

Candidate's Name: .....

Signature: .....

Random No.						Personal No.		

(Do not write your school/Centre name of number anywhere on this booklet.)

112/1  
**ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE**  
**Paper 1**  
**(Theory)**  
**Feb./Mar. 2026**  
**2 Hours**



**For scorers' use only**

Total weighted score		
Initials		

**ASK INTEGRATED TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS BUREAU LTD**

**Uganda Lower Secondary Certificate of Education**

**S.4 ENTRY ASSESSMENTS 2026**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**PAPER 1**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:**

*This paper consists of two sections; A and B. It has four items in all.*

*Section A is compulsory.*

*Respond to one item from Section B.*

*Respond to three items in all.*

*Responses to all items must be written in the spaces provided.*

*Any additional items responded to will not be scored.*

**For Scorers' Use Only**

Item No.	Basic Code	Weighted Score	Scorers' Initials
1			
2			
<b>Total weighted score</b>			

## ITEM ONE

Hon. **Ndagire Lilian**, Member of Parliament for Busiro South, is invited to speak on a local radio station about the rising concern of **early marriages** in her constituency. She uses the opportunity to educate residents on how this practice quietly affects the future of young people and the development of the community.

### Task:

In a Paragraph of about **150 words**, write what Hon. Ndagire Lilian might present to her listeners.

Early marriage in Uganda is a phenomenon that continues to shape the lives of many young people, particularly girls, despite the existence of laws and policies designed to protect them. It is a practice that has persisted across generations, deeply embedded in cultural traditions and reinforced by economic hardship. To understand its impact, one must look beyond the surface and examine the way it quietly influences education, health, family life, and national development.

In many rural communities, the decision to marry off a daughter at a tender age is often seen as a practical solution to poverty. Parents, struggling to provide food, clothing, and school fees, believe that marriage will ease their burden. A bride price, however modest, is welcomed as immediate relief. Yet, when a girl leaves school to become a wife, her future narrows. The classroom that once promised knowledge and opportunity is replaced by household responsibilities. The dreams of becoming a teacher, nurse, or entrepreneur fade, and the cycle of poverty continues. Families may not recognize this immediately, but over time they see that the daughter who might have lifted them out of hardship is now dependent on her husband, who himself may be young and unprepared.

The cultural dimension of early marriage is equally significant. In some societies, marriage is considered the natural step once a girl reaches puberty. Elders encourage it, believing that delaying marriage risks immorality or rebellion. Girls are taught that obedience to tradition is more important than personal ambition. The community celebrates the union, but beneath the celebration lies a quiet loss. A child who should be discovering her talents and building her confidence is instead thrust into adulthood. She learns to cook, clean, and care for children before she has even understood herself. The laughter of adolescence is replaced by the weight of responsibility, and the innocence of youth is sacrificed to cultural expectations.

The consequences of this practice are not always visible at once. A young bride may appear healthy and happy on her wedding day, but as time passes, the challenges of motherhood emerge. Her body, not yet fully developed, struggles with pregnancy. Complications during childbirth become common, and the risks to both mother and child increase. Hospitals record cases of fistula, anemia, and infant mortality, and behind each statistic is a story of a girl who was asked to grow up too soon. Families

mourn, communities whisper, and the nation quietly bears the cost of healthcare and lost potential.

Beyond health, the emotional toll of early marriage is profound. A girl who once played freely with her peers now finds herself isolated. Her friends continue with school, sharing stories of teachers, exams, and youthful adventures, while she listens from a distance, occupied with feeding a baby or pleasing a husband. The sense of exclusion grows, and with it, frustration. Some young brides experience domestic violence, others endure neglect, and many suffer silently, believing that this is their fate. Their voices are muted, their choices limited, and their dreams forgotten.

The economic implications ripple through society. Young couples, lacking education and skills, struggle to earn a living. They depend on subsistence farming or casual labor, which barely sustains them. Poverty deepens, and children born into such families inherit the same struggles. The promise of national development is weakened when a significant portion of the population is unable to contribute productively. Factories, offices, and businesses lose potential workers, innovators, and leaders because their talents were cut short by early marriage. The nation's vision of prosperity is delayed, not by lack of resources, but by the premature silencing of its youth.

Socially, early marriage alters the fabric of communities. It creates households where maturity is absent, where decisions are made without wisdom, and where conflicts arise easily. Young husbands, equally inexperienced, may abandon their families or resort to violence. Young wives, overwhelmed by responsibilities, may become resentful or depressed. Children raised in such environments grow up without stability, repeating patterns of hardship. Communities that once thrived on the energy of youth now struggle with the consequences of premature adulthood.

At the national level, the persistence of early marriage undermines Uganda's progress toward global goals. The Sustainable Development Goals emphasize education, gender equality, and health, yet early marriage erodes all three. Girls leave school, gender inequality is reinforced, and health risks multiply. Population growth accelerates as young couples have many children, stretching public resources. Schools become overcrowded, hospitals struggle, and infrastructure lags behind. The government invests heavily in development, but the gains are slowed by the weight of a practice that continues to rob the nation of its future.

Efforts to address early marriage have been made, but challenges remain. Laws exist, setting eighteen as the minimum age for marriage, yet enforcement is weak. Cases are hidden, communities protect their traditions, and perpetrators rarely face justice. Campaigns by NGOs and international agencies raise awareness, but poverty and cultural resistance persist. Schools provide opportunities through Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education, but dropout rates remain high,



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Joan was stunned. Ruth was only fifteen. She tried to protest, but Ruth shook her head. “He’s already spoken to the man. He’s older, but he has land and cows. My uncle says that’s better than books.”

The next week, Ruth stopped coming to school. Her desk remained empty, her books untouched. Joan kept asking the teachers, but they had no answers. Rumors spread—some said Ruth had moved to the village, others said she was already married.

Months passed. During a school outreach program, Joan visited a nearby trading center. There, she saw Ruth sitting behind a stall, selling tomatoes. Her eyes lit up when she saw Joan, but her smile faded quickly. “I miss school,” she said softly. “I still dream of becoming a nurse.”

Joan wanted to help, but Ruth’s situation was complicated. Her husband didn’t allow her to leave the stall, and her uncle had warned her against returning to school. “They say I belong here now,” Ruth said. “But sometimes, I still write in my notebook.”

Joan returned to school with a heavy heart. She shared Ruth’s story during a class discussion on choices and consequences. The teacher listened carefully, then asked the class to reflect on what it means to lose a future before it begins.

(Adapted for examination purposes)

### Tasks

(a) Why do you think Ruth’s performance in school changed over time?

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(b) Rewrite the sentence: “*They say I belong here now,*” Ruth said. without changing its meaning.

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(c) Do you find Joan an admirable character? Give reasons for your answer.

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(d) What do you learn about society’s expectations from Ruth’s experience?

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(e) Describe the emotions you felt after reading the story.

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(f) If you were Ruth’s friend, how else would you support her in such a situation?

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## SECTION B

### Either

#### ITEM 3

Your community has recently experienced a rise in cases where children are left unattended for long hours, especially during school holidays. As the youth representative in your area, you’ve been invited to speak during a local radio talk show about the risks of neglecting children and the importance of responsible parenting.

Write what you will present during the radio talk show. Use **250–300 words**.

#### ITEM 4

A growing debate has emerged within your school community about the role of the internet in students’ lives. While many believe it has opened doors to learning, creativity, and global connection, others—especially conservative voices—argue that it has exposed students to harmful influences, especially through social media.

You have been selected to speak during a school assembly on this issue. Your task is to present a **balanced view** of the internet’s impact on students, acknowledging both

its benefits and drawbacks. However, your presentation should **emphasize its positive contributions**, especially in education, communication, and personal growth.

**Task:**

Write your presentation in about **250–300 words**, showing a clear understanding of the internet's influence on students. Use examples, reflections, and persuasive tone to support your points.

**END**