

### 3.0 ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

The English examination consisted of two sections:

**Section A** – Objective items; **Section B** – Composition writing.

#### 3.1 GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

**Table 5** below shows the performance of candidates in English in the 2013 KCPE examination. Similar data for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 is also provided for comparison.

**Table 5: General performance in English for the last four years.**

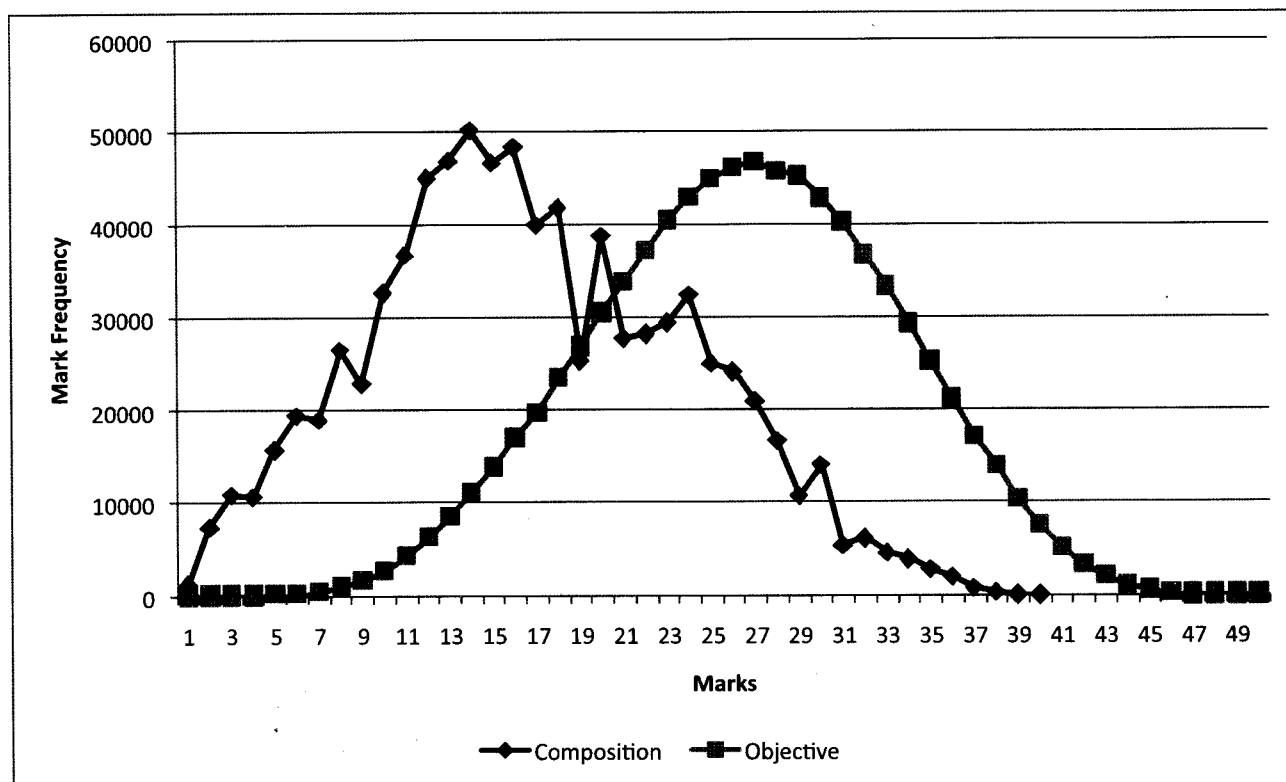
Year	2010		2011		2012		2013	
Paper	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp
% Mean	49.12	42.70	46.24	42.47	49.88	42.43	53.06	41.90

From **Table 5** above, the following can be deduced:

- (i) That the percentage mean for the objective paper rose by **3.28** points from **49.88** in 2012 to **53.06** in 2013.
- (ii) That the percentage mean for the composition paper declined slightly by **0.53** points from **42.43** in the year 2012 to **41.90** in 2013.

**Figure 1** below shows the performance pattern in the two papers graphically.

**FIGURE 1: FREQUENCY OF MARKS IN THE TWO ENGLISH PAPERS**



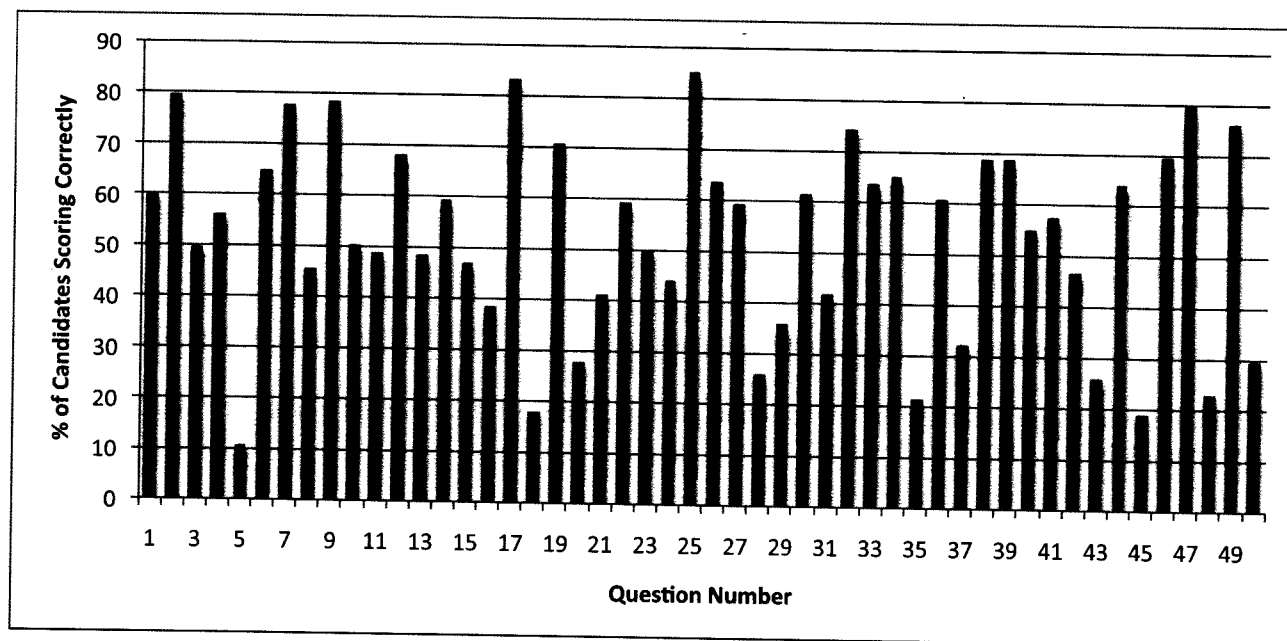
### 3.2 SECTION A: OBJECTIVE PAPER

The percentage mean for the paper improved, shooting from **49.88** to **53.06**. The mean achieved in 2013 surpasses the optimum mean of 50.00. This is really commendable.

#### 3.2.1 Analysis of Selected Items

**Figure 2** below shows the pattern of performance per item in the objective paper for a sample of **837,683** candidates whose average mark was 26.53 out of 50 (a percentage mean of **53.06**), with a standard deviation of 6.81.

**Figure 2**



From **Figure 2** above, it can be observed that there were nine (9) questions in the year 2013 KCPE English Objective paper in which only 30% or less of the candidates scored correctly. These questions, together with the percentage of candidates scoring on them correctly, are shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: Questions with a facility index of 30% and below.**

Question Number	5	18	20	28	35	43	45	48	50
% Scoring Correctly	10.34	17.63	27.67	25.73	21.18	25.71	18.86	22.79	28.42

Question 5 was based on the cloze passage below. Only one out of fifteen items in the cloze passage gave candidates problems.

## Questions 1 to 15

Read the passage below. It contains blank spaces numbered 1 to 15. For each blank space, choose the best alternative from the choices given.

Many people in various parts of the world experience stress. It can be defined as worrying excessively about a 1 situation. I would like us to share some thoughts 2 how to manage stress as an ongoing 3. First of all, the manner 4 which we explain things that happen to us will determine the 5 of our actions.

Stress has no age limit. Children 6 known to experience and express extreme stress. Sometimes stress leads to disagreements with 7 whom we love. We need to be aware that stress 8 come in a bang. Thinking about 9 events is one way of building on our failures. A small failure here and there so increases pressure 10 it 11 reach a level which is beyond 12.

The second point is to 13 note of anything which causes war in the self. Remember at one time, 14 may have made a passing comment 15 "You look so ugly." If you store this in your mind and keep on thinking about it, it becomes unhealthy.

### Question 5

- A. measures                      B. courses                      C. causes                      D. results

### Response Pattern

Option	A	B*	C	D
% Choosing the option	10.44	10.34	51.33	26.73
Mean mark in other questions	25.54	24.42	26.64	27.62

This question tested if the candidates were conversant with the pluralized noun phrase which is commonly used in its singular form 'course of action'. It was meant to help bring out the idea that the way we explain things that happen to us influences the way we respond. Out of the options given, only option **B** collocates with the rest of the noun phrase and brings out this meaning. In fact, option **C** is just a homophone of **B**. Options **A** and **D** would be semantically unfit in this context. The fact that majority of the candidates went for the wrong option indicates that pupils need more practice in the use of this phrase.

### Question 18

The members of the board made a series of decisions on how to proceed in future.

- A. agreements  
B. resolutions  
C. suggestions  
D. proposals

### Response Pattern

Option	A	B*	C	D
% Choosing the option	36.30	17.63	36.08	8.87
Mean mark in other questions	25.28	28.03	26.95	27.27

This question tested vocabulary. The candidate was supposed to choose one word which would convey the same meaning as those underlined in the given context of use. It was expected that the candidates would reason through the meaning of each of these words before settling on the correct one, which was **B**. Resolutions are formal decisions or statements agreed on by a group of people, especially after a vote. The brighter candidates were able to get this right.

### Question 20

He had plenty of money but he \_\_\_\_\_  
help nobody.

- A. will
- B. could
- C. would
- D. can

### Response Pattern

Option	A	B	C*	D
% Choosing the option	5.00	56.37	27.67	9.89
Mean mark in other questions	21.88	27.10	27.54	23.08

This question tested the use of modal verbs to convey meaning. Majority of the candidates went for option **B**, probably because it is in a tense that would allow a grammatical sentence to result. However, it is semantically unfit as it suggests 'ability'. Options **A** and **D** would result in sentences with wrong tenses. It is therefore only option **C** which rightly captures the sense in the input sentence. The fact that a big percentage of the candidates chose option **B** indicates that teachers must narrow down to the ideas expressed by modal verbs (such as ability, intention, permission, necessity and possibility) as they teach these verbs.

*Read the passage below and then answer questions 26 to 38.*

There was once an orphan girl who lived in a poor little hut that stood quite by itself among the rough bushes. From the doorway she could look across the empty stretches of the uncultivated land. It was worse when the darkness covered everywhere making it hard for her not to feel afraid.

She was fourteen when she lost her rough, good-for-nothing father. He had lost his way on a stormy night and was found dead in the morning. Her mother had died when she was very young. She had been left alone, in **possession** of a dog, some chickens and a spinning-wheel.

Mary was a bright, cheerful and courageous child and within a short time, she had become famous for her spinning techniques. Any rough wool brought to her was spun into thread for knitting. Her hens also were productive enough and this made her a popular egg seller, and her dog just like any other, provided adequate protection and company.

Mary was illiterate but she never forgot a prayer her mother had taught her: "God bless this house from thatch to floor, the saints guard the door, and four good angels watch my bed, two at the foot and two at the head". She'd kneel and recite the verse every night before going to bed.

Although Mary was a loner, she was happy and contented with her business. And yet people who happened to pass by her little hut late at night began to whisper strange stories. The village talk reached the religious leader who decided to come and question the girl. Mary wept bitterly on realizing that these stories were being told about her. She explained to the religious leader everything she did but he seemed not to have been convinced. He decided to investigate why the villagers were spreading those rumours about her.

So, late that night, without a word to anyone, the religious leader lit his lantern and went out. The village was still and dark with stars shining here and there in the dark sky. His lantern swung from side to side as he walked slowly up the road towards the bushes.

At last, he saw the hut half-hidden among the bushes. He stopped suddenly when a light streamed through a narrow chink in the wall. He covered his own lantern with his cloak and went forward very quickly and carefully. Although it was pitch dark, the **faint glimmer of stars** made it possible for him to see several men standing close to the walls of the hut whispering to one another.

The religious leader guessed who they were, fell upon his knees but the strangers melted away into the darkness as if they had been pictures in a dream. He rose from his knees and moved towards the window to peep into the hut. Instantly, an invisible hand threw a gleaming sword in front of him and a low voice spoke to him a solemn warning: Do not look. It is the light of angels."

He put his hand upon the sword and prayed. The sword moved slowly away and vanished. He leaned forward and gazed through the chink. With a cry of happiness, he saw a corner of Mary's wooden bed and in the corner a great golden wing. Then there was darkness. He thought that darkness had fallen upon him because of the glorious thing that he had seen.

Praising God for all His goodness, he returned home. He woke up the next day, went to Mary's hut and apologized on behalf of the villagers. To this day, the villagers still talk about Mary and how her simple prayer was answered.

(Adapted from *Oxford English Course*, F.G. French, CBE OUP, 1967)

### Question 28

The phrase "faint glimmer of stars" as used in the passage means

- A. clear light.
- B. dim light.
- C. flickering light.
- D. bright light.

### Response Pattern

Option	A	B	C*	D
% Choosing the option	10.96	35.62	25.73	26.54
Mean mark in other questions	26.66	28.80	27.64	24.11

This question required candidates to tell the meaning of the given phrase as used in the passage. It was expected that the candidates would imagine a dark night with a few stars scattered across the sky giving only some unsteady light. As such, it wouldn't be difficult to arrive at the correct option, which was C.

**Question 35**

- When did the religious leader hasten his steps?
- A. When he saw men standing next to the walls whispering.
  - B. When he covered his lantern with his cloak.
  - C. When a light streamed through a narrow chink in a wall.
  - D. When he saw the faint glimmer of stars.

**Response Pattern**

Option	A*	B	C	D
% Choosing the option	21.18	19.10	49.58	8.89
Mean mark in other questions	26.69	26.68	27.34	21.64

This question tested the candidates' grasp of the chronological flow of the story. Majority of the candidates went for option C which was not correct. In the story, what the religious leader did when a light streamed through a narrow chink on the wall was to stop suddenly. He only quickened his steps when he saw men standing next to the walls of the hut whispering to one another. The correct option therefore was A.

*Read the following passage and then answer questions 39 to 50.*

A long time ago communication was very difficult. People had to travel long distances to convey messages. Roads were quite impassable and there were no reliable means of transport. It took a long time for one to travel from one part of the country to another. Whenever one heard the beating of a drum or saw smoke, they would tell there was need for them to gather.

Travelling from Nairobi to Kisumu would take a number of days. Imagine you were admitted to a school of your choice but all vehicles went on strike on opening day and yet you had only that day or you would be replaced, or that someone fell sick and needed to see a doctor!

Owing to this and many other reasons, a group of companies came up with an interesting idea. With the increased movement of people, there was need to connect people to the existing telephone networks in better ways. They **scrutinized** the existing telephone networks and developed a small handset or mobile phone that offers nearly everything you need. This has proved to be very useful to many people. However, in order to avoid offending others, we need to keep the following suggestions in mind.

First of all, unless your call is urgent, make it at a time that is convenient for the other person. In most cases avoid making calls early in the morning, late at night, or at meal-times. It is quite expensive using a telephone; therefore, it is necessary to avoid irrelevant information such as, "It is now raining heavily, our cow has calved or my aunt has a new hairstyle."

Check the number you are calling and be sure to touch or dial carefully. If you do not recognize the voice that answers the phone, give the number you are calling and ask if you have reached it. If you have made a mistake, apologize for the inconvenience caused. Allow time for someone to answer the phone, probably let the phone ring at least six to ten times. This gives the receiver about eighteen seconds to reach the phone.

When someone answers, identify yourself and state your purpose, as many people become anxious when a caller does not give his or her name. Speak clearly, pronounce words carefully and vary your pitch and loudness, as it is difficult to distinguish between some sounds on the phone than it is in person. Avoid monopolizing the phone as this may inconvenience the person you are talking to.

Just as there are procedures to follow when making a **social call**, so are there when receiving it. Answer appropriately by saying “hallo” and wait for the caller to speak. If the caller is unknown, be cautious about disclosing personal information. You might ask, “Who is speaking, please?” or “What number are you calling?” Respond to the situation. If the person whom the caller wishes to speak to is not available, offer to take the message. Record it and post it where it can be seen. If a person seems confused, or demands your name or number, ask, “What number are you dialling?” If misdialled, say, “I’m sorry, you’ve reached the wrong number.”

Finally be honest but courteous. If you are short of time or are expecting another call, tell your caller. To avoid being rude, you might provide a brief explanation such as, “Juma, I have just sat down to eat dinner, can I call you back in about an hour?” or “Mary, I have enjoyed talking to you but I need to go now. My brother wants to use the phone to get some information about an assignment.”  
With this information, I’m sure you’ll enjoy using your phone.

(Adapted from *Special Speech for Effective Communication*. Second Edition, 1994, Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc.)

**Question 43**

Which of the following is **true** about handsets?

- A. They offer a wide range of things.
- B. They are used everywhere.
- C. They are very convenient to many people.
- D. They often provide everything you need.

**Response Pattern**

Option	A	B	C*	D
% Choosing the option	19.07	8.61	25.71	45.36
Mean mark in other questions	29.90	24.12	27.43	25.13

This question required the candidates to weigh the semantic truth value of each of the statements given in light of the information provided in the passage. All the options except C are vague. In fact, handsets cannot be said to offer a wide range of unspecified ‘things’; they cannot be used ‘everywhere’; and they cannot provide ‘everything’ you need. However, it is true that they are very convenient to many people. Candidates had to reason through the options before arriving at the correct one.

**Question 45**

Why would it be unwise to include unnecessary information while making a call? It is

- A. time wasting.
- B. uneconomical.
- C. annoying.
- D. irrelevant.

**Response Pattern**

Option	A	B*	C	D
% Choosing the option	11.47	18.86	7.54	60.81
Mean mark in other questions	24.35	27.89	23.56	26.94

Majority of the candidates did not take time to read and understand this question and refer to the right section of the passage. In paragraph four, the writer states: *It is quite expensive using a phone; therefore, it is necessary to avoid irrelevant information...* 'Expensive' means 'uneconomical' which is option **B**. The other options are generally true but only **B** is specific to the question.

**Question 48**

According to the passage, "a social call" implies

- A. an official call.
- B. a friendly call.
- C. an urgent call.
- D. an important call.

**Response Pattern**

Option	A	B*	C	D
% Choosing the option	29.02	22.79	25.99	21.04
Mean mark in other questions	26.82	28.51	25.59	25.28

This question required the candidates to analyze the nature of calls described in the passage as well as consider the meaning of the adjective 'social'. In the passage, the kind of calls described is the informal or friendly one as opposed to the official one. As such only option **B** was correct.

**Question 50**

Which of the following **best** summarises the passage?

- A. When making a call, be clear, brief, courteous and loud.
- B. When making a call, be apologetic, loud, careful and clear.
- C. When making a call, be careful, sympathetic, brief and apologetic.
- D. When making a call, be loud, clear, cheerful and brief.



## Response Pattern

Option	A*	B	C	D
% Choosing the option	28.42	25.84	32.79	11.84
Mean mark in other questions	29.51	26.31	25.15	23.89

This question required candidates to carefully consider each of the sets of adjectives given in each option and, through the elimination method, finally arrive at the option with the correct set. The sets of adjectives in options **B** and **C** would be eliminated because of the adjectives 'apologetic' and 'sympathetic' since not all calls require the caller to be so. Option **D** would suffer the same fate because of the adjective 'cheerful'. Thus only options **A** fits the bill.

## SECTION B: COMPOSITION

The paper declined in the percentage mean by **0.53** points from **42.43** in the year 2012 to **41.90** in 2013. As always, the paper tested the candidates' ability to compose a personal and convincing account. Candidates had to write an account that was grammatically accurate, fluent, interesting and original. Mastery of plot development as well as proficiency in the use of a variety of structures and vocabulary was expected. To do justice to the topic, candidates were required to write about a school trip giving details of the preparations made and the experiences they had in relation to the trip. Majority of the candidates dwelt more on the preparations and said very little about the actual trip. Others chose to give their accounts some creative twists of fate, telling of trips that never were! All in all, any account by a candidate was required to be complete and convincing.

### GROUP I: (01 – 10 MARKS)

#### Composition A

**You have 40 minutes to write your composition.**

*The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.*

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday... *that day I was on school the*

*car was on road left the women  
who was talking would of the  
head teacher the become one best  
teacher on school there people  
of school was come at road beside.  
The women who talking was be a*

Country School our School become  
position one the teacher and pupils  
happen a but our School on  
one word name the name my name  
was come my our Education is  
One very good education.

The head teacher  
was outside office of police  
the day was very busy for  
School yourself as become  
the teacher was the two  
women was talking to nominated  
the head teacher was not  
interest the women was not  
take the care the pupils was  
the women who was care

The women was the  
only the School. The School  
was not the head teachers of our  
School the two women was county  
School the teacher was did  
Sponsoring a way I become  
the one would the two women  
the a was on my side way  
the head teacher School.

The candidate hardly communicates anything. The language ability is minimal. The candidate, however, is able to correctly rewrite some of the words used in the rubric, and is also able to shape most letters well.

Mark awarded

02

## Composition B

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

### THE DAY I WILL NEVER FORGET

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

The following Saturday we went to a trip we saw many animals in the game on that day I was happy as a king. I will never forget that day that Saturday I was so happy as a born new baby I will never forget that wonderful blessed day. It was on Saturday morning we went to Nairobi National Park we saw many animals like elephant lions and cheater and many of them. When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car outside the office. When the car left the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip where we are going in Lake Naivasha to see some flamingo and to see the boiling water lakes on the I will never forget about it. It was a enjoyable day.

When we arrived at school we saw a man and a woman talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left the headteacher left announced that our school should must go to a trip on Saturday morning we went and we saw many things there.

Our school went for a trip on Saturday we went to Mombasa we saw many cars and also we went to Indian Ocean we see water there I was happy as a pregnancy woman.

This candidate lacks the ability to narrate probably because of linguistic limitation. The attempt to describe a trip to Nairobi National Park is thus curtailed, and so is the latter attempt to describe one to Mombasa. In an attempt to fill the page, the candidate reverts to copying the contents of the rubric. Even in the piece resulting, we see all types of errors in spelling, tense, and paragraphing. The candidate decides to skip a line in the transition to the fourth paragraph instead of the conventional indenting.

Mark awarded

05

### Composition C

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

The headteacher was so excited and the all school. The headteacher call for the meeting he call all the teacher in his office. after they finished meeting head-teacher all us into assembly he told us that our school had been cleanest school in all the county. and the director education have sponsoring that on Saturday we are going for a trip in Mombasa. we were so happy to hear that. we were so excited from the words coming from the headteacher we went home and waiting the day to come in

The morning Saturday we packed our things  
we take a cup of tea when I finished I went  
to take a bath and finished to clean my  
body I took a pair of shoes put in my legs  
and uniform. I run out of the house and my  
things I run upto school I found my things  
were not yet reached anyone was not yet  
reached I was so warmy after some minutes  
I heard the sound of like a bus coming  
from outside the gate I went quickly and  
opened the gate the bus stopped and I get in  
the headteacher put me a badge on to the  
school uniform and the bus start going.

When we were on our way we saw animals  
which were so beauti As brief we were so happy  
to see them. We reached at Nakuru we got in  
and the driver stopped the bus and the headteacher  
er switched out of the bus my all student get  
out of the bus I was the last one to move to  
the bus. we found a man called bidili who lived in  
a small hut at a place called Carabish he was  
a poor man he was a hard working, cheerful,  
kind, honest, and a good behavur. people in his village  
loved him very much and how he behave, we  
asked him "where is a place called It is the  
lake Nakuru flamingoes he showed us we thank  
him. we went and we find the place there was  
alot of flamingoes, hot springs, winter and benches we

set our bodies there and taking our lunch morning  
our bodies. enjoying our self and our life.  
however, the headteacher told us and he  
would like one day to come all the winter to  
fly. my day was so good I enjoyed my self I  
would like one day one time to fly like other  
birds. what amazing day. I felt that the dances  
fell into my habits. I was excelened to  
all student whom we were with them.  
As happy as a king the sun was raising  
upon fast the birds were fly. the sky  
and the stars were sunning all the world.  
the would like one day the sky to

The candidate's ability to communicate is still limited. The attempt to tell about an outing is hampered by lack of adequate linguistic resources. We see all types of errors: tenses are mixed up, meaning is distorted, punctuation is a challenge, and spelling is bad. The candidate says "the all school" (*the whole school*), "excelend" (*excelled*), "flamigos" (*flamingos*), "sunning" (*shining*), "my self" (*myself*), "a trip in Nakuru" (*a trip to Nakuru*), etc

Mark awarded

07

## Composition D

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

It all started when we were in the school assembly when the headteacher told us that we will start the next topic to clean our county. It was on Friday when the headteacher told us that we will start clean the county. The student was happy when they heard that 'was a good idea when the teacher told us that.

That next day we were going to the school trip it was on Saturday when we start our journey early in the morning the teacher told us in the Friday afternoon that the next we come as clean as we can because we wanted to go for a school trip.

The journey started at six thirty we were starting our journey. When we were waiting the bus to come the headteacher told us that we must have a discipline and we must behave like a candidate. When we were going the traffic police stop the bus as we were in the motor. So they told us that they must arrest us because the conductor he doesn't have the full uniform.

They got us in the cell and they told that we must pay twenty thousand note.

our trip was not enjoyable because the thing got us. Our classteacher Mr Peter told us we don't worry because we will have one which is enjoying. Even our trip some student they didn't taken camera so that you can remember that one day you have gone a trip.

The next term the classteacher announced that the we want to went the trip which is enjoying so that we can't complaine that we want a trip which we can remember was an enjoyable trip. When we went the trip was not boring as we can think.

The candidate still communicates with a lot of difficulty. Spelling mistakes pervade this composition: "Frinday" (*Friday*), "Sarturday" (*Saturday*), "displine" (*discipline*), "cadidate" (*candidate*), "complaine" (*complain*) etc. The grammar is awful: "we will started a new topic", "...they must caught us...", "we want to went the trip", "we will start clean the county...". Mother tongue influence is extensively visible: "...we come as clean as we can", "we were waiting the bus", "...told us we don't worry", "...the trip was not enjoying as we can think" etc. All these mistakes make this composition clumsy and distasteful, and deny the candidate marks.

Mark awarded 10



GROUP II: (11 - 20 MARKS)

Composition E

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

Pupils jumped with joy they were very happy about the news that the head teacher gave us. Others ran excitedly all over the field. After a short while another car drove in. The car was very large it was parked next to the head teacher's office. A certain man came out of the car. He went into the head teacher's office. They stayed for quite a long time and after thirty to forty minutes the man came with the head teacher. The man got into his car and away they drove.

The headteacher came to us and said that we were going to be given a tank from the Simtank company. Suddenly the bell rang and we all went home. When I reached home I told my mother about the good news. She was also excited. The next day very early in the morning I dressed and off I went to school. The teacher on duty was very late and so when she came we didn't stay in class for long time.

It was now time for the assembly when the head teacher came she told that we were going to visit the Westgate Shopping mall.

On hearing this we were very excited. The Saturday I had been waiting for so long soon arrived that Saturday I woke up very early I dressed up and off I was about to go when my dad whom I thought was in the house came in from outside he was as drunk as the disciples on the day of Pentecost. I never talked to him I left and went to school I was late the bus nearly left me behind. I went into the bus and off we went.

The candidate's attempt to communicate well is hampered by multiple errors of spelling, tense and sentence structure. Capital letters are used wrongly (as in 'Jumped...') or are not used at the beginning of sentences; some words are joined (e.g. 'allover'); the apostrophe is misused ('minute's'); the first person singular pronoun is written as 'i'; words are misspelt ('exited', 'hearin', 'sudenly', 'lelft',) etc. One can guess that the candidate might have stopped his narration midway as he could not cope. However, with some assistance from the teacher, this candidate could be enabled to communicate better.

Mark awarded

12

## Composition F

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

### HARD WORK GOES UNREWARDED

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

Our hearts was filled with tears beyond destruction that our hard work had made us proud in all the county we could not believe such that in all schools we are the best. I come to my sense that hard work pays.

The headteacher told us that we will be visiting maasai-mara game reserve from standard four to eight. In our school there is no any rubbish around the school compound there is darkin where all rubbish are burn every evening.

The toilets are cleaned twice a day that has make us to avoid many disease that are caused by germs. The classrooms are swept daily by the sweepers and everybody is responsible to her work.

The County Director of Education did not talked to us but how the teacher said was so good that we could have had her voice. sardonic smile filled our lips we were told to keep it up so that our trip would not go to other schools.

The school had been maintain since our new headteacher come and we have become

ally with many people in the county that is why we got a trip which we were not expecting to go but I commit my memory that be ready always.

The Director wanted to be in our school always because our school is the best again in the county Not only trip but also a place to sleep in the tour trip.

The teachers was as well happy as king because their name will be word from far teachers was hulumating vigerously as the pupils dance as if the world belong to them.

Our school was going to drive for trip. We started preparing for it from that day everybody could not accept to be back their was best maid page boys and candle girls who had to go for the free trip.

The teachers could not be left back they start preparing early because early bird catches worm Every teacher remove Yairment which we had never seen before and start work as if they were in paradise.

This candidate set out to describe preparations made for the trip, but the attempt is greatly hampered by linguistic inadequacy. From the title coined by the candidate, one can guess that the candidate might have initially planned to introduce a twist, but this proved a tall order. We see multiple errors: subject-verb agreement ('our hearts was...', 'disease that are...', 'he have become...', 'the teachers was...'); misspelling ('pround', 'rabbish', 'dasbin', 'their is...'); tense mix-up ('the County Director... did not talked...', 'school had been maintain since our new headteacher comes...'); wrongly used prepositions ('everyone is responsible to her work') etc. The name *Maasai Mara Game Reserve* is a proper noun and capital letters should be used as required.

Mark awarded

16

## Composition G

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

### A DAY TO BECALL

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

When the day arrived we were very excited, our headteacher told us that we were going to visit Masai Mara game park. I was happy as a sand boy, when that Saturday came the weather was chilly, I walked slowly by slowly like a old grandmother to the school. On reaching the school I found that every body have already arrived. They were angry with me because of the lateness.

Before we started our journey our headteacher told us to be responsible pupils, then the journey started it was a long journey full of trouble but God was on our sight. On our way to Masai Mara we saw many kinds of things like giraffe, elephants and many things that I could not tell. Despite the fact that we reached there, we went to the entrance gate and paid entrance money.

When we entered inside the game park we saw many kinds of things, the things that we saw was monkey, snake, elephants and many others that my mind could not mind all. When I saw the snake tears started rolling down my cheeks but I swallowed them and said a man is a man.

When the time of leaving came i did not want to leave because of the good things that i was seeing inside the park, we walked straight away up to where our bus was, every one of us entered inside the bus one by one. My heart was beating repeatedly like a Traditional African drum and my mind was thinking on how i was going to tell my fellow pupils. On reaching the school everyone was happy like a sand boy, everyone of us went happily, we told our fellow pupils about masai mara game park, When i went home i told my parents about good things that i have seen in the masai mara game park, that is the day i will never forget in my life.

Once again, we see a composition riddled with errors that stand in the way of the candidate's attempt to narrate an experience. The language is strained. The candidate writes the first person pronoun 'I' as 'i'; uses the wrong indefinite article ('a old grandmother'); misspells words ('dispite', 'entrence', 'God was on our sight'); writes ungrammatical structures ('everybody have already arrived', 'everyone entered inside the bus') etc.

Mark awarded

20

GROUP III: (21 – 30 MARKS)

Composition H

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

MY ADVENTURE TO NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

We were all happy as a sound boy, every body in the compound was just whispering to his neighbour. Truly we were all eager for that, the head teacher announced, that everybody was supposed to be totally next, pupils in the school were just talking about how they will enjoy themselves on the tour.

On that specific date and day, I woked up early at a crack of dawn, went to the frog kingdom and bathed with cold water, which was as cold as ice and left me cool and fresh as a daisy, the aroma of the breakfast called me, after having my breakfast, I dashed out of the house at a neck braking speed, when I arrived at school I found everybody in his seat ready to set off, after we all settled the driver scoughed the engine and we set the ball rolling to our destination, everybody in the bus was in his own world Imagining of what he/she will observe.

I was sitting with one of my friend who was a fat boy and we were calling him 'fatty fatty' he was one of those greedy people because he was just eating without any care, after two hours, we arrived to our destination to Nairobi National park where we could enjoy ourselves we went to the receptionist and she allowed us to get in. as we got in we saw a monkey which was behaving like a normal

human being but the interesting thing, it had four fingers and toes, it was just chattering around jumping from one post to the other.

The roar of the lion made us jump out of our blotchy skin, the lioness was just breast-feeding her cubs while the lion was searching for food for his family. Pupils from classes one to five were afraid such that they screamed for a dead to awake, am not telling you for the deaf to hear, they ran away thinking the animal would chase them, as we were walking around we came across an ostrich which was about two hundred and twenty kilograms and its egg was twenty kilograms, what a creature? we all asked ourselves. On the other hand there was a giraffe which was called somali because its origin was in Somalia, it was a just a tall animal that could even see tomorrow.

The Rhino itself made us <sup>to be</sup> astonished because of its size, it was a huge animal and it had two thousand and fifty kilograms such that even the pick up cant move with it. Truly it was a fantastic trip for us, after enjoying and taking photographs, we went to the restaurant to have our lunch. Fatty fatty ate the food such that he was unable to walk, we had a lot to tell our friends and a lot of thanksgiving to our county Director of Education for his kindness and I will never forget that day until the Indian ocean dries up am not telling you write a printed book.

The composition brightens up a little in comparison with those we have seen here before. The candidate is relatively at ease with language and is able to use a variety of expressions correctly. We notice great



improvement in plot development and in the use of the English idiom and vocabulary. However, we still see errors of tense, wrong spelling, and carelessness which stand in the way of effective communication: 'adventure to...' (at...), 'every body' (everybody), 'neck braking speed' (neck-breaking speed), 'one of my friend' (one of my friends), '...arrived to our destination' (arrived at...), 'I woked up early at a crack of dawn' (...woke...), 'fingures' (fingers), 'culbs' (cubs), 'ourself' (ourselves), errors of punctuation especially the use of the full stop, etc.

Mark awarded

22

### Composition I

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

to the famous Nairobi National park. Lunch and transport was going to be provided by the Director. Our faces shown with delight upon getting the news. had known our school had been a neat school but it went beyond my expectations that the head of the education in the county would notice and we would be termed as the cleanest school. That day my allies and chattered excitedly as we went back home as we thought of how much fun we were going to have. Eventually, the day came and I got up at the crack of dawn and prepared myself for the day. After preparations I looked at myself at the mirror and surely I did look spic and span. gobbled down my breakfast and took to my heels to school. At school I found

Most of the pupils just standing idly outside our headteacher's office. Everyone was smart and as clean as a new pin. Abruptly the headteacher came in through the gate and looked as though he was being chased by a charging rhino. He called our classteacher aside and from the expression on his face things were not good. In a spur of a moment we could see torrents of tears forming numeral eleven on our teacher's visage.

Suspiciously, we drew closer to them hoping to garner information despite them talking in hushed tones.

"I'm sorry school, your tour has been called off since we have lost one of our beloved teachers Miss Muthengi."

Said our headteacher amid tears. Shock and disbelief filled the vicinity. Myriads of questions ran through my mind and vanished unanswered. My sight became blurred and tears of melancholy flowed freely down my cheeks. I couldn't believe it.

It took a whole hour to calm the whole school but the headteacher was incredible frantic effort by our teachers to come her down proved futile. It had happened too soon. Her burial was carefully planned and was held at her homeplace. She had

been knocked down by a speeding car and that alone rendered her lifeless. Certainly it was a fateful day not worth remembering in my life.

This is quite a readable script. The candidate is in control and is able to communicate fully. We are able to follow her narration and even share in her fateful disappointment. This is in spite of the presence of several errors: 'shown' (*shone*), 'allies', (*friends*), misuse of the definite article ('head of the education') etc. Nevertheless, the candidate's command of language is satisfactory. In addition, one cannot fail to notice the neat handwriting, which gives the impression of an organized pupil.

Mark awarded

28

### Composition J

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday... AN ENVIRONMENTAL TRIP

We woke up at the crack of dawn. We were as happy as a sandboy for the day we had been looking forward to had finally come. After taking breakfast which was as sweet as honey, my brother and I took to our heels to school. We run at a terrific speed that would make lightning feel ashamed. We had left home early enough for we knew that Guffer and Gammer were not Aronias and Sophira when they lamented, the early bird catches the worm.

We arrived and found the rest of the pupils waiting in the assembly ground. They were in a jovial mood. They jumped up and down with joy. The headteacher gave facts and figures about the environmental trip.

Surely, patience pays. A blue bus came and soon we left the school compound. The driver, Mr. Juma, drove slowly like a tortoise for he knew hurry hurry has no blessings.

We drove through hills and valleys. Our long journey came to an end when we arrived at Simba Environmental Reserve. We all waited patiently as our headteacher spoke to a tall gentleman clad in a "navy" blue outfit.

After the dialogue, we were let in by a man who was as clean as a Dutch oven. His teeth were as white as snow. He smiled broadly at us as we drove past the gate.

We alighted the bus and momentarily, we were joined by the gentleman who was talking to the headteacher. He introduced himself as Mr. Nyachama.

He took around us the park. He

showed us the effects brought about by destruction of the environment. He explained thoroughly how the gases emitted by industries destroyed the ozone layer hence causing rise and drop of temperature on the earth's surface commonly known as global warming. He also illustrated how nylon papers destroyed the environment after combustion which caused acid rain, harmful rain with acid caused by sulphur dioxide.

He demonstrated how polluted water caused loss of life due to water borne disease like cholera and typhoid. He made it crystal clear that they were caused by dirty human habits like not disposing their stool properly.

To sum it up, he emphasized about environmental conservation. He made it clear that if the environment would be maintained and looked after, we would wipe out diseases like typhoid which are a fatal epidemic.

We were all tired after going round the park. We all took our late lunch in the shade of the trees there. Breezes which were as cool as cucumber came from the tree.

We left the park half-heartedly for we had learnt a lot about the environment. We learnt that environmental conservation would save the earth from fatal epidemics. It was a day worth to remember, was it not?

This candidate is quite at home with language and is able to communicate without straining. The linguistic structures employed are varied and the vocabulary is apt. However, we still see errors of tense and structure: 'run' (*ran*), 'waiting in the assembly ground' (...*at*...), 'his teeth was...' (...*were*...), 'alighted the bus' (*alighted from*...), 'He took around us' (*He took us round*). These errors, however, do not conceal the fact that the candidate does a good job in the execution of the plot and the use of the English idiom. Furthermore, the factual information integrated in the composition on environmental science is a plus for the candidate.

Mark awarded

30

#### GROUP IV: (31 – 40 MARKS)

##### Composition K

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday...

I had not been in a trip before and I so badly wanted to take part in this. What I had in mind was that my chances of involving were very few because there were many people who were better than me. My heart palpitated as I anxiously waited for the day. On Wednesday our class teacher, Mr. Ogal, assured us that it would be the day.

in which people who would go for the trip were chosen. The process would take place among themselves as teachers. He gave us some of the factors they were to use.

"The first thing so far we will use is the performance in class. And by that we will only take the top five in each class for the examination we did," he continued, "We will take the two school captains; head boy and headgirl who will then be accompanied by three school officials who might have not found chance."

In all those categories I was not found.

This is because since we started doing examination the was not even a day I managed

to be in top five. I was always position six except a certain day that I became the seventh in the examination. The result that would be used was not yet released but we had done it. I still did not know the outcome.

After our lunch, we came back to class and to our normal study. Before I could reach my social book in my bag our classteacher came with a certain paper carried in his hand. Without even greeting us, he started.

"The following people are the most successful to have appeared as those who will go to the



trip : Caleb Opiyo, Calmus Odiwar, Richard Selassie, Emmaculate Sagacity and Kofi Ochalla. That is the order in which they have performed. So those whom I have called should wash their clothes neatly and press. Remember to have pocket money."

I was overwhelmed with joy as butter exposed to heat. How miraculous did it happen that I was the first! I was sure now as egg is egg that I will travel.

On Saturday we all came to school in the morning and the bus was already there. The "most fortunate" boarded the bus as we bid the others who remained in school a good day. I sat next to the window

so I wanted to glance at the beautiful sceneries we would pass during our journey. Actually it was this is what made me to apply the old adage, "Walk you see,"

The journey was very interesting. I managed to see even those that I had not seen since birth. When we finally returned the whole school was curious to know whatever interesting information we had come with. That day will remain as one of the printed papers in my mind.



The candidate displays notable ambition in writing this composition. The English idiom is well used to the candidate's advantage. The story is well executed, in spite of the few mistakes present: 'head boy' (*headboy*), 'All these categories I was not found' (*In all...*), 'Social book' (*Social Studies book*), 'go to the trip' (...for...), 'whateve' (*whatever*).

Mark awarded

32

### Composition L

**You have 40 minutes to write your composition.**

*The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.*

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday... We were to visit Kapenguria to have a look at the gold sites. We were demented with ecstasy. We had to begin our preparations. I was flabbergasted on seeing Munda, the laziest pupil, taking part in the preparations. There was only one barrier ahead of us. That was how to get the school bus fueled and washed. Adhering to the dictum; a willing horse needs no spur I volunteered to ask father for he owned a garage.

No sooner had we finished with the preparations than we went home. All and sundry went home all smiles. I was as sure as egg is to egg that the day would be full of adventure. The big day finally dawned. Father had done as I had promised to tell him to. Giving credence to the aphorism; time and tide wait for no

king, I hastened my strides. Other pupils ran like a bunch of headless chicken to school. Lady-luck was on my side since the county director offered me a lift. I considered myself a lucky pupil.

He drove at a whirl-wind velocity. Sooner than later, he diverted into a dusty meandering path. As sudden as a snapshot, I smelt a rat. It was rock-water clear that he had wicked intentions. I feared to tell him that he had taken the wrong direction. However, bearing in mind; a faint heart never won a fair lady, I took heart and informed him. "Don't worry, I am going to introduce you to my family then give you some money," he said in his muffled convincing voice. Being the brightest boy, it was my chance to put on airs. Truly; fortune knocks once at a man's door.

Not wanting to arouse any suspicion, he played ear-catching music on his radio. He then took me to his mansion. On yanking the door, I was taken aback. He immediately said he was a cannibal. That was when I learnt never to judge a book by its cover. Not wanting to be a victim, I took to my heels at a rubber burning speed. He made an attempt to catch me but

all was similar to 'flogging a dead horse'.  
In a jiffy, I got to school. The headteacher came running towards me then cuddle-hugged me. "We have made up our minds to put out the trip in order to get you," he said. I thanked my Master of Providence for protecting me. The county director was soon there. He tried to give a white lie but it proved an exercise in futility. I decided to let the cat out of the bag to my headteacher. I explained to him what had happened from every angle possible. He was put into custody. Though my dream of visiting the drilling site was over, I shone with bliss for my life was safe and sound. Whoa! What an episode!

This composition is more descriptive and almost error free. Through careful use of language, the candidate is able to take us through an experience that borders on the fairy tale (because of the mention of cannibalism), but which reminds us of the topical issue of child abuse and molestation.

**Mark awarded 34**

## Composition M

You have 40 minutes to write your composition.

The following is the beginning of a story. Write and complete the story. Make your story as interesting as possible.

### ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL

When we arrived at school that morning, two women and a man were talking to the headteacher beside a car parked outside the office. When the car left, the headteacher announced that our school had been nominated the cleanest in the county. The County Director of Education would be sponsoring a school trip the following Saturday. Our faces were radiated with joy.

Our hearts melted with joy like butter exposed to heat. The school prefects were asked to remain as the other pupils went to their respective classrooms. We were told to make sure everybody wore their best uniform and everyone went. It was tough making sure everybody was in class ready to hear the instructions for the trip.

In a jiffy, we rushed to all classrooms and told everyone that they had to select a song which would entertain the County Director of Education.

Everyone seemed to be ready and as alert as a mousetrap.

As I was walking to the staffroom to talk to the headteacher, I saw a man who had a completely bald head. He also had a bulbous nose and protuberant stomach. "Young lass, would you mind helping me to carry this luggage to that end?" he asked in a kind and cordial voice. "Yes please," I replied politely.

In a split of a second, a posh Mercedes Benz was driven beside me and came to a sudden halt. In a fraction of a second, a window rolled down and a man who chauffeured signalled me to move closer. The fellow yanked the door open and forced me into the car. The other man came to defend me but was given a superdelic blow which sent him sprawling and kissing the innocent floor. Blood came out in jets.

The interior had elegant seats upholstered, with high leather covers and all first class trimmings you can expect in a Mercedes-C-class. I let out a stentorian scream which cut through the air like knife in butter. He hit my chubby cheeks with his heavy fists. My face swelled like buds forming from yams. Torrential tears streamed down my chubby cheeks like a river which had broken its banks. My heart skipped a mighty beat as frigid sweat trickled down my face and armpits.

In a flutter of an eyelid, we heard the police siren. Great hope glowed in my heart. The man moved the vehicle

with an astonishing velocity. In front of us, was a wall. He was now between scylla and charybdis. Sweat formed and rolled down his rosy cheeks. The police came and opened the door. I was shocked to the roots of my existence when I saw my aunt. She gave him a mouthful. She told him that I was the last daughter. Pangs of sadness surged through me. He was apprehended and I was taken back to school. Truly, all is well that ends well.

This composition demonstrates great ambition from a candidate who goes out of his way to display skill and ability to sustain the reader's expectation. The level to which English idiom and vocabulary are used is commendable. The few errors present do not hinder this composition's entry into the bracket of the best compositions for the year 2013.

**Mark awarded 38**