



PSAC 2017

Grade 5 History & Geography

Mauritius

Subject Code **No.P142/1**

Examiners' Report

MAURITIUS EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE

March 2018

HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Subject Code No.P142/1

Key Messages

- Candidates must be encouraged to
 - read items and questions carefully, paying more attention to key words to understand the full meaning of questions
 - use the school atlas to locate and name physical features in Mauritius and Rodrigues
 - develop observation and use inquiry skills to develop the ability to read and interpret maps, tables, diagrams, and photographs
 - work with tables of comparison and examples and non-examples to develop understanding of concepts
 - practise writing on open ended questions assessing understanding and application of knowledge more regularly
 - check their spelling well and revise their answers after they have finished writing.

General Comments

The year 2017 is a landmark for the end of primary cycle assessment in the context of the introduction of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE). It was the first year of the introduction of the PSAC Assessment and the year of transition for the implementation of the **modular assessment at Grade 5 and Grade 6**. The modular assessment at Grade 5 covered what was taught and learnt in the curriculum of Grade 5. The question paper is of a duration of 1 hour. It carries a total of 50 marks. In 2017, it contained seven questions of different formats. The design in terms of the assessment objectives to be assessed in the question paper are as follows:

- Knowledge - 30%
- Understanding – 40%
- Application and specific subject skills – 30%

The performance was satisfactory. The mean mark was 27. Quite a large number of candidates achieved Grade 1, the highest grade (38 to 50 marks). The majority achieved Grade 2 to Grade 5 levels, that is they scored between 15 and 37 marks.

The scripts of the high achieving candidates showed well developed and clearly written answers which reflected a good grasp of the content and skills in the subject and high standards of learning.

Most candidates performed well on the items/questions assessing knowledge. These were mainly in the form of fixed answer type/closed responses. However, all candidates could not tackle with the same success the items/questions which were assessing the higher order skills of understanding and application.

Some candidates faced difficulties when they were required to show understanding of climate change, its effects and how they can be reduced.

They also lacked the necessary skills to interpret information presented in various formats and apply knowledge in context:

- Climate graph (question 6)
- Picture interpretation (Question 7)
- Reading and interpretation of Map 3 (Question 7)

To improve performance in structured short answer questions, it is advised to develop the skills of working with information presented in different forms (narratives, pictures, maps, tables and graphs) and to use the inquiry approach and case studies to reach a deeper understanding of the topics and subtopics.

Specific Comments

Question 1

Question 1 comprised 4 multiple-choice items which assessed knowledge and understanding of History. It carried 4 marks. It was well attempted by most candidates.

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|---------------|---|
| Item 1 | It was well answered by candidates. |
| Item 2 | It proved to be difficult. The term 'century' was not well understood by some candidates. The year 1598, first landing of the Dutch sailors, was in the 16 th century. |
| Item 3 | Mostly well answered by the high achieving candidates. There was some confusion between China and Brazil. |
| Item 4 | Candidates did not master the meaning of terms grain store, warehouse and windmill. There was some confusion between the use of a windmill and that of a grain store. |

Question 2

A question related to the classification of natural and man-made features. It carried 8 marks.

Part (a) it was very well attempted by candidates.

Part (b) (i) it was fairly well done by candidates. They could easily identify the coastal features labelled Y and Z. Some copying mistakes were noted.

Part (b) (ii) Candidates were required to give one reason why it is important to protect our sandy beaches. Difficulty in expressing answers clearly in complete sentences was noted. A wide variety of answers was given.

Question 3

This question was based on a map of Mauritius showing the relief features.

It carried 8 marks.

Part (a) (i) and (ii)

This part question required candidates to study map 1 carefully.

Though they could identify the relief feature, they had difficulty in writing the word 'valley'.

Most of them could observe that GRSE flows between Blanche Mountains and Grand Port Range.

Part (b)

Some candidates forgot to attempt to attempt this question.

Part (c)

It assessed the ability of candidates to identify the oldest relief feature in Mauritius.

Part (d)

A wide range of answers was given by candidates. This shows that candidates knew well the names of dormant volcanoes. Some of them had difficulties in writing the names correctly.

Part (e)

It was fairly well attempted by candidates.

Question 4

It was a short story about the Dutch sailor Pieter Both. It carried 4 marks. Candidates were expected to read the story and fill in the blanks with words given.

Some candidates attempted well this question. Other candidates could not read and understand the text. A few spelling and copying mistakes were noted. This is a new question format which may be used for the assessment of History.

Question 5

This question shows a map about the movement of Portuguese and Dutch sailors in the past. It demanded candidates to show good map reading skills. It carried 7 marks.

Part (a) (i)

The correct answer was option B, Holland and was well answered by candidates across the ability range. However, option C, Portugal attracted some candidates.

Part (a) (ii) the map was correctly labelled with the names Persia and East Indies by average and high ability candidates. However, some candidates did not attempt the question and left the boxes blank.

Part (b) a wide range of answers was given by candidates. However, the names of spices were not always correctly written. For example, gloves and cinmon.

Candidates should be encouraged to write such names in English to score full marks.

Part (c) Only few candidates could give two ways in which people used spices long ago. A wide variety of uses was given. Some candidates came up with imaginative answers such as cosmetics and ayurvedic medicine.

Question 6

It carried 10 marks and assessed the topic 'weather and climate'.

Sub-question 1

It assessed the ability of candidates to read and interpret a climate graph showing temperature and rainfall.

Part (a) (i) and (ii)

These two items were true or false items based on the climate graph. The two items were fairly well attempted by candidates

Part (b)

Performance was not up to expectations on this question. It was expected that more candidates would have been able to identify the month of February on the rainfall graph.

Sub-question 2

Many candidates did not make any comparison in their answers. It proved to be a rather difficult question. Candidates should be encouraged to develop comparison skills while studying these two types of rainfall.

Sub-question 3

It assessed the candidates' understanding of the causes and effects of climate change.

Part (a)

Some candidates confused between the pollution of the atmosphere and pollution of the environment.

Part (b)

Candidates who understood well the effects of climate change were able to answer this question. It is very important to develop a good understanding of how climate change is affecting our daily lives across the whole ability range.

Question 7

It assessed the knowledge and understanding of two History topics and carried 9 marks.

Sub-question 1

This question was about the achievements of French Governor Mahé de Labourdonnais concerning the development of agriculture in Ile de France.

Part (a)

It was fairly easy for candidates. Still, some of them ticked Port Louis instead of Pamplemousses. Proper reading of such a question is very important.

Part (b)

Some candidates wrote on the achievement of Pierre Poivre rather than that of Labourdonnais. Other candidates wrote about the achievements of Labourdonnais in other areas than agriculture. A few candidates even mentioned the SSR Botanical Garden.

Sub-question 2

It was based on **Map 3** and assessed how the British captured the Mascarene Islands. It was a question related to map reading and interpretation of a timeline.

Part (a)

It was well attempted by candidates.

Part (b)

It proved to be a challenging question which was well answered by few candidates. Some candidates encountered difficulties to answer this question because they paid no heed to the timeline. Some candidates mentioned 'sailors' instead of 'soldiers' in an answer such as 'there were no sailors in Rodrigues'. More emphasis should be laid on the advantages for the British troops to capture Rodrigues Island first.

Part (c)

The high flyers performed well whereas other candidates did not score full marks as they did not use the timeline properly. The sequence and chronology of events are important aspects to be considered in a timeline.

Some candidates gave only the year and not the month and were therefore not awarded full marks.

