

## PART A

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1-30 on pages 1-4 of the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

### Text 1

## Apologies all around

“Oh look!” Rachel shouted. “There’s a robot at the door.”

Winston Sinclair hoped it wasn’t one of those sales robots. They were nearly impossible to get  
5 rid of. He picked up Rachel and raised the viewing screen she had used. The robot was one metre tall, grey, squat, plain-looking.

“Robot, what do you want?”

It had a cheap synthesized voice. “Winston  
10 Sinclair, born February 18, 2000?”

“Yeah...”

“Worked at CommaTech from 2023 to 2026?”

“Honey, don’t buy anything,” his wife Elizabeth called from the living room.

15 “Pardon, Winston Sinclair, I am not here to sell you something. I am not here to buy something. Winston Sinclair, sir, I am here to apologize.”

Winston sat on the couch with Elizabeth and Rachel while the robot explained.

20 “I contain an apology for Winston Sinclair from Karl Anderson.”

“Karl Anderson? I haven’t heard that name in, gosh, probably ten years.”

25 Rachel pulled at his shirt sleeve. “Daddy, who’s Karl?”

“We worked together at CommaTech, then he got a great job at Future Industries. I applied to work there, but they never called back.”

30 The robot beeped. “Pardon, Winston Sinclair. Will you hear the apology?”

“Uh, okay.”

An identicard reader on its side lit up. “Please confirm your identity.”

35 Winston pulled his card from his wallet and waved it over the reader.

“Identity confirmed, Winston Sinclair.” The robot whirred as a small video screen unfurled into where its head might have been. “Playing apology.”

40 The man in the video had more grey and less hair, but it was definitely Karl.

“Hello, Winston. Isn’t this the strangest bot? It just shows up one day and... well, anyway.” Karl licked his lips. “Nine years ago, you applied to  
45 Future Industries. I didn’t want a young hotshot like you competing with me, so I spread the rumor that you were impossible to work with. I’ve felt bad ever since and I’d like to apologize for doing that. I’m really sorry. I hope you can forgive me.”  
50

The screen rolled back into the robot.

Winston jumped up. “THAT SCOUNDREL!!!”

“Winston!”

55 “Sorry — I really wanted that job. I always wondered what happened. I don’t believe it!” Winston stalked around the living room. “I was miserable at CommaTech for another year until I left, and then — ”

60 “And then you went to IndustriCorp,” Elizabeth said. “And you met me, and we got married, and we had Rachel, and here we are. I’d say things worked out just fine.”

The robot chimed. “Winston Sinclair, do you accept the apology?”

65 He had wanted that job so badly back then. But if he’d gotten it, then Future Industries would be his life. Not Elizabeth. Not Rachel, who right now was poking a plastic magic wand at the robot from underneath the coffee table.

70 Elizabeth was right. Things had worked out just fine. Better, even. She saw the big picture, like she always did. It was one of the reasons he loved her.

“Winston Sinclair, do you accept the apology?”

75 He sat down on the couch and reached for Elizabeth's hand. "Yes. I do."

The robot extended a small metal arm, probably a camera.

80 "Please record your acceptance." Winston took a breath. "Hi Karl, this is Winston. I accept your apology. Things worked out. I hope you're well. Hey, call me sometime and we'll catch up. Bye."

The robot clicked. "Winston Sinclair, now you must record an apology."

85 "Excuse me?"

"You must record an apology. I will deliver it. This is my function."

Well, Winston thought, what do I have to apologize for?

90 "Okay. I scratched a hover-bike with my car door yesterday."

The robot was quiet while an LED on its front blinked, then went solid red. "Insufficient value."

"What!?"

95 "Value of new apology must calculate to within plus or minus twelve percent of value of accepted apology."

Winston rose from the couch. "I need to think about this over dinner."

100 While the family ate, the robot stayed in the living room and recharged.

"Pardon, Winston Sinclair," the robot beeped. "You must record an apology."

105 "Oh, geez, robot. Fine. I stole two books from the library when I was twelve."

Again, the silence. "Insufficient value."

"I teased Devon Marcus in tenth grade."

"Insufficient value."

110 "In university, I cheated on my fourth-year mathematics exam."

"Insufficient value."

A moment from Winston's past emerged in his mind. He slowly turned his chair around.

"What if I broke someone's heart?"

115 "Age at heart breaking?"

"Twenty-two."

The LED blinked for what felt like forever. It turned green. "Value is sufficient. You may apologize."

120 Sitting on the couch, Winston talked as the robot recorded.

125 "Hi, Cherisse. This is Winston Sinclair. I want to apologize. That night by the lake? When I told you I didn't believe in love? I lied. I was scared of being close, and I ran away. I'm sorry I didn't respond to your calls and your mail. I'm hoping you'll forgive me." He sat back. "That's it." Winston felt good, lighter somehow. He imagined this was how Karl had felt.

130 The robot collected itself, unplugged, and moved to the door.

Winston stood. "Robot, wait."

"Yes?"

"I thought of another apology."

135 "Only one apology is allowed. Now I must leave."

Winston opened the door for the robot.

140 "Karl Anderson will receive this acceptance," the robot recited. "Cherisse Deveraux will receive this apology. Goodbye, Winston Sinclair."

145 While Rachel waved goodbye to the robot, Winston watched it go down the path, down the driveway, and down the street until it disappeared into the night. He stood on the porch a few minutes more, and then went inside. He picked up the internet tablet and started searching.

"What are you doing, honey?" Elizabeth said from the table.

150 "I'm looking for instructions. I'm going to build a robot."

### END OF READING PASSAGE

Sources of materials used in this paper will be acknowledged in the *Examination Report and Question Papers* published by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority at a later stage.

Candidate Number

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**HKDSE 2014  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
PAPER 1 PART A  
QUESTION-ANSWER BOOK**

**A**  
COMPULSORY

Write your Candidate Number and stick a barcode label in the space provided on this page.

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1-30. (47 marks)

1. Who shouts in line 1?

- A. the mother
- B. the father
- C. the daughter
- D. the robot

A B C D  
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. Why doesn't Winston like sales robots?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What does Elizabeth think the robot is trying to do?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How does Winston know Karl?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Who does 'they' (line 28) refer to?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Decide whether the following statements are **True**, **False**, or the information is **Not Given** in lines 1-30. Blacken ONE circle only for each statement. (3 marks)

i) At first glance, the robot does not appear to be very impressive.

T F NG  
☐ ☐ ☐

ii) Rachel knows who Karl is.

☐ ☐ ☐

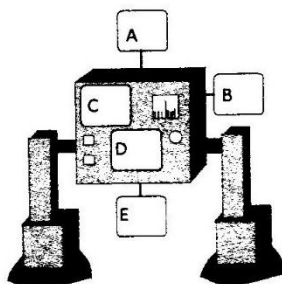
iii) Karl and Winston both wanted to work at Future Industries.

☐ ☐ ☐

7. What does 'it' (line 35) refer to?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Where on the robot is the 'small video screen' (line 37)? Blacken the correct circle.



A B C D E  
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

9. Decide whether the following statements are **True**, **False**, or the information is **Not Given** in lines 40-50. Blacken ONE circle only for each statement. (3 marks)

	T	F	NG
i) Winston does not recognize the man in the video.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ii) The job at Future Industries was to build robots.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
iii) Karl admits feeling guilty for what he did.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Why did Karl spread the rumor about Winston?

A. Karl didn't like Winston.	A
B. Karl preferred to work on his own.	B
C. Karl was scared Winston was better than him.	C
D. Karl thought Winston worked badly in a team.	D

11. What is Winston's first reaction on hearing Karl's apology?

A. sadness	A
B. anger	B
C. fear	C
D. pity	D

12. i) Who says 'Winston!' (line 53)? (1 mark)

\_\_\_\_\_

- ii) Why? (1 mark)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Why did Winston want to change jobs? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. Number the following events in chronological order. Write 1-4 on the lines provided.

Winston meets Elizabeth \_\_\_\_\_

Winston applies for a job at Future Industries \_\_\_\_\_

Winston works at CommaTech \_\_\_\_\_

Winston works at IndustriCorp \_\_\_\_\_

15. What does 'it' (line 66) refer to? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Who is under the coffee table? \_\_\_\_\_

17. What is most important in Winston's life now? \_\_\_\_\_

18. What does 'the big picture' (line 71) refer to?

- A. The robot's video screen.
- B. The apology from Karl.
- C. The things Elizabeth had always wanted.
- D. The complete view of Winston's life.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

19. Why does Winston accept Karl's apology?

- A. He hadn't really wanted the job at Future Industries.
- B. He feels things worked out in the end.
- C. He wants to catch up with Karl.
- D. He is afraid of the robot.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

20. In lines 88-89, who is the question directed at? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What does it mean when the robot says, 'Insufficient value' (line 93)?

(2 marks)

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22. What does the robot do while Winston thinks of another apology?

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23. How does Winston feel when he says, 'Fine' (line 104)?

- A. satisfied
- B. ashamed
- C. relieved
- D. exasperated

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

24. Fill in the missing word(s) for each of Winston's apologies. Choose an answer from the ten options given below. Write the answer in the space provided. Only **FIVE** options can be used. (5 marks)

**destroyed / copied / ignored / laughed at /  
returned / lost / lied to / took / damaged / replied to**

- i) I'm sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_ that hover bike.
- ii) I'm sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_ those books.
- iii) I'm sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_ you, Devon.
- iv) I'm sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_ my friend's answers.
- v) I'm sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_ your letters.

25. How many of Winston's apologies does the robot record? \_\_\_\_\_
26. Why did Winston stop contacting Cherisse?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
27. What is the robot's mission? (2 marks)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
28. What is the message behind the story? (2 marks)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
29. Name two people in the story who have accepted apologies. (2 marks)  
i) \_\_\_\_\_ ii) \_\_\_\_\_
30. Which character from the story is most likely to say each quote below? Write the name of the character next to the quote. Do not use any character more than once. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

Quotes	Character
e.g. "I hope she gets my message."	Winston
i) "Cherisse Deveraux, born March 20, 2001?"	
ii) "Don't worry about the past dear, focus on the present."	
iii) "I cried so much when you left."	
iv) "Put me down, I want to play with the robot!"	
v) "I couldn't stop thinking that I ruined your career."	

**END OF PART A**

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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