# PSAC 2019

## Grade 5
## Modular Assessment
## History& Geography

Subject code: **P142/1**

Examiners' Report

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# HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Subject Code No. P142/1

## Key Messages

● Candidates must be encouraged to

> ➢ pay careful attention to what each question is asking them to do;
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> ➢ spell names and concept words correctly;
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> ➢ work with tables (and graphs) when they study weather and climate to develop comparison skills and the ability to make deductions;
>
> ➢ practise the skills of 'shading', 'labelling' (e.g. marking with a letter, 'locating' and 'naming' on maps and diagrams;
>
> ➢ discuss orally answers to open-ended questions with their peers and practise writing them under guidance.

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## General Comments

The question paper for the Grade 5 modular assessment is a one-hour paper. It carries a total of 50 marks. In 2019, the paper consisted of 8 questions. The overall performance of candidates was quite good. The mean mark was 27 out of 50 marks with girls performing slightly better than boys. A large number of candidates scored high marks on the whole paper. At the same time, it was noted that many candidates could not reach at least 15 marks out of the total of 50 marks.

Candidates fared well on the questions and items assessing knowledge mainly those in the objective-type format such as Multiple-Choice, True or False, and Matching-Type (Questions 1 and 2 and Question 6(c)). They also attempted quite well Questions 3 and 4 with completion type and very short answer items based on a Map of Mauritius and a Map of the World showing physical features respectively. However, many candidates could not tackle with some success short answer structured questions which required understanding and application on important topics (Questions 5, 6, 7 and 8). Questions 5 and 7 were based on an isohyet map of Rodrigues and a table showing temperature and altitude at three stations in Mauritius respectively. It was important to have a good understanding of the relationship between altitude and rainfall based on a map (Question 5) and between altitude and temperature (Question 7) using a table to demonstrate sound geographical reasoning and deduction. However, candidates made a good attempt to explain why convectional rain does not fall at night.

Question 6 which assessed the topic of agriculture during the French period and reasons for the Dutch departure was generally better answered than Question 8. Too many candidates were not able to recall historical facts and to provide valid explanations for the choice of Port Louis as the port and the importance of 'La Citadelle'. This learning outcome should be further emphasized. However, it was pleasing to find that candidates could easily mention one advantage that the British Governor, Sir Robert Farquhar, gave to the inhabitants of the colony of Mauritius, former Ile de France.

For the Geography question 7, many candidates found it difficult to re-arrange information in a table with information on altitude (height above sea level) and temperature at three stations in Mauritius and to deduce how the latter varies with changes in the former.   One strategy to improve this learning outcome is to encourage students to practise the skill of working with information using a table or presented in a table.

For History questions, vague answers such as 'it is of historical importance' should be avoided. For example, candidates should be encouraged to explain what 'historical importance' really means for an important event, a historical site or monument, etc.

One serious weakness of some candidates was the ability to write names or vocabulary words in the subject properly. For example, writing 'Nil' or 'Neel' instead of the 'Nile' or 'plane' instead of 'plain' should be avoided. In addition, they should be encouraged to practise writing sentences instead of giving two-words answers during revision to hone their examination skills.

## Specific Comments

### Question 1
It comprised 4 multiple-choice items, each carrying one mark. Two items were set on Geography and two items on History. It was fairly well attempted by the candidates.

Item 1       It was well answered by candidates. It assessed the ability to recall the name of the line of latitude $O^0$.

Item 2       It assessed knowledge about the discovery of Mauritius by European explorers. It was fairly well answered. Many candidates knew that Pedro Mascarenhas was a Portuguese sailor.

Item 3       It was well answered by the average and high achieving candidates. Less able candidates showed a lack of knowledge of extinct birds other than the

Dodo. Option **D**, the Red Rail was the correct answer. Some candidates probably did not understand the meaning of the term **'extinct'**. It should be

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stressed that the Echo Parakeet, the Mauritius Kestrel and the Pink Pigeon are no longer endangered species.

**Item 4**     It was well attempted by high achievers. The correct answer was 'conservation'. Many candidates chose option **D**, pollution. Candidates could not always make out the meaning of 'sustainable action'. They should be encouraged to learn the vocabulary words related to the concept of 'sustainability'.

## Question 2

This was a True or False question with five items. The first one was done as an example. It carried a total of 4 marks. Candidates did fairly well in this question. It was noticed that some candidates could not write the words 'True' or 'False' properly.

**Item** 1     It was well attempted. However, some candidates thought that Rodrigues was named after the Dutch sailor and not Portuguese sailor, 'Diogo Rodriguez'. Harmensen was the first Dutch sailor to land in Rodrigues.

**Item 2**     It proved to be easy as expected. Flat land was an advantage for the Dutch settlement at Vieux Grand Port.

**Item 3**     It proved to be quite challenging to many candidates.  More emphasis should be laid on the concepts of 'colony' and 'empire'. It is a historical fact that Britain conquered and ruled over many 'colonies' in the 18th and 19th centuries. This is how the British 'empire' was formed.

**Item 4**     It was fairly well attempted. Most candidates were able to show that they knew how clouds are formed.

## Question 3

It assessed knowledge of the main relief features in Mauritius shown in **Map 1.** The 6 items carried a total of 6 marks. Many candidates answered the different items quite successfully. The easiest item was item (f). Surprisingly, items (a) and (b) were not found to be easy as expected.

**Item (a)**

It was fairly well answered. However, some candidates did not write Grand Port for **Mountain Range E**. They wrote Vieux Grand Port, Lion Mountain or Flacq Range.

**Item (b)**

Many more candidates were expected to identify the 'Central Plateau, the broad relief feature shaded in the central part of Mauritius. Candidates were not awarded one mark for giving answers such as 'Centre', 'Centra Plato' or 'plateaux'. Some candidates wrote 'Central Ridge', a wrong answer.

**Item (c)**

Some candidates had some difficulty in identifying feature **K** as a 'plain' or Plaine Saint Pierre. Candidates should practise reading the symbols provided in a key for a relief map more regularly. The word 'plain' was sometimes wrongly spelt: 'plan', 'plane', 'plaint' etc. Inaccurate answers such as 'Saint Pierre' or 'flat land' were not credited with any mark.

**Item (d)**

This item was not always well attempted. Many candidates confused **River L**, Rivière du Poste (option **C**) with Grand River South East (option **A**).

**Item (e)**

This part was fairly well done. Some candidates did not understand the command word 'shade', a basic map skill. They did not shade any area at all.

**Item (f)**

This was well attempted by candidates. A range of acceptable answers was given for the name of one dormant volcano in Mauritius.

**Question 4**

It assessed knowledge of important natural features shown in Map **2**, a world map. It consisted of five parts and carried 6 marks. It was well attempted by candidates across the whole ability range.

**Part (a)**

The three mountain ranges were labeled **A**, **B** and **C** on **Map 2**. Candidates were asked to identify the 'Himalayas'. It was well answered.

**Part (b)**

Candidates were required to mark the Atlantic Ocean with letter **X**. It proved to be difficult for many candidates to mark it correctly. Some candidates marked **X** in the Pacific Ocean. Others marked **X** above the Arctic Circle ($66 1/2^0$ N). Some candidates could not make the difference between continents and oceans.

**Part (c)**

Candidates were asked to shade the continent of South America. This was fairly well done. Some candidates did not understand the command word 'shade' and did not attempt the part question. Candidates who wrote the name on the continent were also awarded the mark.  Some candidates shaded Australia or Africa.

**Part (d)**

It was well attempted mainly by the high achievers. There were a few spelling mistakes (e.g. Neil, Niel, Neel, Nil, Nail, Nille). Candidates should be encouraged to spell the names of the main geographical features shown on a world map correctly.

**Part (e)**

Letter **P** on **Map 2** showed the location of the Great Barrier Reef Nature Reserve.
Candidates were required to explain why it was important to protect this natural site. Again, this was well attempted mostly by high achievers who gave a range of relevant answers.  The most common ones were 'it is the habitat of many aquatic animals', 'it is of great environmental value', 'it attracts many tourists. A few excellent answers focused on

its importance as a major world heritage site and that it should be conserved for future generations.

'It is historic', 'it is beautiful', 'for tourists', 'it is in danger', 'it interests people' were considered vague answers and were awarded a partial mark.

**Question 5**

It carried a total of 6 marks and assessed the topic 'rainfall' in two-part questions. Part (a) consisted of 3 items which were based on a map of Rodrigues showing isohyets and part (b) was set on the formation of convectional rain.

**Part question (a)**

Part question (a) assessed knowledge and understanding of rainfall distribution in Rodrigues based on **Map 3**.

Item (i)    Candidates were required to complete a sentence on the definition of isohyets. It was well attempted by high achievers. Average candidates could not always write the term 'isohyets' correctly.

Item (ii)    Most candidates ticked correctly the box 'more than 1200 mm' for the amount of rainfall at La Ferme.  The ability to read a map of isohyets is an important skill which all candidates should be encouraged to acquire.

Item (iii)    To answer this item, candidates had to interpret correctly the location of Citronelle and Port Mathurin on **Map 3**.  They had to think about one reason why Citronelle receives more rainfall than Port Mathurin. The correct explanation is in the relationship between height of land/altitude and rainfall. Examples of correct answers were 'Citronelle is found on higher land', 'Citronelle is found on the Central Ridge', 'Port Mathurin is found on lowlands'. The idea that 'Citronelle is found on the windward side' does not offer a correct explanation of the difference in the amount of rainfall.  Therefore, the comparison between 'windward' and 'leeward' location (though 'Port Mathurin is in fact on the leeward side') was not acceptable. Candidates should avoid writing that 'Citronelle is found on the Central Plateau'. This was a Geography question on Rodrigues.

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**Part question (b)**

Most candidates could give a valid reason why we do not have convectional rain at night though some could not express their ideas fully. Examples of correct answers were: 'the ground does not get heated at night and the air does not rise' and 'there is no sun to heat the ground'.

Many candidates obtained a partial mark for giving weaker answers such as 'there is no sun', 'no heat or 'no sunlight' got only one mark.  Many candidates could not express their ideas clearly (e.g. 'it occurs in summer' and 'the night is cold' or 'evaporation does not occur at night'.)

Some attempted to give a definition of the term 'convectional rain'. This may be due to their inability to read the question properly with understanding.

**Question 6**

This question carried 9 marks. It assessed knowledge of History, especially about the French and Dutch periods in the 18$^{th}$ century. It comprised four-part questions and was well attempted mainly by high achieving candidates.

**Part question (a)**

This part question was generally well answered by high achievers. Average candidates could not express their ideas clearly. Some gave only one- or two-word answers. It was important to develop agriculture in Ile de France to 'produce food/more food' or 'because the number of settlers/slaves or the population was increasing', or 'to supply food to ships/sailors'. Examples of weaker answers were: 'to feed', 'food', 'to have money'. Some candidates attempted to give the definition of agriculture or wrote about high price of spices, to prevent soil erosion etc. It is important for candidates to read a question well before writing their answers. Beyond the historical context, it is also important to make them realise that agriculture is developed primarily for food production.

**Part question (b)**

It was a completion type item. Candidates were required to give the name of the country from which Ile de France imported rice and cattle. Most candidates could not give the correct answer 'Madagascar'. They thought of Rodrigues, Reunion and India.  Some

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spelling mistakes were noted: 'Magascar'. 'Madamascar', 'Madascar'.

**Part question (c)**

Part (c) (i)    This was a matching type question. Candidates were required to match each plant in column A to its geographical origin in Column B. One example was provided. It was well attempted.

Part (c)(ii)    Candidates were told that the *ayapana* is a medicinal plant brought from Brazil. They were asked to name one illness for which it is commonly used. Only a few were able to name one illness such as fever, colds, colic/colitis, gastric/gastritis, nausea and vomiting/indigestion.   Most candidates probably retained only the geographical origin, Brazil, rather than the medical use of the plant.

Some candidates named one 'organ' or part of the body. Some wrote their answers in French or in Creole. Some others visibly did not understand the question. They named another medicinal plant which was brought to Ile de France such as 'citronelle/ lemon grass'. Candidates should take time to read a question carefully to be sure what is being asked.

**Part question (d)**

This part question was set on the Dutch settlement. Candidates were required to give two reasons why the Dutch left Mauritius in 1710. It was well tackled mainly by the high achievers who gave a range of relevant answers such as 'cyclones destroyed their crops'/'because of damage by cyclones', 'they had no food', 'rats ate their crops', 'because they feared to be attacked by maroon slaves' etc. To enhance learning for average learners, a range of activities/tasks can be used on this topic: storytelling, role play, picture-based study, video films, and cartoons.

This has to be complemented by short answer writing. Heavy reliance on rote learning might not be the best strategy to answer questions assessing knowledge with understanding in History. As an enrichment activity, pupils could also be taught that the Dutch had developed the Cape colony in South Africa and the cutting of ebony wood for export to Europe declined.

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## Question 7

This question carried 7 marks and assessed knowledge and skills on the topic 'Temperature' in Unit 4, Weather and Climate. It was based on **Table 1** which showed three stations, their altitude and average temperature in January. The skills which were assessed were the abilities to re-arrange the order of the three stations, their height and temperature in a new table and to deduce how the temperature varies with altitude (height of the land above sea level in metres).

### Part question (a)

It was well attempted by candidates.  It was a direct question based on observation of **Table 1.** Some candidates did not name the station, Curepipe but gave 550m or 22.5$^0$C.

### Part question (b)

Candidates were expected to re-arrange correctly the stations in a new table starting with the station having the lowest altitude. The station of Curepipe was done for them. Two marks were awarded for writing in the correct order each of the two other stations (Port Louis and F.U.E.L) with its correct altitude and temperature in the table. This was fairly well tackled by candidates who had developed the skills of re-ordering or re-arranging information on altitude and temperature at different weather stations to deduce a relationship between these two factors. Other candidates found the task quite difficult. They tended to 're-arrange' the information randomly without following the instruction. Some candidates were confused because of the decimal point in the temperature (22.5$^0$C, 27.0$^0$C, 25.5$^0$C).

### Part question (c)

Many candidates did not obtain the 2 marks awarded to this part of the question. They had some difficulty to write about the relationship between altitude and temperature. Frequent answers which lacked precision such as 'different places have different temperature', 'height affects temperature', temperature and altitude are not the same', 'it is cooler at Curepipe' were awarded a partial mark (1 mark).  Vague answers such as 'altitude is increasing', 'temperature is low', 'temperature and altitude are different' could not be given any mark.

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**Question 8**

This question comprised four parts and carried 8 marks. Part questions (a) and (b) assessed 'knowledge and understanding' of the French Settlement. Part questions (c) and (d) assessed knowledge of the importance of fortifications in Port Louis and the contribution of the first British Governor Farquhar towards the inhabitants. It was fairly well attempted by candidates.

**Part (a)**

It was well answered by candidates. Most of them identified Governor Maupin as the governor who decided to make Port Louis the main harbour of Ile de France.

**Part (b)**

It was well attempted by few candidates who showed a good understanding of the question and the advantage of the location of Port Louis compared to that of Grand Port in relation to the prevailing wind. It is worthwhile to stress that during the French settlement; the sailing ship was the means of transport which linked Ile de France to other parts of the world. Examples of relevant answers were 'Port Louis was protected/sheltered from the S.E.T W by the Moka Range', 'Grand Port was not protected against the S.E.T.W and it was difficult for ships to leave the harbour', 'Port Louis was a safer harbour', ' there were no coral reefs in the bay of Port Louis', 'there was a narrow channel and sand banks in the Bay of Grand Port'.

Sometimes the ideas of candidates were too vague lacking in depth and precision or comparison skills. They gave answers such as 'because of the S.E.T.W', 'no narrow passes', 'no coral reefs' and 'Grand Port was unsafe'. These answers were given only one mark. Irrelevant answers were due to lack of understanding of the question. Some candidates confused the topic and learning outcome with the Battle of Grand Port. Some candidates also wrote on the development of Port Louis by Labourdonnais.

**Part (c)**

 (i)     It was based on **Picture 1** which showed a fort in Port Louis. Many candidates were able to identify 'Fort Adelaide'/'Fort or La Citadelle'.
Spelling mistakes were quite common.

(ii)     It was well answered mainly by the high achievers. The fort was built for defence purposes against external enemies, that is to protect Port Louis/ the island against any attack. Its location provided a good view of the port as well as of the whole town. Only one mark was given to a one word answer such as 'defence'/ 'defend'. Average candidates encountered difficulties in writing their answers clearly. For example, 'to protek from enemise', 'to attack enmies', 'to protect themselves' and 'to attack the French'. One common wrong answer was 'training of soldiers'/ 'to house soldiers.

## Part (d)

This part question was generally well answered by the higher ability candidates who had learnt and revised well about various advantages were provided to the inhabitants of Mauritius by the first British governor Farquhar.

Besides the traditional answers such as 'they were allowed to keep their language/traditions/culture/lands/property/religion' etc., other answers such as 'he encouraged the cultivation of sugar cane', 'he built better roads', and 'they were allowed to live in peace' were also accepted.