

**2008-CE
ENG LANG**

PAPER 1A
RP

HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY
HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION 2008

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1A
Reading Passages

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write all your answers in the Question-Answer Book.
2. **DO NOT** take away this booklet. It will be collected separately at the end of the examination.
3. **DO NOT** write any answers in this booklet because they will not be marked.

Part 1

Read the following online postings and then answer questions 1-9.

(23 marks)

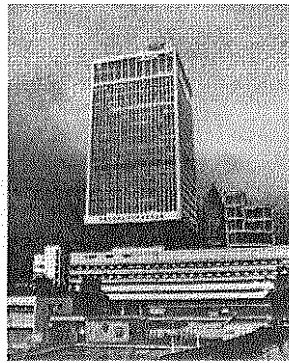
The Development of the Tamar Site on Hong Kong Island

Introduction

The government has been planning to build its headquarters on the Tamar site, which is situated near Central on Hong Kong Island. This has attracted attention from many people in Hong Kong. As a result, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) has created an online discussion forum on the topic of the Tamar site development.

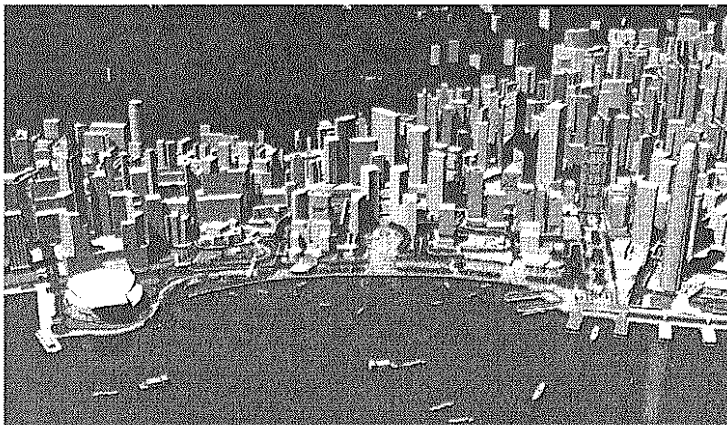
The question it posed was: "The government is planning to build its new headquarters at the Tamar site. What is your view?" Read the following online postings:

Posted by: Peter Yuen
Date: 22 nd April 2008
<i>I believe Tamar will be a people's place. What do I mean by that? Well, I look forward to taking a pleasant walk along the paths winding through the open space just minutes from city offices. During lunch-time, office workers can grab a sandwich and go there by using the connecting footbridges. During the holidays, people can watch movies and visit cultural exhibitions, or see floral shows. Children can try out their football skills, friends can chat in harbourfront cafés and tourists can take (a)_____ of the famous Victoria Harbour in the background.</i>



The Chinese People's Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong Building, previously known as the Prince of Wales Building, is located within the present Tamar site.

Posted by: Mr. Unknown
Date: 16 th March 2008
<i>I personally think the development should not happen at all, but it seems the government will go ahead with it. The natural environment of Hong Kong is extremely important and at the moment, there is a (b)_____ of recreational open space outside offices. There is some space, but not enough to plant trees which can compensate for the pollution in Hong Kong. More trees would absorb the carbon dioxide and improve Hong Kong's air quality.</i>



A proposed vision of the Tamar site as Hong Kong's Central Park.

Posted by: Hazel Lok
Date: 25 th April 2008
<i>I would like to add support to Peter Yuen's posting of 22nd April. I think that Tamar will be especially pretty at night with the twinkling lights. I live in Tai Po, and while we have lovely mountains and rivers, I hope to be a regular visitor to the promenade along the harbour to enjoy the view. I would also like to (c)_____ the ferry over to Hong Kong Island and make use of all the new facilities at Tamar.</i>

Posted by: Pedestrian88
Date: 24 th April 2008
<i>With the exception of the Tsim Sha Tsui East waterfront, what is happening to Hong Kong's harbour is a disgrace. Compare it with Sydney or other harbours and you'll see just how poorly off we are. Even in Macau there are areas where you can walk by the water. There are too few places where you can get a little exercise or relax in this city. The government says its offices at Tamar won't restrict public access. That's a lie. The government offices in Lower Albert Road used to be a public right of way. Now they're fenced off.</i>

Part 2

Read the following poem and then answer questions 10-22.

(18 marks)

A Change is as Good as a Rest

by Grahame Lockey

1

My sister, my mum, my dad and me,
we'd _____ in our house since I was three.
It wasn't that grand and it wasn't so new
but it wasn't borrowed and it wasn't blue.

4

2

We didn't have much, but didn't need more
and we liked to see our gated door
when we came home after long, hard days
to relax inside, in our various ways.

8

3

When typhoons raged, each window and wall
stood proud and straight and true and tall.
When the rain fell in arrows we didn't get _____,
but watched TV or made a bet
on who would win mahjong that night.
We laughed a lot and didn't fight.

12

4

Then the government man, he came along,
and said 'We need to build a great long
road that _____ right through this place.
Please pack your bags, we need your space!'

16

5

We kicked the walls and shouted out madly
until sister and I hung our heads sadly.
My mum wept so much she filled buckets on the floor --
so many in fact, I had to bring more.

20

6

'Now,' said my dad, 'we can turn a new leaf.
Our stay on this earth is only but brief.
So let's make a fresh start, let's begin anew,
pave a new road and stop feeling blue.

24

7

This house of ours wasn't special at all,
it's just that you've lived here since you were small.
A change is as good as a rest, so they say.
We'll go somewhere better and make the government pay.'

28

8

My dad always said life isn't tomorrow.
It's doing things now that makes us follow
the road to success, be it east or west,
though like birds we've since flown from the family nest.

32

9

When the government man or whoever comes by
it's not the right time to be angry or cry.
My dad always knew how to best stay alive.
A tree which bends with the wind will survive.

36

Part 3

Read the following article and then answer questions 23-37.

(40 marks)

The Kowloon Walled City

[1] **The outpost.** The history of the Walled City can be traced back to the Song Dynasty, when it served as a watchpost to defend the area against pirates. It was rebuilt as a fort in the mid-1800s.

[2] In 1898, additional parts of Hong Kong were handed to Britain for 99 years. However, this did not include the Walled City, which had a population of roughly 1,000. It was agreed that
5 China could continue to keep troops there, so long as it did not interfere with Britain's rule.
(a) _____ the 1890s and the 1940s, the outpost consisted of a *yamen* (an administrative office), as well as other buildings, which eventually grew into a crowded neighbourhood.



The Kowloon Walled City, 1915

[3] Up until 1940, the Walled City remained a tourist attraction, where British colonials and tourists could have a taste of the 'old China'. By then, it was home to about 5,000 people.
10 Then, when it occupied Hong Kong during World War II (WWII), Japan evicted people from the city, and demolished much of it to provide building materials for the nearby Kai Tak Airport.

[4] **Triad rule.** After Japan's surrender, many homeless people began to occupy the Walled City, resisting several attempts by Britain in 1948 to drive them out. The Walled City became a home to crooks and drug addicts, as the Hong Kong Police had no right to enter the City and mainland China refused to take care of it. From then onwards, the triads ruled the Walled City up until
15 1973-1974 when a series of over 3,000 police raids reduced their power. By then the population had reached 22,000.

[5] Before the Walled City became a haven for criminals, the people who lived there organised their own daily lives without triad interference. Most residents were not involved in any crime and lived peacefully there. Many charities and religious groups helped to improve the lives of residents, and schools and voluntary organisations were set up.

[6] **The boom.** With the triads' power reduced, the Walled City began to grow almost organically. Buildings folded up into one
20 another as illegal structures were added to them. There were maze-like corridors running through the city. The streets were lit by fluorescent lights, as sunlight was rare except for on the rooftops. The only rules of construction were: electricity had to be provided to avoid fire, and the buildings could be no more than about fourteen storeys high because of the nearby airport. Somehow, water was provided to the entire city through only eight pipes.

[7] By the early 1980s, Kowloon Walled City had an estimated population of 35,000. The city was known for its casinos, opium
25 dens, food courts serving dog meat, and secret factories. Kowloon Walled City was also notorious for its very high number of unsanitary dental clinics, since this was one place where unlicensed dentists could operate.

[8] **Evacuation and demolition.** Over time, both the British and the Chinese governments found the situation increasingly difficult to manage. So in 1984, the Chinese government agreed with the British authorities to demolish the City and resettle its inhabitants. The joint decision to tear down the Walled
30 City was made in 1987. At that time, it had a (b) _____ of 50,000 on 0.026 km² of land, and therefore a very high population density of 1,900,000/km². It was believed to be the most densely-populated place on earth.



Part of the newly-reconstructed area of the Kowloon Walled City

[9] Evacuations started in 1991 and were completed in 1992. The government spent up to HK\$3 billion on relocating the residents and shops. Some residents were not satisfied with the compensation,
35 and some even obstructed the demolition. After the demolition, a park (c) _____ built in its place with construction starting in May 1994. Completed in August 1995, it has now become Kowloon Walled City Park, where only the name preserves the heritage of the fabled Walled City.

END OF READING PASSAGES

Sources of materials used in this paper will be acknowledged in the *Examination Report and Question Papers* published by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority at a later stage.