**Passage one**

In a frantic society where **efficiency** is put great emphasis on, maybe it is high time we should take a breath and think about the bad consequences brought about by the head-spinning life. In the following excerpts, the author presents his opinion on the slow lifestyle versus the fast one. Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about 300 words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author's opinion;
2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Fast-free Living**

What Americans would do if they were serious about stopping to smell the flowers? Is the American lifestyle slowing down, in a response to national trauma and the onset of war? Judging from commentaries by cultural analysts and newspaper columnists, the answer is yes.

A *Boston Globe* editorial looked back on a hard year: "But it brought growth, to, and a deeper understanding of just how fragile life is, and how what we often take for granted——the kiss goodbye in the morning, the chat with a friend, the Saturday soccer game—is what matters most" An observation from *The Washington Post*:" People seem to walk more slowly. They are off their brisk, self-important stride. Motorists are driving better. They lay off their homes. They don't jump lights. "From *The Dallas Morning News*:"Americans are experiencing a sort of cocooning of the heart', cultural experts say. They're using this time to reconnect with their families and friends."

If Americans really were beginning to slow down, the contemporary simplicity movement would not be adding another meeting or two a month to our schedules. The antidote to a frenetic work life wouldn't be something called" power leisure".

The celebration of the new slowness may not reflect reality, but it surely does reflect some degree of yearning. Yet there may be a few bold steps we should take to get us on the path to fast-free living

Backpacks. The task of slowing the country down must begin with efforts aimed at prevention. It should begin early, as an inspection of any schoolchild's backpack will reveal. These encumbrances typically have a capacity of one and a half cubic feet and hold loads of forty pounds. The contents, unpacked and spread out like a GI's battle kit, represent hyper-achievement in microcosm. A simple yet revolutionary reform would be to decree that the capacity of school backpacks be reduced by two thirds.

Drive-thru windows. The whole point of these amenities is speed, and without intervention drive-thru service will only get faster. According to *The Futarist*, McDonald's will soon introduce email billing at some of its drive-thru facilities in southern California. Other chains are experimenting with an E-Z Pass system, similar to the one used for bridge and highway tolls; a transponder the car would permit purchases to be deducted automatically from prepaid accounts.

Electric light Another issue related to biorhythms is the seemingly inexorable drift toward a 24/7 economy. The rule of thumb is that if anything can be done twenty-four hours a day, it will be; daycare centers and dentists' offices are now open at midnight. Almost by definition, the maintenance of basic diurnal rhythms is essential to a humane way of life. Political arithmetic may forever doom a significant rise in the gasoline tax, but what about levying a ten-cent-a-watt tax on light bulbs? One happy consequence might be a shift back to daytime baseball.

Computer keyboards. Yes, computers have made many aspects of modern life more tolerable, enabling stupendous feats of calculation, storage, and management. But they are also an attractive nuisance, putting unimaginable amounts of sheer capability—to buy, to pry, to surf to meddle—into the hands of people unaccustomed to its wise use. One way would be to decide that every computer must have two separate keyboards—one with all the vowels and the other with the consonants.

The measures outlined above would be a start Should more impetus be needed, we could ban cup holders from cars, demand that breaking news be delivered only by mail, and add a ball and a strike to the standard at-bat. If Americans intend to take slowness seriously, they need to start picking up the pace.

**Passage Two Talents**

How to solve the brain drain problem existing in universities in China has been a hot topic as our economy develops steadily. The following excerpt offers some opinions on this issue. Read the excerpt carefully and write your response in about **300** words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author’s opinion;

2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

Every country sends out students. What makes China different is that most of these bright minds have stayed away. Only a third have come back, according to the Ministry of Education; fewer by some counts. A study this year by a scholar at America's Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education found that 85% of those who gained their doctorate in America in 2006 were still there in 2011.

To lure experts to Chinese universities, the government has launched a series of schemes since the mid-1990s.These have offered some combination of a one-off bonus of up to 1m yuan (S160,00), promotion, an assured salary and a housing allowance or even a free apartment. Some of the best universities have built homes for academics to rent or buy at a discount. All are promised top-notch facilities. Many campuses, which were once spartan, now have swanky buildings. The programmes have also targeted non-Chinese. A "foreign expert thousand-talent scheme", launched in 2011, has enticed around 200 people. Spending on universities has shot up, too: six fold in 2001-2011. The results have been striking. In 2005-2012 published research articles from higher-education institutions rose by 54%; patents granted went up eightfold.

But most universities still have far to go. Only two Chinese institutions number in the top 00 in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Shanghai's Jiao Tong University includes only 32 institutions from mainland China among the world's 500best. The government frets about the failure of a Chinese scholar ever to win a Nobel Prize in science.

Pulling some star scholars back from abroad will not be enough to turn China into an academic giant. Many of those who return do so on a part-time basis. According to David Zweig of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, nearly 75% of Chinese nationals who were lured by a "thousand-talent programme" launched in 2008 did not give up tenure elsewhere. Such schemes have often bought reputation rather than better research. They typically target full professors whose more productive, innovative years may already be behind them. (They also favour experts in science, technology and management.)

Chinese universities have great difficulty fostering talent at home. The premium on foreign experience in China has created perverse incentives, says Cao Cong of Nottingham University in Britain. It sends the message to today's best and brightest that they should still spend their most productive years abroad. More than 300,000 students leave each year.

Today the signs are more encouraging Some universities are changing the way they recruit and hence finding it easier to attract staff from abroad. At Peking University departments now hire and promote using international evaluation-methods. They advertise jobs and academics apply for promotion and are rewarded according to their achievements.

**Passage Three**

Nowadays, over-reliance on computers and smart phones has eroded our **penmanship**. Worse still, it may further worsen our reading skills which are based on the recognition of Chinese characters. Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about 300 words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the views on this issue;

2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Bad Characters**

Some Chinese Forget How to Write

Calligraphy has been a revered art form in China for centuries. Children are taught to write with brushes; endless copying of characters is a rite of passage in their schooling. Writing is a feat of memory. Mastery requires learning thousands of unique characters. Despite these ordeals, literacy rates have increased from around 20% in 1949 to over 95% now. But computers, smart phones and tablets are posing a new obstacle to progress. Penmanship is on the decline. Reading skills may follow.

Pundits all over the world blame a reliance on computers for shoddy handwriting and spelling. In China the problem is particularly acute. The number of primary schoolchildren with severe reading difficulties is rising, according to a 2012 study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The authors linked poor reading scores to increased use of keyboards.

One reason is that learning to write is so arduous. Chinese uses ideograms, or characters, rather than an alphabet, to represent each syllable. An ideogram is a graphic symbol that represents an idea or concept, independent of any particular language, and specific words or phrases. Some ideograms are comprehensible only by familiarity with prior convention; others convey their meaning through pictorial resemblance to a physical object, and thus may also be referred to as pictograms. It normally takes six years of primary education to master the 3,000 or so characters required to read a newspaper.

Nowadays Chinese can use keyboards to type a word in pinyin, a Romanisation of Chinese words that reflects sounds but not appearance. They then select the right character from a list. This process does not reinforce how to write the separate strokes that make up a character, and may even disrupt the process of remembering, says Wai Ting Siok of the University of Hong Kong. Ms. Siok predicts that on current tends literacy levels will begin declining within ten years.

The problem is already evident. A government body helped to launch a popular television spelling show that pits middle-school students against each other to write difficult words; in one episode in July more than 50% of the adult audience incorrectly drew a two-character word meaning "gossip", feiwen.

Over the past century, some have campaigned to raise literacy by replacing characters with an alphabet. That remains unlikely. Homophones are so common in Chinese that many different words would be spelled the same. And China views its script as near-sacred. Abandoning its written form would be entirely out of character.

**Passage Four**

In the Information Age, the **mass media** have been playing an ever more important role in shaping our society. In the following excerpts, the author lists the benefits as well s the setbacks brought about by the mass media. Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about 300 words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author's opinions about the mass media;

2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency; organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

We are told the mass media are the greatest organs for enlightenment that the world has yet seen; that in Britain, for instance, several million people see each issue of the current affairs programme, Panorama. It is true that never in human history were so many people so often and so much exposed to so many intimations about societies, forms of life attitudes other than those which obtain in their local societies. This kind of exposure may well be a point of departure for acquiring certain important intellectual and imaginative qualities, width of judgment, and a sense of the variety of possible attitudes. Yet in itself such exposure does not bring intellectual or imaginative development. It is no more than the masses of stone which lie around in a quarry and which may, conceivably, go to the making of a cathedral. The mass media cannot build the cathedral, and their way of showing the stones does not always prompt others to build. For the stones are presented within a self-contained and self-sufficient world in which, it is implied, simply to look at them, to observe—fleetingly—individually interesting points of difference between them, is sufficient in itself.

Life is indeed full of problems on which we have to—or feel we should try to—make decisions, as citizens or as private individuals. But neither the real difficulty of these decisions, nor their true and disturbing challenge to each individual, can often be communicated through the mass media. The disinclination to suggest real choice, individual decision, which is to be found in the mass media, is not simply the product of a commercial desire to keep the customers happy. It is within the grain of mass communication. The organs of the Establishment, however well-intentioned they may be and whatever their form (the State, the Church, voluntary societies, political parties), have a vested interest in ensuring that the public boat is not violently rocked, and will so affect those who work within the mass media that they will be led insensibly towards forms of production which, though they go through the dispute and enquiry, do not break through the skin to where such enquiries might really hurt. They will tend to move, when exposing problems, well within the accepted cliche assumptions of the society and will tend neither radically to question these cliches nor to make a disturbing application of them to features of contemporary life. They will stress the "stimulation" the programs give, but this soon becomes an agitation of problems for the sake of the interest of that agitation itself, they will therefore, again, assist a form of acceptance of the status quo. There are exceptions to this tendency, but they are uncharacteristic.

The result can be seen in a hundred radio and television programs as plainly as in the normal treatment of public issues in the popular press. Different levels of background in the readers or viewers may be assumed, but what usually takes place is a substitute for the process of arriving at judgment. Programs such as this are noteworthy less for the "stimulation" they offer than for the fact that that stimulation (repeated at regular intervals) may become a substitute for, and so a hindrance to, judgments arrived at and tested in the mind and on the pulses. Mass communications, then, do not ignore intellectual matters; they tend to castrate them, to allow them to sit on the side of the fireplace, sleek and useless, a family plaything.

**Passage Five**

Just like other nations in the world, China has been entering an **ageing** era demographically. How serious is this problem and what can we do to tackle it? Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about300 words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author's opinions about this issue;
2. give your comment

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Ageing**

Liu Caiping is a former teacher, now 71,who has lived alone in Xi'an since her husband died last year. The radio is her steadfast companion. Her eyesight is failing and she rarely goes out Like many city residents, her former neighbours have scattered, and her two daughters live far away. When she can no longer cope on her own she will go to a nursing home, she says. That option remains extremely rare for old Chinese. And that highlights the problem: China is struggling to cope with a rapidly ageing society and arising number of elderly people living by themselves.

For most of the past two millennia the family has been central to how Chinese have seen themselves—and the state has been seen as a family writ large. Filial piety was somewhere near the heart of a Confucian order regulating society, and the family was an extended, stable unit of several generations under one roof. A very common saying encapsulated it all: yang er fang lao——"raise children for your old age".

Today multi-generation families are still the norm. Almost three-fifths of people over 65 live with their children, a higher proportion than in most rich countries. Yet things are changing fast Increasingly, parents are living apart from their children—and when one spouse dies, as with Ms. Liu, the other often lives alone. A fifth of all single-person households in China are made up of ove-65-yea-olds In contrast to younger Chinese living alone, few elderly do so by choice. Many are poorly educated. Women predominate, because they tend to outlive their husbands. China is unprepared for the consequences of solo dwelling among the elderly Government policy enshrines the idea hat families should live together and provide for the old and others unable to look after themselves. Despite efforts to extend pensions and other social protection, provisions fall far short because the state assumes offspring will help the old and sick. The welfare system is ill-equipped to help the elderly living alone.

State financial support has improved in the past decade, but many millions of elderly Chinese still have no pension or retirement income. Health insurance is increasingly widespread, but usually covers only the basics. Rural areas lag far behind cities in the provision of pensions and health care for the old.

By 2025 nearly one in four Chinese will be over 60. China's one-child policy has made a mockery of yang er fang lao—fewer among the younger generation are around for the old to move in with, a trend reinforced by starting families later. By 2050 there are likely to be just 2.5 working-age adults for every person over 65, down from eight today. Chinese born in the boondocks who migrate to far-off cities in search of work cannot easily take older family members with them even if they want to.

Despite the challenges, many in China still regard responsibility towards their family as a defining feature of their culture. Not much difference with other countries there. But the expectation of filial piety means that those who are not recipients of it often fee ashamed or isolated. Many are reluctant to seek the help of neighbors when they need it for instance.

The government acknowledges the problem. When it relaxed the one-child policy, one reason it cited was a growing number of elderly singletons. Some enterprising local governments have introduced schemes aimed at the lonely old. But with a weak social-safety net, little support is in place when families fail to help those living alone.

**Passage Six**

The phrase, "everybody's doing it" is very much at the center of the concept of **peer pressure**. It is a social influence exerted on an individual in order to get that person to act or believe in a similar way as a larger group. Most people experience it in some way during their lives. In the following excerpt on peer pressure and alcohol, the author presents his opinion on peer pressure. Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about 300 words, in which you should:

1.summarize the author's opinion briefly;

2. give your comment on peer pressure.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency; organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Peer Pressure**

In the United States, over 80% of college students have at least one alcoholic drink over a two-week time period. Of these college students, 40% are binge drinking (i.e, having four or more drinks) on occasion, which greatly surpasses the rate of their non-college peers. Research suggests that this discrepancy between college students and their non-college peers is largely due to the college environment. More specifically, college students must experience a transitional period from depending on their parents at home to depending on their peers on campus. Per interactions may be essential for college students in that peers provide the guidance and support needed to circumvent this transitional period. In addition, the freshman population is particularly reliant on peer groups because they are new to the college environment and are attempting to adapt to the college lifestyle. Although peers may be an essential coping mechanism during this transitional period, the increase of peer involvement in a student's everyday life may influence the increase of peer pressure as well.

Peer pressure, or the direct or indirect encouragement from one's own age group to engage in activities that they may or may not want to engage in, is a major factor in the development of risk-taking behaviors(e.g, alcohol use, drug use, and tobacco use).Peers act as an influential model by introducing, providing, or pressuring risky activities (i.e, alcohol use)to other peers. By modeling these behaviors to their peers, college students are viewing alcohol use as a positive and socially acceptable experience. However, what college students fail to take into consideration are the negative consequences that are related to alcohol use, especially within a peer group context. For example, the leading cause of death for adolescents 17 to 20 years old is alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes(US Department of Health and Human Services,2011). In addition, about 400,000 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 have unprotected sex due to drinking. More than one fourth of those students report being too intoxicated to know if they even consented to have sex (US Department of Health and Human Services,2011). Therefore, it is imperative to understand peer pressure, as well as which groups of college students are more susceptible to it, in order to decrease these negative consequences from occurring.

The social identity theory may help to explain why college students are influenced by peer pressure. The social identity theory suggests that a significant portion of an individual's self-concept is formed through their peer groups, with the in-groups being viewed more positively than the out-groups. In a college environment, it is essential for students to be associated with the in-group in order to be society accepted. Out-groups, such as freshmen college students and non-drinkers, may lack the social support needed during this transitional period because they are not fitting in with the majority of their peers. More specifically, non-drinkers would be considered an out-group because they are not participating in the normative behavior of alcohol use. Subsequently, students who enter college determined to remain non-drinkers often give into peer pressure in order to become a part of the in-group. This experience of feeling like an out-group is prevalent in freshmen college students as well. Freshmen are highly at risk for alcohol consumption because they are adapting to the college lifestyle and attempting to develop new friendships. Furthermore, vulnerable college groups (e.g., freshmen and non-drinkers) will give in to peer pressure in hopes to be socially accepted and have a successful transition to college.

**Passage Seven**

A unique social phenomenon exists exclusively in China——Chunyun, or **Spring Festival Travel Rush**. The following excerpts are about how a foreign reporter views this issue. Read the excerpts carefully and write your response in about 300 words, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author's opinion about this issue;
2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Tootling back to the Village**

The lunar new year holiday shows the strength of rural ties.

It is often described as the world's biggest recurring movement of people: a 40-day period spanning the lunar new year, during which astonishing numbers of people travel to join distant family members to celebrate the Spring Festival. Officials call this period Chunyun, or spring transportation. The term evokes horror in the minds of many: trains are so jammed that the only place to sit is on lavatory floors. This year the projected number of journeys on public transport during Chunyun, which will end on March 15th, is nearly 2.9 billion, a 10% increase over the comparable period a year ago. Yet there are reasons to be a little less gloomy about what this entails.

The numbers suggest that despite rapid urbanization, the pull of the countryside remains strong. Many of the journeys involve mingong, or peasant workers, as the nearly 300m migrants from the countryside who work in urban areas, are often snootily called. Their families are often divided. Children and parents stay in the villages, because a fragmented social-security system makes it difficult for migrants to enjoy subsidized education and health care in the cities. Many migrants think it a good idea that some relatives remain: the stay-behinds can help retain land-use rights which might come in handy for the migrants if urban work dries up. The authorities themselves are keen for migrants to keep this backstop.

But migration patterns are changing. Wang Kan of the China Institute of Industrial Relations says that, during Chunyun, trips between provinces have been declining. This is because migrants are often working closer to home, thanks to the relocation of some industries away from the coast to inland provinces where labour is cheaper. "We can see the emergence of more regional hubs," says Mr. Wang. No longer is the Chunyun rush so concentrated in the biggest and wealthiest cities.

Analyzing Chunyun data is difficult. Xiaohui Liang of Renmin University says that companies have recently begun providing private long-distance coach transport for their workers. These rips do not get counted in official statistics. Other workers, he says, get counted twice if they go by train to a regional hub and from there continue by bus to their hometowns. A single worker doing this in both directions would account for four Chunyun journeys.

The growth of an urban middle class further complicates the picture. Journeys made by holiday tourists,with no rural reunion in mind,are on the rise.Researchers had long felt it safe to assume that trips taken on pricey high-speed trains were made by such travelers. But according to Mr. Wang, migrant workers are increasingly opting for the speed and comfort of the more expensive trains. This, he says, suggests that the purchasing power of migrants is on the rise. Some are even heading back to their villages in newly bought cars(perhaps with paying passengers to offset some of the cost). One source of data on this year's travel rush is Alibaba, an e-commerce firm which has analyzed the sale of train tickets through A litrip, its online travel business. In a new trend this year, the company says, some families are migrating in reverse for their holiday reunions. Alibaba says there has been a "tremendous increase" in the number of elderly parents travelling from their rural homes to industrial centers, such as the southern city of Guangzhou, to spend the festival with their children. That implies that some migrants are now proud enough of their new urban homes to begin showing off.

**Passage Eight**

Singles' Day has been hailed as another victory by modern society in terms of commercialism.

Businessmen view it as a gold mine for money-digging while the netizens sing high praise for the

convenience it brings us. How should we view this newly man-made festival? Read the excerpt carefully and write your response in NO LESS THAN 300 WORDS, in which you should :

1. summarize briefly the author s opinion;

2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Let's Not Discount Human Touch Next Nov.11**

I had a punishing day's shopping recently. In less than an hour, I bought 12 liter-cartons of milk, the same number of boxes of breakfast cereal, 10 hairy crabs, a dozen pairs of socks, and a replacement laptop power cable.

The next day it was all delivered straight to my door, neatly packed and alive. Welcome to China's most efficient and expanding industry: Online shopping.

When I left Edinburgh, the above list might have meant a whole weekend of much blood, sweat and irritation. In Beijing, however, the opposites apply.

I am embarrassed to say, my list was all bought sting in bed.

This is the ultimate in modern convenience and a gold mine for the delivery and retail sectors. But I can't help thinking it's becoming a killer for society.

Retailers across China will no doubt be tasting another bumper Nov. 11 shopping festival. Alibaba reported that about 91.2 billion yuan was spent on Nov. 11. That was 60 percent higher than the 57. 1 billion yuan it took on Nov.11 last year.

In my view, festivals are about mingling with happy people, listening to music, enjoying each other’s company. They're not about sitting boggled in front of a PC, laptop, tablet or mobile, essentially spending for the sake of spending. In just five years, Nov. 11 has become commercialism on a vulgar scale-much like Christmas has in the West.

In Edinburgh, I lived in Stockbridge. There's a 40 year old cheese shop, a delicatessen, a hardware store, a stationer, two small supermarkets, a butcher, a fresh. fish shop, even a chocolatier: All within striking distance of each other.

At the weekend, families stroll about with armfuls of real shopping bags, having conversations with real neighbors, actually interacting with their fellow Edinburgers.

I fully appreciate not everyone has this luxury of such quirky shop windows on their doorsteps.

Being able to source thousands of online goods, conveniently from home is amazing and impressive. But have we all become just too used to clicking a mouse than using our own two feet to go out for a nice piece of old-fashioned retail therapy?

I feel we've already got to the point that choosing this rather slothful keyboard opinion is a breeding ground for a more sedentary and unsociable society.

What about actual shops? Already, millions are being shuttered around the world. And those that do survive may very well be run by artificially intelligent shop assistant applications or robots——not much chat over the counter in those.

Indoors, too, all-purpose robots are already doing the housework. Sensors in future could also

obviate other chores, with your fridge and cupboards programmed to place orders for you.

I would rather like not having my life ruled by electronics -especially those I can't look in the eye, or say hello to.

So, instead of Nov. ll, how about“ Get Off Your Posterior, and Go and Do Something for Yourself"" Day?

**Passage Nine**

Today, the outbreak of AIDS has given a new sense of urgency to **sex education**. However, whether to perform sex education in schools for students at a younger age has aroused heated debate among people. In the following excerpt, the journalist reports the current situation about sex education in the United States.

Read the report carefully and write your response in NO LESS THAN 300 WORDS, in which you should:

1. summarize briefly the author' s opinion;

2. give your comment.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

The debate over whether to have sex education in American schools is over. A new poll by NPR, the Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government finds that only 7 percent of Americans say sex education should not be taught in schools. Moreover, in most places there is even little debate about what kind of sex education should be taught, although there are still pockets of controversy. Parents are generally content with whatever sex education is offered by their children s school, and public school principals, in a parallel NPR/Kaiser/ Kennedy School survey ，report little serious conflict over sex education in their communities nowadays. Nearly three-quarters of the principals (74 percent) say there have been no recent discussions or debate in PTA, school board or other public meetings about what to teach in sex education. Likewise, few principals report being contacted by elected officials, religious leaders or other people in their communities about sex education.

However, this does not mean that all Americans agree on what kind of sex education is best. There are major differences over the issue of abstinence. Fifteen percent of Americans believe that schools should teach only about abstinence from sexual intercourse and should not provide information on how to obtain and use condoms and other contraception. A plurality ( 46 percent ) believes that the most appropriate approach is one that might be called “abstinence-plus”一-that while abstinence is best, some teens do not abstain, so schools also should teach about condoms and contraception. Thirty-six percent believe that abstinence is not the most important thing, and that sex education should focus on teaching teens how to make responsible decisions about sex.

Advocates of abstinence have had some success. Federal funds are now being made available for abstinence programs; in his State of the Union address President Bush called for an increase in the funding. And in spite of the fact that only 15 percent of Americans say they want abstinence-only sex education in the schools, 30 percent of the principals of public middle schools and high schools where sex education is taught report that their schools teach abstinence-only. Forty-seven percent of their schools taught abstinence-plus, while 20 percent taught that making responsible decisions about sex was more important than abstinence. (Middle schools were more likely to teach abstinence-only than high schools. High schools were more likely than middle schools to teach abstinence-plus. High schools and middle schools were equally likely to teach that abstinence is not the most important thing.)

In many ways, abstinence -only education contrasts with the broad sex education curriculum that most Americans want- -from the basics of how babies are made to how to put on a condom to how to get tested for sexually transmitted diseases. Some people thought that some topics were better suited for high sch00 students than middle school students, or vice versa, but few thought any of the topics suggested were inappropriate at all.

**Passage Ten**

Read carefully the following excerpt on **the segregation of male and female students** in a school in

China and then write your response in NO LESS THAN 200 words, in which you should:

1. summarize the main message of the excerpt, and then
2. comment on whether this measure of segregation is justified.

You should support yourself with information from the excerpt.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Chinese School Segregates Male and Female Students into Two Separate**

**Dining Areas to Prevent Teens from Falling in Love**

A school desperate to halt burgeoning young romance in its tracks has established a somewhat tyrannical regime banning male and female students from eating lunch together.

The middle school in Shenmu county, Shanxi Province, has instructed that for a few months students of opposite genders must stay apart. The school has set up two separate dining areas for girls and boys, with a teacher patrol and harsh punishments for anyone who crosses the clear divide.

The announcement created a flurry of disapproval from readers and students when it was posted online, with many branding it excessive and not conducive to student happiness and satisfaction. When asked, the majority of students confirmed that the regulation made them feel uncomfortable and removed an important aspect of middle school life. One student said: “A boy and a girl sitting together does not necessarily mean they are in a relationship. They could be just talking or discussing school work.”

Principal Qiao Zhenyi said that the measures had been brought in after reports of inappropriate

behavior between students in the canteen. Qiao argued that the new system has been received favorably by parents, as it helped “completely eliminate the indecent behavior, thus preventing premature love affairs.”

Upon hearing the news, Weibo users harshly criticized the move, slamming the school and its head. “Smozando” posted: “It's the silliest school regulation! The more severe the authority's repression, the more students in their rebellious phase will revolt."

“Contact with the opposite sex is a normal phenomenon for high school students," clinical psychologist Wang Guirong pointed out that the practice may work temporarily, but in the long run, he said, it could have a negative impact on students mental health, which will affect their academic performances and damage their chances of social growth.

**Passage Eleven**

Read carefully the following excerpt on the promotion of love courses on university campuses and

then write your response in NO LESS THAN 200 words, in which you should:

1. summarize the main message of the excerpt, and then
2. comment on whether love courses on university campuses should be encouraged.

You should support yourself with information from the excerpt.

Marks will be awarded for content relevance, content sufficiency, organization and language

quality. Failure to follow the above instructions may result in a loss of marks.

**Crazy in Love? Not China's College Students!**

Students at Tianjin University can now enroll in courses in what is possibly the most difficult subject of all——love.

Around 200 students crowded into a lecture hall at the prestigious university as the first class of a new course on romance, “Basic Theory and Experience of Love”, got underway.

“Hopefully the lecture will give students a higher sense of responsibility toward dating," said Liu Xiaochun, an associate professor of law at Tianjin University and course lecturer.

During the 90-minute talk Liu explained legal issues related to dating, including such topics as mistresses，domestic violence, divorce and abortion. “It is the first time I have talked about dating in public,” he said.

For many, often away from home for the first time, college is their first chance to explore romance after dedicating much of their high school years to study.

Organized by a student dating club, the course covers a wide range of topics from dating tips and etiquette to counseling. The classes are taught by teachers from the university and external experts.

The course was inundated with more than 800 applications, far beyond initial expectations, Wang Rui, head of the student dating club, said.

College relationships have been openly discussed across Chinese campuses, resulting in several

programs to help students make their way through what could be a minefield. Such august institutions as China Youth University of Political Studies, Wuhan University and Renmin University all have similar courses.

“The purpose of these courses is not to encourage students to fall in love, but to help them develop a proper attitude toward love and cope with problems they might meet when dating," xiong Bingqi, deputy director of 21st Century Education Research Institute, said.