

BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (BECE), PC
STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS WITH EFFECT FROM 2018
SELECTED TEXTS FOR THE 2018 EXAMINATION

Note that for the 2018 examination, private candidates will be examined on the following selected texts from **The Cockcrow**.

- *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens
- *Sosu and the Bukari Boys* by Lawrence Darmani
- *The Dilemma of a Ghost* by Ama Ata Aidoo
- *The Colour of God* by V. B. Aakye

For the avoidance of doubt, we wish to state that **these selected texts are for the 2018 examination only**. Candidates are therefore required to **study the entire anthology** for the examinations from **2019 onwards**.

THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (BECE)

STRUCTURE AND SCHEME OF EXAMINATION (WITH EFFECT FROM 2018)

There will be two papers; Paper 1 and Paper 2. Candidates are required to take both papers for **100 marks**:

Paper1: Lexis and Structure 30 marks

This will be a multiple choice test made up of thirty (30) questions. It will consist of four sections; **A, B, C and D** and will be taken in 35 minutes for **30 marks**.

NB: There will be no questions on General Knowledge of Literature. The questions on literature will be set on the texts selected for study. Candidates are therefore advised to study the texts closely. Teachers should guide students to identify and appreciate the literary devices/qualities of the texts. The questions will require knowledge of aspects like theme, setting, literary devices, etc. related to the texts.

Paper 2: Essay - 70 marks

This Paper will consist of three parts: **A, B, and C**. The candidates are to answer the questions in 1 hour 10 minutes for **70 marks**.

Part A: Essay Writing - 30 marks

There will be **three** essay topics for candidates to choose **one** and write on it.

Part B: Comprehension - 30 marks

There will be a compulsory Comprehension passage for candidates to read and answer all the questions on it for **30 marks**.

Part C: Literature – The Cockcrow: 10 marks

Candidates will be required to answer 10 question for **10 marks**. The questions will be based **solely** on extracts from the “The Cockcrow” and candidates will be expected to supply short answers to the questions. At least **two questions** will be set on **each genre each year**. The questions will require close familiarity with the texts.

NB: For this year only, questions on ‘The Cockcrow’ will be based on the selected texts listed below:

- *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens
- *Sosu and the Bukari Boys* by Lawrence Darmani
- *The Dilemma of a Ghost* by Ama Ata Aidoo
- *The Colour of God* by V. B. Aakye

The objective of this test is to encourage students to cultivate a good reading habit so close familiarity with “The Cockcrow” will be required. Candidates are therefore advised to read the “The Cockcrow” and not depend on commentaries on the book and other secondary sources.

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**BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
(BECE)**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 1

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

PAPER 1

SECTION A

LEXIS AND STRUCTURE

*From the alternatives lettered A to D, choose the one which **most suitably** completes each sentence.*

1. The lion under the tree waiting for its prey.
A. lie
B. lain
C. lay
D. laid

2. It's high time we the items out.
A. move
B. are moving
C. moved
D. were moving

3. This amount is all I have on me.
A. what
B. that
C. which
D. this

4. Please, I would rather you not disturb me.
A. did
B. will
C. may
D. do

5. Atsu is looking forward to his friends at the party.
A. see
B. be seeing
C. seeing
D. have seen

SECTION B

Choose from the alternative lettered A to D the one which is **nearest in meaning** to the underlined word in **each** sentence.

6. The radio is a very potent means of communication.
A. necessary
B. powerful
C. widespread
D. sound
7. Benjamin deserves the prize because he is industrious.
A. polite
B. hardworking
C. intelligent
D. funny

SECTION C

In each of the following sentences a group of words has been underlined. Choose from the alternatives lettered A to D the one that **best** explains the underlined group of words.

8. Adzo takes after her mother. This means that Adzo her mother.
A. likes
B. resembles
C. is unlike
D. always follows
9. Advise Peter not to poke his nose into my affair.
A. interfere
B. enter
C. speak
D. believe

SECTION D

From the list of words lettered A to D, choose the one that is **most nearly opposite in meaning** to the word underlined in **each** sentence.

10. We are surprised at her hostility to us.
A. faithfulness
B. attitude
C. manner
D. friendliness

11. She timidly faced her accusers.

- A. boldly
- B. calmly
- C. angrily
- D. smilingly

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**BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 2

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Answer **three** questions in all: one question from Part A and **all** the questions in **both Parts B and C**.

PART A

[30 marks]

Answer **one** question **only** from this part.

Your composition should be about **250 words** long.

1. Write a letter to your friend telling him or her three ways in which the computer has made learning easier for students.
2. Write an article for publication in a national newspaper discussing, **at least, two** reasons why students should cultivate the habit of reading.
3. Describe one national event that took place recently and state, **at least, two** effects it had on the people in your area.

PART B

COMPREHENSION

4. *Read the following passage carefully and answer **all** the questions which follow.*

Nobody wanted Ananse to succeed in drinking the cup of hot water and win, Adiefe, the Chief's beautiful daughter.

Ananse grabbed the cup of hot water, bowed as gracefully as possible and smiled confidently. He lifted the cup and said, slowly and calmly, 'Nana, look ...!' Nana Apo barked, 'Yes, it's hot. Drink it right now!' But Ananse kept a cool head. Then, in the full glare of all present, he shook the cup vigorously for some time in order to cool its content. After this, he began to sip the now-lukewarm water as if it was still hot. Between the sips, the pain he seemed to be going through made him frown.

He shut the left eye and his right eye shone brightly. He deliberately let his left hand drop loosely by his side.

Nana Apo smiled, Queen Amola grinned. Adiefe giggled – all in happy anticipation of Ananse's failure.

Suddenly, Ananse began to drink the warm water more quickly and noisily. Soon, all was gone. He turned the cup upside down towards Nana and, indeed, there was not a single drop in it. Lo and behold, Kweku Ananse, the notorious trickster, had succeeded where all others had failed. There was complete silence. Even the wind seemed to have stopped blowing. The impossible had happened and people's expectation that Kweku Ananse would lose the contest had failed. Eventually, Kweku Ananse's victory had won him the hand of pretty Princess, Adiefe.

Nana Apo and Queen Amola, with great reluctance, led their daughter, Adiefe, and handed her over to victorious Kweku Ananse.

- (a) What was the attitude of the people present before the contest?
- (b) Why do you think Ananse shook the cup?
- (c) State the three tricks Ananse used to show that he was in pain.
- (d)
 - (i) Why did Ananse turn the cup upside down?
 - (ii) What was the mood of Nana Apo and Queen Amola in the end?
- (e) Explain the following expressions in your own words:
 - (i) ‘Ananse kept a cool head’
 - (ii) ‘all was gone’
 - (iii) ‘The impossible had happened’
- (f) For **each** of the following words, give another word or a phrase that **means the same** and can fit into the passage:
 - (i) grabbed
 - (ii) barked
 - (iii) deliberately
 - (iv) Eventually
 - (v) pretty

PART C: LITERATURE – The Cockcrow

AMA ATTA AIDOO: *The Dilemma of a Ghost*

Read the extract below and answer Questions 1 to 4.

Nana: My spirit Mother ought to have come for me earlier.

Now, what shall I tell them who are gone?

The daughter of slaves who come from the white man’s land

- 1. “*who are gone*” refers to
- 2. “*The daughter of slaves*” is
- 3. The speaker wished
- 4. The speaker is in a mood.

Read the extract below and answer Questions 5 to 8.

Speaker X: Darling, what is it?

Speaker Y: Eh ... some crawling things. (Composing herself)
Anyway, tell your mother we are very grateful.

5. **X** and **Y** are in the play.
6. The “*crawling things*” are
7. “*Composing herself*” is an example of in play writing.
8. The setting of the extract is

Read the extract below and answer Questions 9 and 10.

Speaker X: Ah well, I don't know the difference, and I don't care neither. Coconut palms, palm-palms, aren't they all the same? And anyway, why should I not go to see your folks?

Speaker Y: You may not be impressed.

9. The setting of the extract is
10. What happened just before this conversation?

Read the extract below and answer Questions 11 to 13.

Ken Saro-Wiwa: “Home Sweet Home”
 “Progress” spluttered lazily down the long, dirty
 Road which stretched before us like the
 coated tongue of an ailing man.

11. Who/what is “*Progress*”?
12. “*Progress spluttered lazily*” is an example of
13. The figure of speech used in “*like the coated tongue of an ailing man*” is

Read the extract below and answer Questions 14 and 15.

And out of the bowels of the night came
the rhythm of drums in the distance, the
hooting of owls, the swooping and beeping
of bats, the burping of toads.

14. The figure of speech used in the expression “*bowels of the night*” is

15. The literary device used in, “*the hooting of owls, the swooping and beeping of bats, the burping of toads*” is

KAAKYIRE A. NYANTAKYI: *Tell My Son to Hold on to His Gun*

Read the extract below and answer Questions 16 to 18.

“This bastard must die”, I screamed, reloaded my gun and fired at him again... Then finally, there was a long, loud and heavy fall like the roar of thunder”.

16. Why did he kill the “bastard”?
17. The “*bastard*” refers to
18. “*like the roar of thunder*” is an example of
19. State a character trait the speaker revealed in the story.

LAWRENCE DARMANI: *Sosu and the Bukari Boys*

Read the extract below and answer Questions 20 and 21.

“It was a sad day for the Bukari Boys ... Bukari cried like a child, and his cry put fear in Sosu”.

20. Why did Bukari cry?
21. What lesson did you learn from Sosu’s fate?
22. State a character trait displayed by Bukari in the story.

Read the extract below and answer Questions 23 to 25.

“Move out of the way, move out, I say” shouts the
cart pusher
None cares about his agitation
The sweat runs down his face, tiny rivulets of
disappointment and fear
They snake down and glide effortlessly into his
dirty t-shirt
His tongue peeps out and licks the beads of sweat
on his lip

23. The extract is from the Poem titled ...
24. What is the theme of the poem?
25. What figure of speech is used in the line underlined?
26. What happened between the woman with the baby and her husband?
27. What picture does the poet paint of the people in the poem?