



ANG MO KIO SECONDARY SCHOOL
SECONDARY 2 HISTORY
CHAPTER 8 (PART I) – SINGAPORE’S ROAD TO MERGER (1959-1963)

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____ Why did

the PAP government pursue a merger with Malaya?

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO TACKLING “EXPLAIN” QUESTIONS	
Step 1:	<p>Read the question and identify what the question is asking for <i>Highlight/Underline/Annotate accordingly</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explain why Singapore wanted merger with Malaya.</p>
Step 2:	<p>Plan out your answer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the (two) <u>main points</u> that you will address in the question • Provide <u>details/examples</u> to help your reader understand what the points are about • Explain, in a step-by-step manner, how the point is relevant to the question focus (i.e. how the point leads to the outcome) <p>□1 <u>Singapore wanted merger to be able to survive economically.</u> [Sample] (Description) <i>What is this about?</i> (Explanation) <i>How will merger allow this?</i></p> <p>Singapore is a small country with no Through merger with Malaya, Singapore natural resources. It relied on trade to would be able to enjoy a <u>common</u> create jobs for the people and support its <u>market</u> with Malaya and there will <u>no</u> economy. However, in the 1950s, <u>longer be tariffs</u> on trade. This would Malaya introduced tariffs on trade with <u>increase the amount of trade and create</u> Singapore, which made Singapore’s <u>more jobs</u> in Singapore to <u>allow</u> goods more expensive and reduced the <u>Singapore to survive.</u> volume of trade. This made it hard for Singapore to survive economically.</p> <p>□2 Singapore wanted merger to gain political independence from the British.</p> <p>(Description) <i>What is this about?</i> (Explanation) <i>How will merger allow this?</i></p>

	<p>After World War II (WWII) and during the Cold War, Britain feared that Southeast Asia would fall to communism. They were not willing to let Singapore become independent unless they were sure that Singapore would not turn communist.</p> <p>Through merger with Malaya, Singapore would be <u>part of a bigger country</u> and there will be <u>more resources to fight against the communist</u>. This makes the British feel more assured to let go of <u>Singapore</u>, allowing Singapore to become independent from the British.</p>
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What was Malaya's response towards merger?

- Before 1961, Malaya did not want merger.

	Number of Malays	Number of Chinese
Malaya	3.1 million	2.3 million
Malaya + Singapore	3.4 million	3.6 million

- Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Raman was afraid that the large Chinese population in Singapore would upset the racial balance of the Federation.
 - He was concerned that a predominantly Chinese population would not accept a Malay Sultan as their leader, or Malay as the national language
- He also saw many of the Chinese in Singapore as pro-communists and was afraid they may spread communist ideas in Malaya if they merged.
- By 1961, Tunku Abdul Rahman became more concerned about the split in the PAP between the moderates and the radicals.
 - In April 1961, then-Minister for National Development Ong Eng Guan resigned from the PAP. He then defeated the PAP as an independent candidate in the Hong Lim by election.
 - Tunku saw the PAP loss in the Hong Lim by-election as a sign of PAP losing power in Singapore and became more fearful of the communists seizing power in Singapore and using it as a base to spread Communism to Malaya.
- On 27 May 1961, Tunku suggested the creation of a new federation through merger with Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo (Sabah) and Brunei. The inclusion of these colonies would ensure that the racial balance would not be upset, and that Tunku would have greater control in preventing communism from spreading from Singapore into Malaya.



	Number of Malays	Number of Chinese
Malaya	3.1 million	2.3 million

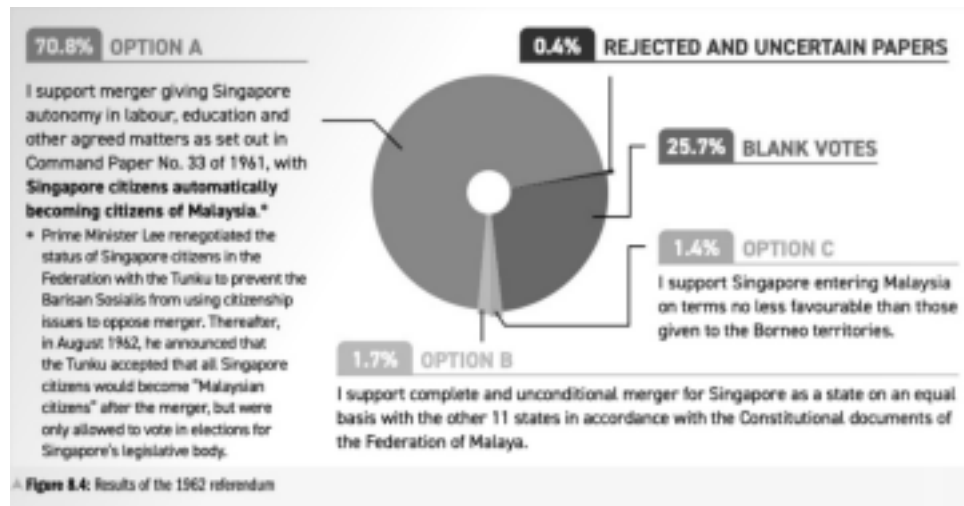
Malaya + Singapore	3.4 million	3.6 million
Malaya + Singapore + Sabah + Sarawak + Brunei	4 million	3.7 million

What were some responses towards the proposal for merger?

- Brunei did not join the new Federation as the Sultan could not come to an agreement with the Malayan government over the economic terms of merger.
- The Philippines laid claim on both North Borneo and Sarawak and objected merger. The Philippines eventually broke off relations with Malaysia in 1963.
- Indonesia wanted North Borneo and Sarawak to come under its influence and opposed merger.
 - In January 1963, Indonesia launched **Konfrontasi**, a policy of confrontation involving armed raids in Sabah and Sarawak and bombings in Singapore.
 - Indonesia refused to recognise Malaysia and broke off all diplomatic and trade relations with Malaysia in 1963.
- In Singapore, many of the pro-communist members within the People's Action Party (PAP) objected merger.
 - The pro-communist (radicals) knew that merger meant communist activity would be monitored and contained, and they may be arrested and put away.
 - Some of them challenged Lee Kuan Yew's leadership and were later expelled.
 - Some assemblymen who had been expelled from the PAP joined other radicals to form a new party: Barisan Sosialis Singapura (Socialist Front of Singapore)
 - Lim Chin Siong (Secretary-General of Barisan Sosialis)
 - Fong Swee Suan
 - Lee Siew Choh (Chairman of Barisan Sosialis)

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- The Barisan Sosialis actively campaigned against merger by arguing that Singapore would be treated as 'second-class' in the new Malaysia as under the proposed terms of merger:
 - Singapore would be known as 'federal nationals' instead of 'federal citizens'
 - Singapore could only vote in Singapore elections
 - Singapore would be given 15 seats in the federal government but smaller states like North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak were given more seats despite their smaller population
- In response, the PAP embarked on a campaign called 'The Battle for Merger' to convince people of the need for merger.
- To safeguard the democratic process, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew called for a referendum to gauge the type of merger the people wanted



- On 16 September 1963, with 71% of the people supporting the PAP's proposal for merger, the new nation of Malaysia came into existence.
 - It was made up of 14 states, including Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak, each with their own state government.

What did merger mean for Singapore?

- Singapore merged with Malaya, Sabah, and Sarawak to form the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.
- As part of the merger, it was agreed between the PAP government in Singapore and the UMNO led central government in Kuala Lumpur that:
 - Singapore would have its own state government and hold its own elections to choose its own state government;
 - Singapore citizens would automatically become citizens of the Federation of Malaysia, but could only vote in elections held in Singapore;
 - Singapore would have control over education and labour in Singapore, but leave control of the armed forces, police and foreign relations to the central government in Kuala Lumpur;
 - Singapore would collect its own revenue and pay an agreed-upon sum to Kuala Lumpur to cover costs of federal services such as defence;
 - A common market would be set up 'in stages'.

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Why did Singapore separate from Malaysia by 1965?

Economic Disagreements between PAP government and Central government

Despite merger, the Central government in Kuala Lumpur continued to see Singapore as an economic rival instead of a partner, leading to economic disagreements:

- Disagreement over Common Market

What Singapore expected	What Central Government did
Common market would be set up <input type="checkbox"/> Tariffs on Singapore-made goods removed for Singapore's economic survival	Delay in setting up common market <input type="checkbox"/> Tariffs on Singapore-made goods continued to protect some of Malaya's industries

- Trust between Singapore's PAP government and the Federal Government in Kuala Lumpur was broken
- Strained relations and rowing unhappiness between Singapore and the Federal Government □ Contributed to Separation

● Disagreement over Singapore's Revenue Contribution

What Singapore expected	What Central Government did
Singapore will contribute 40% of its revenue to the federal government in Kuala Lumpur	Increased Singapore's revenue contribution from 40% to 60% due to increased defence spending on Konfrontasi

- Singapore felt that the amount of revenue contribution it had to pay was too high and unfair □ Disagreements over revenue contribution worsened relationship between PAP and the Federal Government
- Contributed to Separation

Political Differences between PAP government and Central government

Despite agreeing to merger, the Central government in Kuala Lumpur and the People's Action Party (PAP) government in Singapore had different ideas on how the country should be run: ● Differences over Composition of Political Parties

Singapore's PAP government	Central government in Kuala Lumpur
<u>Multiracial political parties that looked after interest of all communities</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ People's Action Party was multiracial and looked after the interest of all races equally 	<u>Race-based political alliance where each party looked after their own community</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Federal government in Kuala Lumpur was formed by the Alliance Party, which comprised communal parties that looked out for their own race: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) looked after Malay interests ❖ The Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) looked after Chinese interests ❖ The Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) looked after Indian interests

● Differences over Treatment of Different Races

Singapore's PAP government	Central government in Kuala Lumpur
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<p>Everyone had <u>equal chance to succeed regardless of race</u> (Meritocracy)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Free education for all to help Malays have better employment opportunities</p>	<p><u>Malays had special rights</u> and privileges to improve their social and economic position <input type="checkbox"/> Certain number of job vacancies reserved for Malays only</p>
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- ☐ Differences in political beliefs led to growing suspicion and tension between the PAP and Federal Government as they saw each other as a challenger to their own beliefs
- ☐ Contributed to Separation

What were the key events leading to separation?

1963 Singapore State Elections

- In 1963, the Singapore branches of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), Malayan Indian Congress (MIC), and Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) formed the Singapore Alliance Party (SAP) to compete in the 1963 State Elections.
 - The Alliance Party in Kuala Lumpur supported the SAP as they functioned on the same belief that politics would be run along racial lines.
- The SAP performed poorly and failed to win a single seat, while the PAP took only 37

of the 51 available seats.

- PAP was upset with the Federal Government for participating in the State Elections.
- UMNO was troubled by its losses to the PAP in Malay-populated areas and vowed to compete again in the following elections.

1964 Federal Elections

- As a result of the Singapore Alliance's participation in the 1963 Singapore State elections, PAP likewise sent a team to compete in the Federal Elections in 1964.
- During the campaign, the PAP promised that they would not work along racial lines; promising to close the gap between the rich and the poor by providing equal opportunities and necessary education to all.
- The PAP's rallies drew increasingly larger crowds and grew in popularity; those who turned up at the rallies were incensed by the criticism of special privileges given to the Malays.
- UMNO became worried that PAP's idea of multiracialism was spreading quickly.
- Although the PAP only won 1 out of 103 seats, their participation in the election angered the Central Government.

Stirring of racial rivalries

- Threatened by PAP's rise in popularity, UMNO started an anti-PAP campaign in Singapore.
- The Utusan Melayu, a Malay newspaper, started writing biased reports about the PAP government not caring for the Malay community.
 - One example of such biased reporting is the resettlement of Malay families for the development of the Crawford, Kampong Glam, Rochor areas. The paper claimed that over 3000 Malay families had to be moved when in truth only 200 Malay families were affected.
- On 12 July 1964, Syed Ja'afar Albar, the secretary-general of UMNO, came down to Singapore for an UMNO-organised Malay convention.
- Syed Ja'afar used the opportunity to make an anti-PAP speech, he made incendiary comments about how the Malay community was mistreated, which heightened racial tensions.

1964 Racial Riots

- On 21 July 1964, Prophet Mohammed's birthday Celebration at the Padang turned into a riot between the Malay and Chinese.
- An islandwide curfew had to be imposed as the fighting had spread throughout the island. 23 people died and 454 people were injured.
- After only 6 weeks of relative calm, another racial riot broke out in September 1964.
- The island wide curfew was imposed again to stop the fighting. This time, 13 people died and 108 others were injured.
- The race riots showed that the high racial tensions have very devastating effects.
- Thus, the Alliance Party in Kuala Lumpur and the PAP agreed not to raise any matters that were racial in nature in their campaigns. They also agreed not to challenge each other in their respective elections for the next two years.

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- However, barely a month later, the SAP announced their intentions to challenge the PAP in the 1967 elections, upsetting the PAP.

1965 Malaysian Solidarity Convention

- In response, the PAP and 4 other political parties in Malaysia formed the Malaysian Solidarity Convention on 9 May 1965 to promote the building of a "Malaysian

Malaysia” and not a “Malay Malaysia”.

- In a “Malaysian Malaysia”, all would be treated equally regardless of their race. This upset the Alliance leaders as it threatened their vision for a “Malay Malaysia” where Malays has special rights.
- Tensions between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore rose to an all-time high.
- With racial tensions increasingly rising, Tunku decided that it would be best for all if Singapore left Malaysia.

Separation

- On 6 August 1965, the leaders of Singapore were informed of Tunku’s decision. ● The following day, the leaders of both sides came to a separation agreement. ● On 9 August 1965, Lee Kuan Yew announced the separation and independence of Singapore.