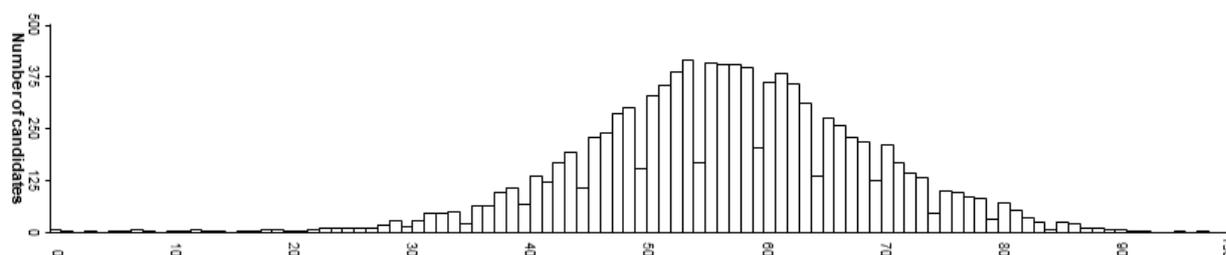




Summary report for candidates on the 2015 WACE examination in English Stage 3

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2015	10322	213
2014	6531	128
2013	9614	183

Examination score distribution



Summary

This examination provided candidates with an open opportunity to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge of the main syllabus concepts from their study of the English course. Initial feedback from teachers and candidates was that the examination was very fair and accessible. Most candidates completed all sections of the paper and there were very few incomplete responses. The examination consisted of three sections with candidates being required to attempt both questions in Section One: Reading and to choose one question from a choice of six in Section Two: Writing and one question from a choice of two in Section Three: Viewing. The examination produced a mean of 57.16%. The means for Sections One, Two and Three were 56.13%, 58.43% and 57.49% respectively. Candidate scores for the examination ranged from a minimum of 0% to a maximum of 97.78%. The standard deviation was 12.33%.

General comments

Candidate performance showed no notable variation from recent years. A number of markers did comment that the general functional literacy level has improved in recent years; however, writing fluency and control of expression continue to challenge candidates as they find it difficult to process the main concepts of questions, plan a complex response and write with consistency and sustained purpose throughout the examination. This was the final examination of this English syllabus. Throughout the duration of this course the examination has undergone a range of improvements to ensure candidates have the best opportunity to perform to the highest level. There has been an ongoing effort to increase the quality of image reproduction for the Viewing section and this effort has provided images of fine quality that has meant much less ambiguity, allowing candidates a better opportunity to interpret them appropriately. The texts selected for classroom study were extremely varied, though a number of texts continue to be popular. *Jasper Jones*, *The Road*, *Gran Torino*, *The Great Gatsby* and *No Sugar* were noticeable favourites. Popularity, however, does not necessarily equate to strong responses, and the strongest came from candidates familiar with the course concepts rather than those studying particular texts. Some candidates chose to refer to the same text a number of times throughout different sections of the examination. This often led to repetitive and laboured responses based on plot retell rather than closely addressing the examination questions.

Advice for candidates

- Read the question carefully. This advice has been emphasised every year. In every section of the examination it is crucial that you address the question that is posed, and address all elements of your selected question. Too many candidates lose valuable marks by not fully

answering the question. This can be due to misreading the question, answering part of the question or even writing an answer to a question they have practised rather than the one in the paper. You are assessed against the requirements of the question so make sure this is in the forefront of your mind when planning your response and check throughout the writing of your answer that you are still on track in relation to the question.

- Be familiar with the syllabus. The syllabus is what is being assessed in the examination and it is also what you have been studying. The texts selected by your teachers are vehicles through which to understand the key concepts of the syllabus. Find ways to discuss comfortably the main elements of the course through your studied texts using the writing skills you have developed. Study the syllabus as part of your revision work. Being familiar with the main concepts of the course is crucial to success in the examination. If there are terms or concepts that you are unfamiliar with, ask your teacher to go over them with you.
- Unpack the question so that you know what you need to include and highlight in your answer. Then plan! This doesn't need to be a formal plan, but a moment of organising your thoughts before launching into an answer. Your choices should be made with a deliberate purpose and answers must be planned and executed carefully. A well-argued, concise and targeted answer is much better than a long, rambling series of disorganised points.
- Avoid repeating answers or focusing on the same text in different sections of the examination. This repetition often means that you are not focusing on the question.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Reading

Attempted by 10297 candidates

Mean 18.71(/33.33%) Max 33.33 Min 0

The Reading section had the same format and requirements as previous years and the two questions were equally weighted. This section saw the lowest mean across the paper, indicating that close reading skills continue to be an area of weakness for many candidates. Across the two questions, markers observed that candidates lacked clarity when discussing generic conventions, and many candidates produced readings of the examination texts and their studied texts that were more content summaries than analytical responses. Stronger responses were characterised by thorough, close and precise analysis of passages and studied texts.

Section Two: Writing

Attempted by 10297 candidates

Mean 19.48 (/33.33%) Max 33.33 Min 0

The Writing section offered a wide range of questions that provided candidates with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding, regardless of their studied texts or their strengths in writing. Questions 4, 6 and 8 provided scope for candidates to engage with some complex and quite pointed aspects of the texts that they had studied. They did not encourage formulaic responses and the best answers were very thoughtful in their engagement with key course concepts. Questions 3, 5 and 7 invited creative or argumentative type responses. As usual the best responses had a clear sense of audience and purpose. This extends to the form that candidates chose to write in and how well that form was controlled. Many candidates needed to make a more conscious and deliberate demonstration of the generic characteristics of the form they chose, so that it was apparent to the marker. All questions in this section were attempted with Questions 4 and 7 being the most popular.

Section Three: Viewing

Attempted by 10270 candidates

Mean 19.16(/33.33%) Max 33.33 Min 0

The format and structure of this section was the same as in previous years and there were five images and two questions for candidates to choose from. Responses were relatively even across all five images, though Images 1 and 2 were certainly the most popular choice for both questions. The selection of studied texts was also varied and candidates demonstrated a thorough knowledge of these texts. Candidates' ability to address the question and provide relevant evidence was the most important discriminator in this section. Question 9 was overwhelmingly preferred to Question 10.