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WOODGROVE SECONDARY SCHOOL

A COMMUNITY OF FUTURE-READY LEARNERS AND THOUGHTFUL LEADERS

O-LEVEL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS 2023

LEVEL & STREAM : SECONDARY FOUR EXPRESS

SUBJECT (CODE) : ENGLISH LANGUAGE (1184)

PAPER NO : 2

DATE (DAY) : 29 AUGUST 2023 (TUESDAY)

DURATION : 1 HR 50 MINUTES

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains Text 1, Text 2, Text 3 and Text 4.

INSERT

Section A [5 marks]

Study the online advertisement (**Text 1**) and social media post (**Text 2**) and answer Questions 1 – 4 in the Question Booklet.

Text 1 is taken from an online advertisement for yacht rentals in Singapore.



Just round up your friends or family and let us take care of the details.

Text 2 is taken from a social media post reviewing the yacht rental.

The views were gorgeous and having a birthday party on a yacht was a dream! Yachtrental.com was very responsive to my enquiries and the whole process of booking the yacht, especially as a first timer, was fuss free and stress free. The boat was very clean and the crew was really accommodating. There was complimentary paddle boarding too! The crew also helped us to take very nice pictures for our social media. I would totally recommend them for any party!

Section B [20 marks]

Text 3

The text below tells the story of Lauren and her daughter, Dove, who are visiting Lauren's mother's house after the latter passes away.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5 – 15.

- 1 It's late in the evening when Lauren and Dove finally reach Swaying Palms, south of Florida. Lauren nearly misses the turn – the faded sign is almost entirely obscured by a trio of dogwood trees heavy with blooms, the streetlight above flickering like a strobe. She lets out the breath she had been holding as she swerved into the street.
- 2 Beside Lauren, her daughter rests her head against the window, feet tucked 5
beneath her. Dove has barely said a word since they left home sixteen hours ago, other than to ask how much farther they have to go. However, her curiosity gets the better of her as the car slows. She lifts her head, takes out her earbuds, and peers into the dark as they make their way through the eerily quiet but pleasant and welcoming grid of identical white houses and neatly manicured squares of lawn. 10
They creep down smooth, asphalt roads lined with streetlights and palm trees that sway in the evening breeze, casting shadows onto signs that say things like 'Welcome to Paradise' or 'I'm on vacation time'. The inhabitants of Swaying Palms are mostly retirees; most of them don't even stay for the entire year, packing up and driving back to their hometowns as soon as the weather gets too hot. But, now, in 15
mid-February, there is a sensible, just-washed car tucked into every driveway, the light of a television flickering behind each drawn blind.
- 3 The house belonging to Lauren's mother is lonely and unadorned in the midst of all this ordered chaos – windows shuttered, garden plain. It's been uninhabited since Imogen died almost three months ago, and it certainly looks it. It has not been 20
completely neglected though. As she pulls into the driveway, Lauren notices someone has been tending to the landscaping – the lawn is freshly mown, and the bushes have been trimmed. Even the driveway appears to have been recently washed. Unsettled, she wonders who might have done so.
- 4 "Well," she says, cutting the engine. "We're here." 25

Neither of them moves. Outside, the cicadas are singing at a frequency that works its way under Lauren's skin like an itch. Her body buzzes with forward momentum, but there is nowhere else to go. Suddenly, it's as if the weight of everything has settled on her chest, like a heavy lead ball. She closes her eyes and tried to visualise rolling the ball off a cliff into a deep, bottomless chasm, but all she can picture is it 30
rolling back over her.
- 5 *How long are we going to be here?* Dove's unspoken question hangs in the air, but Lauren is fluent in Dove's silences. She wishes she had an answer for her - to this, and to all the other questions that float between them.

6 Lauren opens the car door and steps outside. "This is going to be really awesome," she says. "You'll see. A little vacation, just you and me." She turns around and peers back into the car, but Dove is already gone. 35

7 Inside the house, Lauren flips the light switch and is surprised when a dim bulb in the middle of the room flickers to life. In the dusty glow, she gazes around the main room, which contains the kitchen with a rickety card table, and a living room with a pullout couch, a wicker rocking chair, a shelf with a few books on it, and a television. To the right is the bedroom and the bathroom. 40

8 Lauren puts her duffle bag down on the table. *So this is it*, she thinks. *This is where my mother spent her final days*. She was expecting at least a quick whiff of Imogen's favourite perfume, or a glass with her signature red lipstick on the rim. But nothing about this place feels like Imogen. 45

Adapted from 'Pebble and Dove' by Amy Jones

Section C [25 marks]

Text 4

The text below is about urban farming in empty office spaces in cities.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 16 – 23.

- 1 In an old paper company and warehouse building, machines are whirring again. Instead of reams of paper pressed and cut, this warehouse is home to a farm, which now pumps out greens, herbs and root vegetables. There is even a weekly market serving customers year round, all in an effort to bring locally grown food to the urban area. Really local. When was the last time you picked up a strawberry and could confidently say you knew the farmer's name? 5
- 2 Although the Covid-19 pandemic drove workers out of their offices over three years ago, many office buildings still remain deserted. Nearly 20 percent of office space is empty across the United States, and some projections suggest that more than 300 million square feet of office space could be obsolete by 2030. The pandemic has shown that people are capable, and in some cases, in favour, of working in a remote setting. 10
- 3 With many folks comfortably working from home offices, many downtown high-rises serve as a looming frustration not only to landlords but also to local restaurants and small businesses that rely on office commuters to sustain business. So, many cities are trying to fill those spaces back up. Although modifying an existing building is less expensive than rebuilding, turning offices into residential space can be costly, as most office spaces are laid out differently from residential buildings. However, there are other options for these empty offices—such as farms. 15
- 4 Just as cities have changed drastically over the past few years, our modern food system is changing, too, and farmers must be ready to adapt. The idea we have of what farms used to be is not what farms are today. There is no picturesque, red-barn farm anymore. 20
- 5 Growing vegetables does not have to be done outdoors, in-ground, or in greenhouses. Large-scale urban agriculture can be practised inside buildings, without even having sunny windows for light. However, the inner envelope of buildings must be waterproofed to protect them from any mold. It is also necessary to equip grow rooms with proper ventilation and LED lighting systems specially designed for growing plants. Despite these essential modifications needed for an urban farm, the fact remains that the indoor farm's productivity is much higher than that of greenhouse crops. 25 30
- 6 Inside a building, it is possible to grow plants vertically and increase the growing area. This concept is not feasible in a greenhouse without blocking the sun from the plants below. It is estimated that an indoor vertical urban farm can produce up to eight times more food per square meter than a greenhouse. If well insulated, an existing building is significantly less expensive to heat than a double-walled glass greenhouse. 35
- 7 Additionally, vertical farmers gain the added benefit of consistent, year-round production without the uncertainties of climate or pests, all while utilising 90 percent

less energy and 98 percent less water than a traditional farm. Although it cannot be a replacement for more traditional methods, vertical farming provides fresh produce in areas that have little food production or access to healthy foods. 40

- 8 Utilising empty office space for farming could reshape urban centers as we know them now. Cities are changing every day; there is a really great economic opportunity as well. Farms create new green jobs, they beautify spaces and provide fresh food to local communities. That is something that is really precious. In the face of the pandemic and the ongoing threat of climate change, which have further exacerbated food security issues faced by millions worldwide, urban farming for commercial purposes has become even more relevant in today's supply chain-constrained market—and more cities and businesses are taking heed. Like other urban green spaces, urban farms contribute to microclimatic effects that help regulate city temperatures and purify the air. 45 50

Adapted from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/empty-office-buildings-are-being-turned-into-vertical-farms-180982502/>

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