

English Home Language

Comprehension and Language Assessment

Grade 9 Term 1

Name: _____

Date: _____

Time: 1 Hour

Total: _____ / 30

- This question paper consists of **THREE** sections:
 1. Section A: Comprehension (15 marks)
 2. Visual Literacy (5 marks)
 3. Language in Context (10 marks)
- Read and answer **ALL** the questions carefully.
- Leave a line open after each question and draw a line at the end of each section.
- Write neatly and legibly.
- Good luck!

Section A: Comprehension

15

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Honeybees: Tiny Insects, Mighty Impact



In South Africa, the African honeybee plays a vital role in agriculture and biodiversity. Found throughout most of the country except parts of the Cape, these industrious pollinators are smaller than their European cousins, yet just as essential. Alongside the Cape honeybee, they pollinate over 50 crops including sunflowers and subtropical fruits, supporting both ecological health and food security.

Bees live in structured colonies. A single colony may contain up to 60,000 bees, including a queen, workers, and drones. The queen lays thousands of eggs, while the worker bees collect nectar, make honey, and care for the young. Drones, the male bees, have the sole purpose of mating with the queen.

Honeybees are marvels of nature. They have five eyes, two pairs of wings that hook together for powerful flight, and communicate the location of food through intricate dances. Culturally, they are deeply respected in South Africa. Among the Xhosa and Pedi people, swarms are often seen as messages from ancestors or symbols of luck. In traditional healing, even the queen bee has spiritual significance.

Globally, bees pollinate over 70% of the 100 crops that feed 90% of the world. Their decline—from habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change—has raised urgent alarms. In the words of St. John Chrysostom: “The bee is more honored than other animals, not because she labors, but because she labors for others.” This sentiment echoes the honeybee’s selfless service to ecosystems and humanity alike.

Despite their importance, honeybees face numerous threats. In South Africa, unmanaged transport of Cape honeybees into African honeybee territories leads to social parasitism, weakening colonies. Globally, air pollution and pesticides disrupt their foraging and reproduction.

Fortunately, there is hope. From conserving indigenous plants and reducing pesticide use to celebrating World Bee Day on 20 May, every effort counts. As guardians of pollination, honeybees deserve both our admiration and protection. Without them, our diets, economies, and cultural traditions would be poorer—and far less sweet.



Questions 1:

1.1 What is the main role of bees in the ecosystem? (1)

1.2 Name two types of food that rely on bee pollination. (2)

1.3 How do bees communicate? (1)

1.4 Briefly explain the roles of the queen, worker, and drone bees. (2)

1.5 What are two reasons for the decline in bee populations? (2)

1.6 Refer to paragraph 4 in the passage and correct the spelling of two words in St. John Chrysostom's quote (2)

1.7 Suggest one way that people can help protect bee populations. (1)

1.8 In your opinion, why are awareness campaigns important in saving bees? (2)
Give a reason from the text to support your answer

1.9 Identify the type of noun underlined in the sentence: (1)
Bees live in structured colonies.

1.10 Provide ONE adjective from the first paragraph in the passage. (1)

Total: 15 Marks

Section B: Visual Literacy**5**

Study the poster below and answer the questions that follow:



Questions 2:

2.1 Is this an effective poster? Motivate your answer with reference to its format and purpose. (1)

2.2 What register is used in this poster? (1)

2.3 Identify and explain the idiom used on the poster. (2)

2.4 What is the main message the poster is trying to communicate? (1)

Total: 5 Marks

Section C: Language in Context**10**

Read the following paragraph and answer the questions:

The Remarkable World of Honeybees

Honeybees are powerful creatures that play a vital role in our environment. These insects are incredibly hardworking, and their ability to recognise human faces is astonishing. Scientists discovered this by training bees to associate images of faces with sweet rewards.

Honeybees also use a unique way to communicate with one another. To help each other find food sources quickly they will perform the waggle dance that indicates the distance and direction of the food source.

Honeybees are surprisingly fast for their stature. They can fly up to 24km per hour, which is faster than most other insects. Their speed helps them find food and return to the hive quickly. Honeybee colonies are quite large and can contain up to 60 000 bees. While worker bees only live a few weeks, the queen may live for several years. She is considered the life-giver of the colony, a gentle euphemism for her role in reproduction.

Experts say, "Honeybees are essential for agriculture." Without them, our food supply would suffer. For this reason, many organisations support conservation efforts.

Questions 3:

3.1 Identify the root/base word and suffix from the word "powerful". (2)

Root: _____

Suffix: _____

3.2 Change the following into reported speech: (1)

Scientists said, "Honeybees can recognise faces."

3.3 Rewrite the sentence using the correct subject-verb agreement (concord): (1)

The queen and the workers gathers nectar and pollen.

3.4 Explain the euphemism used in the phrase: **life-giver** (1)

3.5 Identify one regular and one irregular verb in the paragraph. (2)

3.6 Identify and explain the following sentence type: (2)

While worker bees only live a few weeks, the queen may live for several years.

3.7 Rewrite the sentence using the passive voice: (1)

The queen lays eggs.

Total: 10 Marks

Grand Total: 30 Marks