HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 1

READING

PRACTICE PAPER · QUESTION-ANSWER BOOK

1 hour 30 minutes

Original texts written for practice. This is not an HKEAA past paper and it is not a live examination script.

INSTRUCTIONS

There are two parts, A and B. Attempt ALL of Part A. Then attempt EITHER Part B1 (easier) OR Part B2 (more difficult).

Candidates attempting Parts A and B2 can be awarded the full range of levels. Level 4 is the highest level attainable by candidates attempting Parts A and B1.

Write your answers in the spaces provided. Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

For multiple-choice questions, choose one letter only. For True / False / Not Given, write T, F or NG. A tick is not a substitute for NG.

The total for the parts you attempt is 84 marks: Part A 42 marks, plus Part B1 or Part B2 42 marks.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on Part A and about 45 minutes on the Part B you choose.

Name _____

Class _____ Date _____

I am attempting B1 ☐ B2 ☐

PART A

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1–24. (42 marks)

Text 1 · Keeping the Glow

[1] From the street, Leung's workshop looks closed. The metal shutter is down to chest height, and the only light is a pink tube bent into the shape of a goldfish. Step under the shutter, though, and the room is busy. Glass tubes lie on a wooden bench. A gas burner hisses. Mr Leung, who has bent neon in Sham Shui Po for forty-one years, does not look up when visitors enter. "If you are here to take a photo, stand by the wall," he says. "The floor is for working."

[2] Neon is not paint and it is not a sticker. A sign-maker heats a glass tube until it is soft, then bends it, freehand, into letters or pictures. The tube is filled with a gas that glows when electricity passes through it. Different gases give different colours. Leung still mixes the gases himself. He keeps the recipes in a notebook that has no cover. "A machine can copy a shape," he says. "It cannot decide when the glass is about to break."

[3] The shop used to supply restaurants across Kowloon. In 2012 Leung employed five people. Then landlords raised rents, and restaurants replaced tubes with printed light boxes, which are cheaper to hang and easier to repair. By 2019 only Leung and one assistant remained. The assistant left for a delivery job that paid more. For two years Leung worked alone. He thought he would lock the door when his hands got too stiff to hold the burner.

[4] Mei Wong found him by accident. She was a design student looking for a typeface that did not look as if a computer had drawn it. A teacher sent her to the goldfish sign. She asked for a two-week placement. Leung said no, then watched her sweep the floor without being asked, and said she could stay if she did not touch the burner. She touched it on the fourth day. He shouted. She came back the next morning. That was three years ago. She is now his only apprentice, and she is paid a trainee wage that she tops up with weekend shifts in a café.

[5] Not everyone who visits wants a sign. Tour guides bring groups who stay for twelve minutes. They praise the "dying art" and leave. Leung hates the phrase. "I am not dying," he told one guide. "I am working." Mei is more patient with the cameras, because the videos sometimes bring a real order: a cha chaan teng in Tai Po, a bookstore in Central, a clinic that wanted its name in both Chinese and English. Those orders keep the gas bottles paid for. They do not, Leung admits, replace the restaurant contracts he lost.

[6] There is also a fight about the building. The landlord has applied to redevelop the block. A residents' group has asked the government to list the workshop as a place of cultural interest. Leung has not joined the group. "If they save the shop but not the rent," he says, "they have saved a room." Mei has joined. She thinks a listing might buy them time to train two more apprentices. Leung thinks time without orders is just a slower way to close.

[7] On a Tuesday in March the goldfish flickered and went dark. A wire had cracked. Mei climbed the ladder while Leung talked her through the repair from the pavement, because his knee would not take the climb. A small crowd filmed them. When the fish glowed again, people clapped. Leung waved them away. Back inside, he wrote the repair in the coverless notebook, on a page Mei had numbered because the old pages had none. "You number things when you expect someone else to read them," she said. He did not answer, but he did not rub the number out.

[8] The redevelopment decision is due in June. Mei has started an evening class for secondary students, six places, paid for by a design museum. Leung refused to let the class use the burner. They bend plastic tubes instead, which do not glow. "They can learn the shape," he says. "The fire can wait." He has not said what he

will do if the block comes down. Mei has. She has priced a smaller unit in an industrial building in Kwai Chung. The rent is lower. The street, she knows, will not see the goldfish from a bus. Leung has not said yes. He has started leaving the notebook on her side of the bench.

1. The goldfish in paragraph 1 is … **(1 mark)**

A. a pet Leung keeps in the workshop.
B. a neon sign outside the shutter.
C. a painting on the metal shutter.
D. the name of a restaurant he supplies.

2. According to paragraph 1, why must visitors stand by the wall? **(1 mark)**

3. Find ONE word in paragraph 2 which means “done by hand, without a machine guiding the shape”. **(1 mark)**

4. According to paragraph 2, what can a machine NOT do? **(1 mark)**

5. What does “It” in “It cannot decide when the glass is about to break” (paragraph 2) refer to? **(1 mark)**

6. Read paragraph 3 and decide whether each statement is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG). Blacken one circle only, or write the letter. **(4 marks)**

	T	F	NG
(1) Leung employed five people in 2012.			
(2) Printed light boxes are harder to repair than neon tubes.			
(3) The assistant who left now earns more than Leung.			
(4) Leung thought of closing the shop if his hands became too stiff.			

7. Why did restaurants stop using neon tubes? Give TWO reasons from paragraph 3. **(2 marks)**

8. Complete the sentence with ONE word taken from paragraph 4. Spelling must be correct. **(1 mark)**

Mei was looking for a (i) _____ that did not look as if a computer had drawn it.

9. Which statement about Mei's first days is true? **(1 mark)**

A. Leung agreed to the two-week placement at once.
B. She was allowed to stay after she swept the floor.
C. She never touched the burner.
D. She stopped coming after Leung shouted at her.

10. How long has Mei been Leung's apprentice? **(1 mark)**

11. Why is Mei willing to be filmed, according to paragraph 5? **(1 mark)**

12. Name TWO customers who ordered signs after seeing the videos. **(2 marks)**

13. Find ONE word in paragraph 5 which means "says, unwillingly, that something is true". **(1 mark)**

14. How does Leung feel about the tour groups? **(1 mark)**

A. Grateful that they stay for twelve minutes.
B. Proud to be described as a dying art.
C. Annoyed that they treat his work as a display.
D. Eager to appear in their photographs.

15. What does Leung mean by "they have saved a room" (paragraph 6)? **(2 marks)**

16. Who holds each view? Write L for Mr Leung or M for Mei. **(4 marks)**

(1)	A cultural listing might buy time to train two more apprentices.	
(2)	Time without orders is only a slower way to close.	
(3)	Learners can start with shapes; the fire can wait.	
(4)	A cheaper unit is worth pricing, even if a bus cannot see the goldfish.	

17. Who climbed the ladder in March, and why did Leung stay on the pavement? **(2 marks)**

18. What did Mei do to the notebook page, and what reason does she give? **(2 marks)**

19. Leung did not answer Mei. What did he do that shows he let the number stay? **(1 mark)**

20. The evening class bends plastic tubes because … **(1 mark)**

A. the museum cannot afford glass.
B. Leung will not let the class use the burner.
C. plastic tubes glow more brightly than neon.
D. the students do not want to learn shapes.

21. Find ONE word in paragraph 8 which describes the Kwai Chung rent compared with the present shop. **(1 mark)**

_____

22. Give TWO differences between the present shop and the unit Mei has priced. **(2 marks)**

_____

_____

23. What does Leung's habit of leaving the notebook on Mei's side of the bench suggest? Explain. **(2 marks)**

_____

_____

24. Complete this summary with ONE word taken from Text 1 for each gap. You may use a word only once. Spelling must be correct. **(6 marks)**

Mr Leung has bent neon for (i) _____ years. Many restaurants later chose printed light (ii) _____. Mei adds to her trainee wage with weekend work in a (iii) _____. A residents' group wants the workshop listed as a place of cultural (iv) _____. The March repair was needed because a (v) _____ had cracked. The redevelopment decision is due in (vi) _____.

_____

_____

_____

PART B1

Read Texts 2–4 and answer questions 25–51. Easier section. (42 marks)

Text 2 · Notice: The Pier Shelf

[1] The Pier Shelf opens on 1 April at Sai Wan Ho Ferry Pier. Anyone may take one book and leave one book. You do not need a card. The shelf is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day, including public holidays. Books must be clean and complete. Textbooks, magazines and library books are not accepted. Volunteers check the shelf at 8 p.m. Wet or torn books are removed.

[2] If you want to help, email pier.shelf@example.com. The first volunteer briefing is on 20 March at 4 p.m. in the pier office. Children under 12 should come with an adult. The shelf is paid for by the District Council this year. Next year's funding has not been confirmed.

Text 3 · She counts the books in a red exercise book

[1] Mrs Chan, 70, started the idea after she saw books left on the seats of the ferry. She used to teach Primary 3. She lives ten minutes from the pier and walks there every morning. "People already wait," she says. "They might as well read."

[2] She bought the first shelf with her own money. It cost $600. Her grandson, a university student, built a small roof so rain would not soak the books. He did not take any money for the work. Last month 140 books were taken and 126 were left. Mrs Chan is pleased, but she worries about the gap. "If people only take, the shelf will be empty by summer." She writes the numbers in a red exercise book. She does not put the numbers online. "I am not making a report," she says. "I am just watching."

Text 4 · Comments

[1] Alex: I took a cookbook and left a novel. The shelf was tidy. I will come back after work on Thursdays.

[2] Ben: I left three textbooks. When I returned, they were gone. The notice says textbooks are not accepted, so someone must have thrown them away. That is wasteful.

[3] Chris: My daughter is 10. We went together. She finished a story before our ferry came. Please add a small stool. The only seat is the floor.

25. On what date does the Pier Shelf open to the public? **(1 mark)**

26. Do users need a card? **(1 mark)**

27. What are the opening hours? **(1 mark)**

28. Name TWO kinds of books that are not accepted. **(2 marks)**

29. What time do volunteers check the shelf? **(1 mark)**

30. What happens to wet or torn books? **(1 mark)**

31. When and where is the first volunteer briefing? **(2 marks)**

32. Who should come with children under 12? **(1 mark)**

33. Who is paying for the shelf this year? **(1 mark)**

34. Read Text 2 and decide whether each statement is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG). **(4 marks)**

	T	F	NG
(1) The shelf is closed on public holidays.			
(2) People who want to help should send an email.			
(3) The pier office is on the second floor.			
(4) The District Council has already promised to pay next year.			

35. What did Mrs Chan see that gave her the idea? **(1 mark)**

36. What level did Mrs Chan use to teach? **(1 mark)**

37. How far is her home from the pier? **(1 mark)**

38. How much did the first shelf cost, and who paid? **(2 marks)**

39. What did her grandson build, and was he paid? **(2 marks)**

40. Last month, how many books were taken and how many were left? **(2 marks)**

41. Why does Mrs Chan worry? **(1 mark)**

42. Where does she write the numbers, and why does she not put them online? **(2 marks)**

43. Mrs Chan's grandson is … **(1 mark)**

A. a Primary 3 pupil.
B. a pier volunteer of 70.
C. a university student.
D. a District Council officer.

44. What did Alex leave on the shelf? **(1 mark)**

45. When will Alex come back? **(1 mark)**

46. According to Ben, what happened to his textbooks, and what does he think of it? **(2 marks)**

47. How old is Chris's daughter, and what does Chris ask the organisers to add? **(2 marks)**

48. The only seat Chris mentions is … **(1 mark)**

A. a stool.
B. the floor.
C. a bench inside the pier office.
D. a seat on the ferry.

49. Mrs Chan worries that people take books without leaving books. Which comment writer best avoids that problem? Explain. **(2 marks)**

50. Complete the sentences with ONE word taken from Texts 2–3 for each gap. Spelling must be correct. **(4 marks)**

The shelf opens in (i) _____. A user may take one book and (ii) _____ one book. The roof is there to keep out the (iii) _____. Mrs Chan records the numbers in a (iv) _____ exercise book.

51. According to the notice, what condition must books meet, besides being of an accepted kind? **(1 mark)**

PART B2

Read Text 5 and answer questions 25–47. More difficult section. (42 marks)

Text 5 · After Eleven

[1] Hong Kong sells itself as a city that does not close. The phrase is useful for tourism posters and less useful for anyone who lives above a row of pharmacies. Light is not neutral. A screen flashing health-product prices at midnight is not “atmosphere”. It is a commercial that you cannot switch off, aimed at people who are trying to sleep three floors up.

[2] A district council is considering a trial: from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., non-essential shop signs would be dimmed, and outdoor screens would be muted. Essential lighting — stairwells, road crossings, pharmacy crosses that actually mark a pharmacy open for night sales — would stay. The proposal is modest. The reaction has not been. Trade associations warn of empty streets, lost jobs and a city “giving up”. Giving up, in this argument, means a shop looking less like a casino for eight hours.

[3] The economic claim is worth taking seriously, and then measuring. Shop owners say bright signs pull in late customers. Some do. Convenience stores and pharmacies with night staff have a reason to be seen. A wedding-card shop does not sell many albums at 1 a.m., and neither does a tutorial centre. Their signs are not fishing for customers who are out; they are occupying the visual field because a lease, or habit, has made brightness the proof that a business still exists. Being lit is not the same as being open. The proposal asks for that difference.

[4] Critics also say a dimmer street is a more dangerous street. That can be true when the thing dimmed is a pavement lamp. It is a lazy leap when the thing dimmed is an advertisement. The trial text, which few of its angriest readers seem to have finished, keeps crossings and stairwells lit and says the police will review incident numbers after three months. Fear of the dark is being asked to do the work of a statistic that does not exist yet. If the numbers go the wrong way, the trial should stop. That sentence is in the proposal. It is rarely in the speeches against it.

[5] There is a class thread running under the noise. Residents who write to the council are often owner-occupiers with windows on the main road. Workers who finish shifts at midnight, and who rely on a bright store to feel that someone else is awake, are less likely to have written. A fair trial would ask both groups, not only the people with the time to sit through a meeting. The council’s questionnaire, to its credit, will be on paper at the pier and the wet market as well as online. Whether night-shift workers will see it is another question. A form placed at 10 a.m. is a form designed for the morning.

[6] I am not arguing for a city of early nights. I am arguing against the idea that any request for limits is an attack on Hong Kong’s character. A character that cannot survive a muted screen between 11 and 7 is a costume, not a culture. Neon of the old kind — made, repaired, switched off when the restaurant closed — was a sign that someone was there. A loop of stock footage selling vitamins to an empty pavement is not the heir of that tradition. It is a habit that has mistaken itself for an identity.

[7] If the trial fails, let it fail in public: publish the incident table, the shop takings that owners are willing to show, and the number of questionnaire replies from people who work after ten. If it succeeds, extend it beyond one photogenic street. The worst result would be a compromise that dims the signs facing the residents who complained, and leaves the rest blazing at the end of the block where the meetings were not held. That would not be balance. It would be a discount on the inconvenience of the people who already know whom to call.

25. What does the writer mean by saying light “is not neutral” (paragraph 1)? **(2 marks)**

26. Find ONE word in paragraph 1 which the writer rejects as a description of a midnight screen. **(1 mark)**

27. Name TWO kinds of lighting that would stay on during the trial. **(2 marks)**

28. Explain the writer’s remark that “giving up” means a shop looking less like a casino for eight hours. **(2 marks)**

29. Which businesses does the writer say have a real reason to be seen at night? **(1 mark)**

30. Why does the writer mention a wedding-card shop and a tutorial centre? **(2 marks)**

31. What difference is the proposal asking people to accept when it says being lit is not the same as being open? **(1 mark)**

32. Decide whether each statement is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG) according to paragraphs 4 and 5. **(4 marks)**

	T	F	NG
(1) The writer believes every dimmer street is safer.			
(2) The proposal keeps road crossings lit.			
(3) Three months of incident numbers for this trial have already been published.			
(4) The writer knows how many night-shift workers will fill in the questionnaire.			

33. What is the “lazy leap” in paragraph 4? **(2 marks)**

34. Which idea, present in the proposal, is rarely heard in the speeches against the trial? **(1 mark)**

35. Who often writes to the council, and who is less likely to have written? **(2 marks)**

36. Why does the writer say a form placed at 10 a.m. is "designed for the morning"? **(2 marks)**

37. The tone of paragraph 6 is best described as … **(1 mark)**

A. nostalgic, and opposed to every modern sign.
B. a defence of unlimited advertising.
C. drawing a line between a lived tradition and an empty habit.
D. undecided about whether the trial should happen.

38. According to paragraph 6, what was different about neon "of the old kind"? **(2 marks)**

39. Find ONE word in paragraph 6 which means "the thing that comes next and is supposed to continue a tradition". **(1 mark)**

40. Find ONE word in paragraph 2 which means "limited in size; not extreme". **(1 mark)**

41. What does "It" in "It is rarely in the speeches against it" (paragraph 4) refer to? **(1 mark)**

42. What does the writer say she is NOT arguing for? **(1 mark)**

43. In what way is the council's questionnaire "to its credit"? **(2 marks)**

44. Give TWO things the writer wants published if the trial fails. **(2 marks)**

45. Explain the "worst result" in paragraph 7. **(2 marks)**

46. Explain what the writer means by “a costume, not a culture” (paragraph 6). You should say what each word suggests, and how the contrast supports her view of the trial. **(4 marks)**

47. Complete the sentences with ONE word taken from Text 5 for each gap. Spelling must be correct. **(3 marks)**

Calling a dimmed advertisement a more dangerous street is a lazy (i) _____. A character that cannot survive a muted screen is a costume, not a (ii) _____. Old neon was switched off when the restaurant (iii) _____.