



SOUTH PACIFIC BOARD FOR
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

*Chief Marker's
Report
2009*

**Pacific
Senior
Secondary
Certificate**

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Tala 'o Tonga 2009 Examination Paper was set under the Curriculum and Prescription umbrella. The Exam paper contained 4 sections namely Reading Comprehension, Writing Tasks, Language Skills and Literature.

1. ***Reading Comprehension*** two passages of equal weighting were selected
 - (1) classical passage and contemporary passage.
The Classical passage is related to past unrecorded compositions as poems etc. and the legacy from which our past can be understood.
 - (2) a contemporary passage focuses on Good Qualitative Parliamentarian.

2. ***The Writing tasks topics***
 - (1) Education is the remedy for poverty support or not support.
 - (2) Eat bread through your sweat.

3. ***Language Skills***
 - (1) Knowledge of grammar
 - (2) Translation for given hierarchical social class
 - (3) Foreign Language impact in Tongan Language.

4. ***Literature***
 1. (a) Analyse and support universal symbolism (heliaki) from Queen Salote songs and poetry composition.
OR
 1. (b) Analyse and support culture – specific symbolism (heliaki) from Queen Salote songs and poetry composition.
 2. (a) Analyse and interpret origins of Tongan Myths and Legends and their relevance or irrelevance to Tonga today.
 2. (b) Explain the background of Tonga and Samoa mutual relationship and why such background is fundamentally important for both countries.

Marking of Tala 'o Tonga exams papers followed the criteria and schedule set up by the Examiner and approved by SPBEA. The marking schedule is hereby attached for your information.

Candidates' performance standard generally are good and acceptable when compared to last year's performance particularly in Reading Comprehension and Essay Writing.

1. *Reading Comprehension*

Although candidates' performance was generally good but the shortfalls experienced last year and years before still exist in declining degree. Some of these shortfalls are outlined below.

2. *Essay Writing*

Points of argument and elaborations are generally to a certain degree satisfactory. The shortfalls are related to writing styles and other areas like paragraphing and their accessories, classical words and proverbs for enrichment of written expression are adopted by very few candidates. Some of the candidates failed to qualitatively elaborate their views about 'eat bread through your sweat' in the form of a story. Some, although few, of them elaborated their views by outlining the sweet and sour impact of life styles but not in story form. Teachers are obligatory to train the students to understand different expression mode in essay writing style.

3. *Language Skills*

Quality standard on the other hand has portrayed a wide range of performances from high quality down to very poor quality.

More effort is needed in the classroom for Language skills training particularly the Grammar and social hierarchical expression.

4. *Literature*

For the Literature section, marking was problematic when some candidates referred to some untexted compositions apart from Queen Salote well texted composition. However the major problem in this section was the failure of the candidates to follow the instruction given regarding the universal or local symbolism (heliaki). There is confusion as to the difference between the universal and local heliaki. Universal heliaki refers to common human experience and not specific to any particular culture. Local heliaki refers to kinship connections, historical and legendary objects, places or person.

Furthermore, some candidates were unable to provide conducive support to substantiate their argument with relevant phrases from compositions and poetry of their own choices even if the preferred sources come from Queen Salote songs.

- The same problem applies for the analysis and interpretation of how the composers portray their message and aims and to be picked up from the poem or song taught in the class. Some of the candidates provided the two poems in parallel without comparing them.

- Analysing and Interpreting of Tongan myths and Legends and their appropriateness to be taught to Form 6 students has shown a much better degree of achievement than the other sections of Literature. The shortfall rested on candidates' inability although they are few to provide substantial reasons for their support or not support socially, economically, political and morally with time context in perspective.
- Concerning the background of 2 stories taught in schools candidates' performance shortfalls rested on their failure to feature the importance of background to each of the 2 difference stories studied in schools.
- Although quality in this year (2009) examination in Tala o Tonga is improving but common shortfalls are still prevalent in declining degree although they were manifested in previous years report.

For conclusion herewith are the common shortfalls which connected with

- (a) unclear writing styles tarnishing the real intended meaning
- (b) lack of focus of answers given what the questions require
- (c) the omission of paragraphs in essay writing
- (d) scarce use of new words and proverbs to elaborate their ideas or expression
- (e) the exclusion of Introduction and conclusion for essay writing and the style and roles they play for quality essay mandate were sometimes omitted and sometimes with poor unconnected expression.
- (f) mishandling the meaning of given words in Reading and Comprehension passage where some candidates opted for the synonyms which is good but they can also provide phrases that contextually elaborated the meaning of those words.
- (g) candidates portrayed their own opinion particularly on Contemporary passage without focusing and concentrating on the content of the passage.

Reading and Comprehension skills need further in-depth training to differentiate opinionised sweeping statement from factual statement from the given passage.