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ANGLICAN HIGH SCHOOL
PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2026
SECONDARY FOUR



ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Paper 2 Comprehension INSERT

1184/02
Monday 17 August 2026
1 hour 50 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

This INSERT consists of 7 printed pages

Section A

Study the poster (**Text 1**) and the online testimonial (**Text 2**) and answer Questions 1-4 in the Question Paper.

Text 1 is taken from a poster about SkillsFuture, a national movement to provide Singaporeans with the opportunities to develop their fullest potential throughout life.



SKILLSfuture

Lynette
Aspiring
Enrolled Nurse

75%

RESKILLING IN PROGRESS:

- Person-centred Care
- Continuous Improvement Management
- Critical Core Skills

**Expand your career options.
Be skilled for the future.**

Stay employable when you learn new skills. Uncover the range of SkillsFuture courses, subsidies, advisory services as well as career transition programmes that can give you more work opportunities.

 Find out more at myskillsfuture.gov.sg/upskill.

Text 2 is taken from an online testimonial about SkillsFuture.

In 2021, the pandemic severely impacted the travel industry, where I had built my career as a tour leader and travel consultant. Faced with a shrinking job market, a pay cut and the responsibility of supporting my young daughter, I knew I needed to explore new opportunities.

Through SkillsFuture-supported training offered by Generation Singapore, I enrolled in a Microsoft Cloud Support and DevOps programme although I had no technological background. After completing the programme, I secured a role as a DevOps Engineer at a leading international gaming company.

Today, I can say with confidence that SkillsFuture showed me that I could succeed in roles beyond the industry I had always known. I am grateful for the opportunity and often encourage others to take advantage of such programmes. As I always say, “Just try – you won't lose anything. It's an investment in yourself.”

Mr. Mark T

Section B

Text 3

In the text below, a cave diver John Volanthen recounts how he and Rick Stanton were involved in the rescue expedition of the Wild Boars soccer team trapped in the Tham Luang cave.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5-15 in the Question Paper.

- 1 I have long learnt that flooded caves have moods, depending on the weather and precipitation outside. During our first peek at Tham Luang the previous evening, the floodwaters had been rising steadily, but in a way that felt escapable. In the time since our last visit, the cave's mood had darkened considerably thanks to twelve hours of relentless rain. The entrance floor and some of the chambers beyond were now submerged to a considerable depth and the water inside them whirlpooled and frothed like the rapids of some ferocious river. Anybody wading through the churn was at risk of being swept away and smashed against the rocks or sucked underneath and drowned. Psychologically it was tough going, too. Beneath the thrash and roar of the flood, there was an ominous feel to our situation, and my senses were on high alert whenever I moved under the surface. 5 10
- 2 Fighting against heavy currents inside the initial pools and submerged tunnels, I felt I was in an underwater playground, overcoming all sorts of obstacles before I could proceed to the next section. We scrambled over jagged rock or along perilous muddy banks that were so slippery, it would have been quite easy to skid, lose footing and fall. I kept my mask on to save time but was also saddled with lead weights in my belt, air cylinders attached to my waist and a helmet and a hood. 15
- 3 Suddenly, coming towards us from the back of the cavern, I saw a light moving unsteadily. Then another. And another. Until finally, four were visible. *We weren't alone.* They were people and at first, I imagined the impossible was happening. The shapes drew nearer, and I recognised the faces as adults, not children. They were workers sent into the tunnels to pump water and lay electric cables. They had taken a nap, and in the meantime, torrents of water surged through the tunnels, cutting off their exit route. No one had any idea of their predicament and pinned inside Tham Luang without breathing apparatus, they were likely to drown within hours if something wasn't done to help. 20
- 4 Our focus changed. Suddenly we had to rescue the workers and there was little time to lose – the waters around us were rising rapidly and the chamber was likely to flood to the roof. We needed to evacuate them. After a quick discussion, we agreed that we should dive them out in a relay system, moving them one by one, from chamber to chamber, until we had made it to the entrance. Neither Rick nor I spoke much Thai, but we were able to communicate our plan through a series of hand gestures. What followed resembled an underwater wrestling match as we dragged the thrashing workers in the submerged blackness. Eventually, somehow, we managed to shepherd them back through four separate flooded sections to the entrance. 25 30
- 5 With the workers back on land, Rick and I continued with our dive. This time, we pushed into a swirl chamber. This was unknown territory; neither of us had been this deep into the tunnels before, and our plan was to look for Pattaya Beach, an area located somewhere around the eighth chamber in the cave system and a spot where the authorities believed the boys might 35

have found shelter. By now, we were dependent on one another and the strong currents on the way back to make a speedy exit before our air supply expired. The clock was ticking. Swimming on into the blackness, we followed an ascending cave roof into a new space, passing what turned out to be the largest flooded section of the Tham Luang. There was a very good reason for navigating a search dive by looking up and directly ahead rather than simply following the floor: we didn't want to miss any air pockets. The passage roof was opening up ahead of us and I could tell there was an air pocket above. We had made our way into the ninth chamber. Rick was sniffing the air; I was too. *Was that the smell of rotting flesh?* I sensed movement in my peripheral vision. There was a noise. When I turned, everything changed in an instant. *The Wild Boars were alive.*

Section C

Text 4

In the text below, the writer discusses the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on learning and thinking.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 16-21 in the Question Paper.

- 1 Artificial intelligence has transformed the way people learn, work and solve problems. In the past, learning was like scaling a peak – it involved researching, debating, losing one's way, meandering and eventually earning the panorama at the summit. Today, information arrives instantly, packaged in fluent paragraphs, bullet points and step-by-step solutions. The ascent takes a split second, but the struggle is missing. While AI has undoubtedly made learning more efficient, many people are beginning to wonder whether this convenience comes at a cost. 5
- 2 Education rests on two enduring pillars: learning and thinking. Learning gives us new facts, frameworks, vocabulary, methods and mental models, but acquiring knowledge is incomplete without critical thinking – the ability to question, analyse and challenge what we learn before forming new ideas and theories. Today, however, these pillars are no longer progressing in step. While AI takes over much of the work of gathering and transmitting knowledge, it does little to strengthen our capacity for reasoning and ultimately erodes our cognitive independence. 10
- 3 Some experts compare AI to a Global Positioning System (GPS) for the mind. While it offers the convenience of quick answers, it can dull our ability to build the internal map we need to navigate complex problems in times when we do not have technology to guide us. If individuals rely too heavily on prompts and ready-made answers, they may lose their sense of direction. 15
- 4 Research has already suggested that this danger is real. In one study, doctors who depended on AI tools to identify medical conditions performed less effectively when the technology was removed. Another study found that students who used generative AI to write essays often felt less connected to their work and demonstrated weaker engagement in the thinking process. Together, these findings have raised concerns that AI may contribute to 'de-skilling', where people gradually lose abilities they once possessed. 20 25
- 5 Apart from de-skilling, there is also the risk of 'never-skilling'. Young people who rely excessively on AI from the beginning may fail to develop fundamental capabilities in the first place. Human beings learn by asking questions – whether in the incessant 'why's' of a child, or as eloquently set forth in the Socratic method still used in classrooms today. However, AI removes the need to ask independent questions as well as the need to follow through the process of grappling and working through layers of meaning to arrive at understanding. 30
- 6 With AI here to stay, experts believe that societies need practical guardrails rather than walls and fences. In some professions, organisations have introduced AI-free periods during which workers are required to complete tasks without the use of AI tools. These measures are designed to ensure that important skills do not weaken over time. In other 35

sectors, governments and institutions are also developing guidelines to encourage responsible and careful use of AI.

- 7 Education systems, too, must adapt thoughtfully. While technology can support learning, it should not replace the foundations of thinking. Pedagogy must drive technology, not the other way round. Some schools are returning to paper-based examinations, oral assessments and supervised tests to ensure that students genuinely understand what they are learning. The pivot away from take-home assignments is not a criticism of technology, but a safeguard to ensure that learning has taken place and essential skills have not withered away. 40 45
- 8 Ultimately, the question is not whether machines can think like humans, but whether humans will continue to think for themselves. AI can provide answers, but it cannot replace the curiosity that drives discovery, the compassion that strengthens relationships or the wisdom needed to make difficult decisions. The future belongs to those who use AI wisely without losing the qualities that make us human. True progress lies not only in becoming more advanced, but also in becoming more human. 50

Copyright acknowledgements

Section A Text 1 Adapted from: SkillsFuture.gov.sg

Section A Text 2 Adapted from a post taken from www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/SkillsFutureStories

Section B Text 3 Adapted from: 'Thirteen Lessons that Saved Thirteen Lives: The Thai Cave Rescue' by John Volanthen

Section C Text 4 Adapted from: 'The AI risk of losing the skills you've mastered over the years' by Tan Eng Chye - The Straits Times, 18 May 2026