

Candidate A**Preparation Time** (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Banyan trees

Banyan trees are still a fairly common sight in Hong Kong. Owing to their irregular size and inferior wood, they have never really been cut down for commercial use. However, as the population of Hong Kong grows, more and more of these trees are being cut down to make way for big development projects.

Banyan trees have many special qualities and so have a unique place in many people's hearts. In the right conditions, they can live for more than 500 years and can grow as tall as 20 metres and as wide as 30 metres. They grow vertical roots from the branches and these roots absorb nutrients and moisture from the air. For years banyan trees have survived typhoons, floods, water shortages and rampant development in Hong Kong. It is no surprise then that many people regard the banyan as a symbol of strength, endurance, determination and long life.

Due to their enormous size and large number of leaves, banyans form a natural shade from the sun. It is common to see groups of people congregating under these trees. In fact, in many villages the shady area under the tree acts as a town hall where people hold discussions about local affairs. The trees are also gathering places where people play chess, relax and chat with others. Banyans are natural noise barriers and they substantially reduce the traffic noise from Hong Kong's busy roads.

Some people in Hong Kong are starting to get worried about the future of banyan trees as more and more are disappearing. University of Hong Kong geography professor and tree preservationist, Jim Chi-yung, thinks that these trees are part of our natural history. He strongly believes that they should be protected as they are becoming extremely rare and are very valuable to Hong Kong.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

A property development company has bought a site next to your school and intends to cut down several mature trees there, including some old banyans, as part of its redevelopment plans. You are members of the Student Union and are meeting to discuss a campaign to save the trees.

You should discuss why it is necessary to stop the destruction of trees in Hong Kong and plan some activities for the campaign. You may also like to think of ways of making other people aware of your campaign.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Protect our trees

April 22nd, 2005 was Earth Day. On that day, the Conservancy Agency (CA) in Hong Kong launched a signature campaign to save Hong Kong's trees. As part of this campaign, members of the CA asked the public to sign recycled-paper leaves, which were then hung on large cardboard trees in Chater Garden. This act was to show support for tougher legislation to protect Hong Kong's large and historical trees.

Trees in Hong Kong are often treated as if they are not living objects. When a tree is in the way of a development project, it is frequently cut down. This is because laws regarding the protection of trees are inadequate and no single department is responsible for their welfare. Instead, various departments offer their own guidelines and this leads to contradictory information. The CA wants trees to become the responsibility of one department so that the rules are clear. They think a law that protects urban trees on the basis of rarity, history and size should be introduced.

Professor Jim Chi-yung, head of the Geography Department at the University of Hong Kong, has been fighting to protect Hong Kong's flora for 20 years. He says, 'Trees are extremely important for our health as they absorb carbon dioxide and pollutants and they release oxygen. They also provide a habitat for wildlife, stop landslides and generally make life much more pleasant. Without trees the global ecosystem would collapse.'

Legislator Choy So-yuk has been trying to introduce new legislation to protect our city's trees since she joined Legco. She has some success stories. 'A developer in Kennedy Town was forced to redesign an estate so that a Chinese banyan tree could be saved.' Unfortunately, she admits that this was a rare case. 'I remember 13 beautiful wall trees on Caine Road disappearing overnight as the government said they were unsafe.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate C

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

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Tree tales

Most people agree that trees are pretty to look at and that they play a vital part in our ecosystem. However, some trees also play a special role in Hong Kong's history. One of these is the famous wishing tree near Tai Po and another is the heung, or incense tree.

People have been visiting the famous wishing tree in Lam Tsuen for years, but do you know why? About 30 years ago, a mother was worried about her son's academic results so she went to a banyan tree, sat down next to it and prayed for her son. Apparently, her son's grades improved and word spread about the tree's special powers. People soon started writing their wishes on red, gold and green paper sheets tied to oranges and threw them on to the branches. If the orange stayed in the tree rather than falling to the ground, the wishes would be granted. The tree soon found a place in all of the Hong Kong guidebooks and became a major tourist attraction.

The name 'Hong Kong', which means Fragrant Harbour, originates from the heung tree, which is also very special. During the Sung Dynasty (619-970 AD) these trees were planted all over the New Territories and their sweet smelling resin was harvested and made into incense, which was exported to the mainland. Different parts of the tree are also used to make joss sticks, paper and Chinese medicine. Even though the heung tree is endangered on the mainland, it remains common in the New Territories. So, recently there have been cases of gangs cutting down these trees and transporting them to sell on the mainland.

Judy Lim, a local conservationist says, 'We are lucky to have such diverse flora and fauna in Hong Kong. We should look after these trees as they make Hong Kong a special place.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Tree terrorism

Terrorism is a big threat in the world today and Hong Kong is no exception. However, the terrorism in our city is of a completely different nature to that which took place in New York and London. Trees are the victims in Hong Kong.

People normally cut down trees to sell or to make way for a new development but this is not always the case. In July last year, almost 190 trees in Tai Lam Country Park near Yuen Long were mysteriously cut down. This case left detectives puzzled as they could not identify a motive. Lister Cheung, chief executive of the Conservancy Association (CA), mentions that trees may be cut down when they block a big project. 'A large banyan tree at a Tsuen Wan development site was allegedly poisoned so that it eventually became weak and fell down in a typhoon.' He thinks behaviour such as this is fairly common.

There are no strict laws in Hong Kong protecting trees and sometimes, developers chop down trees on their sites if they block planned development. Cheung Kong (Holdings) is developing a new luxury hotel on the site of the former Marine Police Headquarters in Tsim Sha Tsui. There were 192 old trees on the original site, and Cheung Kong cut down more than 140 of them.

In order to protect our trees and fight back against tree terrorists, the CA is calling on the public and schools to adopt local trees. Volunteers could take photographs of their trees and report any suspicious activity. Lister Cheung calls these people 'Green Spies'! He thinks the key to saving trees is public support. 'If we can make use of this huge manpower, we'll be able to stop irresponsible developers at an early stage.' If the government is persuaded to introduce tougher legislation, it will only be because of greater public environmental awareness.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

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Ghost stories

All over the world, ghost stories are part of local culture. However, people's attitudes towards ghosts can vary greatly. In Britain, guests have reported seeing ghosts in hotels, and some people who witness them cannot wait to check out and move into a hotel that is not haunted. In contrast, others consciously choose to stay in hotels that are supposedly haunted in the hope that they see something supernatural!

Ghost stories from Britain are extremely common. One such story is about George, who bought a house in England that was over 400 years old. 'It needed a lot of repair so I hired some builders to do the work. Because there was no electricity in the house, I used to visit the local pub for my evening meal but one night, when I got home, I was amazed to find a boiling kettle and a cup of tea waiting for me. This happened on three occasions.' So why was this unusual? The kettle boiled even though

there was no electricity in the house and all the builders had already left. This was clearly a friendly ghost, but other ghosts are not so welcoming.

In southern England, police are investigating seven strange accidents that have taken place on the same country road. Each accident is the same. A woman crosses the road right in front of a moving car. 'She looked straight at me as she crossed and was dressed in clothes from the 1930's; I hit her at full speed,' said one driver.

However, this was no ordinary accident. Seven different drivers have reported hitting this same woman on seven separate occasions. Each time their story was exactly the same; they slammed on their brakes, crashed into the woman and skidded off the road, only to find that the ghostly woman had vanished!

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You and your group are members of the Student Council and you are meeting to plan an exhibition at your school on the theme of ghosts and the supernatural to celebrate Halloween. You are meeting to decide how to organise the event.

You may like to start the discussion by sharing your views on ghosts and supernatural tales. Then discuss the types of displays and exhibits that you would like to include in the exhibition to make it appealing to students from all forms. Justify your answers and suggestions.

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Ghost writers

Mrs. Lim wanted her children to develop a reading habit when they were young, so she encouraged them to read lots of different books, from novels to thrillers and even biographies. However, there was one type of book that she would never allow her children to read. 'I never let them read ghost stories, partly for religious reasons but mainly because those types of books are nonsense!' A few years later, she changed her mind when her daughter got a part in the school play. Ironically, she played the part of a ghost in one of Shakespeare's greatest plays – *Macbeth*.

'I did not realise just how important ghosts have been in literature,' said Mrs. Lim. In fact, some of the world's most famous authors have written ghost stories. *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens featured the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. The fearsome vampire, Dracula, came from a book by Bram Stoker. R. L. Stine, a modern ghost story writer whose

collection of stories is known as the *Goosebumps* series, is hugely popular with local students.

Stine's books have strange titles such as, *Say Cheese and Die*, and these ghost stories are full of colourful characters and interesting plots. 'These books make ghosts and monsters fun,' said one Form Two student. The writer says that all his ideas come from a combination of memory and imagination. Stine tries to remember the things that scared him when he was young and then writes about them. He has been known to write a book in just eight days.

Perhaps this is why ghost stories remain so popular with readers of all ages. 'I like the feeling of being scared by a good ghost story, and the best writers know what makes us afraid,' said Mrs. Lim's daughter, Mary. Her mother even borrows Mary's ghost stories now!

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Ghosts on the screen

Ghost, or horror films have been one of the most popular types of film to come out of Hollywood. Indeed, the ghost genre dates back to the 1930's when films about vampires and other supernatural beings started to appear on a regular basis. Since then, a new film seems to be made every year that promises to be 'scarier' than any film made before and cinemas are full of people who pay to get frightened! Overseas films like *The Sixth Sense* and *The Ring* have been enormously successful locally, and in examining the Hong Kong film industry, it is surprising to see how many ghost films are made.

'Over the last twenty years, two styles of movie have dominated Hong Kong cinemas: the triad film and the horror film,' said one film critic. People's fascination with ghosts and the spirit world seems to be the reason for the large number of films based on ghost stories made each year. 'We respect and fear ghosts in real life but in

movies they are less frightening and more appealing,' said one film fan.

Hong Kong ghost films are often adaptations of successful American or Japanese movies. For example, one of the most popular local ghost films, *A Chinese Ghost Story*, was a romantic ghost story based on the Hollywood blockbuster *Ghost*.

However, local ghost films often contain special features that make them unique. For example, vampires may possess martial arts skills and are able to fight enemies. In other films the ghosts can be cute girls. Celebrities, such as the Twins, have starred in action-packed vampire films such as *The Twins Effect*. This film was very popular with Hong Kong teenagers. It seems that ghosts, whether real or made for the cinema, play a big part in Hong Kong life.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Local ghosts

Although Hong Kong does not have a long history, there are numerous stories about ghosts, and they play a very important part in local beliefs. The Hungry Ghosts festival is an obvious example. During this festival, ghosts are said to return to earth. Believers burn paper money and other offerings to appease these restless spirits.

It seems that lots of people in Hong Kong are fascinated with the afterlife. On Cheung Chau Island, a block of holiday flats has attracted a number of curious visitors. Twenty people have committed suicide in these flats in the past nine years. People believe that the apartments are haunted, and this has turned them into a kind of ‘ghost-town’ attraction. Young people frequently book rooms there in the hope that they may at least catch a glimpse of the ghosts.

An academic at the Chinese University reported that students enjoy telling ghost stories to freshmen. There are two famous ghost stories on the campus. One is of a girl who continued to prepare soup for her boyfriend even after her death. The other is the tale of a faceless old woman who walks the campus at night. One final year student said, ‘Many new students stay up at night to try and see the ghosts, but these stories are just tales, like legends. Real ghost stories are different.’

‘Real’ ghost stories seem to involve people who have died in unfortunate circumstances. Hong Kong taxi drivers tell the story of a young girl who stops them for a ride on a dark road. When the driver reaches the destination, he turns to see that the girl has disappeared from the back seat. A few years ago, a young girl was killed on her way to that same destination. Do you believe in ghosts or are they all just imaginary?

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Why whales?

Whales play an important role in the life of the ocean as they serve as indicators of the health and well-being of the whole marine ecosystem. However, many species of whale may become extinct in the next decade if we do not do something to protect them.

Whales are at risk for a number of reasons. Pollution of the seas has seriously damaged their habitat. Many whales lose their lives when they collide with ships and others die when they become entangled in fishermen's nets. However, hunting or commercial whaling is still the major cause of the decrease in the number of whales in the ocean.

While some countries are strongly against whaling, others, for example Japan and Norway, feel that it is part of their history and that it is culturally and economically important. Mr. Momatsu has been working on whaling ships for years, in the same way that

his father and grandfather did before him. He says, 'Whale meat is delicious. My family has been eating it for years. It is full of nutrients and is very good for our health. Many people depend on the whaling industry to make a living. What is wrong with that? At the end of the day, whales are only animals.'

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) imposed a ban on commercial whaling in 1985. However, some countries still continue with this practice. In 2004, Japan, Norway, Iceland, Korea and the Soviet Union killed more than 6000 whales between them. John Palmer a marine biologist in Australia says, 'These countries should rethink their actions. They should organise whale-watching trips. They could make more money than by hunting whales. In fact, whale watching is such a popular activity in Australia these days that it has really boosted the economy. Last year 1.5 million people went on whale-watching trips.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You are volunteers for the charity Animals Asia. You want to educate students and their families about the work of the charity and at the same time raise money for it.

You are meeting to decide how you can raise students' awareness of the different animals which are suffering or facing extinction in the world. You also need to decide on a fund-raising activity to hold in your school which will involve the whole community.

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Say no to shark's fin

The shark's fin debate has been alive in Hong Kong for years but last year the controversy heated up when it was discovered that Disneyland was planning to put shark's fin soup on the menu at its resort hotel.

Disneyland wanted to respect Chinese tradition by allowing wedding banquets to include shark's fin soup. A spokesperson for Disneyland said, 'We cannot overlook the fact that the resort is located in Hong Kong and for many local people shark's fin is an important part of a wedding celebration.'

Many local people were outraged by this remark. Felix Chan, a well-known chef says, 'Consuming shark's fin is just a way of showing your high status in society. It is commonly served at wedding banquets but there is no special meaning to it. It is simply a show of wealth and reflects a lack of concern for marine life.' He added that Disneyland's target audience is children and it bears

a responsibility to educate them and to put out a positive message regarding conservation.'

Populations of most shark species are declining in number. In fact some have declined by more than 80% since the mid 1970's and others are being pushed to the edge of extinction. Marine biologists say there is strong evidence that demand for shark's fin soup is responsible for this decline. They also condemn the practice of 'finning'. Shark fins are sliced from the fish, which are then thrown back into the sea and left to die a painful death. Joan Li a conservationist explains, 'Fishermen are only interested in the fins as the actual shark meat has a low commercial value.' She also adds, 'Hong Kong people should put people power into practice and should refuse to attend dinners with shark's fin on the menu. The government should also impose a tax on shark's fin consumption.'

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Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Moon bears

Asiatic black bears, also known as 'moon bears' because of the white moon-shaped marking on their chest, are almost extinct in parts of Asia. The main reason for this is not because their homes are being destroyed to make way for big developments, or because they are hunted for their meat or their fur. The reality is that these bears produce bile, one of the most valuable ingredients in traditional Chinese medicine.

Once captured, these bears are taken to factory farms where they live out their days in cages so small that they can barely turn round or even stand up. When the bears are three years old, a tube is inserted into their gallbladder to remove the bile. This tube will never be removed and it causes the bears a lot of pain and suffering. Every day the liquid is drained out and sold for its healing qualities.

There are now officially 247 bear farms across China, housing an estimated total of 7,000 bears. Practitioners of traditional medicine report that the bile can be used to treat a range of ailments, including life-threatening cancers and serious liver problems. However, animal rights groups insist that the practice is not only inhumane, but unnecessary as there are recognised medical alternatives to bile.

Jill Robinson of Animals Asia visited a bear farm in Guangdong and was shocked and upset by the miserable conditions the bears live in and the cruelty they endure. She said, 'The bears show their distress by banging their heads against the sides of the cages and biting their paws until they become sore and start to bleed.' Jill has set up a bear sanctuary in Sichuan, which is now home to 58 rescued bears. She hopes to raise more money through sponsorship and free more bears from the cruel farms.

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Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Fur capital of the world

Fur is in fashion again and the trade is booming on the mainland. In fact, China is the fastest growing fur exporter in the world. It is estimated that 80% of all fur coats are manufactured in China. It is probably no surprise that Hong Kong, with its passion for luxury items and fashionable goods, is the biggest buyer of fur in the world.

Tan Jiyu owns a rabbit farm which employs 100 people and kills about 2 million rabbits a year. His nickname is 'Rabbit King of Jiangsu'. He thinks the fur trade is good for local people as they can earn more money from fur than from traditional farming. He says, 'Ten years ago, this was a poor town of farmers and bicycles. Now we are a rich town.'

Animal welfare groups, such as Animals Asia, are horrified by the lack of regulations and the cruelty the trade involves. 'The problem is that China doesn't have

an animal welfare policy so the animals have no protection,' says Jimmy Chan, an animal welfare campaigner. 'Fur farming anywhere in the world is inhumane, but in China it is exceptionally cruel.' He says that animals such as foxes and rabbits are kept in tiny, dark cages with insufficient room to even turn around. At around six months of age they are killed in extremely cruel ways. Some have their heads cut off with huge scissors, others are beaten with bamboo sticks. The lucky ones are electrocuted.

Animals Asia hopes that now China has joined the WTO, the eyes of the world will be on China and this may move the government to introduce legislation to ensure animals are humanely treated. 'Fur is a luxury item. We don't need it. There are many other synthetic alternatives that look attractive and keep us warm,' says June Smith, spokesperson for Animals Asia.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

All at sea

In the modern world, the time it takes to travel between countries has been made shorter thanks to the speed and convenience of aeroplanes. However, some people who have more time to spend on a journey, prefer the luxury of a cruise. Ocean liners offer passengers a very different experience compared with other forms of travel. For a start, cruises can last from a few days to nine months and passengers enjoy all the facilities of a deluxe hotel except for the fact that they are at sea.

For David and Ann, a holiday on the liner, Queen Elizabeth II (QE2), fulfilled all their expectations. They were celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary and wanted to do something special. ‘We looked at various holiday packages but my wife had always dreamt of the QE2. It was expensive but we decided to buy the holiday of a lifetime!’ The QE2 is one of the most famous cruise liners, having been in service for 37 years. It can carry over 1000 passengers and has multiple pools, cinemas,

restaurants, theatres and even a golf range. These days, other larger cruise ships have been built and operate all over the globe, ensuring that tourists can take a leisurely and stately voyage to some of the world’s most popular places.

For many passengers, the advantage of taking a cruise is that they can stop at many different places during the holiday. David and Ann saw nine European cities in 16 days on their cruise. Here in Hong Kong, travel agencies market cruise packages which provide local people with a similar experience in South East Asia.

One local travel agent commented that cruises are popular because they allow people to escape the rat race of city life. For some people, though, a sea cruise is frightening. ‘After seeing *Titanic*, I prefer dry land!’ said one person.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your class is planning to organise a trip after the A-Level examination to relax and get classmates together before you all join university.

You are meeting to plan the trip. You should discuss some of the places in the world that your classmates would enjoy travelling to and decide on the most exciting destination. You should also talk about the most interesting ways to get there. Justify your choices with logical arguments.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Taking the train

Trains are a great way for travellers to really enjoy the different landscapes of countries. They can relax while looking out of the window and enjoy the passing scenery. Unlike flying, there is actually a view and passengers can take advantage of the stops at different stations and look around. The only drawback is the time that is needed to enjoy a long train trip. Yet, for those who travel for the pleasure of the journey, one railway journey stands out.

The Trans-Siberian Railway is regarded as the greatest rail journey in the world. It covers one third of the globe, approximately 9600 kilometres across a vast continent including Russia, China and Mongolia. John has travelled this route four times, ‘It’s an unforgettable experience partly because of the amazing views but mainly because of the interaction with Russian passengers and other tourists — it’s like a moving community.’ He had to share a tiny compartment with

three other people and said it was very crowded. His advice to other travellers is not to carry too much baggage because there is limited space in the compartments.

Space is not a problem on another famous train journey, however. The Eastern and Oriental Express is seen as one of the most luxurious ways of seeing the Far East as it travels slowly from Thailand down to Singapore. All rooms have air conditioning, showers, toilets and passengers are treated to delicious meals and superb service that would rival any top hotel.

‘We loved the trip to Singapore because it gave us the best of everything,’ said one happy passenger. His only complaint was that the three-day journey was too short. This is one of the advantages of the Trans-Siberian Railway, because the rail trip across the whole of Russia can last up to three weeks!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

This is driving me crazy!

One of the longest road journeys in Hong Kong is from Stanley on Hong Kong Island to the northern New Territories. This takes about an hour, but imagine driving a car for 4000 kilometres along one of the most dangerous roads in the world where temperatures can reach 40 degrees centigrade in the shade. This sort of holiday adventure is exactly what many drivers decide to do and that is why Savannah Way in Australia is so popular despite its deadly reputation. As one local said, 'If you make a mistake driving on this road, you're dead.'

The Savannah Way crosses northern Australia from Broome in the west to Cairns in the east. It attracts many tourists who want a 'self-drive experience' which is unlike any other road adventure in Europe or America. 'When I drove across, I drove through dust that was as thick as smoke and passed rocks on the road that were

larger than basketballs; it was like hell,' said Mark, who completed the drive in 2002. Why did he do it? 'It's the ultimate driving adventure,' he replied.

Some are not as lucky as Mark, with approximately 40 people dying each year on the journey. One man died trying to cross by motorbike when it ran out of fuel. If a car breaks down, there may not be another car passing by for several days. This is why drivers are advised to carry maps, first-aid kits, tool boxes, spare tyres, extra petrol, a satellite telephone and lots of water.

Mr. Chan from Kowloon is planning the trip this year and he has had special training for any emergencies. He is also taking a tracker device which will transmit his position all the time. A relaxing holiday? 'If I relax, I won't come back alive,' Chan said.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your class is planning to organise a trip after the A-Level examination to relax and get classmates together before you all join university.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Experimental travel

Experimental travel is a new trend that is emerging in world tourism. It does not require a lot of planning, bravery, or even a lot of money. Instead, the person doing it must enjoy doing crazy things! One example is the man who travelled around the world dressed as Batman. He had his photo taken in front of famous sights and sent them to a newspaper in the UK. Readers looked forward to seeing where 'Batman' was each week.

One factor which helps to explain how travelling trends have changed in recent years is the availability of budget flights. In Europe, these have allowed travellers to take a flight to another country for as little as HK\$150. Budget airlines have now started to emerge in Asia and more and more people are booking flights simply because of the price and not the destination. A frequent traveller explained the attraction of cheap tickets in terms of how they allow him to participate in experimental

travel. 'I love the freedom. I can go anywhere at any time and the thrill is in going somewhere unplanned.'

Other experimental travellers choose to have fun once they arrive at a destination. A couple from France booked separate flights to Venice in Italy and then spent the weekend trying to find one another without a mobile telephone. Others go in groups but with a very small amount of money. Their tickets are one-way only and once at their destination, they need to work out how to get home.

Joel Henry wrote a book on experimental travel and he says that it is all about having fun and being ready to accept surprises which come along. 'Years ago, travelling across Australia or Russia seemed exotic, but not any more because so many people do it. People want to be different these days,' he said.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Logging on to secrets?

The next time you log on to your computer, consider your actions. Thanks to computer software such as Spyware, even ordinary people can become private detectives and find out what e-mails are being sent, what is being typed on a computer and which websites are being used by the people around them. This means that computer spies are no longer outsiders searching for secret bank account numbers and codes. Instead, the spies could be our loved ones.

Mary thought that her husband was behaving suspiciously and so decided to use spyware to check his computer files. She downloaded a free programme that could recover deleted e-mails. After a short time, she found e-mails that her husband had been sending to another woman which showed that he had been having an affair. As a result, Mary confronted her husband and told him to leave. Did she do the right thing? ‘Sometimes I thought spying on his personal e-mails was wrong, but it helped me find out the truth about my

husband.’ Miss Yu, a counselling expert, takes a different view. ‘Honesty and face to face communication are better than spying,’ she said.

For those who want to spy on others, there is a choice of over 150 spyware programmes. This easy access to spyware has led to heated debate in the community about privacy and personal rights. To make matters worse, using spyware in this way is currently not considered a crime in Hong Kong.

The more serious problem with spyware is that it has been designed to avoid detection. However, now Internet spies are being hunted by spycatchers. Companies such as Microsoft offer free versions of anti-spyware software but experts warn that it is impossible to stop them entirely. ‘No matter what we do, we will always be a step behind the spies,’ said Mr. Chang from Apple computers.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your classmates are preparing for a class debate on the motion *Technological advances these days have a negative influence on our lives*.

At this stage, you do not know which side of the debate your team will be on so you have to prepare a set of arguments for both sides of the motion. You may like to start the discussion by sharing your views on how technology is influencing your lives and then move on to the debate motion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Do we really need our mobile phones?

Last year a company started selling mobile phones in the UK. However, these phones did not have an SMS text facility. They did not have Internet connection, personal organisers or games built in. They did not even have cameras or videos. All they had was the facility to make and receive telephone calls. The company had to produce more as they sold out so quickly! The manager explains their popularity, 'I think some people have had enough of hi-tech features. Most people really just want the basics.'

John, a businessman, once left his mobile phone at home by accident. When he realised this, he worried that no one could contact him. But soon, he saw this as an advantage and started to enjoy his 'freedom', read the newspaper and prepared for his work that day. 'I realised that life could carry on without a mobile phone!' John laughed. So is there now a negative reaction to mobile phone technology?

Recent stories from around the world suggest that phones have not lost their appeal and are often playing a very different role in society. The fastest growth rates for subscription to mobile phones are in Africa, where phones are an important tool for economic development. Businesses and entrepreneurs are using mobile phones to set up new markets for their products and improve communications on the continent. While the mobile phone is creating wealth in Africa, in other countries it has been used to prevent crime and terrorism.

In Britain, police asked the public to hand in their phones after the London terrorist bombings last year so that all videos and photographs could be analysed for clues about the bombings. 'The images taken from phones helped us to find out what happened, so we have really seen the power of technology in this tragedy,' said one policeman.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You and your classmates are preparing for a class debate on the motion *Technological advances these days have a negative influence on our lives.*

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Are you being watched?

Last year the Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, attempted to regulate the use of secret operations to spy on people in Hong Kong. These operations are known as covert surveillance and have been used by local security officials to catch criminals and uncover corruption. Mr. Tsang's proposal generated a lot of public debate on whether these operations are legal. This has also drawn the public's attention to just how easy it is to spy on others these days and what devices are available in shops to help the amateur detective.

Mr. Chan is a private detective who specialises in helping people spy on others. He looks for evidence of gambling, extra-marital affairs and illegal activities and then reports back to his clients. He says Hong Kong is full of spy gadgets. 'There are small cameras that look like cigarette packets and can take photos from 600 metres,' Mr. Chan claims. He also described pens which contain tape recorders and tiny microphones that can detect conversations through walls. Do customers need

special permission to buy these items? Mr. Chan says that the only thing necessary is cash. Spy gear is not only restricted to electronic shops. Even in toy shops such as 'Toys 'R' Us', junior spy kits can be easily bought.

However, despite the technological advances in this field, there are important legal issues to consider before an adult considers becoming a full-time private detective or 'spy'. In fact, buying the equipment is the easy part.

Installing a camera in your living room is fine but it becomes illegal in the bathroom. Tapping someone's phone calls is against the law if the spy illegally enters someone's private property to place the microphone. People who want to spy on others must check the laws on spying and privacy if they want to avoid breaking the law.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Internet access – at 9000 metres

There appears to be no end to technological advances these days. Just a few years ago, it was normal for passengers to fly from Hong Kong to Europe with nothing to do during the flight but sleep, read a book and eat. That changed with the introduction of in-flight entertainment systems which allow passengers to choose from a wide range of television programmes, films and music. Children can watch cartoons and even play video games for the whole journey. Now airlines are about to offer their passengers even more.

Most airlines already have telephones for passengers to use and, although expensive, they are popular with business people who need to make important decisions and cannot wait to arrive at their destination. However, one German airline has started to use a satellite broadband connection on its planes so that passengers can go to a certain part of the plane for Internet access. The long term aim is to provide all passengers with Internet access through the entertainment

systems built into their seats. If this becomes reality, it seems that airline travel will become more entertaining, and for business people, more productive.

However, is it all positive news? One major concern is the technical problems involved. Mobile phones and lap-top computers can interfere with the aircraft's flight controls, so Internet access is likely to make the situation more difficult for engineers and pilots. The Internet network in the air would also interfere with other telecommunication systems on the ground as the plane flies over.

Besides, some passengers would hate to see Internet facilities on planes. David flies thousands of kilometres a year on business and loves flying for one simple reason. 'I cannot be contacted by e-mail or phone! It's the only time I can truly relax and think. Do I want the Internet on flights? Definitely not.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your classmates are preparing for a class debate on the motion *Technological advances these days have a negative influence on our lives*.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Forced to leave their homes

Many people thought that awarding China the 2008 Olympics would encourage the Chinese authorities to improve human rights as the eyes of the world's media would be on the country. However, there is some doubt as to whether this is really the case.

In preparation for the Olympic Games, Beijing is undergoing rapid urban development. Many old buildings are being demolished in a drive to clean up the city. This is leading to the forced eviction of many homeowners and tenants. Zhang, a Beijing resident says, 'In the middle of the night, while we were sleeping, people came in and tore down the courtyard wall. My whole family, including three young children, all lived there. It had been our family home for years. They just came and started smashing it up and we had no choice but to leave.'

Many residents who have had to leave their

homes have tried to take legal action. Unfortunately it seems that the authorities are against them. Zhang says, 'The officials favour the interests of the developers over the residents. Courts often refuse to hear eviction cases because of pressure from local officials.' Although people are given the option of moving to new accommodation, and some of the lucky ones have received compensation, most of them are unhappy. Zhang's wife says, 'I don't want money and I don't want a new home. I was happy with my old one. It's wrong that people took it away from us. Our family had lived in that house for generations.'

Many evicted residents like Zhang and his family have taken to the streets to protest as they feel there is nothing else they can do. Zhang's son says, 'I have joined protests on three occasions and each time the police have come along and asked us to leave.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You are the editors of the school magazine. The next edition of the magazine is going to focus on the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

You are meeting to plan the edition. You should discuss the ways in which you feel the Olympic Games will have an impact on China and consider what other useful information about the Beijing Olympics you could include. You should also think about possible ways of collecting material and any photographs you will want to include to make the article appealing to readers.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

New Beijing, Great Olympics

On 13th July 2001, the International Olympic Committee voted for Beijing to host the 2008 Olympic Games. Many people opposed China's bid to host the Games due to the city's environmental problems. However, the government has adopted the slogan 'New Beijing, Great Olympics' and assures us that we will not be disappointed.

The government is now faced with huge capital outlays in order to get the city ready for the massive influx of people. US\$12 billion is earmarked for a huge environmental cleanup, which will include the closing down or relocation of polluting factories. US\$22 billion has been set aside for the construction of Olympic stadiums and transport improvements. The government is aware that there will be around 20,000 media representatives and countless spectators coming to the country and is keen to present a positive image.

Officials from the Olympic committee say

promoting Chinese culture is a key element in their plan. Mr. Zhou, a committee member said, 'China's ancient and colourful culture will enrich Olympic culture. The opening ceremony will display China's long history and culture and the closing ceremony will focus on the harmony of world cultures. I am positive that these well-planned ceremonies will capture the interest of people all over the world.'

The Olympic torch will be carried over the longest distance in Olympic history and will involve more people than ever before. It will pass through a number of the world's oldest civilisations such as Greece, Egypt, India and China and will even be taken to the summit of Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain. Mr. Zhou said, 'The carrying of the torch represents world peace and it will symbolise how the Olympic spirit can overcome all hurdles and reach all people.' With China's 3000-year long history, surely the Beijing Olympics will be a truly remarkable event.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Hong Kong hosts the horses

Last year Hong Kong was awarded the right to host the horse riding events for the 2008 Olympic Games. This announcement was met with very mixed reactions from Hong Kong people.

Some people were delighted as they think playing host to an Olympic event will boost our city's image. Athlete, Jacky Fu says, 'Our city is forever trying to improve its international reputation and holding an Olympic sporting event will do just that.' Apart from the 32,000 competitors, officials and horse lovers who will come here, there will be a huge influx of media people. 'This will put Hong Kong's name before a global audience as images will be shown on television and in newspapers all over the world.'

However, others were disappointed. They say that hosting the event will cost the city \$1.2 billion but the financial return will only be about \$350 million.

They think it is not worth it. In addition, the Hong Kong Jockey Club is providing most of the money for the event and many people think this is unfair as the organisation is our city's biggest charity provider. Terence Wu, who works for the Jockey Club says, 'How can the government allow a charitable organisation to spend so much money on a sporting event when funding for social services is being decreased?' Another complaint is that Hong Kong should be hosting sports which our athletes are good at, such as windsurfing or table tennis. Ivan Siu, a horse racing enthusiast says, 'Hong Kong is familiar with horse racing, yet people here know nothing about Olympic sports related to horse riding.'

Although feelings are divided and people would have preferred to host a more well-known sport such as football or basketball, taking part in the Olympics will no doubt show the world that Hong Kong is a great city.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The Olympic Village

In July last year construction began on the state-of-the-art Olympic village for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. The village will be at the heart of the Olympic activities as it will accommodate the athletes. Officials in Beijing are sure that local people will be very proud of the development.

The residential area of the village will consist of 42 buildings, as well as a clinic, restaurants, a library, a recreation centre, gymnasiums, swimming pools, tennis courts, basketball courts and jogging tracks. There will also be facilities for the teams to host their welcoming ceremonies. A spokesperson for the company which is in charge of the construction said, 'The village is in an excellent position. It lies to the north of Beijing and borders the Olympic Forest Park. The village will join a long list of important sites on the central axis of the city, including the Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven.'

However, some local people are not so happy with

the construction of the Olympic facilities. Xing Xuan says, 'Beijing is changing beyond recognition. The developers are moving in and flattening old buildings to make way for new and shiny ones to host the Olympics. Beijing is a beautiful city and lots of the buildings here have a special historical significance. I am afraid that some of these are disappearing and the city is losing its charm.'

A government official said, 'Chinese people will be very proud of the Olympic Village. It will be an asset to the city of Beijing. Once the Games are over, the village will be taken over by a private development company and remodelled into residential buildings. This will ensure that the village continues to serve the Beijing community long after the Games are finished.' The residential project will be on the market before the Olympic Games begin.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You are the editors of the school magazine. The next edition of the magazine is going to focus on the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

ESF – a local role

The English Schools Foundation (ESF) is the largest provider of international education in Hong Kong. Yet it is different from other international schools here, as it is partly funded by the government, and this means that, in some ways, the ESF is part of the local education system. The ESF, which manages 17 primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, has received a lot of negative publicity in recent years because of poor management. However, a major review of the Foundation has led to reforms and as a result, thousands of eager parents have placed their child's name on the schools' waiting lists.

As one parent commented, 'ESF is much more affordable than other private international schools in Hong Kong and it provides my children with a really broad and stimulating education.' Over the years, the ESF has had to adapt to changing circumstances. It was originally set up in 1966 to provide British-style education for the non-Chinese community. Yet today, it

can be seen that more than half of the students in the ESF system are local children.

One of the reasons for the ESF's popularity with local children and parents is that it offers a modern liberal education, with English being the medium of instruction. Interestingly, Putonghua is taught as the second language in schools, which pleases parents who want their children to master both languages from a young age. ESF also offers international examinations, unlike local schools.

The ESF schools place great emphasis on extra-curricular activities and community service, and special links between the ESF schools and local schools have been established. 'Last year, my son played basketball in a match organised between ESF students and local school students,' said a parent. 'The ESF is an excellent bridge between local schools and the private international school system,' he concluded.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your group has just finished doing a project on *The different types of schools available to Hong Kong students*. You want to propose to the principal that students from your school be allowed to visit other schools in Hong Kong as part of a one-day exchange. You are now meeting to plan your proposal.

You should decide which sort of school (or schools) you would most like to visit and what you could learn by spending a day there. You should also try to highlight the advantages of the exchange visit in your proposal.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

DSS – The way forward for local schools?

In the 1990's, a new government scheme provided schools with the opportunity to 'opt out' of the local education system by becoming more independent. The Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) allows schools to receive subsidies for each student from the government while, at the same time, charge school fees in order to build up the school's income. 'In a way, these schools are somewhere between the fully independent schools and the local aided schools,' said one official. Although schools have to meet certain criteria before they can charge fees, many new and old schools have chosen to join the 'DSS'. Parents and principals are excited about this initiative, which the government hopes will strengthen local education.

'We became a DSS school in order to build upon our strengths and traditions,' said a principal from one school. 'We can choose our students more carefully and provide a much better learning environment for them,' she continued. DSS schools can enjoy more freedom than other local schools in designing the curriculum, in

the way the school is managed and in how money is spent.

Despite all the excitement about DSS, some observers feel that DSS schools are not very different from other local schools, except that they can charge higher fees. This is not fair according to another principal, who says that important changes have already been made in many DSS schools. 'Some schools are using the money to recruit more teachers and reduce the size of the classes,' he said. 'Others are improving facilities, providing staff development and introducing new subjects and exams for their students.'

It seems that the government wants DSS schools to create a different culture of teaching and learning in Hong Kong. 'Through constant upgrading, evaluation and development of links with overseas schools, DSS institutions can transform the local education scene,' said a government official.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your group has just finished doing a project on *The different types of schools available to Hong Kong students*. You want to propose to the principal that students from your school be allowed to visit other schools in Hong Kong as part of a one-day exchange. You are now meeting to plan your proposal.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

International schools for an international city

Being a cosmopolitan city where many expatriates and overseas business people set up home for a few years, Hong Kong requires schools which cater for students of different nationalities and educational backgrounds. ‘If an Australian family is based in Hong Kong for two years before returning to their home country, it would not make much sense for the children to study at a local school,’ said one educationalist. In Hong Kong, one can find Canadian, Korean, Australian, Japanese, French and German schools. These have been set up by their national governments or established by private individuals and organisations.

Most of these international schools are independent and operate outside the local education system. They also possess some interesting features such as small class sizes and more interactive teaching methods, when compared to other schools in Hong Kong. Students in the international schools were mostly expatriates but in recent years, this has changed. An increasing number of students are locals.

So what makes these international schools so popular with local Chinese students? ‘In Hong Kong there are still many youngsters who do not write or speak Chinese because they have grown up overseas and have recently returned to Hong Kong,’ said a teacher. It means that the families have to find alternatives to the local school system. Another reason is that there are often long queues for places at English Schools Foundation (ESF) schools and Direct Subsidy Schools (DSS), which charge lower fees.

Unlike the DSS and ESF schools, some private international schools charge more than \$10,000 a month. Despite the cost, parents are willing to pay for the advantages of studying in an international educational context. ‘With the globalisation of trade, families can be transferred to other cities like Beijing and London quite easily so international schools have a huge market of Chinese students to choose from,’ said one expert.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your group has just finished doing a project on *The different types of schools available to Hong Kong students*. You want to propose to the principal that students from your school be allowed to visit other schools in Hong Kong as part of a one-day exchange. You are now meeting to plan your proposal.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Special schools for special needs

In Hong Kong, schools have been established for children with physical disabilities. There are also an increasing number of schools which cater for the many students who have special educational needs. For instance, these are often students who have learning difficulties such as dyslexia (reading difficulties) and attention disorders. Some schools today even provide specialist support for pupils with more severe disabilities such as autism and Down's syndrome. These special schools play a crucial role in the Hong Kong education sector but other local schools are also providing education for children with special needs.

This means that parents of these children have more options these days compared to the past. The government has attempted to integrate children with learning difficulties and disabilities into the local school system to ensure that these children are not isolated from their peers. Almost 300 schools had agreed to offer integrated education for children with special needs by the end of 2005.

Unfortunately, problems have arisen. The government does not want to identify schools that integrate these students because, sadly, some parents do not want their own children to study in the same school as children with special needs. In addition, many teachers feel that they cannot cope with the increased pressure because of limited resources and experience.

In the private sector, there are other possibilities. Some special schools have schemes like the Rainbow Project which help young children with autism. This project has been so successful that there are over 50 children on the waiting list. The English Schools Foundation, a group of government subsidised schools, also provides specialised support for students with learning difficulties in all of its schools. As one teacher commented; 'There has been enormous improvement in special needs education in Hong Kong. We are getting there!'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your group has just finished doing a project on *The different types of schools available to Hong Kong students*. You want to propose to the principal that students from your school be allowed to visit other schools in Hong Kong as part of a one-day exchange. You are now meeting to plan your proposal.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Disneyland: hit or miss?

The eyes of the world were on Disneyland last year when it opened. Yet, some people in Hong Kong were keen to criticise the park for as many reasons as possible. Of course, a great deal of the taxpayer's money has been invested in Disneyland so Hong Kong people are entitled to have high expectations, but is it really necessary to complain so much?

The most frequent complaint has been about the long queues for the attractions. The park's capacity is 30,000 and many people believe this is too high. 'There were long queues for all of the rides,' said Gigi Wu. 'Sometimes we had to wait for two hours. It was like paying \$350 for having to suffer.' Stanley Cheung disagrees. He has visited the park three times and says this problem can be solved. 'I always go during the week rather than at weekends and I plan which rides to go on to make the most of my time. I also use the Fast Pass

system, which means you arrive at an attraction at a specified time rather than queue.'

Admission tickets are \$295 or \$350 depending on whether it is peak time or not. Most people admit that this price is quite acceptable. In fact it is the cheapest of all the Disney theme parks. 'The price is reasonable so people can afford to experience the Disney magic for a day,' says Fiona Lau, a student. However, she adds, 'Hong Kong Disneyland is really small. It's only about half the size of Ocean Park.'

Pollution aside, few people have complained about the nightly fireworks display. 'The fireworks are outstanding. They feature music and wonderful visual effects,' said Benny Lui. He added, 'Disneyland is good for Hong Kong. It promotes family togetherness and fun, so I believe the benefits will far outweigh the costs.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You and your group members have decided to take part in a debate on the motion *Hong Kong Disneyland is not a good thing for this city*.

At this stage you do not know which side of the motion your team will support and so are preparing arguments both FOR and AGAINST the motion. You should decide how you will organise and present your arguments.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

How magical is the kingdom?

Back in the late 1990's when Disney was looking to build a new theme park in Asia, Hong Kong was desperate to win the deal. The city was suffering from the effects of the Asian financial crisis, which had resulted in a high unemployment rate. This meant the government was prepared to take big risks and provide favourable conditions to secure a deal with Disney. Now people are asking whether the \$23 billion in public funds, which the government invested in Disneyland, was well spent.

The government reassures us that Disneyland will pump an extra \$148 billion into Hong Kong's economy in the next four decades. What is more, it will provide 36,000 jobs and it will allow the tourism industry to further develop and mature. Disneyland spokesperson, Vanessa Gunn says, 'Families from the rest of Asia will travel to Hong Kong to visit Disneyland. These people will stay in the city for a few days and it will boost the tourism industry overall.'

However, economists are not so optimistic. They say that it is impossible to accurately estimate how much money the park will pull in until it has been up and running for some time. They also criticise the park's recruitment policies. They say Disneyland has hired high-quality service providers, and not the long-term unemployed who have been hardest hit by the financial crisis.

Disneyland has also been criticised for exporting American culture to other countries. Anson Lam, a secondary school student who visited the park on the opening day says, 'We must start valuing our own Hong Kong Chinese culture and promoting how good it really is. There were so many other ways the government could have spent the money. It could have created a theme park to showcase Chinese culture without relying on an American brand name.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Wed in wonderland

Couples in search of an enchanted wedding will find it at Disneyland. Hong Kong Disneyland has put together several Disney Fairy Tale Wedding packages: crystal, emerald and diamond. The price of a dream wedding starts at \$7,888 for a table of twelve guests and that includes an evening banquet, a room in the Disneyland Hotel and a wedding cake.

People who wish to personalise their wedding even further can pay extra to have Disney characters such as Mickey and Minnie Mouse make a special appearance. The wedding receptions are held inside the ballroom, which has a grand entrance, a sweeping staircase and crystal chandeliers. Eva Tse married her boyfriend of five years at the theme park earlier this year. She said, 'The wedding celebration really was magical. I felt like a princess. I would recommend other couples to get married at Disneyland as it makes the day very special.'

Her husband, Raymond was very happy to get married there too. He said, 'Disneyland is both a lucky and a beautiful place to get married. Its natural beauty is stunning as it is surrounded by mountains and faces the sea.' A fung shui expert helped to design the park so the whole resort is oriented to capture the good energy flowing over the hills and out to the South China Sea. According to Raymond, 'The entire park has excellent fung shui so it's an ideal place to get married.'

A spokesperson for Disney said that the company respects the local tradition and culture. 'We appreciate that fung shui is an important part of China's history and culture and that's why we called in a fung shui expert to help with the design of the park. We think it is vital to create the right fung shui to bring peace, harmony, money and good fortune to our park.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Is it really a fantasy land?

Zhu Bing used to work from 7:45 am to well past midnight. Some days he even worked until 5:00 am, making it a 22-hour working day. This left him feeling exhausted. He also suffered from nightmares about his boss yelling at him. Mr. Zhu, who was 19 years old at the time, said he had to put up with these working conditions because money was deducted from his salary if he did not work overtime. Eventually, he had to resign due to ill health.

Mr. Zhu's employer was Dongguan Lam Sun Plastic Products, one of four Guangdong manufacturers of Disney products suspected of exploiting workers. This illegal and inhumane treatment of employees was uncovered by a Hong Kong activist group called Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour (Sacom). Last year members of Sacom travelled into China and interviewed 120 workers from the factories. They discovered that employers did not pay a minimum wage or provide paid holidays and overtime pay. 'There were

also very high accident rates in some of these factories,' said Judy Lee, a member of Sacom.

Managers of the four factories have denied the claims. However, Walt Disney Company spokesperson Alannah Goss said the company takes the claims very seriously and is investigating them. She added, 'We were not aware of the violations that have been identified in the factories.'

Disney Hunter, another student activist group has also accused Disneyland of labour exploitation as well as environmental vandalism and cultural colonisation. The group organised several protests last year around the time that Disneyland opened. Mr. Tsang, a City University student and key member of Disney Hunter said, 'Disneyland portrays itself as a fantasy land, but in fact it is a dirty business. It should be forced to publish a list of its manufacturers' names so the public can monitor the factories.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate A**Preparation Time** (*Total time: 10 minutes*)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Dinosaurs found in shopping arcade!

For six weeks last year, local people flocked to a shopping centre in Taikoo Shing to experience a close encounter with eight dinosaur fossils that are over one hundred million years old. The exhibition was amazingly popular with over 200,000 people visiting on one day alone. The dinosaur fossils, which had been specially loaned by two museums in China, created an awesome sight for shoppers and visitors to the mall. 'I thought I had been transported to a different time in history,' said a visitor as he stood beneath one massive skeleton.

The Chinese Dinosaur Fossils Exhibition is the third to be held in Hong Kong. Two others were held at the Museum of History and the Science Museum in 1985 and 1999 respectively. However, last year's exhibition attracted far more people because of where it was held. One visitor said that she would not bother visiting a museum but found the idea of giant dinosaurs in her favourite shopping centre as 'too attractive to miss'.

How and why did they come to Hong Kong? The management of the shopping centre asked for permission from authorities in China to show the dinosaur fossils, and were surprised when their request was accepted. Within a few weeks, the precious remains were transported in giant containers to Hong Kong by ship and train. The exhibition required additional security as well as mainland experts on dinosaurs to answer questions from the public.

Not everyone was happy with the exhibition. Some staff from museums in Hong Kong felt that the exhibition was not educational enough and was really just a clever attempt to get more customers into the shopping centre. However, it did not matter to Mrs. Chan, who described the dinosaurs as 'amazing' and promised to bring her children, grandchildren and other members of her family to see them.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

There have been an increasing number of exhibitions in Hong Kong in recent years. As members of the Hong Kong Youth Federation, you are concerned that most of them do not appeal to young people. You have decided to send in a proposal to the government suggesting different types of exhibitions that would attract young people.

You may like to start by discussing some of the exhibitions that are commonly held here. You should then suggest some exhibitions which might appeal to the youth in this city and explain why you think these exhibitions would be popular with young people.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Making a lasting impression

One of the most popular exhibitions ever held in Hong Kong took place last year when the Hong Kong Museum of Art hosted an art collection entitled 'Treasures from the National Collection from France'. In total, forty-eight masterpieces were loaned by a museum in Paris and included the work of Degas and Monet, famous Impressionist painters from the nineteenth century. Thousands of people queued every day to see the paintings. Over 700 schools arranged special tours of the exhibition and the response from the younger visitors was extremely positive. The exhibition, it seems, inspired everyone who went to see it.

One teacher praised the Museum of Art for bringing the exhibition to Hong Kong. 'Local students need to see paintings like these close up. Pictures from books and the Internet are just not good enough.' One of her students agreed that she could see the depth of the work in each painting by looking at the colours and the

texture. Art teachers in local schools reported that many students were so excited that they asked to have more painting lessons in the curriculum.

One reason for the success of the exhibition was the efforts made by the staff at the Museum of Art to make the display of paintings appealing. Stories about the famous painters were told by local experts and an online education programme was set up. Audio links were provided so that students could listen to lectures in English, Putonghua and Cantonese. To reinforce the 'French' theme, even the restaurant in the Museum was decorated to make it look like one from Paris.

Such exhibitions appear to have a long lasting effect on all people who see them. 'My students asked so many questions and expressed opinions on all the paintings,' said another teacher. 'It was a unique learning opportunity.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

There have been an increasing number of exhibitions in Hong Kong in recent years. As members of the Hong Kong Youth Federation, you are concerned that most of them do not appeal to young people. You have decided to send in a proposal to the government suggesting *different* types of exhibitions that would attract young people.

You may like to start by discussing some of the exhibitions that are commonly held here. You should then suggest some exhibitions which might appeal to the youth in this city and explain why you think these exhibitions would be popular with young people.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

When cute becomes art

Many people believe that art exhibitions should only display traditional forms of art, but recent displays in Hong Kong have shown that modern art can include the most surprising items. In August last year, for example, the Hong Kong Arts Centre held the 'Hide and Seek' exhibition, which celebrated the 30th birthday of the world famous Hello Kitty cartoon character. Another display hosted by the Heritage Museum focused on highlighting different ways of using Hong Kong's famous red, blue and white shopping bags! So why have commercial products become art forms?

One of the organisers of the Hello Kitty exhibition claimed that the cartoon character was 'an important cultural symbol which has become part of our lives'. Sanrio, the Japanese toy maker behind Hello Kitty, also feels that their famous pink, but mouthless product has a special relationship with people of all ages in Hong Kong. The exhibition displayed over 300 Hello Kitty products ranging from television sets to telephones and

cars. Valuable collectors' items were also displayed and they fascinated the crowds.

Similar arguments about cultural symbols were presented when a huge display of shopping bags was exhibited last year. The famous red, white and blue striped bags were turned into curtains, carpets, pictures and furniture items for the display. The designer of the exhibition described the bag as 'a Hong Kong icon which has become part of our local culture and represents the spirit of our city'. Mrs. Tsang, a visitor to the exhibition, agreed. 'These shopping bags are all around us so the artist has shown how important they are to Hong Kong people.'

Both exhibitions were very well received by the public. This shows that commodities and everyday products can become part of culture and be exhibited in museums. 'This is my type of art,' said one Hello Kitty fan.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

There have been an increasing number of exhibitions in Hong Kong in recent years. As members of the Hong Kong Youth Federation, you are concerned that most of them do not appeal to young people. You have decided to send in a proposal to the government suggesting different types of exhibitions that would attract young people.

You may like to start by discussing some of the exhibitions that are commonly held here. You should then suggest some exhibitions which might appeal to the youth in this city and explain why you think these exhibitions would be popular with young people.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

A world-class exhibition hub?

Hong Kong has long been regarded as one of the most important and one of the most popular cities in the world for hosting major exhibitions. With millions of square metres for hire in exhibition centres all over Hong Kong, it is amazing that even more venues for exhibitions are being built today. One reason is that it is not only art and ancient objects that are being exhibited. The city also plays host to numerous international exhibitions which showcase jewellery, hotels, furniture, jobs, education, comics and books, among many others.

One of the organisers of an annual jewellery fair describes the importance of Hong Kong as an exhibition centre. 'The fair that we host attracts more buyers and sellers than any other because of the modern facilities, superb transport system and world-class hotels,' said Mr. Lo. The exhibitions bring in millions of dollars in revenue from overseas visitors but they also bring controversy at times. Despite tight security, international

thieves have still managed to grab precious jewels from under the noses of exhibitors and the police.

Exhibitions are not only popular with overseas clients. Hundreds of thousands of locals visit comic and book exhibitions held in Wan Chai's Convention and Exhibition Centre. These allow people the chance to purchase rare and special editions of foreign comics. 'It's the only way I can buy collectible editions from Japan,' said one teenage fan of the comic fair.

Education fairs also allow parents and children to speak with officials from prospective schools and universities, both in Hong Kong and from across the globe. The principal of a private school in England claimed that the education exhibition in Hong Kong was the most important one in the school calendar. 'Every year, about 20,000 people visit our stand and through this event we attract some of our best students.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

There have been an increasing number of exhibitions in Hong Kong in recent years. As members of the Hong Kong Youth Federation, you are concerned that most of them do not appeal to young people. You have decided to send in a proposal to the government suggesting different types of exhibitions that would attract young people.

You may like to start by discussing some of the exhibitions that are commonly held here. You should then suggest some exhibitions which might appeal to the youth in this city and explain why you think these exhibitions would be popular with young people.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

The examiners cannot answer any questions about the instructions or the task you have to discuss. If you have any questions, you may discuss them among yourselves and that will be an acceptable part of your group discussion, and will be assessed.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

Candidate A**Preparation Time** (*Total time: 10 minutes*)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The sky's the limit

What do you do on a long-haul flight? Watch a movie, read a book, browse through the in-flight magazine or take a nap? Well, all of this may be about to change.

Airlines realise that their passengers need to be entertained while in the sky so they are coming up with new things for them to do. Virgin Atlantic is now offering in-flight Japanese language courses, while Singapore Airlines is offering lessons in 11 languages including Cantonese, French, Spanish and Japanese. Flight attendant Michelle Chen says, 'The lessons are fun and interesting and include self-tests, games and pronunciation exercises. Passengers who complete a whole course receive a certificate in the mail.'

And this is not the only change. The use of mobile phones on aircraft is usually forbidden as they may interfere with sensitive navigation equipment. However, American Airlines recently announced that it

has developed technology which allows passengers to make in-flight mobile phone calls. A spokesperson for the airline said, 'This technology is very welcome as business people want to be productive while travelling and this means they need to be able to use their mobile phones. Plus, other people may just want to call home to let their family know they are safe.'

Not everybody feels the same way though. A survey in the USA found that Americans overwhelmingly oppose the use of mobile phones on aircraft. 63% said the current ban should remain while only 21% said it should be lifted. 'Passenger rage is a worry,' said Judy Parker, spokesperson for the Association of Flight Attendants. 'Travellers could become angry and even violent if there is no escape from the chatting of fellow passengers.' Two possible solutions would be to ban phone calls during certain portions of a flight or to make some sections of the aircraft 'quiet zones' where phone calls are prohibited.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

The Hong Kong Airport Authority is holding a competition to raise interest in air travel among people in Hong Kong. Participants need to produce a magazine called *Air Travel Now and In The Future*. Your group wants to enter the competition.

You are meeting to discuss the content of your magazine. You should decide on different areas of interest to cover in the magazine. You may also want to think of ways to make the magazine more attractive to readers.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Low-cost air travel shrinks a continent

Thanks to the large number of budget airlines now in operation, Europeans can travel around their continent cheaply and easily. For example, a return flight from London to Paris only costs about HK\$600.

This revolution in air travel has transformed European lifestyles as most of Europe is now within reach for most of its citizens. For example, people who could not leave the Soviet Union until the early 1990's, now fly to London for weekend shopping trips. Budget air travel has also given a welcome boost to towns which were previously not popular tourist destinations, for example, Bristol in south west England and Dortmund in Germany. Millie Smith, a flight attendant for easyJet, the largest low-cost carrier in Europe, says, 'As soon as a budget carrier starts flying to an airport, people will go there. People are willing to go to places they haven't even heard of just to see what they are like. The tickets are cheap and a weekend away is always welcome so

people think they have got nothing to lose.'

Europeans have not only changed their travel choices but the way they live. Many British people have bought homes in France and Spain. 'I can be at my second home in the south of France in about three hours door to door,' says Bill Woods, a Londoner. Meanwhile across the 25 countries of the European Union, marriage between different nationalities is becoming increasingly popular. This could be due to cheap air travel.

European air travel has become a powerful means of unifying and modernising Europe. Petra Kovak from Bulgaria says that thanks to cheap flights, she travels to other parts of Europe such as England and France at least once a month. 'Europe now feels like a small friendly town. Without the low-cost airlines, I would feel isolated and cut off from the rest of the continent.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

The Hong Kong Airport Authority is holding a competition to raise interest in air travel among people in Hong Kong. Participants need to produce a magazine called *Air Travel Now and In The Future*. Your group wants to enter the competition.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Is bigger better?

Later this year, the new Airbus A380 will join Singapore Airlines' fleet. This aircraft, which will be the world's largest passenger airliner, can carry up to 850 passengers.

The triple-decker jet is Airbus' answer to air travel congestion and projections that passenger traffic will double in 15 years. Airbus already has orders for 150 of these new aircraft. The arrival of this huge aircraft has been met with excitement from many people in the industry but also with concern from others. Eryl Smith, director of planning and development at London's Heathrow Airport says, 'It will change the face of long-haul travel, especially the high-volume international routes such as London to New York. It will be easier for passengers to get a seat on busy routes.'

People who were lucky enough to be on board the aircraft when it was first tested said it was very comfortable. With 49% more floor space and only 35%

more seating than the previous largest aircraft, Airbus is ensuring wider seats and aisles for more passenger comfort. A spokesperson for Airbus said individual planes will be tailored specifically to meet the needs of the carriers. 'We can include flat beds rather than just reclining seats, shower facilities, a bar area, wireless network and so much more. It just depends on what the airlines want.' The A380 is also more fuel efficient, so it can fly longer distances without refuelling.

However, residents near Paris' Charles-de-Gaulle Airport complained about the noise pollution the aircraft generated. A French acoustics expert said he recorded a maximum sound level of 88 decibels on take off whereas a level of 40 is normal at the airport. Other people are concerned about safety. Frequent flyer Jack Hope says, 'The planes are too big. What would happen in an emergency? How can more than 800 people be quickly and safely evacuated?'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

The Hong Kong Airport Authority is holding a competition to raise interest in air travel among people in Hong Kong. Participants need to produce a magazine called *Air Travel Now and In The Future*. Your group wants to enter the competition.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Fly for less

The no frills, low-cost air travel trend has been alive in Europe for a number of years. However, this phenomenon is only just becoming popular in Asia and it has not really hit Hong Kong yet.

AirAsia, a Malaysian budget carrier, is the region's most successful low-cost airline. AirAsia flies to some Asian cities such as Phuket and Kuala Lumpur and is hoping to add Hong Kong to the list soon. Budget carriers generally choose to use cheaper airports such as Singapore and Macau but avoid airports like Chek Lap Kok, which charge airlines very high landing fees. However, AirAsia is hoping to strike a deal with the Hong Kong Airport Authority and this may mean other budget carriers will soon fly to and from Hong Kong.

Major airlines are concerned that their profits will suffer as travellers choose the cheaper carriers. Traditionally the people in Hong Kong who can afford to

travel look for quality airlines with good service, such as Cathay Pacific and Singapore Airlines. However, Jimmy Fung, a businessman who frequently flies around the region thinks that passengers will choose a low fare over good service. He is delighted that he will be able to save money in the future and believes that cheap flights to and from Hong Kong will be good for the territory. 'More people will come to Hong Kong to do business, and of course more tourists will also visit our city if cheap flights are available.'

Amanda Brown, a spokesperson for easyJet, the biggest budget carrier in Europe says that the availability of cheap flights changes people's way of life. 'Once low-cost flights are available, people who had not really considered travelling overseas before, because it was too expensive for them, have the chance to do so now.' Surely this can only be good for Hong Kong and its people.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

The Hong Kong Airport Authority is holding a competition to raise interest in air travel among people in Hong Kong. Participants need to produce a magazine called *Air Travel Now and In The Future*. Your group wants to enter the competition.

You are meeting to discuss the content of your magazine. You should decide on different areas of interest to cover in the magazine. You may also want to think of ways to make the magazine more attractive to readers.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Battle of the boys

Last summer, two boys dominated cinemas and bookshops and delighted millions of people around the world. The first one was born with special powers in magic and wizardry. The other grew up in poverty but ended up being given the greatest chocolate factory in the world by its owner. The first *Harry Potter* novel was published in 1997 while *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was first published 30 years earlier. Both novels were turned into successful movies and both Harry and Charlie have appealed to adults and children alike. Just what else do they have in common, however?

The simple answer is not a lot. Although the two boys face hardships, have amazing adventures and enjoy success; they come from very different backgrounds. Harry Potter inherits supernatural powers from his parents and is destined to be a great wizard. Although he loses his parents and is basically alone in the world, he is safe from evil because of his magical gifts. In short, Harry Potter was born with fantastic powers.

Charlie, however, is described by Roald Dahl, the author of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, as 'an ordinary boy' but he has a difficult childhood. Charlie lives in a tiny house with a large family. His four grandparents share one bed and his father is unemployed, so they can only afford watery soup. Life is harsh for Charlie until he finds a golden ticket that allows him to visit Willy Wonka's amazing chocolate factory. Here, he earns riches beyond his imagination because he is such a good boy.

A fan, Jane, described how she preferred the *Charlie* story because it shows how good characters can overcome problems by working hard and being honest. 'He has no supernatural powers and is not even clever – I can relate to Charlie more than Harry!' said Jane.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your group are members of the school's Book and Film Club and you are meeting to plan some activities under a programme called *Learning about life from films and books*.

You might like to start the discussion by choosing some books and films that will encourage students to think more about life around them. You should also discuss how these books and films help people to cope with life's challenges and suggest some ways of promoting their themes through activities.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Battle of the girls

When people think of female authors, one name that comes to mind is J.K. Rowling. Although she has achieved international fame and success, there are many other famous female writers who may have been overlooked. Bonnie, a local Form Five student doing an English project on female writers, found some other names that should be placed alongside Rowling's. 'I love the work of Eva Ibbotson, especially *Journey to the River Sea*', said the student. She also picked a Chinese writer called Adeline Yen Mah, who has become famous for her book called *Chinese Cinderella*. 'I would recommend both books to anyone,' said Bonnie.

The work by Adeline Yen Mah says much about Chinese society and politics and is a true story. Just like the famous fairy tale *Cinderella*, it describes how Adeline, the youngest member of the family, was dominated by a cruel stepmother. Bonnie claims that the story, which shows the importance of human character as

well as education, is a powerful one. Adeline was beaten by her stepmother and even neglected at times but she worked hard, read books and eventually became a doctor and a writer. 'Adeline's achievements inspired me because of what she achieved,' she said.

Although Bonnie prefers *Chinese Cinderella* because it is a true story, she argues that *Journey to the River Sea* is a fantastic adventure novel. The book won a major prize as the best children's book in 2001 and tells the story of a young girl's adventures in the jungles of South America. The story has lovable and bad characters as well as a clever plot.

'I liked *Journey to the River Sea* because it shows that if we have an open mind about places and people, we can find the beauty that is all around us,' Bonnie said. She claims that this book is even better than *Harry Potter*!

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You and your group are members of the school's Book and Film Club and you are meeting to plan some activities under a programme called *Learning about life from films and books*.

You might like to start the discussion by choosing some books and films that will encourage students to think more about life around them. You should also discuss how these books and films help people to cope with life's challenges and suggest some ways of promoting their themes through activities.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Books to help

These days more writers are producing books that set out to make people think carefully about their own lives and not simply to describe those of others. Some of these books have become bestsellers and in recent years, two have stood out. The first book, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, was written by Mitch Albom and focuses on how we see our lives on earth through death. The second book is called *Who Moved My Cheese?* Written by Dr. Spencer Johnson, it uses funny characters to show how to deal with change in life.

Mitch Albom puts forward the simple idea that every ending like death is also a beginning. In the story a man dies and goes to heaven where his life on earth is explained to him by five people who had played an important part in his life. 'This story made me consider the meaning of my life as well as what is waiting in heaven,' said a publisher. He recommended the story to

people of all ages, especially those interested in the meaning of life.

The second story has a lighter tone but an equally important message. Many people find change in life exciting but there are others who see it as something to be afraid of. *Who Moved My Cheese?* deals with this issue by describing how four creatures living in a maze deal with changes centred around a piece of cheese. The cheese represents things in our lives like jobs, education and relationships.

The book, which has also become a film, is so popular because it makes readers think about how they can deal with changes in life with a more positive attitude. 'In fact both books make you look at life in a different way, and that is a powerful thing to achieve,' said the publisher.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your group are members of the school's Book and Film Club and you are meeting to plan some activities under a programme called *Learning about life from films and books*.

You might like to start the discussion by choosing some books and films that will encourage students to think more about life around them. You should also discuss how these books and films help people to cope with life's challenges and suggest some ways of promoting their themes through activities.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Books to inspire

People read books mostly for pleasure or as a way to escape from their daily lives. But, there are also books written about real people who have overcome massive obstacles in life. These books touch the hearts of readers, who often feel inspired by the bravery shown in the books. One local teacher, Mr. Lo, recommends two books about famous girls to all his students. ‘The story of Helen Keller should be read by everyone and I also urge my class to read *The Diary of Anne Frank* because both books show young people what courage really is.’

Mr. Lo believes that students can gain much through books like these. He argues that youngsters these days are mostly concerned with their own lives and do not stop to think of how lucky they really are. ‘Helen Keller grew up blind and deaf and yet she was hungry to learn a language in order to communicate with the world around her,’ said the teacher. He reminds his students

that she actually wrote many books including her autobiographical stories, *Light in My Darkness* and *The Story of My Life*. One student was deeply touched, ‘Keller’s bravery taught me to appreciate my own gifts more and not to take things for granted.’

The Diary of Anne Frank, first published in 1947, is the true story of a young Jewish girl hiding in a tiny room from the enemy during World War II. She died before her sixteenth birthday but her diary gave the world a shocking but moving account of a tragic war. It is now a classic.

Mr. Lo still gets emotional when he reads from the Diary to his class. ‘Anne Frank had a terribly short life, yet she wrote with so much spirit and compassion showing that good triumphs over evil if we just have faith.’

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your group are members of the school’s Book and Film Club and you are meeting to plan some activities under a programme called *Learning about life from films and books*.

You might like to start the discussion by choosing some books and films that will encourage students to think more about life around them. You should also discuss how these books and films help people to cope with life’s challenges and suggest some ways of promoting their themes through activities.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Benefits for all concerned

Anybody who works at a university in Hong Kong will tell you that over the past few years there have been more and more overseas students on campuses. This is due to the drive to boost internationalisation of higher education in Hong Kong and also the recruitment of students from the mainland. Local students, overseas students and educators alike all seem to agree that the increase in foreign student numbers is very welcome.

Although some students from the mainland win scholarships to study in Hong Kong, most have to pay full fees as well as living expenses. Liao Xiangyu from Chinese University explains, 'It is very expensive to study in Hong Kong. It costs around 400,000 yuan for a three-year degree course. This means only the students from rich families can apply.'

Despite this, most of the mainland students admit that studying in Hong Kong has many advantages, the

most important being the opportunity to improve one's English language skills. Jim Songchap, a Thai student at Baptist University explains, 'The university teaches in English and this is very important to me. Good English skills are necessary for travelling abroad or getting a good job in the future.'

Many teachers in Hong Kong feel that more scholarships and exchange programmes should be available for foreign students. They think it is important to attract talented students, who may not necessarily come from rich families. Tim Brown, a lecturer at City University says, 'It is very beneficial for us to have overseas students in our classes as this forces the local students to speak in English and it also means that they become more aware of the world around them. Many of our students have never had the chance to travel overseas so it's great if they can learn about different countries, cultures and societies from their classmates.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your principal is keen to promote internationalisation in your school as she feels that students need to be prepared to study and work in multi-cultural environments. She has asked your group to help think of activities and events to increase their understanding of other cultures.

You are meeting to discuss your ideas. You need to think of ways to promote multi-cultural awareness among students. You should choose the best three ideas and discuss the details of how to run or organise these activities throughout the school year.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The international language

Universities in Hong Kong are increasing efforts to foster internationalisation among their students. Projects include exchange programmes and promotion of courses overseas. As English is the international language, it is recognised that students who wish to take part in these programmes must be fluent in the language. City University (CityU) is running various programmes to encourage communication in English on campus.

The English Language Centre at CityU has been employing 'gappers' for many years. 'Gappers' are students from the United Kingdom who are taking a 'gap' year or a year off between A-levels and university. Mark Peters, a former gapper says, 'We organised fun activities for the students and because we are of a similar age we related to each other very well.' These activities are called Practical Language Activities (PLAs) and include conversation practice, discussions about current affairs and music appreciation.

Students from different departments in the

university come to the PLAs to speak English in a relaxed setting. Many of the foreign students in the university take part as they are keen to meet new people. Tutor Jeff Campbell says, 'PLAs work really well as the students can use their English in a real social environment. It's great to see local students mixing with students of different nationalities and learning about new cultures. Many of the Hong Kong students have never interacted with foreign students before.'

The English Language Mentoring Scheme is another initiative at CityU. Students who take part in the scheme are placed in groups of around six people, including a staff member, according to their interests. Mentoring groups choose when and where to meet. The only condition is that they all communicate in English. Some groups go out for dinner together, while others go hiking. Student Angel Lim, who took part last year, says, 'Our mentoring group did lots of fun things, we even went camping on Lantau. I am much more confident speaking English now.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your principal is keen to promote internationalisation in your school as she feels that students need to be prepared to study and work in multi-cultural environments. She has asked your group to help think of activities and events to increase their understanding of other cultures.

You are meeting to discuss your ideas. You need to think of ways to promote multi-cultural awareness among students. You should choose the best three ideas and discuss the details of how to run or organise these activities throughout the school year.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Relax the quota

Last September, more than 1,000 mainland students from 17 different provinces enrolled in undergraduate programmes in Hong Kong universities. This figure has risen steadily since universities in our city started accepting students from the mainland four years ago. However, the University Grants Committee only allows Hong Kong institutions to recruit one in ten of its undergraduates from outside the city and most educators believe the quota should be increased.

Victor Fung, the University of Hong Kong's council chairman, thinks universities in our city need to be more international in order to meet future challenges. 'If we attract the brightest students we will also attract the brightest teachers. Talent attracts talent.' He adds that almost 5,000 students from the mainland applied to study at the University of Hong Kong last year, but places were only given to 250.

Professor Pang of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology thinks that it is a shame that

universities in our territory are forced to turn away talented students due to the restrictions of the government-imposed quota. He believes the government should increase the quota to 25%. Other professors at the university agree with him and admit that they had to reject students with extremely good academic backgrounds, who performed very well in their interviews, just because of the 10% restriction.

It is certain that in this era of internationalisation, recruiting more overseas students and creating a multi-cultural environment on our university campuses will bring many benefits. Victor Fung said that universities in Hong Kong should take advantage of the city's position as a bridge between east and west and become centres for training the next generation of commercial, industrial and medical leaders. However, some local students do not agree and fear that there will be fewer places for them if more overseas students are admitted.

Part Two – Group Discussion. (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your principal is keen to promote internationalisation in your school as she feels that students need to be prepared to study and work in multi-cultural environments. She has asked your group to help think of activities and events to increase their understanding of other cultures.

You are meeting to discuss your ideas. You need to think of ways to promote multi-cultural awareness among students. You should choose the best three ideas and discuss the details of how to run or organise these activities throughout the school year.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Cultures come together

Since the University Grants Committee's call to promote the internationalisation of higher education in Hong Kong, all of the universities in our territory have been implementing new plans to achieve this.

City University has undertaken a number of steps. It has been strengthening international ties to boost student exchange programmes with overseas universities. It is also promoting its undergraduate and postgraduate courses overseas in the hope of recruiting more students from outside Hong Kong. On campus, there are activities to help prepare local students for internationalisation and there is a new unit called the International and Non-local Students Office, which provides services for mainland and overseas students.

Douglas Wong, president of the Students' Union at CityU said, 'Quite a lot of students are satisfied with just completing their three-year studies. They do not make use of the opportunities to communicate with overseas students.' However, it is important that students

understand the benefits of internationalisation for their future. According to Betty Choi of the English Language Centre, 'In this era of globalisation, most companies, whether big or small, are internationalised. If students do not understand this trend, the consequences are obvious.'

Increasing the number of non-local students on campus automatically creates an international atmosphere. This means local students will be able to communicate with people of other cultures and their cultural sensitivity will be developed as they study and possibly even live together. Many staff think that the university should hold more cultural activities such as African Night or French Week to encourage students to care more about the international community and respect cultural diversity. Another idea is to invite speakers from various countries to come and talk about culture and life in their country. Betty Choi says, 'These kinds of activities will definitely widen our students' horizons and make them more aware of the world around them.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your principal is keen to promote internationalisation in your school as she feels that students need to be prepared to study and work in multi-cultural environments. She has asked your group to help think of activities and events to increase their understanding of other cultures.

You are meeting to discuss your ideas. You need to think of ways to promote multi-cultural awareness among students. You should choose the best three ideas and discuss the details of how to run or organise these activities throughout the school year.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

Candidate A**Preparation Time** (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

An evil influence?

In 2001, nearly US\$10 billion dollars was spent on buying video games, and according to research there are over 40 million homes in the United States with video game consoles. Another international study found that American teenage boys spend around 18 hours a week playing video games. In light of these statistics it is not surprising to hear that Hillary Clinton, a well-known American politician, has accused video games of 'stealing the innocence of our children'. Other commentators have been more critical with some arguing that video games can turn children into violent monsters.

Games like *Doom*, *Grand Theft-Auto* and *Street Fighter* have received an enthusiastic response from players but critics of video games are worried about the effects of the games on youngsters' psychological well-being. A psychologist from an American university pointed to the amount of killing that takes place in many video games. 'The willingness to kill another person isn't natural behaviour, yet such games let players

rehearse the act of murder on screen until it seems real,' said Dr. Grossman. He believes that children are not born violent but such games can change their personality to make them violent.

Adding weight to Grossman's view is a study which found that video games lead to more aggression in children. In fact, video games have been cited as a possible cause of a number of real shootings in schools in America.

A teacher from the UK wonders why these games focus on killing so much. She believes that playing these games on a regular basis can de-sensitise children. In other words, the more they play, the less shocking they find the images and the more normal they find the violence. 'Are we trying to bring up a generation of child soldiers ready to kill anything that moves?' she asked.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your classmates are taking part in an IT project at school. You have been asked to come up with some ideas for a video game that would be fun, educational and appealing to teenagers.

In your group, you might like to start by discussing the game you would like to develop as well as some of the main features you want to include in your video game. You should also consider the different ways to promote it. Justify your arguments.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Just how bad are video games?

The argument that video games can turn angelic children into evil monsters has become popular in recent years. However, is aggression in children the only negative influence? Not according to experts in child psychology. They worry more about the social and developmental dangers of video games on young people. Many parents also worry that their children spend hours in their rooms only playing video games. There is growing evidence to suggest that these concerns are justified.

A leading psychologist claims that violent video games set a very bad role model for youngsters. 'It is natural for children to be easily influenced as they grow up and violent imagery from these games can stay in their minds for a long time – that is unhealthy,' Dr. Gray argued. He gets angry when people say that video games are just a bit of fun. 'How can they be "fun" when the violence on screen gets into children's heads at such a

young age and gives them recurring nightmares and other psychological problems?' he replies.

Over sixty per cent of children report that they play video games longer than any other type of activity. This means that while they may be interacting with characters on the screen, they are not developing any social skills through interaction and play with other children. It gets worse when children make playing these games a habit and get addicted to them.

A mother from Tung Chung, Mrs. Li, complains that her son is 'always' playing video games. 'We only see him at meal times and even then he says very little,' she explained. What worries her most, though, is that he is growing up with a very negative view of the world because he sees everything as being dangerous and violent through his games.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and your classmates are taking part in an IT project at school. You have been asked to come up with some ideas for a video game that would be fun, educational and appealing to teenagers.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Don't exaggerate!

With video games and, in particular, violent games attracting so much negative publicity, parents must wonder what to do when their children ask for the latest game. Parents play a vital role in the healthy development of their children. If a child is allowed to play video games non-stop, there are bound to be health and developmental problems – just like those caused by watching television all day long or eating hamburgers every mealtime.

Mrs. Lim has raised her two young boys with strict guidelines on how and when to use video games. 'They are not allowed to play the games in their bedroom. They have to play in the living room where they are supervised. I also set time limits with an hour a day allowed, providing their homework is done first!' she said.

Psychologists agree that the simple remedy for parents is to just say 'no' when they are worried about

the violence in video games. They suggest that parents can maximise the benefits of games by encouraging children to play games together instead of on their own. Another parent admitted that he rents the games and never buys them because, 'then, I can always return the ones that are too violent'. Moderation seems to be the key.

Years ago, rock music was seen as a harmful influence on youngsters but it is more universally accepted today. Perhaps parents now need to work on how to accept video games instead of criticising them. Much of the research on whether video games can make children violent has been criticised for only looking at short-term effects. One study that did look at the effects of frequent playing of games over one month by children actually found that there was no increase in levels of aggression. So who is telling the truth and are video games really so dangerous?

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Much more than violence

The debate about whether video games are bad for children is likely to rage for a long time. Researchers seem to be divided on whether the games are a harmful influence or not. Looking around video game stores, it is easy to see that there are also countless games which can have an extremely positive influence on young people, so perhaps this is an area that needs more publicity. It is already widely accepted that when children play video games they are improving their hand and eye coordination skills, as they have to react quickly to whatever happens on the screen. Now, it seems that there are other benefits.

'I think people are being quite narrow-minded when they only focus on violent games,' commented Mr. Davies, a computer shop owner. He believes that technological advances have turned video games into powerful educational tools. 'We sell a game that places the player in the middle of Europe in the 1930's and he then has to make political decisions that will stop World

War II from starting. In a way it is like putting the student into the subject that they are studying,' Davies said.

In fact there are several such games that require the player to analyse different situations, read information and make decisions. This involves problem-solving and critical thinking at the highest level! Other 'games' provide the chance for players to build a business empire, or market and sell different products. Some even allow the player to manage famous football teams.

Mr. Davies believes that the negative image of video games is a result of the generation gap. 'Most players are under 30 and most people who criticise video games are over 40. They are just like the people who blamed the Internet for all the problems in the world. It's not fair.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Born free

In the late 1970's, China introduced a controversial policy to deal with its enormous population. The one-child policy meant that married couples were supposed to have just one baby and no more. Now, nearly 30 years after that policy was introduced, the emergence of the new 'only child' generation is leading to some interesting social and economic changes. In fact, researchers argue that this growing group of young Chinese have as much economic power as youngsters in more modern countries such as the United States and Japan.

The most striking similarity is the way in which young people spend money on brand name products. 'They are just like any other young person from the suburbs of a large western city. They want the most recent telephone, the trendiest watch and the latest fashions,' said one commentator. Everyone is familiar with the rapid development of China's economy which has led to massive increases in personal wealth. He

added that China's increasing wealth and the one-child policy have both created this new generation of free spending young people.

Miss Wong is 24 and lives with her parents in Shanghai. She has no brothers and sisters because of the one-child policy and she is very aware of the significance of this. 'My father has three brothers and two sisters. My mother has four brothers. I am an only child and therefore I do not have to compete with siblings. I have more attention so I think I am luckier.' She says that she still lives with her parents because it is convenient and allows her to save money.

Miss Wong claims that she will not marry until she is in her 30's. When asked why not, she replied, 'Why should I? I have everything I need. I like my financial independence. I've benefited from the one-child rule.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You and your groupmates are doing a project on *Social changes in modern China* as part of a joint activity for the English and Chinese Panels. This project will be exhibited at a school Open Day. You are meeting to plan it.

You should first consider some of the changes that have taken place in modern China and the consequences of these changes. You should then discuss different ways to research the topic and plan how you can obtain interesting and relevant information to make your project attractive.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The new generation

Last year, Hung Hing bought a new car, a personal computer and paid for his parents to visit Disneyland in Hong Kong. Hung is a member of China's new generation of rich youngsters who have transformed the image of their country. 'Things are so different for my generation, compared to my father's early years. We can do anything now if we have money,' Hung said. Getting money does not seem to be a problem for youngsters like him and perhaps this explains his confidence.

Hung is a graduate who studied engineering in a leading Beijing university. Because more and more places are being provided at universities across China, the number of graduates has expanded greatly. In 2004, almost three million students graduated with degrees from universities and this was double the figure than in 2002. When they enter the job market, graduates are able to command better salaries than their peers who do not possess degrees. Once they start earning, they are not

afraid to spend their hard-earned cash.

One marketing executive in China estimates that this group of wealthy young people has no worries about spending money on luxury goods. 'They know that they have long-term earning potential so they can easily spend a month's salary on one item without thinking twice,' he said. Hung agrees and reveals that he spent almost 20,000 yuan on a car within two months of getting his first job.

It is not just their salaries that the youngsters are spending. After they have secured a job, banks and finance companies are quick to offer them loans. This provides people like Hung with even more financial power and means that the economy continues to be driven by this new generation of consumers. For Hung, there is a new priority. 'I want to buy a Rolex watch next.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

What responsibility?

As millions of children in China have grown up without brothers or sisters because of the one-child policy, many differences can be seen between their upbringing and that of their parents'. These differences are causing concern, particularly for the elderly members of the family. The state media have also warned of the dangers of 'spoilt' children in society.

Miss Yu got married last year on her 28th birthday. She says that she does not want to start a family of her own until she is well into her 30's. In fact, Yu and her husband are living with his parents because they look after the couple so well. 'We are their only children and that means they spoil us. When I have a child, then we'll move out,' said Yu. This seems rather selfish in a way, but the fact that so many families only have one child means that the infant inevitably becomes the 'little emperor' or 'empress'. These children have

grown up enjoying many different benefits compared to their parents' generation.

During Chinese New Year, children often receive 'lucky money' from relatives. Because there is only one child in a family, he or she gets a larger amount as it does not have to be shared between brothers and sisters. However, there are also disadvantages to this situation. Many of these youngsters have been looked after so well during their childhood that they are unable to shoulder responsibility for other members of their family, most notably the elderly ones.

'My son is 34 now and he cannot even cook his own meals. How is he going to look after me when I get older?' complained one man. 'Even if he wanted to, my son does not have the skills to look after his elderly relatives. It's hard for everyone.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Change agents

After the tragic events in Tiananmen Square in 1989, student movements across China weakened. Those were dark days for Chinese youngsters who were eager for political change. In 2006, however, the younger members of society are again bringing about change on the mainland, but it has nothing to do with politics. Instead, the changes are related to consumerism as more and more advertising agencies try to take advantage of a young and wealthy generation.

Napoleon once declared that 'the world should let China sleep because when the dragon awakes, the whole world will shake'. Today, with economic growth at nearly 9% a year, the world is well aware of China's economic awakening. For many businesses, this represents a wonderful opportunity to expand trade and increase profits. More and more foreign companies are pouring money into China and many are targeting wealthy people in their 20's and 30's.

Of course, car companies, fashion houses and luxury goods makers want to sell their brands and products to the wealthy youngsters directly but they also see another advantage of targeting the new generation. 'Many of these people who are relatively young, but earn good money, still live with their parents. By targeting the younger members, we are also hoping to influence the tastes of their older relatives. That is the way to expand our market,' said a major retailer.

Research seems to support this marketing strategy. Because many young people still reside at home, their spending habits can easily be copied by parents. Traditional tastes in Chinese food are changing as younger family members bring home different food products. Coffee imports are threatening typical Chinese drinks like tea because younger people are making them popular. 'I bought my first pair of jeans last week,' said one elderly man. His daughter showed him where to buy them!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

International short film festival

Last July saw the launch of Hong Kong's first international short film festival at Broadway Cinematheque. While the festival was aimed at a general audience, the organisers said it had a special relevance for young people.

Festival organiser, Jonathon Hung, said that many of the films were specially chosen because of their appeal to youngsters. They included, for example, animations combining digital technology and traditional Japanese art forms, works by young directors and films about local culture or teen values. The films in the Korean drama section reflected the love lives and lifestyles of South Korea's young people. Mr. Hung remarked, 'I hope teenage viewers will realise that cultures in different countries are very diverse and this diversity is reflected in how they express themselves.' The organisers were worried that the event would have to be cancelled when one of their key sponsors withdrew funding. However, the festival went ahead and was a huge success. It

included more than 110 short films from around the world, including Germany, Thailand and Hong Kong.

Although short films are playing an increasingly important role at top international film festivals, there has never been a comprehensive festival in Hong Kong screening just short films from around the world. Festival organisers hope that by bringing quality short films to Hong Kong, they can change people's attitudes to independent film making. 'Many people are only keen to see big name films from famous directors, but people should be more open-minded about independent films and films from new directors,' said Joyce Chan, a member of the organising committee.

Mr. Hung thinks that short films should not be regarded as inferior and people should not think they are merely a stepping stone for new directors. 'Many concepts cannot be developed into a feature film and are best handled in short films,' he said.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your principal has asked the school's Film Club to organise a joint-school film making competition to raise awareness and interest in film making as an art form.

You are members of the Film Club. You are meeting to discuss the organisation of the competition. You should discuss the types of films that students can submit, the awards to be given and how you will publicise the event. You should also think about inviting judges and sponsors for the event.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Singapore's annual film festival

Although last year's annual film festival in Singapore was surrounded by controversy, it did achieve its main aim, which was to give Asian film makers the chance to showcase their work.

One of the concerns in the lead up to the festival was the lack of funding from the Singapore Film Commission. In fact the total budget for the 18th Singapore International Film Festival (SIFF) was only HK\$3.8 million, which is approximately one tenth of the funding for the Bangkok festival. Then, there was the image problem. One month before the festival, first-time film maker, Martyn See, was told to withdraw his short film because censors said it was too political.

However, despite all of this fuss, festival director Philip Cheah thinks the event was a big success. The festival showcased over 300 films from 40 countries and ended with the Silver Screen Awards Ceremony which

gave prizes to the Best Asian Feature Film and Best Singapore Short Film. Cheah said, 'Even with the new film festivals in Southeast Asia, I think there is still a lack of knowledge about the films made in the region. That is why the SIFF, the oldest international film festival in Southeast Asia, won't lose its importance.'

According to many of the festival attendees, the SIFF provides a forum for independent film makers to show their films, especially first-time film makers. Amir Muhammad, a Malaysian film writer says, 'The SIFF has the courage to pick films that nobody has heard of.' It was the first place where some of his films were shown. He believes that a festival should give new film makers a chance to show their works rather than just promote the films of famous directors, whom we already know. Thanks to festivals such as SIFF, the world is slowly sitting up and taking notice of these Asian films.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Boost for Hong Kong film makers

At its peak, during the early 1990's, Hong Kong was producing more than 300 movies a year. Unfortunately, the industry has seriously declined and last year fewer than 50 films came out of Hong Kong. However, local film makers got a welcome boost last year when four Hong Kong productions were prominently featured at the 62nd Venice International Film Festival (VIFF).

In fact, Hong Kong movies were chosen to open the festival and also to close it. This was a huge honour for the director of *Seven Swords*, Tsui Hark, and also for Peter Chan Ho-sun, director of *Perhaps Love*, the closing film. The VIFF is one of the world's most prestigious festivals and it was the first time that Hong Kong films have opened and closed a festival of this scale.

Everlasting Regret, from director Stanley Kwan Kam-pang was nominated for the Golden Lion Award in

the best film category. Festival director Marco Müller said *Everlasting Regret* 'is a masterpiece and I was moved to tears when I watched it'. Although the film did not win the Golden Lion, it won the arts communication award. Another film, *Initial D*, starring pop stars Jay Chou Jie-lun and Edison Chen Koon-hei was screened as part of the official selection at the festival. The film was a box office success in Hong Kong last summer.

Festival director Marco Müller is an expert on Asian feature films. He studied on the mainland and has worked on many Hong Kong features. Müller said that his background partly explains the focus on Hong Kong films at the festival. Franco Arancio, a festival organiser said, 'The festival is the first to include so many films from Hong Kong directors, and it is very rare to have the opening and closing films from the same country. This is a really positive step forward for Hong Kong film makers.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

You can make films too!

New technology has opened up the world of cinema to new film makers. Equipped with digital video (DV) cameras, large numbers of people are experimenting with film making. While the quality of the end products is variable, some of the new film makers are finding success.

Film festivals around the region are taking note. The Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) now has a separate category for DV films, as the organisers recognise that a substantial number of DV films are being made around Asia. Beatrice Chan of the HKIFF said, 'DV has had an important effect on the emergence of new independent film makers. With affordable equipment, film making has become easier, and new directors no longer need large amounts of money to make their first film.'

The DV boom inspired film maker Diao Yinan to take up directing. His first film, *Uniform*, is an unofficial

production and although he made it in China, he does not have a permit to show the film there. Diao says, 'DV is a great thing which has given opportunities to a lot of people. All of us DV film makers have a lot of passion for film making.' He thinks DV allows film makers in China to shoot quietly and cheaply without the knowledge of the censors at the Film Bureau.

While digital video is giving audiences the chance to view a new kind of film, the technology also generates more films which are not up to standard in terms of storyline, acting and editing. Matthew Cheng, a DV enthusiast says, 'Digital film making is the new big thing. If you have a limited budget, DV is perfect as there are no developing costs. DV is also more accessible to the general public as the technology is user-friendly. However, some people just get hold of a camera, find friends to act, and start shooting. This means there are some really terrible movies out there.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

Your principal has asked the school's Film Club to organise a joint-school film making competition to raise awareness and interest in film making as an art form.

You are members of the Film Club. You are meeting to discuss the organisation of the competition. You should discuss the types of films that students can submit, the awards to be given and how you will publicise the event. You should also think about inviting judges and sponsors for the event.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

The examiners cannot answer any questions about the instructions or the task you have to discuss. If you have any questions, you may discuss them among yourselves and that will be an acceptable part of your group discussion, and will be assessed.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

Candidate A

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Preserving Hong Kong's past for the future

The diversity and cultural uniqueness of a city is reflected in its cultural heritage. Many cities around the world have worked towards preserving their historical past for future generations. In Hong Kong, the severe shortage of land for development, the commercial interests of property developers and the lack of a clear government policy on heritage conservation have resulted in the loss of many of the city's historical treasures.

In the last few decades, several historically significant buildings have vanished. The Lee Theatre, the Old Hong Kong Club, the former General Post Office, the former KCR station in Tsim Sha Tsui and the Repulse Bay Hotel are some examples of beautiful old buildings that have crumbled under developers' bulldozers. Local districts which have been of historical value, such as the Kowloon Walled City and parts of Wan Chai, have slowly disappeared in the push for 'urban re-development'. The future of the Central Police Station also remains uncertain.

The government has made some effort to preserve Hong Kong's past, but with disappointing results. There is little coordination between departments and its attempts at heritage conservation have completely destroyed the original character of historical buildings and even their surrounding atmosphere. The Western Market in Sheung Wan was preserved, but the tourist-type shops that have opened in it have completely destroyed its former lively atmosphere. In its present home near Prince Edward, the Mongkok bird market has none of the appeal of its original location at Yuen Po Street.

Hong Kong people are becoming increasingly aware that they need to take prompt action to save the city's unique character and individuality. Jimmy Tan, an architecture student at Chinese University, stresses the importance of preserving the city's heritage. 'Development does not mean destroying our valuable past. Our culture and identity are reflected in our heritage and that is why it must be preserved.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

You are a member of your school's History Club. Your club is planning to hold a display in your school entitled *Preserving Old Hong Kong*.

You are meeting to discuss the display. You should think about which parts of Hong Kong's culture and history to focus on. You may also like to discuss exactly what to include in the display, ways of collecting material and information and ways of making the display look attractive.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Tai Cheong Bakery returns

Every day for years, people have been queuing up outside Tai Cheong Bakery on Lyndhurst Terrace in Central. They are there to sample the famous egg tarts, which were a favourite of former governor, Chris Patten.

Last year, however, the popular bakery was forced to close down after the landlord raised the rent from \$38,000 a month to \$80,000. The owner of the bakery, Au Yeung Tin-yun, was obviously extremely disappointed. He admitted that he was a victim of the economic recovery and he could not afford the increased rent as he was only charging \$3.50 for an egg tart.

Legislator Tommy Cheung Yu-yan and executive councillor Selina Chow, who is also chairperson of the Tourism Board, stepped in to help find the bakery a new home. They both felt very strongly that the 51-year-old bakery is part of Hong Kong's heritage and should be

protected. Although Selina Chow admitted that the government could not really do anything to help the bakery, she said she would help the owner relocate.

Fortunately the bakery opened on the same street after only being closed for three months. The rent of the new shop is cheaper and the owner said, 'We are really lucky to be able to continue the tradition. Our product will be unchanged, the taste will remain the same and we won't increase our price.' He has hung up the old photograph of Chris Patten eating an egg tart on the wall in the new shop and says that whenever Mr. Patten is in Hong Kong, he still visits the shop to have an egg tart. Last November, Mr. Patten was in town and did not forget the bakery. Tommy Cheung and Selina Chow are delighted, but Chow admits that the government needs to improve its preservation policy for establishments with cultural value.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Dai pai dong: a thing of the past?

It seems that government policy is full of contradiction. Last year the government shut down the 80-year-old Man Yuen noodle shop on Elgin Street in Central when the licensee, Wong Kwong-hin died. However, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum recognised that the old dai pai dong had historical significance and was keen to preserve the memory of the famous shop.

In fact, a representative from the museum took video clips of the food stall and acquired the eatery's handwritten sign, old menus and license. He said, 'The material we have taken from the restaurant reflects the lively culture of the old times.'

Catering sector legislator, Tommy Cheung, was upset that the shop had to close. He said the dai pai dong had attracted tourists because it was part of Hong Kong's 'culinary culture'. Similarly, Fred Brown of Mid-Levels thinks the government is short-sighted. He said, 'Hong Kong doesn't have many unique and special eating

places left. Where can tourists go for a special eating experience when all of the old places are gone? Dai pai dongs should be regulated so that they are clean and safe, but should not be allowed to die out.'

However, according to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, street-side cooked food stalls cause problems. In 2004, there were 222 prosecutions involving the 29 surviving dai pai dongs in Hong Kong. A spokesperson said, 'Man Yuen noodle shop could move to a market building where traditional food culture can be preserved in a cleaner environment.' Assistant Tourism Commissioner, Winnie Chung agrees. She says, 'We don't want tourists to think Hong Kong is not a clean place.' However, Fred Brown commented that while the government may have its own ideas about how to promote Hong Kong to the world, this should not be at the expense of the city's heritage and identity.

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (*Total time: 10 minutes*)

Part One – Individual Presentations (*1½–2 minutes each*)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation, but should make the presentation in your own words. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Save our old buildings

One thing that has always attracted people to Hong Kong is its uniqueness. It is a place of differences and contrasts where east meets west and old meets new. Unfortunately though, it appears that Hong Kong's distinctiveness and heritage are fast disappearing.

The government's urban renewal objectives are to preserve social networks and area characteristics but this does not appear to be happening. Almost all of the beautiful old colonial buildings in Hong Kong have been demolished and the government is trying to redevelop old areas into modern shopping malls and tourist attractions.

Residents of Lee Tung Street, better known as Wedding Card Street, in Wanchai have been fighting to retain the character of the street since the government announced the plan to tear down the 50-year-old flats and build a modern retail and residential area. People are concerned that the unique characteristics of the wedding

card printing industry will disappear. However, the government said it may consider establishing a wedding card-themed shopping arcade in the new development. Chan Yao-sheng, who has lived in the street all his life fears the local community will be destroyed. He says, 'It's good for old people to stay in their own homes, in the old neighbourhoods, near their old friends.'

Roger Ho, a local author, is concerned that the government is destroying our history. He spends his time lobbying to save historic sites in Central from becoming high-rise developments. He says that Central holds the key to Hong Kong's transformation from a sleepy fishing port into an international financial centre. 'Various sites in the area should be kept because they represent the real Hong Kong of the past.' Ho is also fighting for the survival of the Central Police Station on Hollywood Road. He says, 'The historic compound should not be turned into another shopping mall.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (*Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion*)

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