

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.

PART A

Read Texts 1 and 2 and answer questions 1-23 in the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

Text 1

Government defends axing century-old banyans on safety grounds

- 1 [1] Four trees collapsed in Hong Kong on Monday morning following a night of heavy rain. This comes after the government's controversial decision to cut down four century-old Chinese banyans after several similar trees fell from stone walls during recent storms.
- 5 [2] The report of the fallen trees comes days after experts expressed anger over the Highways Department's controversial felling of four century-old banyan trees in Sai Ying Pun, without consulting a panel advising the government on tree management.
- [3] The government cited 'unforeseen' circumstances and considerations of public safety, after a giant banyan tree growing out of a masonry wall in Sai Ying Pun collapsed on 22 July. A neighbouring tree was cut down immediately as cracks were found in the wall behind it.
- 10 [4] The Head of the Developments Bureau's Tree Management Office said the trees in Sai Ying Pun were rooted in old stone masonry walls on a slope of almost 80 degrees.
- [5] Following the collapse on 22 July, the Highways Department's contractor inspected the remaining trees and carried out major trimming work. But by midweek last week, cracks were found in the wall behind the trees and were seen to have worsened.
- 15 [6] "Since the trees were growing on this wall, we could not evaluate the trees and the wall separately," said the Head of the Tree Management Office. "We agree with the department that the trees had to be removed immediately. They could have collapsed and pulled the wall with them."

Text 2

A Tree Worthy of Worship: Hong Kong's Banyans

- 1 [1] Mr Lam was a teenager when he installed a shrine to the local earth god under a banyan tree in Tai Hang. "That was over 70 years ago," he says. After World War II, he received permission from the government to transform the shrine into a temple.
- 5 [2] It is no coincidence that Lam's temple started with a banyan tree. These behemoths are ubiquitous in Hong Kong, growing in parks, street planters and even between the cracks of stone walls. Their imposing presence defines the cityscape. "If Hong Kong was abandoned it would be taken over by banyans in a few hundred years," says Jim Chi-yung, chair of the University of Hong Kong's Department of Geography, who is popularly known as the Tree Professor for his arboreal enthusiasm.
- 10 [3] Banyan trees are immediately recognisable for their spindly aerial roots, which cast outwards in search of water and nutrition. When a root finds a suitable source, either in the soil or another tree, it becomes a thick, woody trunk. This is what allows the banyan to grow in varied conditions, which is why they are the most prominent forms of greenery in the hilliest and most densely packed parts of Hong Kong. Jim has counted more than 1,100 trees growing from the sheer surfaces of masonry walls on Hong Kong Island. "They can become 20 metres tall, as big as trees growing out of the ground, except they are growing out from the wall," he says.
- 15 [4] When I first met Jim, in 2009, he took me to Forbes Street in Kennedy Town, where 22 banyans grow out of the surface of a 12-metre-high stone wall, which was built using a traditional Hakka technique that does not require mortar between stone joints. Seeds carried by the wind or dropped by birds find their way into the cracks. As the tree grows, its roots plunge dozens of metres into the soil behind the wall.
- 20 [5] Jim loves the way the banyans form a lush green canopy across Forbes Street. He sits on a number of government committees, and he told me he once proposed pedestrianising the street to make it a destination for *al fresco* dining, a place where people could sit and relax under the shade of the banyans. The government's reception was frosty.

[6] “See what’s happening here?” he asks, touching a root that had been concreted over to stop it from growing. “The people who do this, they don’t understand trees. They’re defacing heritage. Imagine doing this to an ancient monument.”

25 [7] Last summer, after days of heavy rain, a wall tree collapsed onto Bonham Road, which led the Highways Department to surreptitiously chop down four healthy banyans nearby. Their sudden removal was defended by the government as a precautionary measure, but experts like Jim said it was an unnecessary overreaction. It sparked outrage from local residents, who tied balloons and messages of support to the trees’ roots, which still clung to the wall that had supported them for 100 years.

30 [8] Respect for banyans runs deep in southern Chinese culture. Banyan trees are considered to have excellent *feng shui*, symbolising longevity, fecundity and perseverance. They are also believed to be home to earth gods, the indigenous deities that protect each village, and shrines are often built at their base. In many cases, people worship the trees themselves, not just the earth gods. That is the case in Lam Tsuen, where a pair of banyans known as the Wishing Trees have become a tourist attraction. Visitors write their wish on a piece of yellow paper, tie it to an orange and toss it onto one of the trees’ branches. After the weight of all the wishes caused a branch to collapse in 2005, worshippers were instructed to tie their wishes to a plastic tree instead.

35 [9] Anthropologist P.Y.L. Ng notes that banyan trees were worshipped because they were often the only surviving trees in a landscape that had been steadily deforested over hundreds of years. “Its wood is gnarled and so cannot be used as timber. It will not flame and so cannot be used for firewood. Its very lack of useful properties ensures its invincibility and survival,” he wrote in a 1983 study of the New Territories.

40 [10] The 17th century playwright Li Yu saw the banyan tree as a symbol of love. “Anytime a smaller tree grows before a banyan tree, this banyan will sooner or later lean its body towards the smaller tree. After a time, it wraps its branches around the smaller tree’s body, and the smaller tree gradually falls into the banyan’s embrace. The two trees become one, so that even if you cut them with an axe you would not be able to separate them.”

45 [11] Modern Hong Kong has found ways to accommodate banyan trees. To Yuen Street near City University forks around a particularly large banyan, an accommodation also made on Dragon Road near Victoria Park. Nearly two-thirds of the 481 trees on the government’s Register of Old and Valuable Trees are banyans. According to the government, there are 29,000 banyans under maintenance in city parks and streets, though many more exist undocumented in the wild. A total of 3,491 new banyans have been planted in the city since 2011.

50 [12] And while the future of many old and prominent banyans is contentious you can count on banyans to find a way to survive even in the most difficult conditions. New sprouts are already growing from the stumps of the severed banyan trees on Bonham Road. There is a reason they are worshipped, after all.

END OF READING PASSAGES

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.





ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1

PART B1

Reading Passages

8:30 am – 10:00 am (1½ hours)
(for both Parts A and B)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Refer to the General Instructions on Page 1 of the Reading Passages booklet for Part A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART B1

- (1) The Question-Answer Book for Part B1 is inserted in this Reading Passages booklet.
- (2) Candidates who choose Part B1 should attempt all questions in this part. Each question carries ONE mark unless otherwise stated.
- (3) Hand in only ONE Question-Answer Book for Part B, either B1 or B2, and fasten it with the Question-Answer Book for Part A using the green tag provided.

PART B1

Read Texts 3 and 4 and answer questions 24-42 in the Question-Answer Book for Part B1.

Text 3

Some Old Hawkers are Still Here

- 1 [1] Hong Kong hawking is the age-old practice of selling cheap food and wares from stalls and street carts. Three hawkers talk about their experiences.

Flour Doll Seller – Uncle Tang

- 5 [2] Uncle Tang has been selling his flour dolls in Hong Kong since 1978 and he sells each flour doll for HK\$50. He learnt the thousand-year-old craft of making dough figures in his native village in Fujian province.



- 10 [3] Embracing changing times, Uncle Tang also sells plastic toys and figurines. Even with the added variety he says that children today are not interested in buying his goods and are turning towards their mobile devices.

[4] You can find Uncle Tang every day sitting quietly on Paterson Street, Causeway Bay. However, he avoids setting up his hawker pitch on rainy days.

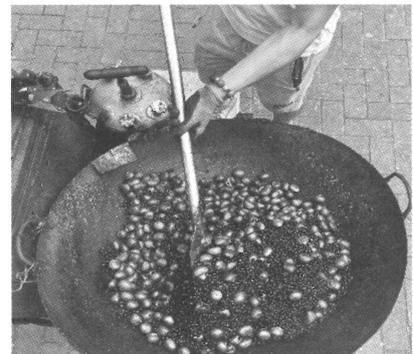
Umbrella Mender – Uncle Ho

- 15 [5] Uncle Ho is an umbrella mender, who has practised his unique profession for over 60 years on Peel Street in Central.

- 20 [6] Uncle Ho explains that in the 1950s umbrellas were considered luxury items and he found that he could earn a living repairing them. He strongly believes that the throw-away culture of people today should be replaced by an attitude of repair and restore. Uncle Ho vows to keep working every day until he dies. It is safe to say that without him Peel Street will never be the same.

Chestnut Roaster – Uncle Leung

- 25 [7] Uncle Leung is a 76-year-old chestnut roaster in Wan Chai. As a child, Uncle Leung had little education and saw chestnut roasting as a profession in which he could earn a good living. As a teen, he would watch experienced chestnut roasters practising their craft, hoping to catch a glimpse of the tricks of the trade. He also learnt that earning a living was hard work. These days, he does not really need to work as he has three children – all are successful doctors and pharmacists – who support him financially. Still, he sets up his stall every day.



Text 4

1 [1] Hong Kong’s hawkers have faced a struggle to survive since officials in the 1970s took steps to limit hawking
due to worries about hygiene, safety and street congestion. Those rules – a ban on new licences and severe limits on
their transfer – have reduced the number of legal hawkers from 50,000 in 1974 to about 6,000 today, city records
show. In 2013, the city started a programme to buy back licences, further shrinking the numbers. With the
5 implementation of this scheme and a shift of consumer activities to big shopping arcades, hawking may cease to exist,
depriving Hong Kong of an iconic tourist attraction.

[2] Perhaps realising this, the government has begun exploring changes to its policies. “We recognise the cultural
significance of hawking and we are not trying to kill it off. However, licence restrictions such as not allowing hawker
licences to be bought and sold are necessary,” said an official of the Food and Health Bureau. “The current hawker
10 policy strikes a balance between allowing legal hawking activities and maintaining environmental hygiene,” a
spokesperson from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

[3] In the 1950s, the government realised that hawkers needed to be regulated, and enforced a licensing system. There
were 150 stalls for every 10,000 people, with most stalls in high-density, low-income districts. City officials believed
there were many hawkers who operated without licences. By the 1970s, the city was concerned that residential areas
15 dense with hawking could pose hygiene and safety hazards. Hawking was no longer viewed as a ‘welfare’ activity,
but a commercial one, which could draw larger numbers if the city did not have tighter policies. “For residents living
nearby, on-street hawking activities might cause obstruction, environmental nuisance or even hazards relating to
hygiene and fire risks,” according to a recent government paper. “Shopkeepers in commercial premises nearby might
consider on-street hawking activities as unfair competition because hawkers do not have to pay rent.”

20 [4] Many hawkers who are licence holders have assistants, and by law the licence holder must be present at the stall
for it to be open for business. The truth is licence holders are often too old to work on the streets all day, and some
are not involved in the business at all. Therefore, many ‘assistants’ are the real hawkers. Some assistants have worked
this way for decades but cannot obtain their own licences. Wong Tai-ming, who began his hawker life in the 1970s
as a *jau gwai* – an ‘on-the-run’ illegal hawker – is now working as an assistant to an elderly fixed-pitched hawker.
25 “It’s a business arrangement,” said Wong sitting on the short ladder outside his stall, keeping an eye on a customer
rummaging through his clothes pile. “Most of the licence holders are too old to work. So we work as their assistants
and get a salary.”

[5] The latest blow to the hawking trade came in 2013, when the government offered lump sums of HK\$120,000 to
hawkers willing to return their licences. The aim was to decongest the denser tourist-heavy streets after a deadly fire
30 on Fa Yuen Street. However, it killed off hawker streets catering to locals instead.

[6] The FEHD spokesperson said the government is considering issuing new hawking licences, given the wide
community support hawkers have gained in recent years. He said that the government is open to suggestions of
suitable locations for hawker markets, but said it is extremely hard to find such spots, given Hong Kong’s tight land
issues and expensive real estate.

35 [7] Veteran hawker Lee Tai-wing, who has been a hawker trading clothes and selling cart noodles and homemade
snacks for over 40 years, remains optimistic about Hong Kong hawking. “Yes, we’ll shrink in numbers, but will we
disappear altogether? I don’t think so,” he said. “Without hawkers, society would be quiet and empty.”

END OF READING PASSAGES

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.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1

PART B2

Reading Passages

8:30 am – 10:00 am (1½ hours)
(for both Parts A and B)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Refer to the General Instructions on Page 1 of the Reading Passages booklet for Part A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART B2

- (1) The Question-Answer Book for Part B2 is inserted in this Reading Passages booklet.
- (2) Candidates who choose Part B2 should attempt all questions in this part. Each question carries ONE mark unless otherwise stated.
- (3) Hand in only ONE Question-Answer Book for Part B, either B1 or B2, and fasten it with the Question-Answer Book for Part A using the green tag provided.

PART B2

Read Text 5 and answer questions 43-62 in the Question-Answer Book for Part B2.

Text 5

Bad Science

1 [1] *In his seminal book 'Bad Science', physician and science writer Ben Goldacre uncovers some of the flaws in science and medicine that have led to widespread misconceptions. From the techniques employed by advertisers and the media, he shows how little veracious scientific evidence there is to be found in their seemingly bodacious claims. Goldacre's book, catering to the general reader, shows us the need to be critical of what we read.*

5 [2] *Below is the introduction excerpted from the book.*

[3] Let me tell you how bad things have become. Children are being routinely taught in thousands of British schools that if they wiggle their head up and down it will increase blood flow to the brain, thus improving concentration; that rubbing their fingers together in a special 'sciencey' way will improve energy flow through the body, and that holding water on their tongue will hydrate the brain directly through the roof of the mouth, all as part of a special exercise programme called Brain Gym. We will devote some time to these beliefs and, more importantly, the fools in our education system who endorse them.

[4] But this book is not a collection of trivial absurdities. It follows a natural development from the foolishness of 'experts', via the credence they are given in the mainstream media, through the tricks of the £30 billion food supplements industry, the evils of the £300 billion pharmaceutical industry, the tragedy of science reporting, and on to the poor understanding of statistics and evidence that pervades our society.

[5] Today, scientists and doctors find themselves outnumbered and outgunned by vast armies of individuals who feel entitled to pass judgement on matters of evidence, an admirable aspiration, without troubling themselves to obtain a basic understanding of the issues.

[6] At school, you were taught about chemicals in test tubes, equations to describe motion, and maybe something on photosynthesis, but in all likelihood you were taught nothing about death, risk, statistics, and the science of what will kill or cure you. The hole in our culture is gaping: evidence-based medicine, the ultimate applied science, contains some of the cleverest ideas from the past two centuries. It has saved millions of lives, but there has never once been a single exhibit on the subject in London's Science Museum.

[7] This is not for a lack of interest. We are obsessed with health – half of all science stories in the media are medical – and are repeatedly bombarded with sciencey-sounding claims and stories. But as you will see, we get our information from the very people who have repeatedly demonstrated themselves to be incapable of reading, interpreting and bearing reliable witness to the scientific evidence.

[8] Before we get started, let me map out the territory.

[9] Firstly, we will look at what it means to do an experiment, to see the final results with your own eyes, and judge whether they fit with a given theory, or whether an alternative is more compelling. You may find going through these steps childish and patronising. The examples we look at are certainly absurd but they have all been promoted credulously and with great authority in the mainstream media. We will look at the attraction of sciencey-sounding stories about our bodies, and the confusion they can cause.

[10] Interestingly our next focus is homeopathy, which Wikipedia declares as a pseudo-science that 'works'. We will look at this not because it's important or dangerous – it's not – but because it is the perfect model for teaching evidence-based medicine and how we can be misled into thinking that any intervention is more effective than it really is.

[11] Then we will move onto bigger fish. Some alternative therapists claim to be nutritionists and have somehow managed to brand themselves as men and women of science. Their errors are interesting because they have a grain of science to them, and that makes them not only more interesting, but also more dangerous, because the real threat is not that their customers might die (there is the odd case) but that they systematically undermine the public's understanding of the very nature of evidence.

[12] We will see the rhetorical slights of hand and amateurish errors that have led to you being repeatedly misled about food and nutrition. This new industry acts as a distraction from the genuine lifestyle risk factors for ill health, as well as its more subtle and alarming impact on the way we see ourselves and our bodies. This arises from the widespread move to medicalise social and political problems, to conceive of them in a reductionist, biomedical framework, and push commodifiable solutions, particularly in the form of pills and faddish diets. I will show you evidence that a vanguard of startling wrongness is entering British universities, alongside genuine academic research into nutrition. In the field of medicine, we see similar tricks used by the pharmaceutical industry to pull the wool over the eyes of doctors and patients.

[13] Next, we will examine how the media promote the public misunderstanding of science, their single-minded passion for pointless non-stories, and their basic misunderstandings of statistics and evidence, which illustrate the very core of why we do science: to prevent ourselves from being misled by our own atomised experiences and prejudices. Finally, in the part of the book I find most worrying, we will see how people in positions of great power, who should know better, still commit basic errors, with grave consequences, and we will see how the media's cynical distortion of evidence in two specific health scares reached dangerous and frankly grotesque extremes. It's your job to notice, as we go, how incredibly prevalent this stuff is, but also, to think what you might do about it.

[14] You cannot reason people out of positions they didn't reason themselves into. But by the end of this book you'll have the tools to win – or at least understand – any argument you choose to initiate, whether it's on miracle cures, the evils of big pharma, the likelihood of a given vegetable preventing cancer, and more. You'll have seen the evidence behind some very popular deceptions, but along the way you'll also have picked up everything useful there is to know about research, levels of evidence, bias, statistics, the history of science and anti-science movements, as well as falling over just some of the amazing stories that the natural sciences can tell us about the world along the way.

[15] It won't be even slightly difficult, because this is the only science lesson where I can guarantee that the people making the stupid mistakes won't be you. And if, by the end, you reckon you might still disagree with me, then I offer you this: you'll still be wrong, but you'll be wrong with a lot more style and flair than you could possibly manage right now.

END OF READING PASSAGE

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