

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a newspaper in Australia:

Schools replace History and Geography with Computer Programming

The Australian Federal Government recently decided to replace history and geography as compulsory subjects in secondary school and bring in computer programming classes instead. This will see students from as young as Primary 5 learning about how a computer works and how to write their own computer programs. Computer classes in school used to be about learning how to use MS Word and Excel — now it's looking at the world like an engineer — developing logical thinking and creativity.

The move makes sense given how much technology is in our lives and practically every job requires you to demonstrate some kind of computer skills. Equipping children with advanced computer skills early on in life could help them secure a bright future in a world which is becoming more high tech. This is something that other countries like the US and UK are already doing.

However, some people think that teaching children history and geography is equally important. Studying history teaches children to learn from the mistakes people made in the past, which will help them to develop sound decision-making and judgement skills. Likewise, studying geography helps us to understand the connectivity between people and places and to appreciate the Earth as the home that we all share. It can teach us how to better manage the planet's resources and to become a better global citizen.

You are members of the student council and are having a discussion on whether your school should change its curriculum. You may want to talk about:

- whether students should learn history and geography at school
- whether computer programming should be taught at primary school
- other subjects that can help students develop logical thinking and creativity
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to learn computer programming?
2. Do you like learning history and geography?
3. What would you rather study: arts or science?
4. What is the most important skill you learnt at school?
5. Why do you think some students might not want to learn computer programming?
6. Do you think all your subjects help you develop logical thinking and creativity?
7. Do you think schools should help students get a job or develop life skills?
8. Do you think there are other subjects that should be dropped from the Hong Kong curriculum?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This blog entry appeared on an education website:

Great teacher = great results?

The great teacher myth is often presented as a simple equation: great teaching gets great results. Many people support it but it is completely wrong.

The great teacher myth sounds plausible. After all, children spend a lot of time at school and we spend a great deal of money on education. By the time they are 16, children have been at school for 10,000 hours, which is often said to be the minimum needed to master a skill. Surely teachers must be the biggest factor in ensuring that all this effort is worthwhile?

The key problem with this idea is when it comes to exams and learning, children are the ones who actually have to do the hard work. Unfortunately, much to the frustration of every teacher – and parent – in the city, children don't always do what they are told, or learn what we attempt to teach them. What's more, some children find school and learning easy and some don't.

Trying to teach anyone anything is difficult unless they actually want to learn, and can do so. Learning is hard work; it requires effort, repetition, practice, mental and physical exertion.

Does that mean that teachers don't matter? Of course it doesn't. They help and provide excellent support, but we should understand they are not the most important factor in educational success.

Your group has to prepare for a debate with the motion: "Good teachers are the most important factor in educational success." You may want to talk about:

- arguments for the motion
- arguments against the motion
- which side would be easier to argue
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to be a teacher?
2. Do you think being a teacher is a good job?
3. What kind of students do teachers like?
4. What is the most important skill for a teacher to have?
5. Do teachers get enough respect?
6. What characteristics make a good teacher?
7. Does learning require hard work?
8. Have you ever been inspired by a teacher?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article appeared in the letters to the editor section of a newspaper in Hong Kong:

End to printed handouts good green initiative

Earlier this year, the University of Hong Kong banned the sale of disposable bottled water on its Pok Fu Lam campus. This green initiative was welcomed.

Now, in this new academic year, one department at HKU has implemented an unprecedented policy – a ban on giving printed paper handouts to students. .

I believe this is the right thing to do, and the initiative should be adopted by other departments and the other universities in Hong Kong as well.

A semester at our universities lasts about three months, so students will use any handouts that they are given for a very short period of time only. After the term ends, they will probably not be read again.

Sometimes, lecturers even print out in-class activity materials that are only used for a few minutes. This is such a tremendous waste of paper.

Nearly all university students these days own laptops. These can be used to access online learning resources systems (in HKU and most of the other universities, it is called Moodle) onto which lecturers will upload teaching materials. As long as teachers upload their handouts, there is no need for printouts.

This can significantly reduce the amount of paper used for teaching purposes. It is through this kind of cooperation that we can ensure the sustainability of our world.

Anson C.Y. Chan, North Point

Your school is planning on introducing ‘paperless classrooms’. The school principal has asked students for their opinion on the idea. You may want to talk about:

- how schools can become paperless
- what challenges there will be
- whether you think it will be successful
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you use a lot of paper at school?
2. How often do your teachers give you handouts?
3. Do you prefer working on paper or on a laptop?
4. Do your teachers let you do homework online?
5. Do you keep your school handouts and books after your exams?
6. Does modern technology, such as laptops, improve teaching and education?
7. Are some subjects better done with paper rather than online?
8. Does using IT help to improve the environment?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article appeared in the letters to the editor section of a newspaper in Hong Kong:

Laid-back life in Taiwan is very tempting

I refer to Nick Westra's article "Why are so many Hongkongers moving to Taiwan?". I agree that a lot of people from Hong Kong are realising that Taiwan is the ideal place for them to settle down.

The living environment in Hong Kong is becoming more difficult. Costs keep rising in what is already one of the most expensive cities in the world, especially when it comes to property prices and rent. People have to work long hours to earn enough to cover living expenses. They don't have enough time to spend with their families and are so tired that on Sundays they often sleep all day.

Life in the city is too hectic, and the workplace is too competitive.

However, the pace of life is much slower in Taiwan. I think you can enjoy a much less complicated way of life there and being away from the fierce competition in Hong Kong's offices must be very liberating.

Families with children can have a good quality of life because, although the salaries are lower in Taiwan, the cost of living is also much lower.

While it is a big change in lifestyle, I am sure people who relocate to Taiwan will eventually adapt to living there and enjoy living there.

Lily Wong, Kwai Chung

Recently two of your classmates have left school and moved to Taiwan. You are discussing this with your group. You may want to talk about:

- the differences between Hong Kong and Taiwan
- the advantages and disadvantages of going to live in Taiwan
- the most important factor in deciding whether to move to Taiwan
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to visit Taiwan?
2. Would you like to live in Taiwan?
3. Do you think you will ever live in another country?
4. What do you think people miss when they move away from Hong Kong?
5. What problems do young people face when they move to another country?
6. Why do you think most Hongkongers work long hours?
7. Would you stay in touch with friends who move to another country?
8. Does modern communication make emigrating easier?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article appeared in a local newspaper:

Want to get fired up? The Hong Kong Fire Services Department is seeking hundreds of recruits

As a member of the Hong Kong Fire Services Department (FSD), whose primary purpose it is to serve and protect the community, a Hong Kong firefighter has a challenging career. At the same time, being a firefighter offers a variety of career opportunities, is hugely rewarding and has an excellent starting salary (\$18,000 per month).

The men and women of the FSD can be called upon to cover a range of incidents, including traffic and industrial accidents, gas leakages, landslides, flooding, building collapses, and even malfunctioning lifts.

In the next year, the FSD is aiming to recruit 60 station officers and 160 firefighters.

"The first and most important question that anyone considering a career as a Hong Kong firefighter should ask themselves is: 'Do I have the wholehearted willingness to serve the community?'," says Wong Ka-wing, divisional officer of the FSD's recruitment, training and examination group. "Being a firefighter is about being trustworthy, and someone the public can always rely on in any situation."

Those wishing to be a firefighter have to complete a 36-week training programme. Then recruits are assigned to fire stations around Hong Kong to begin a three-year probation period. "On-the-job field training is very important because this is where recruits are dealing with real-life scenarios," says Wong. The FSD also provides public education and awareness training and carries out fire safety inspections on licensed premises.

Your careers adviser has asked the class to give presentations on different careers and jobs in Hong Kong. Your group has been asked to give a presentation on being a firefighter. You are meeting to discuss the topic. You may want to talk about:

- what skills and qualities are needed to be a good firefighter
- the advantages and disadvantages of working as a firefighter
- activities that you could organise to help students learn about the job
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to be a firefighter?
2. Would your parents like you to become a firefighter?
3. What do you think is the worst part of being a firefighter?
4. Do you think a high academic qualification is necessary to be a firefighter?
5. What do you think would be the best part of working for the Fire Services Department?
6. Do you think the job of a firefighter is rewarding?
7. Should duties be different for male and female firefighters?
8. Does Hong Kong society appreciate firefighters?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a webpage:

Will everyone be eating insects by 2050?

By 2050 the population is expected to reach 9 billion. To feed all of those hungry mouths, we will need to produce almost twice as much food as we currently do. But that isn't going to be easy. One possible solution? Insects.

Eating insects is a common practice that's been taking place for thousands of years. Around 2 billion people regularly eat insects as part of their diet, and over 1,900 species are edible. The most commonly eaten bugs are beetles, caterpillars, bees, wasps and ants.

So what's so good about insects? Well, they're nutritious and healthy. Insects actually have a high fat, protein, vitamin, fibre and mineral content that is often comparable to fish or livestock. Beetles, for example, contain on average 205 g/kg protein; beef contains 256 g/kg.

Raising insects as a source of food as opposed to farmed animals is more environmentally friendly. Insects require significantly less land and water than traditionally-farmed animals and also reproduce much more quickly. Additionally, insects produce a fraction of the greenhouse gases when compared with other livestock, particularly cattle. Finally, insect farming can provide jobs and income to people living in poor areas. Insects are sustainable, green, nutritious and could help people out of poverty. Chocolate-covered caterpillars, anyone?

You are doing a project on the food we will eat in the future. Your group is meeting to discuss insects as food. You may want to talk about:

- how eating insects can benefit people and the environment
- why people may not want to eat insects
- how to promote insects as food
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to try eating insects?
2. Is eating healthy food important to people in Hong Kong?
3. Should people change their diet to help the environment?
4. Do you think Hong Kong should promote eating insects?
5. Should restaurants have insects on their menu?
6. Do you think Hongkongers will eat more healthy foods in the future?
7. Should Hong Kong develop insect farms?
8. Can people impact the environment by changing their diet?

PRACTICE PAPER ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Discussion

The letter below appeared in yesterday's newspaper:

Teens far too materialistic



I think that today's teenagers have a very casual attitude towards material possessions. From the time they are born, they get what they want, even things that are not necessary. And yet they keep demanding more from their parents. It makes no sense to buy things without thinking about the price. What's more, youngsters are easily affected by their peers. If their friends have something new and trendy, they will also want to have it. But they do not consider whether they really need it. Parents should not buy their children too many items that they do not really need. And they should teach them to treasure what they have. They have to set a good example. Young people need to exercise self-control.

Y.L.

Your group wants to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper responding to the points made by Y.L. Discuss with your group what to include in your letter. You may want to talk about:

- whether teenagers are materialistic
- whether teenagers are easily affected by their peers
- how young children should be educated not to be materialistic
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What do teenagers buy that they do not need?
2. What should children spend their money on?
3. What new things do teens all want to have?
4. How can parents teach their children not to become so materialistic?
5. Why do young people want to buy brand name products?
6. What problems can result from becoming too materialistic?
7. Why do some parents give in to their children's demands?
8. How can teenagers develop more self-control over their spending?

PRACTICE PAPER ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Discussion

Below are two advertisements for part-time summer jobs:

Little Popstars

Recruiting Workshop Presenters

Do you have a...

- bubbly outgoing personality;
- good singing voice;
- love of children – ability to interact with all ages;
- responsible and positive attitude?



The job requires you to run musical workshops for preschool children.

Classes are 30-45 minutes in length.

Training is provided.

\$40 per hour

Email jobs@littlepopstars.com for more details.

CHIC CLOTHING

Part-time salesperson

wanted for clothing store in TST

- *4 days per week
- *8-hour shifts (12pm-9pm with one hour lunch break)
- *good communication skills in English and Cantonese
- *uniform provided
- *\$40/hour

Contact Ms Chan at 36288070.

Your group is considering whether to include the two advertised jobs in the ‘summer jobs’ section of the school magazine. Discuss with your group whether these jobs would be suitable for students. You may want to talk about:

- the skills students would need to do these jobs
- the benefits for students who are employed in these jobs
- other kinds of jobs that may be suitable for students
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What kind of summer part-time job would you like?
2. What kind of job would be a dream job for you?
3. What kind of things do students who have a part-time job spend their money on?
4. Do you think students should do part-time jobs during the summer?
5. What skills can students learn from doing part-time jobs that they can't learn at school?
6. Do you think part-time jobs affect school work?
7. What should you do in order to be successful in a job interview?
8. What kinds of part-time jobs should secondary school students avoid?

**PRACTICE PAPER
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4****PART A Group Discussion**

The article below appeared in a local newspaper:

Out of this world

An American who claims that he was taken away by aliens left some members of his Hong Kong audience completely lost. 56-year-old market researcher Jim Sparks was invited to speak by the Hong Kong UFO (Unidentified Flying Objects) Club.

Sparks said aliens first abducted him in 1988 when he was a property developer. He said, ‘I had a good business and a good life when one day I was pulled from my bed into an alien spacecraft.’ At first he refused to co-operate with the aliens. But as the years passed, he got to understand more about them and even seemed to have won the trust of the aliens. ‘They know us better as a person than we know ourselves. Not only can they read our minds, they also have the technology to be invisible,’ Sparks insists.

While many of the audience listened quietly, some had clearly had enough. One of those who headed for the door said, ‘He’s a pretty good storyteller because he seems so sincere, but for me it’s too much like science-fiction.’

You want to write an article discussing whether you think aliens exist. Discuss with your group what you will include in the article. You may want to talk about:

- whether there is life on other planets
- whether you believe that aliens have visited Earth
- whether aliens would be a threat or a benefit to our planet
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What do you think aliens would look like?
2. Do you enjoy watching movies about aliens?
3. Would you believe someone if they said they had met an alien?
4. What information about human beings do you think might be useful for aliens to learn?
5. Is it worth spending money on trying to locate alien life in the universe?
6. If there are no aliens, why do so many people claim to have met them?
7. If there were aliens, what would they think about human life on earth?
8. What positive outcomes could result from learning about alien culture?

Acknowledgements

Material from the following publications has been used in question papers in this volume:

South China Morning Post	‘An Ocean Apart’ by Suzanne Gendron and Peter Singer (20 March 2010)
	‘Teens far too materialistic’ (Letters to the editor) (3 January 2011)
	‘Alien kidnap stories too out of the world for some’ by Adrian Wan (3 January 2011)
www.torontosun.com	‘Dogs on mend after pit bull attack’ by Brett Clarkson (7 June 2009) http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2009/06/07/9703216-sun.html
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Financial Times	‘China’s army of irregular recyclers face scrapheap’ (16 March 2010)
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HKDSE English Language Paper 4 (Speaking) (Sample Paper)

Instructions to Examiners

Part A Group Discussion

Greeting the candidates	Good afternoon / good evening. Please sit according to the colour of your labels.
Instructions before starting the timer	You have 8 minutes for your discussion (<i>6 minutes for a group of three candidates</i>). You can look at the question paper and your notecard but please do not make notes during the discussion. Turn over the question paper. You may start now. (<i>Start the timer.</i>)
Reminding candidates about the time left	<i>Display the ‘one minute left’ sign on the table.</i>
Ending the discussion	Time is up. Stop your discussion now. (<i>Stop the timer.</i>)

Part B Individual Response

Starting Part B	Let's move on to Part B.
Asking the question(s) and starting the timer	Candidate ___, you have up to one minute to answer the following question. (<i>Ask a question and then start the timer.</i>)
Ending Part B	That's fine. Thank you.

End of Examination

Collecting the notecards after all the candidates have completed Part B	That's the end of the examination. Please give me your notecards. You may leave now. (<i>Check that the question paper has not been taken away.</i>)
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DO NOT TAKE AWAY

Sample 1

Part A Group Discussion (Preparation: 10 minutes; discussion: 8 minutes per group of four candidates)

The article below appeared in yesterday's newspaper:

A question of privacy?

Members of the media often complain that the government limits their freedom of expression, though many members of the public feel there is nothing wrong with this. Some years ago, photographs of Twins singer Gillian Chung Yan-tung were published by a local magazine, Easy Finder, and they caused a real storm. The photographs were taken with a hidden camera as she was changing costumes backstage. Many people were upset by this and demanded that press freedom be restricted. The Hong Kong Performing Artists Guild condemned the incident, and insisted the government amend the law and punish the magazine's owners.

'Some people thought that the whole episode had been exaggerated, but people buy these magazines for exactly this kind of shocking content so it's the market itself that demands such pictures,' explained retired editor John Peters.

Mike Chau

Your group wants to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper responding to the points made by Mike Chau.

Discuss with your group what to include in your letter in response to this article. You may want to talk about:

- whether the media have too much freedom
- whether famous people should have their privacy protected
- why people like to read magazines for their shocking content and gossip
- anything else you think is important

Part B Individual Response (one minute per candidate)

1. Why do some people not want to be famous?
2. Why is it sometimes difficult being famous?
3. What are some of the advantages of being famous?
4. Why is personal privacy so important to some people?
5. Can famous people expect to keep their private lives secret?
6. How are family members of famous people affected by their fame?
7. Why do some people dislike the gossip magazines in Hong Kong?
8. Do the public have the right to know about the private lives of famous people?
9. Why is freedom of expression important for the media?
10. Are there any types of stories which gossip magazines should not publish?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

Sample 2

Part A Group Discussion (Preparation:10 minutes; discussion: 8 minutes per group of four candidates)

Below is an extract from a report on youth culture in Hong Kong:

Body art expresses individuality

More and more teenagers are turning to different forms of body art, such as tattooing and nose piercing, to establish their personal identity and look different. One of the main reasons young people decide to modify their bodies is to look cool. Teenagers want to express their individuality and have a strong desire to stand out from the crowd. This gives them a sense of uniqueness that makes them different from everyone else.

19-year-old James Keen is a typical example. He is one of the first in Hong Kong to have had the tip of his tongue split into two. ‘When I first saw it in some teen magazines, I thought tongue-splitting was the most beautiful thing I’d seen in my life,’ says James. Most of his friends do not know that he has had his tongue split unless he shows it to them. When asked how he felt about the splitting process, James said it did cause some pain for about a week, especially when he ate, but he believed it was worthwhile. ‘Piercing of the ears, nose and lips is just too common. I wanted something different.’

Your group wants to write an article for your school magazine about the advantages and disadvantages of body modification. Discuss with your group what to include in your article. You may want to talk about:

- why some teenagers like body art such as tattooing and nose piercing
- the medical dangers of body art
- how Hong Kong society views people with tattoos and their bodies pierced
- anything else you think is important

Part B Individual Response (one minute per candidate)

1. What do you think of teenagers who have tattoos and body piercing?
2. Why do teenagers think body art is ‘cool?’
3. Do any of your friends have tattoos and body piercing?
4. Have you ever thought about having a tattoo or body piercing?
5. Why is it important for teenagers to express their individuality?
6. How do adults and parents feel about teenagers who have body modifications?
7. Do teenagers go too far with body modifications these days?
8. What do you think are the long term problems of having a tattoo?
9. What other ways do young people try to ‘stand out’ from the crowd?
10. What advice would you give to a friend who wanted a tattoo or some kind of body-piercing?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

Sample 3

Part A Group Discussion (Preparation: 10 minutes; discussion: 8 minutes per group of four candidates)

The extract below appeared in a report on health and safety at work:

The Respectable Addiction

People in Hong Kong are famous for working long hours. However, it is now recognized that obsession with work can be an addiction. In Japan, it is called death by overwork and it is estimated to cause 1,000 deaths per year. In the USA, it is known as the ‘respectable’ addiction.

Addiction to work is not the same as working hard or putting in long hours. Hard-working people generally have some balance in their lives. They spend a lot of time at work, but also set aside time for their hobbies, such as playing sport. However, work addicts think about work even when they are playing sport. The obsession with work is total. It prevents them from maintaining healthy relationships and outside interests. Work addicts neglect their health and ignore their friends and family. They avoid going on holiday so they don’t have to miss work, and even if they do go on holiday, they still think about work.

Often, work addicts only realize they have a problem when something terrible happens, for example, when their health completely fails or they start having family problems.

You want to prepare a presentation on work addiction for a group of young people who will soon be starting their first job. Discuss with your group what you will include in the presentation. You may want to talk about:

- why Hong Kong people tend to work long hours
- the health and social problems that can be caused by long working hours
- things that people can do to avoid work addiction
- anything else you think is important

Part B Individual Response (one minute per candidate)

1. Do you have any friends or family members who work too hard?
2. What are some of the disadvantages of working on Saturday and Sunday?
3. Do you think young people now work harder than their parents did in the past?
4. How do you think children are affected by parents who work long hours?
5. How can children in Hong Kong help parents who have to work long hours?
6. How much do you believe success depends on hard work?
7. How might a workplace be disadvantaged by having workaholics on its staff?
8. Why do you think work addiction is known as the ‘respectable addiction’ in the USA?
9. Why do you think some people enjoy working so much?
10. Some people live to work and others work to live. Can you tell us which kind of person you think you are and why?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

These are extracts taken from a Book Club's Facebook page:

About the Book Club

When and where do you meet?

Book Club meetings are held every Friday in the School Library from 4pm-5pm.

How is it structured?

Every week, members will get a worksheet that highlights 10 important vocabulary items and 8 quotes from the text that we will discuss in our weekly meeting.

What kind of books do you read?

We just finished reading the classic, 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen. Next on our list is 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Brontë, another female writer from 19th century England.

How much does it cost?

It's free but you need to buy your own books.

How many members are there?

We currently have eight members who attend regularly.

Comments

- "It was hard to stay awake. Maybe snacks might help...?"
- "I couldn't get myself to read the first book and then I felt bad, so I didn't come back."
- "I never had a chance to participate – always the same people who dominate the discussion."
- "Do we have to learn vocabulary and grammar? I'd rather just chat about the book."
- "We already read classics in English lessons! Can we read books that are more up to date?"

Your group has been asked to suggest changes to improve the Book Club. You are meeting to discuss this. You may want to talk about:

- why students should join a book club
- why students may not be interested in joining a book club
- how to make meetings more interesting and enjoyable for students
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What types of books do you enjoy reading?
2. Do you prefer reading paper books or e-books?
3. Would you rather join a book club or a film club?
4. Are Hong Kong people too busy to read books?
5. Do you think a book club is a good place to make friends?
6. Would you join a book club that meets online?
7. Which do you learn more from: fiction or non-fiction books?
8. What's the difference between reading for pleasure and reading for study?

DO NOT TAKE AWAY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a website:

Vocational training in Germany

Did you know most German students don't want to go to university? Instead, vocational education and training (VET) is a very common pathway to gain skills and embark on a successful career. VET combines job-training and study, so students can both study and work at the same time. VET offers certifications for people who are interested in becoming an electrician, tax specialist, nurse, ambulance worker, dental technician, hairdresser, film and video editor, and product designer.

Depending on the job, trainees may work for three to four days a week in the company, factory, or shop to learn practical skills through on-the-job training. Trainees earn a modest salary which helps with student expenses.

On the other days, students go to school to learn both job-specific and general education subjects, such as English, maths, and physical education. The program usually lasts between two and four years. At the end of the training, students take an examination and are then given their certifications. They can continue to work in the place they were trained, study to obtain further qualifications or even become self-employed.

The VET program supplies Germany's companies with well-trained employees. It also helps trainees transition into work life. VET opens up a variety of promising career options for young people. Both young people and adults wanting to change careers can take part.

Your group is doing a project on job training for graduates of secondary school. You are meeting to discuss the topic. You may want to talk about:

- what vocational training offers that university does not
- how vocational training can benefit society
- what would attract more students to join a vocational training course
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What do you want to do after secondary school?
2. Why is going to university important to Hong Kong students?
3. How can young people learn more about different careers?
4. When should students start thinking about their career?
5. Would you ever work for no pay to get some job experience?
6. Would you like to go to a foreign country to gain work experience?
7. Which do you think is more important: qualifications or experience?
8. Why do you think employers value vocational training?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a local newspaper:

The smells of Hong Kong

Hong Kong is ‘fragrant harbour’ in Cantonese. There are actually many different smells, not necessarily pleasant and fragrant, that can make people think of this city. The following are some examples.

Money

Hong Kong is a financial centre in Asia. It is no surprise that the smell of money, both banknotes and coins, is a symbolic smell of the city.

Seafood

One never forgets the strong smell of dried seafood in Sheung Wan and the smell of shrimp paste in Sai Kung. All over Hong Kong, in wet markets, the odour of fish stalls is another reminder of how close Hong Kong is to the sea.

Joss sticks and incense

In Chinese temples, burning joss sticks and incense gives off a relaxing and woody fragrance that reflects the cultural roots of Hong Kong.

Street food

Hong Kong people love street food, particularly food that has strong flavours and smells: curry fish balls, stinky tofu, egg tarts and fried chestnuts.

Exhaust fumes on the road

Unpleasant as it may be, the smell of the exhaust gases from cars, lorries and buses all year round just reflects the busy traffic and the energy of the city.

Greeneries

Contrary to most people’s first impression, 75 percent of Hong Kong’s territory is actually green: country parks, agricultural or semi-rural land. The refreshing and calming scents of trees and grass always offer escape from the stress of city life.

The Tourism Board is organising an event called ‘Discover Hong Kong’. Your group wants to set up a stall to introduce the different smells of Hong Kong. You may want to talk about:

- why introducing Hong Kong through smells is a good idea
- which three smells best represent Hong Kong and why
- ways to attract visitors to your stall
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What is your favourite smell?
2. What smell do you hate most?
3. What smells remind you of your school?
4. What smell do you like most in nature?
5. What smells remind you of your home?
6. Would you buy something because it smells good?
7. Should foods that have strong smells be banned in public areas?
8. Should movies incorporate smell in their production?

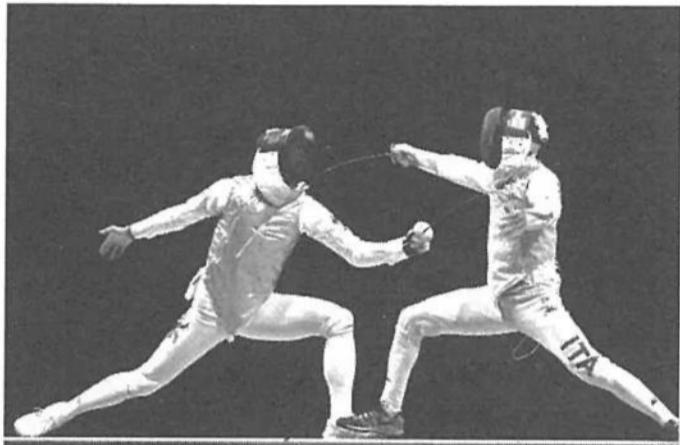
DO NOT TAKE AWAY

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a website:

Edgar Cheung's journey from shy teenager to Olympic gold medallist



How many years must a fencer train before he can call himself an Olympic champion? Edgar Cheung Ka-long, Hong Kong's double Olympic champion would know.

In fact, Cheung didn't take up fencing until he was 10 years old. "All the basketball classes were closed during the summer," he recalls. "My father asked if I would be interested in a fencing course. I still remember it was a summer course for beginners. We practised footwork but that was all. Towards the end of the course, the teacher asked if anybody would like to try it with a real fence. Many of my classmates raised their hands, but I

was too shy to do it in front of people. Even today, I would still consider myself an introvert. I'm not used to presenting myself during public appearances," he explains.

Cheung made his Olympic debut at the 2016 Rio Games. At the 2018 Asian Games, he helped Hong Kong win a silver medal in the team event. In Tokyo, his incredible run to gold included an unbelievable victory against his Italian rival in the final match. Finally, in Paris, he became the first Hong Kong athlete to win consecutive Olympic gold medals.

"I am happy to have won the Olympic gold medals. This is the dream of every athlete," Cheung says. "But more importantly the gold medal has made a great impact on society, ensuring more Hong Kong people know about fencing and more youngsters are willing to take up the sport."

Edgar Cheung Ka-long is going to visit your school. Your group is preparing for his visit and to interview him. You may want to talk about:

- how his visit can benefit students
- questions to ask him during the interview
- other activities you could do on his visit
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What sports do you enjoy watching?
2. Have you watched the Olympic games on TV?
3. Have you ever learned a sport during the summer holiday?
4. Do you think fencing is dangerous?
5. What qualities are needed to be a professional athlete?
6. How has Cheung's success influenced Hong Kong people?
7. How can more youngsters be encouraged to become professional athletes?
8. Should the government invest more in producing elite athletes?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article was recently published online:

Photo-taking visitors not welcomed by everyone

We often take photos of such aspects of everyday life as scenery and food, and we see others posting these kinds of pictures on social media. In some places, however, people are pushing back against this trend.

Vermont, USA	Mount Fuji, Japan	Berlin, Germany
Officials in this town recently voted to close its roads in autumn, when the leaves of the trees turn colour and the area is at its most beautiful. Hundreds of tourists began going there to take photos, and many were parking near people's private homes, damaging property and even arguing with local residents. "Traffic in this area has steadily increased, causing environmental, safety, and quality of life issues," the town reported.	In May 2024, a Japanese town built a wall to block views of Mount Fuji, Japan's most famous mountain. Large groups of tourists started going there to take photos and refused to obey rules on throwing trash and parking. One resident said, "When visitors don't respect rules, leave litter behind and ignore traffic regulations, then as regrettable as it is, we have to take action."	Before opening N&S, one of Germany's top-rated restaurants, owner Billy Wagner set a 'no photos, no videos' rule for the place. He mentions two reasons for the rule: privacy for the other diners and appreciation for the food. "I was interested in analogue focus, which is what a restaurant visit is really all about: to smell, taste, feel, see." He felt that the only way that people could have that focus was to put their phones away.

Your group is discussing the issue of taking photos in public places. You may want to talk about:

- why people might not like others taking photos in public places
- places in Hong Kong that are popular for taking photos
- whether Hong Kong needs to have rules for photo taking in public places
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like taking photos?
2. Do you like to share photos with friends?
3. Is taking photos a popular hobby among teenagers?
4. Have you ever gone to a place just to take photos?
5. Is taking photos an important part of travelling?
6. Who likes taking photos more: younger people or older people?
7. Can taking photos spoil an experience?
8. Do you think tourism causes disruption to local people?

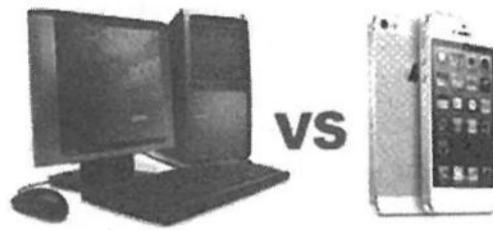
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article recently appeared on a technology website:

As PC ownership declines, smartphones are on the rise

During the 1990s, as personal computers or ‘PCs’ – including desktops and laptop computers – became more user-friendly, ownership of these devices increased dramatically. In the US, households owning a PC rose from 15% in 1990 to 35% in 1997. As the internet became more popular and usable, ownership continued to rise, and by 2007, about 271 million people worldwide owned a PC.



In that same year, something incredible happened. Apple released the iPhone, the world’s first modern smartphone. That year, 124 million smartphones were sold; within four years, smartphone sales surpassed those of PCs. By 2015, sales of smartphones were nearly five times higher than those of PCs.

Although PC ownership received a brief boost during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many people had to work from home, that was short-lived. In 2022, sales of PCs dropped by 20% from the previous year, and worldwide PC sales fell again in 2023 and 2024. Smartphone sales, meanwhile, have been rising by about 10% year on year, and by 2024, nearly 60% of all web traffic was from mobile devices.

Does this mean that the PC is dead? Not quite, say analysts. For people who work mostly in one place, for instance, a PC is more convenient, and for gamers who play high-end video games that require a lot of power, PCs are clearly better than phones.

In the end, analysts say, the device you choose to use is the one that works best for you.

You are members of your school technology club. Your group is discussing the rise of smartphones. You may want to talk about:

- why smartphones are so popular
- whether PCs are still useful for students
- whether smartphones will one day completely replace PCs
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you use a smartphone?
2. Do you ever use a computer for homework?
3. Do teenagers in Hong Kong spend too much time on their smartphones?
4. Do you think that you could live without a smartphone?
5. Should students be allowed to use smartphones in school?
6. Do you think schools should provide laptops for students?
7. Do you prefer to work on a PC or smartphone?
8. Should very young children be allowed to use a smartphone?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article appeared in a local newspaper:

Travelling North Becomes New Trend

Many will have noted the growing trend of Hong Kong residents travelling north to Shenzhen. The activities on these trips may include leisure activities and even medical services.

According to the latest data from the Immigration Department, 53 million trips were made by Hong Kong residents heading north in 2023. Since 2019, the consumption pattern of Hong Kong people in Shenzhen has gradually shifted from spending on leisure activities to everyday purchases, from dining and entertainment to medical check-ups, grocery shopping and even real estate purchases.



Take supermarket shopping as an example. Sam's Club in Shenzhen has recently become a hit among families from Hong Kong. During weekends and holidays, it is common to see Hong Kong people stocking up on groceries and also enjoying dining after shopping.

Aaron Chan spent his New Year holidays in Shenzhen, during which he tried hot pot and barbecue and drank a lot of milk tea. "The cost of a good meal is half the price. In Shenzhen, you are spoilt for choice and the fruit and vegetables are much cheaper," he stated.

Apart from being cheaper and the variety it offers, Shenzhen is attracting more people because of its high-quality services. A visitor from Hong Kong, Sally Wu, said that she had noticed great improvements in the quality of service in Shenzhen over the last few years. "For example, service staff there will proactively inform you about discount offers, and their friendly attitude makes you feel comfortable," she added.

Your group is working on a project on the changing leisure activities of Hong Kong people. You are preparing a presentation about the trend of travelling to Shenzhen. You might want to talk about:

- why trips to Shenzhen are becoming popular
- why some Hong Kong people prefer Shenzhen to other places
- how Hong Kong businesses could keep people in the city during holidays
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What do you do at weekends?
2. Have you ever been to Shenzhen?
3. Would you like to travel to Shenzhen with your family?
4. What would you do on a family trip to Shenzhen?
5. Do you think the trend of Hong Kong people travelling to Shenzhen will continue?
6. Apart from going to Shenzhen, how could Hong Kong people spend their free time?
7. Do you think it is convenient to make everyday purchases in Shenzhen?
8. How will the travel habits of Hong Kong people change in the future?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article was recently published on a news webpage:

American teenagers today are driving less than their parents did

14 years ago, when Zachary Grand turned 17, he couldn't wait to get his driving licence. Back then, a driving licence was considered a sign of adulthood: you were not a child anymore and could travel around freely, not depending on anyone else.

How times have changed. While the share of US teenagers with a driving licence was over 65% in 1995, today it is below 40%. In cities that have good public transport, the percentage is even lower.

Grand notes that teens do not want to get their driving licences anymore. "When I recently moved from California to Chicago, I was really surprised to see that so few young people here want to drive. It's incredible!"

The reasons behind this trend are many, and complicated. For one thing, car costs have increased a lot and so have the prices of petrol and insurance. Additionally, cities and towns have grown more crowded and less car-friendly, and many states in the US have made it harder for teenagers to get a driving licence.

Technology is also a factor. Things that teens used to do in person – hanging out with friends, taking classes, shopping for clothes, playing games – can now be done online. Ride-hailing apps like Uber and home delivery apps have also made driving less necessary.

"You can do anything from your phone," Grand says. "Call an Uber or even book a train or bus if you want to."

Your group is discussing whether it is worth learning to drive in Hong Kong. You may want to talk about:

- the benefits and challenges of being a driver in Hong Kong
- whether Hong Kong is a car-friendly city
- reasons why so few teenagers learn to drive in Hong Kong
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you want to learn to drive?
2. Do young people in Hong Kong usually learn to drive?
3. Is Hong Kong a safe city for driving?
4. Do you think schools should teach students how to drive?
5. Do you think it is necessary for teenagers to learn to drive in Hong Kong?
6. Should the government encourage more or less car ownership in Hong Kong?
7. Should Hong Kong young people be allowed to drive at a younger age than 18 years old?
8. Do you think that learning to drive is a sign of adulthood?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4**PART A Group Interaction**

This article appeared in a magazine:

How phobias happen, and what you can do if you have an irrational fear

Have you heard of *Chelonaphobia*, or fear of turtles? Emily Ko, a Hong Kong-born freelance writer is scared of turtles, and while it sounds silly to most people, that's exactly what a phobia is – an extreme fear of a threat and expecting danger that's out of proportion to the actual risk.

"I was five years old when my parents came home with two pet turtles," Emily says. "I freaked out. Obviously, my parents didn't throw away the turtles – they put them in my brother's room. But these things live long lives... I didn't go into that bedroom for 10 years."

Hong Kong-based hypnotherapist Sonia Samtani has dealt with a range of phobias – some common, some not. "I've treated people for fear of public speaking, cockroaches, needles, medical procedures, flying and dark spaces, and less common phobias such as cats, escalators, and pigeons." Samtani says phobias can also eat away at a person's self-confidence and self-esteem. The impact may get more severe if that person doesn't know why they are scared of something.

However, there are techniques that can help people overcome even the most extreme phobias. One popular type of treatment that helps people change the way they think and behave, is to gradually expose them to their fear so they feel less anxious about it. In this way, people don't have to suffer from phobias all their lives.

Your group is doing a group project about common fears among Hong Kong teenagers. You may want to talk about:

- common fears that Hong Kong teenagers have
- why they may have such fears
- how they can overcome those fears
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What things are you afraid of?
2. Do you know anybody who is scared of an animal?
3. Were you afraid of anything when you were younger?
4. Why would some people be afraid of taking the lift?
5. How can you help a friend who has a fear of public speaking?
6. Where would you seek help if you had a fear of something?
7. How do people's fears affect their self-confidence?
8. Do you think some fears might disappear as you get older?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a local newspaper:

Hong Kong travel firm still offering wildlife experiences despite animal welfare pledge

Hong Kong-based travel firm Vapido is continuing to promote attractions that feature wild animal performances despite a new animal welfare policy enacted last month. The company defended its tours and said it was committed to helping “build a responsible tourism community and improve the lives of animals in the travel industry.”

“Our approach is to continually work with operators to encourage long-term and sustainable change, which not only takes into consideration animal welfare but also communities who are directly impacted by the industry,” a company spokesperson said. “We continue to work with our partners across the world to achieve this. One example is elephant tourism in Thailand, which comes with a cultural and religious heritage, and is beneficial for the local communities and the economy,” she added.

Earlier this year, the travel company vowed to end ticketing for some animal attractions. Under its new policy, situations where wild animals are drugged or abused are banned. This ban extends to circuses and shows during which animals are forced to perform unnatural behaviour.

However, the animal welfare NGO, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, shared a video that showed dead bodies of horses and camels outside a tourist site in Egypt. While camel-riding activities in Egypt are listed as “currently unavailable” on Vapido’s website, the company continues to offer camel rides in places including Dubai, Morocco, and Turkey.

You are a member of the Tourism and Travel Club at your school. Your group is giving a presentation to students about the effects of tourism on animals and local communities. You may want to talk about:

- types of tourist activities that involve animals
- how these activities may cause harm to animals
- possible benefits of these activities for animals and local communities
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Have you ever watched an animal show?
2. Do you enjoy animal shows?
3. Would you go on a camel ride?
4. How would you encourage people to treat animals better?
5. Do animals used in shows have a better life?
6. Why do people go to animal shows when on holiday?
7. Should all animal shows be banned?
8. What can the government do to increase tourists’ awareness about animal welfare?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article recently appeared on a news website:

Music groups no longer dominate the pop charts

When the British rock group The Beatles first visited America in 1964, it set off a musical explosion. Not only did this group become hugely popular around the world, but young people everywhere also started buying musical instruments and forming pop and rock groups of their own.

For the rest of the 20th century, music groups dominated the pop charts. In the year 2000, for instance, over 80% of the songs listed in the ‘Hot 100’ biggest musical acts compiled by Billboard magazine were by pop, rock or hip-hop groups.

How times have changed. According to recent data, very few of the hottest songs from the year 2024 were from music groups. In August 2024, only one group, Imagine Dragons, had a hit in the Global Top 50. Individual performers like Ariana Grande, Taylor Swift, Eminem and Dua Lipa now dominate the charts.

While there are many reasons for this trend, experts say that the biggest factor has been the rise of social media. As music executive Chris Price notes, social media “is mainly a solo activity. It’s easier as an individual singer to express what kind of artist you are on YouTube or Instagram than for four people to do the same thing.”

Another factor is the improved technology for recording music alone, as software like Ableton Live allows people to make high-quality music at home. “In the past, if you wanted to make music for people to dance to, you needed a band,” says Price. “Now you just need a laptop.”

Your group is discussing changes in pop music trends in recent years. You may want to talk about:

- whether music groups are popular in Hong Kong
- whether it is better to watch a performance by a music group or an individual performer
- how social media has affected pop music trends
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like listening to music?
2. Would you like to be part of a music group?
3. Do boys and girls usually like the same kinds of music?
4. Should all children learn to play a musical instrument?
5. Do teens usually prefer music from Hong Kong or music from other places?
6. Do older and younger people in Hong Kong like the same kinds of music?
7. Is music important to young people these days?
8. Do you think music groups will completely disappear in the future?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a local magazine:

The art of self-care

More often than not, we are busy with work, maintaining our friendships and checking in with our families. And as we enjoy taking care of others, it's also important to take care of ourselves. Self-care is key to our physical and mental health.

"Self-care is when you engage in activities that take care of yourself," Valerie Ho, the founder of an e-commerce platform specializing in self-care products, explains. When we do not engage in self-care activities, "physically, we feel the symptoms of stress, things like increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, headaches, and stomach upsets. From a mental health perspective, there is an increase in anxiety or depression, and emotionally, people may find themselves more easily irritated or crying without any reason," says Odile Thiang from MindHK, an NGO focusing on wellbeing among Hong Kong people.

According to Odile, there are three pillars of self-care – exercise, sleep, and diet. Regular exercise is not only important for your physical health, but from a mental health perspective, it has been shown to treat feelings of anxiety and depression. Getting enough sleep is also an incredibly important part of self-care and helps us recharge. And watching what you eat is beneficial to both your body and your emotions.

If you don't know where to start, Odile suggests trying coupling – pairing something you love with something you know is good for you, but you're not too keen on. "A lot of people find it hard to get motivated about exercising, so couple it with watching your favourite Netflix show."

You are members of the organising committee for Self-Care Month at your school. You are meeting to discuss this. You may want to talk about:

- whether Hong Kong students are aware of the importance of self-care
- activities to organise during the Self-Care Month
- ways to encourage students to take part in self-care activities
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you enjoy exercise?
2. Do you think you get enough sleep?
3. What activities do you do if you feel stressed?
4. Does your school promote well-being among students?
5. Do students in Hong Kong have enough time to do exercise?
6. Do you think exercise can help improve mental health?
7. How can parents support their children's well-being?
8. Who should be responsible for students' health: schools or parents?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a film magazine:

Why *Spirited Away* Changed Animation Forever

In 2001, one of the most celebrated anime movies hit theatres in Japan. Directed by Hayao Miyazaki and produced by Studio Ghibli, *Spirited Away* would leave a mark on animation in the 21st century.



The story follows an ordinary 10-year-old girl, Chihiro, as she arrives at a deserted theme park that turns into a world of spirits at night. Her parents are turned into pigs by Yubaba, the witch who manages a bathhouse serving otherworldly customers. Chihiro must work in the bathhouse to save her parents and find a way to return home. The story is a tale of resilience, as Chihiro gradually finds her inner strength.

The movie arrived at a time when people thought animation was for children. *Spirited Away* destroyed prejudice about the art form and proved that a movie created in Japanese with elements of Japanese folklore could reach global audiences of all ages.

Jane Napier, a film critic, underlines the global impact of the movie. The movie's theme is uncertainty. "I think this is one reason why this movie is so popular; it recognizes that the world can be scary, and that we don't always know what's going to happen to us," Napier explains.

To Yoshioka, a Studio Ghibli fan, *Spirited Away* can be interpreted in numerous ways by the viewer. "This is key for the film to be loved as a classic," he says. "So, even 20 years on, *Spirited Away* is a movie that can be watched and rewatched."

You are members of the School Movie Society. You have been asked to plan a Movie Festival at your school. You may want to talk about:

- whether anime movies would be suitable for the festival
- other types of movies that are popular among secondary school students
- other activities to organise for the festival
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like anime movies?
2. What is your favourite animated movie?
3. Do you prefer animated or live-action movies?
4. Do you think that anime movies can be for adults?
5. Should all anime movies have a happy ending?
6. What type of movies make you want to watch them again?
7. What makes an anime movie appealing?
8. Do you agree anime movies have artistic value?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article recently appeared in an online newspaper:

Can a personality test help decide your future career?

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a self-reported personality test that can help you find out what kind of person you are. Among other things, the test assesses people's likes, dislikes, personal preferences, and possible career paths.

There are 16 personality types in total in the test. Many young people nowadays take the test to see if it can help them choose a suitable future job.

According to LinkedIn, a website that helps people find suitable careers, job seekers can use the MBTI test in multiple ways. First, it can help them identify their strengths, weaknesses, preferred work style, and ability to get along with others. Additionally, people can find lists online showing how common each MBTI type is in various fields of work, which can help them choose a career that matches their personality.

"By using the MBTI, you can discover your personality type and how it influences your work preferences, behaviours, and outcomes," the site reports. "You can also use the MBTI to find careers that match your type."

However, it is not only potential employees who use the MBTI but employers as well. In China, many companies, including large international ones, now require job applicants to complete the test, and it is one of the factors that may help them decide whether to hire someone – or not.

"Some companies may not want to hire someone whose personality test results do not suit their goals," said Ning, a senior media executive.

Your group is attending a career planning workshop at school and you are discussing the use of personality tests in finding a job. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of using personality tests for choosing a career
- problems with using personality tests for choosing a career
- other ways to decide how to choose the right career
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. What job would you like to do?
2. Have you ever taken a personality test?
3. Are personality tests popular among young people in Hong Kong?
4. Do your friends have similar personalities to you?
5. Is it important to know your own personality type?
6. What kind of personality do you get along well with?
7. Has your personality changed since you were younger?
8. Should employers be allowed to use personality tests?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a website:

Scouts Create a Better World

Many Scout organizations worldwide have committed to achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, the groups aim to end poverty, reduce inequality and combat climate change.

Learning key values

From as young as six, boys and girls can join to learn about nature while playing games, making friends and learning important values. "The key values of a Scout are respect for others, for oneself and for the environment," says Morgan, a Belgian Scout leader. In Greece, for example, Scouts are given tips on how they can implement the SDGs in their daily lives, such as by asking for a donation to charity instead of a gift on their birthday to achieve Goal 1: No Poverty; or by not letting their tap run when brushing their teeth for Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.

Everyone is welcome

Inclusion is an important principle of Scouting. "Everyone is welcome in Scouting. One of the most important values for young people taking part is that everyone can participate and that you can be yourself," says Takahashi, Director of Scouting Japan. "Cooking together at camp or sleeping in a tent promotes community life and respect for different opinions," says Luc, another Scout leader from Luxembourg.



Global solidarity

Scouting not only brings young people together at a national level, but also internationally. Thousands of young members from 171 countries meet every four years at the World Scout Jamboree. Held in a different location each time, the 10-day educational event promotes peace and friendship.

Your group would like to start a Scouting Club. You are meeting to prepare a presentation to convince the School Board. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of Scouting for secondary school students
- activities to organise for the club
- ways to encourage other students to join the club
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you enjoy nature?
2. Would you like to be a Scout?
3. Have you ever gone camping?
4. Would you enjoy sleeping in a tent?
5. Is camping a popular activity in Hong Kong?
6. Would you prefer camping in a Scout group or with your family?
7. Do you agree Scouts could make the world a better place?
8. What lessons that you learn as a Scout would be the most important?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a website:

A daring heart: Meet the bamboo scaffolders of Hong Kong

Intricate bamboo scaffolding is still part of the cityscape in Hong Kong. The metropolis is one of the world's last remaining cities to use bamboo scaffolding in construction and building repair. Luckily, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and its students are keeping this sustainable skill alive.

Scaffolders perched on bamboo frames several storeys high are a common sight, and are nicknamed 'spiders' by Hong Kong people for their agility over the scaffold. Mo Jia Yu wraps his legs around a pole to balance high above the ground and secure a joint, a skill he must master to become a bamboo scaffolder in Hong Kong. "You have to have a daring heart," says Mo, one of dozens of students who enrol each year at the CIC to learn the traditional method. "You need courage as well as skill to survive," says Professor Chang from the Architecture Department of the University of Hong Kong. "This discourages people from going into the industry."



Despite the dangers involved in the craft, Chang hopes Hong Kong will preserve it as part of its cultural heritage.

Bamboo is readily available across the border in southern Chinese provinces. Its price and efficiency makes it popular, while lightweight bamboo is also easier to transport through a cramped urban centre.

"Bamboo scaffolds are suited to the odd and tight spaces in Hong Kong," adds instructor Kin Kee Wo, who has worked in the construction industry for nearly 30 years. "It can be built in the most unthinkable places, in the most beautiful ways."

Your group is doing a project on bamboo scaffolding. You are meeting to discuss this. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of using bamboo for scaffolding
- ways of improving the safety of bamboo scaffolding
- whether bamboo scaffolding is part of Hong Kong's heritage
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you often see bamboo scaffolding in Hong Kong?
2. Would you like to learn to build bamboo scaffolding?
3. Would you like to work in the construction industry in Hong Kong?
4. Are you worried when you have to walk under bamboo scaffolding?
5. Should bamboo scaffolders be paid high salaries?
6. How can bamboo scaffolding be made safer for workers?
7. Should bamboo scaffolding be taught at secondary schools?
8. Do you think people will continue learning traditional crafts?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a webpage:

Should Teenagers Drink Coffee and Caffeinated Energy Drinks?

Teenagers now have another thing to worry about: coffee. This time, it isn't parents trying to prohibit their kids from becoming over-caffinated: it's Caligula Coffee, one of the largest coffee chains in the UK.

An employee's recent refusal to serve an iced coffee to a 12-year-old is reigniting a controversial question. Should shops be allowed to ban the sale of coffee and energy drinks to teenagers and kids?

While Caligula Coffee isn't completely banning the sale of coffee to teenagers, the company's new policy allows its employees to deny serving them drinks that contain caffeine, including energy drinks. "We do not encourage the sale of caffeine to children under 16," the company's spokesperson said. Some customers, including the 12-year-old's father, are upset. He expressed his outrage online saying his daughter just deserved a treat.

But not everyone is against a ban. The UK government, for example, has been working to prohibit the sale of coffee and energy drinks to teenagers after declaring the link between caffeine consumption and various health issues among younger consumers too strong to ignore.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) says that significant amounts of caffeine affect the heart and blood vessels. According to Dr George of the NIH, when it comes to teenagers and caffeine, education and moderation are both key. And it's also important to remember who you're talking to. "Beware once you tell someone, especially teenagers, that they can't have something: they will find a way to get their hands on it."

You are members of the Healthy Life for All Club at your school. Your group is meeting to discuss the impact of coffee and energy drinks on teenagers. You may want to talk about:

- negative effects of coffee and energy drinks on teenagers' health
- what the club can do to make those effects known among students
- whether coffee and energy drinks should be sold to teenagers
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like energy drinks?
2. What drinks are popular among teenagers?
3. Do young people drink more coffee than old people?
4. Do you believe the coffee ban for teenagers is a good idea?
5. Should schools ban unhealthy drinks?
6. What advice could you give a parent whose child drinks too many energy drinks?
7. What can be done to help teenagers consume fewer energy drinks?
8. Do you agree that banning something is not likely to work with teenagers?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared as a blog post:

Gap Year: Work or Travel?

Students always face many tests and exams. Taking a break from studies for a year and having a rest sounds attractive. A “Gap year”, usually taken after the end of secondary school and before starting university, provides an opportunity for students to explore the world, look for a richer spiritual life and exchange cultural ideas.

What did Hong Kong students do during their gap years? Oscar Chan Chi-kin, a year one business student at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, didn’t go to university immediately. Instead, he went to Singapore in his gap year and volunteered to help young people develop leadership skills. “Instead of being career-driven, I hoped to gain a life direction and figure out what I love to do,” he said. After the gap year, he knew what his ideal working environment would look like in his future career. “Whether the company vision aligns with my personal values is really important.”

Besides travelling and volunteering, young people from Asia also choose to intern and work to enrich their resumés and sharpen their competitive edge. However, Sascha Choi On, a student who has just started studying at CUHK has a different view: “Nowadays it’s changing. Some of my friends took a gap year because they really wanted to find a sense of self, such as ‘who I am’ and ‘what the goal in my life is’. Some students really care about their inner peace and happiness rather than just focusing on earning money,” she said.

You are invited to participate in a round table discussion at the Hong Kong Youth Forum about taking a gap year after secondary school. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of taking a gap year
- challenges of taking a gap year
- activities young people could do during their gap year
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to take a gap year?
2. What would you do during a gap year?
3. Would you prefer to volunteer or to travel during a gap year?
4. Where would you like to travel to during a gap year?
5. Do you know what career you would like to pursue?
6. Do you think taking a gap year is popular among Hong Kong young people?
7. How can students make sure that their gap year is not wasted?
8. How would travelling during a gap year help somebody’s career?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a fashion website:

Hong Kong's growing second-hand luxury clothes culture



Redress, an NGO promoting sustainability through popularising second-hand fashion, is back with its seasonal “Get Redressed #ShopSecondhand” pop-up store in Hong Kong. Located at Taikoo Place, Quarry Bay, the second-hand pop-up store’s success over the years shows a growing second-hand culture in the city. Meanwhile, online second-hand luxury fashion platforms like Hula, Vestiaire Collective and Little Dot Vintage sell discounted items from brands like Dior, Chanel, and Gucci.

Shoppers can expect to see donated second-hand clothes and accessories from all over Hong Kong, with pieces ranging from luxury designer labels to more trendy and affordable ones, according to Redress’ event page. The clothing items up for resale are donated by people and collected through the NGO’s takeback program. With something for everyone, the event is expected to be size- and gender-inclusive, while shoppers will be confident that they are reducing their carbon footprint by buying second-hand clothes that would otherwise end up in the city’s landfills.

According to Redress’ 2020 study on Hong Kong’s fashion consumption, changes in consumer habits were considerable after the pandemic, with two out of three actively changing their behaviour, and 30 per cent of respondents acknowledging the environmental cost of shopping habits. What is particularly interesting is that 31 per cent of respondents already own second-hand clothing, while 12 per cent have been reselling clothes online and offline as well. There is no doubt about the sustainable fashion industry’s potential in Hong Kong.

Your class is preparing a social studies project on second-hand clothing in Hong Kong. You may want to talk about:

- what Hong Kong people normally do with their unwanted clothes
- why second-hand fashion is growing in Hong Kong
- ways to promote second-hand fashion
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like shopping for clothes?
2. Would you like to wear second-hand clothes?
3. Do you think buying second-hand clothing is a good idea?
4. What do you do with the clothes you no longer need?
5. Why do some people think second-hand clothing is not a good idea?
6. Would you be concerned about the cleanliness of second-hand clothes?
7. Why do people throw their clothes away so often?
8. How has the pandemic changed clothes shopping in Hong Kong?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in a newspaper:

In trilingual Hong Kong, Korean language is the new kid on the block

For decades, French, Spanish, German and Japanese have been the most popular foreign languages among Hong Kong students. But in recent years, Korean has emerged as the new kid on the block. The latest estimate by the Korean consulate in Hong Kong showed that there were around 40,000 Korean learners in 2024 based on enrolment figures at universities and private academies.

In secondary schools, most Korean lessons are taught as extracurricular classes. But some have gone a step further to include the language in their curriculum as an elective. The introduction of Korean into the public school curriculum, although still at an early stage, is significant and a testament to its popularity, experts say. Professor Li Chor-Shing said the launching of Korean classes in public schools shows that many young people are motivated to learn Korean, and that it could help students with their future career prospects.

Teachers say Korean has gained popularity in public schools as young people see learning Korean as more than just a hobby. Ms. Lai, who has taught Korean for over 10 years, said she has seen a shift in the past two to three years in the reasons young people want to learn the language. “It used to be K-pop fans wanting to learn how to write ‘Oppa, I love you’ in letters to their idols,” Ms. Lai said. “But now, aside from that, students also see Korea as a study destination or they want to work there.”

You are members of the Student Union. Your school is going to require students to learn a language other than Chinese or English and you are meeting to discuss this. You may want to talk about:

- why Hong Kong students should learn other languages
- which other languages would be popular among students
- how students can learn other languages outside the classroom
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Would you like to learn Korean?
2. Do you like Korean culture?
3. Would you prefer to learn languages online or at school?
4. Is listening to songs useful for learning a language?
5. Is it important to speak many languages to have a successful career?
6. Would you prefer learning an Asian or a European language?
7. Do you think you will need to learn more languages in the future?
8. Do you need to know a country’s culture to learn its language?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This advertisement appeared on the website of a travel agency:

Once-in-a-lifetime adventures

Here at Global Travel, we've specialised in delivering unforgettable educational tours to places all over the world for over 50 years. Take a look at our current trips on offer.

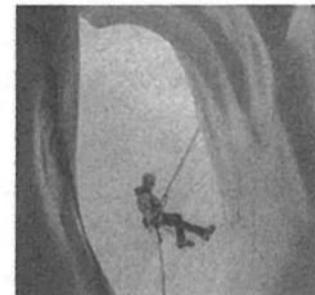
Swim with turtles in Australia



Swim with endangered species at the world-famous Ningaloo Reef, home to around 500 types of fish and other sea creatures. At only 100 metres offshore, there's no need to scuba dive – the snorkelling is amazing. See the seven species of turtles that build their nests on beaches and islands nearby. You can also learn how to save coral reefs, which play a vital role in the marine environment.

Visit a volcanic cave in Iceland

Travel down 120m below the surface of the earth into an ancient volcanic cave. Explore the colourful rock formations and the huge underground spaces. Above ground, visit the ice lakes to see the incredible filming locations of movies like Star Wars and TV shows like Game of Thrones. You'll be amazed by the views as you learn more about the rocks we take for granted.



See the starry night in Morocco

Morocco, in North Africa, has some of the world's best skies for stargazing. The dry climate means cloudless skies all year round, with no towns or light pollution in its remote nature reserves. Experience a unique camping tour in the desert with dedicated guides who know all the best places to see these heavenly wonders. Find out about the history of our universe from the very heart of the desert.

Your school has won a free adventure trip. You are part of the School Travel Team and are meeting to discuss the three choices above. You may want to talk about:

- which trip would be most beneficial for students to join
- problems and challenges that the students might face on the trip
- how to convince parents to let their children join the trip
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Have you ever been on a school trip?
2. Would you like to go on an adventure trip?
3. Would you prefer to take a relaxing trip or an adventure trip?
4. Do you think adventure trips are appropriate for students?
5. Would you prefer to travel to far away places or to stay near to Hong Kong?
6. Would you prefer going on a trip with your school or with your family?
7. Are you interested in exploring marine life?
8. What makes an adventure trip memorable?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in an Australian newspaper:

Urban beekeeping: A good idea?

Thousands have taken up urban beekeeping in Sydney. The reaction from neighbours is not always positive. Rob Simms has three beehives in his garden, and gives away jars of honey to keep his neighbours sweet. "I delayed doing anything for six months because I thought I wouldn't get neighbour approval," Simms said. "Now I give people jars of honey and everyone's happy."



But the beekeeping boom has created problems for urban living. Catherine Heath, a resident, considers herself pro-bee. However, this spring her garden has become a no-go zone because of aggressive bees, and she noticed an adjoining house had a sign on the front fence advertising homegrown honey. "It's to the point that in good weather, we can't use the backyard most of the time," Heath says. "There are a lot of bees and they behave in a strange way. They attack both dogs and humans unprovoked."

Douglas Purdie, president of Sydney Bee Club, said this was not unheard of. "Bees, like all wild things, go through cycles and temperament, just like you can have a dog that's very nice today and tomorrow bites you," he said.

The Department of Primary Industries says Sydney has over 15,000 registered beekeepers and around 400,000 hives. Dr Tobias Smith, a researcher at the University of Queensland, comments that native Australian bees are stingless. "If you have flowers around, they will just do their own thing, and you sit back and enjoy watching them," Smith said. "They're a really easy pet."

You are members of your student council. You are discussing if it is a good idea to put a beehive on the school campus as a biology project. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of beekeeping at school
- problems that beekeeping could cause at school
- other activities that could help students to learn about bees
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you like honey?
2. Are you scared of bees?
3. Would you like to have an insect as a pet?
4. Would you like to keep bees?
5. How can schools make beekeeping safe for students?
6. Would your neighbours be upset if you took up beekeeping?
7. Do you think Hong Kong is suitable for urban beekeeping?
8. How else can schools promote a connection with nature?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

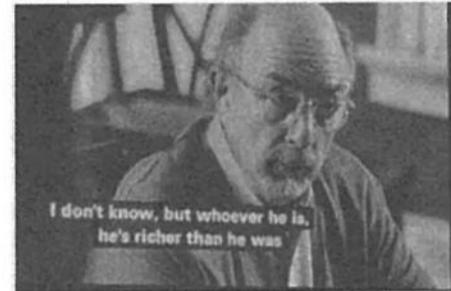
PART A Group Interaction

This article was recently published on a news website:

Young people love subtitles; older people, not so much

Anyone who has ever watched movies or TV shows should be familiar with subtitles.

These are words that are shown on the bottom or side of a screen to indicate what the speakers on screen are saying. For viewers to follow along with the story, the timing of the texts must be the same as the timing of the people speaking.



Originally, subtitles had two main purposes: to translate the words from a foreign language into your own language, and to allow people who have hearing problems to understand the words being spoken.

Recently, however, there has been a new trend among young people in the UK. According to research, 4 out of 5 viewers between the age of 18-25 use subtitles all the time – even when watching movies or TV shows in their own language – while less than 25% of people aged between 56-75 do so.

"I think it's natural now for young people to accept subtitles," said UK media expert Melanie Sharpe. She added that while older people feel that using subtitles while listening to someone speak "requires too much thinking," young people "can take in far more information quickly because they're used to it."

Nobody knows exactly how this trend started, but one theory is that young people grew up with seeing subtitles on social media and are now comfortable with them.

Another factor may be the poor sound quality of streamed videos. "They might be using subtitles because of background noise or changing volumes," Sharpe said.

You are members of the school's Campus TV Team and you are discussing whether to add English and Chinese subtitles to your programmes. You may want to talk about:

- benefits of adding subtitles to the programmes
- whether adding subtitles to programmes would be popular among students
- type of programmes subtitles are not suitable for
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Is there a Campus TV channel at your school?
2. Do you usually use subtitles when watching movies?
3. Do you prefer English or Chinese subtitles?
4. Are movies without subtitles difficult to watch?
5. Are movies with subtitles less enjoyable?
6. Do you agree that young people like subtitles?
7. Do you prefer to have subtitles when watching a movie in your own language?
8. Can subtitles help people to learn a language?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article was published recently on a news website:

An unusual career that may be one of the most desired jobs of the future

As artificial intelligence or ‘AI’ becomes more widely used and starts replacing some traditional jobs, many young people worry about their future careers.

According to some experts, however, there is one popular job trend which will not be easily taken over by AI: being a ‘personal shopper’.

A personal shopper refers to a person who helps customers find products that they need by doing their shopping for them. Instead of visiting real stores or spending hours searching online, a customer with little free time can find a personal shopper with the right skills, knowledge and connections to help meet their needs.

“This is a job that has grown quickly,” says American business executive Tom Ward. “And it’s grown in line with the way that customers want to shop.”

The best personal shoppers have expert knowledge of their field. To become a professional clothing shopper, for instance, you need to learn everything about fashion, from the top designer names to the latest fashion trends.

While AI assistants may also have such knowledge, the benefit of human shoppers is that when they visit stores to locate good quality or ‘on sale’ items, they build personal relationships with store owners and supply shops. This can help a human shopper see the quality of the goods, get the best possible prices, and even find unusual products not available online. These benefits, say retail experts, mean that human personal shoppers are still the best choice.

Your class is talking about personal shopping as a career. Your group has been asked to discuss the reasons for this trend. You may want to talk about:

- whether being a personal shopper would be a good job for teenagers
- if AI will one day replace human salespeople in face-to-face shopping
- how shopping will change in the future
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

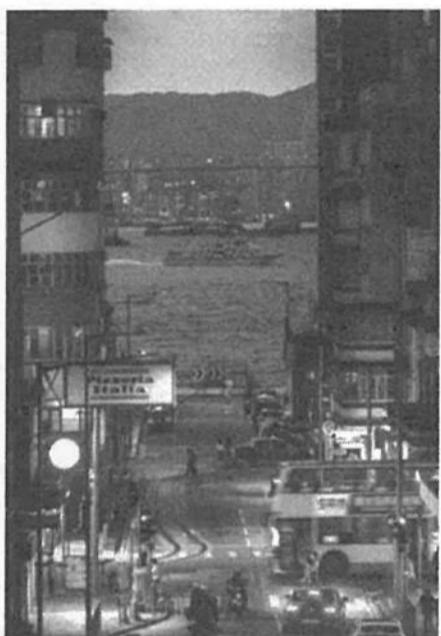
1. Do you like shopping?
2. Where is your favourite place to shop?
3. Do you prefer to shop alone or with friends?
4. Do you prefer shopping online or in a shop?
5. Would you be a good personal clothes shopper?
6. What do you think would be difficult about being a personal shopper?
7. Would you hire a personal shopper if you were too busy to shop yourself?
8. Is shopping a leisure activity or a necessity?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared on a website:

How an app is reshaping Hong Kong tourism



Carrying three lenses, two cameras and a tripod with him, Mainland Chinese tourist, Wei Qingyu, arrived at a basketball court with his girlfriend in search of a photo spot in Kennedy Town on a cloudy day. But why this sports facility in a residential area on Hong Kong Island?

Wei said it provided the perfect vantage point to capture the city's historic trams going along a vibrant street against the backdrop of Victoria Harbour. It was a tip Wei saw on Xiaohongshu, an Instagram-like social media platform popular on the Mainland and beyond.

Xiaohongshu, known for travel tips, has more than 200 million active users, with more than 70 per cent of the users born in the 1990s. The app has reshaped Hong Kong's tourism landscape, as influencers share ideas and tips for previously ordinary places. Some bring takeaways from McDonald's to MacDonnell Road in Mid-Levels for a fun photo. Others flock to Yau Ma Tei Police Station for a shot of the iconic building.

Another destination popularised on Xiaohongshu is a busy footbridge in Mong Kok. Colourful neon signs adorning the residential buildings are a popular draw for tourists, who want to capture the nostalgic vintage vibe of Hong Kong.

"The scenery, with some background music, seems quite romantic," a Malaysian tourist said. "Hong Kong feels familiar because its dramas and films are very popular in Malaysia, and we go hunting for places we see on the app."

Your group has entered a competition to create a video for young tourists who visit Hong Kong. You may want to talk about:

- famous places to include in the video
- activities to show in the video
- difficulties your group may face while making the video
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

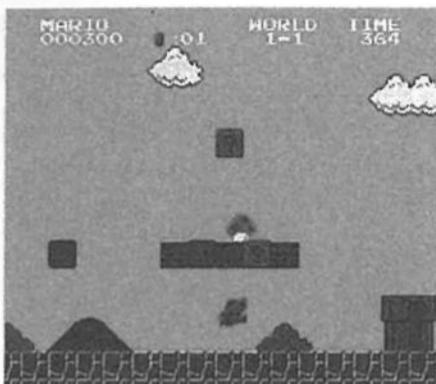
1. Do you like making videos?
2. Have you ever taken a photo at a famous place in Hong Kong?
3. Do you read travel tips on social media?
4. Is social media useful for exploring Hong Kong?
5. What makes Hong Kong popular among tourists?
6. Do you follow any influencers who share travel tips?
7. What aspects of Hong Kong would you like to see on social media?
8. Do you agree influencers are important for promoting tourism?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article appeared in an online magazine:

Why was Super Mario a plumber?



In 1985, a little Italian plumber became the face of video games, and changed the way we play them. ‘Super Mario Bros’ featured the main character in the game, Mario, jumping around collecting coins and rushing to save Princess Peach from a villainous turtle.

At the time, video games were usually created by computer engineers, as opposed to today’s artists.

“I was trying to use the technology available at the time to produce a distinctive-looking character from a small number of pixels, and that resulted in Mario,” said Shigeru Miyamoto, the game designer and producer of Super Mario Bros. As to why he picked a 26-year-old Italian-American plumber from New York as the main character, Miyamoto said, “We wanted him to be someone who might live near you, and not a superhero.”



“People had never seen a game like Super Mario Bros,” said Frank Cifaldi, co-director of the Video Game History Foundation, “Super Mario Bros manages to convey an epic adventure in a massive world. Day turns to night as you progress. You cross bridges into new lands.” Super Mario Bros changed the way we play video games – “from merely aiming for a high score to playing a game to experience an adventure and see it through to its ending,” he said.

To celebrate Super Mario’s 40th anniversary, Nintendo has launched Mario-centred games. These new games use nostalgia for Mario and other classic games while experimenting with recent technologies like augmented reality.

Your group is preparing a class project about video games. You may want to talk about:

- why people still play classic games like Super Mario Bros
- what makes a video game popular for a long time
- what video games will be like in the future
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you play video games?
2. What kind of video games do you like?
3. Do you prefer games with ordinary characters or superheroes?
4. Do adults like playing the same video games as young people?
5. Would you like to be a game developer?
6. Are all video games suitable for children to play?
7. Do you agree that video games can be works of art?
8. How do video games influence young people?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 4

PART A Group Interaction

This article was published recently on a business website:

A hot social media site among teens is one people might not expect

If you were trying to guess which social media sites are becoming popular among teenagers, what would you choose? Snapchat? Instagram? Facebook?

You might be surprised to learn that a growing number of high schoolers are now turning to a site that is all about success at work: LinkedIn.

The world's largest online professional network, LinkedIn, helps people find the right jobs, connect with others in their field, make important professional connections and learn skills necessary for career success. It also allows users to join career-related discussions and to read, and comment on, articles from their field.

According to recent studies, many teenagers in North America now see LinkedIn as the hottest social media platform. This is partly because they are trying to prepare themselves for today's fast-moving job market, but also because they like the positive tone of the site.

"When I go on Facebook, I just see people with horrible feelings and bad ideas," said one teenager. "And when I go on LinkedIn, it's so positive and honest—this is how social media should be."

Many secondary students also say that they like LinkedIn because it helps them to find role models, to follow their interests, and to learn about possible future job trends.

"I had been interviewing teenagers about social media," said journalist Anya Kamenetz. "And I learned that this site is popular with those who are really focused on their futures."

Your class is talking about the growing popularity of LinkedIn among teens. Your group has been asked to discuss this trend. You may want to talk about:

- why teenagers may be turning away from other social media sites
- whether social media is useful for finding career information
- whether secondary school students should be concerned about their future careers
- anything else you think is important

PART B Individual Response

1. Do you use social media?
2. Which social media sites are most popular among teenagers?
3. What job would you like to do in the future?
4. Which careers are most popular among teenagers nowadays?
5. Would you look for jobs on social media?
6. How do people in Hong Kong usually look for jobs?
7. Would you post your profile on social media to find a job?
8. How can you check if information on social media is trustworthy?