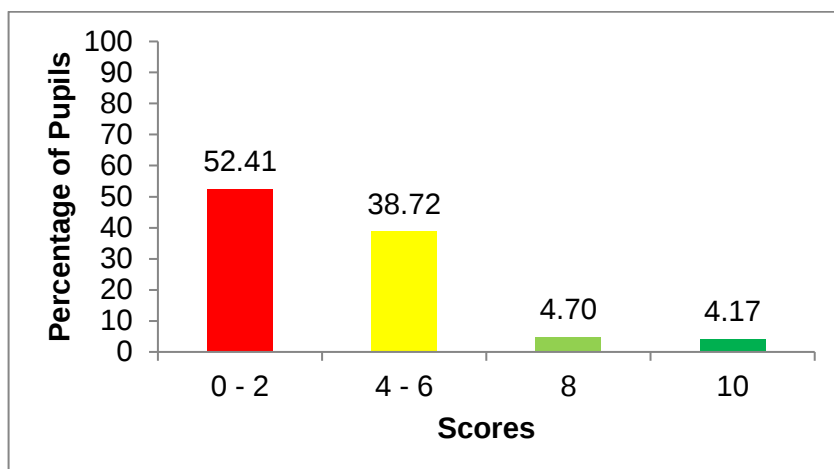


Figure 2: *Pupils' Performance on Question 2*

The following multiple-choice items (i) to (v) required the pupil to choose the correct answer among the options provided.

- (i) The opposite of the word "right" is
- A true
 - B false
 - C correct
 - D wrong

This item tested the pupils' ability to use vocabulary in expressing antonyms. The correct answer was D, (*wrong*). Pupils who selected the correct answer demonstrated an understanding of opposite meanings of various words. They recognised that 'right' is the antonym of 'wrong'.

Conversely, pupils who opted for A, (true) and B, (false) did not understand that 'true' and 'false' are antonyms. Similarly, the pupils who chose C, (*correct*) did not know that the word *correct* is an opposite word to the word *incorrect*, and not the word *true*.

- (ii) After paying for a pen, the shopkeeper gave me
- A a menu
 - B a ticket
 - C a receipt
 - D a timetable

This item assessed the pupils' ability to use vocabulary related to shopping. The correct answer was C, (a receipt). Pupils who selected the correct answer understood that a receipt is a written or printed document that serves as proof of a transaction. They recognised that the shopkeeper would give the buyer a receipt to confirm that the money for the pen had been received.

Conversely, pupils who selected alternative A, (a menu) did not understand that a menu is a list of food and drinks available in a restaurant or café.

Likewise, those who selected alternative B, (a ticket) did not understand that a ticket is a piece of paper or card that entitles the holder to something, such as entry to an event, travel on public transport, or participation in an activity.

Furthermore, those who selected alternative D, (a timetable) did not understand that a timetable is a schedule or chart showing the planned times for events to occur. For instance, a timetable might indicate that the guest of honour's speech is scheduled for 13:00 hours.

- (iii) A very cold water which is in solid form is called
- A ice
 - B liquid
 - C steam
 - D vapour

This item tested the pupil's ability to use names to identify various states of matter. The correct response for this item was A, (*ice*). Pupils who chose the correct answer knew that a word *ice* is the solid form of water, produced by freezing; frozen water.

Pupils who opted for B, (*liquid*) were unaware that *liquid* is a substance that flows freely but is of constant volume, having a consistency like that of water or oil.

Additionally, the pupils who opted for C, (*steam*) were unaware that the word *steam* is the vapour into which water is converted when heated, forming a white mist of minute

water droplets in the air. Likewise, the pupils who opted for D, (*vapour*) did not understand that the word *vapour* is a substance diffused or suspended in the air, especially one normally liquid or solid.

- (iv) Lions ate a _____ of goats yesterday.
- A herd
 - B flock
 - C crowd
 - D swarm

This item tested the pupil's ability to use collective nouns. Collective nouns are names for a number of people, animals or things. The correct response for this item was A, (*herd*). Pupils who selected the correct answer demonstrated knowledge of the collective noun "herd," which specifically refers to a large group of animals of the same type that live or feed together, such as goats.

The pupils who opted for B, (*flock*) were unaware that a flock describes a number of animals or birds of one kind feeding, resting or travelling together. For example, a flock of sheep.

Additionally, the pupils who opted for C, (*crowd*) did not understand that the word crowd is used to name a large number of people gathered together in a public place. Likewise, the pupils who opted for D, (*swarm*) were unaware that the word *swarm* is a collective noun that describes a large or dense group of flying insects. Example, a swarm of bees. Therefore, this was incorrect because it

does not represent goats.

(v) My uncle took the car to a _____ for repairs.

- A garage
- B factory
- C refinery
- D laboratory

This item tested the pupils' ability to use vocabulary to describe people's places. The correct answer was A, (*garage*). The pupils who chose the correct answer understood that the term *garage* refers to a building for housing a motor vehicle or vehicles.

However, the pupils who chose B, (*factory*) did not realise that the term "factory" refers to a building or group of buildings where goods are manufactured or assembled chiefly by machine. Those who selected C, (*refinery*) did not know that the term refers to an industrial installation where a substance such as an oil, sugar or metals is refined.

Likewise, those who selected D, (*laboratory*) did not understand that the term means a room or building equipped for scientific experiments, research, or teaching, or for the manufacture of drugs or chemicals. Therefore, the pupils who selected incorrect responses did not have skills to use vocabulary in different contexts.

2.3 SECTION C: GRAMMAR

This section consisted of five items (i) to (v). The pupils were required to fill in the blanks by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets and write them in the spaces provided. The question tested the pupil’s ability to use English language grammar in daily communication.

This question was attempted by 1,530,196 pupils (100%). Among them, 677,792 pupils (44.29%) scored from 0 to 2 marks which is weak performance; 668,460 (43.69%) scored from 4 to 6 marks which is average performance and 120,140 (7.85%) scored 8 marks which is good performance. Furthermore, 63,804 pupils (4.17%) scored 10 marks which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was average because 852,404 pupils (55.71%) scored from 4 to 10 marks Figure 3 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 3.

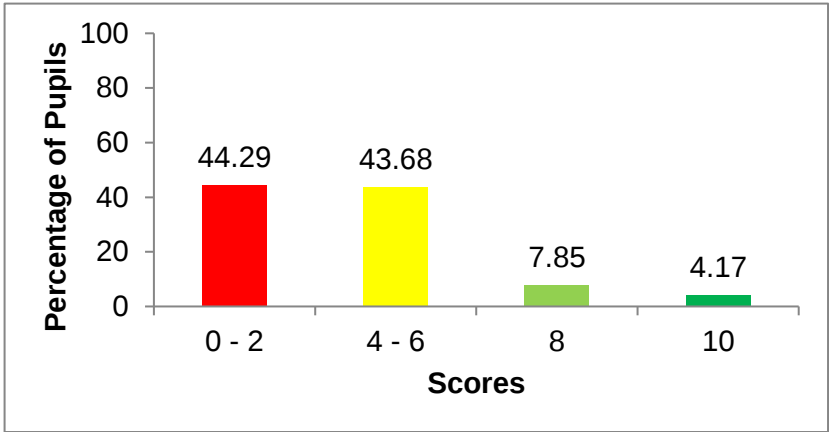


Figure 3: *Pupil’s Performance on Question 3*

Pupils who performed well on this question demonstrated

an ability to communicate simple ideas using English grammar. They effectively utilized word classes to construct grammatically correct sentences. This strong foundation in grammar enabled them to select the appropriate words to create meaningful sentences.

On the contrary, some pupils had weak performance on this question. These pupils did not know how to apply grammatical rules when communicating simple ideas through writing. The items were as follows:

(i) They _____ (is, was, were) late for school.

This item tested pupil's ability to use verb tenses to express past tense. The pupils who wrote the correct answer (*were*) understood that, the verb tense *were* is used with the first, second and third person plural to express past events as in *We were busy yesterday.*

Conversely, the pupils who wrote incorrect verb tenses *is* and *was* did not understand that they are used with the first and the third person singular to express present and past events respectively. For example, *Amani is fast, Neema was hungry.*

(ii) Musa is _____ (rides, riding, ride) a bicycle.

This item tested the pupil's ability to use verbs to express events in present continuous tense. The correct answer to this item was (*riding*). The pupils who chose the correct answer knew that the verb *riding* is used with verb tense *is*

to express events in present continuous tense as performed by the subject represented in the third person singular. Those who provided the incorrect response (rides and ride), did not understand that the verbs *rides* and *ride* were in simple present tense form, therefore they do not agree with a singular verb tense *is*. Therefore, those who chose the wrong answers did not know how to use verbs in different tenses.

(iii) We go for a break _____ (on, in, at) 10:00 a.m.

This item tested the pupil's ability to tell time by using correct prepositions of time. Pupils who wrote the correct answer (*at*) understood that the preposition *at* is used to tell time as in *Maua will come at 09:15 p.m.*

Pupils who wrote the incorrect answer *on* and *in* did not understand that the prepositions are used to express days of the week and parts of the day as in *Mapinduzi goes for shopping on Saturday* and *Azimio will meet his mother in the evening*. Therefore, those who chose the wrong answers did not know how to use prepositions of time.

(iv) There is _____ (enough, many, plenty) milk for you.

This item assessed the pupil's ability to use quantifiers to express the quantity of objects. A quantifier is a word that typically precedes a noun to indicate the amount of that noun; for example, "a little" milk.

Pupils who selected the correct answer ("enough")

demonstrated an understanding that "enough" signifies the required or sufficient amount. They recognized that the milk was described as being present in the quantity necessary for the context of the sentence.

Pupils who selected the incorrect answer ("many") did not understand that "many" is used to quantify countable nouns. For example, "I have seen many people in the hospital." Since "milk" is an uncountable noun, "many" cannot be used to describe its quantity.

Likewise, those who responded with incorrect pronoun (*plenty*) did not understand that the pronoun *plenty* is used with "of" or "more" to describe a large or sufficient amount or quantity; meaning "more than enough". For example, *I would have plenty of time to get home before my parents arrived.*

- (v) I wake up at six o'clock and _____ (goes, go, going) to school.

This item tested the pupil's ability to use the correct verb in the simple present tense to express habitual actions. Pupils who selected the correct answer (*go*) understood that the verb in its basic form is used in simple present tense with the first, second and third person plural (I, We, You and They) to describe repeated or habitual actions.

Pupils who wrote the incorrect answer (*goes*) did not know that when expressing events in simple present tense, we add -s or -es and -ies for the third-person singular.

Furthermore, pupils who wrote incorrect answer (*going*) did not understand that, the Simple Present Tense structure does not use verbs ending with *-ing* form. The verbs with such form are used when expressing events in present continuous tense. Extracts 2.1 and 2.2 are samples of the correct, and incorrect responses to Question 3.

1. Fill in the-blanks in (i) - (v) with the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful

(i) They were (is, was, were) late for school.

(ii) Musa is riding (rides, riding, ride) a bicycle.

(iii) We go for a break at (on, in, at) 10:00 a.m.

(iv) There is enough (enough, many, plenty) milk for you.

(v) I wake up at six o'clock and go (goes, go, going) to school.

Extract 2.1: A sample of correct responses to Question 3.

The pupil's correct responses to all five items in Extract 2.1 demonstrate a strong understanding of grammatical rules. This suggests a solid foundation in English grammar.

Pupils who struggled with this question likely lacked a strong foundation in fundamental grammatical concepts. This deficiency in grammatical understanding hindered their ability to construct grammatically correct and meaningful sentences, leading to the incorrect responses observed in Extract 2.2.

3. Fill in the blanks in (i) - (v) with the correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.	
(i)	They <u>was</u> (is, was, were) late for school.
(ii)	Musa is <u>ride</u> (rides, riding, ride) a bicycle.
(iii)	We go for a break <u>on</u> (on, in, at) 10:00 a.m.
(iv)	There is <u>many</u> (enough, many, plenty) milk for you.
(v)	I wake up at six o'clock and <u>going</u> (goes, go, going) to school.

Extract.2.2: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 3.

The pupil's incorrect responses in Extract 2.2 strongly suggest a lack of understanding of the grammatical rules necessary for accurate sentence construction. This lack of understanding likely hindered their ability to formulate grammatically correct and meaningful sentences as required by the questions.

2.4 SECTION D: COMPOSITION

This section had one question which required pupils to complete the story by filling in the blank spaces with the correct words provided in the box. The question assessed the pupil's ability to communicate various ideas through

writing. The question was as follows:

4. Complete the following story by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the box.

<i>when, at, was, for, games, with, to, who</i>

Last Wednesday _____ sports day at Muungano Primary School. Many _____ were played on that day. Standard Four pupils competed _____ Standard Five pupils. The competition started _____ 10 o'clock in the morning. Many pupils wanted to know _____ would win the football match.

This question was attempted by 1,530,196 (100%) pupils. Among them, 1,201,190 (78.50%) scored from 0 to 2 marks which is weak performance. Moreover, 211,632 (13.83%) pupils scored from 4 to 6 marks which is an average performance and 32,613 (2.13%) scored 8 marks which is good performance.

Furthermore, 84,761 (5.54%) pupils scored 10 marks which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was weak because 21.5 per cent of pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. Figure 4 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 4.

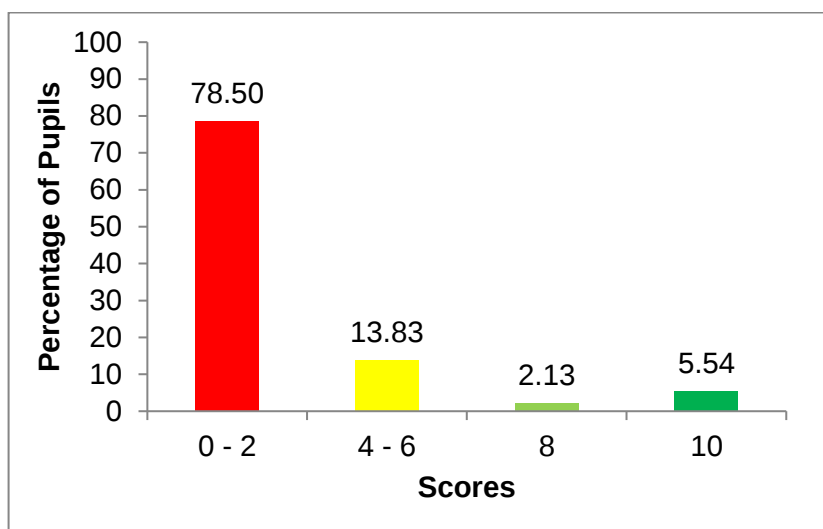


Figure 4: *Pupils' Performance on Question 4*

The analysis shows that the pupils who had high performance in this question were competent in using words to compose various meaningful simple texts. These pupils picked appropriate words from the box provided and wrote them in the spaces to complete the story. The pupils understood that the composition given was a short simple story and so, they knew how to complete it with the appropriate words. Extract 3.1 shows a sample of pupils' correct responses to Question 4.

4. Complete the following story by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the box.

when, at, was, for, games, with, to, who

Last Wednesday was sports day at Muungano Primary School. Many games were played on that day. Standard Four pupils competed with Standard Five pupils. The competition started at 10 o'clock in the morning. Many pupils wanted to know who would win the football match.

Extract 3.1: A sample of correct responses to Question 4.

The pupil's successful completion of Extract 3.1, where they correctly filled in all the required words, indicates strong skills in communicating simple ideas in writing using correct English grammar.

Pupils who had an average performance in this question answered correctly 2 or 3 items only; hence they scored from 4 to 6 marks. These pupils had partial skills on constructing sentences to make various text compositions.

Conversely, pupils who performed poorly (scoring 0 to 2 marks) responded correctly to either none or only one item. This indicates a lack of proficiency in communicating ideas effectively in writing. These pupils inserted incorrect words in the spaces provided, resulting in a nonsensical or

incoherent composition. Extract 3.2 exemplifies this.

4. Complete the following story by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the box.

when, at, was, for, games, with, to, who

Last Wednesday for sports day at Muungano Primary School. Many with were played on that day. Standard Four pupils competed who Standard Five pupils. The competition started when 10 o'clock in the morning. Many pupils wanted to know to would win the football match.

Extract 3.2: A sample of pupils' incorrect responses to Question 4.

In Extract 3.2, the pupil wrote incorrect words in spaces provided. He/she did not observe agreement of words in the composition.

2.5 SECTION E: COMPREHENSION

This section consisted of one question with five short-answer items (i) to (v). It was about comprehension in which the pupils were given a passage to read and answer the questions that followed. The question tested the pupil's comprehension skills. The passage was as follows:

Once upon a time in a forest, there lived a Hare and a Tortoise. The Hare could run very fast. So, it was very proud of its speed. One day, the Hare saw the Tortoise walking very slowly. The Hare laughed at the Tortoise and said, "You are such a slow creature!" "My dear friend, you are so

proud of your speed. Let us have a race to see who is faster,” the Tortoise said. So, one morning, the Hare and the Tortoise had a race. The hare ran very fast and very far. After a while, the Hare turned back to see where the Tortoise was. The Tortoise was running very slowly and it was far behind the Hare. “The Tortoise will take a very long time to come near me,” the Hare thought.

The Hare started feeling bored. He thought to sleep for a short while. In the meantime, he began to eat the grass around. After eating, he went to sleep under a big tree. The Tortoise slowly but steadily passed the Hare. The Hare suddenly woke up and saw the Tortoise just crossing the finishing line. The Hare started running very fast. But it was too late. The Tortoise already won the race. The Hare was very angry and disappointed to find his competitor already there as a winner.

This question was attempted by all 1,530,196 pupils (100%). Among them, 1,362,375 (89.03%) scored from 0 to 2.5 marks which is a weak performance. Moreover, 93,082 (6.08%) scored from 3 to 6 marks which is an average performance and 35,781 (2.34%) scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks which is good performance. However, only 38,958 pupils (2.55%) scored 10 marks, which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was weak because 10.97 per cent of the pupils scored from 03 to 10 marks (average to very good performance). Figure 5 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 5.

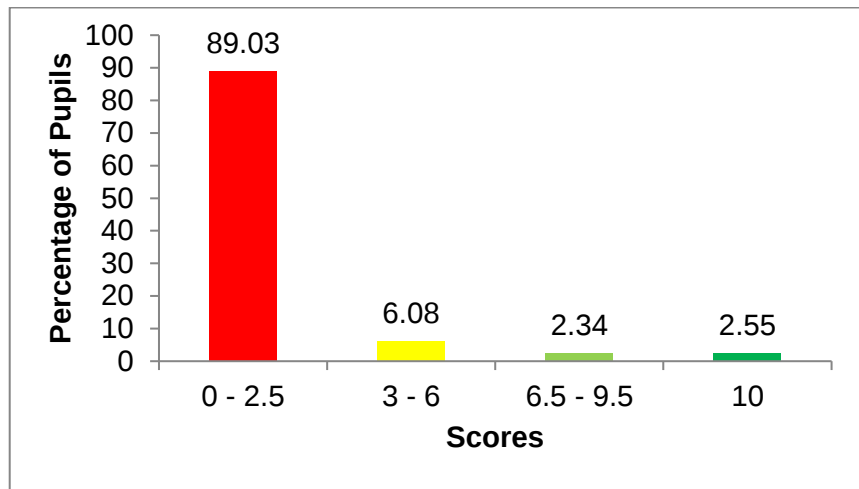
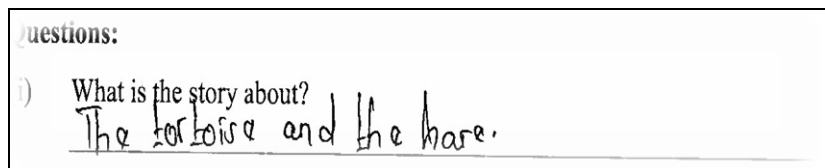


Figure 5: *Pupils' Performance on Question 5*

Pupils who scored high marks on items (i) to (v) of this question could read the passage, understand and interpret it and so, they answered the questions correctly. The following is the analysis of the items:

- (i) What is the story about?

The item tested the pupil's ability to interpret and give summary of the given story. The correct response was, *the story is about the Hare and the Tortoise*. The pupils who answered the question correctly read the text and comprehended the passage. Extract 4.1 shows a sample of the correct responses to this item.



Extract 4.1: A sample of correct responses to Question 5 (i).

In Extract 4.1, the pupil wrote what the story was about. His/her correct response indicates that he/she understood the story and could summarise it.

In contrast, there were pupils who responded incorrectly to this item. Some of them did not understand the story and so, they wrote irrelevant answers such as *meantime he began to eat the grass around, once upon a time in a forest, and there lived a hare and a tortoise*. Other pupils did not understand the item task. Extract 4.2 is a sample of incorrect responses to this item.

Questions: (i) What is the story about? He thought to sleep for a short while

Extract 4.2: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 5 (i).

In Extract 4.2, the pupil wrote a part of expression from the passage. This suggests that he/she did not understand the item task.

- (ii) Where did the Hare and the Tortoise live?

This item tested the pupil's ability to identify the place where the Hare and the Tortoise lived. The correct response to this item was *in the forest*. The pupils who responded correctly understood the introductory part of the story where it described the place where the Hare and the Tortoise lived. Extract 4.3 shows a sample of the correct responses to this

item.

(ii) Where did the Hare and the Tortoise live? <u>Hare and the Tortoise live in the forest.</u>
--

Extract 4.3: A sample of correct responses to Question 5 (ii).

In extract 4.3, the pupil wrote the correct place where the Hare and the Tortoise lived.

On the contrary, some pupils could not identify the place where the Hare and the Tortoise lived. These pupils did not understand the story, while others did not understand the requirements of the question. Hence, they provided incorrect responses such as *the hare could run very fast*, *a Hare and a Tortoise* and *in the big tree*. Extract 4.4 is a sample of the incorrect responses to this item.

(ii) Where did the Hare and the Tortoise live? <u>The hare could run very fast.</u>
--

Extract 4.4: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (ii).

In Extract 4.4, the pupil wrote a sentence copied from the text which is irrelevant to what was asked. This shows that the pupil did not comprehend the passage.

(iii) How did the Tortoise run in the race?

This item tested the pupil's ability to tell the way the Tortoise ran. The correct response to this item was *the Tortoise ran slowly*. The pupils who responded correctly to this item

understood the passage and analysed how the Tortoise ran. Extract 4.5 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.

(iii) How did the Tortoise run in the race?

The tortoise was running very slowly

Extract 4.5: A sample of correct responses to Question 5 (iii).

In Extract 4.5, the pupil wrote the correct answer as he/she realised how the Tortoise ran. The response indicates that he/she had enough reading skills to understand the part of the passage which described how slowly the Tortoise ran in the race.

Contrarily, other pupils could not give the correct responses to the item. Some of them copied parts of the passage, and others wrote meaningless responses such as *So, it was very proud of its speed*. Extract 4.6 is a sample of incorrect responses to this item.

(iii) How did the Tortoise run in the race?

So, the horse and the tortoise had a race.

Extract 4.6: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 5 (iii).

In Extract 4.6, the pupil picked the sentence from the passage and made an irrelevant answer. Such response indicates that he/she lacked adequate reading skills.

- (iv) Why did the Hare fail to win the race?

This item tested the pupil's ability to evaluate a reason as to why the Hare failed to win the race. The correct response to this item was *because the Hare was sleeping*. Extract 4.7 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.

(iv) Why did the Hare fail to win the race?
Because a hare was sleeping.

Extract 4.7: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (iv).

In Extract 4.7, the pupil gave a reason as to why the Hare failed to win the race against the Tortoise. He/she provided the correct answer because he/she had comprehension skills.

Nevertheless, there were pupils who could not give reason which made the Hare fail to win the race. Most of them did not comprehend the passage. As a result, they provided such incorrect responses as *To see who is father, the Hare was very angry* and *The Tortoise said so*. Extract 4.8 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.

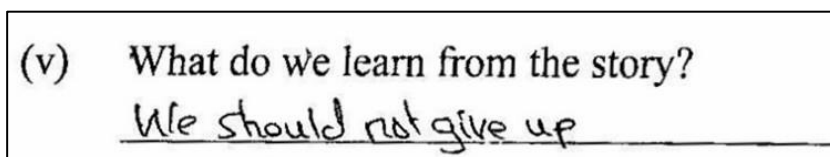
(iv) Why did the Hare fail to win the race?
Suddenly woke up and saw the tortoise
Just crossing the finishing line.

Extract 4.8: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (iv).

In Extract 4.8, the pupil copied a sentence from the passage which stated how the Tortoise was crossing the finishing line to win the race. This indicates that the pupil did not understand the requirement of the item.

- (v) What do we learn from the story?

This item tested the pupil's ability to evaluate the message from the passage. The correct answer was *We learn not to undermine/underestimate others/our opponents/competitor* or *Slow and steady wins the race*. The pupils who correctly responded to this item understood the story and analysed it to get its lesson. Extract 4.9 shows a sample of the correct responses to this item.



Extract 4.9: A sample of the correct responses to question 5 (v).

In Extract 4.9, the pupil explained the lesson obtained in the story. This pupil understood that one should not give up if one is in need of winning something.

In contrast, other pupils could not evaluate the message from the story. These pupils did not comprehend the information in the passage given. In such instances, they wrote such incorrect responses as *to risen are paret, not abuse your friend, not say to your friend you don't know* and *to do not lough your friend*. Extract 4.10 shows a sample of incorrect responses to this item.

(v) What do we learn from the story?

Started running very fast but it was
too late.

Extract 4.10: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (v).

In Extract 4.10, the pupil copied some words from the passage. The pupil had a poor command of English language and so, he/she did not understand the requirement of the question.

3.0 ANALYSIS ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH COMPETENCE

English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) 2024 tested three (3) competencies. The competencies' focus was on the pupils' ability *to comprehend oral and written information, communicate orally and through writing, and acquire and use vocabulary through three language skills, namely writing, reading and speaking.*

The pupils' performance in *communicating orally and through writing* which was assessed in Questions 3 and 4 was average as 38.61 per cent of the pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. The pupils' performance in *acquiring and using vocabulary through the three language skills* which was assessed in Question 2 was average as 47.59 per cent of pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. Furthermore, the pupils' performance in *comprehending oral and written information*, which was assessed in Questions 1 and 5, was weak as 24.93 per cent scored from 3 to 10 marks. The summary for this

analysis is illustrated in an *Appendix*.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The analysis indicates that the pupils' general performance in the English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) for 2024 was good. A total of 1,053,654 (68.86%) pupils passed the assessment by scoring 10 to 50 marks.

The reason for pupils' high scores was their competence on comprehending oral and written information, developing and using vocabulary, and communicating simple ideas through writing. These pupils were able to understand the requirements of the questions and follow the given instructions. In contrast, a total of 476,439 (31.13%) pupils failed in this assessment. These pupils lacked enough competence on comprehending oral and written information, communicating through writing and using vocabulary appropriately in various situations. Moreover, some of them failed to understand the requirement of the questions and so, they provided irrelevant answers to most questions.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the good performance observed in this year's assessment, further measures should be implemented to sustain and enhance positive outcomes. To achieve this, the following recommendations are proposed:

- (a) To enhance pupils' writing abilities, teachers should incorporate the use of flashcards, pictures, and letters that focus on common topics. This multi-sensory approach will facilitate language acquisition and enable pupils to express themselves

more effectively in simple, yet meaningful ways.

- (b) To enhance reading and listening comprehension, teachers should assign tasks that require pupils to read simple texts on a variety of topics and comprehend their main ideas. Additionally, pupils should actively listen to narrations and dialogues on general topics and be able to identify the key messages. These activities will effectively develop pupils' skills in comprehending both oral and written information.

- (c) To enhance vocabulary and writing skills, teachers should organize debates on cross-cutting issues, encouraging pupils to express their views and arguments in English. Furthermore, pupils should be assigned tasks that involve reading and writing a variety of English language texts, such as short stories, poems, and articles. These activities will effectively contribute to the development of pupils' vocabulary and writing skills.

Appendix

COMPARISON OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE PER COMPETENCE IN SFNA 2024 AND SFNA 2023

SN	Competency	SFNA 2024				SFNA 2023			
		Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks	Performance on each Question		Average	Remarks
		Qn. Number	(%) performance			Qn. Number	(%) performance		
1	Communicate orally and through writing	3	55.71	38.61	Average	3	58.07	49.90	Average
		4	21.50			4	41.73		
2	Acquire and use Vocabulary through the three language skills.	2	47.59	47.59	Average	2	35.71	35.71	Average
3	Comprehend oral and written information	1	38.89	24.93	Weak	1	45.27	28.12	Weak
		5	10.97			5	10.96		

