

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**.

General comments

Candidates should attempt to translate each sentence in its entirety in **Question 1** and **2**, taking care not to omit any details. Words that may seem incidental, such as 'sana' and 'however', are just as important as words candidates might consider more prominent and important.

While attempting the comprehension exercise (**Question 3**) candidates should bear in mind that, apart from synoptic questions where answers are based on different parts of the text, the questions are presented in chronological order and match the sequence of the text. A response to **Question 3(b)**, for example, will therefore usually not be found at the end of the passage. Candidates should write their answers in full sentences and keep in mind that merit is given to the use of their own words.

Question 4 was done very well this session. Most candidates remembered that only 120 words are needed and followed the structure they had set out in advance using an essay plan. As a rule of thumb, future candidates may wish to stick to the following, simple four-paragraph structure, where each paragraph is 40 words in length: introduction; discussion of a set of points; discussion of another (likely contrasting) set of points; conclusion.

Comments on specific questions

Candidates seemed on the whole to answer **Question 1** very well. There were, however, some problems and errors which were largely consistent across the board. Below is a list of examples.

1. Candidates appeared to overlook seemingly innocuous words and phrases such *sana*, *nyumbani*, *hilo*; *hata hivyo*, *ingawa*, and *kati yetu*.
2. Candidates should read the text in its entirety first and then translate in context. Some translated *bibi* as 'wife', although the context of the passage implies that the correct translation is 'grandmother'.
3. The word *vibanda* was found to be difficult to translate.
4. The colour *manjano* (yellow) was sometimes translated as 'green' or 'orange'.
5. *Shuka* was translated diversely as 'bed sheet', 'scarf' or 'blanket' but examiners accepted all plausible cultural connotations of the word.
6. Some misread *mazoezi* as *mazoea* and ended up mistranslating the word. Careful reading is essential.

Question 2

This question is usually found to be more challenging than **Question 1**, and this session was no exception. Schools may be reassured to know that Examiners are aware of the cultural and linguistic differences in East Africa and that a range of alternative translations is accepted in certain cases. For example, a phrase such as 'since independence' was variously translated as *tangu uhuru*, or *mapinduzi* or *jamhuri*, all of which were accepted.

The following areas will need to be addressed:

1. Class agreements between nouns and adjectives (as well as between other parts of speech) is still a concern as grammatical knowledge in this area appears not to be very secure. By way of illustration, the correct structure is *miaka mitano*, not '*miaka tano*'.
2. The correct demonstrative should be used, e.g. *uchaguzi huu*.
3. Candidates should use the correct Swahili spellings and avoid forms that are used in speech, for example: *nilivyo* must be used instead of '*nilivo*'; '*alafu*' and '*ata*' are not acceptable spellings for *halafu* and *hata*; and '*hio*' should not be used for *hiyo*.
4. In terms of orthography, candidates should take care not to split words (especially verbs with relatives), e.g. '*wanao wawakilisha*', '*ninao wajua*'.
5. Many students did not know the word for 'society' (*jamii*) and translated it as '*nchi*', '*watu*' or '*sociti*'.
6. There seems to be confusion about use of the prefix *ku-*. Some candidates added it to verbs, e.g. '*kukula*', and sometimes it was dropped in places where it ought to appear, e.g. '*ataweza piga kura*' instead of *ataweza kupiga kura*.
7. Candidates should be reminded that *kwa sababu* and similar constructions are written as two words.

Question 3

As in previous years, candidates did very well in this question. The key guidelines to remember are:

1. Read the passage at least twice
2. Do not lift sentences from the passage in your answers but use your own words whenever possible.
3. Answer in full sentences and avoid giving one-word answers
4. When the question asks you to give two (or more) details, you should do so as each separate element carries a mark.

Question 4

The essay questions produced some interesting responses. Most students chose to write on school uniforms.

The common mistakes were generally similar to those made in previous years, namely:

- Word separation errors, especially with verbs
- Repetition of arguments
- Poor punctuation
- Frequent errors with adjectival agreements
- A lack of grammatical variation (e.g. no relative markers).
- Writing more than 120 words (although this was less prevalent than in previous years)
- Essays written in English rather than Swahili.

Students should re-read their essays and correct any mistakes. Common spelling mistakes such as '*tunava*' (for *tunavaa*), '*mda*' (for *muda*) and '*anaependeza*' (for *anayependeza*) might then have been edited out.