

Name and Register Number:

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SENG KANG SECONDARY SCHOOL END-OF-YEAR EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SECONDARY TWO EXPRESS

Paper 2 Comprehension

23 September 2024

1 hour 50 minutes

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Section A

Study the infographic (**Text 1**) and the extract from a blog (**Text 2**) and answer Questions 1–3 in the Question Paper.

Text 1 is taken from an infographic published by the Health Promotion Board.



5 WAYS TO FIGHT FLU

				
PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE	STOP THE SPREAD			
Frequent hand washing Wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.	Influenza vaccination Ask your doctor about flu vaccination.	Go to the doctor early If you experience flu-like symptoms, seek treatment.	Stay Home If you are unwell, rest at home and avoid school, work and crowded places.	Use tissues or masks Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Always wear a mask if you are unwell.

Text 2 is taken from a social media post about a Netizen's experience with the flu bug.

Absolutely fed up with this flu bug! I caught it after a crowded event where no one was following basic hygiene practices. People were sneezing and coughing without covering up, and the ventilation was terrible. Now, it's spreading like wildfire because so many are ignoring health advice and not taking simple precautions. It's frustrating to see how easily things could be avoided with a little common sense and basic care. Can't believe how quickly it's all spiraled out of control. This needs to be nipped in the bud.

Section B

Text 3

In the text below, the writer describes the search for his sister-in-law's missing dog, and its effect on him.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 4 – 11 in the Question Paper.

- 1 I wasn't at my sister-in-law's in Sri Lanka at the time her dog Siri died, but the peculiar circumstances of his passing, from a Westerner's perspective, anyway, have haunted me ever since. To be honest, I have never really been very fond of dogs as a species. They drool too much. They stink. Many of them have a kind of permanent bad breath. And if they haven't been well trained or trained at all, they're nothing short of a nuisance: pawing you, jumping on you, sniffing you in places you'd rather not be sniffed. So it is all the more strange that I should have grown to love Siri. 5
- 2 Our experiences with Siri had been limited to our holidays in Sri Lanka, but nevertheless we'd developed a deep connection with him. He was the runt of the litter and so was only two-thirds the size of the average juvenile Labrador Retriever. Yet he had that unmistakable muscular build unique to his breed. He loved the water and at heart, if not in practice, was a retriever. I remember how at the word 'ball', he would bolt from Sonali's bungalow and run a circuit from one end of the yard to the other until someone threw the ball. 10
- 3 Shortly before Siri's death, my wife and I arrived in Colombo for our annual summer holiday in Sri Lanka. On our itinerary was a few days at my sister-in-law's bungalow located on the outskirts of Colombo. Whenever we're in Sri Lanka, a stay at Sonali's place is always a welcome respite from the diesel exhaust and garbage-ridden streets of Colombo. Her bungalow sits on a two-acre strip of land overlooking a small lake, or vava. The vava attracts wildlife from all over the area, including elephants from the park. We sometimes sit for hours on Sonali's verandah training our binoculars on the scrub jungle just north of the vava. If we're lucky, we can see an entire herd of elephants from calves to matriarch steal from the jungle, make their way cautiously to the water's edge, and then drink and play and bathe with an air of contentment not even a Buddhist monk could attain. 15 20
- 4 We arrived late in the afternoon. The old caretaker greeted us, took our bags, and we settled into the guestroom. He informed us that Sonali had been out searching for one of her two dogs since early morning. Apparently Siri had gone missing the day before while Sonali was away on a camping trip upcountry. The signs were not auspicious, he explained, as the dog had not been seen by anyone for over twenty-four hours. Also, something had spooked Tunza, Sonali's German shepherd; he had been hiding under the picnic table on the verandah for approximately the duration of Siri's absence and had refused to come out even when tempted with his favourite food. 25
- 5 Sonali did not return for dinner. My wife and I waited at the picnic table until our meal of curry, lentils, and roti grew cold. Not that the cold food mattered, for we had long since lost our appetites. The Siri affair weighed heavily on everyone. We sat at the table for a while in silence, picking at our food with our fingers. The sun had already set, and the geckos had begun to gather about the electric lanterns, feeding on mosquitoes and other insects and making their incessant squawking sounds. Every now and then Tunza shifted his position at our feet. 30
- 6 Not until well after dinner did Sonali finally return home. Her search for Siri had been unsuccessful, and now she feared the worst. Earlier that day one of the park rangers had noticed a crocodile circling a spot in the vava, about twenty feet from shore. It could mean only one thing, Sonali said. The crocodile was guarding a kill, which it had lodged in the lakebed. Sonali and the park ranger had decided that before dredging the vava they would first exhaust the search for Siri on land. That had been done, so the next step was to turn to the water. At first light tomorrow, they would search the vava. I lay in bed that night, thinking with dread about the possibility that a crocodile had taken Siri. I couldn't think of a worse way of dying. 35 40

- 7 The next morning, at my wife's suggestion, I offered to act as lookout for Sonali and the park ranger while they searched the vava. I climbed the nearest palu tree, where I positioned myself with the binoculars at the best vantage point. With the binoculars, I scanned the vava for any signs of danger. The two of them waded in slowly. The water was up to their chests by the time they reached the spot the crocodile had been circling the day before. Together they searched the lakebed with their feet, moving in tight concentric circles. Sonali stopped, as if she'd found something, took a deep breath and disappeared beneath the water. A few seconds later she emerged from the water, a black mass in her arms. I took a closer look with the binoculars. The black mass was Siri's remains. I lowered the binoculars; I'd seen enough. 45 50
- 8 From my perch, I had the sudden urge to rage against crocodiles, to voice what Tunza could not. It struck me that crocodiles and their kind were nothing but brutal killing machines. What redeeming qualities did they have? I could think of none. They were cold-blooded in every sense of the word, and they preyed indiscriminately on both the weak and the strong. Siri was proof of that. A crocodile took him not because he was weak or unfit but because he had the misfortune of not being jungle-wise, and of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. 55

Adapted from The Water's Edge by Jason Zeitler
<https://outofprintmagazine.co.in/2024/03/29/the-waters-edge/>
 Accessed 11 August 2024

Section C

Text 4

The article below is about slum tourism.

Read it carefully and answer Questions 12–18 in the Question Paper.

- 1 Slum tourism, also known as poverty tourism, is an increasingly prevalent phenomenon where tourists visit impoverished areas, often termed "slums," to observe the living conditions of those in extreme poverty. This practice has sparked considerable debate. Critics and supporters alike discuss its ethical concerns and the effects it has on both the local communities and tourists who engage in it. 5
- 2 Slum tourism emerged from a growing interest in experiencing "authentic" local cultures, driven by an increasing demand for unique and immersive travel experiences. To meet these demands, tour operators in various cities around the world, including Mumbai, Rio de Janeiro, and Johannesburg, began offering guided tours through low-income neighborhoods, promising tourists a glimpse into the lives of the less fortunate. The motivations behind slum tourism are varied. For some, it is a quest for authenticity, seeking to understand the stark realities of life in poverty-stricken areas. Others view it as an opportunity to witness social issues first-hand and contribute to poverty alleviation efforts. However, the practice is surrounded by moral concerns and the impact on the communities being visited is minimal. 10
- 3 One of the main ethical concerns surrounding slum tourism is exploitation. Critics argue that these tours often turn the suffering of residents into a spectacle for entertainment. This can lead to a degrading experience for both tourists and residents as it reduces complex social issues to satisfy mere curiosities of the privileged in society. 15
- 4 The presence of tourists in slum areas can also lead to a phenomenon where the focus is on exaggerating the hardships of residents. This is problematic as it can reinforce stereotypes and label the people living in these areas unfairly, instead of promoting real understanding. Furthermore, the economic benefits of slum tourism are often limited. For example, while some local businesses may profit from the influx of tourists, most of the money earned from these tours usually goes to the tour operators, not the residents themselves. 20
- 5 Slum tourism can also lead to negative consequences, such as increased tension between residents and tourists. The presence of outsiders can disrupt daily life, leading to a sense of intrusion and discomfort among residents. Additionally, turning poverty into a business can lead to superficial solutions that fail to address systemic issues, continuing rather than alleviating the cycle of poverty. 25
- 6 The debate surrounding slum tourism highlights the need for a thoughtful approach to addressing poverty and promoting ethical tourism. For those interested in visiting impoverished communities, it is important to be ethical and strive for meaningful interactions rather than merely observing your surroundings. Tourists can take steps to ensure that their visits have a positive impact, such as choosing tours operated by organisations that are committed to social responsibility and community development. Engaging with local leaders and residents to understand their perspectives and needs can also help ensure that supports, rather than harms, efforts to address poverty. 30 35
- 7 Additionally, supporting initiatives that empower local communities and promote sustainable development can help create more fair and respectful forms of tourism. This might include investing in projects that enhance education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for residents, rather than focusing solely on the tourism industry. For example, some tour operators 40

partner with local nonprofits or social enterprises to ensure that a portion of the tour revenue supports community development initiatives. These projects might include building infrastructure, funding educational programs, or providing healthcare services. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of such initiatives are often debated, and the extent to which they address the underlying causes of poverty is uncertain. 45

Adapted from Inside the Controversial World of Slum Tourism by Christine Bednarz
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/history-controversy-debate-slum-tourism>.
Accessed 10 August 2024.

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