

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. Use separate supplementary answer sheets for Part A and Part B. Write your Candidate Number, mark the question number box and stick a barcode label on each sheet, and fasten them with string **INSIDE** the relevant 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.

Not to be taken away before the
end of the examination session

PART A

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1-22 in the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

Text 1

Flash Fiction: Writing a Story in 1,000 Words or Less

- 1 [1] People have been enjoying stories for as long as humanity has been around. Some people love to read 400-page novels, while others struggle to read the first four paragraphs. More and more, technology has unfortunately resulted in many people having shorter attention spans. Therefore, writers have to find new ways to tell stories in a way that appeals to people who are used to reading snippets of information on the small screen of their smart
5 phones. Flash fiction is a medium that works perfectly in a low-attention-span world.

What is Flash Fiction?

[2] Flash fiction is a category of short story that limits the author to a word count of 1,000 words or less. Some magazines limit flash fiction stories to as little as 300 words.

How to Write Flash Fiction

- 10 [3] Following the tips below will guide you in writing a solid flash fiction story.

Focus on One Character

- [4] With a limit of 1,000 words, there isn't a lot of room for character development, so you'll want to pick one character to focus on. There will likely be two characters in the story because you'll often use a human antagonist as opposition to your main character. You might be able to use three characters, but any more than that will
15 probably be overkill in the realm of flash fiction.

Focus on One Scene

- [5] Longer story forms have a beginning, middle, and end, but with flash fiction, you're really telling only the end of a story. Of course, you won't be able to flesh out a complex story world. Instead, your flash fiction story should focus on one scene, one moment in the life of your character. It needs to be a significant, life-altering moment for
20 your character. Focusing on one scene also means focusing on one location. So for flash fiction your limited word count focuses on the essentials to the story.

Focus on One Conflict

- [6] All stories are about conflict. A story can be easily defined as a character who wants or needs something and has to overcome some obstacle in order to attain it. The obstacle is the conflict. You have to answer two very
25 important questions to write a really good flash fiction story:

1. What does your main character want?
2. Who or what is trying to stop your main character from getting it?

Focus on One Theme

- [7] Your theme is the moral argument of your story. It's about how you want your readers to be impacted by the story. What do you want them to be encouraged to do, be, or believe as a result of reading your story?
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Focus on Word Choice

[8] You only have up to 1,000 words to tell your story, so you have to choose those words wisely. When you know what actions and ideas you want to communicate, choose the least amount of words to communicate them.

How Flash Fiction Makes You a Better Writer

- 35 [9] Flash fiction forces you to be economical with your words. It helps you to focus your ideas and strip away anything that isn't essential to your story. Often, when you're writing flash fiction, you'll write more than you need. When you go back through, you'll see what needs to be there, what can be taken out, and what needs to be reworked, which helps you to develop your editing and revising skills.

Flash Fiction Example

40 **The Big Bang**

[10] BOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!! Timothy's eyes nearly popped out of his head. His face was blackened with soot and his hair stood on end. He looked down at what remained of the school laboratory bench and saw smouldering wood and shattered glass. Shocked faces gazed up at him.

- 45 [11] A month ago, it had all started fairly well. It was nearly the end of Chemistry and Timothy was drifting in a pleasant doze with his head rested upon *Super Science Experiments for Eager Youngsters*, whilst Professor Snookhorn droned on. "So, if anyone is interested, raise your hand now ... how about you Timothy?" "Eh? Ermmm - sure," mumbled Timothy with not the faintest idea of what he had been asked. "Marvellous!" replied an enthused Professor Snookhorn, fixing him with a steely gaze through his thick glasses. "Meet me in Lab 922 after school today and we'll get started." The bell clanged and the students crashed out of the classroom like a herd of elephants.
- 50 Billy Brenton, class thug, barged past Timothy muttering "Swotty boy - volunteering for Young Scientist of the Year - urghh!" "Arggghhh!" thought Timothy, but it was too late.

[12] Four weeks and 25 excruciating extra Chemistry lessons later, Timothy was blinking out nervously at a gaggle of eager science teachers and pushy parents, crammed into the National School of Science Laboratory for what Professor Snookhorn enthusiastically described as "The pinnacle of my teaching career" (no pressure).

- 55 [13] Professor Snookhorn was a superlative scientist but little did he know that Timothy was a bigger hazard than sulphuric acid when it came to Chemistry. He had mistaken Timothy's glazed expression for wide-eyed enthusiasm in class. Timothy looked down at the glistening bench, taking in the jewel-coloured containers of liquids and crystals, without a clue of what they were or how to use them.

- 60 [14] A klaxon blared. Timothy's competitors scurried around like a pack of lab rats. Timothy had not bothered reading the competition rules, but jerked into action, picking random coloured bottles up and mixing the contents in a large glass container which appeared to have been placed on the bench in front of him for that purpose.

- [15] A smell like Billy Brenton's worst ever fart began to fill the air and Timothy looked down in alarm at his bench. Thick grey smoke filled Timothy's nostrils. The glass container into which he had poured his random mix shuddered and shook. The pushy parents started to point. The science teachers went pale. Timothy gulped.
- 65 BOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!!

[16] As the smoke cleared, the science teachers began to clap and a tear of pride trickled down Professor Snookhorn's cheek. A voice boomed: "Ladies and gentlemen I give you the winner of this year's Young Scientist of the Year - The Big Bang: TIMOTHY TRENTON!"

END OF READING PASSAGE

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