



THE KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 8-2026

SECTION A

TASK 1: LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Listening and Speaking Rubrics

Criteria	Exceeding Expectation (Level 4)	Meeting Expectation (Level 3)	Approaching Expectation (Level 2)	Below Expectation (Level 1)
Communication (<i>Pronunciation, intonation, and audibility</i>)	Almost perfect/error-free pronunciation and intonation. There is effort to sound like a native speaker. The learner is clearly heard as the response is logical and very easy to follow.	Good pronunciation and intonation with few errors but the learner is clearly heard and can be judged as the response is logical and easy to follow.	Hesitates with frequent errors of pronunciation and intonation. Meaning can be guessed from the responses. Not audible and difficult to follow.	Weak pronunciation skills and intonation and many errors. Lacks sequence and inaudible. No meaning can be derived from the responses. So, it is difficult to follow.
Comprehension (<i>Correct responses and appropriate vocabulary</i>)	Interprets all questions in context. Responds to all questions appropriately. Uses a variety of vocabulary in response to questions.	Interprets most questions in context. Responds to most questions appropriately. Uses the appropriate vocabulary in response to questions.	Interprets some questions in context. Responds to some questions appropriately. Use limited vocabulary in response to questions.	Exhibits lack of understanding of the questions or does not respond to questions at all.
Use of Non-Verbal Cues (<i>confidence, facial expressions, body posture, eye contact, gestures</i>)	Uses a variety of nonverbal cues: appropriate facial expressions, body postures, gestures, pauses, poise and meaningful eye contact with the teacher at all times and speaks with confidence.	Uses nonverbal cues appropriately: facial expressions, body postures and gestures. Maintains meaningful eye contact with the teacher most of the times and speaks with confidence.	Occasionally uses some nonverbal cues and sometimes and speaks with confidence.	Hardly uses nonverbal cues. Makes no eye contact with the teacher, keeps looking down and away while speaking.

Note: Use the assessment rubric to assess *Listening and Speaking* (for Part I and Part II, assess the learner on both, and award once).

Suggested Responses

Part I

1. Expected skill: Making a polite request.

- Excuse me, may I borrow the book when you finish reading it?
- Could you please give me the book when you are finished with it?
- May I borrow the book after you finish reading it?

2. Expected skill: Responding politely and patiently.

- That is okay. I will wait until you finish.
- No problem. Please give it to me when you are done.
- Okay. I can borrow it later.

3. Expected skill: Clearly explaining a situation.

- I would like to borrow the book after my friend finishes reading it.
- We are discussing when I can borrow the storybook.
- I am waiting for the learner to finish reading the book so that I can borrow it.

4. Expected skill: Expressing gratitude.

- Thank you very much.
- Thank you for giving me the book.
- Thank you. I really appreciate it.

Part II: Listening Comprehension

1. He was walking home from school.

2. He hurried to the field because he was worried about his younger sister because it looked like it was going to rain.

3. She was at the field.

4. They would probably have been caught in the rain/They might have gotten wet in the rain/They could have remained outside during the rain.

Listening and Speaking (8 marks)
Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4 (responds to all the 8 prompts plausibly in accordance with the rubrics)	7-8
Level 3 (responds to 6- 7 prompts plausibly in accordance with the rubrics)	5-6
Level 2 (responds to 4 - 5 prompts plausibly in accordance with the rubrics)	3-4
Level 1 (responds to 1 - 3 prompts plausibly in accordance with the rubrics)	1-2

TASK 2: READING ALOUD

Reading Aloud Rubrics

Criteria	Exceeding Expectation (Level 4)	Meeting Expectation (Level 3)	Approaching Expectation (Level 2)	Below Expectation (Level 1)
Speed (<i>Number of words read correctly per minute</i>)	Reads correctly more than 150 words within 1 minute. Reading is consistently smooth and natural; pauses are consistently where they should be throughout the reading time.	Reads correctly at least 150 words within 1 minute. Reading is smooth and natural; pauses are where they should be most of the reading time.	Reads correctly between 80 to 149 words Reading is sometimes halted and the reader does not pause effectively at sentence ends and commas.	Reads correctly below 80 words in a minute. Reading proceeds with difficulty and many words are repeated. There are many stops and starts that make the reading hard to follow.
Volume and Accuracy (<i>Loudness, pronunciation and grouping of words</i>)	Reads clearly and loudly. Pronounces correctly more than 150 words in the passage. Groups words logically throughout when reading.	Reads clearly and loudly enough, correctly pronounces all the 150 words. Groups many words logically when reading.	Reads clearly and loudly some parts of the passage. Pronounces correctly 80 to 149 words. Groups some words logically when reading.	Often mumbles and cannot be understood. Pronounces below 80 words. Volume is too soft to be heard; reads word by word and must be assisted.
Reading with Expression (<i>Intonation, mood, and facial expressions</i>)	The voice carries appropriate inflection (rising and falling) and the tone changes to capture the mood of the text	The voice carries appropriate inflection (rising and falling) and the tone changes to capture the mood of the text	The voice sometimes carries appropriate inflection, and the tone sometimes changes to capture the mood of the	The voice is monotone throughout and carries no inflection and the tone does not change to carry

Criteria	Exceeding Expectation (Level 4)	Meeting Expectation (Level 3)	Approaching Expectation (Level 2)	Below Expectation (Level 1)
	throughout. The voice varies according to characters and uses appropriate pitch (loudness and softness) throughout. Uses facial expressions throughout.	most of the time. The voice varies according to characters and uses appropriate pitch (loudness and softness) most of the time. Uses facial expressions most of the time.	text. The voice does not vary according to characters and monotone is common. Sometimes uses facial expressions most of the time.	the mood of the text.

Reading Aloud: Volume, Accuracy and Reading with Expression (4 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4	4
Level 3	3
Level 2	2
Level 1	1

Number of Words Read Correctly Per Minute (4 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Number of words	Marks
Level 4	150 and above	4
Level 3	150	3
Level 2	81-149	2
Level 1	1-80	1

SECTION B

TASK 3: READING COMPREHENSION – 12 MARKS

Question 1 – 5 marks

- a) The previous evening's heavy rain had left the school field wet / she was worried about the wet field / she wondered whether she should take part.
- b) Some parts of the track were slippery.
- c) A. responsible
- d) She was happy because she had helped another runner. Award 1 mark for identifying her satisfaction/happiness and 1 mark for linking it to helping the fallen runner or showing concern/courage.

Question 2 – 3 marks

- a) Because litter could harm the animals if they ate it / to keep the animals safe.
- b) He is responsible/caring/environmentally conscious/helpful.
- c) B. wildlife park.

Question 3 – 4 marks

Make notes on the benefits of good study habits.

Award 1 mark for any valid benefit, up to 4 marks. Accept any four points.

- Helps learners perform well in schoolwork.
- Helps learners manage time.
- Helps learners complete work without rushing.
- Helps learners concentrate better.
- Helps learners understand what they read.
- Short breaks help learners remain alert.

Note: award a half (½) of the total mark if not in note form.

Reading Comprehension (12 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4	10-12
Level 3	7-9
Level 2	4-6
Level 1	1-3

TASK 4: GRAMMAR (14 MARKS)

Question 4 – 3 marks

- a) across – 1 mark.
- b) before – 1 mark.
- c) to – 1 mark.

Question 5 – 3 marks

- a) C. called off – 1 mark.
- b) A. look after – 1 mark.
- c) B. came up with – 1 mark.

Question 6 – 3 marks

- a) If – 1 mark.
- b) unless – 1 mark.
- c) although – 1 mark.

Question 7 – 2 marks

- a) his – 1 mark.
- b) ours – 1 mark.

Question 8 – 3 marks

- a) doesn't she? – 1 mark.
- b) did they? – 1 mark.

c) weren't they? – 1 mark.

Grammar (14 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4	13-14
Level 3	9-12
Level 2	5-8
Level 1	1-4

TASK 5: LITERARY ANALYSIS (24 marks)

Question 9

a) D. selfish – 1 mark.

b) Using a mocking/laughing or scornful voice when saying “Leopard laughed at Tortoise”.

Using a proud/disrespectful/derisive tone for Leopard's words.

Using appropriate voice variation, expression and/or emphasis to make the narration interesting and show Leopard's attitude.

Any well explained point award 3 marks.

c) Award up to 2 marks for a relevant lesson, such as:

- We should share resources fairly.
- We should respect others and listen to their good advice.
- Working together can help solve problems.
- We should not be selfish or take more than we need.

d) Long ago. (2 marks)

Poetry (8 marks)

Question 10

a) Three stanzas – 1 mark.

b) Award 2 marks for each correctly identified and illustrated feature: 1 mark for identification and 1 mark for a suitable illustration.

- Personification – e.g. “morning opens wide its door” or “hope arrives on gentle wing.”
- Imagery – e.g. “golden sunlight” creates a picture of bright morning.
- Rhyme – e.g. door/floor, sing/wing, day/play, rain/again.
- Metaphor – e.g. “hope arrives on gentle wing” presents hope as something that can arrive/fly.
- Repetition – e.g. repeated use of “I”/“I will” to emphasise determination.
- Symbolism – “light” can symbolise hope or a positive future.
- Alliteration – accept a correctly identified example where the repeated initial sound is clear.

Accept any three correctly identified and illustrated features.

c) We should remain hopeful, positive and determined when facing difficulties / challenges do not last forever. Accept any equivalent relevant response.

Question 11 (8 marks)

a) At the school, specifically at/near the school gate. (2 marks)

b) Award 2 marks per trait: 1 mark for the trait and 1 mark for relevant evidence/illustration.

- Helpful – she helps Brian look for his key.
- Patient/calm – she asks him to think carefully rather than panicking.
- Practical/resourceful – she suggests checking where he last used the key.
- Caring/concerned – she assists Brian instead of leaving him to solve the problem alone.

Accept any two well-supported traits.

c) They are schoolmates/classmates/friends. Award 2 marks for a clear relationship supported by the extract; 1 mark for a partially correct response.

Literary Analysis (24 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4	19-24
Level 3	13-18
Level 2	7-12
Level 1	1-6

TASK 6: WRITING (10 MARKS)

Writing Rubrics

Criteria	Exceeding Expectation (Level 4)	Meeting Expectation (Level 3)	Approaching Expectation (Level 2)	Below Expectation (Level 1)
Grammar and Mechanics of Writing	Almost excellent use of grammar, variety of punctuation marks, spelling, and capitalization. Errors are so few and minor that they do not impede reading.	Good use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. There are a few errors, but they do not impede reading.	There are moderate errors of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. But some errors can impede reading and meaning.	There are many errors throughout in the use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and capitalization and the reader can only guess meaning
Handwriting	Neat and easily readable throughout, many letters are correctly spaced and sized within lines; spaces between words	Neat and easily readable, many letters are correctly spaced and sized within lines; many spaces between words are the correct size.	Untidy but readable; some letters are correctly spaced and sized within lines; some spaces between words are not the correct size.	Not easily readable, many letters are not correctly spaced and not sized within lines; many spaces between words

Criteria	Exceeding Expectation (Level 4)	Meeting Expectation (Level 3)	Approaching Expectation (Level 2)	Below Expectation (Level 1)
	are the correct size throughout.			are not the correct size.
Vocabulary	Almost free of errors of subject-verb agreement, very good choice of words, and wide range of vocabulary and use of varied expressions.	Few errors of subject-verb agreement that do not impede communication, Selection of vocabulary is appropriate to the context.	Frequent errors of subject verb agreement, range of vocabulary is limited and there is no attempt to vary expressions.	Many errors of subject-verb agreement, most structures are incorrect vocabulary repeated and communication is difficult.
Organization	Exhibits an exceptionally clear sense of unity and order throughout, there is a clear sense of beginning, middle and ending and makes smooth transition between ideas.	Exhibits a logical sequence, there is a sense of unity and order, there is a sense of beginning, middle and ending and makes smooth transition between ideas.	Attempts to provide a logical sequence, there is some sense of beginning, middle and ending and some smooth transition between ideas.	Exhibits no sense of order and provided a series of separate sentences and disconnected ideas and it is difficult to follow.

Writing (10 marks)

Conversion Table

Performance Levels	Marks
Level 4	8-10
Level 3	5-7
Level 2	3-4
Level 1	1-2

ASSESSMENT SHEET: SECTION A

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ASSESSMENT SHEET: SECTION B

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