

SWAHILI

Paper 0262/01
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In the reading exercises candidates are:

- expected not only to understand the information provided in the passage/text but also to be able to distinguish between facts, ideas and opinions
- required to demonstrate the ability to extract relevant information from various types of text and organise and present it in the required format.

In the writing exercises candidates should:

- ensure that answers fulfil the task requirements
- develop ideas by using an appropriate register and format
- use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary
- apply writing conventions, such as paragraphs and punctuation, appropriately.

General comments

- Candidates are advised to expand their vocabulary to increase text comprehension as well as improve productive use of Swahili.
- In **Exercises 1, 2 and 3**, the emphasis is on reading skills, and minor spelling errors are tolerated in **Exercises 1 and 3** provided they do not interfere with communicating the correct answer.
- In **Exercise 3**, candidates may write in note-form, as long as all the required information is covered.
- In **Exercises 4, 5 and 6**, marks are awarded for content and language accuracy. Therefore it is important that candidates carefully check their work for spelling and grammatical errors.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Questions 1–7

The most challenging questions for many candidates were **Questions 4, 6 and 7**, with **Question 4** proving to be the most challenging. Candidates are reminded that they must base their answers on the text and not on general knowledge.

The key word for **Question 4** was the word *binafsi*. The correct answer was that the author could read until late (*aliweza kusoma hadi usiku wa manane*) and not that '*siku ilikuwa ndefu*', as some candidates thought. Candidates are advised to read the questions carefully and take on board key words, in this case *binafsi*, to make sure their response is relevant to the question.

Question 6 needed Kabage and Stella's view on why the environment had been damaged. The reason given in the text is that people have not respected the environment. Most candidates who did not get the right answer responded with 'Humans destroyed the environment' which echoed the question rather than answered it.

Question 7 asked students about what had been constructed. The required response needed to include the word *jengo* – a building/structure. Answers such as '*Jengo linalotengeneza mvuke*' were credited but '*mvuke*' on its own was not as that implied that steam was constructed.

Exercise 2

Question 8–16

Most candidates performed very well in this exercise although some made mistakes in choosing the right answers. Candidates should remember not to tick two boxes and to cross out clearly ticks for any responses they wish to cancel.

The most challenging question was **Question 9**. The correct answer was Speaker B who has says '*ninatu ia aina fulani za vitambaa tu*'. Speaker D was the distractor here. While Speaker D uses the term '*masharti*' (requirements) in the sense that she would have enjoyed sewing if it did not have so many requirements, she did not set these requirements herself. Candidates are reminded that they should carefully consider the meaning of the statements in its entirety and not select answers merely on the basis of one particular word or words used in the question also being used in the text.

Exercise 3

Question 17–19

Most candidates did quite well in the note-making exercise.

For **Question 17** candidates were expected to convey the views of the author on tiny houses. Most candidates answered correctly and comprehensively. Those who did not offered the opinions of other people mentioned in the text instead of those of the author.

Question 18 looked for the perspective of the adults mentioned in the text. Those who wrote about the author's perspective invalidated their response.

Question 19 was the most challenging in this exercise. It asked candidates to focus on environmental aspects in relation to tiny houses. Candidates were expected to mention solar energy, the significance for future generations and the raw materials used.

Exercise 4

Question 20

This is normally the most challenging exercise in this exam paper, but many candidates appeared to be better prepared than in previous sessions and did well as a result.

Candidates are reminded not to answer using their general knowledge or personal experience but to base their response on the text. Candidates should also not copy sentences and paragraphs from the text but use their own language.

Exercise 5

Question 21

This year's shorter writing exercise focused on play/sports grounds. Most candidates wrote engaging and wholly relevant responses, mostly on the need for football grounds.

Candidates are reminded to focus on addressing the bullet points and not to write a free composition on the broad topic if they are to achieve higher marks for content. Examiners also look closely at the language and the structure of the response. Important structural aspects considered by examiners include the use of paragraphs, punctuation and sequencing of ideas.

Exercise 6

Question 22

This year the topic of the longer writing exercise was a film festival.

The first thing to note is that this exercise will contain a statement that candidates need to engage with. This year the statement was '*Tamasha la filamu la taifa lisionyeshe filamu kutoka nje ya nchi*'. Two opinions are offered in speech bubbles which candidates could choose to engage with or not. However, candidates should always remember to engage with the main statement. The opinions in the speech bubbles may be referred to and used as a springboard but candidates must also give their own views in response to the opinion expressed in the main statement.

Some candidates appeared not to know the meaning of '*tamasha*'. Some candidates wrote about films in general and ignored the 'festival' concept. This meant that such responses were only partially relevant.

Lastly, centres and candidates are advised to work on addressing the following issues:

- word separation errors, especially with verbs
- repetition of arguments
- poor punctuation
- errors with adjectival agreements
- lack of grammatical variation (e.g. absence of relative markers)
- use of English.

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Paper 0262/02
Listening

Key messages

Candidates should:

- listen carefully to identify the specific information needed to answer each question
- read the instructions and questions with care throughout the paper and if a question consists of more than one part, be careful to respond to all of them
- always attempt an answer rather than leaving a blank space as the paper is not marked negatively.

General comments

The following general observations will be useful for centres and candidates to consider:

- In general there was a robust performance in this Cambridge IGCSE Swahili listening paper, comparable to the 2024 paper.
- In **Exercise 1**, it is vital that answers are short, specific and unambiguous. There was a tendency among some candidates to give two or more answers to a single question, thereby invalidating their answer. Candidates should be encouraged to decisively choose a single answer to each question.
- In **Exercises 1 and 2**, candidates should be careful to read the question fully, to note the specific prompt words used and to ensure their answers logically and grammatically answer the question prompts. This will help them to narrow down possible answers and will help ensure that their response is valid to the specific question demands.
- There was a very slight decrease in overall performance in the multiple-choice questions in **Exercises 3 and 4**, and a very slight increase in overall performance in **Exercises 1 and 2**.
- Some candidates struggled in this year's paper with questions that tested Learning Objectives 3 and 4, i.e., understanding connections between ideas, opinions and attitudes, and understanding what is implied but not directly stated by the speaker.
- All candidates attempted answers to the multiple-choice questions in **Exercises 3 and 4**, which is excellent to see. However, in comparison to the 2024 paper, there was a noticeable increase in the number of omitted answers in **Exercise 2**, which continues to be the most challenging exercise, especially for the least able cohort of candidates. It is important that centres remind candidates to always attempt a response to every question, and particularly **Exercise 2**.
- Candidates should be careful to read the question rubrics and instructions thoroughly, and not skim over these, even where they feel familiar with the paper format.

Centres and candidates should be commended on a generally strong performance in this paper. Candidates were well prepared for the specific requirements of each exercise, and compared to 2024 there is some evidence for a slight improvement in performance in **Exercises 1 and 2**. Overall, the strongest candidates performed particularly well on the multiple matching and multiple choice questions in **Exercises 3 and 4**, while the least able candidates tended to struggle most with **Exercises 2 and 3**, continuing a trend observed in previous papers.

In the open-response questions, the most successful candidates tended to keep their answers short, clear, and specific. Candidates should avoid giving vague or multiple answers, as to do so will invalidate their response. This issue tends to occur most frequently in **Exercise 1** and to a lesser degree in **Exercise 2**. Centres should emphasise to candidates that clear and decisive answers are required in these exercises.

Many candidates continue to make good use of the opportunity to listen to the spoken text a second time, as shown by the number of initial attempts that were crossed out and replaced with another answer. However, care should be taken to clearly cross out any unwanted answers to avoid losing marks.

Candidates should move on to the next question or exercise in time with the audio recording, rather than continuing to try and answer a previous question while the audio plays on. If candidates linger over a previous question for too long, they may miss out on the instructions and audio text for subsequent questions, resulting in a knock-on effect that leaves them struggling to keep up for the remainder of the exercise or even the entire exam.

Question responses should provide a suitable, logical answer to the question prompt. This means that lifting of entire lines of text is likely to result in an incorrect answer. Candidates should practice identifying and writing answers that are a logical and specific response to the question prompt.

Across all exercises, candidates should be mindful that while the spoken text is often phrased in the first person (singular or plural), the questions are often phrased with reference to the third person (singular or plural), and so answers must be phrased with the corresponding grammatical agreement. For instance, a question that is phrased: ‘Alihamia Kenya wakati gan?’ cannot be answered with: ‘Nilihamia/Tulihamia mwaka uliopita.’

In this year’s paper, some candidates struggled noticeably with questions that tested assessment objectives L3 and L4.¹ Less able candidates, in particular, may benefit from preparation focused on the vocabulary relevant to these learning objectives, e.g., ‘hisia’, ‘maoni’, etc., as well as the relevant u-class and other abstract nouns for emotions and emotional concepts, e.g. ‘upendo’, ‘umoja’, ‘fahari’, ‘raha’, etc. Across the entire paper, and particularly in **Exercises 3 and 4**, candidates should pay close attention to the nuances of different speakers’ feelings and opinions.

In comparison to previous years, there was a noticeable improvement in following the instructions for correct answer formatting in **Exercises 3 and 4**. Centres should continue to reinforce the importance of using each letter (A–G) once in **Exercise 3** and ticking only one answer box per question in **Exercise 4**. Incorrect attempts should be clearly crossed out.

Most candidates again did very well in selecting correct answers regardless of chronological order in the text. Centres should continue to remind candidates that fixating on either the first or last potential answer that they hear chronologically may be misleading.

Candidates should always read the question rubrics and instructions carefully, even if they feel familiar with the paper format. Candidates should note any sample answers provided in the question rubrics and avoid repeating these; this will help candidates to narrow down the possible correct answers in the text.

A small number of candidates used heavy pens or marker pens, which can affect the legibility of written responses. Similarly, candidates should not go over pencilled answers a second time using a pen.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Most candidates performed well across the eight questions in this exercise, and particularly strongly on **Question 7**.

The most challenging question overall was **Question 6**, possibly due to the strong distractors in this text and the difficulty many candidates had in correctly identifying the speaker’s prevailing emotion.

Questions 3 and 4 showed the highest degree of differentiation between the highest performing and lowest performing cohorts of candidates.

Exercise 2

¹ L3: *show understanding of the connections between ideas, opinions and attitudes.*

L4: *understand what is implied but not directly stated, e.g. gist, speaker’s purpose, intention and feelings.*

This exercise showed a slight increase in overall performance compared to 2024. Continuing a trend from previous years, this exercise shows a strong degree of differentiation between the highest performing cohort of candidates and the lowest performing cohort.

The increase in candidates who omitted one or more answers in **Exercise 2**, when compared to 2024, suggests candidates may need reminding of the importance of always attempting an answer to these questions, even if all they can do is guess.

It is important to remember that answers should not be repeated in this exercise; each answer is distinct and unique. For example, some candidates answered 'kengele' to both **9(a)** and **9(b)**. Logically, this can only be the answer to one question. If candidates are tempted to repeat an answer, then, time permitting, they should consider reevaluating their chosen answers to both questions with a view to identifying the correct answer to both.

In general, overall performance was strongest on **Questions 9(h)** and **9(a)**. The most challenging question was **9(f)**, which required a high degree of linguistic ability and inference on the part of candidates.

Exercise 3

General performance in this exercise was good, and despite a marginal decrease, remains very consistent with the 2024 paper. **Exercise 3** continues to prove a good differentiator between the highest and lowest performing candidates. Despite this high degree of differentiation, there were hardly any omitted answers in this exercise, which is excellent to see.

Performance in **Question 10** could have been improved by paying more attention to the often subtle differences between the various ideas, feelings and beliefs expressed in the spoken texts. The best performing candidates were those who listened beyond individual words and distractors, and demonstrated a strong ability to understand the overall tone and content of each spoken text.

Exercise 4

Overall performance in **Exercise 4** was generally good, and very comparable to the 2024 paper. Candidates coped well with the vocabulary and idiom required for the questions in this exercise, and mostly did well in following the various timelines and events discussed throughout a long and challenging text.

In general, most candidates performed well on **Questions 11, 12 and 14**. **Questions 15 and 16** were the most challenging, possibly reflecting the difficulty that assessment objectives L3 and L4 posed to candidates this year.

In comparison to 2024, there is some evidence of a decrease in the number of candidates who fill in the letter of their chosen answer in the box rather than a tick. Centres should continue their good work in reminding candidates to use only a tick when answering these questions.

Continuing a trend from recent years, there was an extremely low level of omitted answers in this exercise, which is to be commended.

SWAHILI

Paper 0262/03
Speaking

Key messages

To do well in this examination, candidates should:

- choose a topic for the presentation section that incorporates an aspect, or aspects, of life in a Swahili-speaking or East African community or culture
- ensure when preparing the presentation section that a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures are used (e.g. relatives, negatives, subjunctives, varied tenses), which will demonstrate linguistic versatility
- ensure when preparing the presentation section that care is taken to include a range of opinions alongside factual elements. Phrases such as *inavyoonekana*, *inavyosemekana*, *kwa maoni yangu*, *mazoea ya...* may be used to good effect
- avoid using any English
- seek to engage the examiner in conversation and not feel constrained to answering questions only. For instance, when responding to a closed (e.g., 'yes/no') question, candidates should seek to expand on their answer and demonstrate initiative.

To allow their candidates to do well in this examination, examiners should:

- strive to put candidates at ease at the beginning of the examination
- clearly introduce the format at the start of the exam to the candidate and introduce the start of each section during the exam
- stick as closely to the timings of each section, so that candidates have a fair chance to respond at length in each section
- allow candidates enough time to answer questions fully by avoiding interruptions and allow some time after the candidate finishes speaking to provide the opportunity for them to expand
- ask open-ended questions (e.g. why/how – *kwa nini*, *kivipi*, *kwa mawazo yako...itakuwaje*, etc.) rather than closed questions that would normally only require very short responses, (e.g. *Ulienda?* *Unapenda?*). Asking closed questions may disadvantage especially weaker candidates as it makes more challenging for them to showcase their linguistic ability fully
- keep questions as short and clear as possible, instead of asking questions that require long introductions or a good deal of context. It was noted that some examiners talk more than the candidates; please remember that it is the candidates who are being examined and who primarily need to be heard
- avoid asking the same questions to multiple candidates. Examiners should ask a wide range of spontaneous questions, including follow-up questions, directly related to the individual candidates' presentations, topics, interests, and responses. This will allow candidates to display a wider range of facts and opinions on the topic
- avoid using any English
- repeat questions if asked to by the candidate.

General comments

- Sections were generally clearly introduced by examiners.
- Most recordings were clear and sufficiently audible.
- Marking tended to be generous in the higher mark range and severe in the lower mark range.
- Exams must be submitted on time to avoid delays.
- Examiners should attempt to get the best out of every student according to their needs rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.

Comments on specific sections

Presentation

Most candidates prepared well for this part of the test.

Candidates scoring the highest marks delivered presentations that:

- were natural and not (appearing to be) read out
- were developed to a good length
- were not simply factual but also contained a wide range of opinions
- were wholly relevant
- were challenging and thought-provoking
- were diverse in terms of vocabulary and grammar
- avoided using English vocabulary
- avoided using non-standard grammar such as *-ag/-ang* habitual suffixes.

Some candidates chose topics that were not sufficiently challenging for an examination at this level, such as 'family', 'friends', 'school' and 'daily life' and thus placed limits on themselves in terms of the potential marks available to them. As this section can be prepared in full it presents candidates with the best opportunity to display their abilities from the outset. Presentations on insufficiently challenging topics often lacked opinions.

Some candidates appeared to read out their presentations from a script. It is important to remember that this is not permitted and that a key performance indicator in the higher bands is for the presentation to be engaging and natural. The importance of style (as well as substance) should be clearly emphasised to candidates.

Some candidates tended to play it safe in the presentation in terms of the range of grammar displayed. Cambridge Moderators look for a range of tenses and structures, and this section provides the best opportunity to less confident candidates to display an ability to utilise them. Accurate use of sayings and proverbs is an efficient way of exhibiting a range of grammatical structures.

Topic conversation

Most candidates did well in this part of the test and showed a good understanding of the questions they were asked. There were few instances of questions having to be repeated or answers that were irrelevant.

Some candidates struggled to achieve access to the higher marking bands in this section because they couldn't expand at sufficient length or in sufficient detail on their answers. This was sometimes made harder by Examiners moving on too quickly to other questions and not allowing time for candidates to think and develop a more detailed response.

Candidates should avoid repeating material from their presentation in the topic discussion. Some candidates fell back on this and lost the chance to display a wider range of language and topic understanding.

The range of language was often good but there were common grammatical errors, such as:

- with noun class agreements, especially with possessive pronouns and adjectives
- mixing agreements in relative structures
- errors when using monosyllabic verbs
- confusing *-enye* and *-amba* structures.
- use of non-standard *-ag/ang-* habitual suffixes.

General conversation

Candidates generally did well. Examiners are reminded, however, that questions should span at least one topic from Areas A–B **and** one from Areas C–E. Often topics were chosen from Areas A–B only, which restricted the ability of candidates to achieve higher marks. Examiners should also allow candidates time to expand on each topic, rather than moving on too quickly and trying to encompass too many topics within this section.

It is crucial that topics chosen in this section do not overlap with those discussed in the Presentation and the Topic discussion. On occasion, this was not adhered to and candidates struggled to achieve higher marks as they were left prone to repeating themselves.

A large selection of topics should be covered across the candidates within the same centre and genuinely reflect individual interests as that will free up potential. The same topics were sometimes used for large numbers of candidates within a centre. This invariably inhibited performance and limited the marks they were able to achieve. In the same vein, Examiners should avoid using the same questions for all their candidates as this also limits their potential to achieve higher marks.

For candidates, the same points largely apply in this section as in the previous section. In short, candidates should:

- seek to expand on their initial answers
- avoid repeating information from previous sections of the task and always attempt to cover fresh ground
- seize the opportunity to display a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary
- feel free to engage and expand the topic and take it new directions to demonstrate their command of the language and style.

Candidates are encouraged to engage fully with the examiner. They should ask their own questions and take the conversation in different directions. This section affords the best opportunity to do this and the ability to contribute to the direction of the discussion will always count in a candidate's favour.