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QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES
AND
EVALUATION OF THE QUESTION PAPERS (PER PAPER)

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE 2025

WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT	**ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE**		
QUESTION PAPER	**1**	**2**	**3**
DURATION OF PAPER	**2,5 HOURS**		
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HEAD OF EXAMINATION	**MS LM BREDENKAMP**		

REPORT 2: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER RESPONSES

SECTION 1: ***(GENERAL OVERVIEW OF LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN THE QUESTION PAPER AS A WHOLE)***

The spread of candidate performance seems to be an improvement as compared to other years. While many candidates performed exceptionally well, generally the performance was average with some learners faring poorly.
From observation and the 100-script analysis, candidates are performing at a similar level in the essay questions and the contextual questions. It seems that there is a noticeable improvement in candidate performance in *The Crucible*.

SECTION 2: ***COMMENT ON CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS***
(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question)

QUESTION 1
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The poetry essay question is accessible. It seems to be within the scope of the knowledge of candidates. Most candidates who answered this question fared well, however not many responded to this question as possibly the requirement of 'structure' deterred them. Candidates omitted to refer to structure which disadvantaged their performance.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Many merely paraphrased the lines without any discussion or links to the three elements and statement given. The 'tone' and 'structure' aspects of the question are often very thin. Some candidates lacked engagement and approached the poem on a superficial level.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Learners should be provided with examples of 'tone', 'mood' and 'atmosphere' words. The concept of imagery within the context of the poem should be engaged with. Poetry essay writing must be practiced. Candidates should also focus on the structure and language of the essay which carries 40% of the mark.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Learners must anticipate elements such as 'structure' and 'punctuation' specific to certain poems.

QUESTION 2
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question was generally well-answered.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
In 2.2, the candidates provided a definition of a 'nun', failing to make the link between the nun's spirituality and the setting. In 2.4, candidates failed to refer to the 'sestet' and therefore the incorrect examples of diction were referenced.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
The pre-reading approach is vital for a full understanding of the context of the poem and the specific techniques inherent to the poem must be addressed. Candidates must be able to identify figures of speech and effectively discuss imagery.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
'Critically discuss' calls for learners to make an evaluation, judgement or their own response to the relevant content.

QUESTION 3
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The response to this question was fair.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Many candidates lacked background knowledge and the historical context of this poem and incorrectly referenced Apartheid in South Africa. Candidates struggled to unpack the image in 3.3.2 and many were unable to make a comment on the effectiveness of the image. In 3.4, candidates often provided a very general discussion without referring to the changing tones as instructed in the question, and many failed to attain the third mark for a critical discussion of the identified tones.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
The pre-reading approach is vital for a full understanding of the context of the poem and the specific techniques inherent to the poem must be addressed. Candidates must be able to identify figures of speech.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
The vocabulary of learners must be expanded to accommodate a range of 'tone' words.

QUESTION 4
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Generally, this question was not a popular choice but was answered quite well.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
In 4.1, candidates provided a definition of 'shroud' instead of linking it to the question. Many failed to unpack the image in 4.3.2 and were unable to make a comment on the effectiveness. In 4.4, candidates performed well as the diction in the lines referenced is very accessible.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates must be able to identify figures of speech and must be taught how to answer questions in the effectiveness of an image.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Candidates are making very generalised and sweeping statements without grounding their responses in the poem.

QUESTION 5
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question was accessible to most candidates which was very encouraging.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
5.1 Many candidates did not know what a 'bud' is. Candidates did not provide two distinct points but rather a repetition of the same idea. 5.2 Candidates failed to identify the speaker's attitude. 5.3 Many failed to unpack the image in 5.3.2 and were unable to make a comment on the effectiveness. 5.4.2 allows for candidate interpretation which benefits candidates.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates should be taught the skill set required to analyse and answer the unseen poem and should be given many opportunities to practise.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Learners should be provided with examples of 'tone' words. Candidates must be able to extract a deeper meaning of the poem as the central message.

QUESTION 6
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Generally, the question was well-answered.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Many candidates simply retold the plot and failed to respond to the topic. Many essays lacked depth of discussion and did not address all aspects of the question. Many candidates grappled with the 'nature changing' aspect of the given statement.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates must be taught to write a successful literary essay with structure that includes a clear introduction, a body of approximately six paragraphs (one idea per paragraph) and a conclusion. A good technique is to use the PEEL method: per paragraph, make the POINT, EXPLAIN, provide EVIDENCE to back up the point. LINK the paragraphs to the topic. Candidates must engage argumentatively. It is essential to plan the essay to attain a good mark.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of plot linked to theme and characters.

QUESTION 7

(a)	***General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?***
The general performance in the question is fair.	
(b)	***Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.***
7.2 Candidates fail to link Sibyl's beauty to Dorian's superficiality. 7.7 Candidates struggle with the image and fail to address the 'implications' in the context of the novel. 7.8 Candidates fail to provide the reader's attitude.	
(c)	***Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.***
A thorough and careful reading of the novel is essential. An in-depth study of all characters and themes is vital. The film is certainly not a substitute for the novel. Learners must be taught how to explain the significance of images in the novel. It must be impressed on learners to make a statement and to provide substantiation for it.	
(d)	***Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.***
Candidates must be prepared for a wide range of questions with specific reference to direction words e.g., Place the extract in context, Using these lines as a starting point, Discuss the significance, Critically discuss. Learners must be taught how to unpack questions and answer all aspects of the question. 'Place the extract in context' calls for the candidate to refer to recent events that have led up to the extract.	

QUESTION 8	
(a)	***General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?***
The response to the question was fair.	
(b)	***Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.***
Some candidates struggled with the 'unusual approach' aspect of the statement and then how it became a strength. Often too much irrelevant or flawed information is included. Many candidates simply retold the plot and failed to respond to the topic.	
(c)	***Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.***
Candidates must be taught to write a successful literary essay with structure that includes a clear introduction, a body of approximately six paragraphs (one idea per paragraph) and a conclusion. A good technique is to use the PEEL method: per paragraph, make the POINT, EXPLAIN, provide EVIDENCE to back up the point. LINK the paragraphs to the topic. Candidates must engage argumentatively. It is essential to plan the essay to attain a good mark.	
(d)	***Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments***

that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Refrain from studying prepared essays and attempting to fit it into the topic. Candidates must have a thorough knowledge of plot linked to theme and characters. The second story must be thoroughly discussed with learners as many are either unaware of it or are quite confused.

QUESTION 9
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Generally, candidates are performing well in this question.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
9.1 Some candidates provide only one point. 9.5 Candidates fail to provide evidence and make generalised statements. 9.8 Candidates fail to provide the reader's response and lack understanding of Pi's state of mind at this point in the novel. 9.9 Candidates misinterpret the question by not linking 'survival' to Pi. 9.10 Generalised discussion without providing substantiation.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
A thorough and careful reading of the novel is essential. An in-depth study of all characters and themes is vital. The film is certainly not a substitute for the novel. A close study of Part 3 is vital.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Teachers must clarify the two stories and cross reference them often. Candidates must be prepared for a wide range of questions with specific reference to direction words e.g., Place the extract in context, Account for, Discuss the significance of, Explain the irony. 'Place the extract in context' calls for the candidate to refer to recent events that have led up to the extract.

QUESTION 10
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Fair performance overall. A very accessible question.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Many candidates simply retold the plot and failed to respond to the topic. Often too much irrelevant or flawed information is included. Some candidates tended to speculate or provide a hypothetical response. This is not considered a critical discussion.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates must be taught to write a successful literary essay with structure that includes a clear introduction, a body of approximately six paragraphs (one idea per paragraph) and a conclusion. A good technique is to use the PEEL method: per paragraph, make the POINT, EXPLAIN, provide EVIDENCE to back up the point. LINK the paragraphs to the topic. Candidates must engage argumentatively. It is essential to plan the essay to attain a good mark.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Candidates must have a detailed knowledge of the plot linked to theme and characters. Essays should be argumentative and insightful.

QUESTION 11
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The question was poorly answered but the questions were very fair.
(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
11.3 Candidates fail to address the irony convincingly. 11.4 Many candidates do not provide evidence. 11.8 Responses are often general and not grounded in the lines referenced. 11.9 The stage direction question is still proving challenging as candidates fail to focus on the three aspects of this question. 11.10 Candidates have a superficial understanding of Hamlet's character and fail to address 'inner conflict'.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.
Candidates must be provided with tools to indicate plausible body language in context. Facial expressions do not constitute body language. Tone is not pitch or volume. The motivation is often neglected. Candidates can be taught to structure a response to irony by providing two contrasting statements.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
More teaching should be geared toward understanding the Shakespearian text within a contextual question. Candidates have to comprehend the lines to access the questions. Candidates must be prepared for a wide range of questions with specific reference to direction words e.g. Place the extract in context, Account for, Discuss the significance of.

QUESTION 12

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

A well-answered question.

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

Many candidates simply retold the plot and failed to respond to the topic. Essays sometimes lack evidence.

Many are confusing characters such as Cassio, Roderigo and Brabantio.

'Shaping the actions' prove tricky to navigate and was not always understood by candidates.

Some candidates tended to speculate or provide a hypothetical response. This is not considered a critical discussion.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Candidates must be taught to write a successful literary essay with structure that includes a clear introduction, a body of approximately six paragraphs (one idea per paragraph) and a conclusion. A good technique is to use the PEEL method: per paragraph, make the POINT, EXPLAIN, provide EVIDENCE to back up the point. LINK the paragraphs to the topic. Candidates must engage argumentatively. It is essential to plan the essay to attain a good mark.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

Candidates must have a detailed knowledge of plot linked to theme and characters. Essays should be argumentative and insightful. Candidates should be discouraged from learning prepared essays.

QUESTION 13

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

Not well-answered but questions are fair.

(b) Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

The stage direction question in 13.4 is still proving challenging as candidates fail to focus on the three aspects of this question.

13.7 Candidates do not know what news Lodovico and Gratiano have brought.

13.9 Generalised responses without providing evidence.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.

Candidates must be provided with tools to indicate plausible body language in context. Facial expressions do not constitute body language. Tone is not pitch or volume. Justification is often neglected.

Candidates can be taught to structure a response to irony by providing two contrasting statements.

(d)	***Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.***
More teaching should be geared toward understanding the Shakespearian text within a contextual question. Candidates must be prepared for a wide range of questions with specific reference to direction words e.g. Place the extract in context, Account for, Discuss the significance of.	

QUESTION 14	
(a)	***General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?***
Very well-answered.	
(b)	***Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.***
Some candidates simply retold the plot and failed to respond to the topic. Often too much irrelevant or flawed information is included. Some candidates tended to speculate or provide a hypothetical response. This is not considered a critical discussion.	
(c)	***Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.***
Candidates must be taught to write a successful literary essay with structure that includes a clear introduction, a body of approximately six paragraphs (one idea per paragraph) and a conclusion. A good technique is to use the PEEL method: per paragraph, make the POINT, EXPLAIN, provide EVIDENCE to back up the point. LINK the paragraphs to the topic. Candidates must engage argumentatively. It is essential to plan the essay to attain a good mark.	
(d)	***Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.***
A thorough reading and study of the play is required. Learners should engage with background, context, characters and themes,	

QUESTION 15	
(a)	***General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?***
Very well-answered.	
(b)	***Why was the question answered poorly? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.***
15.3 Candidates struggled to identify two distinct points. 15.4 Many candidates provide a general response without providing evidence. The stage direction question in 15.9 is still proving challenging as candidates fail to focus on the three aspects of this question.	
(c)	***Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning.***
Candidates must be provided with tools to indicate plausible body language in context. Facial	

expressions do not constitute body language. Tone is not pitch or volume. Motivation is often neglected. Candidates can be taught to structure a response to irony by providing two contrasting statements.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners and comments that are useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Candidates must be prepared for a wide range of questions with specific reference to direction words e.g., Place the extract in context, Account for, Discuss the significance of