

Anglo-Chinese Junior College
General Paper Preliminary Exams 2010
Revised Comprehension Answer Scheme (Final)

Questions from Passage 1

1. From paragraph 1,
 i) why does the writer consider the term 'Noughties' (line 2) unfortunate? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

Lift from the passage	Inference
... 'naughty' is probably one adjective that doesn't spring to mind unless you see everything through the prism of one particular golfer. (lines 2-4)	<p>The term 'Noughties' sounds like 'naughty' / suggests (sexual) misconduct/ impropriety / being bad in some way. (1/2)</p> <p>The term is not representative/ inaccurate. (1/2)</p>

- ii) why is Time Magazine's description of life in the Noughties 'unkind' (line 4)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

Lift from the passage	Inference
<p>...Time magazine has called the 00s 'The Decade from Hell'. That seems a little unkind.</p> <p>After all, it hasn't been that bad for China, India or TV personality Simon Cowell. (lines 4-5)</p>	<p>Description : 'The Decade from Hell'</p> <p>The description suggests that the whole ten years had been unpleasant/unfavourable/dreadful/awful years for everyone/all (1/2)</p> <p>but the situation was not so/ the description is inaccurate/not representative/some countries or individuals had done well. (1/2)</p>

2. Explain the irony expressed in the following lines: 'I still remember the first personal email I got from him ... "Dear Matt," it started. An email just for me... and a few million others.' (lines 12 - 14) **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

Lift from the passage	Paraphrase
<p>I still remember the first personal e-mail I got from him. "Dear Matt," it started.</p> <p>An e-mail just for me... and a few million others. (lines 12-14)</p>	<p>It seems/appears as if the email is addressed to him alone ("Dear Matt") as he is referred to by name (1/2)</p> <p>yet, the same email is also sent to many people. (1/2)</p>

3. From paragraph 3, explain how the individual made use of technology to bring about personal empowerment. **Use your own words as far as possible.** (3m)

Lift from the passage	Paraphrase
<p>You have grasped the power of the mouse and the text message (lines 18-19)</p> <p>Whether it's voting on American Idol (line 18)</p> <p>bargaining on eBay (line 18)</p> <p>You have done so in the world of entertainment and politics. In Iran, you students and housewives used your mobile phones and computers to record and broadcast footage that almost toppled the government after disputed elections. (lines 19-22)</p> <p>In China, you have overcome rural isolation and poverty thanks to the Internet. OR You may have lost your job in the garment factory in Guangdong, but you returned to your village armed with a web address and expectations.(lines 22-24)</p> <p>In Botswana, mobile phones are now doing what landlines could never do.</p> <p>And an undersea cable has just brought faster-than-fast broadband to Kenya. (lines 24-25)</p>	<p>With technology, the individual is empowered as he can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> choose the winner/influence the outcome of talent shows, (1) exercise his consumer choice/ sovereignty/ make independent choices, (1) capture/highlight events/images and bring them to the attention of the public and effect/influence political change (1) in a remote /economically deprived/ economically backward/poor area, the individual gained access to (job) opportunities(1) <p>These 2 points only refer to connectivity. To get 1 mark, students must raise the notion of empowerment. This is not stated in the passage and must be inferred. In both contexts, accessibility has brought benefits to local people, as well as given them accessibility to the outside world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people gain wireless accessibility/connectivity to the outside world. (1/2) OR people gain high-speed access to the outside world. (1/2) <p><i>Any 3 of the 6 possible answers, to a maximum of 3 marks.</i></p>

4. In paragraph 4, the writer gives the example of the American researcher who uncovered the British financial scandal. (lines 28-30) What is his intention in citing this example? (2m + ½ bonus)

Lift from the passage	Paraphrase/Implication
<p>Greater connectivity has gone hand-in-hand with a greater sense of entitlement, especially the entitlement to information. (lines 27-28)</p> <p>Remember how the British MPs' expenses scandal was first uncovered by an American researcher who was incensed that authorities were denying her access to public information about what MPs spent on their second homes?</p>	<p>As the world becomes increasingly wired-up/linked up (1/2), people expect/want/demand/deserve (1/2)</p> <p>access to confidential/private/restricted information (1) OR greater/more transparency/legitimacy (1)</p> <p>Award ½ bonus mark: how access to information should not be limited by geographical boundaries. One should have accessibility to every context. The British/American reference is an example of this entitlement to information.</p> <p>Do not award marks for 'through/with technology, 'using advanced technology' etc...</p>

5. In paragraph 6, the author referred to the next decade as the 'Teens'. (line 44) What can be deduced about the next decade from the use of this term? (2m)

Context	Inference
<p>If the Noughties have been unnerving, what can we expect from the next decade?</p> <p>we should just call the decade 'unnerving' or 'unsettling' or even 'unhinged'. (lines 5-6)</p> <p>They will after all be called 'The Teens'. (line 42-44)</p>	<p>The next decade would be even worse/more unpredictable (1) than the last decade</p> <p>Note: Do not accept 'unnerving', 'unsettling' or 'unhinged' unless it is modified by 'even more' or something to that effect. '...even more unnerving gets ½ mark as word was lifted.</p> <p>as teenagers usually go through a troubled phase/rebellious phase/a period when they experience great emotional turbulence.(1)</p>

Questions from Passage 2

6. What does the phrase 'an almost Taliban-like policing of women's bodies' (line 13) say about the standards of beauty adopted by women's magazines and entertainment blogs? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2m + 1 bonus)

Lift from the passage	Paraphrase
<p>Women's magazines and entertainment blogs maintained an almost Taliban-like policing of women's bodies (lines 12-13)</p>	<p>Bonus Mark : The Taliban is a strict/ fundamentalist regime(in Afghanistan) /imposes stringent moral, cultural values/standards. (1)</p> <p>Women's magazines and entertainment blogs set high/exacting benchmark/standards/expect perfection (1)</p> <p>and enforce/monitor/judge these standards closely/ stringently.(1)</p>

7. Using material from paragraphs 2 to 4, summarise how life in the Noughties was superficial and fake. **Use your own words as far as possible.** (8m)
Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words printed below.

Life in the Noughties was superficial and fake because ...

Lift from the passage	Paraphrase
1a. We have stopped prizing things of enduring value , b. things that might be perceived as natural and flawed yet are still substantial	1a. We no longer prioritised (1/2) things that were lasting (1/2), 1b...worthwhile/wholesome(1/2) and imperfect /God-given (1/2)
2. ... and swapped them for inauthentic things (line 8) OR ... a beauty ideal that is more plastic than fantastic (line 8)	2. We preferred fake/artificial/ superficial things (1) OR ... our epitome of beauty was more artificial than real /naturally attractive. (1)
3 ... reality TV celebrities whose rise and fall are based on constructed personas (lines 8-9) OR ...their performances were less real... (lines 19-20) ...People became characters; their real selves edited out or turned into an exaggeration or a caricature .(lines 24-25)	3. ... Famous reality TV stars played stereotypical characters/created personalities (as opposed to being their true selves). (1) OR Actors maintained fake/superficial exteriors/appearances/did not want to show their true selves. (1)
4. Our houses have come to resemble Barbie houses - with more bedrooms than we need, his 'n' hers matching four-wheel-drives, heavy "it" handbags and statement heels - all of which led people to record personal credit card debt in recent years. (lines 9-12)	4. (inferred) We were obsessed with consumerism/ extravagance or desired expensive goods (1/2) despite the fact that we could not afford such a lifestyle.(1/2)
5. Women's magazines and entertainment blogs maintained an almost Taliban-like policing of women's bodies, except that these gatekeepers were monitoring flaws . Nothing less than perfection would do. (lines 12-14)	5. The media was obsessed with/pursued unrealistic beauty ideals and physical imperfections were not tolerated/ subjected to stringent checks. (1)
6. Botox was normalised, hair extensions were fitted and spray tans became a sort of de facto national complexion . (lines 17-18)	6. (Inferred) Cosmetic/aesthetics enhancements/ procedures that were "unnatural" and artificial were accepted and encouraged (1)
7. At the fag-end of this decade, some actors looked more youthful than they did in the '90s. (line 19)	7. Actors tried to look younger than their age. (1)
8. Dominating the art of inauthenticity was reality TV which was the most contrived and predictable genre of television (lines 22-23) OR ...producers may have sensed our desire for something real, so they gave us Susan Boyle watching her perform on a reality TV show, gave a sense that something had been staged , that this claim of being authentic was not as real as we were being told.(lines 30-35)	8. Reality TV was the most orchestrated/scripted format/show. (1) OR ...even what was authentic seemed to be constructed/manufactured.(1)
9. Australian Idol winner who was not the blonde, skinny Barbie ideal of pop stars had the best voice, yet in the world of record companies, photo shoots and glossy magazines, she sank quickly. (lines 27-29)	9. (inferred) Looks were valued over real talent/real talent did not matter. (1)

Award a maximum of 8 marks.

8. From paragraph 6, identify one metaphor and explain how it reflects the artificiality of life in the Noughties. (2m)

- Accept any one of 3 metaphors. Although every identified metaphor has been given corresponding literal and metaphorical meanings, please use your discretion and accept any sensible combination of the meanings.

This is acceptable:

the identified metaphor/literal meaning may be “costume jewellery” but the metaphorical meaning given is the one for Barbie lives/toys.

- Award mark for the (holistic) interpretation, although a paraphrase, of the phrase ‘**plastic, disposable and ultimately worthless**’ is also acceptable.
- Do not award mark for use of the word ‘artificial’

Any one of 3 answers

Lift from the passage	Paraphrased
costume jewellery for our Barbie lives (line 43) plastic, disposable and ultimately worthless. (line 44)	Metaphor: Costume jewellery (1/2) Literal Meaning : Costume jewellery is inexpensive and superficially attractive/ not durable/of little use or value.(1/2) Figurative Meaning: Likewise, in the Noughties, we prize things that are fake/superficially attractive/outwardly attractive (1/2) but have little value.(1/2)
costume jewellery for our Barbie lives (line 43) plastic, disposable and ultimately worthless. (line 44)	Metaphor: Barbie lives (1/2) Literal Meaning: A Barbie doll is a symbol of physical perfection/ has a flawless exterior/ is an object of perfect proportions (although such expectations and standards are unreal/unrealistic)(1/2) Figurative Meaning: Likewise, in the Noughties, our lives are seemingly/outwardly perfect (1/2) but feels/seems unreal/of little consequence/lacking in meaning, purpose or direction. (1/2)
‘toys’ (line 45) Link to ‘artificiality’ not to ‘grown-up status’	Metaphor: toys(1/2) Literal Meaning: A toy is a (material) representation of the real thing. (1/2). Figurative Meaning: Likewise, in the Noughties, we tend to escape from reality/ live unreal lives. (1)

Questions from Passages 1 and 2

9. Give the meaning of each of the following words as they are used in Passages 1 and 2. You may write your answer in one word or a short phrase. (5m)

Vocabulary item	1 mark	½ mark	No mark
signature (P1, line 7) adjective 9/11 was THE event that set the tone... the signature phenomenon of this decade	distinctive iconic definitive distinguishing defining distinct	Characteristic representative	(main) highlight autograph mark sign key prominent significant well-known special distinguished symbolic emblematic hallmark trademark most important
spawned (P1, line 31) verb The decade also spawned a sense of entitlement to prosperity...(lines 31-32)	gave rise to generated produced created	Initiated triggered	offspring progeny gave birth to, 'birthed' resulted in propagated reproduced conceived
lubricated (P1, line 31) verb The decade also spawned a sense of entitlement to prosperity, lubricated ...by easy credit. (lines 31-32)	eased facilitated made easier by helped by		enabled smoothened oiled greased coated catalysed brought about reduced friction between moving parts
malleable(P2, line3) adjective But for me, the plastic, malleable Barbie doll is the symbol of our age (lines 2-13)	literal: adaptable tractable pliable with the ability to change figurative: capable of being /easily shaped, influenced, moulded or manipulated easy to shape, influence or manipulate	easy to change easily changed	weak able to bend movable easily distorted highly changeable modified, 'modifiable' mouldable?
unadorned (P2, line 31) adjective ...Susan Boyle - the middle-aged Scot; unworldly and unadorned, living with her cat in her village and, so the legend goes, 'never been kissed'. (lines 31-32)	not made-up not touched-up not beautified not groomed without embellishment	simple plain ordinary looking without accessories/ jewellery	undecorated not decorated raw unglamorous without flaunting not extravagant not flamboyant untainted not beautiful not well-groomed not pampered simplistic living a simple life

10. The Noughties have been an era of uncertainty and superficiality. Matt Frei describes the Noughties as an era of personal empowerment while Bridget Delaney sees it as an era when life lacks authenticity and superficial values reigned.

Were the experiences of your society in the Noughties similar or different from the developments and trends described in the passages? What are the implications for your society?

In your answer, develop some of the points raised by the authors, give your own views and support your answer with examples drawn from your society's experience.

Question Requirements: Students must

- refer to the trends and developments of the Noughties.
 - Matt Frei feels that The Noughties have empowered the individual (lines 17 – 32) yet were unsettling as the individual was caught in an ironic bind as he surrendered control to the institutions which represented/worked for him. (lines 34-42)
 - Bridget Delaney feels that the Noughties have been a decade when we lived plastic, malleable lives as we fell prey to conspicuous consumerism (lines 6-12) and unrealistic standards of physical beauty (lines 12-18) pursued youth (lines 19-22) and searched for meaning in an inauthentic universe. (paragraphs 2-4)
- show the extent to which these trends are reflected in their society and how these characteristics are manifested in ideas, attitudes, values, actions and forms of behaviour. Answers/Examples must refer to the past and/or the present perspective
- raise the implications/outcomes/consequences of adopting these ideas/attitudes/values/lifestyle/course of action. Answers /Examples must refer to the here-and-now perspective and/or the future perspective.
- Better scripts will be able to pull together common ideas from both passages and present a coherent picture of what their society is/will be like after the experience of the Noughties.

Mark Range	Strand	Descriptor
A 7-8 m	Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic & conscientious reference to specific references to show how the developments in our society were similar or different from the trends and developments of the Noughties • Logical and well-substantiated evaluation (implications) of how these these trends and developments have affected the ideas, attitudes, values, actions and forms of behaviour of our society • Ideas from both passages must be raised.
	Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments are well-developed. • Clear, relevant, effective (even original) illustrations that provide insight/explanation and examples.
	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications raised are insightful, logical and well-substantiated. • Able to offer sound, relevant and concrete reasons; showing how implications raised are valid ones.
	Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows impeccable coherence and organisation – very good paragraphing, good use of appropriate connectors, very clear development of ideas and logical flow of argument.
B 4-6 m	Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer is adequately based on points from the passages, but this may not be clear or explicit. • Attempts to show how trends/developments in our society were similar or different from the developments and trends of the Noughties but this may not always be logical and well-substantiated. • Inadequate or superficial references to what is happening in Singapore.
	Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of some elaboration but may not be fully developed. Examples cited may be clichéd, common, or not truly effective. • May include minor misinterpretation.
	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance may be lacking. • Personal insights and predictions are hinted at, but tend to be superficial with limited development of ideas. • Reasons offered to support the student's evaluation may not be fully developed and clear.
	Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer shows a fair degree of organisation (paragraphing, etc) but is not completely effective. • Links between some points may be lacking. Some minor logical gaps.
C 1-3 m	Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no reference to the specific points made by the writers in the passages. Requires work on examiner's part to locate/understand the ideas raised.
	Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanations are unconvincing, badly reasoned, lack examples and development.
	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no attempt at all at evaluation. • Student may resort to paraphrasing / summarising passage instead of critically commenting on selected points. • Little or no attempt made to justify the evaluation.
	Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction of answer is sorely lacking. Student does not seem to have a thesis / argument, essay is extremely disorganised (evidence of random points jumbled together).