



HWA CHONG INSTITUTION
C2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
Higher 1

Candidate
Name

CT
Group

Index
Number

--	--	--	--

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

This 2-page Insert contains the passages for comprehension. Please detach it and fill in your particulars in the boxes above. You will have to submit this Insert separately at the end of the examination.

Passage 1: David Robson argues there are downsides to attractiveness

- 1 In films, the *femme fatale** character whose charms ensnare her lovers, finds her predecessor in the literary figure of Helen of Troy. Famously referred to as "the face that launched a thousand ships" in Homer's *Iliad*, Helen was so beguiling that a competition to win her hand resulted in the Trojan War. Is it not evident then that attractiveness can be a weapon of mass destruction? Still, most people are incredulous when they realise there are downsides to being drop-dead gorgeous. 5
- 2 Some historians believe it was in Ancient Greece that the misrepresentation of beauty as competence originated. The full-lipped, cheek-chiselled man was deemed doubly blessed as his flawless exterior encased an inner perfection. Today, those with symmetrical features and striking figures are likewise regarded as more knowledgeable collaborators than they truly are. Yet at performance assessments, envy-related hostility holds both genders back. The achievements of stunning feminine associates are condescendingly dismissed and scathing doubt is cast on the abilities of that office beefcake. For positions of authority, it can pay to be plain. 10
- 3 In addition, there are dire consequences when we overrate attractiveness. To be crowned the fairest of them all, in Victorian times, women bled themselves and men applied white-lead potions, to transfigure even the sallowest of skins. In the East, the Chinese used foot-binding techniques to achieve pretty doll-like feet, reflecting an equally dubious obsession with beauty. In more contemporary times, good looks are correlated with robust constitutions, resulting in illnesses being taken far less seriously when they afflict the attractive. Even in supposedly incorruptible courts, there are also reports of our beauty bias affecting legal judgements with more severe fines levied on the less attractive. 15 20
- 4 In terms of interpersonal relationships, beauty is a gift that bites. People are intimidated by exquisite women and will give a wide berth to the virile males they encounter. "It is peculiar that beauty which conveys power attracts believers, yet breeds isolation and loneliness simultaneously," says social psychologist Tonya Frevert. Little wonder online dating sites like OKCupid report that people with flawless profile pictures are less likely to find matches than those with quirkier ones. Who would have the audacity to invite Lisa of South Korean girl group Blackpink, crowned the World's Most Beautiful Face in 2022 or YouTube star PewDiePie, voted the globe's Most Handsome Face of 2020, out for a date? 25 30
- 5 For those born under the Beauty star, the bubble of beauty is the proverbial albatross round their necks. Believed to have an unflagging audience of admirers worshipping at their feet, how could these Gods and Goddesses of the Body ever be adrift or alone? In their temples, surely they are above the manifold troubles the run-of-the-mill wrestle with? This elevation of beauty to the level of godliness is encouraged by the influence of social media and the online curation of perfect images, making the beautiful easy targets for derision. How dare they complain when Fortune has smiled on them? Adding insult to injury, such stereotyping of the beautiful subjects them to undue mental stress and anxiety. 35
- 6 Indeed, beauty is a paradox with the *femme fatale* an empowering but sexist archetype. Recently, Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer was widely panned for flaunting her looks in a Vogue editorial instead of celebrated for her corporate achievements. If even an accomplished tech-Titan like Mayer could be disparaged as a "career-obsessed Barbie" after one glamorous photoshoot, clearly, being beautiful can be beastly. 40

*Femme Fatale - an attractive woman who leads men into dangerous or disastrous situations

Passage 2: Kathy Buccio extols the benefits of attractiveness

- 1 In the 1970s, when ecologists decided on a radical single species conservation line of action to save the endangered, they began with "Save the tiger", "Save the whale" and so on. Charismatic megafauna like the cute and cuddly giant panda has clearly benefitted acutely from this campaign. Aesthetic attractiveness has unsurprisingly yielded an effectual means to reverse the decline of a fragile species. 5
- 2 Similarly blessed are those of us bestowed with a higher beauty quotient and these advantages in fact start remarkably early. Attractive children are venerated like royalty with mothers and fathers showering affection on these cherubs. Cosseted and pampered with all the trappings needed to complement their attractiveness, an encouraging atmosphere envelops such children. Even the acknowledgement from strangers who coo and fawn over 10 enchanting infants contributes to their emotional growth.
- 3 In school, teachers too accord the appealing child special treatment, judging him as more likely to get ahead in life. As expected, the fine-looking young man is subsequently selected for key leadership positions and offered the coaching to turn out well. This preferential investment of resources - which psychologists term the halo effect - allows him to manifest the affirmative 15 traits ascribed to him, later on in life. He can then blossom into a poised adult who will enjoy a lifetime of bliss.
- 4 Particularly gratifying is the way attractive adults have leveraged their good looks to reap multiple benefits for society. Good looks have helped entrepreneurs such as Elon Musk - once voted the sexiest CEO alive - secure investors with very little trouble. Trailblazers like svelte 20 actress Emma Watson, have unapologetically capitalised on their appearances to turn the spotlight on issues most people would have sidelined. More ordinary-looking social activists could never have commanded such attention and even if they did, they would have had to expend a lot more time.
- 5 Beautiful people also have higher success rates in procreation because striking looks are 25 believed to be indicative of a person's quality as a mate, especially pertaining to reproductive fitness. Those who are attractive can afford to diminish their efforts to foster relationships yet continue to have a higher chance at forming influential connections. The time saved means that they are better able to invest in themselves, which results in greater esteem and reduced psychological issues. 30
- 6 In addition, physical attractiveness confers capability where leaders who can turn heads wield more political influence. Seen as more credible, voters are swayed and even political opponents are awed, which can help a society to advance faster. Widely acknowledged as charming, Canada's PM Justin Trudeau for example, has been able to brush off blame for controversial governmental decisions and convince the populace to concur when difficult 35 decisions need to be made.
- 7 It is not hard to see the significant rewards arising from the premium we place on physical attractiveness. Unlike the fluffy panda, the Yangtze River dolphin, which never made it onto anyone's T-shirt, has become the last greater mammal to be wiped out in this century. Nobody shed a tear at its passing. If it had appeared beautiful to us, I doubt that would have been its 40 fate.



Candidate Name	
----------------	--

CT Group	
----------	--

Centre Number	S				
---------------	---	--	--	--	--

Index Number				
--------------	--	--	--	--

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

8807/02

24 August 2022

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, CT Group and index number on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen in this Question Paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue, or correction fluid or tape.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

You are reminded of the importance of legible handwriting and good presentation.

Please submit your Question Paper and Insert separately at the end of this examination.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

This document consists of a Question Paper with **6 printed pages**.
An Insert with **2 printed pages** is attached to this Question Paper.

[Turn over]

Read the passages and then answer all the questions which follow below. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this paper.

For
Examiner's
Use

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passages for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passages.

From Passage 1

1. In paragraph 1, in what **two** ways is the reference to Helen of Troy a revealing example of attractiveness as a "weapon of mass destruction"? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

2. Why does the author argue "for positions of authority, it can pay to be plain" (Lines 13-14)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[3]

3. Suggest why the author uses the word "transfigure" in line 17.

.....

.....

.....[1]

4. What does the author claim are the consequences of the "beauty bias" (line 21) on contemporary society? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

5. In paragraph 4, how do people demonstrate that they are "intimidated" (line 23) by beauty? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

For
Examiner's
Use

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

6. In paragraph 5, what distinction does the author make between the attitudes of the public and his own, in terms of their perceptions of beauty?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

7. How does the author support his earlier assertion that "there are downsides to being drop-dead gorgeous" (lines 5-6) in the last paragraph? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

From Passage 2

8. Explain why the author feels it is unsurprising that the panda has benefitted from the "radical single species conservation line of action" (line 1)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[1]

For
Examiner's
Use

9. Using material from paragraphs 2 to 5, summarise the benefits that the author believes attractiveness confers.

Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. *Use your own words as far as possible.*

From a young age, those who are more attractive

[8]

Candidate to declare Word Count: _____ words

10. Why does the author end with a focus on the panda in the final paragraph?

[2]

For
Examiner's
Use

- How far do you agree or disagree with the views expressed in the two passages? Illustrate your answer with examples of how you and your society regard attractiveness.

[illegible]

[10]

..[10]

6