

**Section One [30 marks]**

Write a composition on ONE of the following topics. You should write at least 300 words. At the head of your composition, write the number of the topic you have chosen. You are advised to spend 60 minutes on this part of the paper.

1. Write about an incident regarding someone who had a great disappointment that turned out to be a blessing in disguise.
2. Describe an incident which taught you the importance of being truthful.
3. Sibling rivalry.
4. Write about a time when you were given some good advice but did not heed it.
5. [Strict discipline leads to rebellious behaviour in teenagers.] Do you agree?

**Section Two [30 marks]**

Begin your answer on a fresh sheet of paper. You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this part of the paper and to write between 200 and 300 words.

Read the information carefully and plan your answer before beginning to write.

You are the chairman of your primary school's alumni association. It is planning an annual reunion for all ex-students of the school. The purpose of the reunion is to bring everyone together, build a stronger alumni association and invite more ex-students to serve the school.

Your organising committee has narrowed the reunion programme to these two options:

**High Tea at Sentosa Hotel**

\$ 45.00 per person

One hall can accommodate 200 people

Dress code is smart casual

Main activity is a performance by one of the Singapore Idol finalists

All preparation will be done by a professional event organizer

The event will be from 3 pm to 6 pm

**A carnival at Pasir Ris Park**

\$ 8.00 per person

No limit to the number of people attending

Dress code is casual

Games like beach volley and treasure hunt will be organised

Your committee members will be planning and preparing the games, prizes and refreshments.

The event will be from 10 am to 4 pm

Write a letter to the Principal of your primary school to describe to him the two proposed activities your committee has discussed and inform him of the programme your committee is most keen to take up, giving detailed reasons why you prefer one to the other. Give the principal the details of the chosen plan.

Include any other relevant details in your proposal. Set your letter out correctly, in clear, accurate English to persuade the Principal to agree with your committee's choice.

End of paper

## SECTION A: CLOZE PASSAGE [10 MARKS]

Fill in each blank with an appropriate word. Write your answers in the blanks below.

I quickly learned at a very young age the \_\_\_[1]\_\_\_ of hard work. Both of my parents had worked hard to \_\_\_[2]\_\_\_ their dreams of a nice home, cars and financial stability. Their working hard not only paid off financially, but also \_\_\_[3]\_\_\_ my two brothers and me that working hard was imperative \_\_\_[4]\_\_\_ life. I was given a set of chores and an allowance every week, which taught me responsibility and how to \_\_\_[5]\_\_\_ money. I also realized that cooperation goes hand-in-hand \_\_\_[6]\_\_\_ hard work. My brothers and I would help each other with our chores from time to time. I did not know that cooperation works on a larger \_\_\_[7]\_\_\_ in the workplace ? that sometimes one needs help to achieve his ultimate goal.

Growing up with two older brothers taught me to be unselfish, patient and respectful. Being the \_\_\_[8]\_\_\_ of three, I learned I would not always get \_\_\_[9]\_\_\_ I wanted. I would have to be patient and wait for my turn for a lot of things, such as the telephone and bathroom. I was glad that I was able to grow up with siblings to teach me these lifelong lessons. All three of us had to be respectful of each other or we would \_\_\_[10]\_\_\_ getting into trouble with my parents.

Answers:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B: EDITING [10 MARKS]**

Underline 10 grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors (excluding the first error given below) in the following passage and write the correct answer above each error.

*Eg. two*

Violence and nonviolence are too very effective ways to solve problems, but for people like me whose brains are stronger then their fists, nonviolence seems much more practical and less harmful. I simply believe and history supports my beliefs, that violence and nonviolence are two stratgies of solving a problem. The flaw of violence is theoretically you are trying to counteract a negative with a negative, or as a old saying goes, "fighting fire with fire". What progress is made from this. Do you not fight fire with water? The practical thing to do is to reach for a bucket fill with water, not for a flaming torch.

History has shown us clear instances which supported my beliefs. For example, take the black civil rights movement where a young Baptist minister named Martin Luther King led a nonviolent protest. Martin did many things to reach his goal but he did not raise a fist at his enemies. As a result, many laws were changed without a single gun, knife or grenade. Around the time when Martin Luther King was making his mark, another young black man with similar hopes had set out on his own quest to freed his people of the unjust rules of white America. Unlike King, this man thought the only way to achieve his peoples' desires was in a violent manner. Malcolm X was this man. Although he was a great leader, he did not achieve King's results.

**SECTION C: COMPREHENSION [40 MARKS]**

Read Passage A and Passage B carefully, and then answer all the questions. You are advised to use your own words as far as possible.

Passage A

1 Match each of the statements below to its relevant paragraph and write the paragraph number in the bracket provided. [3]

(i) Shopping can now be done from the comfort of your home. ( )

(ii) Computer viruses have been around for as long as personal computers. ( )

(iii) The cost of regular phone calls is not as attractive as that of the internet. ( )

Paragraph 1

2 Which organizations first started using the internet? [1]

.....

3 Which word in the paragraph refers to disadvantages? [1]

.....

Paragraph 2

4 How long does it take for an email to reach its recipient? [1]

.....

5 Why do broadcasting companies and radio stations transmit regularly over the internet? [1]

.....

Paragraph 3

6 How does online banking help people save time? [1]

.....

- 7 Which phrase in the paragraph means [clearly]? [1]
- 

Paragraphs 4 ? 6

- 8 Write the appropriate letter (A, B, C, D) in the brackets provided. [3]
- (i) The internet is prone to infection because  
 A it is the job of [trackers] (  
 B there is a lot of data transmission.  
 C security is not tight.  
 D many people use it. ( )
- (ii) Computer viruses are called [artificial clever beasts] because  
 A there are always new viruses attacking computers.  
 B they keep virus authors busy.  
 C they are not real viruses but destructive  
 D they transport data and can grow ( )
- (iii) One way to improve the [information superhighway] is to  
 A use better technology to ensure safe transmission of data.  
 B have many virus authors to cope with viruses.  
 C shut down computers which are infected.  
 D receive and retrieve information quickly. ( )

Passage B

Paragraph 1

- 9 What could Father's Bronco be? [1]
- 
- 10 Identify the phrase which tells us the meatloaf dish was hot. [1]
- 
- 11 Which word in the passage tells you Mother did not bother to vary the menu? [1]
-

Paragraph 2

- 12 In your own words, explain why Father blew up at Mother. [2]

.....

.....

- 13 Which phrase tells you Mother was a tolerant person? [1]

.....

Paragraphs 3 & 4

- 14 Give 2 possible reasons why no one is ever home to see how hard she works! [1]

.....

- 15 What kind of conflict did Mother have with her other children? [1]

.....

.....

- 16 How did Mother's passion cause the water to respect her in a new way? [1]

.....

Paragraph 5

- 17 Who were the people who ranted and raved at Mother's failures? [1]

.....

- 18 For each of the words below, give one word or a short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning as it is used in the passage. [3]

(i) plodded (line 11) .....

(ii) intricate (line 52) .....

(iii) rant (line 57) .....



## Passage A

## The Information Superhighway

- 1 The internet, once concealed inside government agencies and universities, has become the largest single form of communication worldwide. With a number of online individuals exceeding thirty million and the number of networks that act as gateways for users exceeding fifty thousand, the internet's boundaries can only be imagined. Often described by the media as (the information superhighway,) the internet offers to customary users a wide variety of services, but also some drawbacks. 5
- 2 Any form of communication via the internet is cheaper and faster than any service from other facilities. The electronic mail (email), for instance, allows any user on the internet to send nearly instantaneous electronic message to anyone else. The (internet phone,) which is slowly but surely replacing the regular phone, enables anyone to make free long-distance calls through the computer. With the appearance of (streaming,) technologies, broadcasting companies and radio stations are transmitting regularly over the internet, which makes them accessible anywhere on the globe. The only costs involved in using these internet services, and many others not mentioned, are the costs of the user's computer, the modem, and the telephone lines used to dial in, all of which can be relatively cheap. 15
- 3 One of the recent innovations the internet made available is online commerce, which includes online shopping, online banking, online trading and many more. This opens up a new international world of trading. Consumers, overcoming any kind of disability, can effectively dive into an immense range and selection of merchandise, effortlessly compare prices and quickly shop from remote locations. Perhaps, waiting to carry out regular transactions in financial centres is very frustrating. This is not true anymore with the expansion of the internet to include online banking. People can, anytime and anywhere from the globe, access their bank accounts, pay their bills, transfer their money and even trade their stocks. The internet is, beyond doubt, the most efficient and economic tool of the next generation. 25 35



- 4 However, the dark side of the internet reveals some serious drawbacks. First, it was not designed with tight security in mind. This was demonstrated, at least once a month, by so-called "crackers" growing minorities of people with nothing better to do than spoil everyone else's enjoyment. Crackers dedicate their work to purposely infecting programmes and distant computers that access the internet. 40
- 5 Secondly, the internet's structures do not only transport data, but also transport compact and yet very harmful intruders: computer viruses. These artificial clever beasts that destroy data have existed since the very first birth of personal computers. With the growth of the internet, virus authors have been faced up to nothing but a widespread gate to the information superhighway, efficiently supplied with new viruses. 45
- 6 The (information superhighway,) as any other invention, has its strengths residing in its popular aspects ? the World Wide Web, email, online commerce, and many others. The internet has also its weaknesses, some of which can be very damaging. I believe, however, that these drawbacks will be overcome in time as technology advances and methods of securely transmitting, receiving, and retrieving information improve. 55

*(Adapted from 123helpme.com)*

### Passage B

#### Bonding Experience with Mom

- 1 The sun had just started to set behind our home, my father would be home soon. I walked into the kitchen only to be greeted by my mother cooking dinner. She stood there, one hand on her hip, her one leg stuck out at her side, knee slightly bent, stirring the pot, holding the spoon all the way at the tip of the handle. She looked as put off as could be. My mother always felt she could be doing a million other things besides cooking dinner. We sat there talking until I heard a familiar soft rumble in front of our house. The rumble was accompanied by my father fidgeting at the front door. His old noisy Bronco always made his presence known. He plodded down the hallway into the kitchen to greet my mother with a peck on the cheek. After one more quick stir, she plopped a hot pad on the table followed by a pan of sliced meatloaf in sauce. The smell of the meat, potatoes, and vegetables filled the kitchen instantly and the family gathered around the table. The meal was a typical one in our household. My mother, who had a 5 10 15

- million other things to do that day, including having her own personal time, did not feel like cooking a twelve-course meal. However, my father, who always came home expecting steak, did not see the meal as appetizing as the rest of us. 20
- 2 When my father blew up at my mother, we were all expecting him to. The argument of "I want steak" and "I was working all day" was common in our family. I immediately took my mother's side like I usually did because no one in our family appreciates or respects what she does. My father would later grow to regret what he said and apologize. Tonight was different, though. My mother usually took my father's comments in stride, knowing he really does not mean what he says. But, this time they both exploded at each other and my mother ended up running out of the kitchen upset, retiring to her room. 25 30
- 3 No one is ever home to see how hard she works. They don't see her writing for hours every week in her room, or the drafting, typing, rewriting, and revising over and over again on the computer. They just yell and say that she's taking up their time and they need the computer more. My brother and sisters don't remember all the times she took us to the post office when we were kids so she could mail out manuscripts, only for them to be returned with rejection letters. They don't see over a decade worth of work put into something that she believes in so much, even through all the hardships and rejection. They don't see her passion. 35 40
- 4 I believe it was that moment, that exact moment, when I wrote that letter to my mother as she sat in her room and I told her how they all will be jealous when her manuscript sells. How when she is on Oprah they will start believing in her when the money starts flowing. I told her how I believed in her now and that her hard work will pay off. At that moment I saw how much someone could have a passion for writing. How through everybody's nonsense and negativity, through all the folders stocked with rejection letters, she still kept writing. It was then I gained a new respect for my mother and her work, her writing and my writing. I had never known writing could be so intricate and creative. How writing was not just research papers in school, or essays in a test, but personal feelings and emotions that you may be too scared to share otherwise. 45 50 55

- 5 My mother and I have shared a bond since that night. People still rant and rave, but after she signed a contract with a huge agent in California and her manuscript was sent out to publishers such as William and Schuster and Random House, their rants were calmed to just whispers. I guess all some people want is to see 60 the money. We just look at each other and snicker, knowing one day I will be her guest on Oprah.

*(Adapted from 123helpme.com).*

End of paper

Ngee Ann Secondary School  
Mid Year Examination 2006  
Secondary 2 Express  
English Language  
Paper 2

Section A:

1. importance
2. realize
3. tell
4. for
5. manage
6. with
7. scale
8. youngest
9. what
10. be

Section B:

1. that
2. .
3. ?
4. filled
5. Black Civil Rights Movement
6. .
7. .
8. goal
9. Black
10. free

Section C:

1(i) 3

1(ii) 5

1(iii) 2

2. The government agencies and universities first used the internet
3. The word is "drawbacks".
4. An email can reach its recipient immediately.
5. People can then access information about them from all over the world
6. People no longer has to queue up to do the normal banking transactions and can do them anytime, anywhere.

7. The phrase is "beyond doubt".

8(i) C

8(ii) D

8(iii) A

9. Father's Bronco could be a dog.

10. The phrase is "hot pad on the table"

11. The word is "typical".

12. Father wanted a change in the menu and he would argue that he was working the whole day and would want a peace of mind when he reached home.

13. The phrase is "usually took my father's comments in stride".

14. Everyone was either at school or at work and no one could see the mother's enthusiasm in writing.

15. The children would have conflicts of using the computer with the mother.

16. Even though Mother's writings kept being rejected, she did not give up her enthusiasm in writing and persisted on.

17. The agents and the publishers were the people who ranted and raved at Mother's failures.

18(i) plodded: trudged

18(ii) intricate: complicated

18(iii) rant: shout

19

- No one saw the hard work and effort she put in writing, something she is enthusiastic about.
- The author's siblings would have conflicts with her for hogging the computer and did not remember the times when Mother had to bring her children to the post office to post out her writings.
- The writer can finally understand how the mother's work will pay off with her persistence and tolerance.
- Believes money will start rolling in and Mother will become famous.
- The writer finally knew that writing can be complicated and inspired with individual emotions and feelings into it
- Despite people's scolding and rejection, the writer believes that Mother will succeed

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