CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. 1   BACKGROUND

The Education Curriculum in Zambia is designed in such a way that there are many subjects taught at High School level. One of those subjects taught at High School is English language. All these subjects are examined. English language Examination is divided into two papers, namely; Paper One and Paper Two. Paper One involves testing composition skills; and Paper Two tests structure, writing skills and reading. Reading in this paper, comprises Summary and Reading Comprehension. Reading Comprehension usually takes the form of a reading passage, followed by a set of questions which pupils are required to answer after they have read the passage. Our concern area therefore, is the pupils' performance in reading comprehension among the grade twelve classes of the selected Schools in Kalomo.

Catherine Snow et al. (1998) say that reading is essential to success in our society. The ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement of an individual. Most people have not succeeded in education because of not reading well enough. Reading is not a straightforward process of pronouncing words from a page. It is a complex process of problem solving in which the reader works to make sense of a text not just from the words and sentences on the page but also from the ideas, memories, and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences. That is trying to go beyond the information given, making inferences, deductions and conclusions. This is what is known as reading with comprehension. Although at first glance reading may seem to be passive, solitary, and simple, it is in truth active, populated by a rich mix of voices and views—those of the author, of the reader, and of others the reader has heard, read about, and otherwise encountered throughout life. Reading therefore, occupies the primary position of the education system in Zambia.

However, over the years, it has been observed by several educationists with concern, that reading comprehension has proved to be one of the challenging sections of Paper Two leaving examination for many children writing their grade twelve examinations.

Examiners and teachers have expressed this concern at different fora in Zambia. An analysis of the Examinations Council of Zambia examiners report on the 2007 Joint School Certificate (SC) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) examinations also shows this weakness on the part of pupils in comprehension tasks. Reporting on the passage, the report indicates that more than fifty percent of the candidates scored below half the total mark in reading comprehension questions; and some of them scored between 0 and 5 marks out of 20. The 2008 Examination Council of Zambia, Examiners' report shows almost the same scenario.

This state of affairs is worrying. The assumption is that the problem emanates from the poor reading skills. Research globally also shows that only 5% of children learn to read effortlessly, while 20-30% read relatively easily once exposed to formal instruction. However an astounding sixty percent (60%) of children will face formidable challenges (www.michigan.gov/mde/), although about 50% of them are supposed to learn the skill eventually. Usually, the average number of pupils in one class in most of the schools in Zambia is forty. Given this number, it may become somewhat challenging to most of the teachers who are not patient enough to concentrate on a small number of slow learners. Once about half a class has mastered the skill of reading at initial stage, many teachers would opt to move ahead with only the few that are able to read. One would find that the rest that will not have known how to read would find it difficult to catch up with the rest of the class and probably remain behind throughout their entire school life. This implies that even at higher level of education, for instance, at High School level, the problem of reading difficulties will persist.

How children learn to read may have a bearing on their ability to read for understanding at a later stage like when they are in high School. Mastering the skill to read is one thing and reading with comprehension is another. Out of the 50% of pupils who are supposed to learn the skill eventually, only a few of them will be able to read with comprehension. Reading with understanding is one of the challenging

skills among most of the school-going children, yet it is one of the important skills for life. In fact, according to Lyon (2001: 1);

> research has consistently shown that if children do not learn to understand and use language, to read and write ….and to communicate their ideas and perspectives, their opportunities for a fulfilling and rewarding life are seriously compromised.

Research into this area therefore, is needed to try and find out the reasons for the poor performance among the grade twelve pupils in Reading Comprehension. The findings may, to some extent, provide us with necessary information that can be of great use to both educators and learners towards improving results and meaningful learning in Reading Comprehension. Reading Comprehension has proved to be one of the challenging sections of English paper two in the grade twelve final examination however, this scenario should not remain unchecked in the years to come.

1. 2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been observed over the years that many grade twelve pupils find reading comprehension tasks challenging and perform poorly. However, we do not know the reasons for the poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension in selected high schools in Kalomo District.

1. 3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study sought to investigate the reasons behind the poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension in the selected High Schools in Kalomo District.

1. 4   MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the reasons for the poor performance in reading comprehension among pupils in the selected High Schools in Kalomo District?

1. 5   RESEARCH SUB-QUESTIONS

1. What are the teachers' views towards reading comprehension component?

2. How do teachers plan and prepare for reading comprehension lessons?

3. How does a typical reading comprehension lesson proceed in grade 12 classes observe in the selected schools in Kalomo District?

4. How adequate and appropriate are the materials used for teaching reading comprehension to the pupils?

1. 6   GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The study's general objective was to investigate the reasons for poor performance in reading comprehension among grade twelve pupils in selected High Schools in Kalomo District.

1. 7   SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Find out the teachers' views towards reading comprehension component.

2. Find out how teachers plan and prepare for reading comprehension lessons.

3. Find out how a typical reading comprehension lesson proceeded in grade twelve classes observed in the selected schools in Kalomo District.

4. Find out about adequacy and appropriateness of the materials used for teaching reading   comprehension to the pupils.

1. 8   THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study may enlighten teachers on the importance of reading with comprehension. This in return may improve the performance of pupils in Reading Comprehension by mitigating the established reasons behind the poor performance. Once enlightened, subject teachers would adopt teaching methods that will contribute towards enhancing the performance of learners in Reading Comprehension.

1. 9   Delimitation of the Study

The study was carried out in Kalomo District in the Southern Province. There are six high schools in Kalomo District; and the following are the schools: Kalomo High School, Mwata Day High School, Namwianga Secondary School, Kabanga High School, Jonathan Sim High School, and Mubanga High School. Two schools were selected from the list due to time and financial constraints. However, the two schools chosen are the biggest in the District. They are the only biggest (super grade one) schools of the District.

1. 10   Limitation

The study may not be considered as a full representative of the whole province or country due to the limited sample. However, the findings of this study will provide an insight into the reasons for poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension.

It was a bit difficult for the researcher to be allotted time to do the research in each given day amidst tight school programs. Therefore, it was only possible to have a limited sample of only two schools. In respect of this, it was also necessary to reduce the number of reading comprehension questions for the tests to only eight instead of the usual ten given in grade twelve examinations. However, the questions asked

covered most of the skills that are usually examined in a grade twelve Reading Comprehension section.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.

2. 1   Teachers' views towards reading comprehension.

Reading is considered differently by people depending on which social background one comes from. On one hand, reading is so much a part of daily life for people living in literate communities that they hardly think about the purpose and process involved in it. This activity is taken for granted just as listening and speaking (Wallace, 1996). On the other hand, learners from environments where literacy is not so much part of their life, reading may be taken as something they have to learn just like any other subjects of study. This may pose a challenge for ascertaining whether socio-economic background has an impact to reading comprehension performance in pupils. Learners' attitude and feelings play an important role in learning when motivational problems affect reading proficiency (Deutsch, 2005).

Wren (2002) points out many wrong beliefs about the instructions of reading skill. One of the beliefs is that learning to read is a natural process. This has affected some teachers' attitudes. They feel learning to reading is a natural process and thus, do not teach it. He writes that it has often been suggested that children will learn to read if they are simply immersed in literacy rich environment and allowed to develop literacy skills in their own way. He further argues that learning to read is not only unnatural; it is one of the most unnatural things humans do. There is a difference between learning to read text and learning to understand a spoken language. Learning to understand speech is indeed a natural process but reading acquisition is not. Reading and writing are human inventions. If reading were natural, everybody would be doing it, and we would not have to worry about dealing with a 'literacy gap.'

Wren (2002) again writes that when a child is not developing reading skills along with peers, that situation should be of great concern. In the early grades, the literacy gap is "relatively easy to cross, and with diagnostic, focused instruction, effective teachers can help children who have poor literacy skills become children with rich literacy skills." However, if literacy instruction needs are not met early, the gap widens – "the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer" - bridging it requires "extensive, intensive, expensive, and frustrating remedial instruction" (ibid.). This background information Wren (2002) provides to us suggests that the problem of poor performance in reading comprehension among pupils in grade twelve may also be attributed to their literacy development in early grades.

A research that was conducted in the Middle East reviewed that teachers and parents claim that students lack the skills to cope with reading comprehension tests (Deutsch, 2004). English Second Language/English First Language students do not read effectively. Teachers and students report low and failing grades on reading comprehension tests. English Second Language/English First Language students speak English with greater ease than they read. Reading does not come as easily to them as speaking (ibid). They hear English more than they read it. Most Israeli students are very proficient in speaking English but less so in writing and reading. They do not read for pleasure even in their first language.

The same study reviewed that English Second Language/English First Language students spend a great deal of their free time watching television programmes and listening to music in English. When interviewed, parents of English Second Language/English First Language students expressed concern over their children's low marks in reading comprehension tests. Parents felt that because English is an important subject, (100% agreed that it is important), it should receive more attention. As much as 66% of the parents claimed the tests were very difficult for their children. When asked how they reacted when they found out their children had a reading test, 21% felt anxious and 17% suggested tutoring lessons, 28%

asked about the content of the test. Only 34% did not react. This clearly indicates parental involvement in English as a core subject. It also shows that parents are anxious about their children's success in English. They obviously feel that English is an important subject.

A review of students' test scores indicated that many English Second Language/English First Language students taking the English Second Language/English First Language reading comprehension tests were receiving low grades. Teachers' grade rosters showed that English Second Language/English First Language students received low marks when they were anxious. Teachers compared students' work before and after they learned to apply relaxation exercises and reading techniques. Grade rosters indicates an improvement in marks when students used stress relievers and relaxation exercises before reading comprehension tests

Prior background information about culture and world knowledge influenced English Second Language/English First Language students' understanding of the text. Many researchers stressed the importance of prior knowledge on students' comprehension of the text. Michael Pressley claimed, "Reading comprehension can be enhanced by developing reader's prior knowledge" (Pressley, 2000, p. 5). Ely and Lea Kozminsky examined "the relationship between general knowledge, skills in applying reading strategies, and reading comprehension for ninth-grade students at varying educational levels … in Israeli comprehensive schools" (2001, p. 187). McNamara and Kintsch also conducted an experiment on the "effects of prior knowledge and text coherence" (1996, p. 247). They concluded that prior knowledge was important in enhancing student understanding of the text.

There is a connection between first and second language reading habits. "Accomplished readers in their first language tend to use many of the same strategies that successful native English-language readers do—skimming, guessing in context, reading for the gist of a text—when they are reading in a second

language" (Druker, 2003, p. 1). Lawrence Jun Zhang's research showed that "readers' metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies [in their first language] had close links to their English First Language proficiency" (Zhnag, 2001, p. 268). Mokhtari and Sheorey developed an instrument that "measures adolescent and adult ESL students' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies" (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002, p. 1). They called the instrument "Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)". The writers believe that there is a strong research support for the positive relationship between students' metacognitive awareness of reading processes and their ability to read and excel academically" (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002, p. 1).

However, little research has been done in Zambia to reflect the above picture; and nothing also has been done in Kalomo District to investigate the performance of reading comprehension. Thus, the need for this kind of a study carried out.

2. 2   Teachers' planning and preparation for reading comprehension lessons.

The problems pupils have in a reading comprehension component can also be attributed to the way teachers teach and the extent to which they prepare for their lessons. Bruning (1999) argues that a classroom discourse is a significant factor in building knowledge and shaping cognitive growth. They further propose that discussions allow alternative perspectives and have open participation structures. This, according to Bruning (1999), provides learners with a forum for expression and feedback, also creating opportunities to extend knowledge and to develop reflective thought. They also suggested that the strategies for creating productive discussion groups include having the groups develop and modify their own social and interactive norms, teacher coaching before and after discussions, and teacher scaffolding during discussions. Such approaches, they said, enhance the possibility of knowledge construction and development of self-directed, strategic, and reflective approaches to learning.

Nuttall (1982) writes that the difficulty of a reading material also depends on the "amount of previous knowledge that the reader brings to the text." So the reading material may be difficult for a person who does not have prior knowledge of the material he or she is reading while the same material may be an easy one for someone else. Bruning at alia. (1999) adds on to say that in discourse, propositions take on a meaning in relation to one another, with references forward or backward affecting the meaning of individual elements. Reading almost always involves extended discourse sequences; comprehension and building semantic knowledge depend on readers' ability to tie discourse elements together. To do so, learners must recognize, at least implicitly, the structure of stories and texts whether a narrative (stories structured by a temporal sequence of events) or an expository (logical relations), for instance.

Therefore, it is important that prior knowledge is activated even before learners start reading the text, as part of Pre–reading activity. Prior knowledge activation is part of the teacher's teaching activities. Prior knowledge also has practical implications for lesson design and planning.

Goodman 1967, in Windowson (1979:174) says that,

> reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decision is made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses.

The emphasis Goodman (1967) makes is the wider experience that a reader is supposed to have in order to interact meaningfully with the text. He writes of the process of reading which involves the reader stopping and asking questions to both himself or herself and the text. Widdowson (1979:174) also observes that "…reading efficiency cannot be measured against the amount of information contained in a

text…. it depends on how much knowledge the reader brings to the text and how much he wishes to extract from It." It is therefore, important that the reading comprehension passage is brought as close as possible to the level of learners' experiences and this begins with teacher preparation.

Many scholars that have looked at reading comprehension came up with a number of findings that could be the causes of poor performance in reading comprehension. The main focus of a reading comprehension exercise is to test the understanding of the learner. Ellis and Tomlinson (1980), observe a number of factors that could be responsible for the pupils' failure of understanding of a given passage. Firstly, they observe that lack of familiarity with certain types of writing may pose a challenge to learners' understanding. They observed that pupils frequently experience some difficulty with the language of instructions which is usually not very precise to them.

The process of communication between the text and the reader is not an obvious one. To illustrate the difficulty learners find in understanding texts that are written in a language which is not familiar to them especially, Nuttall (1982), examines the relationship that exists between the writer and the reader first. She says the writer has the message in his/her mind to start with, which he/she wants another person to share. To make this possible he/she must first encode, in this case, in written form. Once this is done, then the message is available outside someone's mind as a text. Teacher planning and preparation is needed to help learners understand clearly the various situations depicted in the text. A teacher who has planned his/her lesson well should be able to select appropriate situations and examples for the purpose of teaching which will help learners follow the lesson with less or no difficulties at all.

Wren (2002) also adds on to say, the writer and the reader must have certain things in common, if communication between them is to take place. She says the two should share the same code, and they should also have in common the command of that language that is not too widely different. More interesting, Nuttall (1982) also observed that there should be some match between the presuppositions of the writer

and those of the reader. The two should share certain assumptions about the world and the way it works, she added. Nevertheless, naturally there always is a mismatch of some kind, Nuttall, says. The writer is always likely to leave unsaid something that he or she takes for granted, but the reader does not. In this case, the teacher acts as a bridge between the reader and the writer. He/she should try to identify the unsaid something which may make the readers' understanding of the whole text tasking, and then give some explanations to the learners. This is only possible when the teacher prepares himself/herself adequately for the lessons.

Dean (2000:50) also argues that what is clear about literacy is that one learns it in a social context. All texts are implicated by social relations. The meanings a reader constructs as he/she reads reflect who he/she is, what he/she has experienced, and what he/she knows about language and the world. Therefore, there are at least two things to consider. The social context of a reader's first language literacy use may be very remote from those of second or foreign language literacy use in the classroom (Wallace 1992:21). Dean (2000) also suggests that reading can only be improved in an atmosphere and ethos capable of addressing some of the many problems it constantly presents. Travels (1994) in Dean (2000), presents a number of questions he thinks should be addressed as reading are taught in schools. The following are the questions: what impact do we want reading to have on the lives of pupils we teach? What does it mean to be a reader? And what is involved in the process of reading? Therefore, a reading comprehension lesson well planned by the teacher should be able to address some of these questions and this may help make reading comprehension lessons more meaningful to the learners.

Ellis and Tomlinson (1980) also point out that giving wrong meanings to a lexical item should be another contributing factor of learners' failure to understanding the text. A learner who finds a passage too challenging for him or her is likely to find a lot of difficult lexical items in that particular text that the teacher may not have explained what they mean to them. And inability by the teacher to explain concepts

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to learners could be an indication of lack of preparation for that particular lesson. This, therefore, may cause a lack of understanding of the text by the reader. Nuttal (1982) also observes that the utterance or a word will in one sense clearly have the same meaning but in another sense the meaning may be different. The difference is in the distinction between what we say and why we say it.

2. 3   How a typical reading comprehension lesson proceed.

Sasson 2007 says, a reading lesson typically has three parts: pre, while, and post activities. Pre-reading activity is therefore, the first stage in the teaching of reading comprehension. Several research conducted before have shown us that a meaningful pre-reading activity is difficult to achieve if the teacher has not prepared for the lesson, yet it is such an important aspect of the learning activities which get students ready to read a text with understanding. Taking time to prepare students before they read has a considerable effect on their understanding of what they read and their enjoyment of the reading activity (Sasson, 2007). The effect on the pupils can either be positive or negative depending on how the teacher has handled the activity.

The logic behind activating prior knowledge is to build upon what students already know about a topic as a lead – in to the main reading task. The more teachers activate students' prior knowledge, the easier it will be for the students to retain new information from the main reading task (ibid.). Doff (1988:59) also adds on to say that as part of pre-reading, it is important that the teacher presents some of the words which will appear new to the pupils in the text before they read it. He further says that pupils can guess the meaning of the many remaining words which is an important activity for the development of their reading skills if given practice in this way.

Doff (1988) further proposes that the purpose of pre-reading activity is for the teacher to introduce the text to help the pupils have an idea of what to expect. And also to increase their interest and so make them want to read the text. This may either

be done by simply giving the pupils a sentence on what the text is all about or to have a short discussion, to start the pupils thinking about the topic.

The next stage in the teaching of reading comprehension is while-reading stage. Davies and Pearse (2000:93) propose that this stage helps learners understand the text. Doff (1988) equally echoes the same idea by suggesting that first pupils should read the text silently and try to understand it. After pupils have understood the general meaning, the teacher is supposed to go through the text with pupils again checking detailed comprehension and also focusing on important vocabulary. However, he strongly discourages the idea of making pupils at higher grades reading the text aloud. Doff (1988) argues that reading aloud can only be helpful at the earliest stages of reading (recognizing letters and sound); it can help students to make the connection between sound and spelling. For reading a text, reading aloud is not a good technique because only one pupil is active at a time; others are either not listening at all or are listening to a bad model, and attention is usually focused on pronunciation, not on understanding the text.

Davies and Pearse (2000) support this teaching procedure. They assert that it is important for the teacher to help their learners understand the text rather than just test their comprehension. In order to help pupils look closely at the main points of the text, and to help them understand, Doff(1988) argues that the teacher should ask a series of short, simple questions which help to breakdown the meaning of the text and make it easier to understand. The pupils therefore, should only give short answers and to be allowed to reproduce the text.

Finally, pupils should be in the position to discuss what they have read which is either interesting or new to them in the text (Davies and Pearse, 2000). This is known as post reading stage in teaching reading comprehension lessons. Pupils should be able to debate the topic of the text if it is controversial. The post reading stage should also provide the pupils with an opportunity to do the tasks on the language or

structure of the text. Ellis and Tomlinson (1980) also add on to say that pupils should be in the position to summarize the text, either orally or in writing at this stage.

2. 4 The appropriateness of the materials used for teaching reading comprehension to the pupils.

The UNESCO Strategic Framework for Implementation of Education for All paper presented in May 2005, acknowledges a number of strategic challenges which the Zambian Ministry of Education will need to deal with, notably: lack of textbooks. Compounded with this problem in Schools, is a high temptation on teachers of English language to just be getting any text available for the purpose of teaching reading comprehension. This may have its own hidden repercussions to the learners. Some of the likely ones are that passages picked in such a manner may either be too simple or too difficult for the pupils to read and make sense out of. The other problem however, could be that reading comprehension may not be given enough time for teaching and learning by the teachers due to the lack of materials in schools.

Nuttall (1982:21) suggests that the texts that should be given for children's practice for reading comprehension exercises should be authentic. They should be the sort of texts readers will want to read even for enjoyment purposes. She further says that if the needs of the learners in a given class are very varied, the practice material (text) ought to be varied too. Therefore, the stage at which authentic texts are introduced needs to be decided according to the learners' command of the language.

Obviously a text should be at the right level of difficulty for the learners. Nuttall (1982)'s concern here is with the linguistic difficulty; that is the combination of structural and lexical difficulty which she calls readability. She suggests that it is important that teachers assess their learners as soon as they begin to teach them. They would help teachers to find out how much language the learners know if he /she (teacher) were to select a suitable text. Of course she realizes the fact that no class is ever entirely homogeneous. In an ideal world, she says, every student would

be given material appropriate specifically to his own needs; but most of the teachers teach in circumstances this is not possible, so we shall assume that the teacher has to compromise by choosing material that suits most of his class.

Tomlinson (1980) further talks of the suitability of content to the learners. She observes that it may be difficult for a teacher to do a good work with a dull text. she observes that it is important for the teacher to look for the text that is going to interest the greatest number of learners, and that will not actually bore the others. At least a text that will do one or more of the following: tell the learners they don't already know, introduce them to new and relevant ideas, make them think about things they haven't thought about before, help them understand the way other people feel or think, and make them want to read for themselves. All in all Nuttall (1982) sums up by saying that a relevant text should be able to facilitate learning. It should be made use of to develop learners' competence as readers.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This research was qualitative but borrowed some quantitative techniques to analyze simple data of figures. For example, the information that answered the questions that had to do with: the quality of reading and teaching materials available in Schools; teaching and learning procedure; and the pupils' reading habits, among others adopted a qualitative approach for data analysis and data interpretation. However, the information that had to do with the numbers of teaching and learning materials available in Schools; the frequency of teaching reading comprehension, and test results was analyzed and interpreted using quantitative techniques.

3. 1   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design used is a case study. The researcher described in depth, the particulars of the selected high schools in Kalomo in order to shed light on the case. The study looked at only a case of School X and Schools Y in Kalomo District. A case study is useful in obtaining data on a particular case. This design provided a

description of the prevailing conditions in both schools concerning the performance of reading comprehension among teachers as well as the grade twelve pupils in the above mentioned schools.

3. 2   RESEARCH SITE(s)

The study was conducted in Kalomo District. Two High Schools in this District were selected for the purpose of the study. These are School X and School Y respectively. These two Schools were selected on the basis of size as well as the proximity to the main road for easy access. School X has the enrolment of one thousand and fifty (1050) pupils in regular classes alone. When the academic production unit classes are included, the number goes up by four hundred (400) pupils, giving us the total of one thousand four hundred and fifty (1450) pupils. School Y has the enrolment of eight hundred and fifty (850) pupils for regular classes, and seven hundred and twenty (720) pupils in the academic production unit classes, giving us the total of one thousand five hundred and seventy (1570). Both Schools X and Y are super grade one co-education High Schools. Furthermore, School X is a boarding high school and   Y is a day high school. Thus, the two Schools gave us the representative sample of both boys and girls the study needed.

3. 3   PILOT STUDY

During the first week of February, 2010, a pilot study was carried out at a different High School in the same Province and within Kalomo District. The school was chosen because it had similar characteristics with most of the schools in Kalomo District. Furthermore, it is a Boarding co-education High School hence it conveniently supplied both male and female pupil samples at one site.

All grade twelve pupils, all teachers of English language who taught grade twelve classes; Head of Department for Languages, and the two school administrators were sampled in order to determine the effectiveness of the research instruments. The purpose of the study was explained and instructions were also given. The ethical

considerations were taken care of by assuring the subjects of the confidentiality of their answers and that their participation in the study would not affect their school work. This gave the subjects freedom to participate in the study unreservedly. The procedures employed in the pilot study were used in the final study also.

The instruments used in the pilot study were the interview schedules designed for teachers and administrators, observation checklists prepared for teachers, Focus Group Discussion schedules for pupils, and tests which were given to pupils to write.

Observations on the research instruments were as follows: the test passage that was given to pupils was too difficult and seemed unfamiliar to them. As a result another test passage was prepared. Some questions on the interview schedules were misunderstood and some were irrelevant, as such we rephrased those questions and removed those others that were irrelevant. These corrected instruments were finally used for the study.

3. 4   Population

Study population consisted of all grade 12 pupils in Kalomo District and all teachers of English at grade 12 level in Kalomo District. Pupils and teachers of English were selected as the study population because the study was aimed at investigating the reasons for the poor performance of grade twelve pupils in Reading Comprehension.

3. 5   Informants

The Informants for this study included all the administrators of the Selected High Schools in Kalomo District who gave information on reading comprehension.

3. 6   SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The sample came from the two High Schools, twenty grade 12 pupils from School X and the other twenty from School Y. Some of the informants that were included were as follows: all teachers of English who taught grade twelve pupils, and three

administrators; the Head Master, the Deputy, and the Head of Department for Languages from the two High Schools mentioned above.

3. 6.1 Schools

The Schools selected for this study were School X and School Y. These Schools have been selected using a Purposive Sampling procedure because of the following reasons: The two Schools were selected on the basis of size as well as the proximity to the main road for easy access. Both Schools X and Y are super grade one co-education High Schools. Furthermore, one is a boarding high school and the other is a day high school. Thus, it was able to give us the representative sample of both boys and girls the study needed.

The two High Schools therefore, gave us a true representation of the grade twelve pupils in Kalomo District. The two Schools, being a super grade one High School in Kalomo District, hold the biggest population of grade twelve pupils in the District. One of them also being the only Day High School in Kalomo District holds a good number of grade twelve pupils that are not in boarding. The location of the two High Schools is another factor that the researcher considered. The two schools are located near to each other and also near to the main road. The researcher was therefore, able to access them with ease whenever he needed to.

3. 6.2 Classes

The classes where the pupils' sample came from were sampled using purposive method. All grade twelve classes were selected to be part of the study. It (Grade Twelve) was selected because it is the grade about to write national examinations.

3. 6.3 Pupils

The grade twelve pupils who participated in the study were sampled using a simple random procedure. Using this sampling procedure, the researcher could easily get the representative sample of the whole school. The researcher went through all the grade

twelve classes and picked four pupils at random from each class; two boys and two girls, in case of School Y where the grade twelve classes were five, to make a sample of twenty pupils. At School X, the same procedure was repeated. However, in some classes the researcher picked four pupils while in other classes only three pupils were picked to make a total number of twenty subjects that were needed for the study because there were six grade twelve classes. Altogether, the researcher had forty subjects; twenty from each school who participated in the study, the same subjects who wrote the test were also called to participate in the Focus Group Discussions.

The teachers who teach grade twelve classes were selected purposefully to be part of the population. They were also observed teaching reading comprehension.

3. 6.4 Informants

Administrators who directly supervised the teachers mentioned above for the two selected High Schools were also selected purposively. They gave the information on reading comprehension that contained the most characteristic, and representative attributes of the High Schools in Kalomo. (See Appendix B).

3. 7   Data Collection Procedures and Instruments.

3. 7.1 Tests.

The researcher developed, prepared and administered a test of the same reading comprehension passage with both multiple choice questions as well as the free response ones. Pupils were allowed to answer free response questions first, and then, the multiple choice ones. This was conducted to see if the results were going to be the same. Although this might have been seen to be testing a number of skills, but it was meant to do away with the element of guessing which could be possible in multiple choice questions alone. The researcher therefore, restricted himself to examining the reading comprehension skills. The two test types also helped to

determine which test type proved more of a challenge to pupils than the other. (See Appendix F).

The interview schedules were administered to the teachers who taught grade twelve classes on how they particularly found teaching reading comprehension lesson to grade twelve pupils and the challenges they find in teaching reading comprehension if any. The interview schedule had two sections. Section A sought to gather some personal details about teachers such as sex, qualification, experience and the other subjects of specialty. Section B elicited information on the knowledge of the topic teachers have, how they find teaching reading comprehension, and the procedure involved in teaching it.

Administrators also were interviewed to find out how their various positions impacted on the teaching and learning of reading comprehension in the school. Their interview schedule equally had two sections. The first section sought to capture data on personal details as it was with teacher interview schedule. The second section elicited data of how each administrator facilitated the teaching or learning of reading comprehension in the school. It also aimed to find out if at all he or she at any point in time had paid any particular attention to reading with comprehension as an important skill in the process of learning in the school (Appendix A).

3. 7.2 Focus group discussion schedules

Focus group discussion groups of about five to six pupils each were formed for the purpose of discussing issues pertaining to reading comprehension. Pupils were sampled randomly from all grade twelve classes. They were further, urged to feel free and the purpose of the research was explained to them. That gave them freedom to participate in the discussion freely and actively. Discussions were conducted with pupils to find out how reading comprehension lessons were taught and how they liked it to be taught. Further, the discussion endeavored to find out how pupils found

learning reading comprehension. Responses were given that will help in establishing the performance of pupils in reading comprehension. (See Appendix C).

3. 7.3   Observations

The other method the researcher used to capture data was lesson observation. It was meant to find out how Reading Comprehension lessons were taught. Teachers were observed teaching reading comprehension lessons; and pupils' participation during the lessons was taken note of. (See Appendix D).

3. 7.4   Documents review

The researcher also checked through both the teachers' records of work, schemes of work, reading comprehension lesson plans and pupils' exercise books. A physical checking of these documents was helpful to reveal some of the information that respondents might not have been in the position to reveal. (See Appendix E).

3. 8   DATA PREPARATION/ FORMATING.

Data preparation involved classifying data into categories and also selecting a representative sample of respondent's verbatim statements indicating their responses to questions asked. These responses were coded and grouped in form of tables, and using percentages on a wide range of variables in investigating the performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension in Kalomo District by establishing the emerging themes.

3. 9   DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis of simple figures involved counting frequencies of occurrences and calculating percentages. Data analysis also involved scrutinizing the respondents' statements that was coded as emerging themes of the study. Thereafter, conclusions were made after carefully analyzing, evaluating and interpreting the data which was gathered in line with the main question of the study.

3. 10   Validity of Data

The validity of data depended on triangulation of the research methods. Triangulation of research methods included tests, interviews, observations, focus group discussions, document review, literature review and pilot study. The study was conducted in both natural settings of participants and created settings.

The findings from literature review informed our research in the process of triangulation of the data in order to establish validity and reliability of the study. The pilot study was used to test the suitability of the instruments and procedure for collecting and analyzing data.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings of the study on the poor performance and reasons for it for grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension in selected high schools of Kalomo District of Southern Province in Zambia. The findings are presented in five major sections according to the five objectives used in this study. The study's general objective was to investigate the reasons for the poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension. In addition, the study found out the teachers' attitudes towards reading comprehension; how teachers planned and prepared for reading comprehension lessons; how a typical reading comprehension lesson proceeded in grade twelve classes observed in the selected schools in Kalomo District; and the appropriateness of the materials used for teaching reading comprehension to the pupils.

As a way of investigating and confirming the poor performance of pupils in reading comprehension, we administered two reading comprehension tests to the pupils; the multiple choice one and a free response test. Further, we interviewed the pupils, administrators, and teachers in order to get their views on the performance.

Furthermore, we had an opportunity to observe the reading comprehension lessons to give us an idea of how a reading comprehension lesson is taught. Finally, Documents were also reviewed to ascertain their adequacy and appropriancy to the pupils.

4. 1   Findings of the Study.

The first section of our presentation brings findings from the two tests conducted, starting with the multiple choices one and then the free response test results follows. Later, the findings from the interviews conducted with the administrators and teachers are also presented. Finally, the findings from the observed lessons and document reviews are presented if they have some information to answer the objective of the study presented under each heading.

4. 1.1   Test Results

With regards to reading comprehension test administered to the pupils, Table 1 below shows that most pupils in the two schools obtained a mark below 50%. Only one pupil from each school scored above 50%. At School X, only two out of the total of twenty pupils who wrote the test got 40%(passing mark) and above, and eighteen of them got below 40%. Only four pupils at School Y got 40% and above and sixteen of them got below 40%. The above data shows that more pupils from both schools failed the multiple choices test than those who passed it. These results confirm the position reported in other previous studies as reported in Chapter Two of this report.

Table 1: Test results on multiple choices Questions - Reading comprehension

Total scores	Name of High School		Total
	X	**Y**	
0	1 (5.0%)	4 (20.0%)	5 (12.5%)
1	3 (15.0%)	5 (25.0%)	8 (20.0%)
2	6 (30.0%)	3 (15.0%)	9 (22.5%)
3	8 (40.0%)	4 (20.0%)	12 (30.0%)
4	1 (5.0%)	3 (15.0%)	4 (10.0%)
5	-	-	-
6	1 (5.0%)	1 (5.0%)	2 (5.0%)
7	-	-	-
8	-	-	-

School administrators at School X and School Y were asked to indicate whether they were content with the results produced by the languages department. The Heads of Department at both Schools indicated that the performance in terms of the pass rate was less than 95% while one administrator for School X was of the view that it was less than 90%; and the other administrator for School Y said the performance was at 95%. Table 3 below shows the rest of the responses.

Table 2: Results produced by the languages department

Position of respondent	Name of High schools	
	X	**Y**
Head of Department	<95%	<95%
Deputy Head teacher	<90%	95
Head teacher	98%	<90

Teachers were asked to indicate pupils' performance in reading comprehension in their respective schools. Table 4 below shows their responses. The table shows that most teachers were of the view that pupils' performance was both average and poor.

Table 3: Teachers' responses on pupils' performance in reading comprehension.

Pupil Performance	Name of High School			
	X		**Y**	
	Male	female	male	female
Good	-	1	-	-
Average	2	-	1	1
Poor	1	1	2	-

The table shows the performance of pupils in Reading Comprehension as viewed by individual teachers.

4. 2 Teachers' Attitudes towards reading comprehension.

Teaching reading comprehension received a variety of responses from the teachers from both schools (Y and X Schools) respectively. On one hand, two teachers from School Y said teaching reading is difficult, and the other two of the four that were interviewed said teaching reading comprehension was easy. On the other hand, three teachers from School X said teaching reading comprehension was difficult, only one teacher said teaching reading comprehension was easy, and the other teacher did not respond.

Table 4: Teachers' attitudes towards reading comprehension.

Teachers' Responses on Teaching Reading Comprehension	Name of High School	
	X	**Y**
	NO. of Teachers	**NO. of Teachers**
Difficult	3	2
Easy	1	2

4. 2.1 Teachers' responses on whether they followed the teaching procedures

Teachers were asked to say something as to whether they followed the teaching procedure for reading comprehension they prescribed. All the teachers interviewed at School Y said they followed the procedure. However, only one teacher at School X said he followed the procedure. Three teachers out of the five that were interviewed said they only followed the procedure sometimes depending on the length of the passage. And one did not know whether s/he followed the teaching reading comprehension procedure or not.

4. 2.2 Pupils' reading culture as perceived by teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate what they perceived as pupils' reading culture. The respondents from both schools said that the reading culture among pupils was poor, except for one respondent from School X who said the reading culture was average.

4. 2.3 Teachers' responses on whether pupils utilized the library

Further the teachers in the study were also asked to indicate whether the pupils utilized the library. The study showed that all the respondents said pupils do not utilize the library, except for one respondent from School X who said pupils do utilize the library.

4. 2.4 Teachers' responses on whether the school libraries are well stocked

As regards whether the library is well stocked or not, the teachers under study reported the following: all the respondents from both schools said their libraries were not well stocked.

4. 3 Teachers' planning and preparation for reading comprehension lessons.

Administrators were asked to indicate the reasons for disparities in performance in the languages department. On one hand, the Head of department at School X attributed this to many reasons while the Head teacher, cited lack of planning by some teachers. On the other hand, the Depute Head Teacher from School Y was of the view that lack of textbooks was the cause and the selection criteria for grade tens. Documents were revealed at departmental level, and it was found that many teachers were not up to date with their lesson plan preparations and records of work. Furthermore, lessons observed also showed that many teachers observed had not planned their lessons before coming to teach. When they were asked to hand in their lesson plans to the researcher after teaching, two teachers observed at School Y handed over their lesson plans which they prepared just a few minutes before the

lessons and no one out of the six observed handed over the lesson plans after teaching from School X.

4. 3.1 Frequency at which teachers submitted their schemes and records of work

The school administrators were further asked to indicate how often their teachers submitted the schemes and records of work to their offices. Their responses are shown in Table 6 below. The table shows that at School Y all the respondents said that teachers submitted schemes and records of work fortnightly. However, School Y some administrators indicated that teachers submitted the schemes and records of work three times a term but the other administrator said schemes and records of work were submitted fortnightly.

Table 5: Frequency at which schemes and records of work are submitted

Position of respondent	Name of High school	
	X	Y
Head of Department	Fortnightly	Fortnightly
Deputy Head teacher	Three times a term	Fortnightly
Head teacher	Three times a term	Fortnightly

4. 3.2 Administrators' responses on whether teachers have been consistent in submission of the schemes and records of work

Administrators were asked to indicate whether the submission of the schemes and records of work was consistent. All the responses from both schools in the study indicated that teachers had been consistent in submitting of the records of work for checking to the administators.

4. 3.3 Administrators' responses on whether records indicate that teachers taught all the language skills

Table 6: Administrators' responses on whether teachers taught all the language skills.

	School X			School Y		
	Yes	No	Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure
Head Teacher			✔			✔
Depute Head Teacher			✔	✔		
Head of Department	✔				✔	

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the teachers in their respective schools taught all the language skills they were supposed to be teaching. The study revealed that at both schools, some administrators were not sure whether all four language skills were taught while others who were directly in charge of the languages departments observed that all the language skills were being taught.

4. 3.4 Administrators' responses on whether they had ever observed a comprehension lesson

School Administrators were asked to show whether they had ever observed a comprehension lesson. . The study revealed that at both schools, some administrators had not observed any reading comprehension lesson while others who are directly in charge of the languages departments had observed one or more reading comprehension lessons. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to mention how well the teachers taught the reading comprehension skill. At both schools, the responses showed that the teaching was poor. They attributed this to the following reasons:

      i.   Inadequate teaching and learning materials.

      ii.   Pupils take a lot of time to grasp the concepts in reading comprehension passages.

     iii.   Teachers usually do not follow the teaching procedures for teaching reading comprehension lessons.

4. 3.5 Responses on whether the department has enough teaching and learning materials

Table 7: Responses on availability of Teaching and Learning materials.

Teachers' Responses on availability of materials	School X		School Y	
	Enough	Not Enough	Enough	Not Enough
Teacher A	✔		✔	
Teacher B	✔		✔	
Teacher C	✔		✔	
Teacher D	✔		✔	
Teacher E	✔		✔	
Administrator A	✔		✔	
Administrator B	✔			✔
Administrator C	✔		✔	

As regards teaching and learning materials, all the respondents except one administrator for School X said they had enough teaching and learning materials.

4. 3.6 Support from the administration

The Administrators were asked to say whether they were supportive to the languages department for it to acquire the needed books in their respective schools. The study showed that all the respondents said 'yes' implying that they gave the needed support to the department.

4. 3.7 How pupils find reading comprehension lessons

Pupils were asked to indicate how they found reading comprehension lessons. At least, between six to eight out of the ten pupils talked to from each focus group discussion from both School find reading comprehension difficult and boring. They do not take reading as part of their learning process. The findings show that they only read at times probably when they have nothing else to do. The findings also showed that pupils at times do not understand what they read because many passages seem to be unfamiliar and too long for them. Thus they do not find reading comprehension lessons enjoyable most of the times. They said it was boring to them.

Focus group discussions were conducted at both Schools with grade twelve pupils in order to get their views on reading comprehension. When pupils were asked how they found reading comprehension lessons, between six to eight out of ten pupils from each focus group said reading comprehension lessons were boring and difficult for them.

4. 3.8 Reasons given by pupils for the challenge they face in reading comprehension.

The range of five to seven pupils from the focus groups said they found reading comprehension questions too difficult to answer especially multiple choice questions. They further said that they found a lot of new words in the passages and the passages are always too long for them.

4. 3.9   Teachers' responses on how long they have worked in the School.

Table 8: Teachers' teaching experiences in the school

Teaching Experience (in years).	Name of High School			
	X		Y	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1 – 5	-	2	3	1
6 – 10	2	-	-	-
11 – 15	1	-	-	-

All the teachers fall under the teaching experience of 1 – 5 years at School Y while at School X many are found within the teaching experience of 1 – 10 years. Only one teacher is within teaching experience range of 11 – 15 years.

4. 3.10 Teachers' responses on the highest Qualification each teacher has.

Table 9: Academic qualifications

Qualification	Name of High School			
	X		Y	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Diploma	3	2	2	1
Degree	-	-	1	-

Table 8 shows that many teachers of English language who participated in the study in both schools are Diploma holders except at School Y where only one Degree holder was part of the study.

4. 3.11 Frequency of teaching reading comprehension

Teachers were asked to indicate how regularly reading comprehension was taught in their respective schools and the following picture emerged. One teacher at School X said reading comprehension was taught once after two weeks while the other two said they teach reading comprehension once in a week. The fourth teacher said s/he taught reading comprehension twice in a week. At School Y, all the teachers who were interviewed said reading comprehension was taught once a week.

Table 10: Frequency of teaching reading comprehension

Teachers' Responses	Name of High school	
	X	Y
Once a week	2	5
Twice a week	1	
Once after two weeks	1	

4. 3.12 Measures taken by teachers to improve pupils' reading culture

The teachers under study were asked to indicate what they do to the pupils that are not interested in reading in order to improve their reading culture. Their responses were as follows: All the teachers from both schools said they encouraged pupils to read except two teachers from School Y that did not respond. Some could allocate a period for library during their lessons while others lent their personal novels to pupils to read.

4. 4   How a reading comprehension lesson proceeded in grade 12 classes observed in the selected schools in Kalomo District.

The findings of the lesson observations were that most of the teachers spent more time during the pre- reading activities than it is necessary explaining the meanings of new words picked out of the passage by the teacher. In any case, pre-reading activity is for the teacher to introduce the text to help the pupils have an idea of what to expect. And also to increase their interest and so make them want to read the text. This may either be done by simply giving the pupils a sentence on what the text is all about or to have a short discussion, to start the pupils thinking about the topic.

When it came to reading the passage, the majority of the teachers observed laid more stress on reading aloud than reading silently. The finding on reading was that there was usually just a few minutes left for silent reading. This resulted in a temptation for pupils not to read the passages silently instead most of them just went straight into answering the exercises when they were told to read the passages silently in a given number of minutes. This was the case for the four other teachers in both Schools where the study was conducted. This stage is supposed to help learners understand the text. Pupils should first read the text silently and try to get the idea of the whole story. After they have understood the general meaning, the teacher is supposed to go through the text with pupils again checking detailed comprehension and also focusing on important vocabulary. The teacher should ask a series of short, simple questions which help to breakdown the meaning of the text and make it easier to understand. The pupils therefore, should only give short answers and to be allowed to reproduce the text. Table 9 below, shows the allocation of minutes for the lessons observed. Finally, pupils should be in the position to discuss what they have read which is either interesting or new to them in the text during the post reading stage.

Table 11: Time spent during the 80 minutes reading comprehension lesson.

School X	Pre- reading	Reading + answering Qtns	Post- reading
Teacher A	40 minutes	30 minutes	10 minutes
Teacher B	30 minutes	40 minutes	10 minutes
Teacher C	20 minutes	40 minutes	20 minutes
Teacher D	20 minutes	30 minutes	30 minutes
Teacher E	30 minutes	30 minutes	20 minutes
Teacher F	30 minutes	35 minutes	15 minutes
School Y	**Pre- reading**	**Reading + answering Qtns**	**Post- reading**
Teacher A	40 minutes	20 minutes	20 minutes
Teacher B	30 minutes	30 minutes	20 minutes

4. 4.1 Teaching procedures used in teaching reading comprehension.

As regards the procedures used in reading comprehension, the study showed that the teaching procedures described by all the teachers at School Y are more biased to teaching reading comprehension than testing it. At School X also, all the teachers gave the teaching procedure for reading comprehension rather than for testing it. However, one teacher's teaching procedure did not allow pupils to read the passage silently and comprehend the information there in.

However, the opposite was true for both Schools when teachers were observed teaching reading comprehension. The study found out from interviews that many teachers knew how reading comprehension is supposed to be taught but they did not practice what they knew in reality because pupils seemed uncooperative.

However, time allocation to pre- reading, while reading and post reading activities varied depending on individual teachers, as Table 10 above shows. The observation was that more time was spent by the majority of the teachers observed in the introduction of the lesson. This, later, affected both the actual reading activity and the concluding part of the lessons because there were just a few minutes left for each of them. Therefore, the majority of the teachers either did not conclude their lessons or they did it hurriedly. This affected pupils negatively because they could neither ask questions at the end of their lessons nor summarize their work properly.

4. 5   Availability and appropriateness of the materials used for teaching reading comprehension to the pupils.

The between seven to ten pupils interviewed from the focus groups said they had enough learning materials in form of text books. Of the ten teacher respondents in the study from both schools, five teachers said that their school had enough and relevant books for teaching pupils reading comprehension, and four said the books were enough but not relevant for teaching pupils reading comprehension, and only one respondent said books were not enough. Of all the administrators interviewed from both schools , only one said books were not enough and the rest said they had enough and relevant materials for teaching reading comprehension, as the table below shows.

Table 12: Availability and appropriateness of the teaching materials for reading comprehension to the pupils.

RESPONDE–NTS	SCHOOL X			SCHOOL Y		
	Enough + Relevant	Enough +Not Relevant	Not Enough	Enough + Relevant	Enough + Not Relevant	Not Enough
Teachers	3	1	1	2	3	-
Pupils	9	1	2	8	3	1
Administra'	3	-	-	2	-	1

4. 5.1 Pupils' responses on whether they read story books

Almost all the pupils interviewed said they read story books. However, about seven pupils form each focus group discussion from both schools said they only read story books when they were bored and had nothing else to do. The average number of books read by pupils during that particular term varied. Each pupil interviewed read an average of six to from both schools said only one book. And between one to three out of the ten pupils talked to had not finished a single book during that first half of the term as the table below shows.

Table 13: Pupils' responses on whether pupils read story books

Schools X + Y	Read Books	When Bored	No. of Books Read	
			One + Above	Not finished Any.
No. of Pupils	All	15	12	5

4. 5.2 Teachers' responses on whether pupils understand what they read or not.

Of the four teacher respondents at School Y, only one said some pupils understood what they read. The rest said pupils did not actually understand what they read. At School X only one teacher said a bigger percentage of pupils understood what they read, others either said they did not understand or decided not to comment anything.

Table 14: Teacher interview responses on whether pupils understand what they read or not

SCHOOLS	RESPONSES	RESPONDENTS
X	understand	1
	Not understand	4
Y	understand	1
	Not understand	3

4. 5.3 Pupil Responses on whether they understand the reading comprehension passages

One pupil from each school said they understood sometimes depending on the type of the passage. Four pupils from School X and three from School Y said they did not understand what they read. Those who did not understand attributed their failure of understanding to a lot of new words they meet in the passages and that the contents of some passages are not familiar to them. They further said settings of the stories in the reading comprehension passages were foreign, and the level of the language used was above their comprehension.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the findings presented in chapter four displayed under the headings of the objectives of the study. Therefore, the discussion will also follow the same order.

5. 1   Teachers' attitudes towards reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension tests were administered to the pupils; and the performance of pupils was generally poor. The results were in agreement with Deutsch (2004)'s comment on the general performance of pupils in reading comprehension tasks regardless of the types of questions involved to test reading comprehension.

Deutsch (2004) clearly stated that teachers and students report low and failing grades on reading comprehension tests. He therefore, attributed the poor performance to the fact that English Second Language/English First Language students do not read effectively. His observation was that English Second Language/English First Language students speak English with greater ease than they read. Reading does not come as easily to them as speaking, he said (ibid). Reading is considered differently by people depending on which social background one comes from. It is so much a part of daily life for people living in literate communities that they hardly think about the purpose and process involved in it. This activity is taken for granted just as listening and speaking (Wallace, 1996).

The findings of the study showed that the reading culture among pupils was poor. Although the schools selected for the study had libraries which were supposed to be fully utilized by pupils. The findings were that the libraries were not fully utilized by the pupils. That situation would suggest that there was no one to monitor whether the library served the intended purpose.

The other reason could be the issue of teachers not supervising pupils to read as Wren (2002) points out. Wren (2002) points out many wrong beliefs about

instructions of the reading skill. One of the beliefs is that learning to read is a natural process. He writes that it has often been suggested that children will learn to read if they are simply immersed in literacy rich environment and allowed to develop literacy skills in their own way. Such believes could be responsible for instilling negative attitudes in most teachers who fail to supervise pupils to read. Nuttall (1982) writes that the difficulty of a reading material also depends on the "amount of previous knowledge that the reader brings to the text." This was observed during lesson observations as presented above. Many pupils could not cooperate as teachers taught Reading Comprehension lessons. This probably could be because of the reading material being slightly above their comprehension level. So the reading material may be difficult for a person who does not have prior knowledge of the material he or she is reading while the same material may be an easy one for someone else. It could therefore, be the reason why pupils perform poorly in reading comprehension.

It was further observed that the libraries were not well stocked; most of the reading materials found were that which are donated by some foreign countries. The picture portrayed here is that there seemed to be inadequate relevant reading materials for pupils in Schools. Thus, most lack the required exposure to reading. Wren (2002) again writes that when a child is not developing reading skills along with peers, that situation should be of great concern. Unfortunately, Schools seemed to concentrate on buying only text books and not other reading materials like novels which were equally important for meaningful learning to take place in any given learning institution.

The Study established that the quality of the results in English Language in Grade 12 examinations was not all that impressive for both schools. This simply meant that many pupils just barely passed their English language examinations with credits; and only a few were able to get merits and distinctions.

The views of teachers on pupils' performance in reading comprehension in their respective schools showed that the performance was both average and poor. The observation that teachers made about the performance of pupils in reading comprehension clearly showed that the performance in reading comprehension is not good at all.

Finally, the views collected during the study revealed that teachers' attitudes towards both reading comprehension was negative in that they did not really expect the best to come out of their pupils' results. The data shows that the performance of pupils in reading comprehension was mainly poor because of the fact that either teachers or pupils had not played their part.

5. 2   Teachers' planning and preparations for reading comprehension lessons.

Pupils' performance in English Language in general as captioned in the findings of the interview with the administrators was 90% and above. The performance to me and probably anyone else was an excellent one. However, one would wonder to read one of the reasons one respondent gave for such kind of performance. Text books are not usually enough to support meaningful learning as indicated in the findings of this study. Reading Comprehension is one of the Language skills which can only be taught effectively if there are enough teaching and learning materials. Furthermore, even other reading materials are supposed to be made available for pupils to be reading at all times. Many researchers stressed the importance of prior knowledge on students' comprehension of the text.

Michael Pressley claimed, "Reading comprehension can be enhanced by developing reader's prior knowledge" (Pressley, 2000, p. 5). This point actually reemphases the issue of teacher preparedness when going to teach reading comprehension. Pre-reading and while reading activities are usually done poorly by most of the teachers.this due to the fact that they rarely prepare for their lessons. That is the reason why it reported that in the findings that most of the teaching done by many

teachers was vocabulary explanation. Post reading activities and conclusions are equally usually poorly done. This is due to lack of proper planning of lessons before actually going to teach. Many teachers were observed teaching without lesson plans. It was clear in the findings of the study that one could not teach reading comprehension lesson without preparing himself or herself adequately.

It was further revealed that only one teacher availed his or her file to be checked by the researcher at School X and two at School Y out of five that were asked to avail their files from each school. This equally suggested lack of preparedness on the part of teachers. Although some findings showed that teachers handed in their records of work to their supervisors for checking consistently, lesson observations in fact revealed that many teachers observed did not prepare their lessons before going to teach. Some teachers were observed reading the comprehension passages in class also after they had told the pupils to read silently. Brunning at al. (1999) says that in discourse, propositions take on a meaning in relation to one another, with references forward or backward affecting the meaning of individual elements. Reading almost always involves extended discourse sequences; comprehension and building semantic knowledge depend on readers' ability to tie discourse elements together. A teacher needs enough time alone as he/she prepares to identify the individual elements of the discourse to be taught. This can not be done in a class situation while the teacher is teaching. Otherwise meaningful teaching of reading can not take place if the teacher has not prepared his or her lesson well in advance.

In addition, some teachers when they were asked to give their lesson plans to the researcher for the lessons observed, some requested for time to write them, meaning that they went to teach without lesson plans. Therefore, the willingness to submit the files to the supervisors indicated that teachers write their schemes and records of work on one hand. The unwillingness to avail the files to the researcher as indicated above may on the other hand; imply the absence of records of work because they were requested to avail their files at the time when teachers did not expect. However,

there is always a calendar when supervisors needed to see teachers' working files and teachers probably found it easy to prepare their files a day or two before they handed them over for checking.

Goodman (1967) emphases the wider experience that a reader is supposed to have in order to interact meaningfully with the text. He writes of the process of reading which involves the reader stopping and asking questions to both himself or herself and the text. As indicated above Goodman (1967) highlights what should be involved in reading comprehension teaching and learning. The findings of the study indicated that reading comprehension is one of the skills usually avoided to be taught by many teachers. In many occasions pupils were just instructed to read the reading comprehension passages on their own and to answer the exercise that followed. Ellis and Tomlinson (1980:144), observed that the process of communication between the text and the reader is not an obvious one. There is need for teachers to explain many elements of the passage to the learners. The main focus of a reading comprehension exercise is to test the understanding of the learner. Now if the teaching is not done properly, then the understanding of the passage on the part of the pupil may become an uphill task.

Pupils found reading comprehension lessons boring and difficult to handle. This may imply that pupils neither enjoyed nor understood easily the reading comprehension stories. This ultimately affected their rate of comprehension of the whole passage and thus affecting the way they (pupils) perceived the reading comprehension exercises that followed the reading comprehension passages. Nuttall (1982) writes that the difficulty of a reading material also depends on the "amount of previous knowledge that the reader brings to the text." So the reading material may be difficult for a person who does not have prior knowledge of the material he or she is reading while the same material may be an easy one for someone else. It is therefore, important that the teacher activates the prior knowledge of a learner as he teaches. In

order for a teacher to do that he or she needs to prepare adequately by reading through well in advance and identify the teaching points.

Pupils found reading comprehension questions difficult and tricky to answer especially multiple choices ones. The prominent reasons they gave for the challenges pupils found in reading comprehension questions were that they found a lot of new words in the passages and the passages were always too long. This may either mean that the contents of such passages were not familiar to the pupils in that the knowledge pupils brought with them to help them interpret what they read was not adequate or the language used in the passages was quite advanced for them.

The findings of the study further indicated that pupils usually read story books when they were bored and had nothing else to do. This to me may seem to suggest that although there are deliberate programs put in schools meant to give pupils time to read, there is no effort made to find out what they read and how they read what they read. Therefore, it is easy for a pupil to underrate the importance of story books reading; and each time they find time to read they would rather read notes for their subjects of study because after all that is where they were directly examined on. Pupils also need to be prepared to read. Teachers are supposed to motivate their pupils to be reading. This can be done by promoting clubs and subjects that have to do with reading particularly to pupils, for instance debate and press clubs, and Literature respectively.

The findings of the study further showed that teaching reading comprehension was a challenging task to many teachers. The learner should expected everything from the teacher. Brunning et alia. (1999) talks of a classroom as a platform for knowledge construction. This means that both the teacher and the learners should be actively involved in the learning process.

5. 3   How a reading comprehension lesson proceeded in grade 12 classes in the selected schools in Kalomo District

To start with, the teaching procedure proposed above is questionable because pupils need to be put in the right perspective before reading the passage silently. This is normally done through what is known as pre reading activity which the teacher initiates. If this activity is not well handled and the passage is not familiar to the learners, pupils are likely to lose interest in reading and comprehension may not be achieved. The second step in the teaching procedure given above, explaining of vocabulary, can be an opportunity for a teacher to give the context of the passage and some local situations which is similar to what is depicted in the passage. Unfortunately, this did not come out in the lessons that were observed.

Teachers usually give the dictionary meanings of the new words that are found in the passages instead of contextualizing the meanings. In addition, explaining of new vocabulary items took an average of thirty minutes for most of the lessons as indicated in the findings above. Therefore, they (pupils) ended up going straight into answering the reading comprehension questions given as an exercise following the passage. All this emanates from poor time management on the part of the teacher. As one teacher from School X confirms in his response, "Teaching reading comprehension is taxing. It is time consuming because pupils don't understand easily."

However, the arguments above do not suggest that teachers do not know what teaching reading comprehension involves. Teachers' problem seem to be coming from the linguistic level of the reading comprehension passages versus the level of pupils' comprehending powers. In an interview with one of the teachers at School X when she was asked whether she follows the reading comprehension teaching procedure, the teacher said, "I don't follow it. How to teach depends on the length of the passage." Brunning et alia. (1999) states that

"A classroom is a forum for expression and feedbacks, also creating opportunities to extend knowledge and to develop reflective thought, having the groups develop and modify their own social and interactive norms, teacher coaching before and after discussions, and teacher scaffolding during discussions. Such approaches they said enhance the possibility of knowledge construction and development of self-directed, strategic, reflective approaches to learning."

The writer of the quotation above proposes a learner centred approach which can to some greater extent be helpful in the teaching of reading comprehension.

Pre-reading activity is a way of activating prior knowledge of a learner before she/he starts reading the text. Prior knowledge activation is part of the teacher's teaching activities. Research showed us that a meaningful pre-reading activity was difficult to achieve if the teacher had not prepared for the lesson. Yet it is such an important aspect of the learning activities which get students ready to read a text. Taking time to prepare students before they read can have a considerable effect on their understanding of what they read and their enjoyment of the reading activity, Sasson (2007) observed.

The study further revealed that many teachers spent more time during this stage explaining vocabulary. This activity was mainly taken by many teachers as the only teaching stage. However, Doff (1988) says that the purpose of pre-reading activity is for the teacher to introduce the text to help the pupils have an idea of what to expect. And also to increase their interest and so make them want to read the text. This he said, may either be done by simply giving the pupils a sentence on what the text is all about or to have a short discussion, to start the pupils thinking about the topic.

The next stage in the teaching of reading comprehension is while-reading stage. Davies and Pearse (2000:93) propose that this stage helps learners understand the text. Doff (1988) equally echoes the same idea by suggesting that first pupils should

read the text silently and try to understand it. After pupils have understood the general meaning, the teacher is supposed to go through the text with pupils again checking detailed comprehension and also focusing on important vocabulary. However, the study found that many teachers emphasized reading aloud, and only a few minutes were usually left by most teachers that were observed for this activity. For instance, one teacher at School Y told pupils to go through the passage silently in five minutes after which they were supposed to answer the questions that followed the passage. At this stage pupils get busy answering the comprehension exercise instead of reading and trying to understand the passage.

The final stage in the teaching of reading comprehension is known as post reading. During this stage Davies and Pearse (2000), propose that pupils should be in the position to discuss what they have read which they found interesting or new in the text. They also should be able to debate the topic of the text if it is controversial. What was found in the study is that at this stage the teacher marked the exercise silently without explaining to the pupil why she/he marked a certain answer wrong. In most of the lessons observed the teacher hardly finished marking before the lesson. What this means is that the majority of the teachers at both Schools observed either did the post reading activities poorly or did it hurriedly. This was as a result of poor time management on the part of the teachers and this had a negative impact on reading comprehension performance of learners.

The findings of the lesson observations indicated that many teachers that were observed never followed the teaching procedures. The question that one would ask herself/himself was that if the teachers did not follow the reading comprehension teaching procedure, then how did they teach reading comprehension to pupils? The findings actually showed that many teachers did not teach reading comprehension instead they tested it. Many of the teachers observed teaching in both schools started their lessons by giving dictionary meanings of new words found in the passage. It

can be appropriate at this stage to suggest that what made teachers take explaining of new words as their pre reading activity could be the lack of preparation.

Having examined the teaching of reading comprehension using the information collected in the study, it would be right at this stage to suggest that while teachers are aware of how reading comprehension should be taught, they actually did not really teach reading comprehension. It explains the kind of performance those schools were obtaining in reading comprehension which subsequently affected the performance of English Language paper as a whole. In fact reading being the way it is may not only end up affecting one subject but many subjects in schools because in order to pass those subjects a pupil needs to study them, and studying requires the skill of reading with comprehension. This is just to highlight the importance of this language skill which is actually not being taken seriously by most teachers and pupils in schools.

5. 4   Availability and appropriateness of the materials used for teaching reading comprehension to the pupils.

The main issue is that both Schools sampled in the study had enough teaching and learning materials for reading comprehension in form of text books. However, the majority of the pupils talked to felt that the reading comprehension passages were not too appropriate for them. This means that the passages were either above their level of comprehension because the vocabulary was quite advanced and unfamiliar to them. Nuttall (1982:21) suggests that the texts that should be given for children's practice for reading comprehension exercises should be authentic. They should be the sort of texts readers will want to read even for enjoyment purposes. Nuttall (1982) further says that if the needs of the learners in a given class are very varied, the practice material (text) ought to be varied too. Therefore, the stage at which authentic texts are introduced needs to be decided according to the learners' command of the language. Where the above suggestions from Nuttal (1982) were not taken into consideration the result was always low reading performance among pupils.

The findings established that about half the percentage of pupils that were talked to understood what they read while the other half did not understand. The expectation of almost all of us was that a grade twelve pupil was supposed to understand what she/he read. However, the observation of the researcher was that the problem could be on lack of interest on reading comprehension passages because of probably the reading texts which affected their concentration thus appearing as though they (pupils) did not understand what they read. Some pupils failed to answer even simple reading comprehension questions.

Nuttall (1982) indicated the fact that no class was ever entirely homogeneous. In an ideal world, she says, every student would be given material appropriate specifically to his own needs; but most of the teachers teach in circumstances where this is not possible, so we shall assume that the teacher has to compromise by choosing material that suits most of his class. Nuttall (1982:29) further talks of the suitability of content to the learners. She observes that it may be difficult for a teacher to do a good work with a dull text. She says that it is important for the teacher to look for the text that is going to interest the greatest number of learners, and that will not actually bore the others. The teacher therefore, is an important tool in the learning and teaching of reading comprehension if we are to improve the performance among grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. 1   Introduction

This last chapter constitutes of the conclusion which is made from the findings of this study and literature review, and the recommendations.

6. 2   Conclusion

Reading comprehension is a challenge to both teachers and pupils. Therefore, research has revealed that many grade twelve pupils perform poorly in reading comprehension because of a number of factors.

One such factor for the poor performance of grade twelve pupils in reading comprehension is poor reading culture among pupils. Many found reading especially story books as something they could do only if they had nothing else to do.

This research established that the poor reading culture among pupils was due to inadequate teaching materials for reading. Materials such as those that discuss issues that directly affect the young generation, and depicting some local settings may be the appropriate ones needed for learners. Such materials probably would attract many pupils to read such in the process they (pupils) were going to improve their reading culture and eventually enrich their understanding.

In addition the two High Schools selected for study had only few appropriate reading materials found in their libraries such as novels and other story books. Research showed us that many pupils enjoyed reading stories that directly affected them, depicting local settings and situations.

The other one may be the way reading comprehension is actually taught. Many teachers did not teach reading comprehension the way it is supposed to taught following the correct teaching procedure. One reason could be because the teacher is not well qualified to handle the class, and thus does not know what to include in his/her teaching notes. Such a teacher would always look like he/she has not

prepared his/her lesson well in advance before going to teach. The other one could be the poor reading background of pupils.

Finally, the study established that teachers do not prepare their lessons well in advance before going to teach. This trend was observed to most of the teachers that were observed teaching reading comprehension.

6. 3   Recommendations.

1. Administrators at a High School to make it compulsory for pupils to belong to at least any of the clubs that has to do with reading; and languages teachers with correct qualifications recommended for them to be teaching at a high school should be appointed to positions of patron/matron for such clubs as suggested by some subjects. Research has shown us that reading is useful to all the subjects of study that are being offered in various institutions of learning.

2. The government through the Ministry of Education to increase funding for procurement of books in schools could be a move towards the right direction. With the increased funding, it is hoped that schools will go beyond just buying text books for pupils' subjects of study but also novels and other reading materials preferably by local writers and depicting local settings to be put and accessed by all pupils in the school libraries.

3. The government through the Ministry of Education should normalize the deployment strategies of teachers so that quality education is enhanced in schools.

4. The Heads of Departments to be checking the lesson plans prepared by teachers a day or two before the lessons are taught.

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APPENDIX A

Interview schedule for Administrators

Identification Data (for official use only)

District: …………………………   Identification No: ……………………….

School: ……………………………

Date of Interview: …………………

Time of Interview: Start: ……………….. End: ……………………..

Sex of respondent: ………………..

Part one

Background Information

1. For how long have you been working in this position? ……………………

2. How long have you worked for this school? ……………………………….

3. What is your subject of specialization? …………………………………

4. What is your highest qualification? ………………………………………

 Part two

Content

5. Have the results produced by the languages department been impressive to you as an administrator? …………………………………………………

6. What do you think is the cause of what you have observed? …………………

7. How often do the teachers submit their schemes and records of work to your office? ……………………………………………………………………

8. Have they been consistent in submitting the records of work? …………….

9. Do their records indicate that teachers teach all the language skills that they are supposed to be teaching? ....

10. Have you ever observed a comprehension lesson; and how well do you think it is taught? ……………………………………………………………………

11. Was the teaching procedure employed by the teacher satisfying to you? …………………………………………………………………………………….

12. Why do you suggest that? ………………………………………………….

13. Do you have any suggestions of how reading comprehension should be taught? ………………………………………………………………………….

14. Does the department have enough teaching and learning materials for reading comprehension? ………………………………………………………..

15. Do you have a library in the school? ………………………………………..

16. How has this affected the pupils either positively or negatively? …………

17. What is the school doing to see to it that pupils improve their skill of reading with understanding? …………………………………………………………

18. How supportive has been your office to see to it that the department acquires the needed books? ....

19. How do you rate the performance of languages department in terms of grade twelve results? ………………………………………………………………….

20. How often do you check records of work for your teachers? ………………

21. Languages department seems to me to be one of the busiest departments, taking into account what is involved in the skills that are taught. Is the staffing level in the languages department adequate? ………………………...

22. How do you advise your Heard of Department when allocating classes to teachers? ……………………………………………………………………

23. Why should it be like that? ………………………………………………….

APPENDIX B

Interview schedule for Grade Twelve Teachers of English

Identification Data (for official use only)

District: …………………………   Identification No: …………………

School: ……………………………

Date of Interview: …………………

Time of Interview: Start: ……………….. End: ……………………..

Sex of respondent: ………………..

Part one

Background Information

1. For how long have you been working as a teacher of English language? ……………………………………………………………………………

2. How long have you worked in this school? ………………………………..

3. What other subject do you teach apart from the English Language? ……………………………………………………………………………

4. What is your highest qualification? …………………………………………

Part two

Content

5. Some people say that many pupils do not perform well in reading comprehension. What is your reaction to this statement? ……………………

6. a). If you agree to the above statement, what do you think is the contributing factor to this   poor performance?...

    b) If do not agree, what reasons do you have for the good performance? ……

7. How do you find teaching reading comprehension? …………………………

8. Can you remind us the procedure to be followed when teaching Reading Comprehension? ………………………………………………………………..

9. Do you think you follow the teaching procedure you have explained above when teaching Reading comprehension? …………………………………….

10. Which steps in the procedure do you find easy or difficult to teach and which ones do you enjoy teaching? ....

11. What is the book / pupil ratio? …………………………………………….

12. How do you teach reading comprehension in cases where materials are not enough? …………………………………………………………………………

13. How relevant are teaching and learning materials for reading comprehension? …………………………………………………………………

14. Do you think pupils understand what they read? …………………………….

15. How much time is allocated for teaching reading comprehension lesson in a week? …………………………………………………………………………..

16. How often do you teach reading comprehension lesson in a week? …………

17. Do pupils have interest in reading story books or other materials outside their subjects of study?...

18. Do you have a Library in the School and do pupils use it? …………………..

19. What are you doing as teachers to promote reading in the School? ....

APPENDIX C

Pupils' Focus Group Discussion Schedules

1. How do you find learning reading comprehension lessons? …………………

2. How do you find reading comprehension questions? ……………………….

3. Why do you find them that way? ………………………………………………

4. How often do you learn reading comprehension? ……………………………

5. Do you read any story books during your spare times? …………………….

6. What is the average number of books you have read in a term? ……………

7. What do you think is difficult about reading comprehension? ……………

8. Is it understanding the passage, answering questions or the type of questioning? ……………………………………………………………………….

9. Do you understand what you read? ……………………………………….

10. Why don't you understand what you read? …………………………………

11. Do you enjoy reading comprehension passages? ……………………………

12. Are there enough learning materials for reading comprehension? ………….

13. Do you remember the usual steps that a reading comprehension lesson goes through? State them. ……………………………………………………….

APPENDIX D

LESSON OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

School -------------------------------- Grade --------------------------------------

Topic ---

Date ------------------------------------- Number of Pupils in Class -------------

Sex of Teacher: -------------------- Day: ----------------- Time: ------------

COMPETENCES	1	2	3	4
1. **Organization and analysis of subject matter.**				
a). Preparation – Lesson Planning.				
b). Pre reading activities.				
c). Relevance of the content of the passage to the learners.				
d). Suitability of the content of the passage to the grade level.				
e). Suitability of Linguistic levels to the learners.				
f). Presence of illustrations in the text.				
2. **Presentation of the lesson.**				
a). Ability to follow the lesson plan.				
b). Use of the appropriate methodology.				

c). Timing of the lesson.				
3. **Teaching techniques.**				
a). Lesson Introduction.				
b). Use of questioning techniques.				
c). Pupils' participation.				
d). Use of teaching Aids.				
e). Lesson Procedure.				
f). Marking techniques.				
g). Lesson Conclusion.				
h). Teacher Profile / appearance / voice projection.				
4. **Class Management.**				
a). Class atmosphere.				
b). Discipline and control.				
5. **Pupil / Teacher relationship.**				
a). Interaction levels used during the learning process.				
b). Self confidence in learners.				
c). Teacher attitude to error.				
6. delivery of each stage of the lesson				

a). Pre- reading activity				
b). Reading of the text				
c). Post Reading Activity				
d). Treatment of new vocabulary				
e). Reading and individual task				
f). Class Discussion of Questions				
g). Conclusions				

KEY

1. 1………………………………………….. Poor.

2. 2………………………………………….. Good.

3. 3………………………………………….. Very Good.

4. 4…………………………………………..Excellent

APPENDIX E.

DOCUMENTS REVIEW CHECK LIST

School ---------------------------------- Grade ---------------------------------------

Topic ---

Date -------------------------------------- Number of Pupils in Class -------------

Sex of Teacher: -------------------- Day: ----------------- Time: ------------

COMPETENCES	1	2	3	4
1. **Lesson Plans.**				
a). Preparation of Lesson Plans.				
b). Formant				
c). Content				
d). Whether checked by Head of Department.				
e). Use of the appropriate methodology.				
f). Timing of the lesson.				
g). Reading Comprehension Procedure in the plan.				
2. **Records of work**				
a). Preparation of Records of work.				
b). Whether Reading Comprehension lessons are recorded.				

c). The number of times when reading comprehension is taught.				
d). Whether checked by the supervisor.				
e). Were comprehension lessons adequately taught?				
3. Schemes of Work				
a). Preparation of Schemes of Work.				
b). How well timed Reading Comprehension is?				
4. **Pupils' Exercise Books.**				
a). Written Reading Comprehension Class Exercises.				
b). Whether marked				
c). Performance of Pupils in Reading Comprehension Class Exercises.				

KEY

5. 1………………………………………….. Poor.

6. 2………………………………………….. Good.

7. 3………………………………………….. Very Good.

8. 4………………………………………..Excellent

APPENDIX F.

TEST ON READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following passage carefully. Then answer the questions that follow.

WORLD LIFE CONSERVATION

There is no doubt that Zambia will <u>eventually</u> run out of copper. On the other hand, our wild life can last forever and continue to provide food, jobs and foreign exchange if it is properly managed.

There are few countries in the world that can afford to <u>conserve</u> wild life for its own sake. The old belief that wild life should be left alone does not make much sense in a world where there is so much hardship and poverty. Therefore, wild life conservation must take into account the needs of the people.

Zambia, perhaps more than most other countries, is rich in wild life which could be put to good use in improving the lives of many people. However, this does not mean that uncontrollable killing of animals is the way to go about it. This may provide immediate cash <u>benefits</u> to the people, but Zambia's wild life resources would soon disappear.

Poaching is an example of what happens when wild life resources are not properly used. Poachers are killing so many elephants that the animals are threatened with extinction. Yet, if they were properly managed, the animals could provide a good income through hunting fees and ivory sales every year.

Another important reason for the proper management of wild life in parks is to keep a check on the number of animals in these areas. In the past when the number of elephants was high in South Luangwa and other game parks, the elephants were changing their own <u>habitat</u> by felling the trees. This natural process should have been supported by the carefully controlled killing of the elephants. The elephant population would have been given a chance to recover. But, in fact, what happened

was that the poachers started killing the elephants on a large scale, <u>thereby</u> threatening their existence.

Another situation similar to it is now developing in the Luangwa hippo population. As a result of growing pressure from people in the game management area, who need more land, large numbers the hippos are <u>confined</u> to small areas. This situation has led to overcrowding in these areas. Conservation, in this case, calls for quick action. There should be a carefully managed game cropping programme in which the local population would be <u>actively</u> involved. Meat and other products would go directly to the local people or they could be sold to provide money for village projects.

Controlled hunting of this kind can provide a good source of cheap protein for Zambians in areas where they are no commercial butcheries or reliable supplies of fish. This is already happening in many other countries. Very often large wild animals produce more protein for the same areas of land than domestic animals. In same parts of Zambia, nearly all animal protein which is consumed is obtained from wild life.

Another important type of controlled hunting is safari hunting. In this case hunters are allowed to kill only a certain number of protected species through hunting fees, weekly permits and payments for <u>exporting</u> animal trophies. Since hunters tend to spend more money on safaris than other tourists, the income from safari are allowed to kill only a certain number of protected species through hunting is quite substantial.

However, the development of natural resources in Luangwa's parks and game management areas has not been properly organized. <u>Consequently,</u> local people have not benefited as much as they could have done from the rich wildlife resources themselves have become endangered by poaching and lack of proper management.

An important and <u>exciting</u> new project in Zambia is the Luangwa Valley Integrated Resources Development Project (LIRDP). The aim of the programme is to combine rural development with the conservation of resources in the Luangwa Valley. It is an

important first step in achieving a <u>lasting</u> future for the people there using local management. Several activities are being developed in the area. Some of these are hippo cropping, co-operatives for game meat and forest products, safari hunting and tourism. All these activities are meant to benefit the local people and wildlife.

Now answer the following questions by choosing the correct and most suitable choice from the list provided below each question. You are required to draw a circle around the most appropriate answer of your choice.

1. According to paragraph 1 …………………………………………………..

    A. there is no doubt that Zambia will soon run out of copper.

    B. in the long run Zambia will certainly have no copper,

    C. our wildlife will last forever and continue to provide food, jobs and shelter because it properly managed.

    D. our wildlife can last forever and continue to provide food, jobs and foreign exchange if it is managed.

2. The old belief that wildlife should be left alone ..…………………………

    A. does not make much sense.

    B. does not make sense in a world where there is so much hardship and poverty.

    C. makes much sense in a world where life is enjoyable and rich.

    D. must take into account the needs of the people.

3. Which of the following is the best summary of paragraph 3? ………………

    A. Zambia should kill animals within reasonable limits.

B. uncontrolled killing of animals may provide immediate cash benefits to the people of Zambia.

C. Zambia must kill animals uncontrollably.

D. Zambia's wildlife resources would soon disappear.

4. "This natural process" in paragraph 5 refers to ………………………………

   A. the carefully controlled killing of elephants.

   B. saving the elephant population from decreasing and giving the parks a chance to recover.

   C. the elephants changing their own habitat by felling the trees.

   D. the killing of the elephants on a large scale, thereby threatening their existence.

5. In paragraph 6 the writer …………………………………………………………

   A. merely talks about the threat to the hippo population.

   B. mentions the threat to the hippo population and suggests protective measures that should be taken to conserve hippos.

   C. only discusses the hippo conservation which in this case calls for quick action.

   D. deals with village projects.

6. It is true according paragraph 7 that ………………………………………

   A. controlled hunting provides a good source of cheap protein for Zambia.

B. often large wild animals produce more protein for the same areas of land than domestic animals.

C. in some parts of Zambia nearly all animal protein which is obtained from wildlife.

D. in some parts of Zambia almost all animal protein which is consumed is obtained from wildlife.

7. The income from safari hunting is quite substantial because …………………

A. hunters are allowed only to kill a certain number of protected species.

B. hunters are allowed only to kill a certain number of protected species through hunting fees, weekly permits and payments for exporting animal trophies.

C. hunters tend to spend more money on safaris than other tourists.

D. it is got from various sources.

8. If the development of natural resources in Luangwa's parks and game

management areas had been properly organized all along ……………………

A. local people could have benefited from the rich wildlife resources more than they have.

B. local people could have benefited in any way they wanted from the rich wildlife resources.

C. people could have benefited from the rich wildlife resources more than they have.

D. local people could have benefited from the rich wildlife resources

APPENDIX G.

2nd TEST ON READING COMPREHENSION

Read the following passage carefully. Then answer the questions that follow.

WORLD LIFE CONSERVATION

There is no doubt that Zambia will <u>eventually</u> run out of copper. On the other hand, our wild life can last forever and continue to provide food, jobs and foreign exchange if it is properly managed.

There are few countries in the world that can afford to <u>conserve</u> wild life for its own sake. The old belief that wild life should be left alone does not make much sense in a world where there is so much hardship and poverty. Therefore, wild life conservation must take into account the needs of the people.

Zambia, perhaps more than most other countries, is rich in wild life which could be put to good use in improving the lives of many people. However, this does not mean that uncontrollable killing of animals is the way to go about it. This may provide immediate cash <u>benefits</u> to the people, but Zambia's wild life resources would soon disappear.

Poaching is an example of what happens when wild life resources are not properly used. Poachers are killing so many elephants that the animals are threatened with extinction. Yet, if they were properly managed, the animals could provide a good income through hunting fees and ivory sales every year.

Another important reason for the proper management of wild life in parks is to keep a check on the number of animals in these areas. In the past when the number of elephants was high in South Luangwa and other game parks, the elephants were changing their own <u>habitat</u> by felling the trees. This natural process should have been supported by the carefully controlled killing of the elephants. The elephant population would have been given a chance to recover. But, in fact, what happened

was that the poachers started killing the elephants on a large scale, <u>thereby</u> threatening their existence.

Another situation similar to it is now developing in the Luangwa hippo population. As a result of growing pressure from people in the game management area, who need more land, large numbers the hippos are <u>confined</u> to small areas. This situation has led to overcrowding in these areas. Conservation, in this case, calls for quick action. There should be a carefully managed game cropping programme in which the local population would be <u>actively</u> involved. Meat and other products would go directly to the local people or they could be sold to provide money for village projects.

Controlled hunting of this kind can provide a good source of cheap protein for Zambians in areas where they are no commercial butcheries or reliable supplies of fish. This is already happening in many other countries. Very often large wild animals produce more protein for the same areas of land than domestic animals. In same parts of Zambia, nearly all animal protein which is consumed is obtained from wild life.

Another important type of controlled hunting is safari hunting. In this case hunters are allowed to kill only a certain number of protected species through hunting fees, weekly permits and payments for <u>exporting</u> animal trophies. Since hunters tend to spend more money on safaris than other tourists, the income from safari are allowed to kill only a certain number of protected species through hunting is quite substantial.

However, the development of natural resources in Luangwa's parks and game management areas has not been properly organized. <u>Consequently,</u> local people have not benefited as much as they could have done from the rich wildlife resources themselves have become endangered by poaching and lack of proper management.

An important and <u>exciting</u> new project in Zambia is the Luangwa Valley Integrated Resources Development Project (LIRDP). The aim of the programme is to combine rural development with the conservation of resources in the Luangwa Valley. It is an

important first step in achieving a <u>lasting</u> future for the people there using local management. Several activities are being developed in the area. Some of these are hippo cropping, co-operatives for game meat and forest products, safari hunting and tourism. All these activities are meant to benefit the local people and wildlife.

Now answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

What does paragraph 1 seem to suggest? ………………………………………

Does the old belief that wildlife should be left alone helpful ..……………………

What is the best summary of paragraph 3? ………………………………………..

What does the phrase "This natural process" in paragraph 5 refers to …………….

In paragraph 6 the writer says …………………………………………………..

It is true according to paragraph 7 that …………………………………………

Why the income from safari hunting is quite substantial? …………………………

What does the passage suggest if the development of natural resources in Luangwa's parks and game management areas had been properly organized all along? …………………

APPENDIX H.

Informed Consent Form Sample.

(Respondents)

I have been told the contents of the interview and ascertain that I fully understand the purpose as well as objectives of the study. I hereby confirm that the findings of this study shall not in any way cause physical or psychological harm as it is meant for academic purposes. The study is also conducted with full permission from relevant University of Zambia research committees. I therefore, consent to participate in the study by answering all the interview questions asked to me by the researcher as detailed bellow.

Code No. of Respondent: …………………………………………..

Signature: ………………………………………………………….

Date: …………………………………………………………

Prepared by: ....

Being: …………………………………………………………..

Student Number: …………………………………………………

Programme: ……………………………………………………….

Institution: …………………………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………………………..

Signature: ………………