

# SWAHILI

Paper 3162/01  
Paper 1

## Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- ensure that all the words and phrases in a sentence have been translated in **Question 1** and **Question 2**
- carefully proofread their translations in **Question 1** and **Question 2**
- read the text carefully and write concise responses to the questions in their own words in **Question 3**
- choose a topic on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and vocabulary in **Question 4**.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

Candidates seemed, on the whole, to answer this question very well. There were some errors, however, which were largely consistent across the board. Some examples are given below:

1. Some candidates relied on their own knowledge of rapid buses, instead of attending to the specifics of the passage itself, and often wrote down what they knew about the buses. For instance, some translated *kituo cha mabasi* as 'bus stage' instead of 'bus station/terminal/stop'. Some included words and phrases such as 'the BRT buses' which were not in the passage. Candidates are reminded that they must focus on the passage at all times.
2. Smaller words and phrases were often overlooked. This took away from the precision and the nuance of some translations. Words such as *sana* in '*mapema sana*', and *pia* in *pia 'anapokuwa ndani ya basi'* were sometimes left untranslated resulting in candidates missing out on marks.
3. Some candidates did not know what the word *zogo* meant and translated it as 'horizon', 'scenery' or 'sunrise'. Examiners accepted translations such as 'hustle', 'hustle and bustle' and 'chaos' for the term.

### Question 2

This task is by design more challenging than **Question 1** because the accurate use of Swahili comes into sharper focus. The following areas will need to be addressed:

1. The correct use of verbs is important, as in: *Leo nilifua, nilipiga pasi/nilinyoosha na nilikunja nguo...*. However, some candidates wrote '*leo nilifua, piga pasi/nyoosha na kunja nguo...*' instead. Candidates could also have used the *me*-tense, or even constructions with *ka*, but any verbs should not be left hanging.
2. The phrase 'The old black suitcase' caused problems for some candidates. Examiners accepted *sanduku, begi jeusi zee, and la zamani* or *mkoba mweusi mzee*, among other alternatives. Some candidates struggled to use the correct agreements, e.g. '*sanduku nyeusi nzee*', or some left out *-eusi* or *zee*.
3. When translating 'mother has lent me' some candidates used words such as *kopesha* or *kupa* instead of *azima*.
4. Some candidates struggled to translate straightforward words, such as 'cousins'; '*mpwa*', '*shangazi*', and '*ami*' were among the incorrect translations given. Examiners were looking for *binamu*, although words such as *jamaa* and *ndugu* were also accepted.
5. *Ya* was often left out in 'before' and 'after' constructions, e.g. '*kabla*', instead of *kabla ya*.
6. Many candidates used English approximations such as 'fasta' and 'talanta' instead of the Swahili words *haraka* and *kipaji*.

7. Some candidates were unable to use the *-vyo-* and *-po-* infixes correctly. For instance, 'she described to me' (*alichonielezea/alivyonielezea*) was often rendered as 'alinisema' which carries a different meaning.
8. Candidates did not always bear in mind that Swahili is an agglutinative language, resulting in many misspellings.
9. 'Giraffe' and 'gazelle' were sometimes rendered as '*jirafu*', '*shingo ndefu*' and '*gazeli/sungura*'. For gazelle, Examiners were looking for *swala* but not '*swalla*' or '*swara*'.
10. *Yenye* is increasingly used in cases where *ambayo* would be more appropriate and grammatically correct.
11. In translation, context is paramount. 'To hold' can be translated as *kubeba* in some contexts but not in the sense of a market being 'held every Saturday'. Translating this as '*soko lilikuwa linabebwa...*' was therefore incorrect.
12. The verb *kuwa* (to be) was often misspelled as *kua* (to grow). Similar problems occurred where candidates wrote '*kuva*' instead of *kuvaa* and '*kukua/kukuwa*' instead of '*kuwa*'.
13. Some candidates were prone to dropping the *h* in words such as *hata* and *halafu*.
14. Candidates are reminded that *kwa sababu*, *kwa ajili* and similar constructions are made up of two words and should not be written as one.
15. English conjunctive adverbs such as 'however' and 'therefore' were sometimes confused or otherwise mistranslated.

### Question 3

This exercise was done very well this year. Candidates must remember to:

1. read the passage carefully and not lift sentences from the text in their answer (those who use their own words nearly always score higher marks)
2. answer in full sentences
3. answer questions fully and give, for instance, four bits of information if four are asked in order to achieve full marks.

### Question 4

There were some very thought-provoking and interesting essays this year!

Common mistakes included:

candidates not indicating the topic they had chosen  
irrelevance to the topic set, especially in the case of **4(b)** where some candidates did not write about a short television programme  
word separation errors, especially with verbs  
repetition  
poor punctuation  
errors with adjective agreements  
lack of grammatical variation (e.g. the absence of relative markers)  
exceeding the word limit.

Candidates are reminded of the importance of rereading their essays to check for any mistakes. Lastly, clear handwriting is also crucial as candidates stand to lose out on marks for any illegible content.