

# **KCSE ENGLISH PASSAGES**

## **COMPREHENSIONS REVISION**

### **POSSIBLE QUESTIONS EXPECTED IN KCSE EXAMINATIONS.**

*Series 1 of Possible KCSE Comprehension  
Passages Examinable Questions in Paper 2.*

**SERIES 1**

**FOR MARKING SCHEMES**

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# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 1 QUESTIONS

### 1. COMPREHENSION

1. Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

A lot of students think that learning is only in class. If students use two extra steps, most students will not forget what they learned in class. To achieve effective learning, students need to follow two extra steps in the three strategic learning processes.

The key to success is by following these three strategies. Review is essential to student success. Unless content is reviewed by students shortly after it is learned, it will soon be forgotten. To avoid forgetting what you learned, it is recommended to review daily.

It is also recommended to reduce large volumes of notes into point form and to paraphrase what you have learned. Other helpful tips include creating concept maps and diagrams; creating fact, concept or vocabulary cards and using visualization to better connect to what you learned. These are all important tools to helping students better understand and memorize lesson content.

The key to achieving academic success cannot be directly **correlated** to one specific area. Rather it requires students to be overall rounded in many different aspects. This includes attending class regularly to keep pace with the class. Falling behind in studies or homework can be **detrimental** to academic success and can induce stress onto students. Participating in class activities and discussions are also vital parts of learning and applying concepts learned. On the other hand, taking good, concise notes will always help in the long run when reviewing for tests and exams. To sum it all up, strategic learning is the password for many academic achievements. Being exposed to knowledge is the first step in the journey, the fact that young scholars can learn and be a part of history is a phenomenal step in furthering their search to success. Reviewing notes, in the way the young individual wishes, by him/herself, or with a good friend, this will help him/her to understand what has been learned in a way he/she understands. Lastly practice is a great way to memorise what has been learned, when practice achieves its full potential, the individual won't only be entitled for a good mark, but also a way to view, under and think of things. Those three attributes will help scholars become more successful, but it's important to one as it is to the other, and each and every person should find the learning strategies **effectual** for him/herself, and in extremely **exceptional** occasions even invent or innovate new strategies.

**QUESTIONS**

- (a) What does the writer faults in the students thinking according to the first paragraph? **(2 marks)**
- (b) Explain the **three** strategies that are key to success. **(6marks)**
- (c) Unless content is reviewed by students shortly after it is learned, it will soon be forgotten.. **(1 mark)**  
*Begin: if.....*
- (d) The key to achieving academic success cannot be directly **correlated** to one specific area.. **(1mark)**  
*Add a question tag.*
- (e) Discuss the tone of the passage. **(3 marks)**
- (f) How, according to the passage, does practice help memorise what has been learned? **(3marks)**
- (g) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases are used in the passage. **(4marks)**

Detrimental .....

Correlated .....

Effectual .....

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 1 QUESTIONS**

**Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:**

Calls to improve education most frequently circulate around the need for better prepared teachers, improved governance, expanded infrastructure and a relevant curriculum. Changes in these areas take time; investments in them are not easily quantifiable, and may reduce the financial attraction of the private sector.

Textbooks, meanwhile, are rarely discussed as an investment, yet they are one of the most effective ways to improve students' learning. For the private sector in particular, they provide a straightforward and effective way to invest in education and see tangible results.

And there is real pressing need for this investment. A new paper by the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report at Unesco shows that cutting through debates about the quality of textbooks is a fundamental problem: millions of children simply do not have access to such materials at all. In Kenya, as in many other sub-Saharan Africa, textbooks are becoming less accessible over time, rather than the reverse.

Without textbooks, children end up spending too many of their school hours copying content from the blackboard, which severely reduces time for engaged learning. In 22 sub-Saharan African countries, providing one textbook to every student in a classroom increased literacy scores by up to 20 percent. While the buck should stop with governments, they are currently not investing enough in textbooks. In 2012, in 36 countries with data, governments were spending less than 2 per cent of primary education budgets on teaching and learning materials on average, far less than the 3-5 percent target recommended by the World Bank.

The result is that parents are often left holding the burden; they are forced to cover the cost of learning materials for their children. For the poorest children, this creates a vicious cycle: parents have precious few funds for textbooks, serving as an additional barrier to learning.

Getting a textbook to each and every child is not as easy as it sounds. There are several steps to its production, including the development, procurement, distribution and storage, all of which have their own complications, including corruption and transport issues.

With so many parties involved in such a long process, the predictability of financing improves the chances that each child will possess a textbook. Unfortunately, it is precisely this predictability that is lacking in many low-income countries.

Consider the situation in Africa where many countries have shifted towards decentralized textbook supply systems and away from ministries of Education deciding how

many books each school should receive.

In practice, this has led to schools buying different combinations of textbooks for the same subjects and grades. The result is neither cost-effective nor practical in providing uniformity across schools. At the school level, the capacity to effectively forecast the demand for textbooks and other teaching and learning materials remains tenuous.

This is why our paper has investigated the benefits of shifting to a nationally centralized textbook system, which would pool demand for textbooks and ensure long-term and predictable financing. According to our estimates, this could take upto \$3 off the price of each book, saving almost \$1 billion in sub-Saharan Africa alone. Kenya could save \$64 million from its textbook bill.

Pooling and forecasting demand in this way would open the door for innovative financing that could present smart investments for the private sector. A similar approach has been used by the health sector to finance vaccines through the Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. *Adapted from Dr Aaron Benavot's article, Daily Nation Jan 29, 2016*

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) Why would the private sector find it less attractive to make financial investment in education? **(2 marks)**
- b) Why are textbooks of great interest to the private sector? **(2 marks)**
- c) What evidence do we have that governments are not keen on providing enough textbooks? **(1 marks)**
- d) According to the writer, what is the best way forward to cater for demand and costs of textbooks? **(2 marks)**
- e) What is the writer's attitude towards parents in sub-Saharan Africa? **(3 marks)**
- f) In not more than forty words, give examples of factual information that has been provided by the writer. **(4 marks)**
- g) What do you find ironical in the above passage? **(2 marks)**
- h) Getting a textbook to each and every child is not as easy as it sounds.(Rewrite this sentence using the phrase „easier said than done“) **(1 mark)**
- i) iGive the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. **(3marks)**  
Paper  
The buck should stop  
Tenuous

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 3 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.**

Happiness arises largely from the mental qualities of contentment, confidence, serenity and active good-will. It includes the pain of losing as well as the pleasure of finding. It thrives best in a crowded life. The men and women who are recorded in history and biography as the most happy were with always somewhat to do than they could possibly do. Every waking hour of their lives was occupied with ambitious projects, literature, love, politics, science, friendship, commerce, professions, trades, their religious faith, and a thousand other matters. The secret of happiness may be found by making each of these interests count to its utmost as part of the fabric of life.

We need to avoid the extremes of sluggish placidity and feverish activity. we are not going to be satisfied with felicity which resembles that of a stone, unfeeling and unmoving, but will look back from future years with sorrow and regret if we run to and fro, giving it what Socrates called ‘the itch’.

Happiness obviously includes two sorts of behavior: active and passive. We may say the active consists in searching and sharing, while the passive part is made up security and possession. Neither part is complete in itself, nor does neither yield full satisfaction if it is over-emphasized. Philosophers from the ancient Greeks to present day have been extolling a balanced life as the most happy life, and many unhappy people can, when they face the issue, trace their discontent to imbalance.

The recipe for happiness cannot be given in any single word, because its many virtues have to be combined in their proper quantities, at the proper times for proper purposes.

It is legitimate to seek happiness. We cannot help observing that while followers of some schools of thought are telling us to avoid seeking happiness; they intimate that if we do so we shall be happy.

The search requires a plan. We need to know what sort of happiness we seek, what the ingredients are, what our strongest wants are, and what we have to start with. We should train ourselves to keep the programme simple, and free from complications and side trips, to pay attention to little things to deflate quickly after being praised and to bounce back quickly after disappointment, to seize to create opportunities to put our special abilities to work, to seek excellence in everything we do, to remain modest and to review and revise periodically.

Most of us do not really have to seek far and wide. Happiness grows at our fireside, if we cultivate it.

**QUESTIONS**

- a) According to the writer, what is the source of happiness? (2mks)
- b) What two sorts of behavior does happiness include? (2mks)
- c) What does the writer mean when he talks about a balanced life? (2 mks)
- d) In a paragraph of about 30 words, summarize the things we must know as we search for happiness in paragraph one? (4mks)
- e) Explain the writer’s message in the last paragraph of the passage. (2mks)
- f) The recipe for happiness cannot be given in any single word. (1mk)  
(Rewrite the sentence beginning: No single word...)
- g) Identify and comment on the figure of speech used in the following as used in the passage: (1mk)  
(i) *It (Happiness) thrives best in a crowded life.*
- h) Describe the tone of this passage. (2marks)
- i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. (4mrks)
- (i) Extolling-
- (ii) Intimate-
- (iii) Felicity-
- (iv) Legitimate-

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 4 QUESTIONS

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow

Cities and towns are experiencing massive population growth the world over receiving huge numbers of migrants ever year.

In 1950, urban population accounted for only 29 percent of the world population, according to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). At the turn of the century, the figure had risen to 45percent. This was enough to declare the Twentieth Century the century of urbanization and city life. Now the figure is projected to hit 70 percent by 2025.

In Africa, urbanization is most intense in Algeria, Tunisia and South Africa, which have more than 50 percent of their population living in urban areas. Generally, cities in the developing world are growing at a rate of 3.5 per cent per annum.

These figures indicate that there is a continuous massive movement of people from rural to urban areas worldwide. Driven by the desire for better living conditions, they flock to cities in droves in search of greener pastures. But, slowly the illusion disappears, and is replaced by harsh realities of urbanism: unemployment or underemployment, crime, poverty, hunger and life in the slums.

To cope with this fast – moving wave of rural flight requires new strategies for urban planning and the use of urban spaces. Thus urban planners, policymakers and governments seek pragmatic and timely ways of addressing this challenge. The process of urbanization transforms land use and farming systems, patterns of labour force participation, infrastructural requirements, and natural resource systems. When cities grow, their population expands, putting a strain on food production.

As a way of easing the food shortage, many urban households, particularly the poor, have taken to growing food on small plots. Today, if you take a walk through some of the residential estates in Nairobi such as Ngara, Eastleigh and Buru Buru, you might be forgiven for thinking that a green revolution is under way. And on the outskirts of the city, green – houses and ponds compete for space with small gardens planted with flowers, vegetables and fruits. Banana plants and palm trees dwarf wrought – iron gates, their green dotting the skyline, Kale, cabbage and maize gardens sprout in the middle of urban squalor. In this unusual rare blend, urban features and rural agrarian patterns are combined in a new form of settlement and one might call ‘garden cities.’



Although it is often not given much attention, urban agriculture is steadily increasing. The practice involves cultivating, processing and distributing food in and around a town or city. It also encompasses an array of activities including horticulture, aquaculture, animal husbandry and bee keeping.

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) What are the challenges facing major cities and towns (2mks)
- b) What does the mention of 70% by 2025 reveal? (2mks)
- c) What do we learn about urbanization in Africa from the passage (2 mks)
- d) Mention the reason for rural to urban migration (2mks)
- e) How are urban households easing the problems of food shortage? (3 mks)
- f) What is meant by the term ‘garden city?’ (1mk)
- g) In note form, list the influences of urbanization (4 mks)
- h) Urban populations accounted for only 29% of the world population (1 mks)  
(**Rewrite the statement adding a question tag**)
  
- i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage (3 mks)
  - i) Illusion
  - ii) Pragmatic
  - iii) Squalor

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 5 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and then attempt the questions that follow

As the biometric registration for the National Integrated Identity Management System prominently referred to as Huduma Namba is being rolled out, there is, justifiably, growing whimpers of skepticism among Kenyans. There has been a lot of speculation, rightfully so, because in this day and age of data piracy, people need assurances that the data collected under the Huduma Namba will not be used for nefarious activities.

These doubts have created room for the spread of misinformation and extensively contributed to the registration apathy witnessed since its commencement. It is therefore incumbent to clearly explain to Kenyans what, precisely, Huduma Namba is and what it is not.

According to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 16.9), everyone should obtain legal identity by 2030. The World Bank estimates that today, one in six people are unable to prove their identity because there is a dearth of information about their background. In this era of globalization, integrated information is critical to identification. With that in mind, a snippet of information from the Swedish replica of Huduma Namba gives hope for what the government must do to boost public confidence about the overriding unique value proposition of NIIMS.

A Swedish friend was carrying around an electronic card with a personal number and I got inquisitive. He first mentioned to me that the personal number is called *Personnummer* in Swedish. He expounded that some of the details contained in the chip include family members, spouses, employment status, employer's name, health insurance number, residential area and his exact location of his home.

With such information, the Swedish government, being a welfare state, is able to plan and provide social services easily. Unemployed adults can be mapped out for their monthly stipend; governments can know where more schools, hospitals, colleges and industries are needed; number of vulnerable people in need of social support and it can track down suspected criminals thus enhancing security.

Furthermore, the security of the data is strong. The first few *Personnummer* digits are accessed by anyone (they are merely the person's birthdate) while the remaining digits are only accessible by a specific legally mandated government department.

Clearly, NIIMS is quite similar, from face value and intention, to the Swedish one. What is now needed is strategic dissemination of information to reach out to a majority of Kenyans to enhance public knowledge about Huduma Namba and its attendant benefits.

For efficient public service delivery, integration of data is imperative in planning, resource allocation and reducing unnecessary red tape. For instance, it is easy for the government to know the number of employed and unemployed people in order to develop a strategy for placement and absorbing them.

Again, centralized data provides a neatly weaved base of facts and figures that can be easily harnessed to provide information about the public sector, its performances and project/services prioritization. This will further inform rational budgetary allocation and logical channeling of resources to productive but needful public sectors.

Another advantage of Huduma Namba is that it will cure the skewed issuance of Identity Cards, especially during the electioneering periods where devious politicians can sometimes disenfranchise voters by withholding of IDs. This is made possible because any Kenyan above the age of six years is entitled to Huduma Namba. When they get to 18, the ball will be on their court to either register as a voter or not thus enhancing their civic rights. The Huduma Namba comes in handy in sealing the loophole of intentional voter disenfranchisement.

Kenya has been on the receiving end of organised terror attacks. This has posed an existential threat to our peace and security. But with Huduma Namba, pieces of information about individuals can be put together. Hence, it will be quite easy to compare the biometric data given vis-a-vis suspects of organised crimes.

Ultimately, the reservations Kenyans have should be fully addressed owing to the history of our country that has been characterised by unlawful profiling. Huduma Namba will streamline service delivery and reduce the number of documents one needs to access government services.

*(Daily Nation, 30th April, 2019)*

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) Why has there been growing whimpers and skepticism among Kenyans on registration of Huduma Namba.? **(2mks)**
- b) What in the opinion of the writer can stop HudumaNamba registration apathy? **2mks.**
- c) In note form, outline the benefits of the Swedish *personnummer*. **4mks**
- d) What step should the government take to enhance knowledge about the Huduma Namba and its benefits? **2mks**
- e) How according to the writer is the Huduma Namba going to solve voter disenfranchisement? **2mks**
- f) What is the attitude of the writer towards Huduma Namba registration? **2mks**
- g) Huduma Namba will streamline service delivery. Add a question tag. **1mk**

- h)** Comment on the tone the passage ends in. **2mks**
- i)** Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. **3mks**
- i.** registration apathy
  - ii.** nefarious.....
  - iii.** stipend.....

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 6 QUESTIONS

### 1. Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Some fifteen thousand years ago an artist drew on the walls of a cave in Spain a picture of his Stone-Age neighbor robbing a bees' nest of its golden store. In the centuries that have since gone by, no one has ever discovered or invented a purer and sweeter food than honey.

Because of its **chief** ingredient, Levulose, or 'fruit sugar', honey is almost twice as sweet as cane sugar. Table sugar, like salt, has but one taste. Every honey has its own. It would take an epicure's lifetime to discover, sample and enjoy all the possible vintage that bees distil from the thousands of species of nectar-bearing plants.

Honey is the purest of all foods. When properly ripened, its concentration of sugar is so high that bacteria cannot live in it for more than an hour or two. It is said that in one of the royal Egyptian tombs was found honey that was thirty-three hundred years old – darkened and thickened by time, but pure honey still. No **knavery** can corrupt honey without detection. If diluted with water, it ferments. Nor can the wax of the honeycomb, product of the bees' own glands, be successfully imitated.

This ancient and mysterious food is one of the wonders of the world, the product of an intricate relation between bees; the high peak of insect evolution, and flowers, the loveliest part of the green world. Nature has adapted the forms of flowers to entice bees, and the bodies of bees to fit and pollinate the flowers and to use their pollen and nectar. Some ten thousand species of flowers would be extinct but for the bees, and bees could not live without the flowers.

The honey bee is the most faithful and provident of the flowers' lovers. While a butterfly or a bird would move from flower to flower, a honey- bee is loyal to one sort of flower at a time. So she brings to each bloom none but its specific pollen, and she makes but one kind of honey at a time.

At the height of the nectar flow in late spring and early summer, bees literally kill themselves with work. It is the destiny of every good worker to die flying, struggling to bring back one last load to the hive. It takes about three hundred pounds of honey just to keep one colony alive; thus to gather a surplus, so that you and I may have some, the hive's workers must fly many million miles more.

Each drop of nectar is an ocean holding minerals, enzymes and foods. It contains traces of iron, copper, manganese, potassium, sodium, phosphorous, proteins and vitamins. This explains why many diabetics can tolerate honey but not table sugar, and why it helps babies to retain calcium and so grow stronger limbs and better teeth.

Only certain plants with truly exquisite nectars produce a honey you would want to eat. Many others yield nectar from which are made dark-coloured, strong flavoured honeys that bakers and confectioners use in immense quantities. Tobacco companies buy millions of pounds of low- grade honey a year for preserving, flavouring, moistening and mellowing tobacco.

Such honeys also go into lotions and cough medicines. For thousands of years connoisseurs have been buying their honey with discrimination. The ancient Athenians got their most delicate honey from Mt. Hymettis. It was famous because it came from a little wild flower called thyme.

Perfect as it is as a food, honey is more; it is a slow- formed, perfect drop upon a growing tip of evolution. To take that drop upon the tongue is to partake of a sacrament with nature.

- a. What amazing fact about honey do we learn from the first paragraph? (2mks)
- b. Why is the bees’ nest described as “golden store”? (2mks)
- c. Using information in the third paragraph and in note form, highlight the unique qualities of honey. (4mks)
- d. In what ways are bees and flowers interdependent? (3mks)
- e. This ancient and mysterious food is one of the wonders of the world.  
(Rewrite adding a question tag) (1mk)
- f. What is the writer’s attitude towards the bee? Give reasons from the passage to support your answer. (3mks)
- g. Identify and explain the **metaphor** in the seventh paragraph (3mks)
- h. Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. (2mks)  
Chief.....  
Knavery .....

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 7 QUESTIONS

**1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. (20mks)**

The world has a weight problem. Within the past decade, obesity rates have shot up by 50 percent, rising from 200 million people in 1995 to 300 million in 2003. Even places more familiar with famine than fat are starting to worry about their waistlines. Africa now has weight loss clinics. In a recent survey in India-home to half the worlds undernourished population-55 percent of women between 20 and 69 were found to be found to be overweight .Twenty percent of Chinese adults are overweight. Brazil's childhood-obesity rate has jumped to 239 percent in a generation- four times the growth rate for youth in the United States. In March 2003,the International Obesity task force revealed that 1.7 billion of the planets 6 billion people were overweight or obese. How did we all get so fat? The problem stems from the collision of a number of modern trends; rising affluence and urbanization; the proliferation of conveniences like cars, computers, fast food and television; and the 21<sup>st</sup> century work culture, with its desk jobs and long hours. In rich countries, the familiar mantra of low-fat diet and exercise is routinely ignored. In the developing world, where health education is frequently non-existent, people are particularly vulnerable to the glamour of American burgers and the comforts of the couch. Rural migrants to cities are suddenly confronted with market-stall snacks and McDonald's. In newly industrialized countries packaged foods and fast food chains are promoted as an index of **affluence**.

The consumption of foods high in fat, sugar and salt-combined with increasingly **sedentary** lifestyles- is worrying health experts. And it is killing us. Diet-linked diseases- chiefly heart disease, cancer, diabetes and hypertension, now account for more than half of all deaths in Arab countries. In Barbados, more than 60 percent of hospital and drug-service budgets go toward coping with obesity-related illnesses. In Chinese hospitals, the number of patients suffering from weight-related diseases has increased by 30 percent. The problem is so persuasive that the World health Organization has declared obesity a global epidemic.

In many places ,obesity and related illnesses such as diabetes are growing fastest among children and teenagers. These may be because those groups are more vulnerable to the excesses of their new found liberation. teenagers from rich homes have cars and can go to restaurants with their friends, and consume high-fat fast food. Nutritionists also blame

food marketing and the proliferation of supermarkets for the rise in childhood obesity. Ultimately, diabetes is incurable. Although changes in lifestyles and diet can help stem the progression of the disease, it never disappears. Most patients are on insulin a decade after diagnosis. The best long-term hope for reversing the trend is for society to get its weight problems under control.

## **QUESTIONS**

- (a)What is this passage about? **(1mark)**
- (b)What is achieved by the use of figures in paragraph one? **(2marks)**
- (c)From the information given in paragraph two, how can society get the weight problem under control? **(3marks)**
- (d)According to the passage, what are the indications of the increasing danger of obesity? **(3marks)**
- (e)In about 50 words summarize what the passage says about obesity in children and teenagers. **(6marks)**

### **Rough copy**

### **Fair copy**

- (f)In what way is the modern lifestyle a curse rather than a blessing? **(3 marks)**
- (g)Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. **(2 marks)**
- (i)Affluence
- (ii)Sedentary



# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 8 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow

You may think that expecting food to change your life is too much to ask. But have you considered that eating the right food at the right time will increase your energy, help you manage weight and ward off major illness?

Researchers have found that eating a meal with plenty of protein leaves you feeling more satisfied for longer when compared to a meal loaded with low-quality carbohydrates. your body takes longer to digest protein, leading to a gradual increase in blood sugar. The high protein breakfast will therefore carry you through the morning and ,more importantly ,through your tea break. Many high-carbohydrate meals are absorbed quickly and send blood sugar on a roller coaster ride, taking your appetite with it and depleting your energy. Many foods contain antioxidants neutralize molecules known as free radicals before they damage arteries and body cells. This protects you from heart diseases, high blood pressure, cancer and diabetes; you can now see why antioxidant foods should be consumed in generous portions. Actually, forget pills-antioxidants work best when consumed in foods. In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Its less daunting than it sounds: a portion equals a piece of fruit, three tablespoons of cooked vegetables or a glass of flesh juice.

And do you desire to relieve yourself of some baggage? calcium is the latest weight –loss star to appear on the scene. Scientists stumbled on its magic by accident. From a study that measured the blood pressure of obese people, it was discovered that those who took one large tub of yoghurt a day in their diet lost an average of eleven pounds of body fat in one year, even though they did not eat less.

A follow-up study found that people high-calcium diet lost more weight and fat than did people on a low calcium diet- and again, both consumed the same number of calories. Researcher\*believe calcium encourages fat cells to stop “getting fatter”. Instead, the cells burn extra fat without you having to go anywhere near a gymnasium.

It probably sounds strange to say that you can eat more in order to lose weight .Obviously, the question you should ask immediately is, “Eat more of what?”We are talking about foods rich in fibre . They have what is refer to as low energy density; that translates to few calories relative to weight. This means that you can down a mountain without fear of calorie overload.

Fibre also aids weight loss because its filling. Most high fibre foods take a lot of chewing triggering your bodies fullness sensors. Moreover, you absorb the food more slowly so you

feel full longer. Will the wonders of food ever cease? Not if researchers in nutrition keep up their pace. Let them keep the good news flowing-such as the fact we don't have to starve ourselves to lose weight and keep disease at bay.

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) From the information given in the first paragraph, how can you improve your life? **(2 marks)**
- b) In not more than 35 words, summarize the effects of eating carbohydrates. **(4 marks)**
- c) Explain how free radicals contribute to the occurrence of high blood pressure and cancer. **(2 marks)**
- d) In what two forms can antioxidants- be consumed? **(2 marks)**
- e) "In fact nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruits and vegetables a day."  
Rewrite the sentence above as a question without changing the meaning, beginning: Don't..... **(1 mark)**
- f) What is the attitude of the author towards calcium calcium as a weight –cutting measure? **(2 marks)**
- g) According to the passage, how can you use up excess fat? **(2 marks)**
- h) Identify an instance of irony in the passage. **(2 marks)**
- i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. **(3 marks)**
- i.** Daunting-
  - ii.** Baggage-
  - iii.** Down a mountain-

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 9 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.**

Gender is probably the most important social issue in the world today. It affects and influences every aspect of our lives: politics, economics, religion and leisure. People in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century strongly believed that every project must get the gender dimension right in order to succeed. But what is gender? Basically, gender is the expectation that people should do or not do certain things according to their sex. Every normal human being is either female or male. This is sex and it is a biological fact. Indeed, sex is the most conspicuous difference between human beings.

The moment we look at a person, we can tell whether that person is a man or a woman, a boy or a girl. The question is if society should use this biological difference to tell people what they should or should not do. Yet, since time immemorial, this is what human communities all over the world have done. Some African societies bring up their boys to believe that men must be fighters, take whatever they want – by force if necessary and never cry. If anyone asks why they should or should not do this and that, the ready answer is always: you are a man, and that’s what men are supposed to do. Girls are told to be gentle and quiet, to obey men, not to climb trees and not to eat certain kinds of food. A girl who asks why she should not climb trees or speak loudly in public is told, you are a woman, and women don’t do that. In other words, society is always telling us what we can do and what we cannot do just because we are men or women. In most cases, there is no physical or logical reason for a man or a woman to do or not do certain things. Any girl can climb a tree as smartly as any boy. If a boy wants to go into the kitchen and cook, there is no reason why he should not do so. Indeed, some of the best cooks in the world, called ‘chefs’ are men. Yet in some societies, it is a taboo for a man or boy to enter the kitchen. Similarly, some societies do not allow their women to build houses, even work at building sites, whereas in other societies it is indeed the woman’s role to build houses. Gender is thus society’s assigning of roles to people according to their being male or female. On the face of it, there is nothing wrong with sharing roles – indeed, there are many cases where it is logical to expect that certain people should do or avoid some activities. For example, it would not be safe for a woman in advance stages of pregnancy to go hunting wild animals or grazing livestock many miles away from home. However, this should not be taken as a blanket excuse to declare that all women must not hunt wild animals. The problem is even worse when some people use gender roles to exploit or oppress other people. Men for

example, have for a long time invoked gender roles to force women to do certain things and to prevent them from doing things the women may want to do. This oppressive practice may be called gender imposition, and it may be seen in all aspects of society. In social relations, boys and girls are segregated from the earliest years of life. Members of each sex are strictly drilled into what ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ in behaviour, speech, dress and every activity. Boys and girls are told what work they should or should not do, what places they can or cannot go to. What games to play and even what foods to eat or not to eat; just because they are boys or girls. By the time a person is in his or her teens, he or she has learnt – from both example and direct teaching by older members of society – what exactly is expected of him or her as a man or a woman. These gendered roles often suggest that men should lead and command in everything, be ‘tough’ – meaning hard and even cruel – and ‘strong’, which often means aggressive and violent. The women on the other hand, are required to be soft and kind, submissive and unquestioningly obedient to men. Even in public affairs, such as politics or religion, the gendering of roles leads to some curious situations. In some places of worship for example, men and women are strictly separated. Several denominations do not permit women to preach in public or to be ordained as priests or pastors. Politics is widely regarded as a man’s field.

Some societies insist that a woman cannot be a leader, like President or Army commander. The nagging question, which many women and enlightened men are asking today is: Why not? This is the challenge to the conventional gendering of roles. Is there any logical reason why a man should not change the nappies of his child, or go into the kitchen and cook? Why can a talented woman not become a top soccer or rugby player, or a bishop or a top business executive? Is it fair to prevent people from eating such nutritious foods as chicken and eggs simply because they are women? Should children be denied the right to inherit their parents’ property on the grounds of sex? Is it not pathetic seeing men inflict beastly violence on their wives and children, or one another simply because men are expected to be ‘tough’ and ‘strong’?

To avoid such absurdities, advocates of gender equity demand that sex should not be the main consideration in dealing with people. Assigning roles to people on the grounds of biological differences is a form of evil discrimination, like racism. A more sensible way of dealing with men and women is to take them strictly on the basis of their individual abilities. A human being is a human being, whether man or woman and each should be given every opportunity to realize his or her full human potential. An enlightened approach to gender equity is suggested by the old English saying “What’s good for the goose is good for the gander”.

**QUESTIONS**

- a) According to the passage, what is the difference between gender and sex?  
(2 marks)
- b) What is gender imposition? (1 mark)
- c) How are gender roles passed on? (1 mark)
- d) Add a question tag to the following:  
Any girl can climb a tree as smartly as any boy.....(1 mark)
- e) Identify a phrase in the passage that shows that it is not only women who are concerned with the problems created by gendering of roles. (1 mark)
- f) In not more than 60 words write a summary on what women are not allowed to do simply because they are women. (6 marks)
- g) In not more than three sentences, paraphrase the author’s argument. (3 marks)
- h) Change the following question into a statement: (1 mark)  
Should children be denied the right to inherit their parents’ property on the grounds of sex?
- i) What is the meaning of the following: “What is good for the goose is good for the gander.” (1 mark)
- j) Explain the meaning of the following as they are used in the passage. (3 marks)
  - (i) Segregated
  - (ii) Absurdities
  - (iii) Blanket excuse

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 10 QUESTIONS

1. Read the following passage and then answer the questions that follow.

Kenyan roads hold two things in equal measure: great promise and great disappointment. They begin with a promise, in this case, the construction. Everyone is excited about the possibilities that the road presents. If it happens to be a new road, commuters will talk about nothing else except how pleasantly, things will change for them. Soon, the construction is completed, and people are so excited, some are even tempted to lie on the tarmac! Change does not happen; value of property **appreciates** a hundred fold, businesses and farmers do better and the general outlook of that area changes.

Three years down the road however, due to poor workmanship, cracks begin to appear, small ones at first, which become bigger by the day, and finally, they develop into the craters that we Kenyans know too well. Vehicles are damaged; dust returns with a vengeance and accidents increase, with them. permanent scars and loss of lives. Right in front of our eyes, what held great promise and hope to us becomes a source of disappointment and anguish. Yet every single day, we ply the roads, going about our business in spite of the difficulties. Relationships behave much the same way. In every relationship, hope and promise are intricately intertwined with the potential for disappointment. And just like with the roads, we don't give our relationships the nourishment they need to withstand the bad times. When it begins to crack, we allow the dust of the disappointment to block our view of the promise that the relationship still holds. Here are some thoughts to consider. First, just like roads, relationships are necessary in spite of their challenges. People come into the relationship with expectations, some realistic, some unrealistic and everything in between them.

The backgrounds we come from inform those expectations to a great extent, and these are further reinforced by folktales and fantasies of romance, family wealth and so on. When these expectations are not met, disappointments are bound to occur. Yet like the roads, relationships still hold great promise for happiness, health and wealth. Mark Gungor, the creator of the video, "Laugh your way to a Better Marriage," quotes research that says married people are happier, I healthier and make more money on average than Singles, the challenges notwithstanding. I am of the opinion that human beings have not yet discovered any other source of companionship, love, friendship, and pleasure that is greater than that which is found in relationships. Another thought is the permanent nature of roads. Every

time I visit my home town, I am amazed that most of the roads are still there. I can actually direct someone to my home without the fear that the road will have disappeared. Generally, roads have a permanent nature.

In the same way, relationships must be approached with a view of staying put, for better or for worse. This was the major plank in the traditional marriage in Africa, as well as a central tenet of the Christian tradition to which most Kenyans **pledge allegiance**. Unfortunately, these traditional ideals of love, courtship, marriage and family have largely been discarded and without clear I8UYTGFguidelines, relationships are likely to be a difficult proposition for anyone. The **proliferation** and acceptance of come-we-stay arrangements and other forms at non-committal type of unions is a challenge. This is because the roles that marriage plays in the society-producing and nurturing of children to maturity, providing companionship and building wealth, require a high level of permanency. The promise of relationships lies in commitment, and if approached from any other angle, relationships become unfulfilling.

### **QUESTIONS**

- a) Why according to the passage do people look to the construction of a new road with optimism. **(3 marks)**
- b) Identify one similarity between Kenyan roads and relationship. **(2 marks)**
- c) What is the writer's opinion on Mark Gunger's position on relationships? **(2 marks)**
- d) State why relationships should be permanent according to the passage. **(3 marks)**
- e) Why does the writer of this passage think that roads have a permanent nature?(**2 mks**)
- f) Make notes on the consequences of poor road workmanship. **(5 marks)**
- g) "Everyone is excited about the possibilities that the road presents." **(1 mark)**  
(Rewrite beginning: Everyone's . . . .)
- h) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. **(2 marks)**
  - i) Appreciates
  - ii) Pledge allegiance.....

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 11 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and then answer the questions that follow.

Our emphasis on money and industries has made us concentrate on urban development. We recognize that we do not have enough money to bring the kind of development to each village

which would benefit everybody. We also know that we cannot establish an industry in each village and through this means effect a rise in the real incomes of the people. For these reasons,

we spend most of our money in urban areas and our industries are established in the towns.

Yet the greater part of this money that we spend in the towns comes from loans. Whether it is used to build schools, hospitals, houses or factories etc. It still has to be repaid. But it is obvious that it cannot be repaid just out of the money obtained from urban and industrial development. To repay the loans we have to use foreign currency which is obtained from the sale of our exports. But we do not now sell our industrial products in foreign markets, and indeed it is likely to be a long time before our industries produce for export. The main aim of our new industries is import substitution - that is to produce things which hitherto we have had to import from foreign countries.

It is therefore obvious that the foreign currency we shall use to pay back the loans used in the development of the urban areas will not come from the towns or industries. Where then shall we get it from? We shall get it from the villages and from agriculture. What does this mean? It means that the people who benefit directly from development, which is brought by borrowed money, are not the ones who will repay the loans. The largest proportion of the loans will be spent in and for the urban area, but the largest proportion of the loans will be spent through the efforts of the farmers.

This fact should always be borne in mind for there are various forms of exploitation. We must not forget that people who live in towns can possibly become the exploiters of those who live in rural areas. All our big hospitals are in towns and they benefit only a small section of the people of Tanzania. Yet if we have built them with loans from outside



Tanzania, it is the overseas sale of peasants' produce, which provides the foreign exchange for repayment. Those who do not get the benefit of the hospitals thus carry major responsibility of paying for them. Tarmac roads, too, are mostly found in towns and are a special value to the motor car owners. Yet if we have built those roads with loans, it is again the farmer who produces the goods who will pay for them. What is more, the foreign exchange with which the car is bought also comes from the sale of the farmers' produce. Again, electric lights, water pipes, hotels and other aspects of modern developments are mostly found in towns. Most of them have been built with loans and most of them do not benefit the farmer directly, although they will be paid for by the foreign exchange earned by the sale of this produce. We should always bear this in mind.

Although when we talk of exploitation we usually think of capitalists, we should not forget that there are many small fish in the sea. They eat each other. The large ones eat the small ones and the small ones eat those who are even smaller. There are two possible ways of dividing the people in our country. We can put the capitalists and feudalists on one side, and the peasants and workers on the other. But we can also divide the people into urban dwellers on one side and those who live in the rural areas on the other. If we are not careful, we might get to the position where the real exploitation in Tanzania is that of the town dwellers exploiting the peasants.

- a) What is the author's main argument in the first paragraph? **(2 marks)**
- b) According to the passage, what are the sources of money used to repay loans obtained by Tanzania? **(2 marks)**
- c) In not more than **50 words**, summarize the reasons why the town people are considered exploiters. **(6 marks)**
- d) Mention two challenges facing the Tanzanian government as brought out in the passage. **(2 marks)**
- e) Explain how appropriate the figure of speech in the last paragraph is in relation to the author's argument. **(3 marks)**
- f) The author says: "This fact should always be borne in mind . . ." Which fact is he referring to and why should it be borne in mind? **(2 marks)**

**g)** We must not forget that people who live in towns can possibly exploit those who live in rural areas.

(Rewrite in the passive).

**(1 mark)**

**h)** Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage.

**(2 marks)**

i) hitherto

ii) borne in mind

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 12 QUESTIONS**

***1. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow (20marks)***

The universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly states that “Everybody has the right to education; unfortunately too many poor children in Kenya this is a mere wish-washy dream. Though education plays a great role in enjoyment of human rights in addition to individual personality development to many children in lowly Developed Countries (L.D.C) accessing education is a nightmare.

In Kenya agriculture contributes over three-quarters of income for households in rural areas. The incomes is directly used to finance education; consequently anything that affects agriculture also affects education. Quite unfortunately, market distorting practices by developed members of World Trade Organization (W.T.O) are negatively affecting production and trade in agricultural products in Kenya, leaving an ineffaceable scar in the development of education of children.

Having liberalized its market mainly because of pressure from World Bank and International Monetary Fund through Structural Adjustments Program’s (S.A.Ps), competition from well established foreign organization has led to reduction in farmers production and even collapsing of some factories. This has directly translated to loss of jobs, market for local produce, poor farmers have to chase the ever – elusive market for their produce, get poor pay hence no enough finances to cater for education expenses of their children. In addition, poorly paid workers in processing factories can’t afford to provide adequate food for their children leave alone their education and clothing. More painfully the closure and reduced production of the local factories has rendered most of them jobless.

It is evidently pellucid that international trade particularly in agricultural and agreements affecting it has impacted on the education of many children in Kenya. Practices that have denied Kenyan farmers, traders and workers a chance to fully exploit great goals in developing particularly in providing education to all. Though there is some little impact by local factors. It can be concluded that unfair trade leads to poverty in lowly Developed countries which denies children their right of education.

The impacts of trade liberalization are clearly mirrored in the education sector in Kenya. In the first three successive decades after independence in 1963 saw impressive gains in education access in Kenya. From the time Kenya joined the W.T.O education participation has not only weakened and retrogressed but also eroded the gains achieved in previous decades.

**QUESTIONS**

- a) What according to the first paragraph are the main functions of education. (2mks)
- b) Provide another phrase that could replace the phrase “screaming poverty” (1mk)
- c) In not more than 100 words summarize the effects of trade liberalization on African countries. (5mks)
- d) The impacts of trade liberalization are clearly mirrored in the education sector in Kenya. (Rewrite this sentence showing possession) (1mk)
- e) In Kenya agriculture contributes over three-quarters of income for households in rural areas.(Add a question tag) (1mk)
- f) Poor farmers have to chase the ever-elusive market for their produce. (Rewrite this sentence in passive voice.) (2mks)
- g) What is ironical in this passage. (2mks)
- h) What are the main negative effects of W.T.O on Kenya from the time she joined it (2mks)
- i) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. (4mks)
  - i. Wish-washy
  - ii. Ineffaceable
  - iii. Pellucid
  - iv. Mirrored in the education sector

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 13 QUESTIONS

1. Read the Passage below and answer the questions that follow. (20 marks)

Society has failed and parents have not played their role fully in raising their children. This is according to Jeff Ngari, a counseling psychologist and a deacon with the Reformed Catholic Church. Jeff says the issue of teenage mothers is so big that it should be considered a cry for help. He adds that today, children lack the guidance they require when it comes to having independent social interactions.

“The idea is not to block them from *forming* their own relationships, but to make them understand what it means to be in a relationship, especially with the opposite sex, and how far this relationship should go,” says Jeff.

And just like the rest of society, parents have not been spared by the wave of moral decay and thus, according to Jeff, they have failed as role models for their children. Due to this, many teenagers are picking up social ills from their parents-the very people they are supposed to look up to.

“For instance, a teenager who has seen his or her mother repeatedly sleep out or come home in the wee hours of the morning will most likely be excited about staying out late out of curiosity,” he says, adding, “this is happening to most of our homes today.”

Jeff says many parents are engaging carelessly in extra-marital relationships that leave very little to the imagination of their children, and this is likely to be seen as a normal thing by children, especially teenagers. As a result, there are many avenues through which teenagers can explore the issue of sex and the greatest worry is that girls need to be rescued.

“The boy invariably walks away scot-free as the school, society and church turn their full attention on the girl and judge her,” he says that adding that it is one of the issues that the Reformed Catholic Church is trying to address so that children such as these can be recognized instead of being neglected.

“This is not to say that teenage pregnancy is right, but it is a social ill that must be fought from family level, within the school setting, in the church and the wider society,” he says.

Most teenage mothers experience rejection and abuse by their families, friends and wider community, including the church. “No wonder these girls abandon their babies either in toilets or litter bins. The effects of rejection can be fatal. Rejection by society is the worst thing anybody can suffer. It kills from within. That is why teenage motherhood

is a cry for help and family support is very important, as the result is children giving birth to, and trying to raise babies.”

Jeff notes that without any know-how, finances or proper structures, teenage mothers face a big challenge. Add to this the stigma that comes with being regarded as immoral. “Yet we know that not all teenage sex is consensual. There are cases of grown men preying on innocent girls.”

Abortion, or an attempt to carry it out, complicates an already complicated situation, especially if crude methods are used. Besides, there is a post-abortion self-stigma that does not go away.

“In the course of my career, I have met mature women who tell me they had abortions when they were very young and they still feel guilty decades later. Some even go to the extent of saying, ‘My first-born would be this or that age.’ It is very painful.”

In Kenya, four in every 10 women who die from unsafe abortion are adolescents; 70% of adolescents engage in high-risk unprotected sex. This is according to a research paper presented by Dr. Richard O. Muga of the National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development, Nairobi-Kenya, 2006.

The alarming figures are why Margaret Muyanga, a counseling psychologist, says open communication between teenagers and parents can be very instrumental in curbing any post- pregnancy abortion or even worse, suicidal tendencies.

*(Adopted from Daily Nation Wednesday July .30”, 2008)*

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) Explain how parents have contributed to the moral decay of their children. **(2marks)**
- b) Give the factors leading to teenage pregnancy, according to the passage. **(3marks)**
- c) What is the consequence of the rejection and abuse that teenage mothers experience? **(2marks)**
- d) Jeff says the issue of teenage mothers is so big that it should be considered a cry for help. **Rewrite** the sentence above in direct speech. **(1mark)**
- e) **In not more than 50 words, summarize** the consequences of teenage pregnancy. **(4marks)**

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- f) What solution does the writer offer to curb teenage pregnancy? **(2marks)**
- g) Identify and explain an instance of **irony** in the passage. **(3marks)**
- h) Explain the **meaning** of the following words as used in the passage. **(3marks)**
  - (i) Scot-free
  - (ii) Stigma
  - (iii) Consensual

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 14 QUESTIONS**

**Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:**

You may think that expecting food to change your life is too much to ask. But have you considered that eating the right food at the right time will increase energy, help you manage weight and ward off major illness?

Researchers have found that eating a meal with plenty of protein leaves you feeling more satisfied for longer when compared to a meal loaded with low-quality carbohydrates. Your body takes longer to digest protein, leading to a gradual increase in blood sugar. The high protein breakfast will therefore carry you through the morning and more importantly, through your tea break. Many high carbohydrate meals are absorbed quickly and send blood sugar on a roller coaster ride, taking your appetite with it and depleting your energy.

Many foods contain antioxidants, but fruits and vegetables may be the richest source. Behaving like chemical warriors, antioxidants neutralize molecules known as free radicals before they damage arteries and body cells. This protects you from heart diseases, high blood pressure, cancer and diabetes. You can now see why antioxidant foods should be consumed in generous portions.

Actually, forget pills – antioxidants work best when consumed in foods. In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. It's less daunting than it sounds: a portion equals a piece of fruit, three tablespoons of cooked vegetables or a glass of fresh juice.

And do you desire to relive yourself of some baggage? Calcium is the latest weight-loss star to appear on the scene. Scientists stumbled on its magic by accident. From study that measured the blood pressure of obese people, it was discovered that those who took one large tub of yoghurt a day in their diet lost an average of eleven pounds of body fat in one year, even though they did not eat less.

A follow-up study found that people on a high calcium diet lost weight and fat than did people on a low-calcium diet – and again, both consumed the same number of calories. Researchers believe calcium encourages fat cells to stop “getting fatter” instead, the cells burn extra fat without you having to go anywhere near a gymnasium.

It probably sounds strange to say that you can eat more in order to lose weight. Obviously, the question you should ask immediately is, “Eat more of what?” We are talking about foods

rich in fibre. They have what is referred to as low-energy density; that translates to few calories relative to weight. This means that you can down a mountain without fear of calories overload.

Fibre also aids weight loss because it's filling. Most high-fibre foods take a lot of chewing, triggering your body's fullness sensors. Moreover, you absorb the food more slowly so you feel full longer.

Will the wonders of food ever cease? Not if researchers in nutrition keep their pace.

Let them keep the good news flowing - such as the fact that we don't have to starve ourselves to lose weight and keep diseases at bay.

*(Adapted from Reader's Digest, January 2004)*

- (a) From the information given in the first paragraph, how can you improve your life?  
(1 mark)
- (b) In not more than 35 words, summarize the effects of eating carbohydrates. (4 marks)
- (c) Explain how free radicals contribute to the occurrence of high blood pressure and cancer. (2 marks)
- (d) In what two forms can antioxidants be consumed? (2 marks)
- (e) In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetable a day. Rewrite this statement as a question. (1 mark)
- (f) What is the attitude of the author towards calcium as a weight-cutting measure? (3 marks)
- (g) According to the passage, how can you use up excess fat? (2 marks)
- (h) Identify an instance of irony in the passage. (2 marks)
- (i) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. (3 marks)
  - (a) Daunting .....
  - (b) Baggage.....
  - (c) Down a mountain.....



# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 15 QUESTIONS

1. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow (20marks)

A renowned linguist, Joshua fishermen, identify one of the signals of dying languages as its loss of “intergenerational” use. Intergenerational ‘use means that there are old people middle aged people and young people using it in other words, the language is not only alive among the older generation.

It is possible to argue that there is evidence that many Kenyan indigenous languages have begun their walk towards death. Many parents in urban areas speak to their children in English or Kiswahili at home. The unfortunate thing in urban area is that, while a child who does not learn English or Kiswahili at home will learn it well enough at school, the only social institution that would pay attention to the acquisition of the indigenous language is the home. Increased social mobility, urbanization, inter- ethnic marriages and formal education have hampered the transmission of indigenous language the next generation. Of these factors, urbanization is seen to have contributed to the weakening of indigenous languages in various ways.

To begin with, in urban areas and cosmopolitan areas, the natural environment for the acquisition, development and transmission of indigenous, Language is absent. Relative particularly grandparents whose only languages is the indigenous language, are not part of the urban social set up. The growing child, therefore, finds that English and Kiswahili are sufficient communication tools. This reduces the motivation to learn and use the indigenous language. Thus, many of the children growing up in urban settings lack basic oral skills in the parents indigenous language, if this is not **checked**, these young people will have no indigenous language to pass onto the next generation, and this will keep reducing the ‘umber of speakers of those particular languages.

Another aspect of urban life that affects language transmission in Kenya is that most mothers are career women. They rely on domestic helps to bring up their children. The domestic helps, in most cases, speak a different indigenous language, and from that of the employers. In nearly all such situations, the parent instruct the domestic help to speak to their children either in Kiswahili or in English.

Inter-ethnic marriages are more common in urban area than in the rural areas. Within the patriarchal family structure in Kenya, it is expected that the wife in such a marriage will learn her husband’s language and then pass it on to the children. However, the environment in urban area does not enable the wife to learn her husband’s language. In many of such

cases, the wife chooses to address the children in Kiswahili or English and leaves the husband, in the limited time he has with the children to pass on his language. It is thus, understandable if such children, who also spend most of their playtime with children from other language groups, develop better skill in a common language such as Kiswahili or English.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Identify one signal of dying language drawing you illustration from the first paragraph. (2mks)
2. What evidence does the writer gives to prove that Kenyan indigenous languages are dying out. (2mks)
3. What factors have hindered the transmission of indigenous language to the next generation? (2mks)
4. Identify and explain the figure of speech in the second paragraph. (2mks)
5. State one way to show that the urban social set-up interferes with the natural environment for the acquisition of the indigenous language (1mks)
6. What role does house helps play in language transmission? (3mks)
7. In note form outline the writer's argument on how urbanization has contributed to the weakening of indigenous language. (4mks)
8. Identify a parenthetic expression in the first paragraph. (2mks)
9. Explain the meaning of the following passage
  - i) Surpasses
  - ii) Patriarchal family structure

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 16 QUESTIONS

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow (20mks)

Like termites destroying a structure, stress undermines the body, mind and emotions and the effects can be obvious on your skin. While dermatologists are still debating whether stress actually causes skin disorders, they seem to agree that stress definitely triggers or aggravates skin conditions such as acne, hives, eczema, psoriasis, rosacea, warts, cold sores and blisters. Did you know that one of the first places stress shows is on your skin? The skin is the largest organ and also the busiest immune part with direct and indirect connections to the brain.

Whenever we feel anxious or overwhelmed, our bodies produce cortisol, a major stress hormone and when pumped into our system, it communicates with all our organs and causes inflammation as a reaction to stress. Inflammation produces oxidants that damage the cells.

What does that mean to the skin? When a pore is inflamed, it becomes thick and swollen and is more likely to become clogged. When collagen becomes inflamed, the matrix breaks down and results in acne, wrinkles, dryness and itchiness appears with the inflammation. They are **telltale** indications of what is really going on inside.

All too often, we try to blame external influences such as eating too much chocolate, dust, even the weather for the state of our skin. But the real cause of a so called “**bad skin day**” is often emotional. That’s the thing about the skin: you have to deal not only with how you feel, but also with how others react to you. The flip side is that once your skin starts to mend, people notice immediately and tell you that you look great.

Stress management is possible if you can talk about what is going on in one’s life with a friend or relative. **Binging** or eating of junk food too pays off. Exercise raises the level of endorphins thus the mood is raised. A time off the hectic life to relax, a massage, soft music or even meditation is healthy for stress levels to be lowered. Cortisol levels are at their lowest when one sleeps.

**QUESTIONS**

- a) Why is stress destructive? (2mks)
- b) How does someone look when stressed (2mks)
- c) Make notes on the process by which stress affects our skin (6mks)
- (d) Apart from stress, what other factors are blamed for the condition of the skin(2mks)
- (e) You have to deal not only with how you feel, but also with how others react to you.  
(begin .....Not only) (1mk)
- (f) How does one know that one has started managing stress? (2mks)
- (g) Why is exercise important during stress (2mks)
- (h) Give the meaning of the following words and expressions as used in the passage.
  - (i) Telltale (1mk)
  - (ii) Bad skin day (1mk)
  - (iii) Binging (1mk)

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 17 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and answer the questions below.**

Kenya's wealth management industry is under developed as majority of the super rich prefer to use foreign private firms and hold their money outside the country. A newly released report by New released report by New World Wealth says the high-net-worth individuals in Kenya bank their money in foreign banks. "The majority of wealthy Kenyans use foreign private banks, which hold their money abroad. As a result, the local private banking industry is totally under developed." The report says.

About 50% of these high net-worth individuals are elite with political connections, and are estimated to have \$10 billion (Sh6860 million) banked abroad-constituting 30% of the national wealth. The money is banked mostly in private banks in UK, Switzerland, Cyprus and channel Islands. According to the London based New World Wealth, a large proportion of the local wealth was in 2013 held offshore accounts.

However, Kenya's wealth management systems is set to benefit from strong growth on wealth in other east Africa countries, which have less developed banking systems and are likely to opt for Kenyan banks.

"Kenya's wealth management industry is likely to expand over the forecast period as more high –net-worth individuals are created and as banks begin to set up in the country". The report adds that the current crackdown on the offshore centers might forces super rich Kenyans to repatriate their wealth into the country-further boosting the local wealth management of funds with the objective of stopping funding of terrorist networks. Among the foreign private banks in Kenya are Barclays of UK and Saniam of South Africa. Others that have expressed interest of setting up in the country are credit Suisse and UBS of Switzerland, RMB and Standard of South Africa.

In Kenya, the wealth management service providers are dry Associates, Global Eye, Intouch Capital, Inter-Alliance International and private Wealth. Most wealthy families in developed countries have their assets and funds under managers, but there are no known family offices in Kenya. The report says that this segment is expected to grow as more millionaire.

Family offices are involved in management of household staff, property management, philanthropy co-ordination, family education, inter-generational transfer and legal and tax services apart from the usual investment services. The report says there are 2,700 single

family holding of \$1.7 trillion and 2,300 multi family offices holding \$800 billion in the world-making it a big business. The report says the low-tier millionaires tend to hold cash and real estate billionaires tend to invest in commodities and alternative assets as hedge funds while affluent millionaires are likely to invest in fixed income and equity.

## **QUESTIONS**

- (a) Why is Kenya's wealth management industry under developed (2mks)
- (b) Give a reason as to why these wealthy Kenyans find it easy to bank abroad (1mk)
- (c) In about 30 words, summarize the factors that will strengthen the Kenya's Wealth management systems (3mks)
- (d) What is the importance of creating wealth managers (2mks)
- (e) According to the passage, how can you distinguish between low-tier millionaires and affluent millionaires (2mks)
- (f) Explain any instance of irony in the passage (2mks)
- (g) Why do you think majority of wealthy Kenyans keep their money abroad (1mk)
- (h) (i) Many countries have intensified vigilance are movement of funds with the objective of stopping funding of terrorist networks. (Rewrite using a question tag) (1mk)
- (ii) A newly released report by new World Wealth says the high net-worth individuals in Kenya bank their money in foreign banks (1mk)
- (Rewrite so as to avoid the reported speech) (1mk)
- (i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage (5mks)
- (i) crackdown
- (ii) Repatriate
- (iii) Vigilance
- (iv) affluent
- (v) Hedge

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 18 QUESTIONS

***Read the passage below and answer the questions which follow.***

The majority of the slaves accommodated themselves to unceasing brutality by a profound fatalism and a wooden stupidity before their masters. ‘Why do you ill-treat your mule in that way?’ asked a colonist of a carter. ‘But when I do not work, I am beaten, when he does not work, I beat him - he is my **Negro**.’ One old Negro, having lost one of his ears and condemned to lose another, begged the Governor to spare it, for if that too was cut off he would have nowhere to put his stump of cigarette. A slave sent by his master into his neighbour’s garden to steal, is caught and brought back to the man who had, only a few minutes before, despatched him on the errand. The master orders that he be given one hundred lashes and the slave submits without a murmur. When caught in error they persisted in denial with the same fatalistic stupidity. A slave is accused of stealing a pigeon. He denies it. The pigeon is discovered hidden in his shirt. ‘Well, well, look at that pigeon. It took my shirt for a nest.’ Through the shirt of another, a master can feel the potatoes fall to the ground. ‘Eh! master. The devil is wicked. Put stones, and look, you find potatoes.’

Life was hard for the slaves; wives and husbands, children and parents, and a father and son would meet after many years and give no greeting or any sign of emotion. The sufferings they endured made many of them commit suicide. Some killed themselves in order to **spite** their owner while others did it because death meant not only release but a return to Africa. Those who wished to believe and to convince the world that the slaves were half-human brutes, fit for nothing else but slavery, could find ample evidence for their faith, and in nothing so much as in the rampant homicide among the slaves. Poison was their method. A mistress would poison a rival to retain the valuable affections of her inconstant owner. A slave robbed of his wife by one of his masters would poison him, and this was one of the most frequent causes of poisoning. The slaves would poison the younger children of a master in order to ensure the plantation was taken by one son. By this means they prevented the plantation being broken up and the gang dispersed. On certain plantations the slaves decimated their number by poison so as to keep the number of slaves small and prevent their masters embarking on larger schemes which would increase the work.

What was the intellectual level of these slaves? The planters, hating them, called them by every opprobrious name. ‘The Negroes,’ says a memoir published in 1789, ‘are unjust, cruel, barbarous, half-cowards.’ It was by sentiments such as these that they strove to justify the abominable cruelties they practised. They took great pains that the Negro should remain the brute beast they wanted him to be. ‘The safety of the whites demands that we keep the Negroes in the most profound ignorance. I have reached the stage of believing firmly that one must treat the Negroes as one treats beasts.’ Such is the opinion of the Governor of Martinique in a letter addressed to the Minister and such was the opinion of all colonists. Indeed, the majority of the colonists religiously kept all instruction, religious or otherwise, away from the slaves.

Despite this deliberate move to turn the Negro into a brute, his intellectual potential was not destroyed. Those who took the trouble to observe them away from their masters and in their interactions with each other did not fail to see that remarkable liveliness of intellect and vivacity of spirit which still distinguish their descendants. Father du Tertre, who knew them well, noted their secret pride and feeling of superiority to their masters. He observed the difference between their behaviour before their masters and when they were by themselves. Dc Wimpifien, an exceptionally observant and able traveler, was also astonished at this dual personality of the slaves, He wrote ‘One has to hear with what warmth and what volubility, and at the same time with what precision of ideas and accuracy of judgment, this man, heavy and taciturn all day, now squatting before his fire, tells stories, talks, gesticulates, and argues, passes opinions, approves or condemns both his master and everyone who surrounds him. It was this intelligence which refused to be crushed, these latent possibilities that frightened the colonists. ‘No species of men has more intelligence,’ wrote Hilliard d’Auberteuil, a colonist, in 1784, and had his book banned.

*Adapted from The Black Jacobins by C.L.R. James, Random House New York, 1963, 15 - 18.*

### **QUESTIONS**

- a) i) Give two instances in which the slaves show fatalistic stupidity. (2mks)  
ii) Explain each of the cases in (i) above why there was no real stupidity in the slaves behaving so. (2mks)
- b) What is the author’s feeling towards the master in paragraph one? (2mks)  
c) In a summary of not more than 55 words, give the causes of poisoning according to the passage. (4mks)
- Rough copy**  
**Fair copy**
- d) From the passage, show that life was hard for the slaves. (3mks)  
e) “ But when I do not work, I am beaten, when he does not work, I beat him- he is my negro.”  
(Leaving out the inner punctuation marks rewrite the sentence beginning: **It is because.....**) (1mk)
- f) Explain any **two** instances of the slaves’ dual personality. (2mks)  
g) Explain the irony presented by a master robbing a slave of his wife. (2mks)
- h) Give the meaning of the following as used in the passage. (2mks)  
i) Negro  
ii) Spite



# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 19 QUESTIONS

### 1. COMPREHENSION

(20 Marks)

County Public service Boards are finding themselves caught between a rock and a hard place, owing to competing personal and political interests.

Many boards are enmeshed in an intricate web of personal interests and political arm-twisting by Governors, Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) and other county politicians, even as they are required to observe the law.

These politicians are mainly interested in controlling the organization, staffing and functioning of workers at the county level-an exclusive function of the county boards.

“The issue has been problematic. Some boards are just hiring without following the human resource procedures and paying little attention to the wage bill problem, which is undermining economic development,” said Public Service commission Chairperson Margaret Kobia.

Each of the 47 countries has a public service board whose members are appointed by governors, with the approval of county assemblies. Clause 58 of The County Governments Act, 2012 provides that the membership of the boards is comprised of a chairperson, at least three and no more than five, other members and a certified public secretary who is the secretary to the board.

The boards, according to Clause 59 of the Act are required to establish, fill and abolish offices in the county public service, advise the county government on human resource management and development, and make recommendations to the Salaries and Remuneration Commission on the remuneration, pensions and gratuities for county public service employees.

In addition, the boards, like the national government equivalent- public service commission – have powers to discipline county public servants.

While the Act is clear on their role on recruitment of county staff, Sunday Nation established that some boards have been reduced to rubberstamps for governors and county executives, who handpick staff.

In such cases, the governors merely forward names of their appointees to the boards to regularize and include them in the county government payroll, something Prof. Kobia said should never happen in a professionally run board

**QUESTIONS**

- a) Why are county public service boards finding themselves in difficulties according to the first paragraph? **(2mks)**
- b) What does the writer mean by the expression ‘between a rock and a hard place’ **(2mks)**
- c) According to Clause 59 of the County Government Act 2012, make notes on the duties of the County Public Service Boards. **(6mks)**
- d) In what ways are the rules of recruitment of county staff flouted? **(2mks)**
- e) The issue has been problematic. (Rewrite adding a question tag) **(1mk)**
- f) What is the writer’s attitude towards the county Public Service Board? **(3mks)**
- g) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. **(4mks)**
  - i. enmeshed.....
  - ii. arm-twisting.....
  - iii. procedures.....
  - iv. handpick.....

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 20 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and answer the questions below: - (20 marks)

“...the English judges of the higher ranks are saddled with enormous horsehair wigs that can cost over one thousand pounds and weigh almost that much. They are expected to wear garish robes trimmed with the carcasses of small woodland creatures. The English judicial costume is said to be itchy, unhygienic, and uncomfortable. It also does not always seem terrific!”

So wrote Prof. Charles Yablon in *Judicial Drag: An Eassy on Wigs, Robes and Legal Change*. Many, many years earlier, Alexander Herzen, a contemporary of Thomas Jefferson, described the English judges as “wearing a fur coat and something like a woman’s dressing gown.”

A refreshing image from the swearing-in ceremony at State House was that of the new Chief Justice, Dr. Willy Mutunga and his Deputy, Ms. Nancy Baraza who opted to go through the rituals unencumbered by the medieval robes and horse hair wigs still beloved of the Kenya **Bench and Bar**.

The Director of Public prosecution, however, turned out in his dress powdered wig and still collar and that accountrement down the neck that always reminds me of a child’s bib starched solid with usual **detritus** from feeding time.

By taking the oath of office in their “civvies”, The Chief Justice and his Deputy might be signaling a break with the past and the onset of a regime that intends to chart a fresh course. But then it might seem that the Director or Prosecution – succeeding himself in the same position but in a newly enhanced, independent and very powerful role that is not subservient to the Attorney-General or any Cabinet minister-represent the old order. May be this is unfair. It is probable that the new Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice did not consult the Prosecutor on the dress code for swearing in.

Matters of dress aside, however, there is a new sheriff in town, and that seemed to be the message the Chief Justice was delivering to his fellow judges from the steps of the imposing Supreme Court building soon after the swearing-in ceremony of state house witnessed by the President and the Prime Minister. He was gracious in his acknowledgement that the new broom must co-exist and work together with the judges it finds in service. But he also, in polite but very serious words, said that “We as judges must guard against becoming captives of political, commercial or other interests; it should no longer be possible to speak about corruption and the judiciary in one breath.”

The “we as judges” must have been very deliberate. The message is that he is not coming in from the outside to sweep away the existing Bench; but reaching as brother-judge to colleagues he intends to work with in transforming the judiciary and ensuring it wins public trust.

He is no doubt in a powerful position to drive reforms in the judiciary but he will achieve so much more if he wins the trust and cooperation of his colleagues. Hostile and angry judges can throw all manner of spanners into the works. The Chief Justice can be limited in his actions because he will not alone preside over all cases or sit in review over the ruling of other judges.

One of the key failings of the criminal justice system in Kenya is the failure or refusal to prosecute and convict the high and mighty, a culture that involves unholy alliances across the length and breadth of the entire establishment from the police to prosecutors and judges. This is where major challenges could arise because a reformist judge would be helpless if a prosecutor beholden to the old order refuses to charge his political patrons or presents cases that are doomed to fail.

**(Article by Macharia Gaitho, Daily Nation 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011.)**

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) Make notes on what makes the English Judicial costume undesirable. **(3 marks)**
- b) Show how the writer’s attitude towards the Chief Justice dress code is different from that of the Director of Public Prosecution. **(3 marks)**
- c) What significance is attached to the dressing of the three judicial officers? **(2 marks)**
- d) Why is the word “civvies” in quotation marks? **(2 marks)**
- e) It is probable that the new Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice did not consult the Prosecutor on the dress code for swearing in. (Beginning: The Prosecutor....) **(1 mark)**
- f) Identify and explain the metaphor used in paragraph six. **(2 marks)**
- g) Why it necessary for the Chief Justice to win the trust and cooperation of his colleague? **(2 marks)**
- h) Explain two challenges to judicial reforms. **(2 marks)**
- i) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. **(3 marks)**

bench and Bar \_\_\_\_\_

detritus \_\_\_\_\_

old order \_\_\_\_\_

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 21 QUESTIONS

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

### Choosing a career

The career market is full of opportunities. Gone are the days when we had "either...or" career choices. The time when women, for example, chose between only: nursing, teaching and secretarial work are long gone. The explosion in communication technology and the **liberalization** and globalization of the world economy, has ensured that there is no longer a **dearth** of career choices. Today, colleges and universities offer a wide range of training opportunities to high school graduates. This has made choosing a career an involving process. It has also given rise to the need for career counseling.

When choosing a career, whether you have the help of a career counselor or not, there are several factors that you should consider. These include your abilities or talents, your interests, your priorities and the available opportunities in the job market.

The skills required in a particular career and the ability to gain them through education must be considered when choosing careers. Becoming a doctor, for instance, requires extensive education and training, and many years of educational commitment. In addition to the compulsory subjects, the academic background required for this career is good grades in Chemistry and Biology at secondary school level. If your ability in these subjects is just average, you would be overstretching your luck to enroll for a Bachelor of medicine degree course. In the past, students have chosen to pursue training in engineering, even when their ability to handle Physics and Mathematics is very low. This, in many cases, has made them drop out of the class mid-course. The waste of time and resources would have been **evaded** if they had considered a career that did not require the ability to handle Mathematics and Physics well.

There are many times when people have been driven to choose a particular career because of the salary and prestige associated with jobs in this field. At times, the desire to take certain courses comes from within an individual, but most times, individuals feel pressured by peers or family to take certain courses. Joining a career in which you have no interest in is a recipe for a dull life since you will spend more of your working hours doing something you do not like. Your career does not necessarily have to be your passion, but it should not bore you to death either. You can work out your interests by identifying the

subjects you enjoy most at school, or the topics that are of interest to you and for which you take the initiative to read on your own.

It is true that many young people are attracted more by the **social mobility** that the job might provide than by their interest in the career. However, research has found that money does not play as big a role in job satisfaction as many people think. Of course we all have to make a living, but if you do not like your job, it does not matter how much you get paid to do it. What matters is how well a career choice matches your values.

**QUESTIONS**

- i) What has created the necessity for career counseling? **(3marks)**
- ii) Why is one's ability an important factor in career choice? **(2marks)**
- iii) Why do you think the writer cites engineering in the passage? **(2marks)**
- iv) According to the passage which career should a person who values variety choose? **(2 marks)**
- v) Make notes on the importance of knowing the availability of jobs in the career field one wantsto join. **(4 marks)**
- vi) What evidence is given in the passage to support the statement "Money does not play a big role in job satisfaction?" **(3 marks)**
- vii) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. **(4marks)**
  - a) Liberalization.....
  - b) Dearth.....
  - c) Evaded.....
  - d) Social mobility.....**(25 marks)**

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 22 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow

Among the strikers there were some few who secretly went back to work. They rose very early and did not return to their homes until after nightfall. Tiemoko had recruited a group of such men, and the ‘renegades’, as he referred to them at meetings, were dealt with harshly. This collective action made the strike – breakers more wary and discouraged others from joining them, but there was, nonetheless, one case which caused considerable commotion and provoked extremely varied reactions, depending largely on the age, sex, or the particular situation of those who were involved. It was the case of Diara, the ticket collector.

When Diara’s trial was held in the union building, the meeting hall was filled to overflowing and had lost its customary aspect – there were several women present, and this was something entirely new.

Diara himself was seated at the centre stage, alone, and without even a table before him. His head was bowed so deeply that all that could be seen was his forehead. He seemed to have shrunk- actually to have shriveled somehow – giving the appearance of a piece of meat that had been set out here to dry. His back was bent beneath the **weight of his humiliation**, and his arms hung limply at his sides, grafted to his shoulders like lifeless stumps.

Seated at a table to his right were Konate, the secretary to the Bamoko local, and the regional director from Koulikoro. With them was Sadio, Diara’s son, and facing them, aligned on a bench, were the eight jurors. The hall itself was so crowded that those who had been unable to find a place were jammed into the door and the windows, as they had been on the night the strike was called. But the atmosphere this night was frigid, and not a sound disturbed the silence.

Diara, the ticket collector, was accused of dynfa – Bambara word that was seldom used any longer, but which meant nothing less than treason: betrayal of one’s people. This was serious enough in itself, but in addition there was the fact that this was the first time that anyone there-in the hall or up on the stage – had taken part in a trial. Subconsciously they were torn between the feeling of brotherhood that each of them had for the others – including the accused – and a vague memory of what was meant by the law, which they knew only from fragments of stories they had heard. Because of this **conflict of emotions**, they had a curious feeling of having been removed from their natural element, but the very newness of being

forced to make a decision of this kind for themselves had **sharpened their interest and their curiosity**. There were some of them who realized that, for the first time, they were being called upon to play the role of a man – of their own man.

It was Tiemoko, who was the official record-keeper for the local strike committee, who had insisted on holding the trial, and everyone knew that the idea of it, and even the manner in which it was being handled, had come from a book in Ibrahim Bakayoko's library. Konate was presiding, and he began by exhorting everyone who would have something to say to do so without hatred or malice toward Diara.

Standing up, with one hand still resting on the table, he said sorrowfully, "I have no need to tell you that this affair is disagreeable for all of us". Over his shoulder, he glanced at Sadio, the son of the accused, who seemed as broken and unhappy as his father, and then he continued. 'Until this moment, we have punished strike-breakers simply by beating them, and as you know, there are two who are still laid up as a result. I went to see them before coming here. That is a sorry business, because we all have wives, and mothers and fathers, and children. But now there is the case of Diara. Diara voted for the strike and, like ourselves, he received his proper share of relief, but then he moved over to the side of our enemies. Now it is up to you to speak. Everything you say will be carefully noted, and then your judgement will be carried out by men who will be appointed for that purpose.

Normally, when Konate had finished speaking, he was always loudly applauded, but this time everyone was so conscious of the gravity of the matter that no one moved. For a moment there was utter silence in the hall, and even among the crowd at the door and windows, and then a voice called out, 'Why don't we ask Tiemoko to begin?

"If Tiemoko wishes to begin, I am willing," Konate said. Tiemoko was seated in his customary place

in the third row. He rose heavily, his bull neck seeming even more massive than usual. The sweating in his palms bothered him, and he folded his arms across his chest. Before speaking, he flicked his tongue over his lips, and his strong, white teeth bit down on them, hard. He knew very well what he must do, but his tongue rebelled against it. 'Ah', he thought, "if Bakayoko were here in my place, he could make them understand, right away."

*Adapted from God's Bits of Wood by Sembene Ousmane, Heinemann, 1983, 78 – 79.*

### **QUESTIONS.**

- (a) What happens during Diara's trial that was not customary? (2 mks)
- (b) Mention **two** things that made this trial unique. (2 mks)



(c) Describe the character of Konate. (4 mks)

(d) Replace the underlined words in the sentence below with one word that means the same. (1mk)

That is a sorry business, because we all have wives and mothers and fathers and children.

(e) Identify and illustrate **one** stylistic device the writer uses to describe Diara's appearance.

Explain its effectiveness. (3 mks)

(f) In note form outline what Diara is accused of. (5 mks)

(g) Explain the following expressions as used in the passage. (3 mks)

Weight of humiliation.....

Conflict of emotion.....

Sharpened their interest.....

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 23 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.**

We are moving inexorably into the age of automation. Our aim is not to devise a mechanism which can perform a thousand different actions of any individual man but, on the contrary which could by a single action replace a thousand men.

Industrial automation has moved along three lines. First there is the conveyor belt system of continuous production whereby separate operations are linked into a single sequence. The goods produced by this well-established method are untouched by the worker, and the machine replaces both unskilled and semi-skilled. Secondly, there is automation with feedback control of the quality of the product; here mechanisms are built into the system which can compare the output with a norm, that is, the actual product with what it is supposed to be, and then correct any shortcomings. The entire cycle of operations dispenses with human control except in so far as monitors are concerned. One or two examples of this type of automation will illustrate its immense possibilities. There is a factory in the USA which makes 1,000 million electric light bulbs a year, and the factory employs three hundred people. If the pre-automation techniques were to be employed, the labour force required would leap to 25, 000. A motor manufacturing company with 45,000 spare parts regulates their entire supply entirely by computer. Computers can be entrusted with most of the supervision of industrial installations, such as chemical plants or oil refineries. Thirdly, there is computer automation, for banks, accounting departments, insurance companies and the like. Here the essential features are the recording, storing, sorting and retrieval of information.

The principal merit of modern computing machines is the achievement of their vastly greater speed of operation by comparison with unaided human effort; a task which otherwise might take years, if attempted at all, now takes days or hours.

One of the most urgent problems of industrial societies rapidly introducing automation is how to fill the time that will be made free by machines which will take over the tasks of the workers. The question is not simply of filling empty time but also of utilizing the surplus human energy that will be released. We are already seeing straws in the wind: destructive outbursts on the part of youth whose work no longer demands muscular strength. While automation will undoubtedly do away with a large number of tedious jobs, are we sure that it will not put others which are equally tedious in their place? For an enormous amount of sheer monitoring will be required. A man in an automated plant may

have to sit for hours on end watching dials and taking decisive action when some signal informs him that all is not well. What meaning will his occupation bear for the worker? How will he devote his free time after a four or five hour stint of labour? Moreover, what, indeed, will be the significance for him of his leisure? If industry of the future could be purged of its monotony and meaninglessness, man would then be better equipped to use his leisure time constructively.

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) What is the main purpose of automation, according to the passage? (1mk)
- b) Explain why less men are required for the first type of industrial automation than in a manual system? (2mks)
- c) What is more sophisticated about the second industrial automation system than the first? (2mks)
- d) What is the main benefit of computing machines? (1 mk)
- e) Comment on the biggest drawbacks of automation in industrial societies. (2mks)
- f) How would the sense be changed if the phrase “a single action” (lines 2-3) were replaced by “a thousand actions”? (2mks)
- g) What does the phrase “if attempted at all” refer to? (1mk)
- h) What does the author consider as important as “filling empty time”? (1mk)
- i) State the three lines of industrial automation referred to by the author. Give your answer in note form. (3mks)
- j) In a paragraph of not more than 100 words, describe the benefits and problems of increasing industrial automation. (5mks)

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 24 QUESTIONS

Read the passage below and then answer the question that follow.

The laboratory rats are agitated. Their teeth are chattering. They are nervous and cannot concentrate. Their physiological symptoms are equivalent to drug withdrawal. But they are not on drugs. They are on sugar and they need their fix. The rodents have been fed a diet of 25 percent sugar. If this seems an unpleasant experiment, remember that children routinely eat breakfast cereals containing more than 40 percent of the sweet stuff. Never mind the youngsters' teeth or waistlines, what is this sort of junk food doing to their brains?

'We are what we eat', the old saying goes, and what we eat has changed hugely over the past 50 years. The physical risks to children of a highly – processed, highly-refined diet lacking in fruit and vegetables are now acknowledged, but the damage being done to their behaviour, learning abilities and mood is not. Nutrition can play a key role in preventing and managing many difficulties, including development disorders such as hyperactivity and mental health problems such as depression.

Bernard Gesch, a senior researcher at Oxford, says: 'It is widely accepted that diet influences our physical health, and yet we manage to ignore that connection when it comes to behaviour.' In 2002 Gesch released the results of dietary experiment. More than 200 men in young offenders' institutions took part in a randomized test. **Anti-social behaviour** fell by 25 percent and violent incidents by 35 percent among offenders given multi-vitamin, mineral and fatty acid supplements that brought their intake up to official levels. There was no change in the control group. 'It raises the important question of what would have happened to these men if they had been nourished properly in their young lives,' he says.

However, the wider picture is more complex. Prior to the experiment, Gesch's young offenders had access to well-balanced meals in their institutions, but they made poor choices. So do children when it comes to school dinners, the Consumers' Association reported last year. It asked 246 primary and secondary pupils to keep a food diary. The youngsters filled the pages with details of crisps, chips and chocolate bars, but rarely mentioned fruit or vegetables. Their diets were high in saturated fat, sugar and salt and low in many vital nutrients such as zinc, iron, protein, calcium, foliate and vitamins A and C. Consider the role of just one of these. Nearly half of the UK's children suffer some zinc deficiency – the classic sign is white spots on the fingernails. Zinc has a role in metabolizing sugar. It is also essential for cell division and replication, and a shortage damages the senses of taste and smell. This leaves children open to the appeal of highly-spiced and artificially flavoured, salty and sugary foods and less likely to appreciate the **subtleties** of fruit and vegetables.

The types of fats children eat are another major concern. The brain is about 65 percent fat, and omega 3 oils are its genuine, natural, **polyunsaturated fats**. They are essential to the brain's working and have been much publicized. But Dr Richardson, a colleague of Dr. Gesch, says that omega 3 oils are 'tragically lacking in most modern diets', except of course in the

run up to the summer exam season when students and parents empty the chemists' shelves in the hope of better results.

Omega 3 oils can be displaced by manmade, unnatural nasties called 'trans fatty acids' (TFAs). But these TFAs don't behave in the same way as omega 3 oils. In brain cells, for example, saturated, hydrogenated and trans fats make the membranes far less fluid and flexible. This can affect the functioning of all the cells' signaling systems', says Dr. Richardson. 'Every time children eat crisps, biscuits or cakes they are filling themselves with what are essentially toxic fats.' This has now been admitted by the USA's Food and Drug Administration and the UK's Food Standards Agency.

There are no health benefits and many health costs to these man-made fats. Yet they are all that some children and adults are eating. They are replacing the essential natural fats that would make their brain and body work properly with one that are clogging up the machinery.

### **QUESTIONS**

- a) What evidence does the author give to show that the laboratory rats are agitated?  
(2 marks)
  - b) According to information given in paragraph one, what do children eat for breakfast?  
(2 marks)
  - c) "We are what we eat." With evidence from the passage, explain the relevance of the above saying.  
(2 marks)
  - d) In not more than 25 words, summarise the benefits of zinc in the diet of children.  
(5 marks)
  - e) Dr. Richardson says that omega 3 oils are tragically lacking in most modern diets.  
(Rewrite the sentence in direct speech) (1 mark)
  - f) What is the attitude of the writer towards trans fatty acids according to the passage?  
(2 marks)
  - g) Give the passage a relevant title. (1 mark)
- Why has the author used 'Benard Gesch' in the passage? (2 marks)
- h) Explain the meaning of the following words / phrases as used in the passage.  
(3 marks)
    - i) Anti - social behaviour \_\_\_\_\_
    - ii) Subtleties \_\_\_\_\_
    - iii) Polyunsaturated fats \_\_\_\_\_

## **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## TRIAL 25 QUESTIONS

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

### Recognising attitude

You should have seen her walk in with elegance and style. Even those who had no taste for beauty and art quickly realised that she stood out among the beauty contestants. This was not an ordinary beauty contest like the previous ones. The competition had moved from the mere focus on outside beauty; it required brains too. When it came to answering the questions, Atieno did not disappoint the audience. She was eloquent and articulate, answering the questions intelligently and with precision. What is more, Atieno was cool and composed. She struck an image of one who was sure of herself and her subject. She spoke on how she would plough back the prize money to educate girls in her village and help orphans ravaged by the HIV/ AIDS pandemic. When she finished speaking, I could not help but join the rest of the audience in giving Atieno a standing ovation. To me, she was the epitome of perfection, a marriage of beauty and brains.

I loved the appearance and the experience of the judges. Their resumes spoke of people who were widely travelled and had vast experience, thus they knew what to look for in the contestants. I had no doubt that they would give a fair judgment. We waited with bated breath for the judges to come back from their consultations to announce the winner. Soon we became restless as people began whispering and murmuring. When it took a bit longer, word even begun going round that the judges had disagreed on who the winner was.

Finally, the judges emerged. Looking at their faces, my instincts told me something was amiss. Without wasting time, Judge Dulo dropped the bomb shell: " The winner of Miss Kenya Beauty Contest 2013 is Mzalendo Lukenya!" Shouts of disapproval filled the room. Even the minister for Culture and Social Services who is known for his level-headedness shook his head in disapproval. Finally the master of ceremonies calmed the audience and the judges called the winner on stage. When she appeared, the hall was filled with ululation and shouts **of jubilation as song and dance filled the hall. I saw the minister wipe a tear from his left eye. The judges and the contestants had played a trick on us! Mzalendo Lukenya was actually Atieno! They had agreed not to associate her with any tribe in Kenya, hence the use of the name Mzalendo Lukenya. There were more shouts, music and dance in the hall. Indeed, this was a pageant of 'Beauty and Brains.'**

### QUESTIONS

- a. Why was this contest different from any other? (1 mark)
- b. Identify a sentence in the last paragraph that indicates that all was not well. (1mk)

- c. Using illustrations from the passage describe the writer's attitude towards Atieno(3mks)
- d. Identify and illustrate a stylistic device dominating the last paragraph (2mks)
- e. Why do you think the minister wiped a tear from his left eye? (2mk)
- f. In a paragraph of not more than 30 words describe Atieno (5marks)
- g. Re-write the following sentences according to the instructions given after each (1mks)
- (i) Atieno did not disappoint the audience(Re-write in passive voice)
- ii. I had no doubt they would give a fair judgement (Rewrite using "fairly") (1mk)
- h. Give the meaning of the following words as used in the passage (3mks)
- i. Epitome
  - ii. Resumes
  - iii. ululations
  - iv. Articulate

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 26 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and then answer the questions that follow .

There is nothing as important as a pregnant woman getting all the emotional support she can get during pregnancy. It makes her appreciate the pregnancy and in turn care of it well, says Dr Maxwell Okonji.

The doctor talked to *Pregnant Magazine* on how you can use your *mental muscle* to handle any pregnancy *misgivings*.

“Once you discover that you are pregnant, you need to be optimistic,” says. Dr Okonji. Positive handling of a pregnancy is one of the surest ways of carrying it to term, minus health complications.

He adds: “Stress and worry, which are bound to accompany the numerous emotional and physical changes that come along with pregnancy, can lead to depression” Depression, particularly during pregnancy, often drains your energy, which can prevent you from seeking appropriate prenatal care. Depressed pregnant women are more likely to abuse alcohol or drugs during the term. When it is most severe, depression can lead to self harm and even suicide. Are you depressed?

Persistent feelings of sadness, self-pity and hopelessness during the pregnancy The feelings could be accompanied by difficulty in sleeping or oversleeping, weight loss or change in appetite, irritability or mood swings; difficulty in concentrating, characteristic or bizarre behaviour, and thoughts of self-harm. You may notice that you have become unusually hostile and fighting with your spouse often with no prompt. Feeling as though you could do without the pregnancy at that time and that it is a reason that is constantly making you angry. Having a mental condition. Before pregnancy make depression more likely during pregnancy. Again, if during a previous pregnancy- a woman showed signs of depression, chances are that when she falls pregnant again, it will recur.

In cases where depression is severe with promptings to suicide, termination of the pregnancy may be called for. This is purely on medical grounds. This usually happens during the first three months. Termination should, however, be a last resort, after other modes of treatment have failed. In the first three months of pregnancy, it is not unusual for a pregnant woman to have to experience nausea and vomiting

These are normally very frustrating to the mother, particularly if it’s a first pregnancy.



During this time, it is normal to have mood changes like touchiness and irritability over-friendliness to certain people and nastiness to others is a normal occurrence. This happens to a varying extent and not to all women.

After the third month or so, those early signs of pregnancy and the mood changes disappear. The middle trimester, from four to six months, is a stable time for most women, with little or no problems during that time. The second and third trimester present more mood changes as the mother begins to feel the baby and in turn prepares to receive her.

Mood changes are quite normal and do not pose any threat to the pregnancy however, in case you as a woman notice that the moods border on the extreme, then it is recommended that you talk to a counselor.

*Adapted from, Lifestyle Sunday Nation, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

## **QUESTIONS**

- a) According to author what are the most essential things to a pregnant woman? **(2mk)**
- b) In note form, what are the consequences of depression to a pregnant woman? **(5mks)**
- c) How will a pregnant woman know that she is depressed? **(4mks)**
- d) According to the passage, a certain group of woman are likely to experience depression . Who are they? **(2mks)**
- e) If depression in pregnant woman becomes worse, what should be done? **(2mks)**
- f) Provide an antonym of the word “angry” ? **(1mk)**
- g) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage? (**4mks**)
  - i) Mental muscle
  - ii) Misgiving
  - iii) Drains
  - iv) Last resort

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 27 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.**

Kenyan roads hold two things in equal measure: great promise and great disappointment. They begin with a promise, in this case, the construction. Everyone is excited about the possibilities that the road presents. If it happens to be a new road, commuters will talk about nothing else except how pleasantly things will change for them. Soon, the construction is completed, and people are so excited, some are even tempted to lie on the tarmac! Change does not happen; value of property appreciates a hundred fold, businesses and farmers do better and the general outlook of that area changes.

Three years down the road however, due to poor workmanship, cracks begin to appear, small ones at first, which become bigger by the day, and finally, they develop into the craters that we Kenyans know too well. Vehicles are damaged; dust returns with a vengeance and accidents increase, with them, permanent scars and loss of lives. Right in front of our eyes, what held great promise and hope to us becomes a source of disappointment and anguish. Yet every single day, we ply the roads, going about our business in spite of the difficulties.

Relationships behave much the same way. In every relationship, hope and promise are intricately intertwined with the potential for disappointment. And just like with the roads, we don't give our relationships the nourishment they need to withstand the bad times. When it begins to crack, we allow the dust of the disappointment to block our view of the promise that the relationship still holds.

Here are some thoughts to consider. First, just like roads, relationships are necessary in spite of their challenges. People come into the relationship with expectations, some realistic, some unrealistic and everything in between them. The backgrounds we come from inform those expectations to a great extent, and these are further reinforced by folktales and fantasies of romance, family, wealth and so on. When these expectations are not met, disappointments are bound to occur.

Yet like the roads, relationships still hold great promise for happiness, health and wealth. Mark Gungor, the creator of the video. "Laugh your Way to a Better Marriage." Quotes research that says married people are happier, healthier and make more money on average than singles, the challenges notwithstanding, am of the opinion that human beings have not yet discovered any other source of

Companionship, love friendship, and pleasure that is greater than that which is found in relationships.

Another thought is the permanent nature of roads. Every time I visit my home town, am amazed that most of the roads are still there. I can actually direct someone to my home without the fear that the road will have disappeared. Generally, roads have a permanent nature.

In the same way, relationships must be approached with a view of staying put, for better or for worse. This was the major plank in the traditional marriage in Africa, as well as a central tenet of the Christian tradition to which most Kenyans **pledge allegiance**. Unfortunately, these traditional ideals of love, courtship, marriage and family have largely been discarded and without clear guidelines, relationships are likely to be a difficult proposition for anyone.

The **proliferation** and acceptance of come-we-stay arrangements and other forms of non-committal type of unions is a challenge. This is because the roles that marriage plays in the society-producing and nurturing of children to maturity, providing companionship and building wealth, require a high level of permanency. The promise of relationships lies in commitment, and if approached from any other angle, relationships become unfulfilling. (From: *The Daily Nation newspaper dated February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012.*)

- a) Explain why people look to the construction of a new road with optimism. (3mks)
- b) Identify **one** similarity between Kenyan roads and relationships. (2mks)
- c) What is the writer's take on Mark Gungor's position on relationships? (2mks)
- d) According to the passage, state why relationships should be permanent. (3mks)
- e) State the writer's attitude towards Kenyan roads as revealed in the passage (2mks)
- g) In **note form**, give the consequences of poor road workmanship. (5mks)
- g) "Everyone is excited about the possibilities that the road presents."  
(Rewrite beginning: Everyone's ..... ) (1mrk)
- h) Explain what the following word and phrase mean as used in the passage. (2mks)
  - i) Proliferation
  - ii) Pledge allegiance

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 28 QUESTIONS

Read the following Passage and answer the Questions that follow.

Each day I had to make at least four journeys to the well to fill the huge barrel at home before school. And there was no breakfast for me at home. I went to school to learn on an empty stomach. During recreation, it is true there were tarts, or, properly speaking, fritters; and rice and beans or Krakro to buy from the women who sold these things near the school. A halfpenny worth of tarts was enough to last until twelve o'clock when the first session ended.

Everyone used to call the recreation period 'decreation', or, more appropriately, 'dincreation'.

We didn't know, of course, how clever we were in so corrupting the original word.

The classrooms were quiet and orderly save for the crash of the cane and the squealing of some poor wretch who could not do his lessons. The recreation period provided a much needed outlet for making noise with impunity. The classes would resume — the alphabet again! 'A!' shouted the teacher pointing to the first letter. 'A!' responded the class in chorus. 'B!' 'B!' 'C!' 'C!!!', etc. It was all so easy until it got to the middle letters. The teacher, a little man called Asamoah, paused. He pointed to a letter and called out a boy's name — 'Arhin'.

'P-!', shouted the boy promptly.

'Afram,' for a moment I nearly panicked, my heart stood still and then started to pound madly against my ribs. I went through the alphabet quickly until I got to the particular letter.

'P,' I shouted.

'Good,' the teacher said, 'but too slow. Next time you will get the cane if you are not quick about.'

'Yes, sir,' I replied humbly.

'Now you, Badu,' he pointed M.

T.' shouted Badu. His next shout was Ah! As the cane crashed on his head. Next boy!' 'Q, and the cane descended, and again. Afram!' 'M,' I replied.

'Good boy! Give all the rest one knock each,' ordered the teacher. I was taken aback. but I had to obey. I gave each a half-hearted knock with my knuckles.

He clenched his knuckles and brought them down on my closely cropped head.

The cracks resounded in the classroom.

My head! Why did I ever leave home?' I thought. But the teacher was off again with his test and his cane and I had to be attentive. And so it went on till the bell sounded from the headmaster's office.

‘Class stand! Eyes closed, hands clasped!’ ordered the teacher. After the prayers I ran all the way home to my ‘master’ for I had to lay the table for him and pound his fufu, then I had to stand with my hands behind the back to wait on him as he ate. I had to provide myself with a piece of cloth to drive the flies from his table when necessary, and it was constantly necessary, and then to clear the table. I was entitled to what he left uneaten, so I watched him swallow each morsel with a pang. Half the food was gone! One plate was empty! No meat left. Another plate gone! Two pieces of cassava left over and a pinch of salt.

‘Afram

‘Sir

‘Take what is left to the kitchen and let Mammie give you your share of it!’

‘Yes, sir I said. But I thought, My share of it? There is hardly anything left over.

(from the Catechist by H.W .A bruquah)

- (a) What evidence do we see from the passage that Afram was intelligent in class work **(2mks)**
- (b) Describe Afram’s reaction to his first question **(2mks)**
- c) Make notes on Afram’s duties after school **(4mks)**
- (d) ‘H,’shout the boy promptly.(Rewrite the sentence changing it into indirect speech)
- (e) Describe one character trait for each of the following characters in the passage**(4mks)**
- (i) ‘master’
- (ii) the teacher
- (f) As he watched his ‘master’ eat what was Afram thinking? **(1mk)**
- (g) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. **(4mks)**
- (i) dincreation
- (ii) squealing
- (iii) make noise with impunity
- (iv) barrel
- (h) Describe one theme that would give a correct summary of what the whole passage is talking about **(2mks)**

# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 29 QUESTIONS

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow

We are so accustomed to reading without much serious reflection on the handicaps under which wellbrought-up Victorian girls laboured. It is perhaps time to take stock of the situation and make sure we know just what these handicaps were.

To begin with, the physical handicaps strike us today as slightly comical. For example, a girl from a good home might wear three or four thick petticoats in winter. These reached to within a foot off the ground; the heavy skirt which covered them reached even lower and it was considered shameful for a girl or a young woman to show her ankles. Shoes for walking outdoors were scarcely heard of and the boots were long and tightly laced. As soon as a girl began to grow up, she was imprisoned by day in corsets; tightfitting undergarments stiffened with lengths and whale-bone. Not only did these garments make it impossible for a girl to run about freely and enjoy herself in fresh air; they **stifled** all desire to do so, and girls grew up convinced that they were not intended by nature to play vigorous games or to take violent exercise. Horse-riding was in fact the only exercise which well- to-do women were permitted to enjoy.

Indoors, things were a little less depressing, but only a little, The night air, for example, was a poisonous prowling beast, seeking to destroy all growing boys and girls. Bedroom windows were kept shut and houses were ill-ventilated. As if this lack of exercise and fresh air were not enough, young women were expected to consume large frequent meals.

As we have seen, these physical disabilities had their effect on the minds, as well as the bodies, of Victorian young women, but there were other and more disturbing psychological effects. These may be summed up in a single sentence: women and girls were regarded and regarded themselves, as second-class citizens. There were exceptions, as we shall see, but it is no exaggeration to say that in most Victorian families of the middle and upper classes, the girls were the least important members. It is not difficult to sympathize with the middle-class father with a large family who could afford to send h only his sons to expensive schools. What is less easy to understand is that even in the richest families, where they were no financial problems at all, it was only the boys who were educated.

The fact is that few people saw any point in preparing the girls for any kind of professional work. Indeed any kind of work at all outside the home. There would have no openings for them if they had been so prepared. The banks and the business houses employed only the

male clerks; the shops employed only male assistance, unless they were shops that sold woman and children's clothing; and the professions, like the church, the law, the medicine, accountancy, the civil service, were exclusively male preserves. Even in teaching it was assumed that woman could teach only girls and infants. If anybody has asked why this was so, the answer could not have been that there were no trained or educated women to fill any of these posts; it would have been quite simply that this was men's work. No woman should work in an office or shop or enter a profession. The women's place was in the home.

Along with this prejudice against the employment of women and girls, there existed the conviction that they were physically weak tender flowers that must be protected at all costs from the rough cruel life that men led. For a lady to show her ankles or her bare arms or to play active games was not only immodest; it was dangerous. It was partly this conception of the female as a tender flower that militated against the admission of cultured young women to the medical profession. How could any woman, it was thought, bear to dissect or even to see dissected – a corpse, even that of a frog? How could a mere woman stand the horrible sights and smells of a hospital? No, the dear delicate creatures must be protected from such horrors.

Fortunately, the position of these young women and girls was not completely hopeless. There were a few men who refused to believe that women were a separate and inferior race of human beings. Some, like John Stuart Mill, did what they could for women with their pens and their tongues, or with their influence on members of parliament. Others, like Newton Carrett, were the sympathetic fathers of girls who sought emancipation and they supported their daughter privately and in public.

Moreover, it must not be assumed that all the daughters of the well-to-do Victorian households led **futile** wasted lives. For those who did not seek a purposeful career beyond their narrow horizons, there was plenty of useful and interesting work - women's work - to be done in the home and the village. By midtwentieth century standards their lives were dreary deserts; but there were many oases in the deserts and not all the girls were unhappy. Even those who had no hobbies or accomplishments often made fortunate marriages and became the ruling spirits of happy and successful homes. It was the exceptional and ambitious few, seeking an outlet most under the handicaps we have been considering. They were rebels and the path of the rebel as always thorny.

## **QUESTIONS**

- (a) Why is it important to take stock of the handicaps under which well-brought-up Victorian girls laboured? (2marks)

- (b) Give two psychological handicaps under which girls and young women suffered in Victorian times. **(2marks)**
- (c) Identify and explain the effectiveness of the image used in paragraph three. **(3mks)**
- (d) Describe the feelings of the writer towards the plight of girls and young women during Victorian times. **(3marks)**
- (e) Why is it pointless to prepare girls for any professional work? **(2mks)**
- f) How did some of the people try to change the seemingly hopeless situation? **(3marks)**
- (g) Explain the irony brought in paragraph four. **(2marks)**
- (h) The banks and the business houses employed only male clerks. (Rewrite in the passive) (1mark)
- (i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage (2marks) i. stifled
- ii. futile



# KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

## TRIAL 30 QUESTIONS

### ANC OFFERS KANU, ODM LOTS OF LESSONS

On January , Africa's largest, oldest political party- the African National Congress will be having her centenary celebrations. This would be a **gigantic milestone** for former South Africa Nelson Mandela's party and it my passionate prayer he will be in a good shape to attend the momentous event.

The main event of the celebrations will be the presidential centennial gala dinner at Vista University in Free State to be hosted by President Jacob Zuma on January 7.

This will be a spectacle to **behold** Media **reports have** it that Zuma has extended official invitations to Kenya's Prime Minister Raila Odinga and his deputy Uhuru Kenyatta to attend the January 7 event.

The ANC events provide us with an opportunity to reflect on the significance of our parties in shaping our country's political, economic and social landscape. It would be **prudent** to ask ourselves whether our own political parties are anywhere in comparison to ANC. Have our parties fulfilled their mandate or have they only operated vehicles to ascend to power?

### CONSCIENCE OF MANDATE

Raila Odinga sits at the helm of ODM, which is currently Kenya's largest political party while Uhuru is the chairman of Kenya's oldest political party, Kanu. The two are therefore important in Kenya's political landscape and deserve the ANC invitation. Kanu is currently re-inventing itself while ODM has just concluded its grassroots election in compliance with the new Political Parties Act.

ANC was formed on January 8, 1912 in response to perceived injustices against black South Africans at the hands of the then white South African Government and has remained strong to date. ANC basically delivered its original mandate when it led South Africa in ending apartheid after the successful and fully-representative multi-democratic elections in 1994.

This was a big plus for ANC and will remain etched in the minds of South Africans and the world in general for a very long time.

Kanu is also credited with leading Kenya into independence; however, its leadership later took a completely different path which was nowhere near her original vision. After assuming power, it immediately engaged itself in an amazing plunder of national resources through mismanagement, tribalism, cronyism and political patronage.

Today, Kanu cannot boast of the kind of exploits ANC will be parading on January 8. ODM should also be measuring itself against ANC.

Let this be an opportunity for Kenya's political parties to learn and reflect on what it means to exist for posterity.

*(David Sonye, Nairobi)*

1. Identify the personal pronoun used with ANC and KANU? **(1mks)**
2. Name any two dignitaries officially invited to the event. **(3mks)**
3. Give three reasons why KANU cannot boast of the kind of exploits as ANC **(3mks)**
4. In a summary of about 25 words, write the lessons learnt from ANC. **( 3 mks)**
5. Explain the reasons why ODM and KANU were invited to the event. **(3mks)**
6. Where was the main object of ANC? **( 1mk)**
7. The writer's presentation of this passage is , objective. Give two examples as is evident **( 5mks)**
8. Explain the meanings of the following words and phrases as used in the passage. **( 5mks)**
  - i) Gigantic milestone
  - ii) Behold
  - iii) Reports have it
  - iv) Prudent
  - v) Etched in the minds

# **KCSE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES**

## **TRIAL 31 QUESTIONS**

**Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow:**

With the General Election due next year, we need to start a national conversation about assessing the quality of leadership we want. The new Constitution will only do so much for us in that respect; the rest of the responsibility falls on us, the electorate.

Kenyans are disgruntled, and perhaps rightly so. They feel let down by their so-called “leaders”, most of who are embroiled in scandal, legal proceedings, and even criminal activity. I choose to use the word “leader” sparingly, and even then, only in reference to those who actually demonstrate a propensity to lead; rather than those who find themselves in high office through questionable means- be it ethnic demagoguery or outright bribery of voters. How is it that we consistently end up with poor leaders who frustrate u beyond belief? I submit that the electorate are a large part Of the problem. Our leadership are a reflection of ourselves.

We elect those we feel “fit the bill”, without considering the wider ramifications of poor judgment on our part. Sadly, the evidence would suggest that we have been myopic in setting our selection criteria for leadership. More often than not, we look to those with deep pockets (regardless of the source of that wealth) to assume leadership roles.

We are well aware of the fact that deep pockets do not necessarily translate to wisdom, experience, or the desire to serve the Kenyan people, yet inevitably we are more inclined to select a wealthy simpleton over a not-so-affluent teacher, for example. This may be largely out of self-interest: deep pockets represent. handouts, school fees, medical bills and more. Furthermore, we have created a situation where to be accepted as a credible candidate one must, at the very least, create the illusion of wealth. How strange! The Kenyan electorate has effectively locked themselves out of political leadership by perpetuating a myth: the myth that only particular elite is fit for leadership!

We are preparing to enter another electoral cycle. This presents an opportunity for us to reevaluate the criteria through which we select our leadership! If we are to avoid our previous mistakes, we must divorce ourselves from the old model where the ethnic group, deep pockets, big cars, and fancy suits are the sole determinants of leadership.

Rather, we should apply our minds to evaluating the merit and interrogating the substance of each selection. What are the values we look for in our leader? What criteria do we apply in the selection of leaders?

Some of the values we might look for in our potential leadership can be found in Section 10(2) of the Constitution. These include: patriotism, national unity, human dignity, equity, social, justice, clusiveness, human rights, good governance, and integrity Kenyans will soon have the unity to hold those who wish to lead, to a higher level of scrutiny. It is imperative that we do so at this critical point our nation’s development; as at a crossroads. With the implementation of the new constitution still in early stages, important reforms.

## **QUESTIONS**

- (a) According to the passage, what is the responsibility of the electorate. (2mks)
- (b) What does the statement “The new constitution will only do so much for us...” mean? (3mks)
- (c) Why does the writer choose to use the word “Leader” sparingly? (2mks)
- (d) In your own words, explain the meaning of the following statement, “...we are more inclined to select a wealthy simpleton over not-so-affluent teacher...” (2mks)
- (e) What is ironical about the behaviour of the Kenyan electorate? (2mks)
- (f) How strange!(Re-write the sentence in the direct speech). (2mks)
- (g) In note form, give the possible solutions suggested in the passage to the vote is poor way of selecting their leaders. (4mks)
- (h) Give the meaning of the following words as used in the passage. (3mks)
- (i) Ramifications
  - (ii) Supplement
  - (iii) Criteria

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