

# **A Study of the Efficacy of Grade Seven English Essay Examinations: A Case for Selected Primary Schools in Harare**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

*The study analyses the efficacy of the Grade 7 English Language essay examinations in selected Harare primary schools in Zimbabwe. One hundred respondents made up of heads and teachers in the selected primary schools participated in the study. The sample included participants from high and low density suburbs. Some were from government schools whilst others were from non-government schools. A questionnaire was developed and a pilot study was carried out to validate the instrument before it was distributed to selected Heads of primary schools and their current and former Grade Six and Grade Seven teachers. The objective for limiting the study to these groups was that these were the people presumed to have the information that was needed for the study. The study found out that essay examinations were perceived to: (a) be promoting the development of creativity and originality in the learners; (b) be a pre-condition to linguistic accuracy and language development in pupils; and (c) cater for divergent thinking in pupils. The study recommended that: (a) Grade 7 teachers must effectively plan their work with their pupils' learning needs in mind; (b) pupils should read more library books to broaden their knowledge base; (c) teachers and examiners should be in-serviced in the skills involving essay teaching, writing and marking; and (d) teachers should employ various strategies such as prompt speeches, debates, drama, poem, presentations and essay competitions at class, cluster, district and provincial levels to improve pupils essay writing skills.*