

SWAHILI

Paper 0262/01
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In the reading exercises candidates are:

- expected not only to understand the information provided in the passage/text but also to be able to distinguish between facts, ideas and opinions
- required to demonstrate the ability to extract relevant information from various types of text and organise and present it in the required format.

In the writing exercises candidates should:

- ensure that answers fulfil the task requirements
- develop ideas by using an appropriate register and format
- use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary
- apply writing conventions, such as paragraphs and punctuation, appropriately.

General comments

In **Exercises 1, 2 and 3** spelling errors are tolerated as long as they do not interfere with communicating the correct answer, e.g. by making the answer ambiguous. In **Exercise 3**, candidates are expected to produce phrase and sentence-length notes in response to the stimuli given. Word-length notes will almost always be too short. In **Exercises 4, 5 and 6** marks are awarded for linguistic accuracy as well as content. It is therefore important that candidates carefully check their work for spelling and grammatical errors.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Candidates were asked a series of short-answer questions testing their skim-reading skills of a short text.

The most challenging questions proved to be **Questions 2, 3 and 5**, with **Question 5** being the most challenging. **Question 2** asked after *matendo*, i.e. actions taken by the villagers, not any general views on pollution held by them (*uchafuzi wa mazingira*) as some candidates thought the question did. **Question 3** asked candidates to specify the overall intention of the author, which was to preserve the environment (*kuhifadhi mazingira*). Many however wrote '*kushiriki katika kujadiliana*', which was incorrect. **Question 5** required sharp reading skills; the question was *Jambo gani lilimfanya Vanessa aanze kutambulika kama mwanaharakati?*. The answer could not be that '*aliona vijana wakitambulika...*' as offered by many candidates. The response needed a description of the action that Vanessa undertook, which was '*kuandamana*'. Examiners accepted responses that conveyed an understanding of *kuandamana*, including '*walibeba mabango*'. **Question 6** needed two responses. One of them had to contain the idea of '*peke*', as in: '*Aliendelea kusimama nje ya ofisi peke yake*'.

Candidates are reminded that they must always base their answers on the relevant content from the passage and not answer from general knowledge.

Exercise 2

Most of the candidates performed very well in this exercise although some candidates made mistakes in choosing the right answers.

Some of the more challenging questions proved to be **Question 12** and **Question 13**. Careful reading of the passages is essential as candidates need to be on the lookout for distracting information. For example, the answer to **Question 12** was speaker D, who says '*Nipo mbioni kutafuta kazi*'. Most candidates answered speaker C because this speaker uses the word '*ajira*'. However, speaker C says '*bado ninataka muda kuchagua ajira*', conveying that the speaker is not interested in working despite using the word *ajira*. Similarly for **Question 13**, although it is speaker A who uses the term '*rafiki*', it is speaker B who talks of the value of friendship: the word used is '*wenzangu*' – peers. Candidates are therefore reminded that they should not only look for words in isolation but for the overall meaning of the sentences and passages.

Candidates should remember not to tick more than one box per question as that will invalidate their response, even if one of the boxes ticked happens to be the correct answer. Candidates must therefore remember to cross out any tick they wish to cancel so that it is clear which is their final answer.

Exercise 3

Candidates read a longer text and make brief notes under a number of supplied headings. This exercise was done better than in the previous examination session.

Question 16 required candidates to give the reasons for investing. Most candidates gave appropriate responses. A common answer given by some which was not accepted was '*Alitoa mamilioni ya pesa kwa ujenzi wa roketi*'. This was not a reason for investing but rather description of it.

Question 17 looked for safety measures and these were correctly picked out from the text by most. Candidates are reminded not to repeat or rephrase the same response as an additional note, as some candidates did by giving descriptions of '*mwanasesere*' in two separate answers.

Question 18 had to do with money and most candidates answered it well.

Exercise 4

Generally, the summary was done better than in previous sessions. This year candidates were asked to summarise the different actions taken by parents with regards to online teaching.

Candidates are reminded to focus on the text and not to answer the question using general knowledge or personal experience. However, most candidates took into account that four content points were on offer (two for '*faida*' and two for '*hasara*' in the case of this year's version of the exercise) in addition to the six marks for language, which boosted their score.

Copying and pasting whole sentences and paragraphs from the text in the hope it covers the requirements of the task should be strongly discouraged as this will invariably lead to very low scores. The content points are spread across the whole text and the language used for the summary should be the candidate's own.

Exercise 5

Most candidates did well in this short functional writing exercise.

Candidates are reminded that they do not need to expand in too much depth on the topic in hand (in this case: friendship) but rather tackle each bullet points directly and concisely in order to keep within the stipulated word limit. Only a couple of sentences were needed to cover each bullet point adequately.

Exercise 6

The topic of this session's extended writing exercise was sugary soft drinks.

The first thing to note is that the task always presents a central concern or statement that candidates need to engage with. This year the statement was '*Pesa ndio chanzo cha matatizo duniani*'. The two opinions given in the speech bubbles are there to help stimulate candidates generate a suitable response, but they are free to choose to refer to them or not. Candidates are required, however, to target the main statement and must always keep it in mind to ensure their response remains relevant and on-task.

Some candidates were very creative and wrote excellent essays. A small number of candidates wrote essays that had a very tenuous link or even no link to the question, while other candidates struggled to express their views on the topic clearly.

Finally, candidates are reminded to avoid:

- word separation errors, especially with verbs
- repetition of arguments
- poor punctuation
- errors with adjective agreements
- lack of grammatical variation (e.g. no relative markers)
- the use of English.

SWAHILI

<p>Paper 0262/02 Listening</p>
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Key messages

Candidates should:

- listen carefully to identify the specific information needed to answer each question
- read the instructions and questions with care throughout the paper and if a question consists of more than one part, be careful to respond to all of them
- always attempt an answer rather than leaving a blank space as the paper is not marked negatively.

General comments

In general there was a very good performance in this session's listening paper, mostly on a par with the 2022 and 2021 examination sessions.

In comparison to the 2022 paper, there were slightly more omitted answers for **Exercises 1** and **2** this year, suggesting that some less able candidates may have found these exercises challenging. Candidates should be encouraged to always attempt answers to open response questions, given that only short answers are required.

There was a very good performance in the multiple-matching and multiple-choice questions in **Exercises 3** and **4**, with a slightly stronger general performance this year compared to 2022. Continuing a trend from last year's paper, very few candidates omitted to answer the multiple-choice questions, which is encouraging.

In all exercises of the paper, care should be taken to consider the entirety of the spoken text in order to identify the correct answer, and candidates should avoid the temptation to quickly latch onto a familiar or prominent item of vocabulary to the neglect of the rest of the text. In **Exercises 3** and **4** in particular, a greater degree of inference and interpretation of the spoken text may be required in order to select the correct answer. Candidates should also pay attention to the nuance of different speakers' ideas or feelings in these two exercises.

Candidates should bear in mind that the correct answer item may occur at any point in the spoken text. Candidates should not assume that the last piece or line of text that they hear must be the correct answer. Additionally, candidates should be careful to take answers from the spoken texts, and not from general knowledge or common sense. These points are particularly important for the short-answer questions in **Exercise 1** and the gap-fill questions in **Exercise 2**.

In **Exercises 1** and **2**, it is important for candidates to keep answers short, specific and unambiguous. In comparison to last year's paper, there was a slight increase in the number of candidates who provided two or more possible answers to a single question, including contradictory additions that invalidated an otherwise correct response. Candidates should be encouraged to be decisive when presenting an answer to a question, and should resist the urge to hedge their bets by giving more than one answer as marks cannot be awarded for ambiguous answers. As the same time, candidates should also ensure that their responses clearly answer the entirety of the question, and are a suitable, logical answer to the question prompt (e.g. a question asking about 'vifaa' should be answered with reference to objects rather than actions or times). For the same reason, the lifting of entire lines from the listening text is likely to result in an incorrect answer.

Candidates should always read the question rubrics and instructions carefully, even if they feel very familiar with the paper format. Candidates should always note any sample answers provided in the question rubric and avoid repeating these; this will help candidates to narrow down the possible correct answers in the text.

Answers to the multiple-matching and multiple-choice questions should clearly conform to the instructions given in the question paper.

Once again, it was encouraging to see that many candidates made good use of the opportunity to listen to the spoken text a second time, as shown by the number of initial attempts that were crossed out and replaced with another answer. However, care should be taken to clearly cross out any unwanted answers to avoid losing marks.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Most candidates performed well across the eight questions in this exercise, though general performance was on average slightly lower than in the 2022 paper. Candidates performed strongly on **Questions 1** and **4** in particular.

The most successful candidates tended to keep their answers short, clear, and specific. By contrast, some candidates gave overly long or vague responses that failed to specify their choice of answer.

There was a slight increase this year in omitted and incorrect answers to some of the questions in this exercise, particularly among the weakest cohort of candidates. Some candidates found **Question 5** of this exercise quite challenging and could perhaps have benefitted from being more specific and precise in their answers. **Question 6** was the most challenging question for the less able cohort of candidates, who very often gave multiple possible answers, usually by including the incorrect answer '*hali nyama*' in addition to the correct answer '*msukosuko wa bahari*'. This shows the importance of being decisive and specific when answering the short-answer questions, and also to avoid the temptation to fixate on the last chronological item heard in the text.

Question 3 of this exercise demonstrates the importance of always taking answers from the spoken text, and not giving common sense or general knowledge answers. There was a tendency among some candidates to give answers such as '*lugha hizo hazitungumzwi katika nchi yake*' or '*Kiswahili ni lugha ya chuo kikuu chake*', despite there being no basis for these answers in the text.

Questions 2 and **7** of this exercise showed the danger of spelling variations changing intended meaning. In **Question 2**, some candidates gave the answer as '*msimo*' rather than '*msimu*'. In **Question 7**, some candidates answered with '*kuchangwa*' instead of '*kuchanjwa*'. While both are relatively minor variations on paper, they result in a different meaning than the desired answer, and marks cannot be awarded.

Exercise 2

General performance on this exercise was good, although, continuing a trend from previous years, it proved the most challenging to candidates. Once again, this exercise showed quite clear differentiation of the strongest candidates from the rest. In general, candidates performed best on **Questions 9(a)** and **9(f)**. Many candidates, even the best performing ones, found **Question 9 (d)** and **9(e)** more difficult, probably because these questions both required a degree of inference from the text and asked that candidates pay attention to descriptions of feelings and emotions rather than factual information.

There was a slight increase this year in the number of candidates who omitted one or more questions. Although this exercise can be quite demanding, particularly for less able candidates, it is important that candidates try to maintain focus and stamina throughout and that they are encouraged to always write down an answer to every question, even if all they have is a best guess.

Question 9(a) of this exercise showed the importance of reading the question rubric and completed notes in the form carefully, as the completed notes provided will never be the correct answer to any subsequent question. Many candidates who answered this question incorrectly gave the answer as '*mlipuko wa nzige*', but this was in fact one of the completed notes in the question rubric. It could therefore not be the answer to **Question 9(a)** and should have been discounted from the outset.

Exercise 3

General performance on this exercise was very good and slightly stronger than last year. The exercise was, once again, a very good differentiator between stronger and weaker candidates; it was noticeable how many of the higher-scoring candidates did very well on this question, while the lowest scoring candidates tended to struggle with it.

Performance could have been improved by candidates paying more attention to the sometimes subtle differences between the various ideas, feelings and beliefs expressed in the spoken texts. Some candidates showed a tendency to focus on recognisable individual items of vocabulary from the possible answers listed in the exam paper, rather than paying more attention to the overall meaning of the spoken texts. This is especially relevant where the same or closely related items of vocabulary are used across multiple spoken texts and in the possible answer options (e.g. '*ushindi*', '*mashindano*' and '*kushinda*').

Candidates should be careful to use any answer letter (A – G) only once. Candidates must also ensure that they clearly and unambiguously strike through any first attempts they do not want to be marked.

Exercise 4

Performance in **Exercise 4** was varied, and very much on par with the 2022 paper. In general, most candidates performed well on **Questions 11, 16 and 18**. **Question 14** tended to be more challenging to candidates.

Candidates mostly coped well with the good command of vocabulary and idiom required for the questions in this exercise. The strong performance in the latter questions of this exercise, and the extremely low degree of answers left blank, suggests that candidates had good overall time management during this exercise. It also demonstrates their ability to sustain focus and effort throughout a long listening exercise and relatively demanding text.

Candidates are reminded to tick only one answer box for each question. They must ensure that they clearly and unambiguously strike through any first attempts they do not want to be taken as their final answer.

SWAHILI

Paper 0262/03
Speaking

Key messages

To do well in this examination candidates should:

- choose a topic for the presentation section that incorporates an aspect, or aspects, of life in a Swahili-speaking or east African community or culture
- ensure when preparing the presentation section that a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures are used (e.g. relatives, negatives, subjunctives, varied tenses) to demonstrate linguistic versatility
- include a range of opinions alongside factual elements (phrases such as *inavyoonekana*, *inavyosemekana* and *kwa maoni yangu*, *mazoea ya* may be used to good effect)
- seek to engage the Examiner in conversation and not feel constrained to answering questions only. When responding to a closed (e.g. 'yes/no') question candidates should seek to expand on their answer and demonstrate initiative.

To allow their candidates to do well in this examination, Examiners should:

- strive to put candidates at ease at the beginning of the examination
- clearly explain the format at the start of the exam to the candidate and introduce the start of each section during the exam
- allow candidates enough time to answer questions fully by avoiding frequent interruptions and allow some time after the candidate finishes speaking to provide the opportunity for them to expand
- ask open-ended questions (e.g. why/how – *kwa nini*, *kivipi*, *kwa mawazo yako...itakuwaje* etc.) rather than closed questions that would normally only require very short responses, (e.g. *ulienda? Unapenda?*). Asking closed questions may disadvantage weaker candidates especially as it makes it more challenging for them to showcase their linguistic ability fully
- keep questions as short and clear as possible, instead of asking questions that require long introductions or a good deal of context
- avoid asking the same questions to multiple candidates. Examiners should ask a wide range of spontaneous questions (including follow-up questions) directly related to the individual candidates' presentations, topics, interests, responses and linguistic abilities. This will allow candidates to display a wider range of facts and opinions
- avoid correcting any language errors made by the candidate during the exam
- avoid asking candidates to translate words from Swahili into English or vice versa
- repeat questions if asked to by the candidate.

General comments

- The prescribed timings were inconsistently observed by some Examiners. Failure to allow sufficient time in each section limits the candidate's ability to do well in that section.
- Sections were generally clearly introduced by Examiners.
- Most recordings were clear and sufficiently audible.
- Marking tended to be generous in the higher mark range and severe in the lower mark range.
- Exams must be submitted on time to avoid delays.
- Examiners should attempt to get the best out of every candidate according to their ability and needs rather than use a one-size-fits-all approach.
- It was noted that some Examiners talk more than their candidates; please remember that it is the candidates who are being examined and who primarily need to be heard.

Comments on specific sections

Presentation

Most candidates prepared well for their part of the test.

Candidates scoring the highest marks delivered presentations that were:

- natural, not read out
- not simply factual, but that also contained a wide range of opinions
- wholly relevant
- challenging and thought-provoking
- varied in terms of vocabulary and grammar.

Some candidates chose topics that were not sufficiently challenging for an examination at this level, such as 'family', 'friends', 'school' and 'daily life', thus limiting the marks available to them. As this section can be prepared in full it presents candidates with the best opportunity to display their abilities from the outset. Presentations on insufficiently challenging topics often lacked opinions.

Some candidates appeared to read out their presentations from a script. It is important to remember that this is not permitted and that a key performance indicator in the higher bands is for the presentation to be engaging and natural. The importance of style (in addition to substance) should be clearly emphasised to candidates.

Some candidates tended to play it safe in terms of the range of grammar displayed. Examiners look for a range of tenses and structures, and this section provides the best opportunity for less confident candidates to display an ability to utilise them.

Topic conversation

Most candidates did well in this part of the test and showed a good understanding of the questions they were asked. There were few instances of questions having to be repeated, or answers that were irrelevant.

Some candidates struggled to achieve access to the higher marking bands in this section because they could not expand at sufficient length or in sufficient detail on their answers. This was sometimes made harder by Examiners moving on too quickly to other questions and not allowing time for candidates to think and develop a more detailed response.

Candidates should avoid repeating material from their presentation in the topic discussion. Some candidates fell back on this and lost the chance to display a wider range of language and topic understanding.

The range of language was often good but there were common grammatical errors, such as:

- with adjectival agreements
- mixing agreements in relative structures
- confusing subjunctive and relative structures
- errors when using monosyllabic verbs in negative tenses
- confusing *-enye* and *-amba* structures
- use of the non-standard *ag/ang* habitual suffix
- improper retention of *ku-* in monosyllabic verbs such as *kuwa*, *kula* etc.

General conversation

Candidates generally did well. Examiners are reminded, however, that:

Questions must include at least one topic from Areas A – B **and** one topic from Areas C – E. Topics were sometimes chosen from Areas A – B only, which restricted the opportunity for candidates to achieve higher marks.

It is crucial that topics chosen in this section do not overlap with those discussed in the Presentation and the Topic discussion. On occasion this requirement was not adhered to, and candidates struggled to achieve higher marks.

A large selection of topics should be covered across candidates within the same centre and genuinely reflect their interests as that will free up potential. The same topics were sometimes used for large numbers of candidates within a centre. This invariably inhibited performance and limited the marks they were able to achieve.

Examiners should avoid using the same questions for all their candidates as this also limits their potential to achieve higher marks.

For candidates the same points largely apply in this section as in the previous section. In short candidates should:

- 1 seek to expand on their initial answers
- 2 avoid repeating information from previous sections of the examination and always attempt to cover fresh ground
- 3 seize the opportunity to display a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary
- 4 take the initiative to lead the conversation in new directions to demonstrate their command of the language and style.

Candidates are encouraged to engage fully with the Examiner and ask their own questions. This section affords the best opportunity to do this and the ability to contribute to the development of the discussion positively will always count in a candidate's favour.

