

KENYA CERTIFICATE OF BASIC EDUCATION

SENIOR SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER ASSIGNMENT 2026

GRADE 10 – LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Time: 2 Hours

LEARNER'S DETAILS

Name: _____ School: _____

Assessment Number: _____ Date: _____

School Code: _____ Signature: _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. Write your name, school, stream, admission number and date in the spaces provided.
2. This paper consists of **three sections: A, B and C.**
3. Answer **ALL** questions.
4. Answer all questions in English.
5. Read each question carefully before answering.
6. All answers must be written in the spaces provided.
7. Support your answers with relevant evidence from the texts where necessary.
8. This paper consists of 8 printed pages.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (EXAMINER'S USE)

SECTION	SECTION A	SECTION B	% SCORE	EE1	EE2	ME1	ME2	AE1	AE2	BE1	BE2
SCORE RANGE	30 MARKS	50 MARKS		90-100	75-89	58-74	41-57	31-40	21-30	11-20	1-10
POINTS				8 POINTS	7 POINTS	6 POINTS	5 POINTS	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT
LEARNER'S TOTAL SCORE											

SECTION A: (20 MARKS)

Answer **ALL** questions in this section.

1. Read the narrative below and answer the questions that follow.

THE DRUM THAT SPOKE

Long ago, in a village called Lengo, there lived a young girl named Amina. The people of Lengo were farmers, and whenever they celebrated an important occasion, they gathered around the great village drum known as **Mwangaza**.

Mwangaza was not an ordinary drum. The elders said that it had been made from an ancient tree and that its voice could be heard across the whole village. Whenever it was beaten, people stopped what they were doing and listened.

One evening, Chief Baraka announced, "Tomorrow we shall hold a great harvest celebration. Everyone must bring something to share."

Amina's grandmother warned her, "Remember, child, generosity makes a village strong."

The next morning, Amina carried a basket of grain to the chief's compound. On her way, she met an old traveller sitting beneath a tree.

"Please, child," said the traveller, "I have travelled for many days and have not eaten."

Amina looked at her basket. She remembered her grandmother's words and gave the traveller some of her grain.

"Thank you," said the traveller. "You have a generous heart."

Amina continued to the chief's compound.

When the celebration began, the villagers danced and sang. Suddenly, the great drum was struck.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Everyone cheered.

But then something strange happened. The drum began producing words.

"Those who give shall receive."

The villagers became silent.

Chief Baraka stepped forward. "Who has spoken?"

Again the drum sounded:

"Those who share their food shall never lack friends."

The villagers looked at one another in amazement.

One wealthy farmer named Kenga became suspicious.

"This must be a trick!" he shouted.

He moved closer to the drum and struck it violently.

BOOM!

The drum answered:

"Greed makes the heart poor."

Kenga became angry. He demanded to know who was hiding inside the drum.

At that moment, the old traveller appeared.

The villagers recognized him as a wise elder who had been travelling from village to village to discover whether people still practised generosity.

He smiled and said, “The drum did not create these words. It merely revealed what was already inside your hearts.”

Amina smiled.

Chief Baraka praised her and said, “Today we have learned that the strength of a community is not measured by how much its richest people possess, but by how willingly its members share.”

From that day onwards, the people of Lengo became known throughout the region for their generosity.

a) Identify the genre of oral narrative represented above.
(1 mark)

b) Give **two characteristics** of the genre identified in (a).
(2 marks)

c) Identify the **opening formula** used in the narrative.
(1 mark)

d) Name **two characters** in the narrative.
(2 marks)

e) Why was Mwangaza considered an unusual drum?
(1 mark)

f) Describe Amina's character using evidence from the narrative.
(3 marks)

g) Identify two elements of fantasy or supernaturalism in the narrative. (3 marks)

h) Explain the significance of the repetition of the words “BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!” in the narrative. (3 marks)

i) What moral lesson can the community learn from the narrative? (2 marks)

j) If you were Amina, would you have shared your grain with the traveller? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

SECTION B: ORAL LITERATURE (35 MARKS)

Answer ALL questions.

2. Name any three genres of oral literature. (3 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

3. List five types of songs found in oral literature. (5 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

v. _____

4. Explain four characteristics of oral literature. (8 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

5. State and explain five functions of oral literature in society. (10 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

v. _____

6. The digital space has changed the way oral literature is created, performed and preserved.

Discuss four ways in which digital platforms have contributed to the development and preservation of oral literature. (8 marks)

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

iv. _____

7. Give one challenge that digital technology may pose to traditional oral literature and explain it.

(1 mark)

Answer ALL questions.

8. Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

OUR VOICES

We carry stories in our hands,
From ancient homes and distant lands.
Our mothers taught us songs of old,
Our fathers shared the tales they told.

The drum can speak without a tongue,
Its beating keeps our memories young.
The dancer moves, the singers call,
And stories travel through us all.

But times are changing, roads are wide,
New forms of storytelling stand beside.
The phone now carries song and rhyme,
Across the village, across all time.

Let not the old traditions fade,
Let new ideas join the shade.
For when the past and future meet,
Our cultural voice becomes complete.

a) Who is the persona in the poem?
(2 marks)

b) Identify two pairs of rhyming words from the poem.
(2 marks)

c) What is the main message of the poem?
(2 marks)

d) Identify **one example of personification** in the poem.
(1 mark)

e) What does the **drum** symbolize in the poem?
(2 marks)

f) Explain how modern technology has influenced storytelling according to the poem.
(2 marks)

g) What attitude does the persona have towards traditional culture? Give a reason for your answer.
(2 marks)

h) What lesson can young people learn from the poem?
(2 marks)

GRADE 10 – LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

MARKING SCHEME

TOTAL: 70 MARKS

SECTION A: ORAL NARRATIVE

QUESTION 1 — 20 MARKS

a) Identify the genre. (1 mark)

Answer:

A folktale. ✓

Accept: traditional tale / folk narrative.

1 mark

b) Two characteristics of the genre. (2 marks)

Any **two**, 1 mark each:

- It is traditionally passed from one generation to another. ✓
- It contains a moral lesson. ✓
- It may contain supernatural or fantastic events. ✓
- It has simple, memorable characters. ✓
- It may use repetition and formulaic expressions. ✓
- It reflects the values and beliefs of a community. ✓

2 marks

c) Opening formula. (1 mark)

Answer:

“Long ago, in a village called Lengo...” ✓

1 mark

d) Two characters. (2 marks)

Any two:

- Amina ✓
- Amina's grandmother ✓
- Chief Baraka ✓
- Kenga ✓
- The old traveller / wise elder ✓

1 mark each = 2 marks

e) Why was Mwangaza unusual? (1 mark)

It was believed to be an extraordinary drum whose sound could be heard throughout the village / it could speak and reveal truths about people's hearts. ✓

1 mark

f) Amina's character. (3 marks)

Any three well-supported points:

- **Generous** — she gives part of her grain to the hungry traveller. ✓
- **Respectful / obedient** — she remembers and follows her grandmother's advice. ✓
- **Compassionate** — she responds to the traveller's need. ✓
- **Wise** — she understands the importance of sharing. ✓

1 mark each = 3 marks

g) Two supernatural/fantastic elements. (3 marks)

Possible answers:

1. The drum speaks human words. ✓
2. The drum reveals people's inner qualities. ✓
3. The drum is portrayed as possessing extraordinary powers. ✓

Award **1 mark** for each correctly identified element and explanation where appropriate.

3 marks

h) Effect of “BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!” (3 marks)

Any three:

- Creates rhythm and sound imagery. ✓
- Emphasizes the power of the drum. ✓
- Builds suspense and anticipation. ✓
- Attracts the attention of the villagers. ✓
- Makes the performance more dramatic and memorable. ✓

3 marks

i) Moral lesson. (2 marks)

Possible answers:

- People should be generous and willing to share with others. ✓
- A strong community depends on kindness and cooperation. ✓
- Greed does not make a person truly rich. ✓
- We should help people who are in need. ✓

Any **two relevant points**, 1 mark each.

2 marks

j) Personal response. (2 marks)

Award:

- Appropriate decision — e.g. **Yes, I would share the grain.** ✓
- Relevant justification — e.g. **The traveller was hungry and sharing demonstrates compassion and generosity.** ✓

Accept a well-reasoned alternative response.

2 marks

SECTION B: ORAL LITERATURE

35 MARKS

QUESTION 2 — Three genres of oral literature (3 marks)

Any three:

- Oral narratives ✓
- Songs ✓
- Proverbs ✓
- Riddles ✓
- Oral poetry ✓
- Tongue twisters ✓
- Greetings ✓
- Oral drama ✓
- Praise poetry ✓
- Legends ✓
- Myths ✓
- Folktales ✓

1 mark each = 3 marks

QUESTION 3 — Five types of songs (5 marks)

Any five:

- Work songs ✓
- Wedding songs ✓
- Funeral songs ✓
- Initiation songs ✓
- War songs ✓
- Praise songs ✓

- Political songs ✓
- Lullabies ✓
- Hunting songs ✓
- Religious songs ✓
- Children's songs ✓
- Love songs ✓
- Birth songs ✓
- Harvest songs ✓

1 mark each = 5 marks

QUESTION 4 — Four characteristics of oral literature (8 marks)

Award **2 marks per characteristic**:

i. Oral transmission
Oral literature is mainly passed from one generation to another through speech, performance and memory.
2 marks

ii. Performance
It is presented before an audience using voice, gestures, movement, music or other performance techniques.
2 marks

iii. Audience participation
The audience may respond through singing, clapping, answering questions, dancing or repeating words.
2 marks

iv. Use of artistic devices
It uses repetition, rhythm, imagery, symbolism, proverbs and other techniques to make performances effective and memorable.
2 marks

Other relevant characteristics should be accepted.

8 marks

QUESTION 5 — Functions of oral literature (10 marks)

Award **2 marks for each correctly stated and explained function**.

1. Education
It teaches children and members of society values, skills, history and acceptable behaviour.
2 marks

2. Entertainment
Songs, stories, riddles and performances provide enjoyment and relaxation.
2 marks

3. **Preservation of culture**
It preserves traditions, beliefs, customs, history and community knowledge.

2 marks

4. **Moral instruction**
Stories and songs teach people what is considered right or wrong in society.

2 marks

5. **Socialization**
It helps young people learn the values, language, behaviour and expectations of their community.

2 marks

Other valid functions such as political mobilization, criticism of society, religious instruction, unity and historical preservation should be accepted.

10 marks

QUESTION 6 — Digital space and oral literature (8 marks)

Award **2 marks for each well-developed point.**

Possible answers:

1. **Preservation**
Digital platforms allow oral performances to be recorded and stored for future generations.

2 marks

2. **Wider audience**
Social media and video-sharing platforms enable oral artists to reach audiences beyond their local communities.

2 marks

3. **Easy sharing**
Songs, stories, poems and performances can be quickly shared through phones and online platforms.

2 marks

4. **Collaboration and creativity**
Digital platforms allow performers from different communities to exchange ideas and create new forms of oral expression.

2 marks

Other relevant points:

- Documentation of endangered languages.
- Promotion of indigenous culture.
- Online storytelling.
- Creation of podcasts.
- Digital music and spoken-word performances.
- Educational use of recorded oral materials.

8 marks

QUESTION 7 — One challenge of digital technology (1 mark)

Any relevant challenge:

- Traditional performances may lose their original form through excessive modification. ✓
- False or inaccurate versions of cultural stories may spread quickly. ✓
- Some young people may become less interested in traditional live performances. ✓
- Commercialization may reduce the cultural value of some performances. ✓
- Digital content may be copied without acknowledging the original performers. ✓

1 mark

SECTION C: POETRY

QUESTION 8 — 15 MARKS

a) Persona (2 marks)

The persona is a member of the community / a young person or cultural voice speaking about traditional and modern storytelling. ✓ ✓

Accept: **a collective community voice**, provided it is well explained.

2 marks

b) Two pairs of rhyming words (2 marks)

Any two pairs:

- **hands – lands** ✓
- **old – told** ✓
- **tongue – young** ✓
- **call – all** ✓
- **wide – beside** ✓
- **rhyme – time** ✓
- **fade – shade** ✓
- **meet – complete** ✓

1 mark per correct pair = 2 marks

c) Main message (2 marks)

The poem encourages society, especially young people, to preserve traditional culture while embracing modern methods of communication and storytelling. ✓ ✓

2 marks

d) Personification (1 mark)

Answer:

“The drum can speak without a tongue.” ✓

The drum is given the human ability to speak.

1 mark

e) Symbolism of the drum (2 marks)

The drum symbolizes:

- **Cultural heritage/tradition ✓**
- **Communication and preservation of community memories ✓**

2 marks

f) Influence of technology (2 marks)

The poem shows that modern technology, particularly phones, can carry songs, stories and other forms of oral literature across wider distances and to more people. ✓✓

2 marks

g) Attitude towards traditional culture (2 marks)

Attitude: The persona is **positive/protective/proud** of traditional culture. ✓

Reason: The persona urges people not to allow old traditions to disappear and encourages the past to work together with the future. ✓

2 marks

h) Lesson for young people (2 marks)

Any relevant lesson:

- Young people should preserve their cultural heritage. ✓
- Modern technology can be used positively to promote culture. ✓
- Tradition and modernity can coexist. ✓
- Young people should value stories, songs and cultural knowledge passed down by older generations. ✓

2 marks

GRADE 10 ENGLISH LITERATURE PROJECT ASSESSMENT

PROJECT: 20 MARKS

Name: _____

School: _____

Assessment No.: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete the project individually.
2. Present your work neatly and clearly.
3. Support your responses with relevant examples from the literary work studied.
4. The project should demonstrate creativity, critical thinking and understanding of literature.

PROJECT TASK

Choose **one literary work** that you have studied, such as a **novel, play, short story or collection of poems**, and carry out the following tasks:

1. Identify the literary work and give its basic information.

Include the title, author and genre. **(2 marks)**

2. Write a brief summary of the literary work.

Give the main events in a clear and logical sequence. **(4 marks)**

3. Discuss TWO major characters.

For each character, describe their traits and support your answer with relevant evidence from the text. **(4 marks)**

4. Discuss TWO major themes developed in the literary work.

Explain how each theme is presented, giving appropriate examples. **(4 marks)**

5. Identify and explain TWO literary techniques or styles used by the author.

Examples may include symbolism, imagery, irony, dialogue, personification, flashback, satire or foreshadowing. **(2 marks)**

6. Give your personal response to the literary work.

Explain one important lesson you have learnt and how it can be applied to real life. **(2 marks)**

7. Presentation and creativity.

Neatness, organization, originality and appropriate use of supporting material. **(2 marks)**

TOTAL: 20 MARKS

Learner's Signature: _____

Teacher's Comment: _____