

Section B**Question 2**

17 Novice Street
Singapore 455617

19 July 2024

Dear Uncle Ng,

How have you been? Thank you for entrusting me with the task of choosing a venue for Jayden's birthday party! All three venues seem very attractive. After studying them carefully and taking into consideration Jayden's preferences, I do feel confident that he will prefer to have the party at 'The Magic Hall'.

As we all know, Jayden is very interested in magic tricks and enjoys magic performances. Every chance he gets, he watches magic performances on television and on YouTube! I remember an occasion when he was fascinated by a simple coin trick I performed for him, and he begged me to teach him how I did it. As the magic show is an interactive one, having the chance to take part in performing the magic tricks is not only an opportunity he will definitely cherish, but will also be greatly entertaining to his guests. Additionally, 'The Magic Hall' provides magic accessories as welcome gifts, which I am sure Jayden will find extremely interesting as they will add to his growing collection of 'magical items'! A delicious catered meal is also provided, taking the headache of planning and preparing food and beverages for the event away from you! Hence, 'The Magic Hall' is the most suitable venue for everyone involved.

The other two options are also quite appealing. However, for 'The Art Sanctuary', the fun of painting may wear off after a while and may resemble art classes at school, which will probably not sit well with the guests. As many of the guests are young children who may be afraid of loud sounds like balloons bursting, 'The Balloon Room' may not be a good option.

I believe that the party should be held in 'The Magic Hall', which will provide the most fun and entertainment to Jayden as well as the guests attending his birthday party. Do let me know if you need any more help. I hope Jayden will have an unforgettable birthday party!

Your loving nephew,

Charles

(326 words)

Sender's full address

Date

Salutation

Greetings

State your choice

Link your choice to your cousin's interest.
Add a personal anecdote to help justify the link.

Link statement to end off the paragraph.

Provide reasons for the options being less suitable.

Conclude by restating your choice and its favourable outcome.

Valediction

Section C**3 Describe the popular pastimes among teenagers today.**

A pastime is defined as an activity that allows time to pass pleasantly, and it is unique to each individual. However, as a distinct group, teenagers generally enjoy certain kinds of activities. In the past, these activities include making boats out of leaves and letting them sail down drains. Nowadays, with the advent of technology, teenagers are mostly drawn into the online world of social media and interactive games.

Online social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok are hugely popular among young people today. Users can join online networks to interact with other people and to reconnect with old friends. People can also send messages, update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves and post pictures online. TikTok has become a complete addiction among youngsters, with its easy-to-navigate interface and the vast amount of content to keep its users entertained. The scrolling feature of the application has even spawned a new term: doomscrolling, which refers to the action of mindlessly scrolling through the virtually limitless videos and causing teenagers to spend many hours on it. With the short attention span of teenagers today, using social media applications is their go-to pastime.

Interactive games have also become pervasive in the lives of teenagers. Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG), a genre of computer role-playing games in which a large number of players interact with one another in a virtual world, have been gaining immense popularity with teenagers around the world. The main advantage of MMORPG over traditional games is that the participants do not have to gather in one place to play and they are often given the freedom to choose the backgrounds and personalities of their characters, also known as 'avatars'. The flexibility and creativity of such games provide participants with an avenue for stress release and an escape from the real world into a realm of fantasy or science fiction. Most of these games can be played by even the casual gamer, so these games have widespread appeal. An extremely popular MMORPG now is 'Valorant', a game that is often paired with an online communication platform called 'Discord' as its players need to communicate with each other during play. One of the great attractions of this game is that it allows players from all over the world to play together. With MMORPG, teenagers enjoy interacting with other teenagers who live in other countries, and in the process of playing the games, make new friends.

Certainly, teenagers are not restricted to only online activities as a way to pass their time. There are many other pastimes common to teenagers as well, including perennial favourites of going to the movies or meeting up with friends. However, the changing profile of the younger generation—as one that is more technologically savvy—means that the nature of pastimes is changing to encompass more online pursuits.

(477 words)

Definition of the term'pastime'Compare past and present.State direction of essay.Topic sentence / PointElaborationExampleLinkTopic sentence / PointElaborationExampleLink

Conclude by mentioning other popular pastimes but justify your reasons for choosing to describe the two pastimes.

4 'School uniforms are unnecessary.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

The school uniform is an important symbol of identity to the school and is a means to cultivate in students a sense of belonging, loyalty and pride in the school. However, it has long been a source of debate as to whether schools can do without school uniforms, on the grounds that one's individuality is being compromised by having to wear a school uniform or to comply with any type of dress code. Nevertheless, it is my contention that school uniforms are indispensable and necessary to ensure equality, prevent unnecessary expenditure due to peer pressure and promote safety in schools.

Apart from instilling a sense of belonging to the school, school uniforms also serve the function of ensuring equality. With students coming from varying strata of socio-economic status, life at school may become competition grounds for who has the most money, and can therefore, buy the most expensive clothing. The purpose of education is likely to be pushed into the background as students put more emphasis on their apparel than their academics. Those who are well-off are likely to buy more expensive and possibly more flashy clothes, while those who come from less well-to-do families have to do with the more functional and mundane. Even if outright discrimination is absent, the glaring difference makes for a sense of separation instead of belonging. School uniforms are needed to ensure students appear to be on equal footing.

Extending the above point, if school uniforms were banned, the interest in fashion and fads combined with peer pressure could lead to pressure to spend money on the latest fashion attire that some families can ill afford. In Singapore, the cost of school uniforms is intentionally kept low so that every family can afford them. By standardising attire for students, this avoids the problem of students trying to keep up with appearances in order to fit in with a desired group. A branded T-shirt like one that hails from a certain football team can easily cost up to \$80 or more, while a simple T-shirt from Giordano costs about \$10. School uniforms help ensure the students' focus remain on what is important: their education.

On a utilitarian level, the homogeneity of uniforms can help promote safety in schools. Because students can be easily identified, it would be easier for authorities to identify intruders—those who are not supposed to be within the school premises and those who may pose threats to the students' safety. Students who go on field trips can also be more easily accounted for. While travelling on public transport, other commuters can quickly know who to contact should any mishap befall a student from school. It can therefore be seen that school uniforms promotes safety for students in school and in public spaces.

State the importance of school uniforms.

The use of 'However' moves the essay in a different direction.

Thesis statement

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point

Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Some may argue that school uniforms are highly regimented and stifle one's individuality that could otherwise have been expressed through what he or she wears. However, where does one draw the line if everyone is free to express themselves through their outfit? Would clothes with inappropriate exposure of skin be allowed, such as halter dresses and midriff tops? What about shirts with inappropriate insignia, for example, clothing with vulgar language or representing otherwise objectionable connections, such as gang membership? **It would thus be much easier to have a uniform than to monitor independently chosen clothing.**

On the whole, school uniforms are necessary to avoid unnecessary comparisons and to promote safety, even though it is true that uniforms do, to a certain extent, suppress individuality. However, who is to say that individuality cannot be expressed in other forms such as the bags, shoes and even pencil cases that students use? Hence, I firmly believe that uniforms are a necessary part of schools.

(622 words)

5 Which factors will influence your choice of career?

The idea of success tends to be intertwined with the performance in one's career. A person's career is also what he or she would be spending a major part of his or her life engaged in. It can become a form of enslavement or a source of great enjoyment. Hence, choosing a career is no small matter.

The foremost factor in a practical society such as Singapore tends to be the monetary rewards the career path promises. Personally, it would be hypocritical to not list this as a major factor. After all, one obtains a job to be financially responsible and contribute to the family's income. However, the financial rewards of a career will also need to be weighed together against the emotional, mental and time strain the job will require. After all, should the demands of a job become overwhelming, what benefit would money yield if one's life is in danger?

Whether the career is one that is meaningful and grants personal satisfaction would be another point of consideration. Job satisfaction can motivate one to persevere even through trying times. All occupations have their peaks and troughs but if one is personally committed to the value of one's actions, then the job is not merely a means to an end but an activity that makes a person a contributor to something that they believe in.

A job that is rewarding financially, yet is not sustainable in the long run, may prove to be extremely risky. An unstable career path could end up in a crisis due to some unforeseen circumstances. Embarking on a relatively steady occupation may prove to be less interesting but it would be a wiser decision and with less harmful consequences.

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Link

Conclusion

General statements regarding the main topic: success

Discuss the financial aspect of a career choice.

Discuss the meaningfulness of a career choice.

Discuss the stability of a career choice.

Another factor that affects my decision would also be the available choices in the local job market. Closely related are the courses one is able to attend to equip oneself with the skills required for the job. The cost in terms of time and other resources to attend the requisite institute of learning, if beyond one's ability to afford, will restrict the choices available. At times, scholarships are available to overcome such difficulties, removing some of the obstructions. If the job is one that can only be found elsewhere, the long-term effects of migrating will also have to be carefully measured.

Therefore, the financial rewards, job satisfaction, stability and costs pertaining to a career are factors that I would consider carefully before committing to any job.

Discuss the cost (in terms of finance and availability) of a career choice.

Conclusion

6 'We should exercise every day.' What are your views?

Exercise is good for us. This is true to a certain extent, considering how a lack of regular exercise might make our muscles weak, as well as cause our heart and lungs to function poorly. **However, do we really need to exercise daily?**

While our body benefits from regular exercise, there are many examples on how excessive exercise can be counter-productive or even harmful to our bodies. Exercising every day may expose ourselves to the risk of over-exercising.

First, extreme exercise such as marathons trigger heart rhythm abnormalities and increases the possibility of a permanently damaged heart. Scientists have revealed that the limit of pressure an individual's heart can take varies from one to another. In other words, not every person responds to the same exercise in the same way. The rise in popularity of social media has perhaps distorted the perception of exercise, and many may put their ideal weight and figure ahead of respecting the limits of their bodies. **Therefore, exercising daily may result in one pushing that limit and risking the health of his or her heart.**

Second, when people start exercising, they often do it with little or no supervision from a trained professional. The ideal amount of exercise for a beginner is set at thrice a week and no longer than 60 minutes per session, and even this is just a general guideline. Many beginners have a great deal of enthusiasm, and they often take on a more demanding exercise routine than they should, thinking that they would see more positive results sooner. This could potentially lead to muscle strains and injuries to specific muscle groups. Although those who exercise regularly face a lower risk of such injuries, they can still risk injuries from over-exercising as they continue to push beyond the limits of their bodies. **Thus, daily exercise may not be beneficial.**

General statements regarding the main topic: exercise

Rhetorical question

Make a case for the risks involved when one over-exercises.

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Link

Third, over-exercising may lead to negative effects on one's mental health. When an individual is overworked or physically stressed, it can lead to mood changes such as depression, anger and irritability, to name a few. Stress hormones, which are released when one is emotionally stressed, are also released when one is physically overloaded. Consequently, when one is not in the best of mental states, it is much easier for injuries to occur from the lack of attention. **Thus, daily exercise may then cause more suffering in terms of physical pain, which then adds on to the mental strain.**

However, should one be cognizant of the issues highlighted above, exercising daily does provide much benefit. Being outdoors in the sun allows the body to produce vitamin D, which is beneficial to health. It also releases endorphins which makes one feel good and keeps one's mood stable. The body gets to work up a sweat, allowing toxins and waste to exit the body. **Varying the types of exercise one does can help to mitigate the ill effects of daily exercise while reaping its bountiful benefits.**

In conclusion, while the benefits of having a regular exercise routine are undeniable, one should be cautious when exercising daily. Exercise should be done in moderation to prevent repercussions such as sustaining damage to the heart, muscle injuries or possible emotional trauma. In addition, many people have the tendency to undertake an exercise routine that is overly heavy, leading to the gradual buildup of irreversible heart injuries and other health problems. Ultimately, each person should carefully consider his or her own body and be aware of its limits.

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Link

Conclusion

Section B**Question 2**Set 2

Block 148 Maybank Avenue
#10-258
Singapore 324010

25 May 2025

Madam Doris Ang
Form Teacher
Resilience Secondary School
14 Indigo Street
Singapore 677888

Dear Madam Ang,

RE: December Class Trip

Thank you for wanting to organise a class trip for us. It would be a truly wonderful way for us to finish our final year in secondary school. **After much discussion with my classmates, we have decided that going to Kurau Basin is the best option.**

Of the three destinations, Kurau Basin is the closest one to Singapore, and is therefore, the most affordable. The class is in complete agreement that it is more important to have every student in the class be present on this trip, and this option, at an affordable \$400, allows everyone to participate. Apart from the fact that Catacorn Island and Jec Stone are much more expensive, we will also be disadvantaged by rate of currency exchange at these countries.

The travel time is also much shorter: it would take only two hours to get to Kurau Basin from Singapore, compared to the six to ten hours needed to get to Catacorn Island and Jec Stone respectively. This time can be more fruitfully used for activities on the trip.

As you know, our class takes Geography as an 'O' level subject, and the prospect of seeing some of what we have studied up close and personal is very appealing. Kurau Basin is home to tropical rainforests, with many areas of wildlife successfully conserved by the government. Not only can we experience the beauty and serenity of these natural spaces, but we can also benefit from the guided tours, during which we can learn more about conservation initiatives and biodiversity. Should we decide to stay at the campsite, we will be treated to the world-renowned Kurau Falls, which is a mere 15-minute walk away.

Sender's full address

Date

Name of recipient

Designation of recipient

Name of organisation

Address of organisation

Salutation

Subject

Stating your choice

Reason for

choice: financial

consideration

Adding fact about

currency exchange to

justify choice

Reason for choice:

travel time

Stating benefit of

shorter travel time

Reason for choice:

educational benefit

During the class discussion, we have calculated that on top of the \$400 needed for the airfare and accommodation, each of us would need approximately another \$100 to spend on food and other miscellaneous items like souvenirs and keepsakes, and an additional \$20 should we decide to engage a tour guide. We have also determined that 11 to 13 December is the best time for the trip as we are all available.

Thank you once again for making the effort to organise this trip for us. This would be a most fitting conclusion to this chapter of our lives: deepening our learning while we strengthen our friendships with one another.

I hope the information here is of use to you. Thank you for your time and kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Madeline

Chairperson of Class 4C

(406 words)

Address other logistical issues.

Conclude by expressing gratitude.

Valediction

Section C

3 Describe what you might observe on the first day of school after the holidays.

It has been a long holiday. While some students lament the passing of the holidays and yearn to remain carefree and rested, **I personally cannot wait to go back to school after such a long break.**

Setting foot into the familiar compound of my school courtyard, numerous groups of students could be seen chatting animatedly with one another in the cold morning air. Although technology has made it possible to communicate with one another via texts and messages, there is something much more enjoyable in meeting friends in person than merely sending a couple of lines through a mobile phone. The look of joy and excitement on the students' faces is testament to this.

In stark contrast, there are several students sitting sullenly on the steps or benches, staring blankly into space. Their dishevelled appearance and tired eyes suggest that they have fully enjoyed their last day of the holidays by either gaming or watching YouTube videos late into the night. Don't they know this would only make it harder on themselves? I muse as I wave to my best friend, Andy, who is just walking through the school gates.

State personal perspective

First observation: behaviour of students after not having met for a while.

Second observation: how some students react to returning to school.

As I listen to Andy regale me with details of his trip to Bangkok, I notice a small but obvious group of students in a distance. They look lost, frightened and about to cry. A smile crosses my face as I realise that they must be the newly arrived Secondary One students. My mind immediately recalls the same nervousness and timidity I felt when I first entered this school, and it was only the kindness and gentleness of the student councillors that made me feel safe and welcomed. Andy's boisterous recount brings me out of my reverie and when I look over at my new schoolmates, I am delighted to see the ever-friendly student councillors mingling with them and offering to show them around. The look of palpable relief on the faces of the Secondary One students is heartwarming, and I am once again reminded of how fond I am of my school.

The bell sounded in the distance. Andy and I walk towards the parade square where students are organising themselves into neat lines. I catch sight of some of my teachers and wave to them happily. It must sound odd, but I do miss my teachers. Beyond their duties to teach, many of them have created a safe space for me to air my troubles, express my doubts and fears and just for me to be me. Coming from a rather strict and traditional family, I am grateful to be able to come to a place where I do not have to hide who I am.

A lanky student councillor approaches the microphone in the front of the parade square and in a commanding voice, calls the school to attention. As the first strains of the national anthem fill the air, I feel my heart swell with pride as I begin to sing. It is indeed good to be back in school.

(504 words)

4 'Both parents and teachers have a part to play in the education of children.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

From infancy, a child's first teachers are his parents. He models the behaviour of their parents, through which he learns to sit up, walk and talk. Then the day comes for the child to enter nursery or kindergarten, where he learns from their teachers a variety of skills: how to colour within the lines, what the days of the week are, how to read and write and so on. I agree that parents and teachers have a part to play in the education of children, where parents imbue values and morals, while teachers impart knowledge and skills.

When it comes to values and morals, parents are the primary influence as they are the ones with direct responsibility for the child. Values such as discipline and kindness are inculcated within the safety of the family. A child is guided through actions and words what is acceptable and what is not. He is supported by his parents when his actions lead to consequences, and is guided to reflect the appropriateness of his or her behaviour. When a child spills his food, he can be taught how to clean up after himself and how to get more food. In this way, the child learns how to manage the consequences of his actions in a kind and loving way, and beyond learning about consequences, he learns how to be kind and loving. Parents are therefore their children's first and most important educators.

Third observation:
how new students
to the school are
treated.
Personal recount to
set up reflection.
Reflection

State personal feeling
for connection.

Personal reflection to
connect with readers.

Reaffirm personal
perspective.

General statements
about the roles of
parents and teachers

Thesis statement

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Education is not just about morals and values. When it comes to knowledge and skills, teachers have a role to play. In school, children are instructed on a variety of subjects, ranging from languages to social sciences. However, not only are they taught academic subjects, but they can also be inspired by a teacher's love for a subject, or disheartened by the crushing words of an angry teacher. Stories of how people were inspired to enter certain fields or take up certain occupations are replete on social media applications such as Facebook and Instagram. What is less visible but perhaps more important are those who suffer harm to their self-esteem from their interactions with teachers which may have long-lasting negative impact. **This clearly shows the impact a teacher has on children and their education.**

There are those who would say that teachers are the only ones to educate children since the children are in school most of the time. While children do spend a substantial amount of time at school, their home environment is still their primary place of living, and in it, they learn the many aspects of life and living that is not within the curriculum of schools. Especially in the matters of values and religion, teachers are not at liberty to prescribe beyond the social standard. **Therefore, both parents and teachers have a role to play in the education of children.**

The role of parents and teachers in contributing to the growth of children is critical and neither can be absent. Both contribute towards building an environment where children can learn and grow safely.

(505 words)

5 Many foreign workers have come to Singapore to search for employment. What are some benefits and problems associated with these foreign workers?

Singapore has a large pool of foreign workers in many different sectors. Foreign workers in Singapore have been closely associated with our economic development and the demand for them has progressively grown with increased industrialisation and globalisation. **Foreign workers are important to us, but they have concomitantly brought about societal problems as well.**

It is in the nation's interest to have foreign workers because they supplement Singapore's limited pool of local workers in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs that are mostly not taken up by Singaporeans. News reports have pointed out that while some Singaporeans can be very fussy about the type of jobs they want to do, many foreign workers are willing to take on unskilled blue-collar jobs. In the case of domestic workers, almost all of them are from foreign countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines or Myanmar and one will be hard-pressed to find a Singaporean who is willing to perform such a labour-intensive job. This is perhaps due to the fact that as migrant workers, their sole aim is to work hard to earn as much money as they can. **Thus, foreign workers benefit Singapore by taking up jobs that Singaporeans avoid.**

Topic sentence / Point	
Elaboration	
Example	
Link	
Counter-argument	
Rebuttal	
Link	
Conclusion	

General statements about foreign workers	
State the pros and cons in hiring foreign workers.	
Topic sentence / Point	
Elaboration	
Example	
Link	

Employing foreign workers will also help to keep companies competitive against global competitors. The comparatively lower wages paid to foreign workers allow business operation costs to remain competitive and in turn, helps attract big companies and multinational companies to invest and set up a base in Singapore. Among the many multinational companies that have bases in Singapore are pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, internet frontrunner Google and electronics innovator Philips. **This will result in more job opportunities for Singaporeans.**

However, the influx of foreign workers has also led to the problem of inadequate housing for them. In land-scarce Singapore, it is difficult to house so many migrant workers and it can be expensive to do so. Some cost-sensitive employers have resorted to squeezing many workers in overcrowded dormitories which often do not meet health and safety standards. This situation came under fire during the COVID-19 pandemic where the relatively cramped quarters in the dormitories became a site for the rapid spreading of the virus. **Therefore, accommodating foreign workers pose a problem for Singapore.**

There is also a problem of social acceptance towards these foreign workers. The negative perception of these migrant workers, no doubt skewed by a few black sheep, has caused them to be segregated from the local community, leading to social exclusion of this migrant pool. There are also issues with culture and traditions that are sure to differ, and can be fodder for misunderstanding and miscommunication. A poll by The Straits Times revealed more than half of the Singaporean respondents believe that foreign workers may increase crime rates in the country. **Such social divides and misperception need to be fixed before locals and foreigners alike can live together in social harmony, which is a challenge for Singapore.**

In summary, foreign workers are here to stay because their contributions are valuable and necessary to our economy's growth. However, the problems of adequate housing and social acceptance of these foreign workers need to be addressed for such a bilateral relationship to thrive in Singapore.

(528 words)

6 'Spare the rod, spoil the child.' What are your views?

Corporal punishment is the use of physical force to cause some degree of pain or discomfort for the purpose of meting out negative consequence. It is commonly referred to as caning or spanking in Singapore. Caning stems from the belief that children have to be physically punished so that they will not behave badly again. Although caning was a punishment commonly used in the past, **I believe that physical punishment negatively affects children emotionally and may lead to aggressiveness and withdrawal.**

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Conclusion

Definition of the term
'corporal punishment'
in response to the
idiom

Stating direction of
the essay

Opponents to this position may argue that physical punishment is a good way to teach children when they misbehave. Since corporal punishment has an immediate effect on children, parents think that caning will make children remember not to repeat their wrongdoings. Hence, it is argued that physical punishment might teach children discipline by making them afraid of the consequences of undesirable behaviour.

However, corporal punishment can bring about more damage than good. The use of corporal punishment may encourage children to be aggressive and violent, and it may even have the adverse effect of teaching them that corporal punishment is an acceptable behaviour. Psychologically, children tend to identify with their parents and teachers and often try to emulate them. By using force as a disciplinary tool, parents are setting an example which the children may try to follow. When a mother canes her son whenever he is mischievous, she may later discover that her son is hitting his classmates whenever they do not do what he wants. This behaviour is an indication that he has already learnt that physical punishment is acceptable to obtain what he wants.

Corporal punishment can also harm the relationship between the parent and the child. In a bid to avoid punishment, the child may try to avoid his parent, whether physically or psychologically. When the child withdraws from the parent, the parent loses the child's trust and confidence and gradually, the child may not want to share with his parent his problems and difficulties if he knows he may be hurt for telling the truth. In fact, if corporal punishment is a standard tool for dealing with misbehaviour, the child's pulling away may be construed as such, inviting even more punishment, and a certain erosion of the parent-child relationship. A common occurrence is when a child is caught misbehaving in school, but does not want to reveal this to his parents as he is afraid that he may be further punished. This effectively takes away the opportunity for the parents to intervene and guide. It is therefore clear that corporal punishment is detrimental to the relationship between parent and child.

Instead of using brute force in corporal punishment, perhaps a more viable method in disciplining a child is to use reasoning to explain to the child the consequences of his actions. This is the ideal method of long-term control of behaviour because it develops self-discipline in the child. Parents can also remove a reward or a positive reinforcer to communicate disapproval of a behaviour, instead of using a negative reinforcer like physical punishment. For instance, taking away a trip to the park because the child took too long to pack his room is a safe and effective way for the child to learn about consequences.

In conclusion, using the rod encourages violence in parents and children and it jeopardises the trust between parent and child. Corporal punishment is not the only method of discipline that parents can use to teach their children as there are other ways which are more effective.

(587 words)

Explore the view of those who agree with the idiom.

Link

Assert the opposite with the use of 'However'.

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Propose a solution
(Point)

Example and link

Conclusion

Section B

Question 2

Set 3

To: Mr Chong Wee Hian
Principal
Pegasus Secondary School

From: Andrew Lee Meng Kiat
President
Student Council

Date: 12 March 2024

RE: Equipment Upgrade for Audio Visual Aids (AVA) Room

Thank you for the opportunity to make a suggestion regarding the upgrade of equipment for our school's Audio Visual Aids (AVA) room. **After much discussion with my council members, it was decided that the Scarlett Projector will be the most beneficial to the students of Pegasus Secondary School.**

The AVA room is mostly used by students planning and practising their project presentations. The current projector is at least 15 years old and is not working at its best. The constant flicker and frequent burning out of bulbs make it an unreliable piece of equipment. The AVA club has spent a considerable amount of time repairing the unit, but there is a limit to what they can do.

The Scarlett Projector is a state-of-the-art projector that is both lightweight and portable. This provides a unique advantage to both students and the school. Not only will students enjoy the crystal-clear display in the AVA room, but it can also be moved to any location easily, expanding its usability. Its mobility notwithstanding, the Scarlett Projector is able to project clearly even in large venues, up to a 300-seat auditorium. It can therefore be deployed in our school hall as well as when there are videos to be shown and presentations to be made. An accompanying remote control affords greater flexibility in movement for users as they do not have to be near the unit to control it. The Scarlett Projector comes with a 5-year extended warranty as well as complimentary projector screen, both of which are only available during the promotion period.

The other two options, while useful, bring less benefits to the school. The Avax control system is more of a convenience than a necessity and it is also not readily connectable to the AVA room's existing systems. The Kinnex Audio System can easily replace the audio system in the AVA room, but the main issue with the school's audio system is the speakers. Simply replacing the audio system will not produce any marked improvement or benefit.

Therefore, I strongly recommend the purchase of the Scarlett Projector for the school's AVA room. While it is the most expensive option, it is also the one that can bring the most benefits to the students and the school at large.

Report written by:

Andrew

(375 words)

Recipient's name
Recipient's
designation

Sender's name
Sender's designation

Date

Subject

Greetings
State your choice.

Highlight the current
situation in the AVA
room.

Explain the functions
and benefits of
getting the Scarlett
Projector.

Weigh the chosen
option against the
other choices.

Reaffirm the choice.

Valediction

Section C

3 Describe some situations that irritate you.

Life in general is not a bed of roses. Every day, there are people and situations that can frustrate and irritate you. That said, not everyone is frustrated and irritated by the same things. For me, I am triggered by inconsideration and injustice.

In this day and age of technology, it is now a common sight for people to go about their lives with a screen in their hands and in front of their faces. With their eyes glued to the screens and presumably their minds anywhere but where they actually are, they resemble mindless zombies, unconsciously moving from place to place. This is most observable on trains and buses. Virtually everyone is lost in their own worlds of YouTube videos and social media that they are not aware that their actions may inconvenience others. The elderly and the infirm now have to ask for seats as the commuters are too engrossed in their devices to notice them. Inconsiderate commuters play videos and music without using earphones, adding to the already noisy atmosphere and to the ire of the other commuters. Still others talk into their phones or earpieces with reckless abandon, making unwilling audiences of all within earshot. Though most bus and train rides are not very long, such inconsideration frays my nerves and makes me wish for a world without technology.

There is a great deal of injustice in the world today. News reports are replete with incidences of cyberbullying and oppression of the weak by those in power. While in the past, one reads about such injustice in the pages of the newspaper, the ubiquity of mobile devices and the internet means that I am served such information right in my face via social media applications such as Instagram and TikTok. Videos of students beating up students, hurtful comments from strangers to innocent posts, and toxic opinions of a small-minded minority take any joy I could receive from spending time on these applications. It makes me so angry that just because one can do a thing, it follows that one should. Just because one can take a video of people beating up others does not mean one should stand apart and watch it happen. Just because one can anonymously post comments does not mean one should be careless and hurtful. Just because one has an opinion does not mean one should force it down other people's throat.

As I write this, I realise that be it directly or indirectly, technology has something to do with what irritates me. While I know that it is merely a tool, I do wish for a world where this very powerful tool can be used with greater care and compassion. In the meantime, I am going to do my part and not be someone else's irritation!

(465 words)

General statements about life
State specifically what is irritating.

Explain why inconsideration is irritating.

Examples of inconsideration

Explain why injustice is rampant.

Examples of injustice

Use stylistic repetition to emphasise point.

Final thoughts

4 'Parents should restrict their children's reading materials.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

The world is an evolving place and its pace of change has increased significantly thanks to globalisation enabled by technology. Reading materials are no longer restricted to books and periodicals. Rather, they are presented in the form of online articles, forum posts and blogs. Ideas in the form of the written word are spreading like wildfire through the internet, including those that are immoral, harmful and divisive. **Therefore, I agree that parents should restrict their children's reading material as unmonitored consumption can lead to unnecessary anxiety and the inculcation of wrong values.**

Restricting what a child reads is akin to monitoring what a child eats in his diet. As the old saying goes, you are what you eat. In the same vein, we are what we read. When the body ingests something poisonous or toxic, it reacts by vomiting out the offending agent. However, such a natural response is lacking when a child reads something inappropriate. Given the lack of sufficient understanding, a child reading something abstract, bewildering or puzzling may become anxious and afraid. The lack of understanding is itself quite frightening, and when presented with such material, a child may find him or herself facing big emotions they do not know how to handle. Reading age-appropriate material may also cause misconceptions later on as the information may be internalised as facts. A young child reading *Harry Potter* may really believe that magic exists and become disgruntled when he or she is unable to cast a spell. Therefore, children's reading materials require parental oversight.

Perhaps the greater danger of permissive reading is the inculcation of wrong values. Reading materials promoting violence, intolerance, discrimination, promiscuity and drug use are replete. When exposed to such materials, the child may mistakenly believe that availability is acceptability, that the fact that they can read it is tantamount to the material's content being above board. While this may be true in the past, it is certainly not true today. Censorship and the editorial process have become a rarity with the internet enabling indiscriminate publishing. Not only does this make identifying fact from fiction a nightmare, but the threat of misinformation and indoctrination is also alarming. In early 2023, a 38-year-old teacher was arrested for becoming self-radicalised after reading material published by an extremist online. If an educated adult can be corrupted, how much more a child?

There are those who say that children should not be restricted with regard to what they read because if they do not read it at home, they will simply read it elsewhere. However, if a child is properly monitored and guided in his or her reading diet, he or she will learn to better identify beneficial material from harmful ones. The process of restriction does not guarantee complete protection from harmful reading material. Rather, its objective is to teach and guide children to be discerning readers and consumers.

General statements about the state of the world and the written word

Thesis statement

Use of analogy for impact

Elaboration

Example

Link

Point

Elaboration

Example

Use of rhetorical question as link for impact

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Technology has greatly improved our lives in many ways. However, it is a two-edged sword that can cause chaos, as much as it brings convenience. The world our children will grow up in is no longer the innocent neighbourhood where they catch spiders and sail boats of leaves down drains. The world they live in now is the virtually limitless expanse of the internet, where anyone can write anything. Parents must be vigilant.

(549 words)

5 Which factors contribute to the academic success in children?

According to the old adage, success is ten per cent inspiration and 90 per cent perspiration. This is not far from the truth because hard work on the child's part generally contributes greatly to his or her academic success. **However, there are a host of other factors that will contribute to academic success, such as parental involvement, experience in school and peer influence.**

Parental involvement is an important factor in the academic success of a child. According to research, effective parental involvement addresses the most important factor in academically successful children: engagement. By this, I mean that a child is fully involved in the learning process by being a motivated, enthusiastic and responsible learner. Parents thus need to spark their children's interest and enthusiasm in learning by being involved in keeping them motivated in the learning process. For instance, parents can read to their children, bring them for educational trips or watch television with them to teach them values whenever the opportunity arises. **Thus, parents have a great impact on their children's academic success.**

Much of a child's academic education is taught in school. It therefore follows that a child's academic success is positively correlated to his or her experience in school. Apart from the quality of teaching, the child's experience with teachers sets the tone for their perception and attitude towards a particular subject, and learning in general. If a child is taught with patience, kindness and understanding, he or she is able to develop a love and appreciation for the subject. If a child is often chastised, scolded and reprimanded in school, he or she is likely to develop an aversion for school and all things educational. In time, this fear will give way to anger, which is the start of many problems, including academic disincentives. **Therefore, a child's school experience makes a marked difference in his or her academic achievement.**

A child's peer group has been shown to influence social and academic development and that these influences begin at the very start of formal education. Good peer relationships can indirectly influence academic success because positive relationships can help children become well-adjusted individuals while learning a host of other skills such as group interaction and conflict resolution. In direct terms, peers with positive outlooks on studying can influence one another with good study habits. The importance of peer relationships cannot be understated—it has been said that without positive peer group interactions, serious social problems may develop. Peer rejection in early adolescence, for example, has been found to be a good predictor of social and academic problems later on in life. **From this, it can be seen that friends contribute to a child's academic success.**

State that the world has changed to emphasise the need for parents to be vigilant.

General statements about success
State contributing factors to children's academic success.

Topic sentence
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence

Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence

Elaboration

Example

Link

Parental involvement, parenting styles and peer influence are but some of the factors that create academic success. Certainly, there are many other factors in the equation that will affect performance. However, perhaps nothing will affect academic performance more than the will of the child himself or herself
(494 words)

Conclude by stating that the child's will is the strongest contributor to academic success.

6 'Parents are the best people to discuss problems with.' What are your views?

Parents are the primary caregivers to their children. They are tasked with the responsibilities of ensuring safety, sufficient provision and guidance. As children grow up, their social circles expand to include their peers, teachers, and with today's advanced technology, virtually every person with an internet connection. **That said, I am still of the opinion that parents are the best people to discuss problems with as they know their children since birth and have much life experience.**

A caveat before I go further: parents are the best people to discuss problems with only as far as it is safe for their children to do so. If discussing a problem invites invalidation and punishment, then clearly, these parents are not the best people to discuss problems with.

Parents are present at the moment of birth and they are the ones with intimate knowledge of their children. This is greatly advantageous when looking for solutions to their children's problems. They are able to identify the strengths within their children while addressing whatever weakness that caused the problems. I once heard a father suggesting to his young daughter to say 'thank you' whenever her classmates are mean to her. The little girl appears to be a very shy and introverted person, and would not be able to stand up for herself with the kind of blustering bravado so often seen on social media. Her father's interesting approach makes use of his daughter's polite demeanour to diffuse what could be a very hurtful comment by advantaging his daughter's position through politeness. Such deep knowledge of their children allows parents to meaningfully intervene in times of trouble.

An obvious fact to note is that parents have lived much longer than their children. As a result, they have acquired much experience with life and living. They are more able to bring to the table perspectives and insights that are not available to their children's contemporaries. Children often listen to the advice from their friends, not fully aware that their friends are often of the same age and of the same limited experience as they are. How would they be able to offer anything more substantive than what the children themselves could come up with? One's parents are therefore the best people to discuss one's problems with.

Of course, teachers and friends are also invaluable sources of advice. They are often more readily available as children spend much of their time in school. Children may also feel less afraid of speaking to their teachers and friends as they are not as close and are perhaps more objective. That said, while teachers and friends may suffice for certain types of problems, those that are of a more serious nature should be brought to the parents' attention.

Definition of parents

State the direction of the essay.

Set the scope of the essay.

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point

Elaboration

Example

Link

Include teachers and friends as possible alternative sources of advice.

Parents are charged with the responsibility of ensuring the well-being of their children. Helping and guiding them through various problems and situations is part of their role and they should work towards creating a safe and inviting environment where their children can share freely.

(497 words)

Conclusion

Section B

Question 2

To: Madam Norliza
Form Teacher, S4A

From: Chen En Xuan
Chairperson, S4A

Date: 3 April 2024

RE: Choice of Enhanced Curriculum Modules (ECM)

Thank you for requesting input from the class regarding the ECM modules. I am certain that they will add a touch of realism to the learning we have here in school. After several conversations with my classmates, **we have decided that the Social Etiquette course will be most beneficial to us.**

It has been said that it takes only seven seconds for a person to form an impression of another. In the competitive world we are about to step into, it is vital that we know how to present ourselves in a manner that most advantages us. Not only do we need to know what to say, we must also learn how to say it. Along with that, we should also have some idea how to dress according to occasions and how to carry ourselves, so that others may have a good impression of us.

With that in mind, the Social Etiquette course run by Miss Valerie Yeo, a former beauty pageant winner and the owner of a finishing school, Style Studio, is most useful to us. With her many years of experience working with multinational corporations and schools, Miss Yeo will be able to impart to us the finer points of intelligent conversation, help us identify our areas of weakness in terms of our speech and demeanour, as well as highlight pitfalls when interacting with others. Her personal experience as a beauty pageant winner will stand her in good stead as she offers dressing and styling tips that will help us look our best.

The other courses, while educational and enriching, are perhaps not as pertinent to us at this point in our lives. The acquisition of these skills is less beneficial to us when compared to being able to present ourselves well. Although the Social Etiquette course is the most expensive of the three, it does carry the most advantage for us.

Thank you again for seeking our input. We look forward to expanding our learning beyond the curriculum.

Report written by:

En Xuan

(336 words)

Recipient's full name
Recipient's designation
Sender's full name
Sender's designation

Date

Subject

Express thanks for the opportunity to provide input.

State your choice.

Justification:

Making a good first impression is important.

Justification: Provide evidence regarding the suitability of the trainer.

Justification: While the most expensive option, the chosen course is the most advantageous.

Conclusion

Valediction

Section C**3 Describe what you may see or hear on the day of the release of the G.C.E. O-Level results in school.**

The day of reckoning has finally arrived. The agonising days of poring over books and nights of burning the midnight oil has culminated in this tense, nail-biting moment: the release of the G.C.E. O-Level results.

Some students are clearly confident of their results, judging from the composed, almost blasé look on their faces. These are mostly the straight-A students—those who excel academically in almost every subject and find it a breeze understanding even the most gruelling concepts in class. They are most often the ones called on by the teachers to answer questions in class and to help mentor the weaker students. I can hear them now discussing whether to take up A-Level H3 Mathematics or Chemistry.

There are other nonchalant faces in the crowd but those are the ones who are not concerned about how they fare in the examinations. Some of them are more concerned about what to do and where to go after picking up their results, and others are looking frustrated that they have to wait around for such a long time to collect their results. One of them is seen even sitting by the table painting her fingernails, trying to pass time. These students have perhaps resigned to the fact that they are not going to do well and have mentally prepared for whatever awaits them after getting the results. I cannot help but feel some sympathy for them. I am sure they worked hard; the lack of good results must have been very difficult to endure, and over time, giving up became the easier option.

Most of the students, however, have jittery looks on their faces. They are not so confident about their results and the outcome clearly matters a lot to them—and rightly so, since the results can directly affect the postings to their desired schools. They are a bundle of nerves—too nervous to sit around and wait, they start pacing around the hall trying to calm their nerves. Some look deep in prayer while others are talking in hushed tones to their friends in an attempt to draw strength from one another.

The teachers are streaming into the hall and anytime now, they will be releasing the results. The silence in the air is palpable and even the most blasé of students are now looking serious in the face of a potentially life-changing momentous event. The principal starts reading out the names of the top students. The audience claps politely for those students whose top honours are unsurprising, but it roars in excitement whenever an unexpected student claims the same. Everyone loves an underdog.

As the teachers distribute the results to the rest of the students, the atmosphere bursts with great variety. Shrieks of joy punctuate the air while a low cloud of gloom surround those sobbing in sorrow. Hugs are offered all around—for joy, comfort and solace. Students who have outdone their own expectations are now chattering excitedly about where to go to celebrate while others who have fared below their expectations have now slunk to one corner in tears, pondering about their future, and perhaps, what to tell their parents.

General statements about the important day

First observation: top students and their expressions

Second observation: students who have given up

Personal feeling to connect with readers

Third observation: anxious students and their expressions

Fourth observation: the scene at the hall

Note a moment of human drama.

Fifth observation: the varied expressions when results are received

Such sights and sounds at the release of the G.C.E. O-Level results are certainly something to behold but I am glad I only have to do this once, because the suspense and the stress is definitely too much for me to handle!

(565 words)

Conclude with a personal thought.

4 'The current education curriculum is demanding for students.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

It is no secret that the current education curriculum is demanding for almost all students and overwhelming for some. On top of the standard academic curriculum, students also take national education, civics and moral education and physical education classes. However, these are not the main reasons why the curriculum is demanding. **I am of the opinion that the current education curriculum is demanding for students as there are many after-school activities and pressure to perform well academically.**

Schools today mandate many programmes which take up a substantial amount of students' time. There are co-curricular activities (CCAs), Values in Action (VIA) programmes and project work. Co-curricular activities and Values in Action programmes are generally conducted outside of curriculum time, which means that students often end up with less time to complete their school homework, revision and for some, tuition assignments. Although project work is conducted within curriculum time, students are affected as well because their teachers will then have to quicken the pace of their lessons or conduct supplementary classes just to make sure that they do not fall behind in covering the academic syllabus. It is now not uncommon for students to be able to get home only in the evening of each day, after completing all that is expected of them. **It can thus be seen that the current education curriculum is demanding for students.**

The Singapore education system is well-known for being a pressure cooker and many students would be quick to confirm this. The competition to get into good schools, fuelled by the belief that this will lead to a bright future, is on the minds of many parents, and consequently, their children. As a result, virtually all students whose parents can afford would have enrichment or tuition classes, so they can 'outshine' their peers and ultimately achieve more in their lives. After spending on average seven hours a day in school, they would have to make their way to these classes for a few more hours. Although this is done with good intentions from their parents, there is no doubt that the extra classes play a part in taking a toll on the health of the students, both physically and mentally. **The current educational curriculum is definitely demanding.**

There would be those who say that the current education curriculum is not demanding as many of the students perform well. Singapore has a 96.77% literacy rate, which is in the tenth position globally. However, just because something is done well does not follow that it is easy. In fact, Singapore's educational ranking is hard-earned, and perhaps the price is too high. A survey by the Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) revealed that suicide remains the leading cause of death for youths aged 10 to 29. While it is unclear whether the reason for suicide is directly linked to pressures from the current educational curriculum, it is nevertheless a sobering statistic, and a plausible cause Singapore will do well not to ignore.

General statements about the current educational curriculum

Thesis statement

Topic sentence

Example Link

Topic sentence

Example

Link

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Link

It is clear that the current education curriculum is demanding in the different aspects of education it tries to fulfil and the tests and examinations used to assess students' progress in learning. The demands on students are greater than before and both parents and teachers have to play a bigger role in ensuring a safe and balanced lifestyle for them.

(554 words)

5 'Having dreams is important.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

Having dreams—does this represent wishful thinking or visionary foresight? For some, dreams allow us to aim higher and be freed from the constraints familiar to us. A slogan for a popular sports brand, Adidas, states that 'Impossible is Nothing'. It suggests that we should aim for greater aspirations and not be restricted by any limitations. **Thus, having dreams is important as they help us set goals and better ourselves.**

Athletes dreaming to exceed the limits set by predecessors usually push themselves to the fullest. With natural talent and abilities as well as an indefatigable belief, sportsmen from the days of the first Olympic Games in Athens to present-day athletes amaze everyone with their capabilities. Accolades are bestowed on those daring to believe and who break records held for the longest time. Tennis legend, Roger Federer, has often stated in interviews that he dreamt of winning the championship at Wimbledon very early in his career. With grit and determination, he went on to win the Wimbledon Championship a whopping eight times. **From this, we can see that having dreams help us to be the best that we can be.**

Having dreams also gives us something to work towards. Rather than be satisfied with our lot, we work towards a specific goal. Examples include obtaining a scholarship, getting a place in a prestigious university or getting a dream job. These goals push us to be hardworking and resilient as we strive towards them. The actor famed for his role as Bilbo Baggins in *The Lord of the Rings* movie series, Elijah Wood said, "Safety and comfort comes with complacency, and that's never a good place to be working from." **Having dreams gives our lives a sense of purpose so that we do not lead a banal or complacent existence.**

However, for some, pursuing the dreams that they hope for may lead them to quests that will never be fulfilled. Dreaming of becoming powerful or famous without investing the requisite efforts and determination is simply a fantasy. The real grind of hard work shunned leads the individual to nothing but empty dreams. Driven by greedy aspirations, some of these individuals find themselves in schemes or rash acts that land them in trouble with the law. It is good to dream and work towards achieving these dreams, but we must also be careful how we work towards achieving them. Achieving one's dream through ill-gotten gains is misunderstanding the purpose of having a dream. The process of achieving a dream is often more meaningful than the achievement of it. For this to happen, dreams are needed, and therefore important.

Conclusion

Rhetorical question to generate interest
General statements about dreams
Thesis statement

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Link

Dreams can be seen as the first visual of what we would like to have or be in the future. Keeping that image clearly in one's mind can provide a steady objective and target towards which continued effort can be directed. Dreams have the ability to bring purpose and meaning into one's life, making one's existence truly worthwhile.

(493 words)

6 Describe what you might see at the airport.

The airport is a place that is usually teeming with travellers and non-travellers and bustling with activities. During peak hours, throngs of people can be seen warmly receiving loved ones, tearfully bidding farewell to family and friends, and hurriedly walking towards the departure gate with luggage in hand. However, during the slow periods at night, the frantic pace of the daytime is replaced by a quiet, almost gentle rhythm of strolling and ambling.

One of the busiest areas in the airport has to be the check-in area. Each time a flight is open for checking in, one can find a stream of travellers queueing up at the counters. Some travellers look impatient with the long queues that have formed, evident from the urgent tapping of their feet and the constant checking of their watches for the time. Occasionally when the queue becomes too long, the airport staff would open up another check-in counter and those who are more alert would immediately make a dash for the new counter.

The departure gates are home to poignant scenes. Wives giving their husbands lingering goodbye kisses or friends giving one another big farewell hugs are virtually the stuff of television dramas. One of the most heart-wrenching scenes I have ever witnessed took place at these gates. An elderly woman is trying to say goodbye to her children and grandchildren, who are talking to one another about their new lives in Australia as migrants with nary a goodbye or a backward look at her as they go through the gates. The tears streaming down her cheeks are perhaps signs of her knowing that it might well be the last time she sees them.

On the quiet observatory deck on the second floor of the airport, it is not uncommon to find students in every nook and cranny cramming for their examinations or tests. The peace and quiet of the deck is conducive for their studies, evidenced by the looks of intense concentration on their faces. Every now and again, the tranquillity in the area is broken by the chatter of one or two students who are taking a break from their studies. At times when more students join the group and it gets too big, the incessant chatter creates a noisy scene, inviting incensed glares from other visitors who are there for a respite from the dissonance of the other areas of the airport.

Periodically, immaculately groomed and attractive flight attendants would appear, walking across the airport floor with smiles on their faces. I am obviously partial to the flight attendants of Singapore Airlines, the national carrier of my home country. With their distinctive *sarong kebaya* accentuating their svelte bodies, these Singapore Girls look bright and fresh, all ready for a shift ahead of them. Others, while still wearing gentle smiles, look visibly tired, having just disembarked from the plane after a long-haul flight. However, as they see their family members waiting to pick them up, their faces brighten immediately.

Conclusion

General statements
about the airport

First observation:
check-in area

Second observation:
departure gates
Personal recount to
connect with readers

Third observation:
observatory deck

Fourth observation:
flight attendants

O Level English Language Specimen Paper • **Answers**

The airport has many facets which reveal themselves at different times of the day. It is a prize for the visitor who spends time taking note of them. **My challenge to you is to go to the airport one day with no agenda in mind. I assure you it will make for a very insightful trip!**

(553 words)

**Direct reference to
readers for connection**

Comprehension

Section B

Question 2

Set 5

My friends, Singapore is a first world country, a metropolitan city state that is home to people and cultures from all over the world. We have one of the best public transport systems, excellent healthcare and a corruption-free government. **It may therefore shock you to learn that, according to The Food Bank Singapore, 10 percent of Singaporeans experience food uncertainty. This means over 600 000 Singaporeans are not sure where or how their next meal is coming from.**

When I first learnt of this fact, I was immediately embarrassed. I thought back to all the times I complained about my mother's cooking, not once stopping to think about the regularity of the meals she provides. **Hunger in Singapore is unacceptable, so let us do something about it!**

The 'Hungry Hearts' programme is an initiative that brings people together to cook and prepare food for those who do not have enough, particularly in the Sembawang area where our school is located. I know a good number of us are taking Food and Consumer Education (FCE) as an 'O' level subject, so this is an excellent opportunity to put your skills to good use, for the benefit of those less-advantaged. The good news is that all the ingredients will be provided through the programme's fundraising team, so all you have to do is to avail your culinary expertise.

Can't cook? No worries! 'Hungry Hearts' is also looking for volunteers to feed some of the beneficiaries who are not able to feed themselves. They need patient and gentle volunteers who will not only help to nourish their bodies, but also lend a listening ear. Who knows? You may be treated to an interesting blast from the past!

Can't cook and not good with people? You're in luck! Your hands alone can do plenty! While other volunteers are cooking and interacting, you can stay safely behind the scenes by helping to ensure that all the crockery and cutlery are properly washed and cleaned. You can also assist in the packing of the food items for those who want to grab and go. Your efforts here will be invaluable as you are keeping the beneficiaries healthy by maintaining a high standard of hygiene.

Taking part in this programme can't be easier. After filling up this form which I will pass around later, all you need to do is to meet me during our usual CCA timings, and I will bring us to where the programme has set up that day. The venue changes weekly, so do expect some light travelling. If you are cooking, you may also want to bring some additional clothes as you may get splattered. We may occasionally stay beyond the usual end time of 5 p.m. if we are serving many people that day. Rest assured that this is purely voluntary, so feel free to leave when you need to.

General statements about Singapore

Use statistics to highlight situation / attract audience's attention.

Personal reflection to connect with audience
State stand / soft call to action

Introduce the programme. / State first way to help.
Connect the programme's initiative to audience's skills.

State second way to help.

State the benefit.

State third way to help.

State the benefit.

Explain the logistics of joining the programme.

It is my hope that everyone in our group joins this most worthy cause. I can already imagine all of us having a great time being of service to others. Join me to stamp out hunger in Singapore!

Thank you!

(518 words)

Section C

3 Describe a shopping centre that you frequent regularly.

As one is walking down Orchard Road, the seemingly endless belt of shopping centres beckons the countless pedestrians to enter. Each shopping centre has its appeal and some have an almost clannish following of patrons. **One shopping centre that is constantly filled with customers would be Ngee Ann City.**

As one enters the main shopping area, the central block is filled with a dazzling array of colourful displays to entice the shoppers. Shops are carefully arranged according to the type of merchandise they sell. Shoes, bags and accessories dominate one of the levels while sports equipment and outfits fill another. Shoppers can simply head to the level that interests them, or simply mill around the huge expanse to take in the myriad range of goods they can buy.

Ngee Ann City is also home to many top international brands. Elegant and classy, these shops stand aloof of others, exuding a kind of royal charm that can be slightly intimidating to those of us on a limited budget. Not that that is of any concern to these shops. The constant flow of customers queueing to enter them is testament to the fact that there are many who are willing and able to purchase their offerings. Such stylish shops add a touch of prestige and glamour to this grand dame of shopping centres.

A shopping centre is not complete without places to eat—at least, not in Singapore! Ngee Ann City excels in this, with a comprehensive list of dining options that is sure to tantalise even the most discerning taste buds. The diverse cuisine, from Thai to Western, Mediterranean to Korean, can be found throughout the building, whether in the food court, restaurants, cafés or fast-food outlets, and they are more than a match for the desires of the hungry shoppers.

Then there are the practical facilities. Ngee Ann City has a sprawling block of offices as well as a range of amenities such as a post office and automatic teller machines of various banks. The basement is largely occupied by a Japanese supermarket that not only sells the usual offerings of a local supermarket, but also fresh imports directly from Japan. One is spoilt for choice with the variety of fish and fruits as well as popular Japanese delights such as sushi and sashimi.

Ngee Ann City remains my favourite shopping centre as it is the one place where I can find everything I want. Few shopping centres can match its size, variety and sheer good energy!

(418 words)

Call to action

General statements about shopping centres

State your favourite shopping centre.

First observation: the large variety of shops and goods

Second observation: high-end shops

Third observation: food and beverage outlets

Fourth observation: amenities

Conclusion

4 'Restrictions should be placed on the use of mobile phones in public areas like restaurants and theatres.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

The last decade has seen an explosive growth in the use of the mobile phone and has compelled some regulations to govern its use in specific areas. Schools have banned the use of mobile phones in classrooms and airlines have restricted the same in aeroplanes during take-off and landing. With increasing reports on the misuse of mobile phones and the disturbances caused in public areas such as libraries, restaurants and theatres, **I believe the use of mobile phone should be restricted in certain public areas as they cause disturbances that affect the public peace, and may endanger the lives of user and the public at large.**

One of the most powerful arguments for the restriction of mobile phone usage is the amount of disturbance it causes to the public space. In places such as trains, restaurants and movie theatres, the sudden ringing of an incoming call or message can greatly disrupt the enjoyment of those around. Social media platforms are replete with videos and pictures of inconsiderate commuters watching videos and playing games without earphones, and loudly talking and laughing to their friends on the other side of their mobile phones, infringing upon the rights of other commuters to a peaceful ride. **Therefore, restrictions on the use of mobile phones in such places will allow people to enjoy the amenities that they have paid for.**

Irritation from inconsideration escalates to a matter of safety when it comes to using mobile phones in public areas such as parks and beaches. Many activities are carried out in such spaces such as cycling, roller-blading and skating, all of which involve a certain amount of speed. Should the people there be engrossed in watching a video or playing a game on their phones, they may not be aware of the activities around them. While it is the responsibility of those carrying out the activities to be vigilant and careful, it is one's duty to take care of oneself, and being aware of one's surroundings can be the difference between being well and being badly injured. To combat this, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) Singapore started an initiative in 2019 where large yellow stickers on the ground that says 'Look Up' are pasted on the ground to encourage pedestrians to look up from their phones. **This highlights the danger of using mobile phones in public areas, justifying the need for restrictions.**

There would be those who are of the opinion that such restrictions infringe upon the rights of mobile phone owners to freely use their devices. However, the exercise of one's rights should not deprive others of their rights. The disturbance of peace and endangerment of the lives of others through their mobile phone usage cannot be permitted on the basis of a single person's rights. Rather, the rights of the public to a safe and peaceful surrounding should be upheld.

As the advent of technology continues with growing speed and rapidity, there are bound to be many more of such issues emerging. Perhaps the key to this is to return to the teaching of values like consideration and other-centredness. Mobile phones are after all simply tools; those who use them will determine their effects.

(529 words)

General statements about the use of mobile phones in public areas

Thesis statement

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Counter-argument
Rebuttal

Conclusion

5 'Money is the root of all evil.' What are your views?

The famous American author, Louisa May Alcott, once said that 'Money is the root of all evil, and yet it is such a useful root that we cannot get on without it any more than we can without potatoes.' No one can dispute the necessity of money, but can we pin all the blame on money for the evils committed by people?

Like many things, money is a tool. In and of itself, it has no inherent quality to make it either good or bad. Just like guns. As the popular slogan goes—guns don't kill people, people kill people. Money can no more be the root of all evil than having a gun make one a murderer. The perception of money on the other hand is a more appropriate suspect as being the root of all evil. Believing that money to be the way to status, fame and happiness has propelled many to go to all sorts of means to obtain it. While the majority work hard and spend prudently, there are those who want to get rich quick. These are the bank robbers, swindlers and fraudsters, who for their love of money, go down the way of evil. Money is therefore not rightly the root of all evil; the love of money is.

That said, even the love of money cannot be said to be the root of all evil. Many evil deeds are committed for reasons that have nothing to do with money. During World War II, Hitler had over six million Jews executed, and his reason was ethnic purity, not money. In 1994, figure skater Tonya Harding conspired to have her competitor, Nancy Kerrigan, assaulted so she would not be able to compete in the Olympics for the coveted status of Olympic champion. While being crowned an Olympic champion was likely to have some financial gain, intense jealousy could also be a likely motivation, and that Harding simply wanted all the glory to herself. In both cases, neither money nor the love of money was the motivation behind these heinous acts, which is why money is not the root of all evil.

As money is directly linked to material possessions, it is a very useful tool. It can be seen as the one tool to obtain many other tools. Because of this, many people have a distorted view of money, thinking it can be used to buy everything, which leads to an unhealthy love of money. No matter how useful money is, it cannot buy those which are the most important in life: friends, family, and connection.

(432 words)

6 'Remembering past events is important.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

Past events cannot be undone, so is there any purpose in holding onto the memories of them? Will the vestiges of past traditions and methods impede the progress of mankind? I am of the opinion that remembering past events is important as it serves as lessons for future generations, and for those responsible to take accountability.

Quote to generate interest

Rhetorical question

Topic sentence / Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence/ Point

Example

Elaboration
Link

Conclusion

Thesis statement

Significant past events, such as wars, serve as lessons for future generations. For the many who have suffered atrocities of wars, the records of such events are of great importance to them. They serve to warn future generations against walking down the same path that led to the horrifying events such as the Holocaust conducted by the Nazis against the Jews as well as other groups that have left many dead and even more permanently traumatised and scarred. The extent of damage sustained in the past serves as a deterrent against similar events occurring again. **These events should always be remembered.**

Those who are responsible must be made accountable as many are only able to move on after their ordeals have been addressed as well as given recognition. Furore erupted when Japan made known her intention to 'rewrite' history by glossing over the events of World War II, especially the atrocity known as 'The Rape of Nanking'. Such a gross denial of past wrongdoings is an insult to the many victims who experienced great suffering. Only after the records were corrected did the indignation subside. Accurate historical records provide proper closure to the terrible past and allow society as a whole to move on. This applies also to the appalling acts of inhumanity during the rule of the Cambodian Khmer Rouge and China's Chairman Mao, as well as mass killings in Rwanda. **Remembering these events holds those responsible accountable so that those they have harmed can receive closure and begin the process of healing.**

Of course, some would argue that a person living in the past will not be able to contribute to progress. To think out of the box, break barriers, create and produce original inventions all stem from moving beyond past knowledge. That said, it was Geroge Santayana who wisely noted, 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it'. Failures of the past can help move to a better future. Progress is often the product of observing and learning from past mistakes, not merely to avoid them, but to take a look why they occurred in the first place.

Remembering the past is far from pointless. It serves to remind and prevent future generations from repeating past mistakes, while providing closure to some. The conservation of beautiful products of the past is like a gift that bestows joy to the present and the future.

(455 words)

Topic sentence / Point

Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence / Point

Elaboration

Example

Link

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Conclusion

Section B

Question 2

Set 6

Art Meets Heart in the Lion City

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has put a crimp in many a travel plan. Thus, it is no small feat that in its wake, Singapore received 12 million visitors in 2023 alone! Here is one of the reasons people all over the world visit the Lion City: Gardens by the Bay.

Among the many attractions the metropolitan city state has to offer, one of the most outstanding has to be Gardens by the Bay. Living up to its reputation of being a garden city, Gardens by the Bay boast an impressive array of attractions for all things flora.

Be dazzled by one of the tallest man-made waterfalls in the Cloud Forest. Feast your eyes on a diverse range of flowers and plants in the Flower Dome. Satisfy your curiosity by seeing rare and exotic blooms and foliage and learn all about how they survive and thrive in the tropical climate. As you traverse the various trails, observe the intricate ways art and the beauty of nature can be creatively combined and eloquently expressed. Photo opportunities abound at every turn and corner where you can take as many Insta-worthy pictures as your heart desires!

Indulge your inner adventurer by wandering beyond the two conservatories to find yourself among the Supertrees, Singapore's distinctive tree-like gardens. These futuristic structures are not merely an innovative way to exhibit flowers and plants, but come sunset, these Supertrees join the brilliance of the setting sun with a laser and light show that will illuminate the dark skies with hope, joy, and passion.

From the ground to the skies, elevate yourself by taking a stroll up the walkways where you will be greeted by a panoramic view of the entire Gardens by the Bay. Beyond the gardens, you will also enjoy a view of the skyline of Singapore, whose architecture is planned with as much care and love as Lion City extends to you. It is a scene that will surely take your breath and your heart away.

For an unforgettable experience both visual and visceral, make your way to Gardens by the Bay!

(346 words)

Catchy headline

Context statement
about tourism in
Singapore

State attraction

Stating Gardens by
the Bay as one of
many attractions

Highlighting main
attractions at Gardens
by the Bay
Using vivid verbs to
generate interest

Highlighting
attractions outside
Gardens by the Bay

Using vivid verbs to
generate interest

Highlight the
panoramic view

Emotional appeal

Use of rhyme to
emphasise call to
action

Section C**3 Describe the appeal of Singapore to tourists around the world.**

Tourists are a common sight in Singapore. There are many attractions in this city-state which draw in visitors from all walks of life, making our fair isle one of the most visited countries in the world.

When we think of France, we tend to think of the Eiffel Tower; for the United States of America, it is the Statue of Liberty. For this flourishing city, we have the Merlion. The Merlion can be found on the island of Sentosa, a popular attraction among tourists and locals alike. The massive symbol towers over the many visitors milling around the various locations. There are the stretches of beaches where tourists can bask in the warm tropical sun, play beach volleyball or take a dip in the sparkling waters. Sentosa is also home to one of the most famous theme parks in the world: Universal Studios. Non-stop fun awaits visitors there, from dizzying roller-coaster rides to interactive exhibitions that are sure to thrill even the most adventurous!

Tourists must also make a point to visit the Singapore Mandai Zoo. It has the distinction of being the world's best rainforest zoo, and is home to some 4200 animals within its reserve. The zoo is divided into zones, each with its own unique and enthralling exhibits and inhabitants. Tourists can see not only animals from the tropics, but also many that are found in other climates and countries. Truly a one stop for animal lovers!

Apart from the tourist attractions, I feel that the most attractive part of Singapore is her people. The diverse cultures and traditions of our harmonious multi-racial society holds much appeal, especially for your tastebuds. Walking through Little India, there are colourful saris, temples and blaring Bollywood music that a visitor can experience. Hungry ones can also flock to try dishes such as fish head curry and roti prata. Nearby, another immersion into the Malay culture awaits the explorer at Kampong Glam. Indulge in nasi lemak, fragrant coconut rice with sweet sambal sauce and delight in the savoury mee rebus. Remember to head to Chinatown, which comes alive especially during the Chinese New Year. Shops adorned with Chinese calligraphy and paper cutting offer trinkets such as folding fans and jade jewellery. Nearby, a dizzying array of authentic Chinese delights like chicken rice and wanton noodles await.

Even though this little island does not have awe-inspiring canyons, mountains or valleys, there is still much to do and experience in Singapore. Beyond the unique attractions, Singapore's spirit of harmony, mutual respect, and tolerance is perhaps the biggest draw. We welcome visitors to our little red dot, and I am sure tourists can feel the warmth of our hospitality, which makes Singapore one of most popular travel destinations in the world.

(457 words)

General statement about tourism in Singapore

Stating Singapore's icon against other famous icons.

Highlighting the appeal of Sentosa

Attraction: Singapore Mandai Zoo
Highlighting the appeal of Singapore Mandai Zoo

Attraction: Multi-ethnicity (food)

Highlighting the appeal of Singapore's multi-ethnicity

Conclude by emphasising the intangible appeal of Singapore that is her citizens

4 'Animals should be kept in cages.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

The image of a cage is synonymous to the loss of freedom. Although animals should have the right to be free, sometimes there are valid reasons that require them to be caged. **I agree that animals should be kept in cages in the case of food production and scientific investigation.**

In the production of food, animals like chicken, ducks and geese need to be contained in order for them to be fed and cared for. While these animals by nature require open spaces to roam about, economic reasons can make this difficult. In order to maximise available space, producers need to keep these animals in cages, usually small to the point of discomfort. These animals suffer the indignity and discomfort of such treatment until they are slaughtered. That said, producers are limited by the need to keep food prices competitive and costs down, which greatly hampers their ability to make more humane the living conditions of these animals. Chickens kept in cages are unable spread their wings completely, and may promote violent behaviour like pecking other chickens. **Thus, at this point, animals that are used for the production of food need to be caged.**

In the case of scientific investigation, animals are captured for the sake of studying them. Scientists who carry out such studies aim to learn how animals behave and contribute to science; they also learn more about each animal's habitat and life cycle, aiding conservation efforts. While captured, these animals must reside in cages, so that the observations can be made, and any measurements taken are accurate. The cages are also necessary if the animals are taken in to treat injuries they may have sustained. These animals need to be protected from other animals, and perhaps even from itself. While the time spent in the cages may be uncomfortable, these scientists often release the captured animals back to their natural habitats after they have obtained the information they require. **Therefore, putting animals in cages for the purpose of scientific investigation is acceptable.**

There are those who would say that animals have a right to roam freely about, without any form of constraint. While this is ideal, the development of man requires that some constraints be applied, especially in the case of urban development. If an area is to be cleared of trees and natural foliage, which are the homes of many different animals, would it be better to deprive them of their homes and leave them to the mercy of the elements, or to place them in cages where they can be cared for? **Urban development should of course be done in as humane a way as possible, but when needs must, placing animals in cages is preferable to death.**

To have animals roaming freely is a lovely thought and an ideal situation. However, life is far from ideal. Humans are the dominant lifeforms on earth, and along with that status comes the difficult decisions regarding the treatment of other living things. While caging animals may be inhumane, it is nevertheless necessary.

(505 words)

General statements
about topic
Thesis statement

Topic sentence/ Point
Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence/ Point
Elaboration

Use of positive
outcome as
justification
Link

Counter-argument
Rebuttal

Rhetorical question to
emphasise point

Link

Conclusion

5 'Money is more important than interest in choosing a career.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

Every person has different reasons for working but we work because we want to obtain something that we need from work and that something becomes the driving force for our work. Some may choose to work out of interest for the job because they truly love what they do while others work primarily for the money. **Personally, I would choose interest over money in a career.**

The idea that dangling money and other goodies in front of people will motivate them to work harder is the conventional wisdom in our society. Whatever you call it—salary, bonuses or benefits—money is the one thing that pays the bills and determines one's lifestyle. Money is also the main reason why employers are often at the risk of losing their best workers to a better-paying employer. Competent workers leave because they feel they are not equitably remunerated.

However, nobody can be forced to like something if they are not motivated. Sure, money matters and is important, which is why it certainly can motivate someone into investing the time and effort into doing something in exchange for it. However, if the person does not enjoy the work, their hearts are not in what they do—it is akin to having the body without the soul.

Evidence also lends credence to the argument that interest is more important than money. It was reported that 82 per cent of US workers would pursue their dream job even if it meant taking a reduction in pay, according to a global poll conducted by a job-search and job-recruiting website. Closer to home, the local news ran a feature on Mr Seow, founder of catering firm Purple Sage, who took an 80 per cent pay cut from his previous job to pursue his interest in catering. For these people, it is evident that money does not dictate their job.

Job interest then, as an intrinsic motivator, will keep a person longer at a job than money, which is an extrinsic motivator, because intrinsic motivation can propel a person to do work and allow him to be truly happy doing it. Thus, what motivates is a job one is interested in, which allows a feeling of achievement, responsibility, growth, recognition and most of all, enjoyment when the work is done.

While this may sound very idealistic, I will personally choose interest over money when it comes to choosing a job. Of course, the job needs to be able to provide for my basic needs, but once those are met, I can be confident I will be happy doing my job. There is a saying: choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.

(452 words)

General statements regarding the main topic: money vs interest

State direction of essay

Discuss money as the usual motivation for work.

Introduce the idea that money is not the only motivator.

Discuss interest as being more important than money in a career choice.

Example

Discuss interest as being a better motivator than money.

Conclude with personal position.

6 'Advertising is a form of manipulation.' Do you agree? Why or why not?

A milk commercial may inform consumers about the nutritional benefits of drinking milk, but using a popular celebrity as the spokesperson clearly suggests that advertising goes beyond just providing information. While the goal of advertising is to inform the consumer of goods and services, the contention is that it is more than just a provider of information. **I agree that advertising is a form of manipulation as it uses emotional appeals and celebrity endorsements.**

Utilising emotional appeal is an advertising technique in which the advertiser tries to play up the emotions of the audience, often in lieu of providing rational information. Advertisers often appeal to sentiment, often through images like babies, cute animals and touching parent-child interactions. Another kind of emotional appeal that is very popular is the fear appeal, where the advertiser implicitly or explicitly takes advantage of people's anxieties to sell a product. An advertisement for mosquito repellent might show a scenario of a child having many mosquito bites because he was not amply protected. Parents wanting the best for their children may feel guilty if they do not buy the advertised product. **It can therefore be seen that advertising with emotional appeal is manipulative.**

Celebrity endorsements are also used in advertisements to relate consumers to the celebrities and hence to the brand itself. Using a celebrity for the brand connotes the idea that if the star uses the product, then it must be good. It can also create the effect that by using the recommended product, the consumer can somehow become like the celebrity. Many of these advertisements do not quite make sense, if one takes the time to think about it. What does Tiger Woods, a golf champion, have to do with a shaving razor? What does Orlando Bloom, a famous actor, have to do with a car? What does Beyonce, a talented singer, have to do with a soft drink? Sadly, few think about this, which is why advertising is manipulative.

Some would say that some advertisements are objective as they employ expert opinions to sell their products. The premise is that if the experts say that a product is good, it must be good for everyone. It is not uncommon to find an advertisement for toothpaste claiming that 'four out of five dentists recommend a certain brand of toothpaste for their patients' or advertisements for household detergent claiming that 'doctors certify that it kills 99.9 per cent of germs'. However, much of these statistics is unverified or unverifiable. Some basic questions like 'who are these dentists?' and 'what area of speciality are these doctors?' will quickly reveal that the statistics are quite meaningless, included only to manipulate viewers into buying the product.

Advertising thus goes beyond just informing consumers about the product—its aim is to persuade people to buy products and at the very least, to have the brand imprinted in people's minds. With the degree of persuasion that goes on in advertising, it is all the more important for consumers to be critically aware of the messages embedded in advertisements.

(506 words)

General statements
about topic

Thesis statement

Topic sentence/ Point
(through definition)

Elaboration

Example

Link

Topic sentence/ Point
Elaboration

Use of rhetorical
questions as examples
of illogical celebrity
endorsement
Link

Counter-argument

Rebuttal

Link

Conclusion

Sec 4 - Paper 1
Set 1 to 6
Answer Guide
EPH - Alex Wang