



ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1

PART A

Reading Passages

8.30 am – 10.00 am (1½ hours)
(for both Parts A and B)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) There are two parts (A and B) in this paper. All candidates should attempt Part A. In Part B, you should attempt either Part B1 (easier section) OR Part B2 (more difficult section). Candidates attempting Parts A and B2 will be able to attain the full range of levels, while Level 4 will be the highest level attainable for candidates attempting Parts A and B1.
- (2) After the announcement of the start of the examination, you should first write your Candidate Number and stick barcode labels in the spaces provided on the appropriate pages of the Part A Question-Answer Book and the Part B Question-Answer Book which you are going to attempt.
- (3) Write your answers in the spaces provided in the Question-Answer Books. Answers written in the margins will not be marked.
- (4) For multiple-choice questions, you are advised to blacken the appropriate circle with a pencil so that wrong marks can be completely erased with a clean rubber. Mark only **ONE** answer to each question. Two or more answers will score **NO MARKS**.
- (5) Supplementary answer sheets will be supplied on request. Write your Candidate Number, mark the question number box and stick a barcode label on each sheet and fasten them with string **INSIDE** the Question-Answer Book.
- (6) No extra time will be given to candidates for sticking on barcode labels or filling in the question number boxes after the 'Time is up' announcement.
- (7) The two Question-Answer Books you have attempted (one for Part A and one for Part B) will be collected together at the end of the examination. Fasten the two Question-Answer Books together with the green tag provided.
- (8) The unused Question-Answer Book for Part B will be collected separately at the end of the examination. This will not be marked. Do not write any answers in it.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART A

- (1) The Question-Answer Book for Part A is inserted in this Reading Passages booklet.
- (2) Attempt ALL questions in Part A. Each question carries ONE mark unless otherwise stated.

PART A

Read the following texts and answer questions 1-18 in the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

Text 1

10 COMMON SUPERSTITIONS

1. **FOUR LEAF CLOVER**
Finding a clover with four leaves is lucky because clovers usually only have three leaves.
2. **CAREFUL WITH THAT MIRROR**
If you break a mirror, you will have seven years of misfortune.
3. **KEEP THEM CROSSED**
Crossing your index and middle finger is lucky because it symbolizes the support between two friends.
4. **FALLING LEAVES**
If you catch falling leaves in autumn, every leaf you catch means a lucky month next year.
5. **BLACK CATS**
You're in luck if you meet a black cat. However, that depends on who you ask – some say it's a sign of good things to come, but for others, it's a terrible warning.
6. **DON'T WALK UNDER A LADDER**
This superstition is practical because walking under a ladder, possibly with someone on it, is already a risky thing to do.
7. **HORSESHOE**
Hanging a horseshoe over a door is lucky. But the horseshoe needs to be the right way up with the two ends pointing down so that the good fortune will shower upon you.
8. **NO UMBRELLAS INSIDE**
Opening an umbrella indoors brings bad luck and danger – you might just poke someone's eye out.
9. **MIND THE SALT**
Spilt the salt? Oh, no! If you have, you must throw some over your shoulder to counteract the bad luck, but make sure it is the left one.
10. **THERE GOES A MAGPIE**
It's bad luck to see one magpie, but it's lucky to see two.

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.

Text 2

1 The Scientific Study of the Lucky Mind

By Professor Richard Wiseman

Section 1.

5 People have searched for an effective way of improving the good fortune in their lives for many centuries. Lucky charms, such as keeping a rabbit's foot, have been found in virtually all civilizations throughout recorded history. The pagan ritual of 'knocking on wood' was designed to elicit the help of benign and powerful tree gods. Superstition represents people's attempts to control their destiny by warding off bad luck while enhancing the good.

Section 2.

15 There is just one problem. Superstition doesn't work. At least it doesn't work in the way most people think it does. Superstition is based on outdated and incorrect thinking. It comes from a time when people thought that luck was a strange force that could only be controlled by magical rituals and bizarre behaviours. Several researchers have tested these age-old beliefs and found them wanting.

Section 3.

25 Ten years ago, I started to examine why some people consistently encounter chance opportunities whereas others do not. In my experiment, I first asked volunteers to complete a questionnaire to determine if they considered themselves lucky or unlucky. Then I gave each group a newspaper, and asked them to look through it and tell me how many photographs were inside.

35 On average, the unlucky people took about two minutes to count the photographs whereas the lucky people took just seconds. Why? Because the second page of the newspaper contained the message "Stop counting – There are 43 photographs in this newspaper." This message took up half of the page and was written in text that was over two inches high. It was staring everyone straight in the face, but the unlucky people tended to miss it and the lucky people tended to spot it.

45 Personality tests revealed that unlucky people are generally much more tense and anxious than lucky people, and research has shown that anxiety disrupts people's ability to notice the unexpected. The harder they looked, the less they saw. And so it is with luck – unlucky people miss chance opportunities because they are too focussed on looking for something else.

50 The experiment I conducted revealed that luck is not a magical ability or the result of random chance. Nor are people born lucky or unlucky. Instead, although lucky and unlucky people have almost no insight into the real causes of their good and bad luck, their thoughts and behaviour are responsible for much of their fortune. My research revealed that lucky people are more skilled at creating and noticing chance opportunities.

Section 4.

60 But a lucky life is not just about noticing chance opportunities. Another important principle revolved around the way in which lucky and unlucky people dealt with the ill fortune in their lives. Imagine competing in the Olympic Games. You do very well, and win a bronze medal. How happy do you think you would feel? Most of us would, I suspect, be overjoyed and proud of our achievement. Now imagine we did even better and won a silver medal. Most of us think we would feel even happier with a silver medal.

70 But research suggests that athletes who win bronze medals are actually happier than those who win silver medals. And the reason for this has to do with the way in which the athletes think about their performance. The silver medalists focus on the notion that if they had performed slightly better, then they would have perhaps won a gold medal. In contrast, the bronze medalists focus on the thought that if they had performed slightly worse, then they wouldn't have won anything at all. This is "counterfactual" thinking and it is often associated with perceptions of luck.

Section 5. *Positive Scepticism*

85 After ten years of scientific research, my work has revealed a radically new way of looking at luck and the vital role that it plays in our lives. It demonstrates that much of the good and bad fortune we encounter is a result of our thoughts and behaviour. More importantly, it represents the potential for change, and has produced an effective way of increasing the luck people experience in their daily lives. The research is not simply about debunking superstitious thinking and behaviour. Instead, it is about encouraging people to move away from a magical way of thinking and toward a more rational view of luck. Perhaps most important of all, it is about using science and scepticism to increase the level of luck, happiness, and success in people's lives.

END OF READING PASSAGES