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DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

MATURE AGE ENTRY EXAMINATION 2025

QUESTION PAPER B

TOTAL MARKS: []/100]

TIME: 2 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Follow the instructions very carefully.

Encircling more than one letter for a question will invalidate it.

Answer ALL questions.

Name of Student:

Student Number/ID number:

Please DO NOT TURN OVER THE PAGE until the examiner gives instructions.

Question 1: Reading Compression

Read the text entitled “**Mental Health in Namibia by– Mustafa Tareen**” and answer the questions that follow.

1. Extreme poverty looms over Namibia, negatively affecting its population of 2.6 million and keeping living slow. These high levels of socioeconomic hardship often cause people to overlook the country’s mental health issues, although illnesses such as anxiety, depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), trauma, bipolar disorders and psychosis affect 25.6% of its population and the number could double by 2025. Here is information about the correlation between poverty and mental health in Namibia.
2. Namibia has a poverty rate of 47% and 46% of its youth workforce is unemployed, according to ISS African Futures. These factors contribute to a lack of financial resources and constant pressure to earn more, leading to high stress and anxiety levels. The Namibian reported that “approximately 70% of Namibians suffer from stress and chronic health conditions.” Additionally, people with low incomes often have limited access to mental health services, further worsening their situations.
3. The country suffers from a traumatic history. From 1915 to 1990, apartheid South Africa occupied Namibia, during which many of the latter’s citizens were killed and displaced. The country only gained independence in 1990, after a long, drawn-out war, which caused 20,000 to 25,000 deaths.
4. Furthermore, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is quite prevalent in Namibia. According to the World Bank, the virus infects 11% of adults aged 15 to 49 years in the country. Studies have shown that HIV has a direct link to mental health; it causes damage to brain cells and leads to a variety of neurocognitive disorders. Living with HIV also causes acute psychological distress and depression, both for the patient and their loved ones. A 2024 study found that depression affects 24.6% of HIV patients and 17% suffer from anxiety. Approximately 9.3% of Namibians die from HIV. The burden of carrying the disease and the discrimination against it also increases the risk of suicide. From April 2020 to March 2023, 1,542 Namibians committed suicide, 82% being men.
5. Another factor that further complicates mental health in Namibia is the stigma and cultural beliefs toward mental health issues. Many Namibians consider mental illness to be a sign of

weakness or low willpower. Because of this, people go undiagnosed and there is less availability of treatments. A 2020 study showed that the level of public prejudice against mental health was 41% on the Community Attitudes towards Mental Illness (CAMI) scale. The country has only two major mental institutions: Windhoek Central Hospital, which dedicates only 220 beds to mental health care, and Intermediate Hospital Oshakati, which offers 60 beds but often deals with 200 patients at once.

6. Citizens affected by poor mental health in Namibia often cope through substance abuse. However, this can further exacerbate their condition and can result in psychosis, bipolar disorders, and depression, along with a decline in physiological health as well. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported that: in 2020, the Government of Namibia confiscated 843,892 kg of cannabis, 4,930 tablets of mandrax, 2,922 grams of crystal meth, and 1,072 grams of cocaine. Also, in 2023, WHO stated that Namibia drinks 2.38 of pure alcohol per capita amongst people aged 15 or above.
7. Despite all these challenges, there is still a ray of hope for Namibians. Countless organisations have stepped up to advocate for mental health awareness and solutions. Established in 1980, Lifeline/Childline focuses on supporting emotional wellness and child protection in Namibia. It now has wide-reaching services across the country and has gained international recognition from organisations such as USAID and UNICEF. Lifeline/Childline operates a free counselling helpline that is available 24 hours a day, providing mental health support to individuals suffering from a wide range of issues such as anxiety, depression and trauma. The organisation provides counselling via telephone, text message or in person, making them accessible to a large sum of the population. From April 2024 to June 2024, its toll-free helpline answered 10,101 calls. The non-profit also runs awareness programs that aim to reduce the stigma regarding mental health in Namibia and the importance of seeking help through social media campaigns, educational workshops, community outreach programs and its radio show.
8. Even though Namibia seems to be struggling in the face of these challenges, it's important to acknowledge the fact that non-profits such as Lifeline/Childline are making a palpable difference and are changing people's lives for the better. With more progress from the country's numerous non-profits and government, mental illness rates in Namibia will likely decline and its citizens will be able to have bright, optimistic futures.

1.1 How many Namibians committed suicide between April 2020 and March 2023? (1)

1.2 Which organisation in Namibia focuses on mental health awareness and emotional wellness? (1)

1.3 What percentage of Namibians suffer from stress and chronic health conditions? (2)

1.4 What historical event contributed to the high levels of trauma in Namibia? (2)

1.5 How does substance abuse affect mental health in Namibia? (2)

1.6 How does Lifeline/Childline aim to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health in Namibia? (2)

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Question 2: Language

Read the following article entitled “**Preserving Namibia’s Indigenous Languages: A Call to Action**” by Gideon Kapuka carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. Everyone of us has a role to play. Indigenous people and settler Namibians can contribute to a healing chapter in our shared story of **indigenous** language removal, recovery, and revival. Decades of hard work have been dedicated to restoring and protecting indigenous languages that are a vital part of Namibia’s history. The urgency of this continued and necessary effort cannot be overstated.
2. A 2023 survey by the Namibia Statistics Agency revealed a concerning trend among indigenous peoples, who represent approximately 8% of Namibia’s population. For the first time in 34 years, there was a decline in the number of people **sufficiently** proficient in their language to participate in a conversation.
3. In addition, the number of individuals reporting an indigenous first language dropped by 7%. This **decline** is not surprising given that many first language speakers, who learned these languages from birth, are nearing the end of their lives. Violent and deliberate colonial attempts to sever the link between indigenous people and **their** cultures have had lasting effects.
4. The work of the **Namibian Heritage Foundation** over the past decades has laid a solid foundation to build upon successes. Indigenous communities and their supporters aim to ensure that future generations learn and share the languages of their ancestors. Regular indigenous-led gatherings and engagement platforms focused on language resurgence and continuation must be held countrywide. These gatherings bring together indigenous language speakers and pupils, community leaders, programme developers, educators, and policymakers committed to **revitalising** indigenous languages. As indigenous language pupils, speakers, teachers, and advocates, our focus is on hope.
5. There are indigenous language speakers of all ages across the country using their language skills daily. It is time to build on this momentum. Funding and expertise from various Namibian institutions, which hold significant reconciliation responsibilities, could share the burden of developing pedagogy and supporting infrastructure essential to language teaching.
6. Moreover, not only large-scale initiatives are needed. Every individual can make a difference. From displaying welcome signs in the languages of the region/area in store windows to advocating and participating in the restoration of indigenous place names or replacing colonial

street names, all Namibians have a role to play in preserving indigenous languages. To further combat language loss, comprehensive language programmes should be implemented in schools countrywide, integrating indigenous languages into the curriculum from an early age. This would not only ensure the transmission of language to younger generations but also foster a deeper appreciation of Namibia's diverse linguistic heritage. Efforts should also be made to document and preserve indigenous languages through audio recordings, written materials, and digital archives. This would not only serve as a valuable resource for linguistic research but also provide future generations with access to their cultural and linguistic heritage.

7. In addition, partnerships between indigenous communities, educational institutions and government agencies should be strengthened to support ongoing language revitalisation efforts. Language is pivotal to our well-being as a people as the ideology and cultural fabric that define us is coded in our language. Our true selves are expressed through our native language. This is why nations who remain true to their identity and language have been known to produce greater innovations, inventions, and creations – it's because they are rooted in our true selves. Nothing defines our true selves better than language. If a people wants to destroy another, they target their language. This explains why Africa is home to some of the most fragmented societies. When you destroy a people's languages, you dismantle the very foundation that unites them, erasing the unique intelligence inherent to that community.
8. When language is destroyed, self-pride dies, self-worth vanishes and identity is lost. With identity lost, people become susceptible to any form of ideology, not in the sense of open-mindedness, but in the sense of making them vulnerable to any form of doctrine. In this way, we become replicas of other cultures. True civilisation lies in staying true to oneself. By working together, we can ensure that Namibia's indigenous languages not only survive but thrive for generations to come.

2.1 Provide the part of speech for the bolded words in the passage. (7)

a) indigenous (para 1)

b) sufficiently (para 2)

c) their (para 3)

d) Namibian Heritage Foundation (para 4)

e) To (para 5)

f) but (para 6)

g) thrive (para 8)

2.2 Change the following active sentence to the passive voice. (2)

The Namibian Heritage Foundation has laid a solid foundation.

2.3 What does the pronoun 'their' in paragraph 3 refer to?

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Question 3: Critical Thinking

3.1 According to the 2023 survey by the Namibia Statistics Agency, what trend was observed among indigenous peoples in Namibia? (1)

- a) An increase in language proficiency
- b) A decrease in indigenous language speakers
- c) No change in language proficiency
- d) An increase in the number of indigenous language speakers

3.2 What is the primary goal of the gatherings and platforms mentioned in the text? (1)

- a) To create a new language for indigenous people
- b) To focus on other cultural issues besides language
- c) To revitalise and continue the use of indigenous languages
- d) To reduce the number of indigenous languages

3.3 What has been the lasting effect of the colonial attempts to sever the link between indigenous people and their cultures? (1)

- a) A stronger connection between indigenous peoples and their cultures
- b) A decline in indigenous language proficiency
- c) An increase in the number of indigenous languages spoken

d) Indigenous people becoming more integrated into mainstream culture

3.4 Is the statement below a Fact or an Opinion?

3.5 "When you destroy a people's languages, you dismantle the very foundation that unites them, erasing the unique intelligence inherent to that community." (1)

- a) Fact
- b) Opinion

3.6 According to the text, why is language considered pivotal to a community's identity? (1)

- a) Language defines a community's economic status
- b) Language is the means through which cultural ideology and identity are expressed
- c) Language prevents communities from interacting with others
- d) Language is irrelevant to a community's identity

3.7 What will happen to Namibia's indigenous languages if no action is taken to revitalise them? (1)

- a) The languages will likely thrive naturally
- b) Indigenous languages will disappear entirely
- c) The languages will be integrated into mainstream culture
- d) There will be a growing number of speakers of indigenous languages

3.7 Which of the following words is the opposite of "decline" as used in paragraph 3 ? (1)

- a) Growth
- b) Failure
- c) Deterioration
- d) Decrease

3.8 What is the synonym of the word "revitalising" as used in paragraph 4 ? (1)

- a) Destroying
- b) Reviving
- c) Forgetting
- d) Ignoring

3.9 Say whether the statement below is True or False.

The text suggests that only large-scale initiatives are needed to revitalise indigenous languages in Namibia. (1)

- a) True
- b) False

3.10 Indicate whether the statement below is a Fact or an Opinion.

Language is pivotal to our well-being as a people as the ideology and cultural fabric that define us is coded in our language. (1)

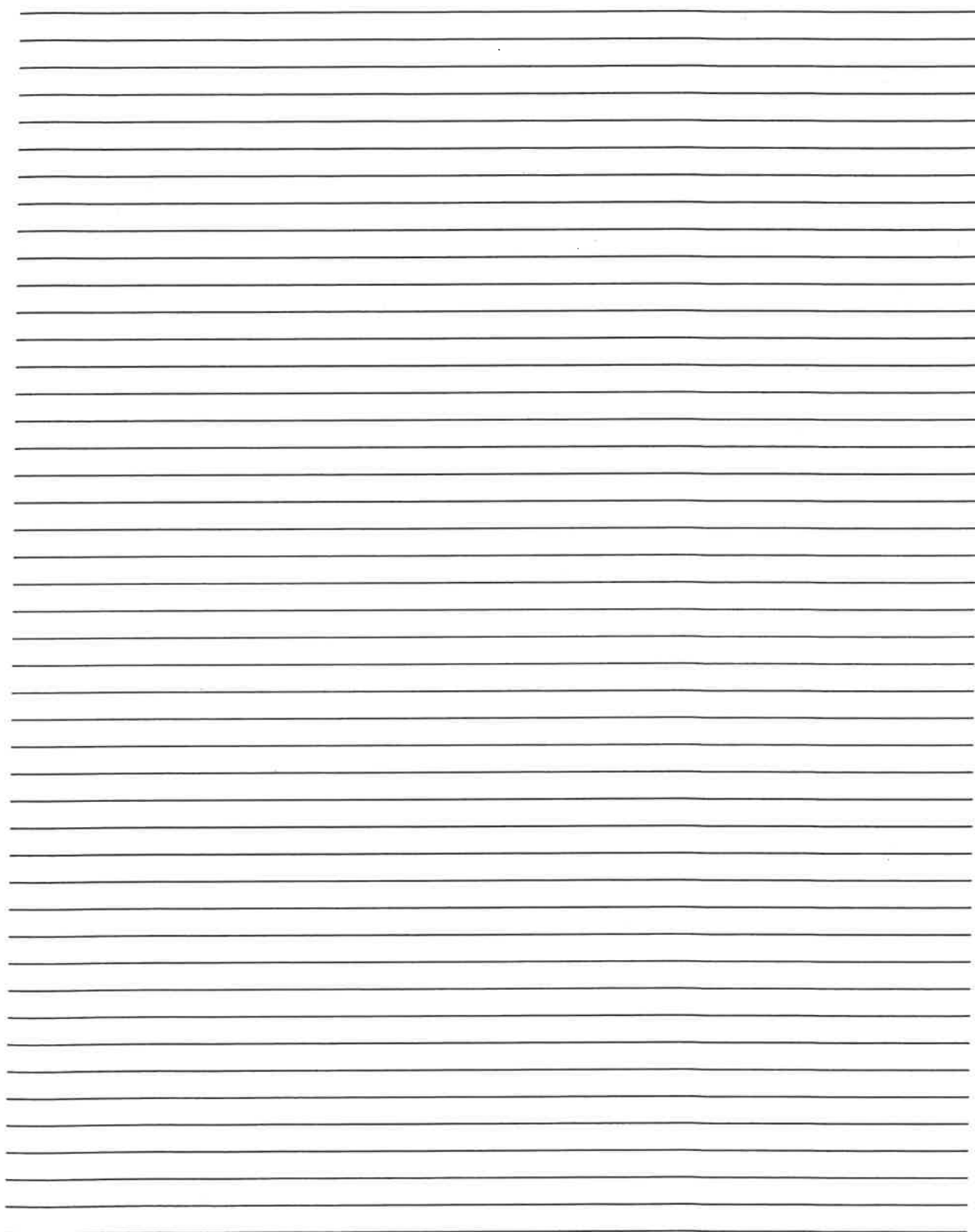
- /10

Write an essay of not more than 250 words on ONE of the following essay titles. Please write down the selected ESSAY TITLE on the space provided. (20)

- ESSAY TITLE:**

ESSAY

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TOTAL MARKS: 50X2= 100