



PSAC 2019

Grade 6 Modular Assessment History & Geography

Subject code: **P142/2**

Examiners' Report

Mauritius Examinations Syndicate
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Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- read key words related to time sequence carefully, e.g. **before, during, after, first**;
- interpret maps, graphs, and diagrams properly;
- learn about the contribution of settlers, slaves and Indian as well as Chinese immigrants;
- visit, locate and name historical sites, monuments and museums on a map of Mauritius and Rodrigues;
- regularly practise writing answers to short answer questions.

General Comments

The History & Geography Grade 6 modular paper was based on the learning outcomes of the MIE Teaching & Learning Syllabus for Grade 6. It consisted of 8 questions which assessed basic skills as well as higher order skills such as reasoning, interpreting maps and diagrams and the application of their knowledge. The total mark for this paper is 50.

On the whole, the performance of candidates was quite good. 74.6% of the candidates achieved at least grade 5. The mean mark for the paper was 27. Candidates performed well on the multiple-choice items in Question 1. They also made a good attempt at answering the Geography Questions - Questions 2, 5 and 7. However, sub-question 2.2, part (b), proved to be particularly difficult. It assessed the knowledge of one condition for the formation of a tropical cyclone. For Part (c), it was expected that more candidates would be able to give two precautions to be taken **after** a tropical cyclone. Some candidates wrote incorrectly about precautions to be taken **before** and **during** a tropical cyclone. Learning strategies should be devised for candidates to avoid confusion between precautions to be taken before, during and after a tropical cyclone. For example, a table could be designed and some examples of precautions to be taken given for each period.

The History questions – Questions 3, 4 and 8 proved to be quite challenging to some candidates. Question 4 assessed knowledge and understanding of Chinese immigration at the end of the French period (18th century) and during the British period (19th century). It was not well-answered in general. One particular difficulty which they encountered was the ability to differentiate between aspects of Chinese settlement at the end of the 18th century in Ile de France (French period) and aspects of Chinese settlement during the British period in the 19th century in Mauritius. It is important for learners to know that

‘China Town’ started to develop in Port Louis at the end of the French period and that the settlement of most Chinese immigrants in the 19th century was on and near sugar estates and in villages mainly.

Specific Comments

Question 1

This question comprised seven multiple-choice items which assessed knowledge of Geography and History for a total of 7 marks. It was fairly well attempted by candidates.

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| Item 1 | It was well answered. Candidates were required to identify the type of land use shown in Picture 1. The type of land use devoted to sports activities, a stadium, is recreational land use. |
| Item 2 | Most candidates were able to choose the correct answer, mixed farming, from the four different types of farming. |
| Item 3 | This item was set on ecotourism. It proved to be slightly difficult. Some candidates could not often identify national parks and opted for museums or monuments. It is worth emphasizing the difference between ecotourism and heritage tourism. |
| Item 4 | It was generally well answered by candidates. Most of them were able to select the correct definition of an earthquake. |
| Item 5 | The item was set on the monthly payment of indentured labourers. Most candidates correctly chose Rs 5 as the answer. |
| Item 6 | It assessed the ability of candidates to recall the year when the British took possession of Mauritius. Most candidates were able to identify 1810 correctly. |
| Item 7 | Performance on this item was below expectations. Though many candidates identified Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo as the first President of the Republic of Mauritius, a good proportion of candidates wrongly opted for Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam. |

Question 2

This question was set on the topic 'Natural Hazards'. Sub-question 1 was based on a diagram showing the occurrence of a tsunami. It carried 4 marks. Sub-question 2 was based on a map showing the track of cyclones which affected Mauritius and Rodrigues in the past. It carried a total of 5 marks.

Sub-question 1

This question assessed knowledge and understanding of a tsunami using a diagram which showed the approach of a tsunami towards a coastal area.

Part (a) required candidates to fill in the blanks in two sentences with appropriate words.

No list of words was given.

A large number of candidates was able to complete the first sentence on the definition of a tsunami with the word '**wave**'.

Fewer candidates were able to recall that a tsunami is caused by a powerful **earthquake** below the ocean floor. Candidates who wrote 'shaking of the earth' were also awarded one mark. However, the word 'shaking' only could not be given any mark.

Part (b): Candidates were required to give one reason why **area X** in **Diagram 1** would be affected by the tsunami. Many candidates interpreted the diagram correctly and stated that **area X** is found on the coast or in a coastal area. Some excellent answers linked the movement and speed of the huge wave as it was approaching a coastal area, thus resulting in serious damage to **area X**.

Sub-question 2

This question was based on a map which showed the track of four tropical cyclones which affected the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues in the past. Parts (a) and (c) were better answered than part(b).

Part (a) (i): The majority of candidates identified cyclone Bella as the one which passed near Rodrigues in January 1991. This showed a good acquisition of map reading skills in terms of location.

Part (ii): Candidates were asked in which direction cyclone Céline moved **after** passing over Rodrigues. Unfortunately, many candidates were not able to read the direction of cyclone Céline along its track correctly. The correct answer was South–East.

Part (b): Candidates were required to give one condition that can give rise to the formation of tropical cyclones. It proved to be difficult to many. Only the best performing candidates were able to provide a relevant answer such as high ocean/sea temperatures in summer. Some of these candidates even mentioned the development of low-pressure areas over the oceans in summer. Unfortunately, vague answers such as ‘hot climate’, ‘hot/high temperature’, ‘heat of the sun increases temperature’ and ‘heat waves’ could not be given credit.

Part (c): Candidates were required to describe two precautions to be taken **after** the passage of a tropical cyclone. In general, it was not well attempted, probably because many candidates could not give two relevant answers. They got confused about precautions to be taken before, during and after a cyclone probably because they were asked to give two precautions. This reveals a weakness in their understanding of preparedness before, during and after the occurrence of the natural hazard. Examples of relevant answers were: boiling water before drinking, not consuming/eating fallen fruits, avoiding going near flooded rivers and not touching fallen electric wires. However, some candidates had a tendency of listing precautions to be taken **before** and **during** the passage of a tropical cyclone. For example, ‘to stay indoor’ or ‘we must clean our yard’ is not relevant (unless the reason such as to prevent accumulation of stagnant water is given for the latter).

Question 3

This question was based on the expansion of sugar cane cultivation in Mauritius after the arrival of Indian workers in the 19th century. It carried a total of five (5) marks. Candidates answered part (a) which was based on **Diagram 2**, a graph showing the area under sugar cane cultivation, better than part (b) which was set on the definition of the term ‘immigrant’.

Part (a) (i): It was based on the ability to read information provided in the graph. This was tackled successfully. Most candidates gave correctly 30,000 hectares for 1830.

Part (a) (ii): Candidates were asked to give one reason why many Indian workers were brought by the British after 1840. To gain full marks, the emphasis should have been on

the fact that **more** workers were needed to cultivate the land or to increase the production of sugar.

Candidates were also awarded marks when they mentioned that slavery was abolished in 1835 and the British needed to replace them by a cheap source of labour.

However, many candidates obtained only a partial mark by stating one work that Indian workers did on the sugar cane plantations (e.g. to clear the land).

Part (b): This question assessed the meaning of the term 'immigrant'. Fewer candidates were able to answer this part question. Examples of correct answers were: 'someone who left their country to live in another country with the hope to have a better life', 'an immigrant is a worker/person who comes to work/settle in a country from another country'. Therefore, it was not necessary for candidates to add the reason for moving from one country to another such as 'it was for a better living/better life' to gain full marks. However, two marks were also given for a definition such as 'a person who comes /goes to a country/our island to stay/get a better life'. In this case, no mention was made that 'the person leaves his country'. Answers such as 'a person leaves his country' or 'a person goes to another country' were given partial credit.

Question 4

This question was set on the settlement of Chinese immigrants during two distinct periods, at the end of the 18th century and in the 19th century. It carried a total of 6 marks. On the whole, the performance of candidates was below expectations.

Part (a) (i): Fewer candidates than expected were able to give the answer 'Canton' or 'Guangzhou' correctly. Spelling mistakes were quite common.

Part (a) (ii): Candidates were asked to name two jobs carried out by the Chinese immigrants in China Town at the end of the 18th century. Most of the time, they could name only one of these jobs: blacksmith, carpenters, tradesmen, masons, tailors. Some answers were also written in French or Creole, e.g. 'ferblantier'.

Part (b) (i): For this part, many candidates confused the British period with the end of the French period concerning the Chinese settlement and ended up writing Port- Louis and China Town. The correct answers were rural areas, on or near sugar estates and in villages.

Part (b) (ii): The most common answers were selling/ buying foodstuffs or obtaining credit facilities. They settled as shopkeepers and indentured labourers could buy items from them. Weaker answers such as “sold things/bought things or food items” only were awarded one mark. Some candidates had a tendency to use the word ‘us’ in their answers instead of thinking about indentured labourers in the past.

QUESTION 5

This question assessed map reading and interpretation skills on the topic land use. It was based on a grid map showing different types of land use in one part of Mauritius. It carried a total of 6 marks. Candidates performed fairly well on this question.

Part (a) (i): Candidates were required to name the type of land use in Section **A2** of the grid map. Most of them were able to identify residential type of land use. Candidates could not be given credit for writing ‘house’ only. Housing was an acceptable answer.

Part (a) (ii): This part was also generally well answered. Candidates were able to identify the location of the commercial centre, section **B4**. Some candidates answered 4B instead of B4. They should be encouraged to locate features on a grid map using the proper convention.

Part (a) (iii): This question provided candidates with opportunities to think of one valid reason why no road was built in Section **D4**. They came up with a range of relevant answers such as ‘for the conservation of the nature park’, ‘to preserve the natural environment’ and ‘it is used for recreation purposes’ etc. Answers which simply identified the nature park on the map were not credited with any mark.

Part (b) asked candidates to give one reason for the decrease in the area of sugar cane cultivation in Mauritius. Candidates who could apply good reasoning and writing skills came up with a range of relevant and interesting answers. Examples of relevant answers were related to changes in land use or conversion to another type of land use, loss of revenue/income in the sugar/ agricultural sector, higher costs of production, low profitability of the sugar industry, the loss of overseas markets and the fall in sugar prices on the world market.

QUESTION 6

This was a topical question which assessed candidate's knowledge about the Coat of Arms of Mauritius. It carried a total of six (6) marks.

Part (a) (i): Most candidates easily identified one animal found on the Coat of Arms of Mauritius. Dodo and deer/stag were the two correct answers.

Part (a) (ii): Candidates were required to give the meaning of the motto 'Stella Clavisque Maris Indici' on the Coat of Arms of Mauritius. It was quite satisfactorily answered. Candidates who wrote 'star and key' gained only one mark.

Part (a) (iii): Most candidates correctly identified sugar cane or palm trees.

Part (b): This part of the question proved to be more challenging for candidates. They were required to think about the importance of having a Coat of Arms as a symbol representing our country. Examples of correct answers were: it develops a sense of belonging, it develops a sense of pride/honour, 'it distinguishes a country from another country'. Candidates should be discouraged from writing 'it is part of our history' as an answer. A better answer would have been 'it/the features remind(s) us of the history of our island'. A good interpretation would have been 'it shows the strategic importance of our island (in this part of the world)'.

QUESTION 7

This question assessed the understanding of the concepts 'environmental pollution' and 'sustainability'. It carried a total of 7 marks. Part (a) aimed at assessing candidate's knowledge and understanding of one type of pollution, its harmful effects and ways to reduce it. It was based on a picture which showed air pollution caused by a factory. Part (b) was set on what is household waste and ways it could be put to good use to protect the environment. Many candidates attempted this question satisfactorily. Yet, it was obvious that the less able candidates faced linguistic difficulties - reading with understanding and limited ability to write their answers in English.

Part (a) (i): The majority of candidates was able to identify air pollution from the picture.

Part (a) (ii): Candidates were required to give one harmful effect of the type of pollution shown in **Picture 3** on people's health. Many candidates answered this question correctly.

The most frequent answer was ‘people can get/have lung cancer/diseases’ or ‘people get respiratory/breathing problems.’

It should be noted that spelling mistakes could have been avoided for the respiratory diseases mentioned. E.g. bronchitis, asthma, breathing problems.

Part (a) (iii): Candidates were asked to suggest one way of reducing the type of pollution shown in **Picture 3**. The most common correct answer was ‘installation of air filters in the chimneys. A partial mark was given for an answer such as ‘stop burning bagasse’. A better answer was ‘to reduce the use of bagasse and use another renewable source of energy’. Examples of wrong answers were ‘to stop the factories’ or ‘to remove factories’.

Part (b): This part question was mainly about how we should act in a sustainable manner by not throwing waste in the environment.

Part (b) (i): Many candidates were able to give one example of a household waste. Answers ranged from garbage such as vegetables/ fruit peels to all sorts of waste material due to household consumption such as plastics bottles, aluminum cans etc. A common spelling mistake which could have been avoided was ‘*fruit/banana pille/pilli/peal!*’ instead of ‘peels’.

Part (b) (ii): Candidates gave a range of interesting and relevant answers. They also showed a sound knowledge of recycling, re-use/ re-using and composting. A good example of sound understanding of composting in a candidate’s own words was: ‘vegetable peels can be used to make natural fertiliser’. No credit was given to one of the 3 Rs, namely ‘reduce’. The question was on one way to put waste into a good use. Reducing the amount of it is not a correct answer.

QUESTION 8

Candidates were required to complete a table with the location (place) and importance of museums/monuments/historical sites. One example was provided. It carried a total of 4 marks.

Many candidates could not give the exact location of the François Leguat Monument, that is Port Mathurin. They simply wrote ‘Rodrigues’ whereas it was already stated that this monument reminds us of the first settlement in Rodrigues.

Candidates remembered the importance of the Aapravasi Ghat as the landing place of the first Indian workers/indentured labourers.

The location of the Fort Frederik Hendrik Museum also proved problematic to candidates. They confused Vieux Grand Port with Ferney, the first landing site of the Dutch.

The last part of this question required candidates to write about the importance of the monument at Pointe Canon. Many candidates were able to relate the monument to the importance of remembering/commemorating the abolition of slavery.