

P310/1
LITERATURE IN
ENGLISH
Paper 1
Nov./Dec. 2024
3 hours



UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 1
(Prose and Poetry)

3 hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

This paper consists of three Sections; I, II and III.

All the Sections are to be answered.

Candidates are advised to spend 70 minutes (1 hour 10 minutes) on Section I and 55 minutes on each of Sections II and III.

Read Section I twice and then answer the questions. There is no need to read the whole paper first.

Do the same for section II and then Section III.

Begin answering each question on a fresh page.

SECTION 1

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Contemporary critics who bemoan “the disastrous decline of educational quality” include those who cite “the good old days” when they went to school. Their remembrance of what those days were like adds up to the following scenario: the curriculum stuck to the basics, with no frills and soft options; teachers were dedicated and conscientious, maintained strict discipline, and insisted on high standards; students took their studies more seriously, worked harder, and learned more than they do today. Ergo: “Turn back the clock to the good old days and back to the basics.”

This is not the place to ask whether schooling ever really worked in the way claimed in an imagined Golden Age or whether schools have since “gone to pot” almost beyond redemption. This is the place, however, to ask a fundamental question about the critics. Are they animated by a realistic and valid concept of quality and standards, congruous with the nature of a swift-changing and greatly diversified world?

Their criticism appears to rest on an essentially static concept of quality. That is, it is tied on the one side to an earlier era’s conventional school objectives, content, methods, and clientele and on the other side to a set of standards often viewed as immutable truths whose absolutes are good for all times and all places. Hence, any deviations from the time-honored curriculum and educational ground rules constitutes, *prima facie*, a dangerous heresay and a threat to quality and standards. So it was, for example, in Western Europe in the 1950s when great academic battles raged over proposals to eliminate Latin and Greek as compulsory requirements for university admission, so that students would have the option of substituting science and mathematics to prepare themselves for life in an increasingly technological world. The opponents insisted that this would undermine traditional standards and quality.

The fundamental issue is not whether all proposed educational changes are good, or conversely, whether all resistance to such proposals is wrong-headed. The issue is whether in the world of today it makes sense to perceive educational quality and standards in terms of fixed and universal absolutes.*

Quality and standards are in fact *relative* matters—relative to the particular time and place and to particular learners and their circumstances. What constituted a good education for secondary students growing up in France or England or the United States in the nineteenth century is surely inadequate for their counterparts today and still more so for those who will be born in the twenty-first century. Thus, the challenge to educational planners and teachers today is not how to get back to the standards, curricula, and methods of the “good old days.” It is how to formulate standards and programs that will prepare young people to function effectively on the rapidly moving and changing frontiers of the future. The criteria for judging any educational proposal must therefore be: education for whom, for what purpose, and under what conditions.

When put to such a test, an educational diet suitable for teenagers growing up in the milieu of today’s post-industrial societies will not prove equally suitable to their counterparts growing up in the milieus of Afghanistan, Upper Volta, or Paraguay.

45 Does this mean that young people in developing countries should be given a second-class education? It does not. Many young people in developing countries, however, are getting only a second-class version of some developed country's education, one that would not fit them even if the import was first class. They are getting the second-class version, with its gross misfit, in the dubious name of international standards – for the most part a misnomer referring to the prevailing educational orthodoxies of one or another metropolitan country.

*“Two Views of Standards”, from **The World Crisis in Education.**”*

Questions:

1. (a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage and give a reason for your suggestion. (04 marks)
 - (b) What are the writer's views about educational changes? (08 marks)
 - (c) Describe the views of the critics on the quality of education. (06 marks)
 - (d) According to the writer, what are the differences between the education system of the United States in the 1950's and that of the Dutch gymnasiums? (06 marks)
 - (e) Explain the meaning of the following words and expressions as used in the passage. (10 marks)
- | | line |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| (i) ... stuck to the basics. | 04 |
| (ii) ... gone to the pot... | 09 |
| (iii) Immutable truths ... | 17 |
| (iv) Dangerous heresay ... | 19 |
| (v) Fixed and universal absolutes | 28 |
| (vi) Criteria ... | 37 |
| (vii) Educational diet ... | 40 |
| (viii) ...counterparts... | 42 |
| (ix)dubious name. | 47 |
| (x) ... misnomer . | 48 |

SECTION II

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

WHEN DOES A BOY BECOME A MAN?

Last Saturday you and I disagreed on how late you should be allowed to stay out. When I refused to extend your curfew, you complained that I was not treating you like an adult. This has become your standard answer whenever you can't have your own way. But what you really mean is that I don't go along with your idea of what constitutes adulthood.

Let me put it this way: I do not pretend you are a grown man because you are a 16-year old boy. I am not as you are deceived by a few similarities of plumage, diet and song into identifying you as a genuine adult. You may be as big and strong and capable as many adults (and you probably argue better than most), but only a child would maintain – and sincerely believe – that his manhood can be measured by the lateness of the hour his father permits him to stay out at night.

Recently I attended an assembly of teen-agers that was addressed by a grown man. He seemed to believe that the way to get the audience on his side was to pretend that he was one of them. He jittered and jiggled, made odd faces, spoke disdainfully about adults, and laboured to use a great deal of what he thought was current teenage slang. Later, I heard the kids talk with amusement and contempt about his efforts to appear as one of them by imitating what he thought was teen-age behaviour. It was obvious from their comments that the speaker would have commanded more respect and attention if he had appeared as a grown man and not as a caricature of a boy. All he did was to make more obvious the gulf of years that lay between him and his audience.

The kids could see how silly it was for an adult to pretend he was a boy, but they could not see the same thing in reverse. After the assembly I saw teen-age boys swaggering down the street with forbidden cigarettes in their mouths, manfully cursing as they swaggered. Others roared away in their cars, belligerently demonstrating their "right" to the streets. I saw little teen-age girls teetering along on spike heels in tight dresses, with extravagantly styled and dyed hair. All this, I am sure, because they believed they could impress the world with their maturity if they imitated behaviour that, to them, appeared to be adult.

All this reminded me of a fable I used to read aloud when you were little, about the donkey who longed to be a lion. The donkey, if you recall, covered himself with a lion's skin, crept on among the lions, and lay down quietly among them. When the lions took no notice of him and seemingly accepted him as one of them, the donkey was filled with joy and confidence. It seemed to him that he had actually become a lion, and he thought of donkeys with contempt. All went well until one evening, when the lions began their customary evening roaring. The little donkey, completely fooled by his own disguise, lifted his head and roared with them. What came out, of course, was a donkey's bray. Whereupon the lions fell upon him and devoured him.

The moral applies equally to boys and men. Human victims of self-deception are likely to be devoured by the lions of reality.

If the extremes of behaviour among teen-agers represented nothing more than a little natural day dreaming and imitation, they could be overlooked. But the danger in them - as in your attitude towards how late you stay out - is that they look like real lion skins, and are so employed.

I can understand why you and your friends are eager to become adults, and to enjoy the freedoms, privileges and even the bad habits that are denied to you as children. What you fail to see is that these freedoms and privileges are routine and minor by-products of being an adult. They are not, as many of you believe, the components of genuine maturity.

"When Does a Boy Become a Man?" from Letters to a Teen-Age son by Henry Gregor Felsen published in Prose Readings (1964) by Jan de Bruyn.

Questions:

- (a) What is the young people's (teen-agers') idea of what constitutes adulthood? (04 marks)
- (b) (i) How and with what effect does the writer employ irony in the extract? (08 marks)
- (ii) What is the importance of the lion and donkey fable in paragraph 6? (04 marks)
- (iii) Discuss two of the other techniques used in the extract. (04 marks)
- (c) Describe the tone of the extract. (10 marks)
- (e) What is your idea of what constitutes adulthood? (03 marks)

SECTION III

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

I Met a Thief

On the beach, on the coast,
Under the idle, whispering coconut towers,
Before the growling, foaming, waves,
I met a thief, who guessed I had
An innocent heart for her to steal.

She took my hand and led me under
The intimate cashew boughs which shaded
The downy grass and peeping weeds.
She jumped and plucked the nuts for me to suck;
She sang and laughed and pressed close.

I gazed: her hair was like the wool of a mountain sheep,
Her eyes, a pair of brown-black beans floating in milk,
Juicy and round as plantain shoots.
Her legs, arms and neck;
And like wine-gourds her pillowy breasts;
Her throat uttered fresh banana juice:
Matching her face – smooth and banana-ripe.

I touched – but long before I even tasted,
My heart had flowed from me into her breast;
And then she went – High and South -
And left my carcase roasting in the fire she'd lit.

A.S BUKENYA

Questions:

- (a) What is the subject matter of this poem? (06 marks)
- (b) What is the persona's attitude towards the female beauty he encounters in this poem? (08 marks)
- (c) Discuss the techniques used by the poet. (15 marks)
- (d) What important lessons do you learn from this poem? (04 marks)