

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| (i) vast; | (iv) thrives; |
| (ii) remarkable; | (v) outrun; |
| (iii) fascinated; | (vi) extinction. |
| (iv) thrives; | |

Answer

- a. *The ostrich egg is considered valuable because*
(i) they are the largest in the world
(ii) It taste deliciously
(iii) The hard shell is used as container for storing water by bushmen
- b. *It survives attacks because of its keen eyesight, extra-ordinary swiftness and long distance stamina.*
- c. *It cannot fly because of its great size and weight*
- d. *Because of its fluffy and beautiful nature, it became fashionable to Europeans*
- e. *Noun Phrase*
Subject of the verb "are"
- f. *The writer is fascinated with the bird and he is appreciating it.*
- g. *Vast: enormous, huge, immense*
- f. *Remarkable: worthy, extra-ordinary*
Fascinated: attracted, captivated
Thrives: survives
Outrun: run faster than, over take
Extinction: inexistence, disappearance

Passage 4

(WASSCE 2003)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Chief Ibezim and the District Officer were good friends. Ibezim was the Chief Priest of Ani, the earth goddess, in Ndiuzo, and although the District Officer was stationed in far-away Umueke and the Chief Priest by his calling should not travel out of Ndiuzo, their friendship remained as solid as a rock.

They became friends after Ibezim had testified before the District Officer in the land dispute between Ndiuzo and Umuokeke. He was the only man to testify against his own people in that dispute, and had struck the District Officer as an honest man who was telling the truth.

This was what earned Ibezim the admiration and friendship of the District Officer. Consequently, the District Officer advised him to send his son to the new school and the new religion that held out so much promise of positive change in the future. And when the system of indirect rule necessitated the appointment of a warrant chief at Ndiuzo, the District Officer also promptly thought of the honest friend as the most suitable candidate.

On the other hand, Ibezim's testimony in the land dispute earned him the wrath of many of his own people. They not only held him responsible with the District Officer and his patronage of the new education and religion, which were threatening to erode the old ways of the land. So, when the District Officer wanted Chief Ibezim at Umueke, and he sought to confer with his people on what to do, his detractors quickly turned their backs on him and left him alone in his dilemma. Some even secretly hoped he was going to be arrested and detained.

After a long period of hesitation, Ibezim finally decided to break with tradition and go to Umueke. The times were changing and he was sure the earth goddess would understand and condone his going away from the village.

When he came back, those who had wished him the worst got the shock of their lives. They now had a new Warrant Chief to rule over them.

Questions:

- (a) What had earned Chief Ibezim the District Officer's friendship?
- (b) State two ways in which Ibezim benefitted from his friendship with the District Officer?
- (c) Give two reasons why the villagers were unhappy with Chief Ibezim.
- (d) State the dilemma in which chief Ibezim found himself.
- (e) "... Ibezim finally decided to break with tradition..." What tradition is meant here?
- (f) "*When he came back...*"
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression?
 - (ii) What is its function as it is used in the sentence?
- (g) "... *as solid as rock*".
What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase that means the same and can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) calling; (ii) consequently; (iii) promptly; (iv) wrath; (v) detractors; (vi) condone.

Answer

- a. *Ibezim's testimony against his people over a land dispute*
- b. *His son was sent to the new school and new religion*
 - ii. *He was made the warrant Chief of Ndiuzo*
- c. i. *His closeness to the District Officer*
 - ii. *His patronage of the new education and new religion*
- d. *His dilemma was whether to go or not to go to Umueke*
- e. *The tradition is that the Chief Priest by his calling should not travel out of his town*
- f. i. *Adverbial clause* ii. *modifies the Verb 'wished'*
- g. *Simile*
- h. i. *Calling: vocation, duty* ii. *Consequently: as a result, therefore*
 - iii. *Promptly: quickly, immediately* iv. *Wrath: anger, annoyance, fury*
 - v. *Detractors: critical enemies* vi. *Condone: overlook, forgive*

Passage 5

(WASSCE 2004)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

When Eze was invited to spend his Easter holidays with Uncle Chike in Lagos, he jumped for joy! He had always pictured Lagos as a wonderland of bright lights, paved roads, elegant people riding by their expensive cars, and beautiful residential quarters. This invitation was the wonderful opportunity for him to leave his small village for the first time and experience first - hand the good life of the city that he has imagined so much. The fateful day came and Eze, happy as lark, bid an exciting goodbye to his family. The first leg of his trip started modestly in the back of the rickety lorry that plied the dirty road linking his village to the rest of the world, but Eze was sure that he would later ride triumphantly into Lagos on one of those legendary luxury buses that he admired so much. This was also an experience to look forward to!

When he arrived Lagos, it was almost dark. The first thing that struck him as he alighted from the bus were the teeming crowd with desperate unsmiling faces, the deafening noise of the ceaseless traffic. the polluted air with acrid smell of exhaust fumes and decay, the endless rows of dirty and crumbling concrete buildings, and the filth everywhere. What a sharp contrast with the city he had built up in his imagination! But surely there must still be much to look forward to. Back in the village, Uncle Chike was regarded as a well- to - do trader. So Eze was further surprised and disappointed to find that he lived in a single room in a sleazy part of the city. At night, it got hot and stuffy, but they dared not open the windows as this would bring an invasion of mosquitoes.

Eze woke up the next morning feeling clammy, but he could still not have his bath. As his uncle took him to a stack across the street for a hurried breakfast of thin tea and mouldy bread, he explained that they usually bought water from a mobile tanker that had not come around for some time . Eze was still recovering from his surprise at this information when they rushed off for his uncle's market stall, and he had his first unpleasant ride in one of the notorious molue buses of the city.

As they struggled down the bus, shoving against the solid mass of desperate, bad - tempered commuters, Eze thought of his village, and the city suddenly lost whatever was left of its attraction for him. True, the village was small; life there was monotonous, and it lacked some essential amenities. But it was peaceful; you drank clean water and ate what you wanted fresh; you moved about freely and breathed clean air; and everyone was friendly and helpful. Greatly disillusioned with the city, Eze longed to return to his beloved village.

Questions:

- (a) State two experiences that Eze looked forward to.
- (b) Mention any two features of the city that Eze noticed at once
- (c) What two discoveries surprised and disappointed Eze when he arrived the city?
- (d) Mention any two experience in the city that Eze found unpleasant .
- (e) What conclusion did Eze draw from his experiences in the city?

- (f) "... happy as a lark..." What is the figure of speech is contained in this expression
(ii) What is the function?
- (g) "When he arrived in Lagos,..."
(i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it used in the passage?
(ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage
(i) pictured (ii) stuffy (iii) invasion (iv) hurried (v) attraction (vi) monotonous

Answer

- a) (i) *To have a taste of good city life*
(ii) *To ride in a luxury bus to Lagos*
- b) (i) *The city was overcrowded*
(ii) *The deafening noise of the ceaseless traffic*
- c) (i) *His uncle lived in a one - room apartment in the dirtiest part of the city*
(ii) *The city of Lagos was not as beautiful as he had imagined*
- d) (i) *There was no water for him to have his bath*
(ii) *He ate an unpleasant breakfast*
- e) *He concluded that life in the village is peaceful and better off than life in the city*
- f) *Simile*
- g) (i) *Adverbial clause of time* (ii) *It modifies the verb "was"*
(h) (i) *pictured: imagined, viewed, thought of* (ii) *stuffy: airless*
(iii) *invasion: attack, influx* (iv) *hurried: quick, rushed, hasty*
(v) *attraction: fascination, appeal, charm, beauty*
(vi) *monotonous: dull, boring, uninterested, unexciting*

Passage 6**(WASSCE 2004)**

Read the following passage carefully and answer the question on it.

It is no longer news that the social and economic problems of African countries continue to worsen. What we experience daily are the vicious consequence of unemployment, inadequate health and educational facilities, urban squalor resulting from a population bursting at the seams and, the most frightening of all, the rate at which crime is rising it is also no longer news that many Africans now see "checking out" of their countries for other supposedly better one's abroad as the only solution to the problems. In this regard, the United States, Britain, Canada, Germany and Italy are the hot favourites. Most of these Africans are usually so desperate to leave that they fall easy prey to all sorts of passport and visa fraud, and often end up smuggling themselves abroad at all costs. In such countries, they have to do all manner of menial jobs, sometimes resorting to criminal activities, and are often cut off completely from families and relations back home. Young girls who have been enticed with the assurance of rosy future often end up in forced prostitution, with all unpleasant consequences!

Is “checking out”, the ideal solution to Africa’s social and economic problems? Of course not! What is baffling is why Africans cannot see abandoning their countries as a step that holds out no solution at all. All that they achieve, in fact, is the substitution of one set of problem for another!

What then should we do? We must look inwards for more realistic solution. First, we must develop the will to tackle our problems. Where there is a will, it is said, there is a way. If we abandon our problems instead of tackling them head on, we will simply be leaving an unpleasant legacy for future generations. Secondly, we must orient ourselves towards self-reliance and self-employment, instead of looking helplessly to our embattled government for salaried employment.

Finally, we must seek a long term solution by addressing the population question. It is obvious that Africa’s outsized population is the root of the problems. The question we should ask ourselves is , if the average family size in America or Britain were to be as large as the average African family, would these countries still be as attractive to us as they are now? The big puzzle is that we have adopted the white man’s lifestyle in all other respects, but have made an exception of family size.

Questions:

- (a) Mention two sequences of the usual desperation of Africans to leave their countries.
 - (b) The writer argues that escaping abroad is not the ideal solution to Africa’s problems
- Quote one sentence from the passage that sums up the writer’s recommendation or solution.
- (c) According to the writer, why should Africans solve their problems rather than avoiding them?
 - (d) What does the writer consider the most serious cause of African problems?
 - (e) What does the writer imply by using “supposedly” in the first paragraph?
 - (f) “What we experience daily....”
 - (i) What is the grammatical name is given as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is it function?
 - (g) “... a population bursting at the seams...” What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
 - (h) For each of the following words or phrases, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it used in the passage.
 - (i) prey (ii) enticed (iii) ideal (iv) holds out (v) tackle (vi) head - on

Answer

- (a) (i) They fall victim to passport and visa fraud
- (ii) They smuggle themselves out of the country
- (b) We must seek a long term solution by addressing the population question
- (c) To leave a good legacy for future generations
- (d) Overpopulation (e) He implies that these countries are no better than African countries.
- (f) (I) Noun clause (ii) The subject of the verb “are”

- (g) (i) *Prey:* *victim*
(ii) *enticed:* *lured, seduced, attracted* (iii) *Ideal:* *best, most suitable, perfect*
(iv) *holds out:* *offers, proffers, promises*
(v) *tackle:* *face, confront, deal with, grapple with*
(vi) *head-on:* *directly, squarely, earnestly.*

Passage 7

(WASSCE 2005)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the question on it.

The chalkboard is by far the commonest teaching aid used at virtually all levels of education from the nursery to the university. It is the most enduring teaching aid and perhaps will be the most difficult to replace. In the advanced countries of the world, it is being threatened by the overhead projector. However, the overhead projector requires constant supply of electricity - which is the reason why we cannot rely on it yet. The chalkboard used to be black, which was why the name "blackboard" struck for ages: but today, there are boards of **various** colours: blue, green, even white.

Now, most chalkboards are made of wood nailed to the wall, instead of the concrete board made of cement and fine sand that was more common. Some are also made of metal. The chalkboard has the advantages of low cost renovator. The chalkboard has the advantages of low cost, availability and ease of maintenance, usually involving mere cleaning and occasional retouching of the surface with the renovator. However, if the board is metal, the felt marker should be protected against drying by replacing the cap when it is not in use. The major draw back in the use of the chalkboard is that the information on it can only be temporary. If there is only one board for the class, it is usually impossible to leave the information there for more than a few hours, since other teachers would want to use it.

It is not easy to draw complex diagrams showing minute details, such as parts of the body and contours, unless one is a good artist. Where one has succeeded with laborious illustrations, using different colours, it could be painful when the board has to clean by the next teacher. However, there are nowadays various innovations, including foldable boards made of plywood, which allow teachers more room to leave their materials for longer periods.

Finally, it is a great disadvantage that during the course of teaching, more time is spent writing on the board than when one using the overhead projector. So, in all, more time is needed for any lesson when one uses the board rather than the overhead projector.

Questions:

- (a) Why does the writer use the word chalkboard rather than blackboard most of the time?
(b) Mention two different types of chalkboard that have been use.
(c) Mention two disadvantages of the chalk board.
(d) Why should the cap of the felt pen be replaced when the pen is not in use?
(e) The major drawback in the use of the chalkboard.....
 (i) What grammatical name is given to the expression? (ii) What does it mean?

- (f) ...it is being threatened by the overhead projector...
- (i) What figure of speech is used in this expression?
 - (ii) What does it mean?
- (g) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it used in the passage : (i) virtually (ii) constant (iii) various (iv) temporary (v) laborious (vi) room

Answer

- a) *He uses chalkboard because there are boards of different colours other than black*
- (b) (i) *metal chalkboard*
(ii) *wooden chalkboard*
- (c) (i) *It is difficult to draw complex diagrams on the chalk board*
(ii) *Information on it are usually temporary*
- (d) *To prevent the ink from drying up*
- (e) (i) *noun phrase* (ii) *Subject of the verb is*
- (f) (i) *metaphor*
(ii) *It means that the overhead projector may soon replace the chalkboard*
- (g) (I) *Virtually: almost, nearly, practically*
(ii) *Constant: regular, frequently, continuous, consistent*
(iii) *temporary: a short time, for a brief period*
(iv) *laborious: difficult, tedious, tasking, tiresome*
(v) *room: opportunity, space, time*

Passage 8

(WASSCE 2005)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the question on it.

Dele groaned and got out of bed. There was no clock on the mantelpiece, the room was still dark, but he knew that he was already late for work, probably by up to an hour. He was a commercial bus driver and had to get started as early as 5.00a.m. and go almost non-stop until about 9.00p.m. to be able to make the daily returns that the bus owner demanded.

On the previous day, he had attended an all - night party - a late uncle's burial ceremony - where he had drunk himself almost senseless before crawling home in the early hours of the morning. Now he got up shakily, splashed water on his face and hurried off to work . but not before carefully fastening on his upper arm the amulet he had always worn for protection against accident. A similar amulet hung concealed under the steering column of his bus. On his way, still feeling groggy, he caught his left toe against a stump and had some misgiving, it was a bad sign, and he was supposed to go back home and then set out again. But there was no time for that now, so he hurried on. At the bus station, Dele quickly loaded his bus and sped off without any of the necessary checks on the vehicle. He had to make up for the lost time. It was the rush hour, so the bus was overloaded as it

often was, with many passengers hanging on to the doors. The tyres were threadbare, the brakes were faulty and the road was wet, but, still feeling a little sleepy, Dele sped on. Many passengers protested about his reckless driving, but he would not listen. After all, didn't he have protection against accident?

As the vehicle took the last turn before its destination, Dele saw a broken-down truck blocking his side of the road. Under normal circumstances, he could have brought the bus safely to a halt, but the circumstances were far from normal. The careering bus hit the parked vehicle, swerved wildly across the road and plunged into a ditch. Dele's surprise before he sank into oblivion was the failure of his supposed protective amulets.

Questions:

- (a) Why did Dele wake up late?
- (b) ...he caught his left tow against a stump and had some misgiving. What does this tell us about Dele?
- (c) Give two reasons why Dele drove recklessly.
- (d) Why was Dele unable to stop his faulty vehicle?
- (e) What was Dele's condition after the accident?
- (f) After all; didn't he have protection against accident? What literary device is used in this expression?
- (g) ...widely across the road...
 - (i) What is the grammatical name given to the expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (I) probably (ii) returns (iii) groggy (iv) misgiving (v) threadbare (vi) reckless

Answer

- (a) *He went to bed late and drunk*
- (b) *He is superstitious*
- (c) (i) *He is trying to make up for lost time*
(ii) *He believed that his amulets offered him protection for accidents*
- (d) *He was driving recklessly/ The brakes were faulty.*
- (e) *He was unconscious*
- (f) *Rhetorical question*
- (g) (i) *Adverbial phrase* (ii) *modifies the verb "swerved"*
- (h) (i) *Probably: maybe, possible, perhaps*
(ii) *returns: amount of money, profits, income*
(iii) *groggy: drowsy, weak, dizzy, unsteady*
(iv) *threadbare: old, overused, worn-out*
(v) *reckless: careless, dangerous, rough, bad*

Passage 9

(WASSCE 2006)

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Late one night Mr. Oliver was returning to his school on the outskirts of the hill station of Simla. He had been teaching in this school for many years. A bachelor, he usually strolled into the town in the evening, returning after dark, when he would take a short cut through the pine forest. Whenever there was strong wind, the pine trees made moaning, eerie sounds that kept most people to the main road. But Mr. Oliver was not a nervous or imaginative man.

He carried a torch on this particular night and its pale gleam - the batteries were running down - moving fitfully over the narrow forest path. When its flickering light fell on the figure of a boy who was sitting alone on a rock, Mr. Oliver stopped. Boys were not to be out of school after 7 pm and it was well past nine.

“What are you doing here, boy?” Asked Mr. Oliver sharply, moving closer so that he could recognize the miscreant. But as he approached the boy, he sensed that something was wrong. The boy appeared to be crying. His head hung down, he held his face in his hands and his body shook convulsively. It was a strange soundless weeping, Mr. Oliver felt quite uneasy.

“Well, what’s the matter?” He asked, his anger giving way to concern. “What are you crying for?”. The boy would not answer or look up”. His body continued to be rocked with silent sobbing. “Come on, boy, you shouldn’t be out there at this hour. Tell me the trouble. Look up”. The boy looked up. He took his hand from his face and looked up at his teacher. The light from Mr. Oliver’s torch fell on the boy’s face, if it could be called face.

He had no eyes, ears, nose or mouth. It was just a round head - with a school cap on top of it and that was where the story should have ended, as indeed it has for several people who have had a similar experiences and dropped dead of un-explainable heart attack. But Mr. Oliver did not end there.

The torch fell from his trembling hand. He turned and scrambled down the path, running blindly through the trees and calling for help. He was still running towards the school building when he saw a lantern swinging in the middle of the path. Mr. Oliver had never before been so pleased to see the night watchman. He stumbled up to the watchman, gasping for breath and spoke incoherently “what is it Sahib?” Asked the watchman. “Has there been an accident? Why are you running?”

“I saw something- something horrible a boy weeping in the forest and he had no face!” “No face, Sahib?” “No eyes, nose, mouth, nothing”! “Do you mean like this, Sahib?” Asked the watchman and raised the lamp to his own face. The watchman had no eye, no ears, no features at all, not even an eyebrow. The wind blew the light out, and Mr. Oliver had his heart attack...

Questions:

- a. Why did Mr. Oliver take the pine forest route to school?

- Answer**

- ### Passage 10

(WASSCE 2006)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Children today are being hurried through childhood, rushed into taking on adults tasks at a very early age. Granted that the effects are not always so dramatic or so tragic, they can be profound and long lasting. Parents are understandably eager to see their children succeed. When that eagerness turns into anxiety, parents may overload their children, pushing them too hard too soon. For instance, it is becoming increasingly common of parents to enrol their children in after-school activities. Often, special tutorials is added.

Of course, it is not wrong to encourage a child's talent or interests. There is a danger of excess when some children seem to have as many pressures as harried adults do. Before their children are born, parents are already enrolling them to preschool, hoping to improve their prospects of success. In some countries, children are assessed for Reading and Mathematics skills before they are six years old. Such have raised concern about emotional damage. Many parents seem to think it normal, even advisable, to teach their children that winning is everything.

Some parents work extremely hard to provide every possible material comfort for their children's happiness - but they may well be doing the opposite. Often, more than a few children raised this way are involved in drinking, drugs and sullen rebellious behaviour as many fume with resentment because they feel neglected. The children often pay a high price. Although they may have many material luxuries, they lack the most essential ingredients of a good childhood: parental attention and love. Without guidance, discipline and direction they face adult questions too soon, with little or no preparation. They will likely obtain their own answers from peers or TV or movie characters. The results often bring childhood to an abrupt, even tragic end. Without doubt, rushing children through childhood is a dangerous practice that should be avoided.

Questions

- a. Why do parents rush their children through childhood?
- b. Give two examples of how parents rush their children through childhood.
- c. State two sad effects of bringing up children in extreme luxury
- d. Why do children raised in luxury become angry?
- e. What is ironical about parents' efforts to make their children happy?
- f. "The children often pay a high price". What is the meaning of this expression?
- g. "Although, they may have many material luxuries..."
 - (i) what grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) what is its function?
- h. For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage.

(i) effects	(ii) eager
(iii) prospects	(iv) raised
(v) essential	(vi) resentment

Answer

- a. *They want to see their children succeed early in life.*
- b. (i) *Children are enrolled in after school activities.*
(ii) *Children are enrolled for special tutorials.*
- c. (i) *They get involved in drinking, drug addiction and other rebellious activities.*
(ii) *Some are resentful and feel neglected.*
- d. *They lack parental attention and love.*
- e. *They become resentful or angry.*
- f. *It means the children becomes worse off in behaviour than expected*
- g. *Adverbial Clause - it modifies the verb "lack"*
- h. (i) *effects: results, outcome*
(ii) *eager: interested, keen*
(iii) *prospects: chances, possibility*
(iv) *essential: vital, important*
(v) *resentful: anger*

Passage 11

(WASSCE 2007)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Mr Cissey pulled on his trousers very hurriedly and dragged himself to the verandah. He was bent on getting to his office before his workers. The previous day, he had reprimanded his staff for regularly coming to work late, and threatened to give the sack to any of them who would repeat the offence. Today, he must get to work in time not only to serve as a role model but also to show that he really meant what he had said.

He managed to squeeze himself behind the wheel of his car which was at least two sizes too small to accommodate his paunch. He inserted the ignition key and turned it but the car would not start; the engine just grumbled. On the second attempt, it coughed and finally roared to life on the third. It moved grudgingly to the gate and stopped. Cissey immediately realized that he would be caught in a traffic jam. It was evident that he would arrive at his workplace late.

For about two hours, Cissey just sat, glued to his seat, fuming. Hard as he tried to control his temper, the misbehaving acts of other drivers once prompted him to bawl at them. Then suddenly, after the interminable wait, the street cleared and Cissey sped off. It was almost three hours after leaving home that he got to his workplace. The staff were already there and when he entered the building he found his secretary and the clerical staff apparently immersed in their assignments, with an air of dutifulness. One look at their boss warned them that they had better keep quiet to save their skin. But as soon as he closed the door to his office he heard soft voices mumbling words he could not understand.. Worst of all, he heard subdued laughter from his secretary.

Cissey immediately shot out of the chair ready to vent his spleen on these underlings but suddenly plopped back into his seat. On second thoughts, he changed his mind. How could he castigate them for what they had not caused?

Questions:

- (a) Why was Mr Cissey in a hurry to get to the office?
- (b) What two indications are there in the passage that Mr Cissey was a huge man?
- (c) How did Mr Cissey express his anger while caught in traffic?
- (d) Why did Mr Cissey become angry with his staff?
- (e) What was the attitude of the staff towards their boss?
- (f) ...when he entered the building...
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) How could he castigate them for what they had not caused? What literary device is used in the expression above?
- (h) What is meant by the expression vent his spleen in the last paragraph?
 - (i) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it used in the passage:
 - (i) reprimanded (ii) evident (iii) prompted (iv) interminable (v) immersed (vi) subdued

Answer

- (a) To sanction those perpetual late comers
(b) (i) He squeezed himself behind the wheel (ii) He had a paunch
(c) He fumed and brawled once at the drivers
(d) He was angry because they laughed at him and mumbled
(e) Fear
(f) (i) Adverbial clause (ii) It modifies the verb "find"
(g) Rhetorical question
(h) It means he will show his anger to his staff
(i) reprimanded: rebuked, scolded
(ii) evident: clear, obvious
(iii) prompted: caused, forced, led
(iv) interminable: unending, prolonged, endless
(v) immersed: buried, absorbed, engrossed
(vi) subdued: stifled, suppressed, restrained

Passage 12

(WASSCE 2007)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Whenever I ask myself the question why I have not left this country for good, many answers rush to my mind, each striving to be recognized as being the most convincing. I am reminded of the popular slogan that this country belongs to us, for which reason every one of us must join hand to salvage it. I try to dismiss the argument by reasoning that it is foolhardy attempting to lend a helping hand where one's service are apparently not required. Then I am reminded that if I leave the country in a hurry just because of our political instability and economic hardship my commitments to my nuclear family and extended family at home will suffer. I reply by saying that as soon as I get settled abroad, I would arrange for my family to join me. Other financial problems at home would be taken care of by my regular remittances. Would I then never think of going back home in future? Not until the situation in the country improve considerably, I would answer. And who do I expect to carry on with the task of national rehabilitation, when the likes of me are all out of the country? Those who messed up the country in the first place, I would argue. And so on. This self-examination has been going on for the last ten years or so; meanwhile, I am yet to leave the country.

When I wonder how many people think as I do. I realize that we are very few. Indeed, not many have the slightest opportunity of absconding from the country; they do not have the place to run to, nor do they have the means of escape. Even among the elite who consider this possibility, the uncertainty of a future outside their fatherland intimidates them. And so we all end up staying and grumbling.

Questions:

- (a) Why would the writer like to leave his country?
- (b) Why does the writer believe that he should join in salvaging his country?
- (c) What would make the writer return to his country?
- (d) Who does the writer suggest should carry on the task of national rehabilitation?
- (e) Give two reasons why it has not been easy for him and others to leave the country
- (f)many answers rush to mind. What figure of speech is used in this expression.
- (g) ...the uncertainty of a future outside their fatherland...
 - (I) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words or phrase, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
- (i) for good (ii) slogan (iii) foolhardy (iv) commitments (v) absconding

Answer

- (a) *His country is going through political instability and economic hardship*
- (b) *He believes that his services are not required*
- (c) *When the situation in his country improves considerably*
- (d) *Those who are responsible for the mess*
- (e) (i) *The opportunity to run away or escape is farfetched*
(ii) *The uncertainty of a future outside their country*
- (f) *metaphor*
- (g) (i) *Noun phrase* (ii) *Subject of the verb "intimidates"*
- (I) (i) *for good: forever, permanently* (ii) *slogan: belief, motto, saying*
(iii) *foolhardy: foolish, stupid, senseless*
(iv) *commitments: responsible, duty, obligations*
(v) *absconding: running away, fleeing, escaping*

Passage 13

(WASSCE 2008)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the question on it.

I have great sympathy for the common fear that is suffered by young people when examinations are looming ahead. Sometimes it is the actual examination they fear but equally likely to excite fear are the expectations of the parents who are keen on their offspring achieving good results. Pressure in these circumstances only lead to more fear and often results in failures which could be avoided.

My very last examination was an oral and I knew that every thing depended on the kind of impression I made on the government representative who I expected, had difficult questions for me. This, though, was not the only reason for my apprehension. As a youth, I was often teased because I was small in stature, I was obsessed with it. I was very self-conscious, therefore, about meeting this important man. Fortunately, the previous day I had learned another lesson from nature, one which was to help me in my face-to-face encounter with the examiner.

I had been staying with my aunt and uncle in order to do some last - minute preparations. I went through my books that afternoon, sitting outside in the sunshine until about three o'clock, when the weather took a turn for the worse. The sky looked menacing and, as the clouds gathered in the distance, I heard the rumble of thunder. The lovely sunny afternoon was changing dark and dismal evening. Several times I broke my concentration to look at a very beautiful water lily in the pond. As I quickly gathered my books, I remembered the lily and went over to see it for the last time that day. I was just in time to see the flower close its petals as the rumble of the distant thunder grew louder. I didn't mind getting wet as I realized that the rain could do nothing to damage the delicate, inner beauty of the lily.

The simple act of nature restored my confidence and I realized that I too could muster courage to face the examiner. I could, in fact protect the inner me from the outside world. My new-found philosophy worked! Of the eight people who sat for the examination that day, only two succeeded and the government representative congratulated me on being the youngest candidate ever to have passed. I was lucky for I had learnt to control my obsession with my stature.

Questions:

- (a) According to the writer, what two things excite fear in young people going for examinations?
- (b) Give two reasons for the writer's apprehension before the examination.
- (c) Why was the writer almost obsessed with his small stature?
- (d) How did the observation of the lily affect the writer?
- (e) What proof is there in the passage that the writer actually passed the exam?
- (f) The sky looked menacing.... What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
- (g) ...because I was small in stature
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means and which can replace it as it is used in the passage.
 - (i) excite (ii) offspring (iii) apprehension (iv) dismal (v) delicate (vi) muster.

Answer

- a) (i) *The examination itself* (ii) *Parents expectation for good results*
- (b) (i) *The difficult questions he expected from the examiner* (ii) *his small stature*
- (c) *Because he was often teased and mocked about it*
- (d) *It gave him a renewed confidence*
- (e) *He was congratulated by the government representative*
- (f) *metaphor/personification*
- (g) (i) *Adverbial clause of time* (ii) *It modifies the verb "was teased"*
- (h) (i) *excite: evoke, arouse, create, cause*
(ii) *offspring: children*

- (iii) *aprehension:* *fear, anxiety, worry* (iv) *dismal:* *gloomy, dull*
(v) *delicate:* *fragile, tender, frail* (vi) *muster:* *gather, summon, pluck up*

Passage 14

(WASSCE 2008)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the question on it.

Work can be an essential part of children's education and a means of transmitting vital skills from parent to offspring. In some countries, children are often in workshops and small-scale services, and gradually become full-fledged workers later in life. In other countries, teenagers work a few hours a week to earn pocket money. Such work is beneficial as it enhances a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development without interfering with his schooling, recreation and rest.

Child labour, on the other hand, is about children who work long hours for low wages, often under conditions harmful to their health. This type of work is destructive and exploitative. Child labour takes different forms. By and large, most child workers are domestic in service. Domestic service need not be hazardous, but it is often. Children in domestic services are poorly paid or not paid at all. Their masters set the terms and conditions of their work entirely to their whim. They are deprived of affection, schooling, play and social activity. They are also vulnerable to physical abuse.

Poverty is the most powerful force of driving children into hazardous labour. For poor families, the small contribution of a child's income at home can make the difference between hunger and survival. The parents of child worker are often unemployed or underemployed. They are desperate for a secure income. In developing countries, for example, classrooms do not have seats, half of the students have no textbooks, and half of the classrooms have no blackboards. It is not surprising that many children who attend such schools abandon schooling for work.

Child labour is aggravated by a modern society that is preoccupied with the demand for low-priced products. Few people seem to care that these may have been produced by millions of anonymous, exploited children. The effects of child labour on the psychological, emotional and intellectual growth of the victims are grave. Such children are deprived of affection. Beatings, insults and punishment by being deprived of food are very common. Ultimately, most child labourers are condemned to lifelong poverty, misery, sickness and illiteracy.

Questions:

- (a) Identify two types of work that are beneficial to children.
- (b) According to the passage, what is child labour?
- (c) Give two causes of child labour.
- (d) In one word, describe the effect of child labour on the child.
- (e) According to the passage, why do children drop out of school?
- (f) ...who work long hours for low wages?
- (i) What is the grammatical named given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
- (ii) What is its function?

- (g) ... most child labourers are condemned to lifelong poverty... What is the meaning of this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage
- (i) transmitting (ii) enhances (iii) vulnerable (iv) preoccupied
(v) anonymous (vi) grave

Answer

- (a) (1) *Work that develops the child physically, mentally, spiritually and socially.*
(2) *Work to earn pocket money*
- (b) *Child labour is when children are subjected to long hours of work, for low wages and under harmful conditions*
- (c) (I) *Poverty* (ii) *The demand for low priced products*
- (d) *destructive / devastating*
- (e) *schools are not well equipped even the children lack the necessary materials*
- (f) (i) *Adjectival/relative clause* (ii) *It qualifies the noun "children"*
- (g) *It means child labourers live in abject poverty through out their life*
- (i) *Transmitting* *passing on, transferring*
(ii) *enhances* *improves, boosts, promotes*
(iii) *vulnerable* *prone, exposed, open, susceptible*
(iv) *anonymous* *nameless, unnamed, unknown*
(v) *grave* *serious , profound, tremendous*

Passage 15

(WASSCE 2009)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

I can vividly remember my predicament in my first year as a new teacher. On the first day in the class, I told my students that they were mature enough to comport themselves in an exemplary manner without burdening them with stringent rules. I wanted them to like me and so I allowed them a lot of freedom. Unfortunately, I lost class control, and the students exploited the situation to disrespect me. Some would leave their seats without permission; freely throw objects like pens, rulers or crumpled pieces of paper to mates or talk with others.

During the long vacation, I busied myself reading books on discipline and consulting seasoned colleagues for help. When we resumed school next season. I had formulated strategies on maintaining discipline . There were laid-down rules such as “students are to be courteous and silent when teacher or a student is speaking to the class,” “Students are to ask for the teacher’s permission to leave their seats for anything”, “Students are not to leave the class during lessons.”

After giving the class the rules that I knew were essential for class control, I made sure the students followed them to the letter. I virtually enforced discipline myself instead of sending students to the Principal's office for disciplinary actions as I did the previous year. After about a month, I realized that my effort were yielding results

Then, two months before the Christmas holidays, I began to relax some of the rules. One of them read as follows: "Whenever any student wants to leave the class for any reason, he should come up for permission, provided he does this without disturbing other students." A bout one week later, I told the students that because they are not disruptive, they would whisper to one another, open or shut windows quietly without permission.

Indeed, before the second term holidays, we had a classroom where students would come in and go on recess as they finish their class assignments and also where small group discussions on project work took place. Where a student in one group talked too loudly to disturb others, he was cautioned by the group, not me. Teaching then became a pleasure and I felt my students had matured greatly by learning to conduct themselves in a more acceptable way.

Questions:

- (a) Why did the writer not give student rules initially?
- (b) What was the outcome of the writer's desire for the student to like him?
- (c) How did the students react to the writer's loss of class control?
- (d) What did the writer do to change the unfortunate development in the class?
- (e) What helped the writer to formulate measures to maintain discipline in class?
- (f) "...before the second term holiday..."
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) "...I made sure that the students followed them to the letter" What does the writer mean by the statement as it is used in the passage?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which replace as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) stringent (ii) strategies (iii) courteous (iv) essential (v) yielding
 - (vi) cautioned

Answer

- (a) *It was because the writer felt/thought that the students were mature/old enough to conduct themselves*
- (b) *He allowed them a lot of freedom*
- (c) *The students disrespected the writer*
- (d) *The writer gave the students rules and enforced them*
- (e) *The writer read books on discipline and sought help from his colleagues*

(g) *He means that he made sure the students follow the rules strictly.*

- (i) (i) *stringent: strict, severe, stiff, inflexible, rigid*
- (ii) *Strategies: plans, measures*
- (iii) *courteous: respectful, well-mannered*
- (iv) *essential: important, necessary, useful, crucial*
- (v) *yielding: producing, showing*
- (vi) *cautioned: warned, admonished, reprimanded*

Passage 16

(WASSCE 2009)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

There is a fierce war going on in Africa which has attracted little public attention, but is nonetheless a serious business for all concerned. It is a war of Man versus Baboon. The conflict started when engineers built the magnificent bridge which skirts Victoria Falls and crosses the Zambesi River. That, apparently, gave the baboons the opportunity they were looking for. They swarmed from the jungle across the bridge in such numbers that trains were held up by chattering families of baboons. They swung from the girders and barked defiance at everyone- driver, guard and passenger.

Recently, guest at the new tourist hotel at Victoria Falls have complained that trousers and other article of clothing have been disappearing mysteriously at night . Socks, with suspenders attached, were found dangling from tree- top in the nearby bush and it was realized that the baboons, not thieves, were the culprits. From the time, baboons became declared enemy; Guests were entreated not to give them buns on the lawn at tea - time or encourage them in any other way.

A period of comparative peace followed, and then, a few weeks later, the baboons embarked on a new campaign at the new international airport at Livingstone. At first they confined themselves to racing across the runways when planes were coming to land, but when one of them was asleep in the cockpit of a southbound airliner, it was felt that the time had come for a drastic action. Then the authorities installed electric flares embedded in concrete alongside the runways. Only once did the baboons demonstrate in full force against the glare of the lights, attacking with sticks, stones and fists; but the light stood up to the onslaught, and the attackers retreated.

The next stage in this strange conflict will be the erection of an electrified fence round the perimeter of the airport. Such shocks tactics, it is expected, will result in the baboons conceding defeat and completely abandoning their guerilla warfare. But grey-headed Matabeles who have dwelt all their lives in the Zambesi Valley shake their heads gloomily . They have a legend that if the baboon disappear from Victoria Falls the river will dry up, and “The smoke that Thunders” will thunder no more.

Questions:

- (a) What was the reaction of the baboons after the new bridge had been built?
- (b) What incident caused those in control at the airport to deal seriously with the baboon?
- (c) What did the airport authorities do to forestall further intrusion by the baboons?
- (d) What does the writer suggest as the final solution to the baboon problem?
- (e) What fear do the Metabeles have about the efforts to get rid of the baboons?
- (f) "... the light stood up to the onslaught..." What figure of speech is contained in the expression above?
- (g) "...guest at the new tourist hotel at Victoria Falls...?"
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage :
 - (i) magnificent
 - (ii) culprit
 - (iii) entreated
 - (iv) drastic
 - (v) conflict
 - (vi) gloomily

Answer

- (a) They swarmed across the bridge
- (b) The sleeping baboon in the cockpit of the plane or A baboon slept in the cockpit of a plane
- (c) They installed/ put in place electric flares alongside the runways
- (d) The erection/ building of an electrified fence round the airport.
- (e) They fear that if the baboons are got rid of, the river will dry up and " the smoke that thunders " will cease
- (f) personification
- (g) (i) Noun phrase (ii) subject of the verb "have complained"
- (h) (i) magnificent attractive, beautiful, marvelous , wonderful, admirable
- (ii) Culprit offenders, wrongdoers, delinquent
- (iii) entreated implored, requested, asked, persuaded
- (iv) drastic serious, severe, stringent
- (v) conflict confrontation, war, fight, combat
- (vi) gloomily sadly, unhappily, despondently, sorrowfully, in grief

Passage 17

(WASSCE 2010)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

It was a little past 10 a.m but the medium-sized hall that served as a prayer house was already brimming with people from different parts of the metropolis, who had come to seek cure or answer to their problems. The majority of this lot were those with seemingly intractable mental health conditions. The superintendent of the prayer house in question was often spoken of in whispers as possessing uncanny spiritual powers to exercise evil spirits. It was also believed that he had answers to numerous illnesses that defied orthodox medication. Wednesday of each week was set aside for these healing sessions.

On this particular Wednesday, noisy supplications to the Most High and ceaseless invocation of His name to free those supposedly held captive by alleged evil spirits had reached fever pitch. Suddenly, a middle-aged man broke loose from the crowd and ran as fast as his wobbly legs could permit. Some male workers from the prayer house gave him a hot chase.

At first, bemused by - standers rained curses at the fleeing man, wondering why a man in his right senses would in broad daylight rob a house of God. They mistook the man for a robber fleeing from the scene of his crime. But he was not. Minutes later, he was caught and chained hands and feet, despite his struggle against his captors who intermittently lashed him with horse - whip. As he was being violently dragged along the street his captors who muttered incomprehensible words that sounded like the muttering of a colony of baboons. Then, a clear picture of the situation dawned on the on-lookers. The man, after all, was not a thief and had stolen nothing; rather, his ability to think and reason properly had taken flight of him. Simply put, he was mentally deranged.

The above incident is a common occurrence in many parts of the country. It aptly underscores the devastating mental health conditions plaguing a sizeable number of people in recent times. It also points to the unspeakable and inhuman treatment which people with such health disorders suffer at the hands of self-styled spiritualists. This is the usual lot of mental patients whose family members refuse to take advantage of orthodox treatment.

Questions:

- (a) What brought the people to the prayer house?
- (b) State the functions of the superintendent of the prayer house.
- (c) What was wrong with the on-lookers' assessment of the run-away man?
- (d) Mention two instances of inhuman treated of lunatics at prayer house?
- (e) What is the writer's attitude towards the treatment in the passage.
- (f) "...like the muttering of a colony of baboons" What figure of speech is contained in the expression?
- (g) "... Whose family members refuse to take advantage of orthodox treated."
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage. (i) intractable (ii) supplication (iii) wobbly (iv) bemused (v) intermittently (vi) deranged

Answer

- (a) To seek cure and answers to their problems
- (b) To exercise evil spirits To cure illness that defied orthodox treatment
- (c) The on-lookers mistook him for a thief
- (d) (i) chaining the lunatic (ii) lashing the lunatic with horse whip (iii) dragging the lunatic along the street

(e) *He disapproves of it/ He condemns it*

(f) *simile*

(g) (i) *Adjectival/relative clause* (ii) *It qualifies (the noun) "patients"*

(h) (i) *intractable* *incurable, unmanageable, uncontrollable, complicated*

(ii) *supplications* *prayers, petitions, entreaties, pleas*

(iii) *wobbly* *weak, unsteady, shaky, trembling, shaking*

(iv) *bemused* *confused, baffled, amazed, bewildered, perplexed*

(v) *intermittently* *at intervals, now and again, from time to time*

(v) *deranged* *disturbed, troubled, unbalanced, sick*

Passage 18**(WASSCE 2010)**

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Miss Williamson announced in class one day that she wanted one of us to live with her to help with her domestic work after school. There was a rush to volunteer which took her completely by surprise. When She recovered and had quietened from our excited shouting, there was a moment during which none of us dared breathe, as she scanned the eager faces. What made her choose me I never found out, but I noticed before that she was partial to me. "All right Karimu ", she said. ' You can come; but first run along and get your father's consent, '

My parents were only too glad to have one mouth fewer to feed and my brothers and sisters to see the back of one who inevitably, had begun to assume an air of superiority in talking to them. Miss Williamson's bungalow was a stone's throw from the school. That very evening saw me installed on a mat in a corner of her back veranda. I was unable to sleep, excited at the thought of the good fortune that had come my way. To be within earshot of Miss Williamson's English all day, to have access to her books, to nurse the possibility, overwhelming even in thought, of going with her frequently to Rofunki- all these visions kept my eyes wide open and brain racing until very late that night. With my 'lapa' pulled right over my head and happy beyond all description in my heart, I smiled myself to sleep.

I learnt a very great deal in Miss Williamson bungalow. Apart from improving my English, I learnt about the world outside, and began to sense that there were barriers much higher and much less easily gauged than those of mere language and colour, between my own people and those from whom she sprang. The smiling teacher in the daytime often became the brooding, restless, ill-tempered spinster in the evening. Her bungalow was shared by another lady, a doctor, also a scot, who traveled to and fro between the two villages on a bicycle. I noticed when they are not at their work or talking about it, these two women showed no sign of being happy. As I grew up with them, I found myself wondering what had made them leave their country and come to live strange life styles among a people whose ways were totally different from theirs.

Questions:

- (a) Why was Miss Williamson completely surprised?
- (b) Why was Karimu's family happy to see him go to stay at the bungalow?
- (c) State the overwhelming thought that kept Karimu awake ?
- (d) What did Karimu find difficult to understand the two ladies?
- (e) Mention the identical trait in these ladies' behaviour?
- (f) "... what made her chose me..."
 - (i) What grammatical mane is given to this expression as it used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) "I smiled myself to sleep. " What is the meaning of this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage :
 - (i) scanned (ii) inevitably (iii) nurse (iv) vision (v) gauged (vi) brooding

Answer

- (a) *Because many pupils were eager/volunteered to stay with her*
- (b) (i) *His parents would be saved the problem of feeding him*
(ii) *His brothers and sisters did not not like his ways/ attitude towards them*
- (c) *The thought of accompanying Miss Williamson to Rofunki*
- (d) *He could not understand why they left their own country to live among a people whose ways were different from theirs*
- (e) *They showed no sign of happiness when they were not at work or talking about their work.*
- (f) (i) *Noun clause* (ii) *Object of the verb " have never found out "*
- (g) *I smiled until I fell asleep or the writer smiled until he slept*
- (h) (i) *scanned* *searched, examine, studied, scrutinized*
(ii) *inevitable* *undoubtedly, certainly, naturally, surely*
(iii) *nurse* *nuture, cherish, anticipate*
(iv) *visions* *fancies, dreams, thoughts, hopes*
(v) *gauged* *determined, measured, assessed*
(v) *brooding* *depressed, unhappy, sad, moody*

Passage 19

(WASSCE 2011)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

As I watched Musa step out of the plane, I concluded that diligence, intelligence and luck has turned Musa from the rustic pauper of thirty years earlier to a highly successful professional. Here was a village boy of yesteryear, an orphan from early life, cheated out his heritage by his half-brothers and uncles whose actions forced him to fend for himself. So, how did he become an internationally acclaimed computer wizard?

When his well-to-do father died three years after his mother, he had just gained admission to a fee-paying secondary school. Had his parents lived, that would not have been a problem. But his closest relatives are more interested in sharing assets than handling liabilities. They shared the three buildings in the city, as well as several cocoa plantations with hundreds of oil palms. None considered it right to take on the care of the poor boy.

Left in the lurch, he clung on to a classmate who had longed to work in the city as a petty clerk. They moved to the city. Both were engaged by a big-time retailer in all sorts of goods, which he gave out to the boys to hawk on the busy roads. There were no salaries; all they had were commissions from each day's sales. Musa and his friend could be out in the streets from 6.00 a.m. Till almost midnight. That way, they were able to keep body and soul together.

But Musa soon decided that his returns could cater for a little more than that. His yearning for education still very keen, he cut short his daily schedules at 4.00p.m. to attend an evening school organized by some secondary school teachers.

And he made very rapid progress. Often, after classes, he would return to the streets. He never fared worse than any of the other learners, most of whom attended classes after normal school. In time, he sat for and passed all his school certificate papers with flying colours. Indeed, his results were among the best in the country.

An oil company which had a policy of sponsoring the university education of the best students in the various disciplines awarded him a scholarship. Thus, his university education in computer science was fully sponsored. Eventually, he emerged as the best graduate in the university. The training made him a top 3-D computer programmer in engineering and architectural designs.

So, as he stepped out of the plane, returning from one of his several international conferences, I could not but reach the conclusion I had made earlier.

Questions:

- (a) Where was the writer when he arrived at the conclusion with which he opened the passage?
- (b) What tragedy had beset Musa early in life?
- (c) What worsened Musa's plight?
- (d) How did Musa solve the problem of acquiring secondary education?
- (e) What element of luck contributed to Musa's success?
- (f) "... *keep body and soul together*."
 - (i) What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
 - (ii) What does it mean?
- (g) "... *who had longed to work in the city*..."
 - (i) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words or phrase, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) fend for; (ii) considered; (iii) engaged (iv) yearning; (v) eventually.

Answer

- a. The writer was at the airport
- b. He lost both parents at an early age
- c. He was cheated out of his heritage by his half-brothers and Uncles
- d. He attended an evening school
- e. He was awarded a scholarship by an oil company
- f. i. Metaphor ii. It means to care for oneself
- g. i. Adjectival Phrase ii. It qualifies the noun 'Classmate'
- h. i. fend for: Provide for, carter for ii. considered: thought
 iii. engaged: employed iv. yearning: longing, desire,
 v. eventually: at last,

Passage 20

(WASSCE 2011)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Although rural people needed kerosene for lighting, they relied on it more for cooking. However, persistent fuel scarcity had made the commodity hardly affordable where it was available. Fetching dry wood from the forest became inevitably the order of the day.

Early one morning, Jojo and I, armed with cutlasses and axes, joined other young people, who were more conversant with the forest, in search of dry wood. It soon dawned on us that this "essential commodity" had been driven so far away that we had to wander into the heart of the forest before we could find a huge branch of tree that looked dry. Convinced that it was, we went into action, each cutting from his own side.

Scarcely had we started when Jojo suddenly jumped up from her position and exclaimed "Goodness!". When I inquired what had happened, she explained that the ground on which she was lifting her up. This sounded weird and I went closer to examine the ground. It appeared level and was full of dry leaves. There was no sign of anything other than the bare ground. Mockingly, I asked her to return to work, adding that her phobia about the forest was changing into an illusion. Nevertheless, I struck the ground with my cutlass, cutting through it to reassure her that there was nothing to fear. But before I could leave, we noticed blood trickling out of the cut on the ground and we scampered away, developing goose-flesh.

As we watched from the distance, we observed that there was a writhing movement and gradually, a curled gesture stretched into full length of about three and a half feet. The earthy but splendid design of the skin became visible and it started what was like its last struggle away from the spot. Its pace was decreasing with every effort to crawl on while more blood was being lost as a result of the deep cut it had received.

Whether it was shock or fear that prevented me from finishing up what I started, I cannot say. Although we accomplished our aim of going to the forest that day, I was haunted by the guilt of an unwilling murderer many days after.

Questions:

- (a) Why was kerosene important to rural people?
- (b) State two reasons why the people sought an alternative to kerosene.
- (c) What lifted Jojo up?
- (d) What did the narrator start that he could not finish?
- (e) "... *the heart of the forest...*"
 - (i) What figure of speech is contained in this expression?
 - (ii) What does it mean?
- (f) "*As we watched from the distance...*"
 - (i) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) persistent; (ii) inevitably;
 - (iii) weird; (iv) mockingly;
 - (v) splendid; (vi) accompanied.

Answer

- a. *They used it for lighting and cooking*
- b. *There was persistent fuel scarcity and kerosine was expensive*
- c. *A snake or a curly creature*
- d. *Killing of the snake*
- e.
 - i. *Personification/metaphor*
 - ii. *It means the innermost part of the forest.*
- f.
 - i. *Noun clause*
 - ii. *Subject of the sentence*
- g.
 - i. *Persistence: Continuous*
 - ii. *Inevitably: Unavoidably*
 - iii. *Mockingly: Jokingly, Jeeringly*
 - iv. *Splendid: Beautiful*
 - v. *Accomplished: completed, finished*

Passage 21

(WASSCE 2012)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

When Bademosi heard that he had some visitors from Ireti, his hometown, he concluded immediately that they must be the usual seekers of financial assistance, or jobs. He decided that this time he will give them the rough edge of his tongue. They had come because earlier callers had not reported what he had stressed: That he was not in Kapitatown for anyone's sake.

He took his time to put his office and workshop in order, determined not to leave in a hurry just because of some stubborn fortune-seekers. He made sure that all his seventy - two workers had signed out before he signaled to his driver. There, in the huge limousine, he

thought of the new multi-million dollar contract for his construction company and how he would get a helicopter from the profit. That would be the ultimate solution to the persistent problem of the traffic congestion which he faced in Kapitatown.

The five-kilometre distance to his mansion was covered in about two hours. On arrival, his youngest wife informed him that his visitors were chiefs from Ireti. He felt a revulsion as he imagined that they must come with a king - size request. As he entered the house, he steeled his mind. However, the three chiefs disarmed him with their cheerful smiles. Each met him in the door way with a bear hug. As soon as the chit-chat ended, they announced that Ireti ruling council had decided to confer on him the highest traditional title of the land, and that a date had been set for the great event. He was flabbergasted; so they had come with an offer. He immediately accepted.

Thereafter, things moved very fast. He contacted all great names in the country, among them his state governor, the top politicians in the land and his business associates from far and near, he did not even pay a preparatory visit to Ireti. He took everything for granted.

The great day came. Hundreds of limousines from far and near streamed into Ireti. As he was not the only awardee, the conferment ceremony began with the others. Each took about fifteen minutes ; so before Bademosi's turn, all invited guests had arrived. Just as he was called, some heavily-built youngsters appeared. Shouting into the microphone, their leader announced, "Bademosi doesn't deserve this conferment and cannot have the title. A man who has deserted his community for more than thirty years, who did not think it proper to return home to care for his ailing parents before they died, and who has consistently turned deaf ears to the calls of our youths, cannot have the title. Good day, everybody!"

With that, the youths continued to appear in their hundreds, angry and fierce, welding all forms of weapons, warning everybody to disappear immediately, otherwise heads will roll, including theirs if the police wanted it so. within minutes the whole arena was deserted.

Questions:

- (a) How had Bademosi treated visitors from his Bademosi?
- (b) What evidence in the passage that shows that Bademosi is wealthy?
- (c) Why has Bademosi planned to buy a helicopter?
- (d) What should Bademosi have done before the day of conferment of the title ?
- (e) Give two reasons why the youths objected to Bademosi 's installation?
- (f) "... as soon as the chit chat ended..."
 - (i) What grammatical mane is given to this expression as it used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) ".... give them rough edge of his tongue."
 - (i) What figure of speech is used in this expression? (ii) What does it mean?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage :
 - (i) stressed (ii) ultimate (iii) flabbergasted (iv) deserted (v) disappear

Answer

- a. *He treated them with contempt or disrespect*
- b. *The evidence that he is wealthy are:*
 - (i) *He has a company that employs workers*
 - (ii) *He lives in a mansion*
 - (iii) *He owns a limousine*
- c. *He planned to buy a helicopter in order to beat or avoid traffic congestion in Kapitatown*
- d. *He ought to have visited Irete or his hometown*
- e. *The youths objected to his installation because:*
 - (i) *He had failed to take care of his sick parents*
 - (ii) *He had isolated himself from his people*
 - (iii) *He had turned deaf ears to the calls of the youths.*
- f. i. *Adverbial clause* ii. *It modifies (the verb) "announced"*
- g. i. *metaphor*
 - ii. *It means speak angrily or harshly to them*
- h. i. *Stressed:* *emphasized, reiterated, pointed out*
 - ii. *Ultimate:* *final, eventually, best, ideal*
 - iii. *Flabbergasted:* *stunned, astounded, amazed, dumbfounded*
 - iv. *Disappear:* *vanish, leave, quit, go away*
 - v. *deserted:* *forsaken, abandoned, neglected*

Passage 22

(WASSCE 2012)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Part of my one-year study programme in Britain involved visiting several places of historical importance, especially those related to precolonial African history on which I was researching. One was the home of William Wilberforce, the 19th century anti-slave trade statesman . The house had been turned into a museum by one of the several organizations that fought the scourge . Among the most outstanding features of a museum were the several statues of slaves in different postures: black slaves being captured in their native homes, being chained together, being led to the port for sale, on the slave ship and being forced to work on plantations. The sculptures were particularly remarkable in that they illustrated very movingly the bane which Wilberforce threw himself against.

As a black man, I could not help shedding tears when going from room to room on the two floors. Then, there was a period of pandemonium which I, unwittingly caused. I was on the first floor, about to cross the lobby, when I came face to face with another visitor, a white man. When he saw me , a wave of fright swept through him, His eyes were immediately bloodshot. He shouted out of fright and ran back. Quickly , he made for the staircase, sped down to the ground floor, and took to his heels.

All this while, I remained still, at a loss as to the cause of his action. He stopped shouting only when he got into the bus that brought his group. Meanwhile, others around him, realizing the cause of his fright, came to tell me that I was the cause. They laughed it off when they told me that he thought I was one of the statues and had suddenly turned into a human being. I discovered the reason for his fright when I entered the room which he had just left and found that one of the statues looked exactly like me. Whoever did the wax model perhaps had my picture. It was my height, my shape, my complexion, indeed the exact replica of me.

I realized what had happened. I was the only black person present in the building. The man had not expected a live black person to be in the museum. Thus, the sudden sight of a black person moving around, with the shape and face of one of the statues, should certainly frighten him. I wondered what could have happened if I had pursued him down the staircase.

Questions:

- (a) In what capacity did the writer visit the museum?
- (b) For what was William Wilberforce famous?
- (c) Why did the writer stand out among the visitors in the museum at the hour?
- (d) Why was the other man frightened?
- (e) Why had the man assumed that the writer was a statue that had come alive?
 - (i) What grammatical term is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (f) "... a wave of fright swept through him."
 - (i) What figure of speech is used in this expression?
 - (ii) What does it mean?
- (g) "... that brought his group..."
 - (i) What grammatical term is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage :
 - (i) organization (ii) remarkable (iii) pandemonium (iv) replica (v) pursued

Answer

- a. He visited the museum as a research student or a researcher.
- b. Wilberforce was famous for fighting or opposing slave trade.
- c. He was the only black visitor at the museum at that hour.
- d. He thought that one of the statues had turned into human being.
- e. He thought so because he had just seen a statue which looked exactly like the writer.
- f. i. metaphor ii. It means that he became frightened.
- g. i. Adjectival or relative clause ii. It qualifies the noun "bus"
- h. i. Pandemonium: chaos, commotion, uproar, confusion
ii. organization: bodies, movement, group
iii. Remarkable: striking, notable, outstanding
iv. Pursued: run after, chased, gone after, followed
v. replica: model, likeness, image, resemblance

Passage 23

(WASSCE 2013)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Mr. Ogun it was that wooed me for school. That was decades ago. I had resisted vehemently; I even ran away to hibernate with my maternal grandmother. I had told Granny that I wanted to spend a few days with her. By nightfall, my father, who suspected that I was hiding there, came to take me away. The following morning, he dragged me all the way to school where Mr. Ogun received all fresh students.

I swore secretly that I would abscond at the first opportunity, but throughout the day, Mr. Ogun kept a watchful eye on fresh pupils. He had a smiling face and looked very friendly. As soon as he had registered our names, he led us to the field to play. Of all the children, I was probably the only one who looked forward to an opportunity to abscond. Mr. Ogun seemed to have read my mind; he used my name in the songs he composed as we marched round the field. He once held me by the hand and marched along with me. As we went on, he announced, "What a smart fellow! Clap for him!"

In the classroom, Mr. Ogun told me to sit in front as he stated, "My Smartie will keep the pieces of chalk and the duster." Gradually, I was mellowing in my plan to abscond: I began to think that I could give school a try. At the end of that day, my father was around to take me home. Perhaps he decided not to take chances.

During the first week, my father took me to school everyday. Somehow, my resistance was softening, to his surprise. Every morning as I produced the pieces of chalk from the cupboard, Mr. Ogun smiled broadly, nodding approvingly. Before we left the classroom for recess, for games or for home, I dutifully kept the materials safe, and as soon as we returned, I produced them. It took some time before I realized that my role was crucial since the pilfering of such materials was common in all the other classes.

My father soon stopped bothering about me as I would get up from bed, take my bath, and get into my uniform without any prodding. My love for school was deepening, especially when I discovered that I was among the few that always did well in most tests. And Mr. Ogun would praise to the skies.

Towards the end of the school year, we learnt that Mr. Ogun was going on transfer to another school. How devastated I felt! now, at least was the time to abscond from school. But then, I simply could not take the crucial step because my bond with school had become very firm.

Questions:

- (a) What evidence is there in the passage that the writer's experience took place long ago?
- (b) Mention two things that Mr. Ogun did that won the writer for school.
- (c) What was the benefit of the duty performed by the writer to his class?
- (d) What do you think the writer implies when he states that he dressed up for school without any prodding?
- (e) Why could he not carry out his plan to abscond when his mentor had left?
- (f) that my role was crucial...
 - (I) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) "... *my bond with school has become very firm*"
What figure of speech is used in this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) vehemently;
 - (ii) abscond;
 - (iii) probably;
 - (iv) gradually;
 - (v) prodding;
 - (vi) devastated.

Answer

- (a) *The expression that states that it was decades ago.*
- (b) *Mr. Ogun composed songs and used his name and he also made him responsible for keeping the class chalk while he kept a watchful eye on him.*
- (c) *The benefit to the boy was that he became less desirous of running away from school.*
- (d) *He meant he had adjusted school life.*
- (e) *He had already become bonded / attached to school by then.*
- (f) (i) *Noun Clause*
(ii) *Acts as the object of the verb "realised"*
- (g) *Metaphor*
- (h) (i) *strongly;*
(ii) *run away;*
(iii) *possibly / perhaps;*
(iv) *little by little;*
(v) *urging;*
(vi) *troubled / dejected.*

Passage 24

(WASSCE 2013)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

When the principal introduced Mr. Njobe as our new Mathematics teacher, we did not think much of him. He did not look very likeable nor did he appear to be an achiever. Nothing was spectacular about him apart from the fact that he was a South African. Most of us who knew the goings-on in his country regarded him as one of the luckless refugees from the apartheid regime. After the mild clapping, we forgot about the man with gaunt, hungry looks.

During his first lesson in our class, it struck me that not once did he consult the textbook. Rather, to teach the properties of the square and rectangle, he made us measure the top of our tables, the classroom doors, and other objects around. From there, we discovered that these objects had opposite equal sides, and all the angles were equal. We did not have to learn these from books; he made us find out. When later I consulted my textbook, what Durell, the great Mathematician, wrote came very much alive. I started to see Mr. Njobe as equal to Durell.

With time, we began to like his teaching. He taught with zeal and usually through play like methods. His class was always lively and full of jokes. For instance, to teach us the properties of a circle, he instructed us to bring out the bowls which we used for the midday meal. During the lesson, he made each one measure the distance round his bowl. Incidentally, almost every bowl was different in size. We laughed at the sizes of the different bowls while we meticulously measured them. Throughout the lesson, there was much laughter. Finally, he told each student to divide the distance round the bowl by the distance through the centre. Imagine our amazement when we discovered that, whatever the size of the bowl, all the answers were the same. This he explained is the base of all computations regarding the circle. That was fifty years ago and I have not forgotten. He actually tamed Mathematics for us, terrifying as it was.

Then one day, we learnt that Mr. Njobe was on admission in Wesley Guild Hospital. Our representatives sent to convey our good wishes were refused entry into the intensive care unit: they were told that his condition was critical. We virtually went into mourning for weeks. But just as we were writing him off our mind, one hot afternoon, his car crawled into the school compound. As he stepped out, students swarmed out, carried him shoulder high and danced round the school, chanting spontaneously, "Njobe, welcome! Mathematics welcome!"

Questions:

- (a) Describe the appearance of Mr. Njobe on his first day in the school.
- (b) With what concept of South Africa did the writer associate Mr. Njobe?
- (c) What did the students' mild clapping suggest?
- (d) What impressed the writer about the new teacher during the first lesson?

- (e) What is unique about the new teacher's method of teaching?
- (f) "...that these objects had opposite equal sides..."
 - (I) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) "He actually tamed Mathematics for us..."
What figure of speech is used in this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage.
 - (I) luckless;
 - (ii) consult;
 - (iii) meticulously;
 - (iv) amazement;
 - (v) terrifying;
 - (vi) critical.

Answer

- (a) *Mr Njobe's appearance was ordinary on his first day in the school.*
- (b) *The concept of struggling depressive economy of South Africa.*
- (c) *Their clapping suggested they were not very impressed with the new Mathematics teacher.*
- (d) *His class was lively and there was active participation.*
- (e) *He used everyday familiar materials to teach his topics.*
- (f) (I) *Clause*
(ii) *Object of the verb discovered*
- (g) *Personification*
- (h) (I) *Unfortunate;*
(ii) *Contact;*
(iii) *Carefully;*
(iv) *Surprise;*
(v) *Scaring /frightening;*
(vi) *Serious.*

Passage 25

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

(WASSCE 2014)

The case of Dr. David Akide drives home the point that nobody should be written off as a failure as long as he has not died. As far as I can recall, he was one of the weakest in class throughout our primary school career. Right from the second grade, he was the butt of most of our jokes. Indeed, whenever the teacher referred a question to him, most of us wanted eagerly to have a good laugh. But we all admired him for two things. For one thing, he was the only one who never wrote with the right hand as he was a complete southpaw. Then, he endured all the jokes cheerfully and indeed referred to himself as “Mr. Why Hurry.” For ever sociable, he was a friend to everybody who came close enough.

Not surprising, we left him behind in the primary school as he could not get admitted to any of the secondary schools to which he took an admission examination. That was why, from the time I entered secondary school, I lost contact with him. Nor did any of my mates whom I closely associated with ever mention meeting him anywhere. As far as most of us were concerned, David had faded away into obscurity. I imagined that he must have ended up in one of the low-grade vocations since he was at least good in handcraft.

Then, a few months ago, thirty-eight years after I last saw him in the primary school, while I was watching a 9 o’clock television network programme, I saw David being interviewed by a team of reporters. He was introduced as a specialist surgeon who had made his mark in heart surgery in the nation’s leading teaching hospital. The questions were on his recent feat in his successful correction of abnormality in the heart of a patient who had been written off by most other specialists. The patient fully recovered and was now back in his vocation as a mechanic.

I was amazed. I was pleasantly surprised. From the interview, it became clear that he had experienced a surge in intellectual prowess late in his secondary school career and zoomed into and through the university as a medical student. Thereafter, it had been one major achievement after another for him in his chosen field.

Questions

- (a) What evidence is there that the writer is not a young person?
- (b) For what two things was David Akide admired by others in the primary school?
- (c) Why could he not move into a secondary school then along with the others?
- (d) What did the writer assume had been the fate of David after leaving the primary school?
- (e) What is established by the fact that David Akide was being interviewed by a panel of reporters on the nation’s network programme?
- (f) Why was the writer amazed?
- (g) “.... *while I was watching a 9 o’clock television network programme...*”
 - (i) What is the grammatical name given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?

- (h) “...zoomed into and through the university...”
- (i) What figure of speech is used in this expression?
 - (ii) What does it mean?
- (i) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
- (i) cheerfully;
 - (ii) sociable;
 - (iii) imagined;
 - (iv) vocation;
 - (v) achievement.

Answers

- (a) *His classmate the central figure in the story is already a specialist surgeon and he said he saw him last 38 years back.*
- (b) *He was admired for his use of the left hand and also for his ability to endure jokes cheerfully.*
- (c) *He did not qualify into any of the secondary schools.*
- (d) *The writer thought David has ended up in one of the vocational or handicraft trade.*
- (e) *The fact that David Akide is a success in his chosen career was established.*
- (f) *He was amazed as he thought David had faded away into obscurity.*
- (g) (i)
- (ii)
- (h) (i) *Onomatopoeia*
- (ii) *Went through very fast*
- (I) (i) *cheerfully: happily / blissfully*
- (ii) *sociable: friendly / amiable / amicable*
- (iii) *imagined: thought / assumed /*
- (iv) *vocation: job / career / occupation*
- (v) *Achievement: success / accomplishment*

Passage 26

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions on it (NECO 2007)

Having lived on three continents, Azubike was in a position to compare and contrast. One of the good aspects of the Nigerian situation by his reckoning is the role of women in society. The Nigerian woman is more empowered and she carries herself creditably. Azubike has come to realize how different the African woman is from other women in both Europe and America. The Nigerian woman is always a major contributor to the family *upkeep*, still she plays her motherly role to children and the entire household including undertaking all domestic chores without complaining. Most women who share their husbands with other women in polygamous homes shoulder the responsibility of training their children. In spite of it all, they remain *submissive* to their husbands. They are rarely taken as equal partners who must be consulted while taking decisions that affect the whole family. It is not uncommon for a housewife to hand over her monthly earnings to the husband for joint *disbursement* even in a situation where she earns more than the man. Most of them do it willingly and *voluntarily* in accordance with a tradition that subjects a woman to the authority of her husband. This unique characteristics of the Nigerian woman especially among the Igbo has a good stabilizing influence on the family. One consequence of this is that the family needs are nearly always met even when the man loses his job and the woman becomes the family breadwinner. There is therefore mutual confidence between the woman and her husband even though the wife pays more in terms of social cost. The overall benefit is stability in the family leading to a tradition of children who love and respect their parents.

This contrasts sharply with parallel situations in Europe and America. it is *inconceivable* for a woman to be a financial head in a family while remaining submissive to the husband, Azubike could recollect instance *when women desert their husbands on very flimsy excuses* including failing to return home in the time from work without telephoning. He remembered whenever a wife talked about joint account over there, she was only talking about having access to the man's income but never under the man's authority. She knew all her rights and would go to any length to secure them. Nor would European or America wives tolerate their husband's relatives coming to live with them on a permanent basis as is the lot of most Nigerian wives.

Questions:

- Briefly state *three* duties the Nigerian woman performs in the family
- Why do most Nigerian women willingly hand over their monthly earnings to their husband for joint disbursement
- What according to the passage is one unique characteristic of the Nigerian woman
- What *two* benefits does the family derive from the Nigeria woman's financial

- contribution to its upkeep?
- e. In Europe or America, what sort of woman is not likely to be submissive to her husband?
 - f. ...when women desire their husbands on very flimsy excuses
 - (i) What grammatical name is give to the expression?
 - (ii) What grammatical function does it perform in the sentence?
 - g. What is the different between the Nigerian woman and her European counterpart on the issue of rights?
 - h. For each of the following words, find a word which means the same as and which can at the same time replace each of the following words in the passage
 - (i) unkeep (ii)submissive (iii) disbursement (iv) voluntarily (v) inconceivable (vi)tolerate

Answer

- a. (i) *The Nigerian woman contributes to the family welfare*
(ii) *She undertakes all domestic chores* (iii) *She trains her children*
- b. *She does so because she is subjected to the authority of her husband.*
- c. *She becomes the breadwinner when her husband losses his job*
- d. (i) *Family Stability* (ii) *The family needs are always nearly met*
- e. *Those who are financially advantaged than their husband*
- f. (i) *Adverbial Clause* (ii) *It modifies the verb "recollect"*
- g. *The Nigerian woman knows her right but does not cling to it tenaciously while her European counterpart knows her rights and would go to any length to secure them.*
- f. (i) *Upkeep: Welfare, Maintenance*
(ii) *Submissive: Obedient, Meek*
(iii) *Disbursement: Expenditure, Usage*
(iv) *Voluntarily: Willingly, Freely*
(v) *Inconceivable: Unthinkable, Impossible*
(vi) *Tolerate: Accommodate ,Put up with*

Passage 27

(NECO 2007)

- . Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

At 16, I was tall and skinny. My barrel-chested father wanted me to get a holiday job. He talked to a building contractor friend of his, who hired me. I didn't want to work but I couldn't tell my father because I was afraid of making him angry. The very next day, my father drove me to work. In the car, I sat frightened, sadly resigned and feeling absolutely incompetent. We drove down a street and parked at a corner where men were building a store. I had never done any real physical work. My father introduced me to the foreman and said, *make a man of him*. Then he left.

I was given a pickaxe and a shovel and told to get into a trench about three feet deep that would be the building's foundation. In it were more muscular men swinging picks and shoveling. Two of them made a space for me. All I knew in those first few hours in the hot sun was raising the pickaxe and swinging it down again and again till the earth was loose, then plunging the shovel into the dirt that I tossed out of the trench. I did not have the stamina for this, I only wanted it to end.

After the third or fourth hour I was nauseated. At noon, at the sound of a loud whistle, all men stopped working and walked towards a shade. It was lunch time. I took my packed lunch. Then my stomach tightened and everything rose. I dashed round the corner of the tools shed and vomited. When I returned to the shade and lay down, one of the men said, *You 've got to eat. I threw up*, I said, closed my eyes and slept. At one o'clock, we went back to the trench where I picked up a shovel and began to heave out loose earth. Shortly after, I heard my father's voice. Had he come to take me home and forgive my failure. In the car his voice softened with pride. The foreman had called him. He bought me lunch and afterwards a hat – the type I would have willingly worn if I were fifty.

At five o'clock the whistle blew and I went home. My father had told my mother and sister the story. They were proud of me but also worried and wanted to know how I was feeling. I said I was fine but the truth was that the thought of going back to work was unbearable. The work was hard, but after the first morning I could bear it. I even carried 50-kilo bags of cement. At the end of the holiday my body was several kilos heavier. My father may have wanted to take me home the first day but he knew he must not. I would have spent the holiday *yearning* to be someone to be respected - a man among men.

Questions:

- (a) What was the boy's opinion of himself before the holiday job?
- (b) Why did the boy's father find him a holiday job?
- (c) Describe the boy's experience on his first day at work.
- (d) State two changes that occurred in the boy at the end.
- (e) *Make a man of him.*
What did the boy's father mean?
- (f) ... *that would be the building's foundation.*
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) *I threw up.*
What literary device is used in this expression?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage:
 - (i) resigned; (ii) incompetent;
 - (iii) trench; (iv) stamina;
 - (v) heave; (vi) yearning.

Answer

- (a) *He felt unfit and incompetent for any job*
- (b) *The father wanted him to be physically strong like a man.*
- (c) *His first experience at work was applaudable because he put in all his efforts even though his health later gave him out.*
- (d)
 - i. *His body became several kilos heavier*
 - ii. *He became someone to be respected*
- e. *He wanted both the job and his employer to make him physically and mentally strong.*
- f. *adjectival clause*
It modifies "trench"
- g. *Idiomatic expression*
- h.
 - i. *resigned: submit, gave up*
 - ii. *incompetent: unfit*
 - iii. *trench: ditch, furrow*
 - iv. *stamina: strength, power*
 - v. *yearning: longing desiring*

Passage 28

(NECO 2008)

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Newspapers contain a lot of information. No wonder many people buy copies everyday. Some who cannot afford to buy one, cluster around the vendor's stand to glance at their favourite pages.

I used to be very much interested in football write-ups. Recently, however, the cartoon has taken the whole of me. Cartoon journalism is sound. In a very small space the cartoonist can speak more volumes than a popular columnist. And, he is the safest of all the journalists. He is a clever person. If he decides to criticize a government functionary, for example, he does not need to write the officer's name in his cartoon. But he makes sure that his drawing truly resembles his target. Then a few words below it and the entire message is sent across to the world!. The person criticized knows that he is the one but cannot go to court for defamation of character for lack of evidence.

The cartoonist tacitly corrects the ills in society in defence of the poor masses. A cartoonist once wanted to stop the police in the Republic of Cascadia from taking bribes. All he did was to draw the picture of a boss and a young man who had applied to join the police force. Both gentlemen sat facing each other. Below the drawing was a simple question from the boss: *Apart from bribes, what else made you decide to join the Police Force?* The cartoonist's point was that bribery was the usual practice in the Cascadian Police Force. Four days later, the Police Commissioner announced that any policeman found with more than fifty Cascadian shillings at any check-point would be prosecuted.

In 1990, the power supply in that country broke down completely. There was hue and cry against the government. At first, the authorities claimed that the water level of the dam was too high. In the midst of criticisms, the same body came up with yet another defence: this time a huge snake was living in the dam and nobody could face the monster. A week later, as if these obnoxious reasons were not annoying enough, a director in the water corporation announced that the snake has disappeared but that the water level had gone too low to generate energy for light.

Once again, the cartoonist came to the rescue. He drew the members of a family with domestic animals. The man was carrying a drum, the wife a 50-litre container, the son a 25-litre jerry-can, the daughter a 15-litre container, the goat a bucket, the dog a bottle and the cat a match box. All these were filled to the brim with water. The caption for the cartoon was: *Let's go and fill up the dam and see who is lying*. Four days later, there was power supply.

Questions:

- (a) Why was the author very much interested in the cartoon?
- (b) Why, according to the passage, is the cartoonist safer than the journalist?
- (c) Give two instances of success achieved by the cartoonist's efforts.
- (d) What specific function of cartoons is highlighted in the passage?
- (e) What is the writer's opinion of the stories told about the dam?
- (f) *...that the water level of the dam is too high*
 - (i) What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?
 - (ii) What is its function?
- (g) *Recently, however, the cartoon has taken the whole of me*
What does the writer mean by this?
- (h) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it used in the passage:
 - (i) cluster; (ii) functionary; (iii) obnoxious; (iv) generate; (v) caption.

Answer

- (a) *The author was very much interested in cartoons because they speak volumes in a very small space.*
- (b) *He is safer because his criticism goes unpunished*
- (c) *The collecting of bribe in the Police Force in the*
 - i. *Republic of Cascadia was checked*
 - ii. *Restoration of power supply in the same country*
- (d) *Criticism of government functionaries*
- (e) *To the writer the stories are flimsy, unreasonable and annoying*
- (f) (i.) *Noun clause -* (ii.) *Object (of the verb) "claimed"*
- (g) *The writer meant that recently here ads cartoon more often than football write ups in the newspaper.*
- (h) i. *Cluster: gather, throng* ii. *Functionary: Official*
iii. *Obnoxious: disagreeable, offensive* iv. *Generate: Produce, give*
v. *Caption: Title, heading*

Passage 29

(NECO 2010)

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions on it

Marriage as human institution is facing its greatest threat ever in the twentieth century. Never, since the first man and woman were joined together, has the institution been beset by as many problems as it is now. And this trend, which started in the western world, has spread and is spreading to all parts of the globe.

The most disturbing problem is the high rate of divorce. it is no longer a social stigma for women to fill in forms indicating that they are divorced; men, too, proclaim their liberty from the shackles of matrimony, somehow with pride. Little wonder the young couples resort to separation and eventually, divorce at the slightest disagreement.

The availability of an alternative aggravates the seriousness of the problem. Instead of entering into matrimony, very many couples simply decide to live together. Even the courts now recognize such common law marriages, and respect the rights of partners in such associations. The great advantage this accords the partners is the fluidity of the association; the ease with which one can call off the union.

Besides, very many countries now enact laws that recognise the rights of children born out of wedlock. This singular factor has helped to shoot up the number of such children in many civilized communities. A recent survey in an urban college showed that about forty percent of the students were born out of wedlock.

Not less among the factors hastening the death of marriage institution is the progressively rising cost of living. Nowadays, it is essential for both partners to be gainfully employed, to be sure of a reasonably decent level of existence. The marriage ceremony itself costs so much that the young men save towards it for years. little wonder then that many young men simply remain single, raising one or two children from ladies who themselves are often willing collaborators against the institution of marriage.

Questions:

- a. What does the author mean by referring to marriage as an institution?
- b. What, according to the passage, is a common law marriage?
- c. Mention any two (2) factors that are seriously threatening the marriage institution
- d. What has encouraged the issue of the increase in number of children born outside wedlock?
- e. What does the expression *liberty from the shackles of matrimony* mean as used in the passage?
- f. Explain in your own words what is meant by
 - (i) Call off the unions and
 - (ii) Out of wedlock
- g.*Who themselves are willing collaborators against the institution of marriage*

- (i) What is the grammatical term used to describe the above expression as used in the passage?
(ii) What is its function
- h. Give word or phrase that means the same as and can replace each of the following expressions as used in the passage:
(i) *stigma* (ii) *enact* (iii) *aggravates* (iv) *fluidity* (v) *resort to* (vi) *trend*

Answer

- a. *Marriage is referred to as an institution because it is a custom that has existed for long amongst human beings*
b. *When a man and a woman decide to live together without the matrimonial vows*
c. i. *Divorce* ii. *Rising cost of living*
d. *The enactment of laws recognizing children born out of wedlock*
e. *To be free from the problems of marriage*
f. i. *The couples separate from each other* ii. *“not being married”*
g. i. *Adjectival Clause* ii. *It qualifies the noun “ladies”*
h. *Stigma: disgrace, problem*
enact: pass laws, make laws
aggravates: worsens
fluidity: weakness
resort to: Have recourse to, go into
trend: changes, development

Exercises

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it

Zainab's relatives could not help smiling benignly at her pair of identical twins. When three years later, her identical triplets toddled behind the twins, most of the relatives beamed at what a pleasant sight they were.

Before she got married, Zainab was full of the good intention of having only three children. But her interpretation of three made the Directors of Family Planning's face go as white as a ghost. Zainab saw every sense in the traditional wit that ideally a woman should have at least three children. If the first turned out to be a bad egg, the second, with any luck, would be average, but the third was bound to be a blessing. Traditional wisdom had observed that talents were evenly distributed among families.

During her school days, Zainab had accepted her Biology teacher's declaration that identical twins originated from only one egg. The twins, according to Zainab's calculation, were, therefore, only one child... they could both go identically idiotic. In the same way, the triplets, being also identical, split up from that single egg that was to have been her second child; they could consequently, all be no better than average. Zainab ignored all advice to the contrary and went ahead with a third pregnancy. When the midwife announced that she had gone one better and given birth to quadruplets, Zainab did not bait an eyelid; that would be her blessed fourscore, she thought to herself. She raised a quizzical eyebrow at the hustle and the bustle visitors were creating all around her, wondering out loud how in heaven's name she was going to maintain a healthy standard of living on her meagre typist income.

Her husband's completely contrary reaction to the news was a classic. "God have mercy!", he screamed, "NINE mouths to feed?" He did not even bother to pack a suitcase. He bolted and no one ever heard of him again.

Questions

- (a) For each of the following, provide another word or phrase that means the same and can replace it in the passage:
- (i) benignly (ii) interpretation (iii) a bad egg (iv) originated (v) meagre
- (b) Why was the Director of Family Planning disturbed?
- (c) (i) Was Zainab very certain that her twins were going to be idiots?
(ii) Quote from the passage the words that justify your answer.
- (d) (i) What is the grammatical name for the expression, "*that she had gone one better*"?
(ii) State its function in the sentence.
- (e) Why did the husband run away?

Read the following carefully and answer the questions on it.

Among the problems - and there are many - faced by a man struck down by a serious ailment, perhaps none is as tasking as that which, for lack of a better term, we can describe as the 'human factor'. In a highly gregarious society such as ours, friends, relatives, colleagues, neighbours and members of the same church or mosque make it a point of duty to visit a sick person and wish him a quick recovery. It is a point of duty, because failing to visit might make one attract unpleasant comments and even suspicions from the sick man and his close relatives.

So, in twos, threes and fours, they stream in. Should the sick man be fast asleep, perhaps under the influence of drugs prescribed by the physician, the visitors do their best to wait patiently until he opens his eyes and acknowledges their good gesture. Should he be asleep for very long, and if there is no member of his family around to acknowledge their visit, they tactfully rouse him from his slumberland. His rest is terminated so their visit would not be purposeless. This goes on even in hospitals, despite the vigilance of nurses and other hospital staff.

Should the illness be protracted, the sick man is bombarded with strong advice and recommendations from visitors turned medical experts. They tell him modern medical practice is not as effective as traditional methods; that his ailment is not understood by foreign medical practitioner, and that it is time to quit the hospital and try a certain herbalist. Or, the expert outside to whom he should go might be a certain faith healer. Advice galore! The poor sick man is more sickened by them.

One may then understand the reaction of an over visited patient when he, one day, shouted as he heard a knock on the door of his private hospital room: 'Go back! Not one more!' But the caller happened to have been the ward attendant bringing him his meal.

Questions

- (a) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase that means the same and which can replace it in the passage:
 - (i) ailment (ii) stream (iii) tactfully (iv) terminated (v) protracted (vi) galore
- (b) Why do people consider it a point of duty to visit a sick person?
- (c) What two things do the visitors do to register their presence?
- (d) What alternative suggestion is the sick person given if the illness is protracted?
- (e) What is usually the effect of the visitor's advice on the sick person?
- (f) What grammatical name is given to the expression: "*should he be asleep for very long...*"?
- (g) What figure of speech is the expression '*bombarded with strong advice and recommendations*'?

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

History textbooks tell us that it was primary that vicious malaria that prevented white colonialists from permanently digging in here. Malaria, therefore, saved West Africa from having its best portions preserved as white settlements, quite unlike what happened in mosquito free East and South Africa.

Two ideas spring to mind: one that malaria killed only white people but not blacks; two that we Nigerians should be grateful to the mosquito, which caused the disease in the first place.

Nothing can be further from the fallacies in these ideas. Malaria is no respecter of colour: every year, more Nigeria deaths are attributed to malaria than to any other ailment. Years ago, Nigeria presumed *that only babies died from the disease*; but these days, the regular deaths of full fledged adults for the same cause has proved that malaria is no respecter of age either. To make matters worse, the parasite seems to have set itself up in a bitter battle against our efforts to eradicate it. It has, accordingly, developed a tough resistance to the chloroquine, which used to knock, its predecessors dead. Now, it has become so chameleon-like that its many varieties cannot be easily detected under the microscope.

The latest variety of the fever has been tagged 'go slow': it takes its own sweet time to leave its victim in peace. A suffer always goes through a whole series of treatments. He completes the full course of chloroquine injections, and backs these with ten unpleasant tablets. He then swallows three to six tablets of Fansidar; doses himself with antibiotics, and ends this long process with the extremely expensive Halfan tablets. This unauthorised medication may give its victim blood poisoning, or it may give him stomach cramps.

Through all these miseries, the malaria parasite tucks itself away in its victims spleen. Every evening it resurfaces to give him a reminding shiver, a cold sweat, a splitting headache and a churning stomach. Then, *naughtily smiling to itself*, it wriggles its way back into its hiding place to sleep the day through. This is the reason why the malaria patient feels well during the day but lousy by the evening.

Recent attempts to revert to the herbal brews of our forefathers have not consoled us sufficiently. In this distressing situation, how can Nigerians be in any way grateful to the mosquito?

Questions:

- (a) For each of the following words underlined in the passage, give another word or phrase which means the same and can replace in the passage:
(i) vicious (ii) portions (iii) eradicate (iv) tagged (v) splitting
- (b) State one positive contribution that the mosquito has made to the people of Nigeria
- (c) Who can fall victim to malaria?
- (d) State two qualities that have enabled the malarial parasite to survive.
- (e)*that only babies died from the disease*.
(i) What grammatical name is given to the above construction?
(ii) What is its function in the sentence?
- (f) *Naughtily smiling to itself*. What does this phrase suggest about the writer's attitude to the mosquito?
- (g) Why have people gone back to traditional medicine?

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

When Chief Obi read the note and absorbed its terse content, he nearly collapsed. For minutes, he stared at it in utter disbelief. But much as he wished otherwise, the message was clear - the robbers had indicated that they would visit him very soon and that “no force in the world would stop them from carting away all he had”. The note ended by warning him in his ‘own interest’ not to inform the police or other law enforcement agents.

As a wealthy businessman, Chief Obi had seen enough of life to know that the gang meant business. He could recall at least half a dozen men who had got such sinister notes in the past and who had been robbed as planned. One of them had contacted the police which then guarded his house for weeks. Yet, the robbers struck all the same - they attacked him in his expensive car on his way to another town, thrashed him throughly and relieved him of his car.

So, contacting the police was out of it, he decided. But what could he do? He confided in his closet friend who had been his business associate for thirty years. The latter advised him to vacate his house for as long as it was necessary and seek refuge in a hotel. After giving it much thought, Chief Obi checked into Exclusive Hotel. But he stayed only for a night. he reasoned that leaving his retinue of wives, children, servants and relatives behind was not the best solution. So, emptying the water in an over-head tank, Chief Obi turned the tank into his refuge every night. His powerful double-barrelled rifle in hand, he hid in the tank late in the night, waiting.

Then one night, the robbers came in a lorry. They were about a dozen. As they were forcing their way in, Obi aimed at their leader, and brought him down with a loud report. Another shot, and a second man fell. Surprised, the others fled, with Chief Obi’s shots seeing them off. By day break, the news spread fast - the body of Chief Obi’s friend and business associate was found in a pool of blood at the entrance to the Chief’s house. He was the leader of the gang!

Questions

- (a) For each of the following words underlined in the passage, give another word or phrase which means the same and can replace it in the passage:
(i) terse (ii) sinister (iii) relieved (iv) associates (v) vacate (vi) report
- (b) What message did Chief Obi receive?
- (c) Why did he decide against seeking police assistance?
- (d) For what reason did Chief Obi’s friend advise him the way he did?
- (e) Why did Chief Obi kick against the idea of a continued stay in the hotel?
- (f) Chief Obi single-handedly repelled the thieves. Why could he?
- (g) “...*leaving his retinue of wives, children, servants and relatives behind.*”
(i) What grammatical name is given to the above construction as used in the sentence?
(ii) What is its function in the sentence?