

This question was based on a comprehension passage. The passage was accessible and dealt with the biography of a renowned leader, Nelson Mandela.

Weaknesses

Performance was good, but as always there were candidates who had problems with questions that had a literary leaning such as 2(a)(v) and 2(a)(vi).

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should impress upon the candidates that English is an integrated course and there should not be compartmentalization of the skills. The vocabulary items also need to be emphasized. Most candidates give dictionary meanings without due regard for the context and fail to score.

Question 2(b)

(b) *Read the following passage and then answer the questions that follow:*

One who enters the world of organised play and sport indeed enters a mythical world. Inside this world exploits become superhuman and combat is a ritual re-enactment of the gods played before throngs of ordinary mortals. In this world, ordinary time and space and the rules of society are suspended and replaced with ritual elements. The world of the game proceeds within its own boundaries, according to its own fixed rules.

All sports events are enacted within a playground, carefully marked off and set aside from the real world. The arena, gymnasium, game board, track, field, court, or even the stage is carefully marked by boundaries which set off the space inside as special, belonging to another world.

Inside this play world order reigns supreme, even though outside chaos rules. Only occasionally, such as during the tragedy at the Munich Olympics, do the two collide. Players from the imperfect world enter the play territory and all agree to follow strict rules even though in the real world these same players may flout law and order. Referees, umpires and judges preserve order here, and constitute a tribunal from which there is rarely any appeal. They are tiny unarmed men and yet rule those nearly twice their size, and can even eject them from the game world without fear of reprisal. There are no criminals or constant rule breakers. A basketball player who refuses to dribble or a chess player who insists his pawns can move at random simply cannot survive. Those who do break the rules are punished swiftly and justice rules supreme.

There are no revolutionaries in this play world either. A revolutionary athlete might question the basic assumptions of capitalism outside the playing field, but once he steps across the boundary he does not theorise if, for example, placing a ball through a hoop is a valid basis for basketball.

Ordinary time is suspended on the playground. A special clock, a timer or some other system of keeping time is used. Often, as in football and basketball, time moves forward only when play is in progress, much unlike the non-play world where time never stops. The temporal boundaries provided by the umpire's call, the starting buzzer or ending gun strictly define the creation and demise of the play world.

(Adapted from *Advanced Composition* by John E. Warriner)

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