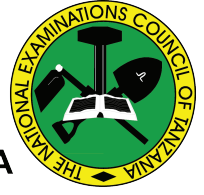**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA

PUPILS' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS REPORT ON STANDARD FOUR NATIONAL ASSESSMENT (SFNA) 2023

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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02 ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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FOREWORD

This report presents the Pupils Item Response Analysis (PIRA) on Standard Four English Language National Assessment that was conducted in October 2023. The Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) is a formative evaluation which intends to monitor pupils' learning in primary education. This report aims at providing feedback to all education stakeholders on the pupils' performance in the English Language subject assessment.

The analysis in this report identifies pupils' strengths and weaknesses in attempting assessment questions. The pupils who attained high scores were competent in comprehending oral and written information, communicating simple ideas through writing, and developing and using vocabulary. These pupils could identify the requirements of the questions. However, pupils who scored low marks faced difficulties in responding to the questions and were incompetent in assessed areas. Some of them did not understand the requirements of the questions.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects that the feedback provided in this report will help teachers and pupils to take appropriate measures to improve teaching and learning of the English Language subject. Consequently, pupils will acquire competence as indicated in the syllabus for better performance in future assessments and examinations.

The Council appreciates the contribution of all who made this report a success.

Dr. Said A. Mohamed
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This report analyses pupils' performance in the English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) which was conducted on 26th October, 2023. The assessment was set in accordance with the 2015 English Language syllabus and the 2018 English Language format.

A total of 1,693,438 pupils were registered for the SFNA in 2023 whereas 1,545,208 (91.24%) sat for the assessment. Moreover, data indicate that 1,120,760 (72.54%) passed the assessment. According to the statistics, pupils' performance in SFNA 2023 increased by 0.82 per cent when compared to the performance in 2022. In 2022, a total of 1,718,896 pupils were registered for the assessment whereas, 1,591,090 (92.56%) sat for the assessment and 1,141,100 (71.72%) passed.

The English Language assessment paper consisted of five (5) sections: A, B, C, D and E. Sections A, B, C and D consisted of objective questions, and section E, comprised a short answer question, making a total of five (5) questions.

This paper tested different language areas in each section, as follows: Section A, five (5) dictation items and section B, five (5) vocabulary items. Moreover, section C had five (5) grammar items while section D had five (5) composition items and section E had five (5) comprehension items.

The pupils' performance in each category has been provided according to their range of performance as follows: weak performance ranged

from 0 to 33 marks; average performance ranged from 34 to 66 marks; good performance ranged from 67 to 100 marks.

Generally, each item carried 02 marks, making a total of 10 marks for each question. However, in Question 1, each correctly written word was awarded 0.5 marks. The analysis indicates the number and the percentage of pupils who correctly answered the questions and those who incorrectly answered them. In such instances, for questions 2, 3 and 4, the marks from 0 to 2 indicate weak performance; 4 to 6 marks indicate average performance, 8 marks indicate good performance and 10 marks indicate very good performance. For questions 1 and 5, the marks from 0 to 2.5 were categorised as weak; 3 to 6 as average; 6.5 to 9.5 as good and 10 marks as very good performance. Charts and graphs were used to indicate the pupils' performance on each question.

Moreover, colours in graphs, tables and charts represent the pupils' performance. Red colour represents weak performance, yellow stands for average performance, light green indicates good performance and green indicates very good performance.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' RESPONSES TO THE ITEMS

This part presents the analysis on the pupils' responses to the items. The presentation indicates pupils' performance based on four categories namely weak, average, good and very good. Their performance levels are categorised in Table 1.

Table 1: Performance Level in the English Language subject

Range of Marks for Questions 2, 3 and 4	Range of Marks for Questions 1 and 5	Remarks
0-2	0-2.5	Weak
4-6	3-6	Average
8	6.5-9.5	Good
10	10	Very good

2.1 SECTION A: DICTATION

This section comprised one (1) question with five items (i) to (v). The question was about dictation. The invigilator read five (5) sentences carefully and loudly for the pupils to listen and write them down in the answer sheets provided. The five sentences were as follows:

(i)   This mango is big.
(ii)   Look at that picture.
(iii)   I can speak English.
(iv)   Those are my friends.
(v)   They are good parents.

This question tested pupils' ability to listen and write the sentences read. In responding to this question, the pupils were required to observe punctuation marks such as full stop (.).

The question was attempted by 1,545,208 (91.20%) pupils. The general performance in this question was average because 45.27 per cent of the pupils had performance that ranged from

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average to very good. A total of 845,688 (54.73%) pupils scored from 0 to 2.5 marks out of 10 indicating weak performance. A total of 405,996 (26.27%) pupils scored from 3 to 6 marks which is an average performance. Other 205,557 (13.28%) pupils scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks indicating good performance. However, those who scored 10 marks were 88,267 (5.71%) pupils indicating a very good performance. Figure 1 illustrates the summary of pupils' performance in Question 1.
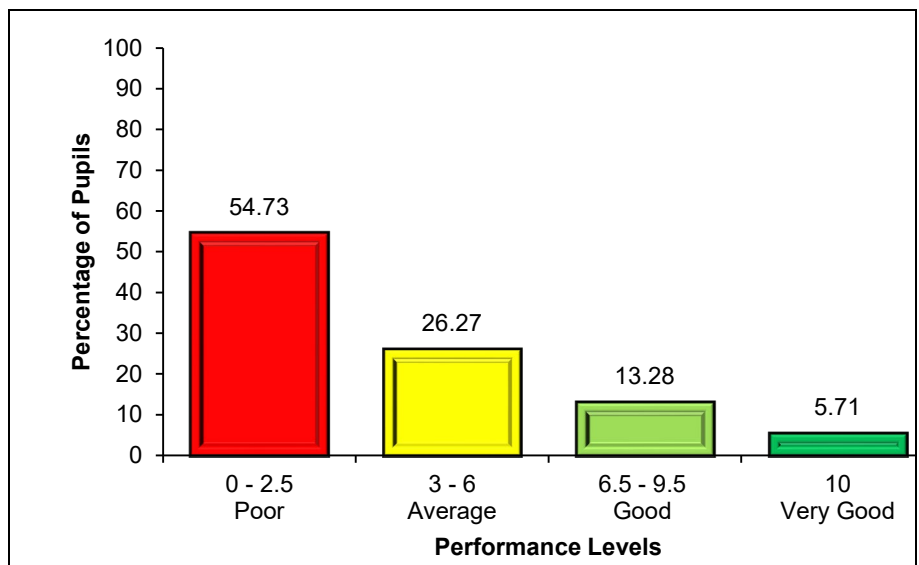

Figure 1: *Pupils Performance on Question 1*

The analysis shows that the pupils who scored 10 marks correctly wrote all the five sentences and put the punctuation marks accordingly. They also realised that the first letters of all words at the beginning of sentences are capitalised. Furthermore, they understood that all five sentences were declarative sentences. A declarative sentence is a type of sentence that states fact, information, or an argument. It always

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ends with a full stop or period (.). Extract 1.1 provides a sample of the pupils' correct responses to this question.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) - (v) and then write them in the spaces provided.
   (i) This mango is big
   (ii) Look at that picture.
   (iii) I can speak english
   (iv) These are my friends
   (v) They are good parents.

Extract 1.1: A sample of pupils' correct responses to Question 1.

In Extract 1.1, the pupil wrote all four words correctly in each sentence. He/she put the punctuation marks appropriately such as capitalization at the beginning of the sentences and full stops at the end of each sentence. This pupil demonstrated his/her effective listening and writing skills.

On the other hand, there were pupils who scored average marks on this question. These pupils could not write all word correctly as dictated by the invigilator. They misspelt some words in the sentences and some were unable to observe punctuation marks, capitalisation and spacing in some sentences. This made some pupils to score half of the allotted marks to this question.

Nevertheless, there were pupils who failed to write correctly the sentences which were read. Some of them wrote words with incorrect spelling and other wrote English words using Kiswahili Language. These pupils did not know that English Language is not one to one correspondence between spelling and pronunciation, hence, the words are not spelt in the same way as

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they are pronounced. For example, one pupil wrote the word *zis*i instead of *this*, and *kipicha* instead of *picture.* Extract 1.3 is a sample of pupils' incorrect responses to this question.

1. Listen carefully to the sentences read in (i) - (v) and then write them in the spaces provided.

(i) _IS My oy 19c bis_

(ii) _s.a the sentences read al then?_

(iii) _"Atdene Ec+L SH"_

(iv) _Du IS cq h/ is/DICTATon_

(v) _"Dysgaro is n snopolikochstdvp"_

Extract 1.2: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 1.

In Extract 1.2, the pupil wrote many words that did not make a meaningful sentence. In addition, he/she did not mark word boundaries. Therefore, the sentences written sounded meaningless.

2.2 SECTION B: VOCABULARY

This section consisted of one (1) question with five (5) multiple-choice items (i) to (v). Each item consisted of four (4) choices A to D. The pupils were required to choose the most correct answer from the given alternatives and write its letter in the box provided.

This question was attempted by 1,545,208 pupils (91.20%). Among them, 993,462 (64.29%) scored from 0 to 2 marks indicating weak performance. Furthermore, 436,442 (28.24%) scored from 4 to 6 marks which is average performance and 70,628 (4.57%) scored 8 marks which is good performance.

Additionally, 44,676 (2.89%) pupils scored 10 marks. The general performance on this question was average because 35.71 per

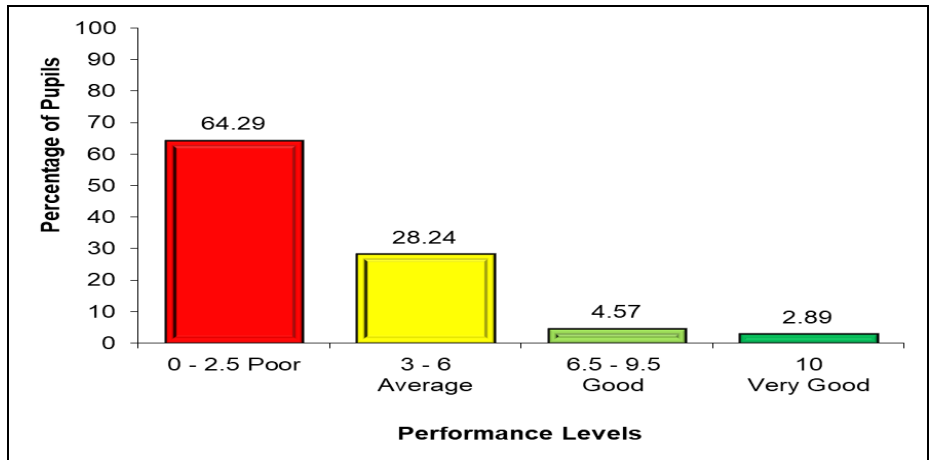cent of the pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. Figure 2 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 2.

Figure 2: *Pupils' Performance on Question 2*

The following multiple-choice items (i) to (v) required the pupil to choose the most correct answer among the options provided.

(i)   Edward is the son of the Queen. Therefore, he is;

   A   a Prince

   B   a Princess

   C   a King

   D   a Queen

This item tested the pupils' ability to use vocabulary in expressing royal relations. The correct answer was A, (*a Prince*). The pupils who chose the correct answer knew a royal tree which represents royal relationships. They understood that *Prince* is a son of Queen or King.

In contrast, the pupils who opted for B, (*a Princess*) did not know that *Princess* is a daughter of the Queen or King. The noun

Princess is feminine while *a Prince*, which is a correct answer, is masculine. Therefore, they opted for an incorrect response as they misidentified gender of the royal family members.

Similarly, the pupils who chose C, (*a King*) and D, (*a Queen*) did not know that *a King* and a Queen are the rulers in independent states which have royal families. The pupils were unaware that a King is a husband of a Queen, and a Queen is a wife of a King.

(ii)   This box does not contain anything. Therefore, the box is

    A   full

    B   heavy

    C   empty

    D   loaded

The item tested the pupils' ability to use different adjectives in describing things. The correct answer was C, (*empty).* The pupils who chose the correct answer knew that *empty* is an adjective which describes things containing nothing; not filled or occupied.
On the contrary, the pupils who chose alternative A, (*full)* did not know that *full* is an adjective which describes things with no space which contain or holding as much or as many as possible. Therefore, option A was an incorrect answer because the box did not contain anything.

Likewise, those who chose alternative B, (*heavy*) did not realise that *heavy* is an adjective which means weighing a lot, difficult to lift or move. Therefore, option B, (*heavy*) was an incorrect answer

because the box was not weighing a lot as it was not containing anything.

In addition, the pupils who chose D (*loaded*) did not know that *loaded* is an adjective which means full and heavy. For example, *a truck loaded with supplies.* Therefore, *loaded* is an incorrect answer because the box was not full since it was not containing anything.

(iii)   We saw a_____ of cattle in his farm.

    A   flock

    B   herd

    C   swarm

    D   crowd

This item tested the pupil's ability to use collective nouns. Collective nouns are names for a number of people, animals or things. The correct response for this item was B, (*herd*). The pupils who chose the correct answer knew that a word *herd* is a collective noun that describes a large group of animals of the same type that live or feed together such as cows. Therefore, a group of *cattle* is referred to as a *herd*.

The pupils who opted for A, (*flock*) were unaware that a *flock* describes a number of animals or birds of one kind feeding, resting or travelling together. For example, a *flock of sheep*. Therefore, this was an incorrect response because "a flock" does not represent a group of cattle.

Additionally, the pupils who opted for C, (*swarm*) were unaware that the word *swarm* is a collective noun that describes a large or dense group of flying insects. Example, *a <u>swarm</u> of locust*. Therefore, this was incorrect because it does not represent cattle. Likewise, the pupils who opted for D, (*crowd*) did not understand that the word *crowd* is used to name a large number of people gathered together in a public place. For example, *Mr. Abel pushed his way through the <u>crowd</u>.* Hence, it was an incorrect answer because it does not refer to cattle.

(iv)   Musa was given a _____ of soap to wash his clothes.

    A   bunch

    B   fleet

    C   loaf

    D   bar

This item tested the pupil's ability to use collective nouns. The correct response for this item was D, (*bar).* The pupils who chose the correct answer knew that a collective name for word *soap* is *bar*.

In contrast, the pupils who opted for A, (*bunch*) were unaware that a *bunch* describes a large number of things of the same type which are growing or fastened together. For example, *a <u>bunch</u> of bananas.* Therefore, this was an incorrect response because "bunch" does not collectively represent soap.

In addition, the pupils who opted for B, (*fleet*) did not realise that the word *fleet* is a collective noun that describes a group of ships

organised to do something together, for example *The exploration team set off on their journey by a <u>fleet</u> of ships*. Therefore, this was incorrect because the word "fleet" does not collectively represent soap.

Furthermore, the pupils who opted for C, (*loaf*) were unaware that the word *loaf* is used with an uncountable noun bread to mean an amount of bread that has been shaped and baked in one piece. For example, *My aunt gave Mr. Matata a <u>loaf</u> of bread.* Therefore, this was incorrect as it does not collectively represent soap.

(v)   Mr. Mwaka is a _____ because people buy things from him.

    A   buyer

    B   seller

    C   shopper

    D   customer

This item tested the pupils' ability to use vocabulary to describe people's occupations. The correct answer was B, *(seller)*. The pupils who chose the correct answer understood that the term "seller" refers to a person who sells something.

However, the pupils who chose A, (*buyer)* did not realise that the term "buyer" refers to a person who buys something. Those who selected C, *(shopper)* did not know that the term refers to a person who buys goods in a shop.

Likewise, those who selected D, (*customer)* did not understand that the term means someone who buys goods or services, especially from a shop.

2.3   SECTION C: GRAMMAR

This section consisted of five items (i) to (v). The pupils were required to fill in the blanks by choosing the correct words provided in the brackets. The question tested the pupil's ability to apply grammar of English language in daily communication.

This question was attempted by 1,545,208 pupils (91.20%). Among them, 647,859 pupils (41.93%) scored from 0 to 2 marks which is weak performance; 732,949 (47.43%) scored from 4 to 6 marks which is average performance and 121,837 (7.88%) scored 8 marks which is good performance. Furthermore, 42,563 pupils (2.75%) scored 10 marks which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was average because 897,349 pupils (58.07%) scored from 4 to 10 marks. Figure 3 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 3.
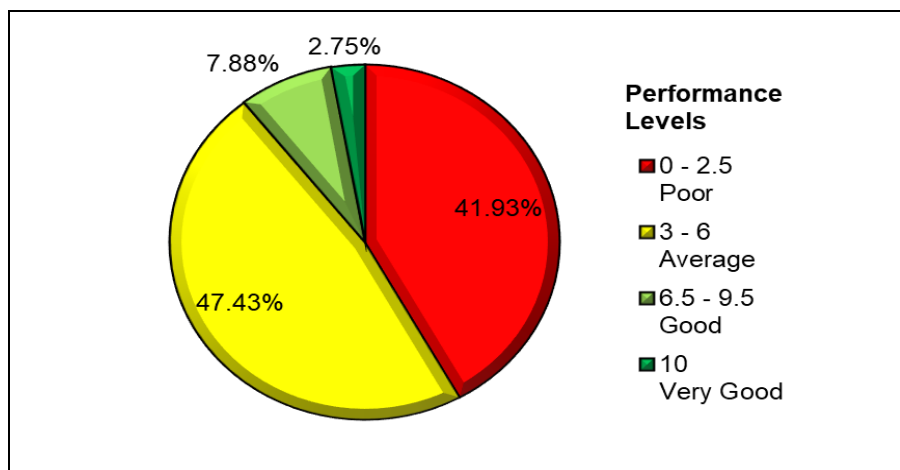

Figure 3: *Pupil's Performance on Question 3*

The pupils who had high performance on this question were competent in communicating simple ideas by using English language grammar. They had ability to use word classes in making sentences meaningful. Therefore, they chose words that correctly fit together in sentences to make the utterances meaningful and grammatically correct.

Nevertheless, some pupils had weak performance on this question. These pupils did not apply grammatical rules. They also lacked ability to communicate simple ideas in different contexts. The items were as follows:

(i)   _____ (A, An, The) police will arrive here soon.

This item tested pupil's ability to use articles appropriately. The pupils who wrote the correct answer *(the)* understood that, the article "the" is used to mention or point a unique thing that is found in a particular place (very specific) such as in the house, as in *I think I left my book in the kitchen*.
On the contrary, the pupils who wrote incorrect article "a" and "an" did not understand that they are used to indicate an item that is not unique, instead, they indicate words which start with vowel sounds (a, e, i, o and u).

(ii)   Would you like _____ (this, these, those) apple?

This item tested the pupil's ability to use demonstrative pronouns in expressing number that is singular and plural. The demonstrative pronouns give information about the relative closeness. The "near" demonstrative "this" (singular) or "these"

(plural) indicates something close. The "far" demonstrative "that" (singular), or "those" (plural) indicates something far. The correct answer to this item was (*this*). The pupils who chose the correct answer knew that the pronoun "this" is used with singular noun, while "these" and "those" are used with plural nouns. The word "apple" is a noun which is singular hence it needed a singular demonstrative pronoun "this". Those who provided the incorrect response (these and those), did not understand that the demonstrative pronouns "these" and "those" were in plural form, therefore they do not agree with a singular noun "apple". Therefore, those who chose the wrong answers did not know how to use demonstrative pronouns in singular and plural.

(iii)   She _____ (forget, forgot, forgotten) to close the door last night.

This item tested the pupil's ability to express events that happened in the past by using simple past tense. The pupils who wrote the correct answer (*forgot*) understood that the action was performed last night. The presence of adverbial phrase "last night" in the sentence indicates that the action happened in the past; thus, the verb "forgot" was suitable.

The pupils who wrote the incorrect answer (forget) did not understand that the verb "forget" is used to express habitual or repeated actions done at the present time (Simple Present Tense). It is also used with first person, second person, and third person plural pronouns or nouns.

Those who provided the incorrect response (*forgotten*) did not understand that the verb "forgotten" is in past participle form and it is used to express completed or perfect actions, whether in the present, past or future time. In such situations, the word "forgotten" is used with the helping verb *have, has* and *had*. Therefore, those who chose the wrong answers did not know how to form simple past tense in English verbs.

(iv)   Our   grandparents   live   in   Lindi. We   visit
_____ (us, they, them) often.

This item tested the pupil's ability to use the correct object pronoun. An object pronoun is a type of personal pronoun that is normally used as a grammatical object, either as the direct or indirect. Such pronouns are *me, you, him, her, it, us, them* and *whom.* These pronouns refer to a person or thing affected by an action. They normally come after a verb or a preposition.

The pupils who wrote the correct answer (*them*) understood that the pronoun "them" refers back to "grandparents" who are often visited. In addition, object pronouns are used when one wants to substitute a noun that has the role of the object in a sentence. The object in the sentence is the receiver of the action.

The pupils who wrote incorrect answer (*us*) did not understand the word "us" is used to refer to people including the one who is speaking in the sentence. In such instances, the word cannot address the noun "our grandparents" as used in the sentence.

Likewise, those who responded with incorrect pronoun (*they*) did not understand that the word "they" is a subject pronoun of an object pronoun "them", hence it cannot be used in place of object pronoun which represent "our grandparents".

(v)   Mr. Kato is _____ (teach, teaching, teaches) English at the moment.

This item tested the pupil's ability to use the correct verb in expressing events happening in present time by using the present continuous tense. The pupils who wrote the correct answer *(teaching)* understood that the sentence is in present continuous tense and so the main verb should take in *-ing* form to complete the sentence.

The pupils who wrote incorrect answer *(teach)* and (*teaches*) did not understand that, the verbs (teach and teaches) are in simple present tense and so, they do not agree with the structure {is/are+-ing} which is used in present continuous tense. The word "teach" is used with such pronouns as *I*, *We*, *You* and *They*; whereas, the word "teaches" is used with such pronouns as *he, she* and *it* in simple present tense. Extract 2.1 and 2.2 are samples of the correct, average and incorrect responses to question 3.

3. Fill in the blanks in (i) - (v) with correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.

(i) ___The___ (A, An, The) police will arrive here soon.

(ii) Would you like ___this___ (this, these, those) apple?

(iii) She ___forgot___ (forget, forgot, forgotten) to close the door last night.

(iv) Our grandparents live in Lindi. We visit ___them___ (us, they, them) often.

(v) Mr. Kato is ___teaching___ (teach, teaching, teaches) English at the moment.

Extract 2.1: A sample of correct responses to Question 3.

In Extract 2.1, the pupil correctly responded to all five items. The responses indicate that he/she was competent in grammatical rules.

Pupils with weak performance on this question had inadequate competence in applying grammatical rules when constructing sentences. Therefore, these pupils produced incorrect responses as shown in Extract 2.2.

3. Fill in the blanks in (i) - (v) with correct words provided in the brackets to make the sentences meaningful.

(i) ___an___ (A, An, The) police will arrive here soon.

(ii) Would you like ___those___ (this, these, those) apple?

(iii) She ___forgotten___ (forget, forgot, forgotten) to close the door last night.

(iv) Our grandparents live in Lindi. We visit ___us___ (us, they, them) often.

(v) Mr. Kato is ___teach___ (teach, teaching, teaches) English at the moment.

Extract.2.2: A sample of pupils' incorrect responses to Question 3.

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In Extract 2.2, the pupil incorrectly responded to all five items. This suggests that he/she did not have competence in grammar. This is a reason the pupil could not construct the sentences as required.

2.4   SECTION D: COMPOSITION

This section had one question which had an incomplete letter. The question assessed the pupil's ability to communicate through writing. This question required the pupils to fill in blanks with correct words provided in brackets. The question was as follows:

Complete the following letter by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the brackets. Write the answers in the answer sheet provided.

_____ *(Yours, Your, Dear) John,*

I am very _____ (sorry, happy, glad) to inform you that I will not be able to _____ (involve, attend, come) the birthday _____ (hobby, party, wedding), because I will be attending my brother's graduation ceremony.

Thank you for _____ (welcome, inviting, call) me. Your friend,
Joyce.

This question was attempted by 1,545,208 (91.20%) pupils. Among them, 900,428 (58.27%) scored 0 to 2 marks which is weak performance. Moreover, 507,693 (32.88%) scored from 4 to 6 marks which is an average performance and 69,650 (4.51%)

scored 8 marks which is good performance. Furthermore, 67,137 (4.34%) pupils scored 10 marks which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was average because 41.73 per cent of pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. figure 4 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 4.
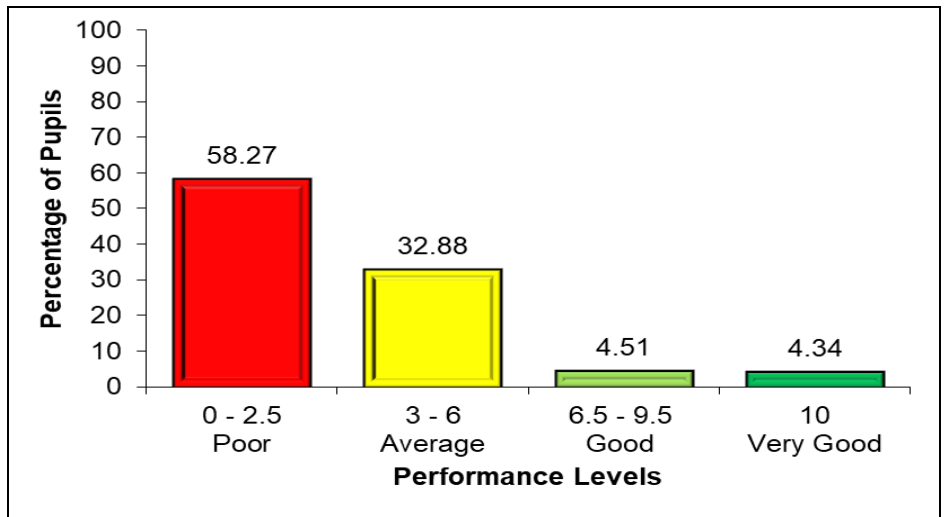

Figure 4: *Pupils' Performance on Question 4*

The analysis shows that the pupils who had high performance in this question were competent in using words to compose various meaningful simple texts. These pupils picked appropriate words from the brackets provided and wrote them in the spaces to complete the letter. The pupils understood that the composition given was the part of the friendly letter and so, they knew its components. The friendly letter has to begin with the writer's address though the part was missing in the given composition, follows salutation, the main body, complementary closure, and the last part is name or signature of the writer. Importantly, these pupils comprehended the content of the letter; hence they could fill the gaps appropriately as shown in Extract 3.1.

4. Complete the following letter by filling in the blanks with correct words provided in the brackets.

_____Dear_____ (Yours, Your, Dear) John,

I am very ___Sorry___ (sorry, happy, glad) to inform you that I will not be able to ___attend___ (involve, attend, come) the birthday ___Party___ (hobby, party, wedding), because I will be attending my brother's graduation ceremony.

Thank you for ___inviting___ (welcome, inviting, call) me.

Your friend,

Joyce.

Extract 3.1: A sample of pupils' correct responses to Question 4.

In Extract 3.1, the pupil wrote the words in all the spaces as required. The pupil's correct responses to this question are attributable to his/her adequate skills on communicating simple ideas through writing.

The pupils who had an average performance in this question answered correctly 2 or 3 items only; hence they scored from 3 to 6 marks. These pupils had partial skills on composing various texts.

On the other hand, the pupils whose performance was weak (0 to 2 marks) responded correctly to either none or only 1 item. This was due to lack of proficiency in communicating through writing. These pupils wrote wrong alternatives in spaces and finally produced meaningless composition. Extract 3.2 is demonstrative.

Extract 3.2: A sample of pupil's incorrect response on Question 4.

In Extract 3.2, the pupil wrote incorrect words in spaces provided. He/she did not consider the contextual meaning of the sentences. This indicates that he/she did not have skills on using language to compose texts.

2.5 SECTION E: COMPREHENSION

This section consisted of one question with five short items (a) to (e). It was about comprehension in which the pupils were given a story to read and answer the questions that followed. The question tested the pupil's comprehension skills.

The passage was as follows:

One day, it was very hot. A crow was very thirst. He flew here and there looking for water. But he did not get water from anywhere. At last he saw a pot with water in a thick bush. He went close to the pot. The crow saw that the water in the pot was very little. The crow tried to reach the water with its beak but he was not able to do so. He then tried to push the pot down for the water to flow out

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but the pot was too heavy for him. The crow looked around. He saw some little stones. After a little thought, the crow came up with an idea. He picked up a few stones one at a time and dropped them into the pot. As he dropped the stones into the pot, the water came up. Soon it was high enough for him to drink. He happily drank the water and flew away.

This question was attempted by 1,545,208 (91.20%) pupils. Among them, 1,375,787 (89.04%) scored from 0 to 2.5 marks which is a weak performance. Moreover, 113,818 (7.37%) scored from 3 to 6 marks which is an average performance and 32,654 (2.11%) scored from 6.5 to 9.5 marks which is good performance. However, only 22,949 pupils (1.49%) scored 10 marks, which is very good performance. The general performance on this question was weak because 10.96 per cent of the pupils scored from 03 to 10 marks (average to very good performance). Figure 5 summarises the pupils' performance on Question 5.
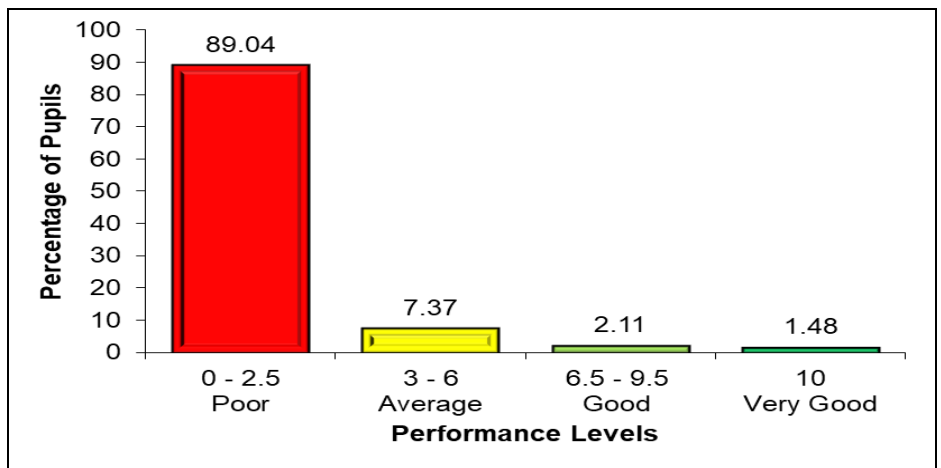

Figure 5: *Pupils' Performance on Question 5*

Pupils who scored high marks on items (a) to (e) of this question read the passage, understood it and answered the questions correctly. The following is the analysis of the items:

(a)   What is the story about?

The item tested the pupil's ability to interpret and give summary of the given story. The correct response was, *the story is about the* thirsty *crow* or *the crow and the pot of water*. The pupils who answered the question correctly read the text and comprehended the passage. Extract 4.1 shows a sample of the correct responses to this item.

(a)   What is the story about?

The story is about a crow who was very thirsty
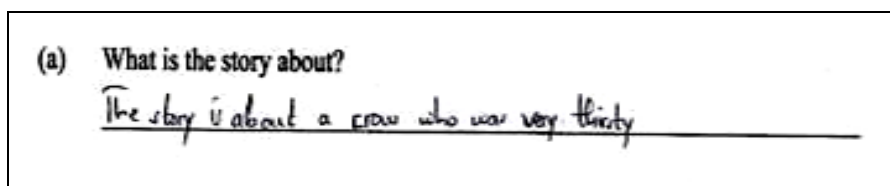
Extract 4.1: A sample of pupil's correct responses to Question 5 (a).

In extract 4.1, the pupil wrote what the story was about. His/her correct response indicates that he/she understood the story and could summarise it.

In contrast, there were pupils who had weak performance in this item. Some of them did not understand the story and so, they wrote irrelevant answers such as *but the pot was too heavy*, *water in a thick bush He went close the pot* and *But he did not get water from anywhere*. Extract 4.2 is a sample of incorrect responses to this item.

Questions:

(a) What is the story about?

_He flew here and there looking for water_
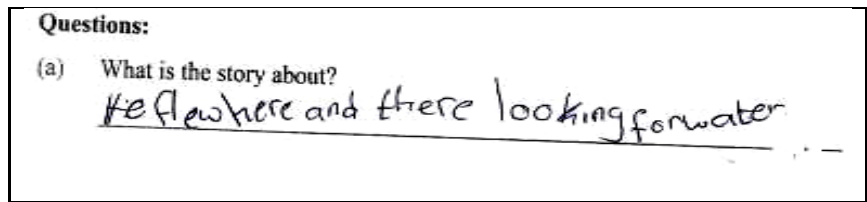
Extract 4.2: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 5 (a).

In Extract 4.2, the pupil wrote irrelevant response as he/she did not understand the story. He/she copied a part of the story as the answer.

(b) Where was the pot of water?

This item tested the pupil's ability to identify the place where the pot of water was. The correct response to this item was *the pot of water was in a thick bush.* The pupils who responded correctly identified the events that took place in the story. Extract 4.3 shows a sample of the correct responses to this item.

(b) Where was the pot of water?

He saw a pot of water in a thick bush.
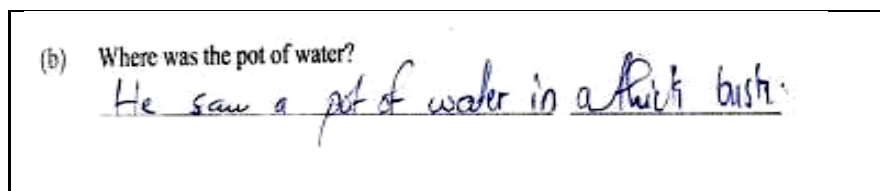
Extract 4.3: A sample of correct responses to Question 5 (b).

In extract 4.3, the pupil understood that the pot was in the thick bush where the crow saw it.

On contrary, some pupils could not identify the place where the pot was. These pupils did not understand the story, and others did not understand the requirements of the question. As a result, they provided incorrect responses such as *came up, to*

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do so and *soon it was high enough for him to drink*. Extract 4.4 is a sample of the incorrect responses to this item.

Extract 4.4: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (b).

In Extract 4.4, the pupil wrote an incomplete sentence from the passage. This shows that the pupil did not comprehend the passage.

(c)   Why did the crow fail to push the pot of water?

This item tested the pupil's ability to give a reason as to why the crow failed to push the pot of water. The correct response to this item was *the pot was too heavy for him.* The pupils who responded correctly to this item understood the passage and established a reason as required. Extract 4.5 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.

Extract 4.5: A sample of correct responses to Question 5 (c).

In Extract 4.5, the pupil wrote the correct answer as he/she realised what made the crow fail to push the pot of water. The response indicates that he/she had adequate reading skills.

Contrarily, other pupils could not give the correct responses to the item. Some of them copied parts of the passage, and others wrote meaningless responses such as *At last he saw pot with water in a thick bush*, *as he dropped the stores into the pot the water came up* and *To flow out but come up*. Extract 4.6 is a sample of incorrect responses to this item.
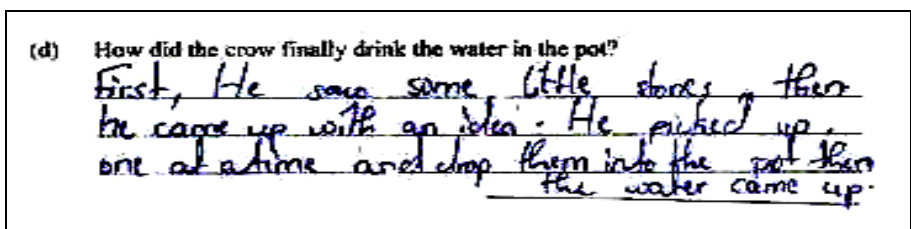
(c) Why did the crow fail to push the pot of water?

    pot was little The crow The thi
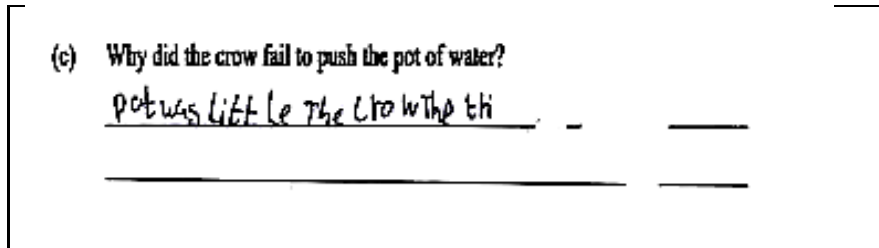
Extract 4.6: A sample of incorrect responses to Question 5 (c).

In Extract 4.6, the pupil picked the words randomly from the passage and made an irrelevant answer. Such response indicates that he/she lacked adequate reading skills.

(d)   How did the crow finally drink the water in the pot?

This item tested the pupil's ability to explain how the crow drank water in the pot. The correct response to this item was *the crow dropped the little stones into the pot until water came up.* Extract 4.7 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.

(d)   How did the crow finally drink the water in the pot?
    First, He saw some little stones, then he came up with an idea. He picked up one at a time and drop them into the pot then the water came up.

Extract 4.7: A sample of correct responses to question 5 (d).

In Extract 4.7, the pupil explained how the crow managed to drink the water in the pot. He/she provided the correct answer because he/she had comprehension skills.

Nevertheless, there were pupils who could not explain how the crow finally drank the water. Most of them did not comprehend the passage. As a result, they provided such incorrect responses as *The crow looked around*, *she word she Mr mwaka* and *he happily drank the water and flew away*. Extract 4.8 shows a sample of correct responses to this item.
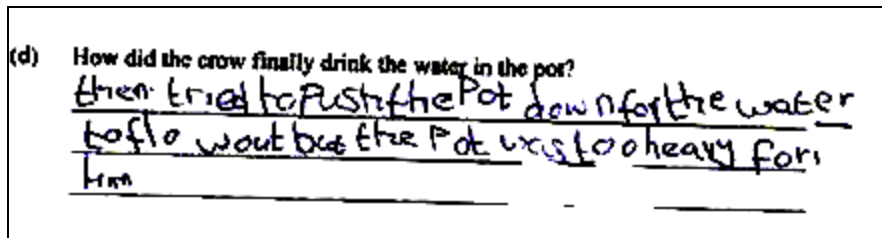
Extract 4.8: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (d).

In Extract 4.8, the pupil copied a sentence from the passage which stated the reason which made the crow to fail to push the pot of water. This indicates that the pupil did not understand the requirement of the item.

(e)   What did you learn from the story?

This item tested the pupil's ability to evaluate the message from the passage. The correct answer was *you should never give up when facing of our problems* or *if you try hard enough, you may find an answer to your problem.* The pupils who correctly responded to this item understood the story and analysed it to

get its lesson. Extract 4.9 shows a sample of the correct responses to this item.

Extract 4.9: A sample of the correct responses to question 5 (e).

In Extract 4.9, the pupil explained the lesson obtained in the story. This pupil understood that hard working pays and one should not give up if one is in need of something.

In contrast, other pupils could not evaluate the message from the story. These pupils did not comprehend the information in the passage given. In such instances, they wrote such incorrect responses as *For him to drink the happily drank the water and flew away them into the pot*, *But he not get water anywhere* and *At last the saw with water in a think brush*. Extract 4.10 shows a sample of incorrect responses to this item.

Extract 4.10: A sample of incorrect responses to question 5 (e).

In Extract 4.10, the pupil copied some words from the passage. The pupil had a poor command of English language and so, he/she did not understand the requirement of the question.

3.0 ANALYSIS ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH COMPETENCE

In the 2023 English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA), three (3) competencies were tested. The competencies focused on the pupils' ability *to comprehend oral and written information, communicate orally and through writing,* and *acquire and use vocabulary through three language skills, namely writing, reading* and *speaking.*

The pupils' performance in *communicating orally and through writing* which was assessed in Questions 3 and 4 was average as 49.90 per cent of the pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. Their performance in *acquiring and using vocabulary through the three language skills* which was assessed in Question 2 was average as 35.71 per cent of pupils scored from 4 to 10 marks. In addition, the pupils' performance in *comprehending oral and written information*, which was assessed in Questions 1 and 5, was weak as 28.12 per cent scored from 3 to 10 marks. The summary for this analysis is illustrated in **Appendix**.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The analysis indicates that the pupils' general performance in the English Language Standard Four National Assessment (SFNA) for 2023 was good. A total of 1,120,760 (72.54%) pupils passed the assessment by scoring 10 to 50 marks.

The pupils' high scores were attributable to their competence on comprehending oral and written information, developing and using vocabulary, and communicating simple ideas through writing. These pupils could identify the requirements of the questions and follow the given instructions.

In contrast, a total of 424,171 (16.25%) pupils failed in this assessment. These pupils had insufficient competence on comprehending oral and written information, communicating through writing and using vocabulary appropriately in various situations. Moreover, some of them failed to understand the requirement of the questions hence, they provided irrelevant answers to most questions.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the pupils' performance in future assessments, the following measures are recommended:

(a) Teachers should apply cards, pictures and letters with common topics in order to develop pupils' competence in *communicating through writing*. This will improve the pupils' ability to use language to interact in a simple way.

(b) Teachers should give pupils tasks to read simple texts on different topics and comprehend the contents. The pupils should also listen to narrations about general topics and mention main ideas. This will give the pupils ability to develop skills in *comprehending oral and written information*.

(c) Teachers should task pupils with reading-writing works to develop pupils' vocabulary level. This will help the pupils to correctly use and write English words.

COMPARISON OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE PER COMPETENCE IN SFNA 2023 AND 2022

SN	Competency	SFNA 2023				SFNA 2022			
		Performance on each Question		(%) Average	Remarks	Performance on each Question		(%) Average	Remarks
		Qn. Number	(%) performance			Qn. Number	(%) performance		
1	Communicate orally and through writing	3	58.07	49.90	Average	3	46.22	40.54	Average
		4	41.73			4	34.87		
2	Acquire and use Vocabulary through the four language skills.	2	35.71	35.71	Average	2	34.56	34.56	Average
3	Comprehend oral and written information	1	45.27	28.12	Weak	1	19.85	16.63	Weak
		5	10.96			5	13.41		