

9.0 HISTORY & GOVERNMENT

History and government equips students with adequate knowledge that enhances their understanding of social, economic and political developments of the world. Students are expected to relate this information to the Kenyan situation. The year **2009 KCSE History and Government** examination was presented in two papers: **paper 1 (311/1)** covers the “**History and government of Kenya**” while **paper 2 (311/2)** examines “**themes in world History and Government**”

This report analyses the performance of candidates in the year 2009 History and Government examination papers, paying special attention to the poorly performed items. It looks at what the questions tested, the candidates’ weaknesses and possible reasons for their poor performance. It also gives advice to History and Government teachers with the aim of improving future performance in the subject.

9.1 GENERAL CANDIDATES’ PERFORMANCE

The table below shows performance of candidates in History and Government (311) over a period of four years: 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Table 14: Candidates’ Performance in History and Government for the Last Four Years

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2006	1		100	59.16	19.55
	2		100	42.23	17.74
	Overall	140,400	200	101.38	35.00
2007	1		100	48.04	18.60
	2		100	53.82	20.19
	Overall	165,844	200	101.85	36.00
2008	1		100	36.20	16.96
	2		100	45.75	18.33
	Overall	184,823	200	81.92	33.57
2009	1		100	49.56	16.58
	2		100	42.20	16.14
	Overall	210,622	200	91.56	31.13

From the table above, the following can be deduced:

- 9.1.1 The candidature increased from **184,823** in 2008 to **210,622** in 2009.
- 9.1.2 There was an improvement in performance in paper 1 (311/1) from a mean of **36.20** in 2008 to **49.56** in 2009. However, there was a drop in performance in paper 2 (311/2) from a mean of **45.75** in 2008 to **42.20** in 2009.
- 9.1.3 The improvement in the performance of paper 1 to a mean of **49.56** led to the increase in the overall mean to **91.56** in 2009 from **81.92** in 2008.
- 9.1.4 The best performance over the four year period was in the year 2007 which had an overall mean of **101.85**.

Some questions were performed poorly. These will be discussed in the following section.

9.2 PAPER 1 (311/1)

The performance of candidates in this paper improved from a mean of **36.20** in the year 2008 to **49.46** in the year 2009. In this report, questions **20 (a)** and **24 (b)** will be discussed as they were challenging to many candidates.

Question 20 (a)

Why did the colonial government deny the Africans the right to grow cash crops in Kenya before 1954?

The candidates were expected to give reasons why the colonial government did not allow Africans to grow cash crops.

Weaknesses

Many candidates gave irrelevant responses such as **“there was lack of funds, they were seen as baboons, construction of industries, the colonial government wanted the Africans to use their own raw materials etc”**.

Expected responses

- (i) Africans were expected to provide labour on settler farms.
- (ii) European settlers did not want to compete with Africans in cash crop growing.
- (iii) The settlers claimed that Africans did not have knowledge of growing cash crops as this would lead to low quality products.
- (iv) They feared that crop diseases would spread from African farms to settler plantations.
- (v) European settlers claimed African farmers would produce low quality crops due to inadequate resources.

Advise to teachers

The various wrong responses denote poor syllabus coverage or poor teaching and testing since the required answers are very basic and mainly based on common sense. Teachers should ensure that there is proper syllabus coverage and carry out revision with the candidates before sitting for the examinations.

Question 24 (b)

Explain the functions of the Speaker of the National Assembly in Kenya.

The question simply asked for the functions of the speaker of the parliament in Kenya.

Weaknesses

Some candidates gave irrelevant answer such as **“welcoming the president, maintains parliamentary buildings, he is the one to pray when people want to start the meeting, he chairs the cabinet meetings”**, etc.

Expected responses

- (i) Chairs parliamentary sessions during which he invites Members of Parliament to contribute to motions/ debates.
- (ii) He maintains order by enforcing standing orders/ rules.
- (iii) He gives permission to members of parliament who wish to be absent for eight consecutive sittings.
- (iv) Swears in members of Parliament after elections before they can participate in proceedings.
- (v) He is in charge of the general administration of the National Assembly.
- (vi) He chairs the Standing Order Committee which interprets the standing orders of the National Assembly.
- (vii) He declares parliamentary seats vacant in order to pave way for general and by-elections.
- (viii) He receives and accepts letters of resignation from members of parliament who have left/defected to other parties.
- (ix) He chairs the Parliamentary Service Commission which looks after the welfare of the members.
- (x) He represents parliament in international for dealing with matters of common interest.

Advice to teachers

The answers given by the candidates showed that this topic was either ignored, overlooked, assumed or was never taught at all. The teachers should ensure proper syllabus coverage and effective syllabus coverage.

9.3 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 9.3.1 Teachers should effectively cover the syllabus within the time allocated.
- 9.3.2 Teachers should desist from using unapproved revision materials and set standard tests for revision.
- 9.3.3 The teachers should teach their students to understand the rubric and follow it.
- 9.3.4 The students should be exposed to current affairs.

9.4 PAPER 2 (311/2)

The performance of candidates in this paper declined from a mean of 45.75 in 2008 to 42.20 in the year 2009. This report looks at question 22.

Question 22(a)

List three European countries that formed the Triple Alliance before the outbreak of the First World War.

Weaknesses

The candidates were not able to list the countries that formed the Triple Alliance before the outbreak of the First World War.

Expected responses

- (i) Germany.
- (ii) Austria-Hungary.
- (iii) Italy.
- (iv) Romania.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should teach the students on the First World War alliances.

Question 22 (b)

Describe six functions of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN)

Weaknesses

The candidates gave out the objectives of the United Nations.

Expected responses

- (i) The General Assembly liaises with the Security Council in making recommendations on maintenance of peace/ security.
- (ii) Discusses issues relating to international peace/security
- (iii) It elects jointly with the Security Council, the judges of the International Court of Justice/ appoints the Secretary General.
- (iv) It receives/ acts on reports from Security Council and other UN organs.
- (v) It approves UN budget /apportions the amount of contribution to be paid by each member state.
- (vi) It admits/suspends/dismisses member states from the UN with the recommendation of the Security Council.
- (vii) It elects non-permanent members of the Security/Economic and Social Councils.
- (viii) It promotes international cooperation in political/social/economic fields.
- (ix) It promotes the development/codification of international law.
- (x) It facilitates the realization of human rights/fundamental freedoms.
- (xi) It promotes better/higher standards of living among nations.

Advice to teachers

Teachers must differentiate between the objectives of the UN and the specific functions of the General Assembly.

9.5 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 9.5.1 Teachers should effectively cover the syllabus within the time allocated.
- 9.5.2 Teachers should desist from using unapproved revision materials and set standard tests for revision.
- 9.5.3 The teachers should teach their students to understand the rubric and follow it.
- 9.5.4 The students should be exposed to current affairs.