

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Reading a newspaper article

Read the newspaper article.

Sick cops cost taxpayers R536m

2009-09-28

Cape Town —

South African Police Service (Saps) members on sick-leave cost the taxpayer about R536m last year, it emerged on Monday.

According to Saps's latest annual report, 1.2 million work days were lost through sick-leave, Freedom Front Plus spokesperson Pieter Groenewald said.

Sick-leave costs alone amounted to R387 711m and permanent and temporary incapacity leave amounted to R148 691m.

"What is more worrying is that the category where sick leave appears the most is among the highly skilled members and the second among the skilled members' category," he said.

Highly skilled members took 645 730 days off and skilled members 430 788 days.

"This is exactly the category of members who have to investigate crime and form the core of the police service."

The figures pointed to a more serious problem in the police service, which indicated that members in these categories were either over-worked or were placed under too much pressure and tension.

Part of the pressure and tension was that some members were not properly trained for the tasks they had to fulfil.

The police service had to undertake an urgent investigation and come up with solutions for this situation, Groenewald said.

According to the annual report, 91.5% of the sick leave was supported by a medical certificate and the average number of days' sick leave per member was eight.

— SAPA

(From <http://www.news24.com>)

Answer the questions.

Part A: Audience and purpose

- 1 Describe the kind of people who would be interested in reading this newspaper article. (3)
 - 2 What is the purpose of this article? Why did the journalist write it? (3)
- (6)

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Part B: Point of view

- 3 Who claims that Saps sick leave costs the taxpayer money? (1)
- 4 Who is concerned that highly skilled members of Saps are the ones taking sick leave most often? (1)
- 5 Who is being quoted in "This is exactly the category of members who have to investigate crime and form the core of the police service"? (1)
- 6 Given your answers to the three questions above, discuss the point of view from which this article was written. (3)
- (6)

Part C: Implicit messages

Indicate True or False for the following statements.

- 7 Saps sick leave costs the South African taxpayer a lot of money each year. (1)
- 8 Pieter Groenewald thinks the police should not take sick leave. (1)
- 9 The Freedom Front thinks that the costs of sick leave in Saps are high. (1)
- 10 The most pressurised members of the police force are unskilled. (1)
- 11 The statistics regarding sick leave indicate higher levels among skilled policemen. (1)
- 12 The police are generally not highly trained or skilled. (1)
- 13 Most police get medical certificates when they take sick leave. (1)
- 14 The average number of days of sick leave per policeperson per year is actually not that high. (1)
- (8)

Part D: Design

Grade 9 English Worksheet

- 15 Study the newspaper article above. Describe the design characteristics of the newspaper article. How is it laid out?
(7)

Part E: Connotation

- 16 Give the connotation of “emerged” in South African Police Service (Saps) members on sick-leave cost the taxpayer about R536m last year, it emerged on Monday. (2)
- 17 Give the connotation of “alone” in Sick-leave costs alone amounted to R387 711m and permanent and temporary incapacity leave amounted to R148 691m. (2)
- 18 In the article it is stated that “Highly skilled members took 645 730 days off and skilled members 430 788 days”. What is the effect created by multiplying the days of leave by members of the police force? (2)
- (6)

Part F: Passive voice

Study the following two sentences, in which the agent responsible for making the statement is removed.

- a) South African Police Service (Saps) members on sick-leave cost the taxpayer about R536m last year, it emerged on Monday.
- b) According to Saps's latest annual report, 1.2 million work days were lost through sick-leave, Freedom Front Plus spokesperson Pieter Groenewald said.

They could have been written differently so that the agent responsible for the statement is given, for example:

- a) The report pointed out that the South African Police Service (Saps) members on sick-leave cost the taxpayer about R536m last year.
- b) According to Saps's latest annual report, Saps members took a total of 1.2 million work days' sick-leave, Freedom Front Plus spokesperson Pieter Groenewald said.

Imagine that you've been at a meeting about school uniforms. People in the audience said a number of different things about the issue. You're not sure who said what, but you did write down some quotations. You are reporting on the meeting. Rewrite the following quotations, using words such as suggested, agreed, claimed, proposed and mentioned.

Grade 9 English Worksheet

For example:

The school uniform is very ugly and outdated.

It was suggested that the school uniform was ugly and outdated.

- 19 If learners wear ordinary clothes it is harder to discipline them. (2)
- 20 The uniform should be simplified so that there are fewer items to buy. (2)
- 21 The school uniform should be modernised. (2)
- 22 The uniforms are extremely expensive and you have to save all year to buy your child's uniform. (2)
- 23 The school should carry out a survey among parents. (2)
- (10)

Part G: Vocabulary

- 24 When journalists write newspaper articles they use phrases such as those in the list below. Choose six of these phrases and write sentences with each. (12)

the sentiments expressed
the attitude of people
the opinion of ...
the emotions of ...
their reaction to the
the outlook ...
the contention of the group
the issue being debated
the conflict between
the dispute concerns
the claim being made
according to ...
there is a clear indication
it appears that
... believes that
another concerning issue
this is relevant to the ...

Part H: Newspaper headlines

Grade 9 English Worksheet

What do you think the following headlines are about? Choose the most appropriate subject.

- 25 SAA to be sliced and diced (1)
- A SAA to be cut in pieces.
 - B SAA to be chopped up.
 - C SAA to be split up.
 - D SAA will be closed down.
- 26 Celebrating SA's big earners (1)
- A There will be a party for people who earn lots of money.
 - B About people who earn a lot of money in South Africa.
 - C About millionaires.
 - D There is a big gap between rich and poor in South Africa.
- 27 Huge diamond found at Cullinan (1)
- A Type 1 diamond found in Cullinan.
 - B Another big diamond found at Cullinan.
 - C Diamonds of colour and clarity found in South Africa.
 - D Diamond of colour and clarity found in South Africa.
- 28 Worst pension fund named (1)
- A The Private Security Pension Fund was named the worst in South Africa.
 - B South Africa has the worst pension funds in the world.
 - C The worst performing pension fund has been identified.
 - D The best performing pension fund has been identified.
- 29 Cosatu wants MTN deal blocked (1)
- A Cosatu wants to halt an MTN deal.
 - B Cosatu wants MTN to stop negotiating a deal with another cellphone company.
 - C Cosatu wants a share in MTN.
 - D Cosatu doesn't like MTN.
- 30 Soccer's new executive digs in (1)
- A Soccer's executive digs a garden.
 - B Soccer's executive settles in.
 - C Soccer's executive likes to watch soccer.

Grade 9 English Worksheet

D Soccer's executive has been announced.

31 Climate change threatens to drown most of earth (1)

A The climate is getting warmer.

B Rising water levels are likely to cover most of the earth.

C Melting ice is causing rising sea levels.

D A warmer climate is likely to cause water to cover most of the earth.

(7)

Part I: Brainstorm a topic

32 Brainstorm a current issue. The issue can be about something at school or in the community or even in South Africa. It can be about politics or sport or the environment. Create a mindmap of ideas.

Put your topic in the middle of a page.

Draw lines in a spider's web spreading out from your topic.

Write any ideas you have about your topic on or at the end of these lines.

Look at the mindmap again with your article in mind.

Use colours to highlight some similar ideas.

Choose some of the ideas for your newspaper article.

Part J: Write a newspaper article

33 Write a report on a current issue. Draw on the ideas you developed during mindmapping.

- Read up on your topic.
- Discuss it with other people. Ask for their opinions and whether you can quote them.
- Organise your ideas logically.
- Write the first draft of your newspaper article.
- Think of an eye-catching headline.
- Add a date and an author to your article.
- Revise your article:
- Who is your audience?
- What is the purpose of your article?
- Have you adopted a point of view?
- Rewrite the article neatly and correctly.
- Proofread and correct your article.

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Suggested Solutions

Part A: Audience and purpose

1	Learners' answers will vary. Accept their suggestions if they justify them. The general public / the taxpayer would be interested in reading this newspaper article. It is interesting that a conservative politician's comment is quoted. This indicates that the article may have been written for people who are critical of government spending.	(3)
2	Learners' answers will vary. Accept their suggestions if they justify them. The article is meant to inform the general public about the fact that policemen take a lot of sick leave. These are especially the skilled members of the force. The article may be attempting to suggest that the police are highly stressed by their work.	(3)
		(6)

Part B: Point of view

3	According to Pieter Groenewald, Saps sick leave costs the taxpayer money.	(1)
4	Pieter Groenewald is concerned that highly skilled members of Saps are the ones taking sick leave most often.	(1)
5	Pieter Groenewald is once again being quoted.	(1)
6	The article was written from only one point of view, namely that of Pieter Groenewald, spokesperson for the Freedom Front Plus. Therefore, it is heavily biased. No-one else's opinion was sought or reported. Its conclusions should therefore be in doubt.	(3)
		(6)

Part C: Implicit messages

Indicate True or False for the following statements.

7	True	(1)
8	False	(1)
9	True	(1)
10	False	(1)
11	True	(1)
12	False	(1)
13	True	(1)
14	True	(1)

Grade 9 English Worksheet

	(8)
--	-----

Part D: Design

15. There is a headline which is larger and bolder than the rest of the text. The date when the article was written is given. The origin of the article is indicated as being Cape Town, i.e. the seat of parliament. The first paragraph is in bold. The article is written in two columns. The acknowledgement for the article is given as SAPA. (7)

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Part E: Connotation

16	The word “emerged” suggests that the information was given reluctantly. The information came out of the annual report. It wasn’t emphasized in any way, but a careful listener might have picked up the information.	(2)
17	The word “alone” suggests that there were other serious costs to the taxpayer. Sick-leave costs weren’t the only costs that Saps had.	(2)
18	Multiplying the days of leave by members of the police force makes it appear that the number of days’ sick leave is huge. Actually, when they are averaged out, they equal eight days per member.	(2)
		(6)

Part F: Passive voice

19	It was mentioned that learners who wear ordinary clothes are harder to discipline.	(2)
20	It was proposed that the school uniform be simplified so that there were fewer items to buy.	(2)
21	It was agreed that the school uniform should be modernised.	(2)
22	It was claimed that uniforms were extremely expensive and one had to save all year to buy your child’s uniform.	(2)
23	It was suggested that the school carry out a survey among parents.	(2)
		(10)

Part G: Vocabulary

24. Learners’ sentences should use the phrases correctly and in the correct context. (12)

Part H: Newspaper headlines

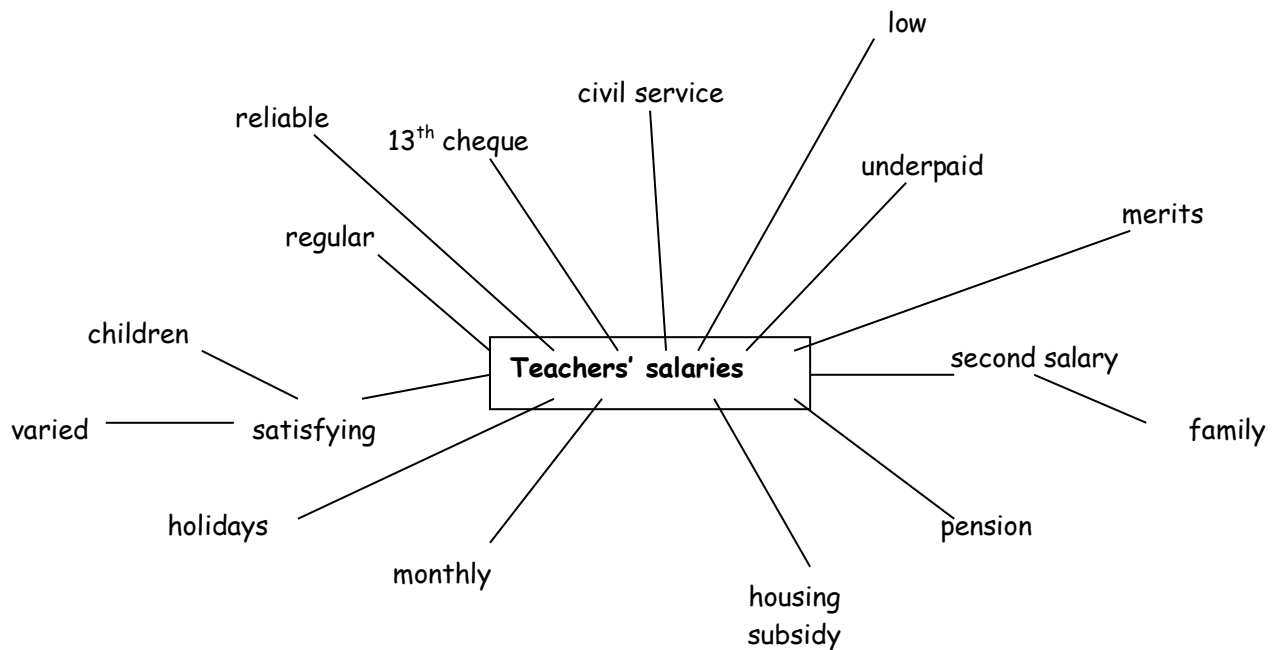
What do you think the following headlines are about? Choose the most appropriate subject.

25	C SAA to be split up.	(1)
26	B About people who earn a lot of money in South Africa.	(1)
27	B Another big diamond found at Cullinan.	(1)
28	C The worst performing pension fund has been identified.	(1)
29	A Cosatu want to halt an MTN deal.	(1)
30	B Soccer’s executive settles in.	(1)
31	D A warmer climate is likely to cause water to cover most of the earth.	(1)
		(7)

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Part I: Brainstorm a topic

32. For example:



Part J: Write a newspaper article

33 Use the assessment rubric in the Appendix of Assessment Tools to assess the newspaper article.

Grade 9 English Worksheet

Assessment rubric: Newspaper article

	4	3	2	1
Format	The first paragraph clearly summarises the rest of the article. It leads the reader into the article and makes him/her want to read the rest of the article.	The first paragraph summarises the rest of the article. It leads the reader into the article.	The first paragraph summarises the rest of the article.	The first paragraph does not summarise the rest of the article.
Content	The story is very interesting and informative. The reader would want to talk about it.	The story is interesting and informative. The reader may want to talk about the story.	The story is interesting.	The story does not capture the reader's attention.
Substantiation	Relevant people are appropriately and clearly quoted in support of what is suggested in the report.	Reasonably relevant people are quoted in support of what is suggested in the report.	People are quoted.	People are not quoted.
Headline	The headline is arresting, clever and catchy. It makes the reader want to read the article.	The headline is catchy. It makes the reader want to read the article.	The headline tells the reader what the article is about.	The headline is misleading in that it doesn't relate to the article. It is ordinary and uninteresting.