

Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Boy genius

Philip Chan leads a normal sort of a life for a university student. Every weekday he travels by MTR and bus to the University of Hong Kong where he is studying Physics. When he travels back and forth, he keeps himself occupied by reading his textbooks or doing the crossword puzzle in the newspaper. He spends most of his mornings attending lectures or doing practical work in the laboratory.

He welcomes the lunch break because it gives him a chance to relax. He usually eats in the university cafeteria, sharing some food with his friends and talking over the morning's work with them. He prefers to spend his afternoons in the library, unless there are further lectures or tutorials to attend. He is a disciplined student, so he usually completes his work by five o'clock and then returns home. At home he plays with his brothers and sisters and watches cartoons on the television.

The family always eats together in the dining room, and they enjoy sharing their day's experiences with each other.

Mrs Chan is quite strict with her children and insists that they complete their homework and go to bed by ten in the evening. And that includes Philip, because, believe it or not, Philip is only thirteen years old. He is allowed to go to university at this very young age because he is a genius.

What's it like to be in Philip's position? He admits that it's sometimes difficult. 'People don't know whether to treat me as an adult or a child. Sometimes they test me to see just how mature and clever I am. At other times they treat me as if I'm a little kid who doesn't know anything. I'm happiest when I'm left alone with my books or when I'm at home with my family.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

The government is planning to give a prize of \$10,000 to an outstanding student every year.

You are a member of a student group which has been asked to decide what qualities make a student outstanding. You may also suggest how the person chosen for the award could make good use of the prize money.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Swimming champ

Mary Ho seems much like any other Hong Kong teenager. She is always at school on time and looks neat and tidy in her navy blue school uniform. She enjoys going to school and is looking forward to the day when she completes her A-levels, so that she can go to university. She has already decided what she wants to study, Physical Education. She hopes to become a PE teacher, or perhaps a sports coach.

Like most students, Mary works hard at her lessons and tries to finish her homework as early as possible. And she has a very good reason for being in bed early. You see, Mary has to be out of bed and training at the swimming pool by five o'clock every morning. She is an outstanding swimmer and has the potential to become an Olympic champion.

How does this make her life different from other young people of her age? 'Well, it's *completely* different,' explains Mary. 'I can never go out late at night because I have to get up so early every morning. And I have to train hard. My swimming coach makes me exercise every muscle in my body. I'm always trying to improve my performance and break my personal records. And another thing is that I always have to watch my diet. I have to eat a lot of carbohydrates and protein to replace the calories I use when swimming.'

But there must be some rewards for all that hard work? 'Yes, there are,' says Mary. 'I get the chance to travel. There are international competitions all over the world that I'm invited to compete in. And it's a real thrill to win. In fact, every race I win is a step closer to the day I compete for a gold medal for Hong Kong in the Olympics.'

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Candidate C

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Bright and brave

Anne Lee is a talented young woman who is in the final year of her A-levels at one of Hong Kong's best-known girls' schools. If you speak to her on the telephone, you can tell she is intelligent and enthusiastic about life. She is particularly good at Art, Design and Computer Studies, and next year she hopes to begin studying at university to become an architect. It is only when you meet her in person that you realize what difficulties she has to overcome. Because of an accident in her early childhood, Anne has lost the use of her arms and legs.

One result of Anne's disability is that it takes her much longer to complete ordinary tasks than other people. For example, whereas most students can complete their homework in three or four hours,

sometimes it takes her six hours. This is because she has to write with a special device which she can only operate by moving her shoulder.

Still, Anne does not see studying as a problem. 'The greatest difficulty I have is getting around Hong Kong in my wheelchair,' she explains. 'It is really difficult because the transport systems and the buildings are not designed to assist people who have disabilities like I have.' She adds that facilities like the MTR have special lifts and assistants who come to help her. But everywhere else she goes there seem to be stairs. Hardly any buildings have ramps to make it easy for people in wheelchairs to enter. 'I suppose that's one of the reasons that I want to become an architect,' says Anne. 'I want to design buildings where everybody can get around easily. I really know how functional buildings are – and can be.'

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Candidate D

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Teenage breadwinner

Robert Chow is a model student. He is always helpful and smiling. He is bright too, and always gets the best marks in his class. And he is popular with both teachers and students. But there is something else that makes him particularly special. When this intelligent young man leaves school each day he becomes the family breadwinner – the person who supports the family by earning money. Robert has to support his family because there is no one else to do so.

‘My mother passed away when I was only six, leaving my father, myself and my younger brother and sister,’ explained Robert. ‘Dad was marvellous. He looked after us very well and we were very happy, just like any normal family. But, unfortunately, when I was twelve, he was killed in an accident, so we were left to cope alone.’

Luckily, Robert is very good with computers, and is able to write programs. This skill has turned out to be the salvation of the family. Robert set up business as a computer expert at home, and people in his block were soon calling on him to help them with their computer problems. ‘Now I can install hardware, set up web-sites, and solve quite complex computer problems. After getting home from school, I work on computers until about eleven o’clock each night. And at weekends I give mini training courses.’

Doesn’t he feel tired working at two ‘jobs’ every day? ‘Not really,’ Robert explains. ‘School is great fun and computers are like a hobby to me. And besides, there are some financial rewards. We now have some savings in the bank, and with a bit of luck, we may be able to afford a trip to China during the summer holidays. Things are really getting better all the time.’

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Life on the high seas

In 1998, Billy Cheung graduated from university with an Arts degree. At first he wasn't sure what career to choose, but eventually he decided to join the Hong Kong Police Force. But he didn't join as an ordinary police inspector in the streets of Hong Kong – he joined as a marine police inspector patrolling the sea. After his three-month training period, he was assigned to a police boat which covered Victoria Harbour and the coastal waters around the Outlying Islands.

His first shock came on his second day of work, when the seas were particularly rough. To his surprise, he became very sea-sick. He felt so awful that he thought about resigning from the Force. But after a time, he became used to the motion of the waves – he had found his 'sea-legs'.

Another thing that he had to get used to was the shift work. Marine policemen do not have a regular working day like most other people. They work for three days at a time and then have two days off. This means that they sleep on the boat in tiny bunk beds with very little privacy and not much space to move about.

The work, however, is fascinating. Marine police regularly stop large and small sailing vessels to check whether they are carrying illegal goods such as cigarettes, cars or drugs. They are trained to identify when captains of ships and the crew are acting suspiciously. But occasionally they get a surprise. Instead of finding smuggled goods, they sometimes discover illegal immigrants in hidden compartments under the cargo. They then have to arrest the crew of the boat, which can be dangerous if the crew tries to escape. Billy, however, is willing to take risks like this in return for an adventurous job.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion that *'It is better to have an interesting and exciting job that you really enjoy than to have one which only brings you money and security.'*

Your group has been chosen to enter the debating contest, but at this moment you do not know whether you will be asked to argue FOR or AGAINST the motion. You and your team will therefore need to prepare arguments for both sides. You will probably want to decide how to organize and present your arguments.

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Early bird

Every Sunday morning Terry Lee gets up at six o'clock. After a quick breakfast of bread and a glass of milk, he leaves home to go to the airfield at Shek Kong. He must be there by eight o'clock for his flying lesson. Seventeen-year-old Terry is learning to fly and by nine o'clock in the morning he will be high in the clouds, looking down on the skyscrapers of Hong Kong.

Ever since he was a small boy, he has wanted to fly. His mother says that, even when he was at kindergarten, he would yell with excitement every time he heard a plane flying overhead. As he grew older, he spent a lot of his time making planes out of cardboard, and constructing model aircraft. Later, he began to beg his parents to allow him to take flying lessons. Finally, they agreed, and for his sixteenth birthday, they paid for a series of flying lessons. He was thrilled.

Now, he has been flying for over a year. After he has completed 400 hours of flying, he will be able to get his licence as a junior pilot. It seems certain that one day he will be flying jumbo jets to London or Los Angeles. But is that what Terry wants?

'I'm not interested in flying long distances to strange places. I think it would be boring, because everything is computerized,' explained Terry. What he would really like to do is work for the Emergency Services in Hong Kong. That way he would have the chance to fly a helicopter. 'Helicopters are used in all kinds of emergencies – rescuing hikers lost in the hills or saving people who are trapped on rooftops or sinking ships. Then you have to get them to hospital as soon as possible. It's an exciting life!'

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Fired with ambition

When Winnie Lui completed her Form Five studies, she wasn't sure what she wanted to choose as a career. All she knew was that she enjoyed helping people and making sure they were happy and comfortable. At first she thought that she would like to become a nurse, so she took a first aid course and spent some time helping at an old people's home near where she lived. But then she decided that she wanted a job that was more exciting. At last she realized what she really wanted to do – become a firewoman.

It is not very easy for a young woman to join the fire services. Very few women have the physical strength necessary to qualify for the job. Winnie was aware of this, so she took a very tough course of exercises and bodybuilding at the gym. When she thought she was ready, she put in her application. To prove her strength, she had to climb down a ladder

carrying a sandbag which weighed as much as an average adult. After all her hard work, she was able to pass the test easily, and was accepted for the training course.

During her training, she had to do lots more physical exercise. She was taught how to drive a fire engine at high speed, and use all the fire-fighting equipment. She had to be able to break down doors and move through rooms filled with smoke and flames. And then, of course, she had to learn how to help the victims of fire.

'I've got to be able to rescue people and treat them when they are injured,' she explained. 'I also have to be able to calm people down if they are in a panic. Helping people escape from burning buildings can be very dangerous, but it's very rewarding.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Boat to freedom

Most people know very little about fishing boats in Hong Kong. Betty Wong is an exception. She was born on her parents' fishing boat, and both her mother and her father come from fishing families which go back at least five generations. Betty still lives on board the boat with her family and when they are not fishing in the South China Sea, the boat is tied up in Cheung Chau harbour.

Betty's school life is very different from other students in Hong Kong. She only goes to school when they are not fishing. The rest of the time she has to take her school work with her and study at sea. 'Sometimes it's difficult to concentrate or to write, especially when the sea is rough,' explained Betty. 'And sometimes I don't get enough sleep, because the fishermen work right through the night.'

Despite all her difficulties, Betty is a very bright girl and she expects to complete her 'A'-levels this year. If she wants to, she can leave the boat and live with her grandparents in their flat on Cheung Chau. Then she will be able to go to university. But if she continues to live on the boat, her life will be very different.

Betty says she loves the sea too much to give up her lifestyle. She and her older brother have persuaded their father to place a deposit on another fishing boat. Betty and her brother will hire their own crew to do the fishing. They will pay off the rest of the loan with the profits from their fishing. Betty doesn't think this life will be too difficult for a girl. 'I've always helped on board, ever since I was a young girl. It's tough and sometimes dangerous – but I love the freedom of a life at sea.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Family troubles

Mabel Leung had always wanted to have a daughter. She thought it would be wonderful to dress up a baby girl in beautiful, colourful clothes. She was, in fact, dreaming about a childhood that she herself had never had. When she married Mr Leung, she told him that she wanted to have a little girl, and he promised that one day she would. She began to think that perhaps her hope would not be fulfilled as she gave birth to one boy after another. She was therefore delighted when she found out her fifth child was a girl.

But her sons were not so pleased when they discovered that their mother spent all her time taking care of her daughter. She treated the new baby, Brenda, as if she were a doll. She bought her a lot of soft toys and spent a fortune on clothes for her. Sometimes she even spent her household money on things for Brenda, and her sons would complain that they did not have enough to

eat. As time went by, they came to hate their ‘precious’ sister.

Brenda grew up completely reliant on her mother. Whenever she had an argument with a friend, her mother would protect her and complain to the friend’s parents. If her homework was too difficult, she did not even try to do it – she just handed it to her mother. Whenever she wanted a new toy or new clothes, all she had to do was cry and her mother bought them for her. In the end, she was just a spoiled selfish little girl.

Since then, things have changed. When her mother died, Brenda went through a very painful period of emotional change. As she got to know her brothers better, she began to realize how much unhappiness she had caused them by being her mother’s favourite.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

As part of a term project, the Social Studies teacher at your school wants students to produce a special booklet entitled *How to raise the perfect family*.

You are one of a group of students who have been chosen to produce the booklet. You are meeting to discuss what advice to include in it and how the information could be presented in an interesting and attractive way.

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Smaller families

There are more and more only children in the world. As time goes by, fewer people want to have large families. One of the reasons for this is that an increasing number of women work. They find that they are unable to cope with a larger family and still have time for household tasks, so the solution is to have fewer children. In Hong Kong, there is also the problem of space. It is difficult to find a flat which is big enough to accommodate a large family. If you find a large flat, then it is likely to be very expensive to rent or to buy.

But perhaps the main reason that most young couples do not want to have children is because they do not want to give up their leisure time in order to look after a family. These days, young professional people want more freedom and flexibility. At the same time, they often experience pressure from their own parents to have grandchildren. A good way of pleasing everybody is to have just one child.

It used to be believed that a single child in a family was spoilt. People still talk about the ‘little emperors’ who exist in China because of the one-child policy. However, it seems that spoilt children are common in large families too. It really depends on whether parents are willing to say ‘no’ to their children when they ask for things they don’t need. Most ‘only children’ are, in fact, sociable and generous.

Jenny Lam, an only child, has this to say, ‘Not having any brothers and sisters can sometimes be a bit lonely, but, on the other hand I have always had love and guidance from my parents. Because of their care, I feel more confident about myself, and I think I can perform better, both socially and intellectually.’

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

A family dream

Mr and Mrs Lo always wanted to have a big family. They both came from big families themselves, and have fond memories of when they lived in the countryside in Guangdong where their parents owned farms. It was a good, peaceful and secure life which they both enjoyed a great deal. So, when they decided to marry and settle in Hong Kong, their plan was to build a happy home with lots of children.

Within the space of twelve years, they had eight children – seven boys, and one girl. Mary Lo was the eldest child. Bringing up so many children was a real task for her parents, so Mary was expected to help out when her mother could not manage. As a schoolgirl, she was expected to care for and feed the smallest children, then bathe them and put them to bed. After that she had to do the dishes. And then there was always

something else to do. She was never allowed to enjoy playing games, read story books or watch TV like other children.

Life in the city was not like life on the farm. The family was crowded into three bedrooms. Because of the lack of space, the children were always fighting and arguing. With so many mouths to feed, at the beginning of the school year, the family couldn't afford to get new books and uniforms for the children. The Lo's realised that their old dream of having a large family was actually a nightmare.

Mary Lo grew up full of anger. 'Because I was the eldest girl, I was treated like a slave. My brothers never did any housework at all. I was a victim of my parents' foolish dreams. I'll never forgive them.'

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Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Boy's world

People often wonder what it is like to be a member of a large family. Paul Fung can tell you – he is one of five children. In fact, he is the youngest member of his family, and has four older sisters. Although it might be old-fashioned, many parents want to have a boy to continue the family name. Like Paul's parents they will go on having children until they have a male child.

This kind of attitude can have a harmful effect on other members of the family. For the Fungs' first daughter, it was not quite so bad. Her parents thought that their next child would surely be a boy. But as one girl followed another, the Fungs' disappointment increased. The girls grew up believing that they were inferior.

When Paul Fung was eventually born, he was greeted as if he were an emperor. All his relatives came

to the hospital, bringing expensive gifts with them. At home the eldest girl was moved from her own room and had to share with her sisters so that Paul could have a room of his own. From then on, the whole family was focused on the activities of the male child of the family. He received the most attention, was sent to the best schools, and always received the best toys and the most red packets at Chinese New Year.

Now, as an adult, Paul looks back on his childhood. 'My parents were totally unfair – they spent so much time and money on me, and completely ignored my sisters. As a result, my sisters grew to dislike my parents, and they certainly hated me. It's taken us many years to start talking about what happened, and to finally become friends as brothers and sisters should be.'

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Village design

There are many interesting old villages in the New Territories and on the Outlying Islands. If you visit them, you will notice that they are often laid out in a similar way, with houses in a line in front of a hill. This follows the rules of the ancient Chinese science, *fung shui*.

As Lily Tsoi, the author of a book on this subject, explained, ‘Villages should preferably face south and look out over water. The *yang* force, which gives energy, flows from the hills behind the village. To balance this, the complementary *yin* force flows from the fields below the village. This is supposed to make the area a good place to grow crops. Ideally, a village should be situated where the two forces meet and complement each other.’

The tree-covered hill behind a village protects it from the bad spirits of the north and from too much *yang*

force. These beliefs mean that trees behind a village are rarely cut down. Consequently, these ancient woods of local trees, as well as the wildlife they support, may have been undisturbed for centuries.

In fact, many aspects of *fung shui* are common sense. ‘The shelter of the trees keeps the villages safe from landslips and typhoons,’ said Lily, ‘while the location above the valley floor means flooding is less of a problem.’ Any disturbance to the local *fung shui* is serious as it affects the luck and prosperity of the village. In 1937, a typhoon blew down many trees near the village of San Shek Wan on Lantau Island. Villagers later found that their crops often died and blamed the destruction of the trees for exposing the village to bad spirits. In the end, the inhabitants actually moved their village half a mile away, abandoning their original homes and their ancestral hall.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

A small group of students from the United States is coming to Hong Kong as part of an exchange programme. They will be spending a week with your class at school and will be doing a project on old and new Hong Kong.

You are a member of the organizing committee. You are meeting in order to plan a day-trip in the New Territories for the visitors. Discuss where you think you should take them, what you should do and also who they could meet.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Village paths

Although Hong Kong has an impressive public transport system, a few small villages in the New Territories can still only be reached on foot. In fact, this was how most of the older villages were connected with the outside world until relatively recently.

Newer footpaths may be made of concrete but, especially in remote areas, many original tracks still exist. These are very rough and are made from pieces of rock – a reminder of how poor the inhabitants of these places were. As Steve Lam, a conservation volunteer, explained, ‘The paths are too narrow and often too steep for horses or donkeys to use. This shows that everything coming into the area had to be carried on the backs of men or women.’ This was normally done using a bamboo pole across the shoulders, from which two baskets were hung, or, if the load was too heavy for one person, the pole was supported by two people, one at each end.

The footpaths connected the villages with the local market towns such as Yuen Long, Tai Po, and Sai Kung. These places were the focus of economic activity for the surrounding villages, and markets were held in each town on a different day of the week. Villagers then had the chance to bring their firewood or pigs to sell in exchange for necessities such as incense sticks, cooking oil, fuel for their lamps, or stationery for their children at the village school.

‘If you go walking in the more remote parts of the New Territories today, you will find ruined, deserted villages,’ said Steve. ‘In other villages, many houses stand locked and empty. Only a few are still occupied by elderly villagers. The number of inhabited villages is decreasing rapidly – young people need easier access to jobs and therefore have to move away.’

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Village houses

Most small villages in the New Territories are a mixture of old and new. Traditional village houses are sandwiched between smart new villas. The design of the old houses has not changed much over thousands of years, while the new houses are much bigger and more suited to the modern way of life.

Wong Mei-ling used to live in a traditional house in her village, but her family now live in a villa they built on land which belongs to them. 'The old house was uncomfortable,' she recalled. 'It was too hot in summer and too cold in winter. It didn't have proper foundations either, which meant it was often damp.' She now has the ground-floor flat, with a modern bathroom and kitchen, while her two married sons and their young families live in their own flats above hers.

The old houses were built with the local weather conditions in mind. They have very small windows in order to keep out the heat of the sun. The walls are thick and painted white to reflect the sun's rays. The roof sticks out beyond the walls as well – this provides some shade from the sun as well as protects the house from the heavy rains that typhoons bring.

Mrs Wong recently visited the Sam Tung Uk Museum in Tsuen Wan on an excursion with her grandchildren. The museum is a walled village which used to be inhabited by Hakka people. 'The houses in the village were quite similar to the place where my family lived until about ten years ago,' laughed Mrs Wong. 'It was very strange for me to see a museum like this. Perhaps my family should set up an exhibition in our old house – we just use it to store junk these days and keep the place locked up!'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

A small group of students from the United States is coming to Hong Kong as part of an exchange programme. They will be spending a week with your class at school and will be doing a project on old and new Hong Kong.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Village education

In Hong Kong and the New Territories, as in the rest of China, learning and study have always been much respected. Even a century ago, almost every village did something to make sure the boys received some kind of education. This often took place in the village temple or ancestral hall. Some villages built primary schools, usually in or near the temple area. One example can still be seen at Tsung Pak Long near Sheung Shui.

‘Most children had the opportunity to attend school for an average of three years and they usually reached a basic level of literacy,’ explained Matthew Yip, who is researching the history of education in Hong Kong. ‘But it wasn’t easy for them. Discipline was strict and students were frequently punished. Also, textbooks were written in classical Chinese while the students spoke Cantonese or Hakka. This meant they could not follow their lessons very well, and the teacher did not

give them much help. It was only after about two years of hard work that the students began to understand their lessons.’

On finishing his primary education, a promising student could transfer to a study hall providing he was able and willing to continue. Study halls were important places, as they represented the power and political ambitions of the different local clans, or social groups, which had built them. Here students would prepare for the examinations which allowed them to enter the emperor’s civil service, a task which might require many years of study.

‘No wonder the Chinese symbol for learning is a carp,’ laughed Matthew. The carp is a fish which struggles to swim upstream while the water currents try to carry it down to the sea. ‘You can often find the carp represented in one form or another in the traditional study halls around the New Territories.’

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

A small group of students from the United States is coming to Hong Kong as part of an exchange programme. They will be spending a week with your class at school and will be doing a project on old and new Hong Kong.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

No patience with students' problems

Tommy Chan is in Form Six. He describes himself as an average student who is well liked by his classmates. He tries hard to have a good relationship with his teachers too, as he thinks it is important to get along with everyone in a small community like a school. However, to his surprise, Tommy found himself in trouble at school last Monday and he now wonders whether his efforts to be friendly were worthwhile.

'It was a strange weekend at home,' explained Tommy. 'My grandmother was suddenly taken ill in Guangzhou and my parents had to go to see her there. I stayed in Hong Kong with my younger brother and we coped quite well at home on our own. It was fun to have the flat to ourselves and stay up late on Saturday night.' Tommy only realized on Sunday evening that he had forgotten to get his own and his brother's uniforms ready for school the next day. He managed to get his brother's

shirt washed and dried, but then didn't have time to do his own.

'I thought it would be better to wear a clean T-shirt to school rather than my dirty shirt from the week before,' said Tommy. 'But as soon as I got into my classroom, the teacher called me out to the front to tell me off. It wasn't our usual teacher and, although I tried to explain what had happened, he wasn't interested and said that I probably used the same excuse every Monday.'

Tommy now thinks he should have stayed away from school instead of attending without his uniform. He is annoyed that the teacher wasn't prepared to accept his explanation and wonders if there is any point in respecting teachers when they just ignore the problems that students may have.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school principal has just set up a staff-student committee. The committee will meet regularly to try to improve relations between teachers and students at your school.

You and the other members of your group are class representatives. You are meeting to discuss what issues you would like to bring up with the teacher representatives and want to focus in particular on how students may be treated unfairly by teachers. You may also want to talk about the most effective way to present your complaints and suggestions.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Victim of a misunderstanding

Terry Ma is in Form Two. He has already decided that he wants to leave school and find a job once he has taken his Hong Kong Certificate exams. He knows that he is one of the weaker students in his class, but this is simply because he prefers other activities to studying. Terry is a good athlete, for example.

Terry's least favourite subject is English. 'I can't see the point of learning something which I'm sure I won't ever need when I leave school,' he said. 'Apart from that, I'm not good at learning languages. I find it difficult to follow what's going on and I usually just sit at the back of the room and hope the teacher doesn't notice me.' This is especially true when the native-speaker teacher at his school is taking the lesson.

'Miss Baker comes from Canada. She doesn't know any Cantonese and speaks English all the time,' explained Terry. 'This is fine for the good students who

understand her, but I'm always completely lost.' Last week, Terry got into trouble during his English class. He couldn't follow what the teacher had told the students to do and, as usual, he asked the person in front of him to explain the exercise again in Cantonese. 'I suppose Miss Baker thought I was just playing around. Anyway, she suddenly lost her temper,' he said. 'But I still didn't know what she was asking me and so I asked one of the other students again. This made her even more angry and I ended up being sent out!'

Terry is still not sure what really caused the problem, but he doesn't think it was his fault entirely. He was just misunderstood by a teacher who, because of a language barrier, has no way of communicating with him directly.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Teachers' pets get away with it

Every day, Angela Yau, a Form Five student, has a lot of problems at school. She likes to talk about these with her friends after school. Yesterday was another bad day. 'I've had enough of being treated like a little child,' she said. 'School rules are so meaningless and unimportant. I wish teachers would spend more time helping us with our exams and not fuss about whether we line up properly or keep quiet on the stairs.'

Her main complaint for the day was that one of the teachers had caught her chewing gum during assembly. The teacher then told her to stay in the hall to apologize to the principal. Angela knows that chewing gum is not allowed in school, and she admits she was breaking the rule. However, this is not what makes her angry. 'What annoys me is that I could see several other students doing exactly the same thing in assembly, but I was the only person who was picked out!' she complained.

Angela thinks teachers are often unfair in their monitoring of school rules. Their 'pet' students – perhaps those who work hard in class and get good results – can behave any way they like without having to worry about being punished. On the other hand, students who are not among the teachers' favourites have to be careful not to break any rules. Sometimes they can be punished for the smallest mistake, like forgetting to close a door.

'I think it sets a bad example if there are different standards for different people,' explained Angela. 'Rules should be the same for everyone – it's just not fair if people are treated differently. If some students can break a rule without punishment, then it's probably a stupid rule anyway and we should get rid of it.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Heavy demands on students

There has been criticism in the local media recently of how students have to carry heavy textbooks to and from school. Some schools have made efforts to improve the situation by installing lockers for students, for example. However, many students in Hong Kong still need to plan carefully what they should take with them to school each day.

Denise Lai is a student in Form Three. She got into trouble with one of her teachers last week because she didn't have her geography textbook in the lesson. 'I had been using the book at home over the weekend,' explained Denise, 'and I just didn't have any space in my bag to take it back to school for the class on Monday.' Although she wasn't actually punished for not bringing the book to class, Denise knows that her teacher expects her to have it at each lesson from now on.

'The problem is that we don't have any personal space to keep our belongings at my school,' Denise complained. 'That means on some days when we have sports activities, I have one bag for my books and another for my shoes and sports kit.' Even on days without sports, students may have bags containing four or more large textbooks for different subjects, notebooks, pens and other stationery. 'And don't forget that it's worse if the weather is wet, because we'll probably have raincoats and umbrellas too,' laughed Denise.

Students seem to be suffering because of unreasonable demands made at school. Teachers require them to bring their textbooks all the time, even when they don't actually use them in every lesson. 'Perhaps school administrators should think more carefully when they are planning class timetables,' suggested Denise. 'They could try to make sure that we don't have to bring too many books each day.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Regular correspondent

Rarely a day passes without Mandy Chiu receiving a letter or postcard from somewhere in the world. She has penfriends in several different countries who write to her regularly. Of course, it's true that if you don't write first, you won't receive any letters. So, naturally, Mandy is also a keen correspondent and a familiar face at her local post office, where she buys stamps and sends her mail.

'I started writing when one of my older cousins moved to Canada with his parents about seven years ago. I was only 10 and was very sad to see him leave,' explained Mandy. 'He promised he'd send me a postcard as soon as he arrived and he kept his word. I sent a card back and we kept up the exchange until last year, when he got married. We joked that he needed more time with his wife!'

Having become interested in making penfriends, Mandy found a special page in a magazine where people who are looking for friends in other countries publish their addresses and personal information. Mandy now has seven penfriends and writes about five letters a week. 'It's a nice way to relax and, at the same time, reflect on my life. I enjoy telling other people about myself and what interests me,' she said. 'And when someone replies, it's fascinating to learn about their life too and find out about the similarities and differences between us.'

Mandy is always willing to start writing to someone new, though she realizes that not all the exchanges will last. 'It's very easy to communicate with some people. With others, I quickly realize that we don't have much in common,' said Mandy, 'and the letters get less frequent. In the end, it's better to stop than to reply simply because you feel obliged to.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

A local telephone company and the Hong Kong Post Office are promoting a competition for schools entitled *Keeping in touch today and tomorrow*. They have invited groups of students to prepare short presentations about how teenagers keep in touch nowadays and how they may want to communicate in the future.

You and your classmates would like to take part in this competition. You are meeting for the first time to discuss what you would like to include in your presentation and how you can make it as effective as possible.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Living in the present

Last year, Stanley Lo, a student now in Form Seven, went to visit his aunt and uncle near Guangzhou. He stayed with them and his cousin for two months during his summer holidays. Stanley got on well with his cousin, as they are the same age, and he met some of his cousin's friends too. He became particularly friendly with Li Man, who had been in his cousin's class but had recently left school and was waiting to start a job in the autumn.

'Li and I spent a lot of time together,' remembered Stanley. 'We had a lot in common – we used to go swimming every day and go out walking around the streets in the evening. I think my cousin was a bit jealous that we became such good friends so quickly. Li seemed to have a different attitude to life from the others in the school and lots of the students wanted to spend time with him.'

Stanley got to know Li so well over the summer that, when he left for Hong Kong at the end of his holiday, it wasn't a surprise to him that Li didn't come to say goodbye. 'We had occasionally talked about relationships. Li said that life only made sense for him if he lived totally in the present and tried to communicate with the people he met every day,' explained Stanley. 'I had originally wondered about keeping in touch by letter or phone, but Li believed that there was no point in maintaining contact with someone you might never see again.'

This attitude was new to Stanley, but he came to understand Li's point of view. Like Li, Stanley tries not to think about the future and aims to get the most out of what happens to him each day.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Long-lost friends

When Winnie Cheung heard recently that her best friend from primary school had come back to Hong Kong after nearly ten years in Australia, she couldn't believe her ears. Mary had moved to Melbourne with her parents when she was nine and, when she left, Winnie had promised to keep in touch with her favourite classmate. The girls wrote to each other with their parents' help for a few years, but Winnie lost Mary's address when her family moved to a new flat.

'I was a very sad little girl when I realized that I had lost contact with Mary, and I've often wondered since then about her life in Australia,' said Winnie, now 18 years old. 'I never thought we'd meet again and it was a real surprise to hear from one of my former primary school teachers that Mary was back in Hong Kong and looking for me.'

Mary has chosen to go to university in the place where she was born, and she is going to live with her grandparents while she studies. When Winnie and Mary arranged to get together again, both admitted to being nervous about the meeting. 'I didn't know what to expect,' said Winnie. 'I wondered if we'd even recognize each other and what we'd find to talk about. I was worried that it was going to be like meeting a stranger.'

However, when the two teenagers were finally face to face, it was as if they hadn't seen each other for just ten days rather than ten years. While they had developed from girls into young women, their basic personalities hadn't changed and soon they were chatting together like old friends. 'Although we've led different lives, the reasons why we were good friends before are the same reasons we are friends again today,' laughed Mary.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Virtual conversation

Mike So used to collect stamps from around the world, but, since his family got a computer with Internet access, he prefers to ‘collect’ friends in other countries instead. Like many teenagers today, 17-year-old Mike spends his free time ‘chatting’ to people he will almost certainly never meet. He uses ICQ, which is computer software that allows someone sitting at one computer to communicate directly with someone else at another computer anywhere in the world. People can send messages to each other in the form of a written conversation, with the writer’s sentences appearing immediately on the reader’s screen.

It is this immediate response that particularly attracts Mike. ‘If you send letters or e-mail, you have to wait for a reply,’ he explained. ‘But with ICQ software, it’s as if you are talking to someone in the same room. I’ve got a friend in California and I can ask her what the weather is like there and get a totally up-to-date report!’

There can be large time differences between the places around the world where Mike has friends. This means that he has to fix times to chat with them on-line at the weekend. However, it doesn’t prevent Mike from using ICQ during the week, as he often communicates with his school friends in this way too. ‘In the evenings we chat about what happened at school and sometimes we check our homework together.’

When he started using ICQ, Mike found it difficult to follow the conversation taking place on his computer screen. This was because he couldn’t read what someone was ‘saying’ and type his reply at the same time. However, he’s got better with practice and now thinks it’s the only way to communicate. ‘It’s much cheaper than making long-distance phone calls and much more fun than writing old-fashioned letters,’ he laughed.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

In the news

One of the most interesting and challenging jobs you can do is that of a journalist. Of course, to do this well, the most important requirement is the ability to speak and write English or Chinese well.

Most young people who follow this career usually go to university to study journalism or communications. There they become familiar with different styles of writing. They learn how to interview people and to describe events which they are observing. They must also develop editing skills to ensure that the news stories they write are accurate and interesting to read. At some point during their studies they are sent to newspapers and magazines to gain work experience, so that they can get an idea of what it is like to be part of a production team.

On graduating, these young people must decide whether they want to work for a newspaper, a magazine,

a radio station or a TV station, although most journalists start working on newspapers. It is a very busy life because they have to rush all over Hong Kong to interview people and to follow up on interesting stories. Sometimes they will cover two or three stories in a day – but that's not the end of their work. They then have to return to the office to write up their notes. There is usually a deadline – everything must be completed by eleven o'clock in the evening so that the newspaper can be printed and distributed in the early hours of the morning.

Jane Leung, a new graduate, is one person who has chosen to become a journalist. She works for a local Chinese newspaper. 'You have to work very hard,' Jane says. 'I'm out on the streets in all kinds of weather, and often I don't have time for dinner. But it's very exciting and fulfilling.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Because many students have expressed an interest in improving their writing skills, your school has decided to hold an intensive writing course during the summer holidays.

You and your friends have been asked to help to plan the programme for the course. You are meeting to discuss how to make the course as interesting and varied as possible. You may also want to suggest some practical activities outside the school.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Living in a world of imagination

Can you write well in English or Chinese? Do you find it easy to make up stories and tell them to children? If you have a creative mind, you could think about writing novels as a career. Some people think that there is no money to be made in writing books, but they are wrong. Some of the world's top novelists are very rich indeed.

A novelist needs space where he or she can work alone – a quiet room where it is possible to think in peace. But it is important to work to a schedule too. Most novelists set aside a certain time of the day, say from six o'clock in the morning to midday, and try to write every day at this time. Others set themselves a target of a certain number of words every day, so they can feel satisfied that they are making progress.

Most novelists have a plan for their novel before they write it. They make detailed notes about the plot so that they know in which direction the story is going. Some also write outlines for the characters in the story. It is also important to do research into the background and subject matter of the novel. When the first draft is completed, the work becomes more interesting. The novelist reads the first draft again, correcting the grammar, adding small details and deleting unimportant parts. Once the writer has completed this task, a copy is sent to an agent. The agent's job is to persuade publishers to print the novel.

According to Fay Lau, a popular novelist, writing is lonely work. 'No one can help you put your ideas into words, but when the characters at last come to life, and the book is published, you feel very satisfied.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Selling your ideas

If you are good with words, have a creative and intelligent mind, and you are good at dealing with people, then you might consider joining an advertising company after you leave school. Many people who work for advertising companies have a university degree, but others join straight after leaving school and work their way to the top. Some people have even been known to join as a messenger and eventually become a creative director! It's all a matter of hard work, talent and good luck.

Advertising can be an interesting and attractive job. But people have to work very long hours in order to meet the deadlines set by their clients. Sometimes it is exciting – some advertising companies make films and commercials for their clients which involves working with famous movie stars or singers. But advertising can be dull and boring too – it is very difficult to write an

advertisement about a chair or a table in a way that makes everybody want to buy it. This is a routine part of the work.

Advertising is sometimes seen as a dishonest job, however. This is because advertisers are often paid to make a client's product attractive and popular, even if the product is of poor quality or environmentally unfriendly. The profits which come from advertising are often very high indeed, so salaries are very tempting. A good creative director can earn over HK\$100,000 a month.

John Kwok, an advertising executive for a local car dealer, gave his opinion: 'It's a stressful job. You work irregular hours and rarely get enough sleep. But it's very rewarding to see advertisements on TV and in magazines and realize that I was the person who came up with the ideas. That gives me a real thrill.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Because many students have expressed an interest in improving their writing skills, your school has decided to hold an intensive writing course during the summer holidays.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

At home with words

When students finish a degree in English language at university, many of them become school teachers or go into advertising or the civil service. However, if you can speak, write and understand English very well, you could also consider becoming an English language textbook writer. It is a job that requires special skills.

A good textbook writer must be able to see Hong Kong through the eyes of a student and to understand how students think. It is also very important to know about their standard of English, their level of grammar and how much vocabulary they can use. As well as that, textbooks have to be designed so that they are easy to use. They need to reflect the latest teaching ideas, and have a bright, colourful layout that will be attractive to students. Photos, diagrams and cartoons can make a big difference.

There are various things to consider when preparing to write a textbook. First, writers must have a quiet environment in which to work. A writer should also have excellent computer skills as well. It is also very important to be well-organised to ensure that all parts of the syllabus are covered. The final stage is to find a publisher for your first book. To do this, you must send an outline of your aims in writing the book, and a sample unit from the book to a prospective publisher. Education publishers in Hong Kong are always keen to find new textbook writers if the quality is good.

Peter Lam, a textbook writer, has this to say: 'The money you make is not too bad. Publishers will generally give you some money in advance to complete the book. Then it depends on sales – the more books I sell, the more money I make.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Because many students have expressed an interest in improving their writing skills, your school has decided to hold an intensive writing course during the summer holidays.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Animals in the wild

A hundred years ago, people who travelled to strange and far off lands often went to hunt wild animals such as lions and tigers. But, in the last thirty years, the attitudes of tourists have changed. People want to see animals in their natural surroundings and they also want to make sure they do not harm the animals or the environment in any way. This kind of tourism is known as eco-tourism – ecological tourism.

Eco-tourism is becoming an increasingly popular form of sightseeing in places like India and Africa, but it is also being developed on a small scale in Hong Kong. For example, it is now possible to go on organized trips to see the rare Chinese White Dolphins which inhabit Hong Kong waters. These beautiful and intelligent creatures, which range in colour from dark grey to bright pink, can be found mainly in the waters to the north of Lantau Island.

An eco-tourism company called Hong Kong Dolphin Watch is responsible for the guided boat tours to see the dolphins. These tours are carefully planned so that the animals are not put in any danger. It is an exciting experience for both adults and children to see these graceful creatures enjoying their natural habitat.

The dolphins are threatened by many dangers – pollution in the South China Sea, fishermen who overfish the areas where the dolphins find their food, and the loss of their breeding grounds to reclamation projects. Some people argue that the creatures will only be safe if they are caught and put in aquariums. Others argue that it is cruel to put these creatures in small pools and teach them tricks to perform to the public. What is really needed is an understanding that rare animals have a right to live in their own environment, and that this environment should be protected.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your principal is thinking of establishing a small zoo in the school grounds where Hong Kong birds and animals can be kept.

You are a member of a group of students which is meeting to discuss whether the zoo is a good idea. You will need to talk about what animals it would be possible to keep, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of keeping the animals in a zoo.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Watching for birds

One of the most interesting and unusual hobbies that can be followed in Hong Kong is bird watching. There are plenty of sites where you can see and identify birds – for example, Mai Po Marshes, Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve or Sai Kung Country Park. People who are interested in learning about bird watching should consider joining the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society. The Society publishes up-to-date articles containing lots of information about where to see certain birds, and it arranges field trips so that bird watchers can meet each other.

In order to be a bird watcher, certain pieces of equipment are necessary. The most obvious of these is a pair of binoculars. It is important to buy a good quality pair because it will make it easier to observe the birds and will help avoid eye strain. A good bird book is also necessary to help you identify different species of birds.

There is an excellent guide to local birds produced by the Government. It contains coloured illustrations of all the birds in the region.

People who are new to bird watching may benefit from a few tips. They must first of all learn to be very patient. Some very common birds are easy to identify, but others are more difficult because they change colour at different times of the year. Being able to watch in silence is also an important skill. Chatting with a friend will soon scare away the birds.

It is also a good idea to take a pen and paper on field trips so that you can make notes about the birds. When you get home, you can write the notes up so that you have a record of what you have seen. Happy birding!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your principal is thinking of establishing a small zoo in the school grounds, where Hong Kong birds and animals can be kept.

You are a member of a group of students which is meeting to discuss whether the zoo is a good idea. You will need to talk about what animals it would be possible to keep, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of keeping the animals in a zoo.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Keeping a snake

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has often complained about the number of people who abandon their cats and dogs when they decide that they are too much trouble to keep. But now the latest craze is to keep a snake, and the organization that is called on to care for lost and abandoned snakes is the Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Garden.

The most popular snake people like to keep as a pet is a python. Pythons are not as dangerous to humans as other snakes are. They can bite, but they are not poisonous. The problem is that they feed on small animals, and very few owners want to buy things like mice to feed their pythons. Another problem is that some pythons – the Burmese Python, for example – can grow to a length of 10 metres. These big snakes also have a long life span – they can live for up to 30 years. Obviously, not many people are prepared to look after such a creature for so long.

Some species of python are native to Hong Kong, and are found from time to time in the New Territories. Older residents in some of the more remote areas can tell stories of how they used to catch and kill huge dragons – pythons that had eaten their pigs or chickens. Such killing, however, is forbidden now. Pythons are protected by international law.

Anyone who wants to keep a python must import it from overseas and have a proper licence for it. Therefore people should think carefully before they buy a python. This may help reduce the number of snakes which Kadoorie Farm is called on to rescue – over 600 snakes each year. These rescued pythons have to be resettled in a protected area in Guangdong.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Special treatment

Most Hong Kong people believe in the power of acupuncture – the traditional Chinese way of curing illness. The doctor places needles in certain parts of the body to help restore energy and health to the patient. But now this practice is being used in a new way. Beginning last year, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) has begun to give acupuncture treatment to animals.

This may seem a new thing for Hong Kong pet owners, but, in fact, there are records that acupuncture was used on farm animals in China as long as 3000 years ago. In those days, when battles were common, it was particularly important for armies to have horses that were fit, so acupuncture was used to improve the animals' health and strength. It is only in the last 30 or 40 years that the practice has been developed for the treatment of smaller animals.

Acupuncture is now used to treat a number of health problems in animals. It can improve muscle and skin conditions, as well as help with breathing and problems with the nervous system. The great advantage of acupuncture is that the animal does not suffer from any of the side-effects that normal pills or painkillers can have. The only pain they feel is when the needle is put in the skin, but this does not last very long.

So, acupuncture can be a wise choice for animal lovers when their pets are sick. The SPCA charges \$220 for a first appointment and \$180 for subsequent appointments. Animals frequently need treatment once or twice a week for four to six weeks. Each session lasts for about 20 minutes. And although it sounds amazing, acupuncture can be done on any animal, no matter how large or small.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Island temple

If you happen to have some spare time in May, it may be a good time for you to visit the island of Cheung Chau. At that time of the year, the annual Bun Festival is held at the Pak Tai Temple there.

The Pak Tai Temple was built in 1783, and the statue of Pak Tai – the Emperor of the North – is almost as old. It is a particularly fine wooden statue, which was rescued from the sea. Pak Tai is seated on a throne with a tortoise under his left foot and a snake beneath his right foot. According to legend, he had to fight these animals in order to become the emperor.

The terrace entrance to the temple and the sportsground beyond it are full of activity during the Bun Festival. On the sportsground, three 60-foot, cone-shaped towers are built. These towers are covered with buns which are stamped with characters wishing the

person who eats them happiness, good health or prosperity. They are mainly meant to serve as food for the ghosts of former residents of the island, but at the end of the festival the buns are distributed to local villagers. The buns are supposed to have health-giving properties.

As well as this, there are other colourful activities which take place during the Bun Festival. Many of the villagers have their own household gods. These statues are cleaned and decorated and brought to the temple in a procession. They are placed in the same shed where Pak Tai is kept and people pray to them and give offerings of incense and paper prayers. There is also a parade of children dressed as famous personalities. The children have special wire frames under their clothes which allow them to be carried at the tops of long poles in the parade.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion ‘*In a modern place like Hong Kong, temples are too old-fashioned and unnecessary. The space they take up should be used for other public facilities*’.

You are a member of a team that has been chosen to enter the debating contest, but at this moment you do not know whether you will be asked to argue FOR or AGAINST the motion. You and your team will therefore need to prepare arguments for both sides. You will probably want to decide how to organize and present your arguments.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The people's temple

By far the most popular temple in Hong Kong is Wong Tai Sin Temple. A painting of Wong Tai Sin was first brought to Hong Kong from Guangzhou in 1915 and was placed in a small temple in Wan Chai. As his popularity grew, he was transferred to his own private temple in Kowloon. From 1956, the public was allowed to enter for a fee of 10 cents. This money was donated to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals in order to run their schools and hospitals. Nowadays there is no entrance fee, but most people give a small donation.

The present temple was opened in 1973. It is an impressive building covered in golden tiles and richly decorated with ornaments and carvings. In front of the temple are two sets of stairs, one leading to a lower terrace, the other leading to an upper entrance.

On the lower terrace, people light joss sticks and paper offerings and bring food and fruit to the god. They also shake numbered bamboo sticks until one of them falls to the ground. They remember the number, and then when they leave the temple, they go to one of the fortune-tellers who will tell them what the number means. Thousands of people flock to the temple each Chinese New Year to find out their fortune for the coming year.

Wong Tai Sin is supposed to be able to heal people. Some worshippers believe that the water at the temple has special qualities, and they line up to drink some before they leave, or better still, fill up a bottle to take home with them to use when there is an illness in the family. Perhaps the real healing is done by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals though, which educates and looks after the sick and the poor.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion '*In a modern place like Hong Kong, temples are too old-fashioned and unnecessary. The space they take up should be used for other public facilities.*'

You are a member of a team that has been chosen to enter the debating contest, but at this moment you do not know whether you will be asked to argue FOR or AGAINST the motion. You and your team will therefore need to prepare arguments for both sides. You will probably want to decide how to organize and present your arguments.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

City temple

Most of the tourists who visit Hong Kong want to see a Chinese temple, and one temple that they often see by accident is Man Mo Temple. This is because it is in Mid-levels, where tourists often go to browse for antiques. Although it is not the oldest temple in Hong Kong, it was built over 150 years ago – just after the British took over Hong Kong.

Until the 1970s, it had a clear view of the sea, because the waters of the harbour came right up to where The Landmark shopping centre is now. It was harder to reach, though, because there were no paved roads or stairs leading that far up the hill. Apart from this, the temple has changed very little since 1845.

The coloured tiles still make the building look new. The temple has a traditional design which includes

a bell tower, a place for burning offerings, and a large main room with a carved screen. What the tourists notice first are the huge coils of incense hanging from the ceiling, which produce great clouds of perfumed smoke. For people who worship at the temple, smoke represents prayer, so these huge coils of incense are, in fact, very long ‘prayers’ since they stay burning for long periods of time. The people who buy these coils are usually requesting some special favour from the gods.

The main features of the temple are the statues of Man and Mo. Mo is dressed in red robes and holds a sword, whilst Man is dressed in green robes and holds a pen. They are supposed to represent a soldier and a scholar, perhaps suggesting that the qualities of both characters are necessary in order to be a well-balanced person.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion ‘*In a modern place like Hong Kong, temples are too old-fashioned and unnecessary. The space they take up should be used for other public facilities.*’

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Fishermen's temple

The goddess of the sea is Tin Hau, and she is one of the most popular goddesses, especially with fishermen, who believe that she protects them when they are at sea. There are many Tin Hau temples built close to the sea in Hong Kong, but the most famous of all is the one at Joss House Bay.

The temple was first constructed in 1266. Of course, the original building no longer exists, but it is believed to have been re-built many times. It is situated in a very isolated part of the New Territories, so it is rarely visited. But on the twenty-third day of the third month each year, the temple is suddenly filled with a lively crowd of people. The people come on their own boats or by ferry. The fishermen fill the small bay with boats covered with flags and banners of every colour of the rainbow.

On board each boat is a giant cardboard figure of Tin Hau which is decorated with coloured paper and lanterns. In front of the cardboard figures, the fishermen place thick sticks of incense as well as many types of food, including chickens and roasted pigs. Only the best food will be chosen for this special occasion. It is a noisy and high-spirited event – as the boats approach the shore, the fishermen beat drums and perform dragon dances.

Inside the temple it is difficult to approach the altar (the place where offerings are made) because there are so many people. There are two statues of Tin Hau seated next to each other by the altar. These are protected by statues of two generals, who are supposed to be able to sense danger before it arrives. But on Tin Hau's birthday, there is no danger, because everyone is there to have a good time.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion 'In a modern place like Hong Kong, temples are too old-fashioned and unnecessary. The space they take up should be used for other public facilities'.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

A traditional inn

If you ever have the chance to visit Japan, you must try to spend a night in a traditional Japanese inn or guesthouse. This will give you a fascinating insight into the traditions of this country, and it is an unforgettable experience.

Arriving at the inn in the late afternoon, guests take off their shoes at the entrance and put on slippers to walk to their rooms. These slippers are for use inside the inn. However, when you get to the entrance of the room, you have to take the slippers off too – the rooms all have special flooring made up of straw mats, called tatami, and you walk on these only in socks or barefoot. In the room, you take off your outdoor clothes and put on a comfortable cotton gown.

The rooms are simple and private. There are cushions on the floor to sit on and a low table. The

windows have screens of white paper in front of them, but slide them open and there is usually a small garden outside with bamboo and other plants to look at. Before dinner, guests take a very hot bath. The inn usually has separate baths for men and women, but you might find yourself sharing the big bath with other guests – it is a great way to relax. Everyone has to wash and rinse themselves before getting into the bath. Then they can see how long they are able to stand the heat of the water.

After the bath, a set meal is served in your room. Later, the maid clears away the dishes and lays out a mattress (futon) on the floor for you to sleep on. This is more comfortable than you might think and the next morning you wake up refreshed and ready for a traditional breakfast.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and a group of friends have won a competition in a travel magazine. The prize is a two-week trip to one or more countries of your choice.

You are meeting to discuss where your group wants to go and where to stay there. You should choose accommodation which will allow you to get a better insight into the traditions and the way(s) of life in the country or countries you decide to visit.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Monastery guesthouse

When Steven Lee was travelling around Tibet, he often ended up in small towns without facilities for visitors. However, he could always find a bed for the night at the local monastery guesthouse. Buddhist monks in Tibet traditionally offer hospitality to the pilgrims and travellers who visit their monasteries.

Steven was always grateful to find accommodation. 'I was travelling in the early spring and it was terribly cold at night. Sometimes there was snow too,' he explained. 'The accommodation was usually basic, but I couldn't expect the facilities of a five-star hotel!' The rooms generally had a bed with a rough mattress and a small stove where Steven could light a fire. He slept in his clothes and had a thick sleeping-bag to keep him warm as well. However, the most important thing was to try to keep the fire burning all night so it would not be too cold by the morning. This usually meant getting up in the middle of the night to put some

more fuel into the stove. Because there are not many trees in Tibet and coal is very expensive, the fuel mainly consisted of small pieces of wood and dried animal droppings.

'I boiled water on the stove to make hot drinks and wash every day,' said Steven. 'I'm sure I wasn't very clean, though, because there was nowhere to have a shower or bath.' The toilet at the monastery guesthouses was often no more than a hole in the ground in a wooden shed. 'With such low temperatures and a lack of lighting, I didn't like going out to the toilet at night,' laughed Steven.

Despite these hardships, Steven was always impressed by the friendliness and generosity of his hosts, who shared what they had with visitors and never turned anyone away.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and a group of friends have won a competition in a travel magazine. The prize is a two-week trip to one or more countries of your choice.

You are meeting to discuss where your group wants to go and where to stay there. You should choose accommodation which will allow you to get a better insight into the traditions and the way(s) of life in the country or countries you decide to visit.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Youth hostel adventure

When Teresa and Monica Kwok had the opportunity to take a holiday in Europe last summer, they wanted to avoid the big cities and to visit places away from typical tourist destinations. They decided to go to Ireland and spent a fortnight touring through the beautiful countryside there. Although Ireland is famous for its rain, the Kwok sisters were lucky and enjoyed two weeks of bright sunshine.

‘We loved being outside in the fresh air,’ said Teresa. ‘The weather wasn’t too hot, and it was really great spending the whole day in the sun.’ The sisters hired bicycles to get around and, for a week of their stay, they followed a special cycling route which was suggested in their guidebook. This led them to some interesting sights and across some beautiful landscapes.

Teresa and Monica were able to find a pleasant and inexpensive place to stay each night. ‘Our

guidebook had a map with the locations of all the youth hostels,’ explained Monica. ‘We weren’t sure if the hostels were going to be clean or comfortable to start with. But after our positive experience at the first one we visited, we realized that hostels were the best places to stay. We met other visitors who would tell us a good place to stay the next day.’

Youth hostels are sometimes located in converted old buildings, such as farmhouses or even castles. Their facilities nowadays can be very good : there are kitchens where you can prepare your own food, and bathrooms with hot showers. There is also probably a sitting room where visitors can sit in the evening and talk together, perhaps around an open fire. ‘Sometimes there were special activities arranged in the evening for visitors,’ said Teresa. ‘We were delighted to be able to do some folk dancing one night!’

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation. 10 minutes discussion)

You and a group of friends have won a competition in a travel magazine. The prize is a two-week trip to one or more countries of your choice.

You are meeting to discuss where your group wants to go and where to stay there. You should choose accommodation which will allow you to get a better insight into the traditions and the way(s) of life in the country or countries you decide to visit.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Australian journey

Australia is very large. If you have enough time, one way to get an idea of the size of the country is to drive between any of its big cities, for example from Sydney to Melbourne. On the way, you will see how the landscape varies as you travel, and how the common species of plants, animals and birds change. You will also be able to experience different aspects of the Australian way of life.

Tom Hung recently spent a month in Australia visiting his aunt and her family. He and his cousin borrowed a car and spent two weeks travelling. 'We didn't have a specific route to follow. We just decided where we wanted to go each morning when we got up,' explained Tom. 'It was a very relaxing holiday for me as we didn't have any deadlines to meet or particular destinations to reach.'

Each day, when they felt they had driven far enough, the holiday-makers looked for somewhere to stay. Tom's cousin preferred motels, as they were usually very easy to find and relatively cheap. Because travelling by car is so common in Australia, there are motels in most towns. You park your car just outside your room and only unpack what you need for the night. The accommodation is often very comfortable with good beds and a private bathroom. 'There's usually a television and a small fridge and you'll also find an electric toaster if you're lucky,' laughed Tom. 'Australians like drinking tea and coffee so there's always a kettle and cups – the motel owner will give you milk for hot drinks too.'

A motel generally does not have great views or a famous restaurant. Nevertheless, it may still be a wise choice for travellers who are looking for convenience and value for money.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

You and a group of friends have won a competition in a travel magazine. The prize is a two-week trip to one or more countries of your choice.

You are meeting to discuss where your group wants to go and where to stay there. You should choose accommodation which will allow you to get a better insight into the traditions and the way(s) of life in the country or countries you decide to visit.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

An eye on fashion

Most young people are interested in fashion, and many of them go shopping to places like Beverly Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui so that they can keep up to date with the latest styles. Keeping up with the latest fashions requires constant attention to all the media, especially magazines, newspapers and the Internet. Lots of people would like to spend their life working in the world of fashion, but do not know how to find a fashion-related job. One way to get into the business is to work as a fashion photographer.

Many photographers learn their skills at college or evening classes. Some aim to get a job on a magazine or a newspaper. Once they have improved their skills by taking all sorts of photos they may then think of becoming an expert in one particular field such as fashion. The next step is to get a job on a fashion magazine.

Ron Lee is a photographer who has worked for the magazine *High Fashion* for the last ten years. He says that there is a lot of difference between taking photos for a fashion magazine and taking photos for a newspaper. 'In a newspaper, every shot is presented just as it happens. But in a fashion photo, everything is very carefully positioned. The models have to pose in a particular way, the colours of the clothes they wear are co-ordinated, and the background and lighting are set up and created in order to show the clothes at their best.'

Every fashion photographer hopes that he or she will get the chance to cover the shows in the famous fashion houses of Paris, London and New York. Those who have had the chance say it is non-stop work, but they also say it is a very exciting and glamorous experience.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

An Education Department official has suggested that photography should be included in the school syllabus. Your principal has asked Form Seven students to discuss what they think about this idea.

You are a member of the Form Seven group which has been chosen to discuss the issue. You should talk about what the advantages and disadvantages are of including photography in the school syllabus.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Seeing the world

Lots of young people are interested in photography. They see it as a challenge to take photos from unusual angles, or experiment with light and colour. Instead of just capturing an everyday event, they try to make the photograph as artistic as possible.

Those who find this kind of photography fascinating may be interested in pursuing photography as a career. One field of photography which is particularly attractive is press photography. Newspaper photographers have a very exciting life – sometimes! But it is not all glamorous. They have to work hard too. They must be prepared to work at all hours of the day and night, and they have to carry heavy equipment with them for long periods of time.

There are many different ways of becoming a press photographer. Some people join a newspaper as

soon as they leave school, and learn the job as they go along. Others go to film school or do media studies at university or college. But, once they are recruited, most press photographers will agree that it is the best job in the world.

So what is it about the job that they like so much? One thing is the variety of the work. They rarely photograph the same thing twice. In the morning they may be called out to shoot a fashion show, but in the afternoon, they may find themselves at a sporting event or the scene of a disaster such as a plane crash. They can never predict what will happen next. What they are always hoping for is that one day they will take such a great photograph that it will be printed on the front page of all the major newspapers in the world. What a thrill that would be!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Shooting animals

If you are interested in and enjoy experimenting with different photographic techniques, then it might be possible to find a career as a nature photographer. Most nature photographers start out working for magazines which publish pictures of all kinds, but eventually they find work with magazines specializing in outdoor life and nature. If they become really well known, they could end up working for famous magazines like *National Geographic*, which only employs very experienced and skilled photographers.

There are lots of problems associated with photographing animals. The best animal pictures are taken when the animal is not aware that it is being photographed. It is therefore necessary to set up the camera carefully and quietly. It is a wise idea also to take some insect spray so that you are not irritated by mosquitoes and other pests when taking photos.

Another problem is that animals have a seasonal pattern of behaviour. This is not such a problem if you are photographing animals in enclosures such as zoos, but there are difficulties when dealing with animals in the wild. It may be relatively simple to take a picture of an animal giving birth in the springtime, but photographers sometimes wait days or even weeks to get a photograph of an animal catching its prey. While some photographers camp out in the jungle for long periods of time, others tag the animals with electronic devices so that they can find them quickly.

However, it is generally agreed that the best photos are obtained by leading a fairly uncomfortable life in the jungle or in other harsh environments for a considerable period of time. If you are prepared to do this, the work is very rewarding – both financially and in terms of job satisfaction.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

An Education Department official has suggested that photography should be included in the school syllabus. Your principal has asked Form Seven students to discuss what they think about this idea.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Paid to travel

One of the jobs that most people would like to have is that of a travel photographer. To wander around the world taking photographs of beautiful places in different countries sounds like a dream come true. But is it really as glamorous as it sounds? Surely there must be some difficulties?

Mary Cook is a travelling photographer who has worked with a travel guidebook company for the last fifteen years. She says that she has to face many problems when she is on an assignment. For example, she finds the work physically demanding. She has taken some wonderful photos of the rivers in southern India, but these were not easy to take. She had to bend down in damp water for half-an-hour at sunset, just when the mosquitoes were biting. A series of romantic pictures of camels in the desert in China were taken after a three-hour camel ride that made every bone in her body ache. Besides that, she has to carry heavy equipment wherever she goes.

Most people will be surprised to know that it is not a very well-paid job. She gets her air fares paid, and is then given a basic daily allowance to cover her expenses. However, the allowance is quite small, and is certainly not enough to enable her to stay in first class hotels. In fact, she usually has to stay in budget hostels, and can only afford the most basic food.

So why does she keep doing the job after all these years? Mary says that it is the excitement that keeps her going. 'At every new place I stop, there's something fresh and different. Every time I turn a corner, there's a chance I might come across the greatest travel photograph of my life. And I meet such wonderful people as well.'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

An Education Department official has suggested that photography should be included in the school syllabus. Your principal has asked Form Seven students to discuss what they think about this idea.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Endless patience

It is interesting to compare relationships between brothers and sisters. In some families, the children get along very well. In others, there is more conflict between them, with frequent arguments or fights. Some brothers and sisters just ignore each other, feeling that they have little in common and little to share.

Sometimes, the relationship between the children in a family is less predictable. When one of the children is disabled, for example, he or she might need the assistance and support of the others to cope with daily life. There is an example of this in the film *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*. In the Grape family, one of the children, Arnie, is mentally retarded and depends on his brother and sisters to look after him and keep him out of danger.

Although Arnie is nearly eighteen, his mind has not developed fully, and he still thinks and behaves like a

young child. He recognizes the love and care his family gives him, but not the realities of the world outside their home. Arnie's elder brother, Gilbert, carries much of the responsibility for his brother. Gilbert looks after Arnie during the day while working in the local shop or meeting his friends. He also gives Arnie a bath every evening and puts him to bed.

Arnie needs the security created by this daily routine and by the familiar faces of his brother and sisters. However, having to provide this security puts pressure on his family, and on Gilbert in particular. This is because they all need to be patient with Arnie, no matter what he does. Arnie's behaviour can be annoying and dangerous, but he cannot help himself and does not understand if someone gets angry. The film illustrates how difficult it is to be endlessly patient and understanding in such a situation.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school is organizing a Family Week. The aim is to get students to think about their family life and about ways of improving relationships with their parents, brothers and sisters. Each class has to prepare a display for the school hall.

You are a member of the organizing committee for your class. You are meeting with the other committee members to discuss what family issue or issues you want to include in your class display. You should also decide on how to present your ideas in an eye-catching way.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Family responsibility

It is now quite common for children to grow up in families with only one parent. This can be a positive situation, with a very strong relationship developing between the mother or father and the children. Nevertheless, it is difficult for a single parent to carry all the responsibility for a family. Therefore, as the children grow up, they might need to share some duties with the parent. An older child, for example, often has to look after his or her younger brothers and sisters.

In the film *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, Gilbert has to take on many responsibilities for his family. His father left the family home when Gilbert was a child, so Gilbert had to grow up quickly. Now in his early twenties, Gilbert works in the local shop to support his mother, a brother and two sisters. He seems to have replaced his father at home. While other people his age

are still deciding what to do with their lives, his future appears to be fixed already, looking after his family.

Gilbert is not angry about his role in life. He understands his duty to his mother, brother and sisters, and he knows the expectations and limitations of the small town where they live. However, perhaps because of the responsibility he has had to take for other people, he seems unable to take any responsibility for himself. He doesn't stop to think what he would actually like for *himself* in life. He is too involved in the present to think much about the future.

Gilbert seems to be content with his situation until a girl from outside the town arrives to challenge his way of life. He then begins to wonder whether his life could be different.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school is organizing a Family Week. The aim is to get students to think about their family life and about ways of improving relationships with their parents, brothers and sisters. Each class has to prepare a display for the school hall.

You are a member of the organizing committee for your class. You are meeting with the other committee members to discuss what family issue or issues you want to include in your class display. You should also decide on how to present your ideas in an eye-catching way.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Travelling daughter

When a married couple realize that they no longer love each other, the usual conclusion today is divorce. This may be the most practical solution to an unhappy situation. Of course, it doesn't just affect the husband and wife – their children are also involved. Some researchers have suggested that children actually suffer the most in divorces because they have no control of the situation and are rarely given a chance to express what they feel about the final decision.

In the film *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, Becky is the daughter of divorced parents. She has spent most of her childhood flying back and forth between her parents, who now live in different parts of the United States. She jokes that she has lived in many different places as her mother and father move around trying to settle into new lives after their separation.

Although she regrets not being able to stop her parents divorcing, she has learned to like her new way of life. It has made her realize what is important to her. She does not belong anywhere in particular any more and she is interested in trying new things and seeing new places so she can find out about the world. As the film starts, Becky is on holiday with her grandmother. She has encouraged the old lady to be adventurous as well. They are travelling across the USA in a mobile home which she has recently bought.

It seems that Becky's reaction to her parents' divorce was to make the best of the situation and to take it as a chance to find out about life. Perhaps the divorce also showed her how to accept life's events as they happen and not to worry too much about the future.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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You are a member of the organizing committee for your class. You are meeting with the other committee members to discuss what family issue or issues you want to include in your class display. You should also decide on how to present your ideas in an eye-catching way.

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Overweight parent

For most people, being overweight means that last year's clothes don't fit them any more. For some people, however, their size is a reason not to leave home. They fear that people on the street will laugh at them.

In the film *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, one of the main characters is Bonnie, who is very overweight. She has not left the family home for many years and spends her days in front of the television while her children prepare meals for her. Like many overweight people, she did not get into this situation through choice. She says in the film, 'I don't want to be like this.'

The film is about how Bonnie's children deal with their mother and her size. Her son Gilbert is embarrassed by his mother and makes jokes with his friends about her size. If the local children come around, he holds them up

to the living-room window to spy on her, as if she were an exhibit in an old-fashioned circus. An important scene in the film is when Bonnie leaves the house for the first time in many years to pick up Gilbert's brother, who has been arrested by the police. As no one in the small town has seen her for so long, people are shocked by her appearance. When she leaves the police station with her son, passers-by stop and stare at her and her family. Gilbert is still embarrassed, but he begins to realize what determination his mother must have to leave the security of her home.

Near the end of the film, Gilbert brings his new girlfriend to meet his mother. This means that he has come to respect Bonnie again and can now show his love for her. He has learned that inner beauty is more important than outside appearance.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school is organizing a Family Week. The aim is to get students to think about their family life and about ways of improving relationships with their parents, brothers and sisters. Each class has to prepare a display for the school hall.

You are a member of the organizing committee for your class. You are meeting with the other committee members to discuss what family issue or issues you want to include in your class display. You should also decide on how to present your ideas in an eye-catching way.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Childhood dream

If you are looking for an example of someone who knows exactly what she wants to do with her life, Hong Kong student Lilian Tang is the perfect choice. Although still in Form Six at school, Lilian has a very clear idea of what she will be doing in ten years' time and, in fact, for most of the years between now and then. She is determined to turn her childhood dream into reality.

'Ever since I was a little girl, I have wanted to work as a vet, caring for sick and injured animals,' said Lilian. 'My older brother remembers how I used to pretend to be a vet with my toy animals even before I started primary school.' Most childhood ambitions to become something special – an astronaut or sporting celebrity, for example – tend to fade away. However, Lilian hasn't lost her ambition. She has already made choices in her life in order to make it happen.

'I chose the subjects I'm taking at school to meet the entry requirements for studying to be a vet at university,' she explained. 'The training is similar to what you need if you want to become a doctor for human beings, but it takes longer. You have to study a lot of animals and the different problems they can have.' There are very few places available for people who want to study this subject. Consequently, there is a lot of competition. Nevertheless, Lilian's commitment is total: she always talks about studying to be a vet as if she is already doing it.

'I don't want people to think I'm strange, though,' she laughed. 'Basically, I'm an ordinary schoolgirl with the same hobbies and interests as everyone else.' Lilian can consider herself fortunate that she already knows the career path she wants to follow.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion that '*A university degree does not necessarily guarantee you a well-paid job in the future.*'

Your group has been chosen to enter the debating contest, but at this moment you do not know whether you will be asked to argue FOR or AGAINST the motion. You and your team will therefore need to prepare arguments for both sides. You will probably want to decide how to organize and present your arguments.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Career choices

Some people believe it is important to get a university degree in a subject which clearly leads towards a particular profession. After all, what's the point of studying hard for three years unless you are going to get a real benefit from it when you graduate? This kind of person traditionally studies law or medicine with the idea of becoming a solicitor or doctor in the future. Nowadays, perhaps business studies or computer engineering courses are more attractive choices for students who want to be sure of a well-paid job when they complete their degree.

However, other people take a very different approach to their university studies. They choose subjects which don't prepare them directly for a job and which sometimes don't seem to have much relevance to the world today at all. Ron Tse is a Form Six student who wants to study music at university – more specifically, classical Chinese music. 'I know this isn't

very fashionable these days,' explained Ron, 'but I am very interested in traditional Chinese opera and I want to find out what makes this music so special.'

Ron already knows that he won't be able to get a job in this area of work. He realizes that it takes years of training to become a skilled performer, and he doesn't like the idea of being a music teacher. 'But studying Chinese classical music and its history will definitely give me useful skills which I'll be able to use in all sorts of jobs once I decide what I want to do as a career,' he said.

For example, graduates who know how to analyze classical music and who have experience in composing can often become very good computer programmers after some special training. So, perhaps Ron's choice isn't as pointless as some people might think.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your school has entered an inter-school debating contest on the motion that '*A university degree does not necessarily guarantee you a well-paid job in the future.*'

Your group has been chosen to enter the debating contest, but at this moment you do not know whether you will be asked to argue FOR or AGAINST the motion. You and your team will therefore need to prepare arguments for both sides. You will probably want to decide how to organize and present your arguments.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Practical training

When Cathy Ho leaves school after her exams next year, she is going to start a summer job immediately. She wants to get as much work experience as she can before she begins a training programme in the autumn. Cathy has chosen to take a course at a vocational training college, where she wants to learn to be a chef. Her holiday job is as a helper in the kitchen of her uncle's restaurant.

'In the past I've helped out in the restaurant at the weekend and during holidays,' said Cathy, 'but before I start my course, I want to get an idea of what it's like working in a kitchen full-time.' Cathy already knows that restaurant work is hot and tiring. Despite this, she hasn't changed her mind about the type of job she wants to do. 'I want to work in a big hotel and learn from the famous chefs there how to prepare dishes from all over the world,' said Cathy. 'I might even get sent overseas if I work for a hotel chain that operates in other countries.'

Cathy has enjoyed school but she thinks it is time to stop her academic studies and start doing something more practical. 'The training programme is great because it's a mixture of study and work,' she explained. 'Trainees are not allowed to be late for classes because punctuality will be an important part of their job. They are treated like adults by the college staff – this means more freedom in some respects, but also more responsibilities.'

During the two-year course, the trainees spend six weeks getting work experience in big restaurants around Hong Kong. Cathy is looking forward to this, though she has already learned a lot from working in the kitchen of her uncle's restaurant.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Young and free

Joey Chow is typical of many Form Six students. He has had enough of school and is already looking forward to leaving next summer. He wants to get away from his current life of uniforms and class monitors, assemblies and practice exams. Joey feels that the real-life world of work is waiting for him and he can't wait to join in.

'My teachers are always telling me that I could do better if I studied harder,' said Joey. 'I suppose they're right, but I'm just not interested any more. I'll be fine once I get out into the real world – I'm smart and I know how to get on with people. These things are much more important than qualifications and certificates in the end.' Some people might disagree with Joey, but he has evidence to support his views. His older brother left school when he was sixteen with poor grades in his exams. Now, aged twenty-two, he has a well-paid job, his own flat, and is just about to buy a car.

'I'm really proud of my brother,' said Joey. 'He worked very hard to get what he has today. He doesn't have any proper qualifications, but I'm sure very few university students who are the same age as him have been so successful.' Joey realizes that he may have to start his career at the bottom, but he is sure he will soon prove what he is capable of. He thinks he will be good at selling things to people.

'I can talk to strangers easily and my girlfriends always say how charming I am,' he laughed. 'Perhaps I'll get a job persuading people to buy new mobile phones or something. I know it's a small start but, in a few years, I'll have my own business – just you watch!'

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Our furry friends

In Hong Kong, there are many pet shops selling cute animals such as dogs, cats, rabbits and birds. Every day you can see lots of people looking at them lovingly through the shop windows. It is easy to hand over some money and take the animal home, but the problem is that most people do not give enough thought to the responsibility that comes with owning a pet. Pets have to be looked after carefully.

For example, if you buy a dog, you must have it registered. This means that you must take it to a vet, or to the SPCA, to have some injections and to have a micro-chip implanted in its ear so it can be easily identified if lost. It's a bit like having a dog ID card! Then you must also look after its health. Dogs have to be kept clean and free of ticks – a kind of insect which lives on dogs.

Dogs need good healthy food, and they should be fed at least twice a day. They also like exercise so it is a good idea to take them on a long walk at least once a day. Unfortunately, many people have difficulty finding the time to fit walking their dogs into their busy schedule. Finally, and most important of all, dogs need love and affection.

These days there are more and more dogs being found in the city streets, neglected and hungry. They are also found in the New Territories, where uncaring owners have abandoned them. Many of these dogs end up joining packs which run wild. These packs can be a danger to other animals and even to people. So, people who are thinking of buying a pet should remember the many responsibilities that come with ownership.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

It is Animal Rights Week. Your school has managed to raise a large sum of money to be donated to a project related to animal protection.

You and the other members of your group are meeting to discuss what kind of project the money could be used for. You may want to suggest ideas for a project based in Hong Kong, or elsewhere in world.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Tales from the deep

For countless years, the waters of the South China Sea have been home to many varieties of fish and coral. There has always been an abundance of fish to feed the coastal population of the Southeast Asian region.

Fishermen realized early on that they could earn money by selling fish to other people living on shore rather than just keeping it to feed the family. Fisherman's associations were set up to help finance the cost of bigger and better fishing boats. The fishermen paid for their boats by supplying the fish to the managers of the associations. The fishermen were often cheated by the managers who were keen to make big profits.

However, since the 1980s, local fishermen have been able to do business directly with restaurants and food suppliers who want to buy their fish. Nevertheless, there are other problems. Because of the industrialization

of the land along the coast, the fishing waters have become polluted. There are less fish available close to the shore, so the boats must travel great distances in order to catch enough fish to make a living.

In recent years, the varieties of fish and coral in Hong Kong have declined. The government is trying to create artificial reefs in places like Sai Kung to provide a safe place for fish to grow to maturity. These reefs are protected and no fishing boats are allowed into the area. The fish are now breeding rapidly, and soon it will be possible to release them into Hong Kong waters in limited numbers. However, this project will only be successful if people realize that the sea has limited resources. Fishermen must learn to be more selective in the fish they catch.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Snake scares

Most people are afraid of snakes. In places like Australia, where there are many deadly snakes, children are taught at a very young age how to avoid snakes and how to treat people who have been bitten by them. Because Hong Kong people mostly live in urban areas, the majority of them have never come across a snake, except in places like Ocean Park, or in restaurants which serve snake soup.

Certain snakes inhabiting the countryside in Hong Kong are very dangerous – in fact, their bite can be fatal unless you receive medical treatment promptly. The ones you should beware of are the King Cobra, the Chinese Cobra and the Green Bamboo Snake. King Cobras are very rare, so the chances of encountering one are quite small. This is fortunate because the King Cobra is very aggressive, and can move faster than a human can run.

On the other hand, the Chinese Cobra and the Green Bamboo Snake are quite common, and they can be found throughout the New Territories. The Chinese Cobra is a fast-moving snake, greyish-brown in colour, with light grey stripes on its body. It can grow to about two metres in length. The Green Bamboo Snake is, as its name suggests, brilliant green with a yellow belly. It is a slow-moving snake, but it can be very dangerous if disturbed.

The thing to remember about snakes is that they are very shy creatures. So long as you do not threaten them – or accidentally stand on them – they will not harm you. So it is best to allow them the opportunity to escape rather than kill them. Another good reason not to attempt to kill them is that many species of snake in Hong Kong are protected – it is a criminal offence to kill them.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Save the tiger

As the tiger becomes rarer and rarer, attention is being focused on India, which has the largest population of these animals. For the purpose of protecting those that remain, the tigers have been isolated in national parks and visitors must pay for a special permit if they want to see them.

Unfortunately, the tigers are still not safe, even in the national parks. The dangers for the animals come from many directions. Because the tigers are herded together in one area they can be located easily by poachers – people who kill animals illegally for profit. Although the parks are protected by guards, they are so large it is easy for poachers to sneak unseen into the area. In addition, the guards are poorly paid, and therefore can be easily bribed. So, tigers are still being killed.

Why do people want to kill such beautiful beasts? In the past, many big game hunters saw hunting and killing tigers as an exciting and challenging sport. To kill a tiger was their greatest sporting ambition. Nowadays, however, tigers are more frequently slaughtered for the profits that can be made from their body parts.

Some of the people who kill the tigers are local villagers who are very poor. Rather than see their families suffer in poverty, they are prepared to hunt the tigers for profit. In fact, the truly evil people behind the scenes are the businessmen who sell the remains of the dead animal for a fortune. Tiger-skins, for example, fetch a huge price, and Chinese people will pay a lot for powdered tiger bones, which they use as a tonic. It is clear, therefore, that more has to be done to ensure that tigers are properly protected in the national parks where they live.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

It is Animal Rights Week. Your school has managed to raise a large sum of money to be donated to a project related to animal protection.

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)**Part One – Individual Presentations** (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Beach blues

Many Hong Kong people love to spend a Sunday on the beach, and during the summer, beaches on Hong Kong Island and in the New Territories are very popular destinations.

The Chans were one of the families who decided to try the beach at Shek O last year. They caught the MTR to Shau Kei Wan, and then took a mini-bus from there. They thought it was a marvellous ride to Shek O, travelling along a winding, mountainous road with great views. As soon as they arrived they headed for the beach.

However, they were amazed at the sight which greeted them. There were so many people packed onto the beach that it seemed more crowded than Mong Kok. They had to struggle to find a place to sit down – there was no space to stretch out and sunbathe. And the noise

was unbearable. It was not just that people were shouting, everybody seemed to have brought their cassette players, and all sorts of music from rock and roll to punk rock was blasting out over the beach. Nobody seemed to care about whether they were disturbing their neighbours or not.

The Chans thought it would be better in the sea, so they got changed and went in. But it was actually worse in the water than it was on the sand. People were crowded tightly together like sardines in a tin. It was impossible to swim without bumping into someone else. And the sea was filthy! Not only were there plastic bags floating in it, the water was also oily and smelly. After queuing for half an hour to have a shower, they went to eat at a nearby restaurant and had to wait again. When they finally got a table, one thing they certainly didn't order was seafood!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

The Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA) is researching ways to make Hong Kong a more attractive place to visit. As part of this research, the HKTA would like to know what young people think are the problems of living in a crowded place like Hong Kong.

You are one of a group of young people who have been chosen by the HKTA to discuss how serious these problems are, and to suggest what can be done about them. You may want to talk about such things as overcrowding, pollution, and the behaviour of some citizens.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

A bad weekend

Felix Wong knows a wonderful secret beach about an hour's walk from Sai Kung Country Park. To begin with, he did not tell anyone where the beach was because he wanted to keep it to himself. However, last July he decided to share his secret and take his very best friends to this special place for a weekend. There was a small holiday villa that could be hired there, so he made a reservation with the owner.

Felix and his friends had to carry all sorts of supplies to the beach because there were no shops there. They needed lots of things – food for a barbecue, packets of noodles and snacks, bread, soft drinks, fruit and so forth. Their rucksacks were very heavy when they met to catch the bus to Sai Kung.

The path across the mountains to the beach was quite rough so they had to walk carefully and make sure

they did not slip and fall. It was very steep, too – they needed all their energy to scramble up to the top. They also had to watch out because there were lots of snakes in the area. It was quite a challenge, and some of his friends wanted to turn back. Felix managed to persuade them to carry on.

When they eventually arrived at the beach, they discovered that a gang of youths had already occupied the house. The gang refused to let Felix and his friends in. The gang had also left great mountains of litter on the beach which attracted stray dogs from the hills. So there was nowhere for Felix and his friends to stay and they couldn't camp on the beach. What a disaster! Eventually, a group of five very unhappy and disappointed people walked back over the hills, dreaming of the comforts of home.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

The right move?

Amy Siu has always liked living in a big city. When she left her home village in Guangdong for Hong Kong, she found a flat right in the heart of Wan Chai. At first, she enjoyed city life. It was easy to go shopping or to go to the cinema, and there was a wonderful choice of restaurants. But recently, she has been thinking that it would perhaps be better to move to the countryside – somewhere like Sai Kung or Lantau Island. There are a number of things that have made her change her mind.

About a month ago, she was doing her normal weekend shopping in Wan Chai market. As she was buying some tomatoes, she slipped on a wet vegetable leaf and hit her head so badly that she had to be taken to hospital. She felt very ill and was off work for a week. ‘The people who work in the markets in Hong Kong don’t make enough effort to keep the place clean,’ Amy complained. ‘When I next went to the market I had a

good look around, and was shocked to see how messy and unhygienic it really was.’

Another thing that she noticed recently was how many buses there were travelling along Hennessy Road. There seemed to be too many buses for the number of passengers, and often she noticed two empty buses with the same route number following each other. With all the taxis and the cars as well, she found the pollution appalling. ‘Sometimes I hurry into an air-conditioned building just so I can breathe,’ said Amy.

Amy is not sure how much longer she can continue to live in Wan Chai. If she moves to the country, she will have to travel a lot more, but at least she will be living where the air is fresh.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Shopping nightmare

Mr and Mrs Brown live in a peaceful village on Lantau Island. For a long time they had planned to make a shopping trip over the border to Shenzhen. Friends told them that they could shop there very cheaply and buy practically anything they wanted. One Sunday last month they decided to go and find out what it was like. They took a bus to Mui Wo, a ferry to Central, the MTR to Kowloon Tong, and the KCR to the border. It was a long trip, but when they got there, they were feeling quite excited.

Their excitement did not last, however. Since they both had foreign passports, they had to wait for ages to get their visas inspected. There were crowds of travellers there and they were very impolite, pushing and shoving and yelling loudly. When the Browns eventually crossed the border, they headed straight for one of the shopping malls. Mr Brown was surprised to see how

smoggy the air was. As he has breathing problems, he started to cough and sneeze, and only stopped when they got into an air-conditioned mall.

But inside the mall, the crowds were terrible. It was like the MTR during peak hours. Although there were plenty of things to buy, it wasn't possible to get into the shops because they were so full of people. People were constantly bumping into them and pushing them.

Finally, the Browns gave up trying to do any shopping at all. Instead, they decided to have a nice relaxing meal. What a mistake that was! The restaurants were so crowded that they had to wait for an hour to get a table. After a hurried and expensive meal, they were eager to get home. Unfortunately, though, they had chosen to get home at the same time as everyone else.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate A

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Indian style

The next time you are looking for somewhere different to eat with family or friends, why don't you try an Indian restaurant? There are good Indian restaurants all over Hong Kong and a meal certainly doesn't have to be expensive. What you pay will depend on the location of the restaurant, how comfortable it is, and the standard of service you receive. If you choose well, you will have delicious food in a friendly atmosphere and at a very reasonable price.

Like China, India is a large country with a variety of styles of cooking. These styles are linked to the climate of a particular region and what the local farmers grow. Bina Gupta's family owns a small restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui and they offer a range of dishes from all over India. 'Generally, Indian food is quite spicy, but you mustn't let that stop you from trying it,' said Bina.

'We're careful not to make the dishes too hot and it's rarely a problem for customers. Actually, I think people in Hong Kong really enjoy spicy food.'

'We use special rice imported from India and make different kinds of bread to accompany the curries. Beef isn't normally used in Indian food for religious reasons, but chicken and lamb curries are common. My own favourites are curried fish and a dish with potatoes and peas in a sauce,' she explained.

Bina usually has some advice for her customers when they are ordering: 'Don't fill yourselves up with the main courses. Leave some space for an Indian dessert – the ice cream is fantastic!' Also, it is useful to know that most restaurants offer a take-away service so you can eat at home. And, once you have realized how good Indian food can be, you may even want to learn how to prepare it yourself.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your English teacher is going to return to Canada soon. You know she is very interested in food and you would like to organize a surprise farewell party for her.

You and your classmates are the party organizers. You will need to decide what kind of party you want and what sort of food you should have. You may also want to discuss where and when to hold the party and who to invite.

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Candidate B

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Sushi expert

Over the past few years, Japanese food has become very popular with young people in Hong Kong. They like sushi the most, and often go to sushi bars which seem to give value for money. In these restaurants, customers are seated next to a moving belt on which plates of different kinds of sushi pass by. They take what they want and then pay according to the number of empty plates they have at the end of their meal.

Carmen Tong, a Form Six student, is a great fan of sushi. 'I think it really makes a healthy meal, because raw fish and rice are good for you,' she explained. 'Also, there's very little waste because you can choose exactly how much to eat.' Carmen used to go to sushi bars a lot. She would watch how the chefs prepared the fish and other ingredients, and then roll and cut them to create the different pieces of sushi.

One day, Carmen saw a book about making your own sushi. She had a look through it and, as the instructions were clear, she bought it to make sushi at home. 'We have a tiny kitchen, but all you need is a rice cooker and a table to put the sushi rolls together on,' she said. 'I got the ingredients at a Japanese supermarket near my flat – the most important thing is to get extremely fresh fish.'

Though her first efforts were rather clumsy, Carmen has improved with practice and is now quite proud of her sushi rolls. She recently prepared some for her mother's birthday, making sure there were enough to take to school for lunch the next day too. So, Carmen doesn't need to eat at sushi bars nowadays, though she still goes occasionally to compare her sushi rolls with those of the experts!

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

Your English teacher is going to return to Canada soon. You know she is very interested in food and you would like to organize a surprise farewell party for her.

You and your classmates are the party organizers. You will need to decide what kind of party you want and what sort of food you should have. You may also want to discuss where and when to hold the party and who to invite.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

The examiners cannot answer any questions about the instructions or the task you have to discuss. If you have any questions, you may discuss them among yourselves and that will be an acceptable part of your group discussion which will be assessed.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE

Candidate C

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Family favourites

Like many Hong Kong families, the Yeungs had a tradition of going for dim sum on Sunday mornings. Three generations of the family – grandparents, parents and children – used to meet at a large restaurant in Western District to spend a few hours chatting, reading the newspaper, and of course, eating favourite family dishes. Kelvin Yeung, now a Form Seven student, didn't use to enjoy this tradition very much, however. 'I always wanted to stay in bed a bit longer,' he recalls.

Last year, Kelvin's grandmother broke her leg in a fall and went into a nursing home to be looked after properly. Members of the family had to find time to visit her there regularly, and the habit of getting together for a family meal was quickly forgotten. Kelvin's grandmother had always been the organizer of these meals.

'When we didn't meet for dim sum any more, I realized that it had been a good chance to catch up on family news and to get to know my relatives better,' said Kelvin. 'I wanted to do something so I could keep in touch with my grandmother.' Kelvin eventually decided to buy dim sum for her and take a selection with him on his visit each Sunday. 'This was actually quite hard for me as I really didn't know how to order anything – my grandmother had always done this for the whole family!'

Over the next few weeks, Kelvin found out the names of the dishes his grandmother particularly liked and how much he needed for the two of them. He has grown to enjoy his visits to the nursing home, because of the food and because of the contact he has maintained with the old lady. 'I know some people think dim sum is old-fashioned, but it's more than just a meal,' he explained.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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Candidate D

Preparation Time (Total time: 10 minutes)

Part One – Individual Presentations (1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

Pizza surprise

Mario Rossi is a young business executive from the south of Italy who has been living and working in Hong Kong for about six months. He says he likes the city and the people here and has settled down well in his job. However, coming from Italy, which is known traditionally as the home of the pizza, he has to admit that his first experience with a ‘Hong Kong-style’ pizza was not very positive.

‘My colleagues took me to a pizza restaurant for lunch one day and I couldn’t believe my eyes when the food arrived. The pizza was so small and thick and there were pieces of pineapple on the top!’ explained Mario. ‘When I ate it, it tasted all right, but it was nothing like the pizzas at home in Italy.’

For Mario, the real thing is made from the freshest ingredients and cooked in a special oven made very hot

by burning wood. ‘The pizza chef tosses the base of the pizza in the air to make it very thin. This helps it cook quickly in the wood-fired oven,’ said Mario. ‘Where I come from, pizzas are prepared in front of your eyes and immediately put into the oven for a couple of minutes only. The base becomes crisp and the toppings are hot – you should eat it straight away for the best taste.’

Mario says he is confused by the variety of toppings for pizzas, which can include sliced peaches and barbecue sauce. He has even heard of an apple pizza you eat for dessert, but he can’t imagine what that must taste like. ‘I suppose I’m quite conservative about food and I really didn’t expect to find these new flavours and pizza styles in Hong Kong,’ he laughed.

Part Two – Group Discussion (Total time: 2 minutes preparation, 10 minutes discussion)

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