

C A R I B B E A N E X A M I N A T I O N S C O U N C I L

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

MAY/JUNE 2008

HOME ECONOMICS: MANAGEMENT

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GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS
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GENERAL COMMENTS

The Caribbean Examinations council administered its twenty-seventh examination of the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate of Home Economics Management in May 2008. The General proficiency included **three** components: Paper 01 - Multiple Choice, Paper 02 - Structured Essays and Paper 3 - School- Based Assessment.

Paper 01 – Multiple Choice

This paper consisted of **sixty** items, thirty of which tested the candidates' knowledge. Thirty items tested the use of knowledge. Candidates' performance was satisfactory. The mean mark was 34.7 out of a possible maximum of 60. The marks ranged from 1 to 54.

Paper 02 – Structured Essay Questions

This paper consisted of two parts. Part A comprised three compulsory questions while Part B comprised **four** questions from which candidates were required to choose **TWO**. Candidates were required to answer a total of **FIVE** questions. Questions in both parts were each worth sixteen marks; six marks were awarded to the Knowledge profile while 10 marks were awarded to the Use of Knowledge profile.

The maximum possible mark was 80 and the marks obtained ranged from 0 to 68. The mean mark was 33.3.

Paper 03 – School Based-Assessment

This paper the School-Based Assessment (SBA) consisted of **three** assignments testing practical skills. Each assignment is marked out of 20 and therefore the SBA is marked out of 60. The **first** and **third** assignments were set and assessed by the teachers. The **second** assignment was set by the teacher and assessed jointly by the teacher and an external examiner.

The mean mark on Paper 03 (SBA) was 45.2, with 60 as the highest mark.

DETAILED COMMENTS
Paper 02

Question 1

Question 1 was a compulsory question which focused on work and work ethics. It consisted of four (4) Parts: (a), (b), (c), and (d). Parts (a) and (b) tested candidates' knowledge while Parts (c) and (d) tested candidates' use of knowledge.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to identify **THREE** work habits that the sisters must possess in order to make the family business successful. In their responses, most candidates were able to identify the work habits while some candidates misinterpreted the question and made reference to work habits that Joe should possess and still others referred to the management processes instead. Popular correct responses that the candidates gave included:

- Cooperation
- Punctuality
- Regularity
- Tolerance and
- Ability to work hard

Common incorrect responses given by candidates included:

- The sisters should ensure that Joe comes to work early.
- Good health.
- Take pride in work.

In many instances, references were made to work habits that employees in general should possess rather than the sisters identified in the item.

In answering Part (b), candidates stated financial benefits even though the question asked specifically for **benefits other than improved earnings** that may be derived from the family business.

Correct responses given included:

- Bond of friendship
- Meeting basic needs and goals
- Work experience and
- Development of skills

Others gave inappropriate answers such as:

- Buy cars and open restaurants
- Export cakes

Based on some of the incorrect responses given by candidates, it is evident that candidates did not peruse the questions carefully and thoroughly.

Part (c) required that students suggest FOUR guidelines that may help Dawn to manage her health. This part was answered correctly by the majority of the candidates.

Correct responses given by candidates included:

- Eating balanced meals
- Exercising regularly
- Checking with the doctor
- Getting adequate rest
- Practicing good personal hygiene
- Drinking 8 glasses of water per day

Additionally, some candidates had more than one guideline relating to eating habits such as “eating balanced meals”, “eating healthy” and “eating on time”. In such cases, candidates were awarded just one mark.

Incorrect responses suggested by candidates included:

- Drinking liquid
- Having a shower
- Clean environment

Eating health foods was a popular response.

Part (d) stated that Liz wants to help Joe to understand the importance of his work in the family business. To achieve this objective, candidates were asked to outline THREE statements Liz can say to Joe. This part was answered incorrectly by a vast majority of the candidates as they did not give specific statements that would address Liz’s concern for Joe. Candidates found this part of the question challenging. Some candidates wrote the importance of work while others gave the characteristics of a good worker to answer this part of the question.

Correct responses given by some candidates included:

- Joe, if you do not come to work early and regular, you will be fired.
- Joe, if the cakes are not delivered, no money will be made.
- The business will lose customers if the cakes are not delivered on time.

Other candidates gave incorrect responses which were popular. These included:

- Do as I say because I am the oldest and I am in charge.
- Joe the importance of you in the family business can help you to buy one of your own.
- Think positive about what you want out of the family business.

This part of the question tested candidates' ability to use knowledge. Due to the large number of candidates giving incorrect responses, it can be concluded that students' analytical skills and critical thinking ability were not fully developed. It will help if candidates utilize information to solve different problems in real life situations when they arise. Hence candidates could use Role Play to experience and understand different activities.

Question 2

Question 2 was a compulsory question that tested candidate's knowledge on money management. Parts (a) (i) and (ii) tested candidates' ability to define the terms 'gross income' and 'net income' respectively. Parts (b) (i) and (ii) required candidates to give one (1) example of fixed expenditure and one example of flexible expenditure, respectively. Part (c) tested candidates' knowledge of the statement 'Money serves as a store of value.'

Parts (a) (i) and (ii) in particular, was fairly well done. However, in some instances candidates were unable to define some key terms. Examples: 'gross income'- before tax and 'net income'- after tax. Some candidates defined net income as 'when you earn money by selling things through the net' or 'things you get through the net' or 'getting money over the net without stress' or 'gross income is earned annually and net income is earned monthly or fortnightly.' Many candidates interchanged the definitions of gross and net income.

Parts (b) (i) and (ii), in particular, were generally well done, although a few candidates gave the definitions for fixed and flexible expenditures instead of giving an example of each. Even in instances when both definitions and examples were given, the examples were incorrect. Some candidates interpreted fixed and flexible expenditure in terms of the "bank accounts" or "an individual's ability to do more than one tasks."

Part (c) required an explanation of the statement 'money serves as a store of value'. Few candidates answered this part fairly well. The majority of candidates did not demonstrate an understanding of the concept, "money serves as a store of value" and basically repeated the phrase or merely gave definitions of the term 'money'. Some common errors or vague responses were:

- "because if you don't earn money, you cannot serve your store to get value"
- "a store for selling goods and services".
- "legal tender for the purchase of goods and services"

In Part (d) (i), candidates were given a scenario depicting a family's budget. Candidates were required to review the steps that Mr. John followed to prepare the budget and identify four errors in the budget preparation. Most of the candidates understood this part of the question and answered it fairly well. However, a number of candidates gave responses such as, "education was not catered for" and "he put his needs before his family's needs." A few candidates also prepared a written budget and identified the steps instead of the identifying the errors in Mr. Johns budget preparation. Some candidates wrote recommendations instead of the errors in the budget preparation.

Part (d) (ii) required candidates to state two problems the family might encounter as a result of the budget. The majority of candidates were able to respond satisfactorily saying "bankruptcy", "bills may not get paid"

and “family goals may not be achieved”. Some candidates wrote errors in budgeting instead of problems that the family might encounter. A popular incorrect response was “family conflict” as a problem.

Question 3

Question 3 was a compulsory question which tested candidate’s knowledge of the accidents and safety practices in the home. Parts (a) (i), (ii) and (iii) required candidates to identify one different type of accident that frequently occurs in the laundry room, bathroom and staircase.

The majority of candidates did not write three **different** types of accidents. The responses focused on falls, slides, skating, and drop which were all the same. Candidates failed to recognize that the question mentioned three “**different ...frequently occurring**” accidents. Some candidates listed drowning in the bathroom as a frequent accident. Candidates were asked to **list** the accidents, but instead of listing the accidents they described the causes of the accident. Examples: “Something was left on the floor and they drop.” “Don’t allow the water to fall from the bathtub, you will slip and break your hand.” Correct responses should have included; falls, shock or electrocution, cuts or bruises, poisoning and suffocation.

Part (b) required candidates to outline one safety practice that family members should observe in order to prevent each type of accident identified in (a) above. Many candidates were unable to outline fully the safety practices, instead they focused on the causes of accidents. For example, “Do not allow children to play with toys on the staircase” and “Toys all over the steps” were some of the responses given. In addition they described the accidents, rather than outline them.

Correct responses included:

- Keep poisonous substances out of the reach of children.
- Do not touch plugs and electrical appliances with wet hands.
- Wipe up spills immediately.
- Remove sharp objects from clothes.
- Use chemicals as directed.

Part (c) (i) of the question required candidates to formulate appropriate safety rules to be placed on the wall near the ironing board. Generally the candidates handled this section very well as most of them were able to formulate at least two correct safety rules. For example:

- Do not leave iron plugged in and unattended
- Switch off iron and unplug after use
- Don’t plug iron in or out with wet hands

Few candidates misinterpreted the question and placed the emphasis on rules for the ironing board rather than rules for the iron. Examples include:

- Close ironing board after use.
- Store ironing board out of the reach of children.
- Ironing board should be firm and strong.

For Part (c) (ii), candidates were asked to explain two ways the family could benefit from having an iron with the following features; thermostat control and insulated handle. Many candidates gave incorrect responses such as, “Thermostat saves electricity” and “the iron turns off automatically”. For the insulated handle a few candidates wrote answers such as it prevents the family from getting shock; it can control the different movement of the iron; it gives a firmer grip. Some candidates did not respond to this part of the question.

Question 4

Question 4 tested candidates’ knowledge on values and attitudes. While it was a popular optional question, it was poorly done by most candidates. Part (a) required candidates to state the relationship between values

and behaviour. Few candidates gave correct responses for the relationship between values and behaviour. The correct responses were “values are personal beliefs or principles which form a basis for behaviour; values are revealed in attitudes, interest and actions or behaviours; behaviour reflects values. Values influence behaviour. Many candidates related Nona’s disrespect to her grandmother as having no value or behaviour. “Behaviour and values is one cousin” was another response. The majority of the candidates defined both concepts separately without showing the relationship. Some candidates confused the concept ‘behaviour’ with ‘values’.

In Part (b), candidates were asked to explain the ways in which a community could help to instil positive values in **young people**; instead they gave ways in which positive values could be instilled in Nona. Candidates did not provide full explanations; they gave one or two words for the responses such as, “counselling” and “youth programmes”. A common practice was to repeat the same point using different words, for example: “Provide youth clubs with games”, “provide netball and football”, “recreational activities”.

Part (c) tested candidates’ understanding of the impact of Nona’s behaviour on classmates and her grandmother. Many candidates misunderstood this part as the majority of candidates did not give satisfactory responses. Responses were too simplistic, for example: “Nona would be unhappy”, “Nona acted like her friends”, and “Nona would hate her grandmother”. A popular incorrect response was, “Her grandmother would not give her any food and run her out of the house”.

Part (d) tested candidates’ understanding of two measures to be taken by school officials and religious leaders to resolve the conflict between Nona and her grandmother. Many candidates responded satisfactorily and scored the majority of their marks in this part. The most common responses were: “Nona and her grandmother should attend counselling” and “The religious leaders should pray for Nona and her grandmother”.

Question 5

Question 5 was optional and focussed on over population and its effects on the community. It was a popular choice as many candidates attempted it. A diagram representing the overpopulated community was given. Candidates were required to study the diagram and answer the questions given. Instead of using the time to concentrate on answering the questions, candidates used time to draw the diagram which was unnecessary.

Part (a) (i) required candidates to state **THREE** social problems that might occur in over populated communities while Part (a) (ii) required them to identify **THREE** different economic effects of overpopulation on the community. Many candidates did not differentiate between social and economic problems and were unable to score marks because they placed the problems under the wrong category. Most candidates gave one word responses instead of complete sentences. For example, for social problems they gave: “jobs were scarce”, “unemployment”, “poverty” and “lack of resources” while for economic problems they gave: “poor health”, “teenage pregnancy”, “lack of personal space” and “crime and violence”. Very few candidates scored full marks for this section.

Part (b) required candidates to suggest **THREE** measures that can be employed by the governing committee to assist in controlling the population growth. Many candidates interpreted this to mean what could have been done, generally, to help the economic crisis of ‘over population’. Responses such as: build more houses, build schools, and provide jobs for the students were given. Some other candidates gave answers such as “use condoms,” use birth control pills,” use family planning” instead of saying, ‘provide counselling on family planning, encourage citizens to set up programs or educate citizens on wise family planning. Many candidates did not gain full marks because they responded in short phrases instead of stating the measures fully. In some cases only one word answers such as ‘birth control’, ‘education’, ‘family planning’ ‘jobs’ were given. Many candidates gave solutions for the problem of overpopulation for example: build schools, build houses, find work, get resources instead of suggesting measures to **control population growth**.

Part (c) presented the report of a survey conducted in the community. The survey revealed that six year old children were being neglected. Candidates were required to suggest **TWO** factors that may have led to the

conclusion in the survey report. Many candidates interpreted this to mean that they had to find solutions for the children's neglect. Incorrect responses such as, "government should put them in homes, build children homes, give them to the welfare, put them up for adoption, help the children by giving them jobs", were given. Many one word responses were given instead of statements or sentences. Some candidates included what the government should do to these parents who had abandoned their children. Appropriate responses should have included indicators such as, child labour, abuse, lack of basic needs, abandonment. Generally, candidates had problems outlining plausible responses. Overall this section was poorly done.

Question 6

Question 6 was a popular optional question. Part (a) tested candidates' knowledge on 'Work Simplification'. Many candidates defined the term 'Work' instead of 'Work Simplification'. Part (b) required the candidates to list FOUR reasons, other than shelter, why families needed housing. This question was misinterpreted, as candidates listed the functions of the families. Some responses given were:

- Procreation
- Socialization
- Conferring Status
- Shelter

Part (c) asked candidates to prepare a 'Plan of Work' for the family to show the use of time. Instead, many wrote a completed Plan schedule including Sheet A, Sheet B and Sheet C. Many candidates did not write the activities in the correct sequence. Instead, they simply re-wrote the exact order of the activities as stated in the question, allotting too little or too much time to complete each activity. Arranging the furniture was given the most time and was always carried out lastly. The question focussed on appropriate allocation of time, sequencing and inclusion of all activities.

In Part (d), candidates were expected to describe TWO ways the bedroom could be made suitable for a NEW BORN baby. Many candidates did not take into account that this question was related to a **new born baby** and suggested responses such as:

- Decorate the room with lots of teddy bears, cartoon characters, soft furnishings and toys
- The use of the word "bright" instead of "light" colours to paint the room was chosen by almost everyone.

Question 7

Question 7 was a popular optional choice and most candidates scored between six and ten marks. In Part (a), candidates were asked to define the term 'Warranty'. Most candidates omitted "manufactures' statement" or "written contract" from the definition. Many students confused the term 'warranty' with 'warrant'. Candidates gave response such as:

- Warranty is what the police give you when you are arrested.
- It is a discount
- It is a seal of approval
- It tells how long an item is to be used for
- Time given to complete payment

The term 'Warranty' was also confused with the term 'Hire Purchase'. The definition of 'Hire Purchase' was given for the definition of 'Warranty' in many responses.

Part (b) required candidates to describe TWO methods of payment that may be used for the purchase of furniture. Most candidates gave correct responses and were able to score marks here. However, the full response was not given in most cases as candidates listed two methods of payment but did not describe them. The terms 'Lay- away' and 'Hire Purchase' were not completely understood as some phrases such as 'make a down payment' or 'instalment with interest' were omitted from candidate's responses. Candidates

did not clearly associate the definitions with the correct terms. Example, ‘Lay-away’ – taking goods and paying for them later.

Part (c) (i) required candidates to outline three guidelines that a family should follow in order to decide on the type of living room set to be purchased. This section was poorly answered since many candidates listed as the guidelines, information given in the stem of the question, for example, “consider the number of children in the family”. Candidates did not compare the features of both chairs in order to determine which one would be more suitable for that particular family. A majority of the candidates gave responses that were general guidelines for shopping. In other instances single words or phrases such as – size, space, colour, quality, cost, age of children and gender, were listed.

Part (c) (ii) required candidates to state one advantage and one disadvantage of leather covered and fabric covered chair. Many candidates did not differentiate correctly between advantages and disadvantages. They listed negative points as advantages and positive ones as disadvantages. An example of a disadvantage of leather was, ‘it is not as strong as fabric’. Many candidates gave as responses the information included in the stem of the question.

SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT

Paper 03

It was the fifth year that the second practical assignment worth 20 marks was assessed by the teacher and an external examiner. However, it was the third year that those assignments were not requested for moderation by CXC. Teachers were required to mark assignments using the guidelines for setting and marking assignments that were developed and issued by CXC.

In most cases both the Teacher and External Examiner completed the required forms though the comments were few.

In every instance there was a call for more practice. The External Examiners commented on the wastage of resources such as time, fuel and ingredients. Some candidates gave all their attention to one component of the text while other segments were rushed. In some instances the plan of work was totally different to the assignment given.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Structured Essays Questions

1. Candidates must be guided to underline key points in the question to focus on when writing responses.
2. Candidates must be able to interpret instructional terms such as: define, explain, describe, illustrate, outline, and justify.
3. Candidates must use prior knowledge to analyse information and form conclusions in keeping with the specific situations set out in each question.
4. When answering questions, candidates must take time to determine the relevant context and treat the topic or issue as it relates to the context. Examples:
 - Questions on ‘budgeting’ may require responses that relate to a specific context such as budgeting to meet a particular goal and not budgeting in general.
 - Benefits of work as they relate to a business or a particular job.
 - Rules relating to buying furniture in relation to leather and not rules for shopping in general.
5. Candidates must attempt to write complete statements when required.

6. Candidates must also try to use the terms of the subject and write words that are recognizable. Some words and phrases were beyond recognition in the body of knowledge known as Home Economics: Management.
7. In reference to the SBA assignments, candidates must improve the logical sequencing of tasks, show creativity in labelling items and refrain from overcrowding display areas. The allotted time for the test must be utilized judiciously so that each segment of the test might be completed.