

Hausa syllabus

Every examinable topic area in WAEC Hausa, in one place — with how the papers are structured and answers to common questions. Compiled by waeccbt.com; not an official WAEC document.

How the papers work: Two papers. Paper 1: 60 multiple-choice items in 1 hour for 60 marks — Section A Language 30 items (comprehension 2 short passages 10, composition/letter 4, sound system 6, grammar 6, translation 4), Section B Literature 22 items (basic principles of literary appreciation 4; oral literature prose 3, poetry 3, drama 3 = 13 with appreciation; written literature prose 3, poetry 3, drama 3 = 9), Section C Culture 8 items (customs 4, institutions 4); all literature items except the 4 appreciation items come from the Paper 2 set books. Paper 2: essay paper, rubrics in Hausa, 2 hours, 100 marks — answer 6 questions: three from Section A Language (composition/letter of about 300 words in the official Hausa orthography, advised 45 minutes; sound system 1 of 2; grammar 1 of 2), two from Section B Literature (one of three oral-literature set books, one of three written-literature set books) and one from Section C Culture (1 of 2). Weighting: composition 25 marks, the other five questions 15 marks each. Maximum 160 marks scaled to 100%.

1. Paper 1 — Objective (1 hour, 60 marks)

- Section A Language: 30 items — comprehension (2 passages) 10, composition/letter writing 4, sound system 6, grammar 6, translation 4
- Section B Literature: 22 items — literary appreciation 4; oral prose, poetry, drama 3 each; written prose, poetry, drama 3 each
- Section C Culture: 8 items — customs 4, institutions 4
- Literature items (other than appreciation) are drawn from the six set books

2. Paper 2 Section A — Language (answer 3)

- Composition/letter writing (insha'i): about 300 words, not more than 45 minutes — narrative (insha'i na labari), descriptive (na siffance), argumentative (na muhawara), expository (na bayani), dialogue (muhawara ta kai tsaye), proverbial (karin magana), letter writing (rubutun wasika)
- Sound system (tsarin sauti), 1 of 2: consonants, vowels and syllable structure — production by place, manner and state of the glottis (e.g. bilabials, nasals, voiced and voiceless)
- Syllable structure (tsarin gaba): CV, CVV, CVC; open and closed syllables (budaddiyar/rufaffiyar gaba)
- Vowel production: short and long vowels, diphthongs; tone (karin sauti) — high, low and falling
- Grammar (nahawu), 1 of 2: word structure and formation — root (saiwa), affix (dafi), prefix (dafa goshi), infix (dafa ciki), suffix (dafa keya)
- Word classes: noun (suna), verb (aikatau), adjective (sifa), adverb (bayanau), pronoun (wakilin suna), conjunction (mahadi), specifier (mafayyaci), quantifier (ma'auni), demonstrative (nunau), ideophone (amsa-kama), diminutive (tsigilau), stabilizer (dirka), referential (madanganci)
- Grammatical categories: tense and aspect — general past, relative past, general continuous, relative continuous, first and second future, habitual, subjunctive, negative; gender (jinsi); number (adadi)
- Sentence structure and types: subject and predicate; simple, complex and compound sentences

3. Paper 2 Section B — Literature (answer 2: one oral, one written)

- Oral literature: prose (tatsuniya, tarihi, karin magana, ka-cinci-ka-cinci), oral poetry (wakokin baka), traditional drama (wasannin gargajiya) — three set books, one question each, answer one
- Written literature: prose (zube), written poetry (rubutattun wakoki), drama (wasan kwaikwayo) — three set books, one question each, answer one
- Basic principles of literary appreciation

4. Paper 2 Section C — Culture (answer 1 of 2)

- Greeting: respectful greetings, congratulations, greetings for times and seasons, condolence (jaje, ta'aziyya)
- Upbringing (tarbiyya): methods of correction; respect for parents, elders and peers; obedience to authority
- Hospitality (karimci): honouring guests, gifts, feeding, alms (sadaka)
- Family (iyali): marriage customs, birth, naming, child-rearing, weaning, circumcision, kinship, death customs
- Traditional beliefs and practices: superstition (camfi), bori, divination (duba), charms, witchcraft, ghosts
- Traditional occupations: farming, blacksmithing, weaving, tanning, barbing, hair-plaiting, carving, herding, leatherwork, butchery, fishing, dyeing, trading, brokerage
- Traditional medicine: practitioners such as magori, herbalists, bokaye, barber-surgeons
- Traditional authority: sarki, hakimi, dagaci, mai unguwa, shamaki, shantali, sarkin zagi, liman, sarkin fada
- Traditional recreation: dambe (boxing), kokawa (wrestling), kalankuwa, shanci, sukuwa (horse racing), hawan kaho

Frequently asked questions

How is the WAEC Hausa examination organised?

Paper 1 has 60 multiple-choice items (30 language, 22 literature, 8 culture) answered in 1 hour for 60 marks. Paper 2 is a 2-hour essay paper worth 100 marks in which you answer six questions. The combined 160 marks are scaled to 100%.

Which six questions do I answer in Paper 2?

Three from Section A (composition/letter, one sound-system question of two, one grammar question of two), two from Section B (one on an oral-literature set book and one on a written-literature set book) and one of the two culture questions.

How are the Paper 2 marks shared?

The composition/letter carries 25 marks and each of the other five questions carries 15 marks, giving 100.

Which essay types can be set?

Narrative (insha'i na labari), descriptive (na siffance), argumentative (na muhawara), expository (na bayani), dialogue, proverbial (karin magana) and letter writing (rubutun wasika). Write about 300 words in not more than 45 minutes, in the official orthography.

What grammar topics are examined?

Word structure (root and affixes), the word classes from noun to referential, tense and aspect (general and relative past, continuous, two futures, habitual, subjunctive, negative), gender and number, and sentence structure and types.

How many set books are there?

Six: three for oral literature (prose, poetry, drama) and three for written literature (prose, poetry, drama). One question is set on each book and Paper 1 literature items are also drawn from them.

What should I study for the culture section?

Greetings, upbringing (tarbiyya), hospitality, family customs from marriage to death, traditional beliefs, occupations, traditional medicine, traditional authority titles and forms of recreation.

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