

PRACTICE EXAMINATION PAPER

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE

PAPER 2 | GRADE 12 | 2024

Time: 2.5 hours

Total: 80 marks

Language: English

This paper is for PRACTICE purposes only. Not an official Department of Basic Education paper.

INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. This question paper consists of FOUR sections.

2. Answer A

QUESTION 1: SECTION A: Comprehension

[30 marks]

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

THE DIGITAL GENERATION

[1] Today's youth have grown up in a world saturated with screens and connectivity. Unlike previous generations who acquired technology as adults, young people today have been immersed in digital culture since birth. This unprecedented exposure has fundamentally altered the way they think, communicate, and learn.

[2] Critics argue that constant connectivity has diminished attention spans and reduced the capacity for deep, reflective thinking. Studies have shown that the average attention span has decreased from twelve seconds in 2000 to eight seconds in recent years - ironically, less than that of a goldfish. Social media platforms, designed to deliver rapid bursts of stimulation, have trained users to expect immediate gratification and to move quickly between topics without pausing to contemplate.

[3] However, defenders of the digital generation point to remarkable cognitive advantages. These young people demonstrate superior ability to multitask, to navigate complex digital environments, and to process visual information at extraordinary speed. They are natural collaborators, having grown up sharing ideas and creating content across platforms. They possess a global consciousness that previous generations simply could not have had, connecting with peers across continents in real time.

[4] The question facing educators is not whether technology is good or bad, but how to harness its power while developing critical thinking skills. Schools that ban devices entirely miss an opportunity; those that integrate technology thoughtfully see marked improvement in engagement and learning outcomes. The key lies in teaching students not merely to consume digital content, but to evaluate, create, and contribute to it meaningfully.

[5] Perhaps the greatest challenge for this generation is not cognitive at all, but social and emotional. The curated perfection of social media creates unrealistic expectations and fuels anxiety and depression among vulnerable young people. The permanence of online mistakes can have devastating consequences for developing identities. Mental health professionals report a significant increase in anxiety disorders, loneliness, and social isolation - paradoxically, among the most "connected" generation in history.

[6] The solution, as with most complex social questions, lies not in extremes but in balance. Teaching digital literacy alongside traditional literacy, encouraging face-to-face interaction alongside online communication, and helping young people understand the commercial interests that drive the platforms they inhabit - these are the tasks that will determine whether this generation's unique capabilities become a force for positive change or a source of ongoing vulnerability.

Questions:

1.1 In paragraph [1], what does the word "saturated" suggest about the presence of screens in modern life? (1) (1)

Answer:

1.2 Refer to paragraph [2].
(a) Identify the literary device used in "less than that of a goldfish". (2)

Answer:

1.3 (b) Comment on the effectiveness of this comparison. (2)

Answer:

1.4 In your own words, explain TWO cognitive advantages mentioned in paragraph [3]. (4)

Answer:

1.5 How does the writer structure the argument in paragraphs [2] and [3]? Comment on the effectiveness of this structure. (4)

Answer:

1.6 Explain the irony identified in paragraph [5]. (3)

Answer:

1.7 "The solution... lies not in extremes but in balance." (Paragraph [6])
Discuss whether you agree with this statement, using evidence from the text and your own experience. **(6)**

Answer:

1.8 Choose the word from the passage that best matches each definition:
(a) Gathering information quickly between multiple tasks **(2)**

Answer:

1.9 (b) Shaped or influenced in a significant way **(2)**

Answer:

1.10 Suggest a suitable alternative title for this passage and justify your choice. **(4)**

Answer:

TOTAL FOR THIS QUESTION: 30

QUESTION 2: SECTION B: Summary

[10 marks]

Read the following passage about social entrepreneurship and write a summary of the CHALLENGES faced by social entrepreneurs. Your summary should be: written in point form, in your own words as far as possible, no longer than 7 points, focused ONLY on challenges (not solutions or examples).

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: CHANGING THE WORLD, ONE PROBLEM AT A TIME

Social entrepreneurs face extraordinary challenges that distinguish them from traditional business founders. Unlike conventional entrepreneurs who measure success primarily through profit, social entrepreneurs must simultaneously satisfy financial sustainability requirements and social impact metrics. This dual mandate creates constant tension: investors expect returns while beneficiaries need affordable services.

Funding presents perhaps the most significant obstacle. Traditional venture capital firms are reluctant to invest in enterprises with capped returns and uncertain timelines to profitability. Government grants, while valuable, come with bureaucratic requirements and short funding cycles that make long-term planning difficult. Many social enterprises survive in a perpetual state of financial precarity, diverting enormous energy from their mission to fundraising.

Operating in underserved communities brings its own complexities. Infrastructure is often inadequate, skilled workers are scarce, and markets are poorly understood. Regulatory environments may be hostile or simply absent, leaving social entrepreneurs to navigate uncertainty without clear guidelines. Cultural barriers can undermine even well-designed interventions; what works in one community may fail entirely in another context.

Measuring impact is notoriously difficult. How do you quantify the value of keeping a child in school, reducing domestic violence, or improving community nutrition? Without clear metrics, demonstrating success to funders and stakeholders becomes an exercise in storytelling rather than evidence-based reporting. Developing robust measurement frameworks is resource-intensive and time-consuming.

Finally, scaling successful models presents a paradox. What makes a social enterprise work is often deeply contextual: the trust built with a specific community, a charismatic founder's personal relationships, or a unique local partnership. Replicating these elements across different geographies or demographic groups requires extraordinary care and frequently fails.

Write your summary below (7 points maximum):

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____

TOTAL FOR THIS QUESTION: 10

QUESTION 3: SECTION C: Language and Editing Skills

[20 marks]

3.1 Choose the word that is most similar in meaning to the underlined word:
"The proposal was VEHEMENTLY opposed by the council."
A: weakly B: passionately C: quietly D: reluctantly (1)

Answer:

3.2 Identify the figure of speech in the following:
"The wind whispered secrets through the trees." (1)

Answer:

3.3 Correct the error in each sentence:
(a) "Each of the students have submitted their assignments." (1)

Answer:

3.4 (b) "Having studied all night, the exam was easy for us." (1)

Answer:

3.5 (c) "Neither the teachers nor the principal were informed about the decision." (1)

Answer:

3.6 Rewrite in the passive voice:
"The committee will announce the results tomorrow." (2)

Answer:

3.7 Rewrite as reported speech:
She said: "I will not tolerate dishonesty in my classroom." (3)

Answer:

3.8 Read the following paragraph and identify FOUR language/editing errors. Rewrite the corrected paragraph.
"The learner's was confused buy the instructions. They didn't knew what to do so they asked they're teacher, whom helped them with the assignment." (5)

Corrected paragraph:

3.9 Explain the difference between a metaphor and a simile with one example each. (4)

Answer:

3.10 What is the function of a semicolon? Write a sentence that uses it correctly. (1)

Answer:

TOTAL FOR THIS QUESTION: 20

QUESTION 4: SECTION D: Poetry

[20 marks]

Read the following poem and answer the questions.

THOSE WINTER SUNDAYS
by Robert Hayden (1913-1980)

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

4.1 What is the setting of this poem? Quote ONE word to support your answer. **(2)**

Answer:

4.2 Identify the mood of the poem and quote evidence from the text to support your answer. **(3)**

Answer:

4.3 Explain the significance of "Sundays TOO" (line 1) - why does the poet use the word "too"? **(2)**

Answer:

4.4 "cracked hands that ached / from labor in the weekday weather" - Identify and explain the poetic device used. **(3)**

Answer:

4.5 What does the repetition "What did I know, what did I know" (line 13) convey? **(3)**

Answer:

4.6

Discuss the theme of this poem. How does Hayden convey this theme throughout the poem?

(4)

Answer:

4.7

Relate the experience described in this poem to your own cultural context. How do family members in South African families show love in actions rather than words?

(3)

Answer:

TOTAL FOR THIS QUESTION:

20