

Section One [30 marks]

You are advised to write between 350 and 500 words on one of the following topics.

At the head of your composition, write the number of the topic you have chosen.

- 1) Is acquiring a good academic qualification important?
- 2) Contemporary youths are more stressed than their predecessors. Discuss.
- 3) "You must always be grateful to your parents for all their sacrifices." Do you agree?
- 4) Describe the scene at a major concert and explain why you think it is the best place to hang out alone or with friends.
- 5) A Nasty Prank.

Section Two [30 marks]

Begin your answer on a fresh page

You are advised to write between 250 and 350 words for this section.

You should read the information carefully and plan your answer before beginning to write.

You are the Student Chairman of your School's CIP committee. Your committee has just been requested by the school to initiate a CIP expedition to a foreign country.

As required by your principal, you have to submit an expedition proposal to her. In this proposal you need to shortlist two possible venues for the CIP expedition. The relevant details of these venues are highlighted in the following table:

	Medan, Sumatra	Yala, Sri Lanka
Estimated Budget	S\$20000	S\$100000
Primary Objective(s)	Refurbishment of a primary school's furniture and character education activities with pupils.	Reconstruction of a coastal village and its drainage system
Time duration	Minimum of 10 days	Minimum of 21 days
Manpower	Minimum – 30 students	Minimum – 100 students
Risk Factor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area has been disinfected and totally cleared of debris• Labour intensive but minimal supervision required• Regional hospital is about 10km away from site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area has not been completely disinfected and cleared of debris• Both labour intensive and demanding in terms of technical and engineering skills• Regional hospital is about 10-minute drive away from site
Urgency of Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary school is functioning with basic amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living in refugee camp and lacking in proper sanitation

In your proposal, you must compare and decide on the most suitable venue based on objectives, time and manpower requirements, security and other logistical concerns as well as the impact of the CIP programme on the people's lives.

Use a persuasive tone so that the Principal is convinced and will agree to the needed project. Your report should be written in clear accurate English.

End of Paper

Read Passage A and Passage B and then answer the questions which follow below.

You are recommended to answer the questions in the order set.

Mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalised in any part of the Paper.

Note: When a question asks you to answer in your own words, YOU MUST NOT COPY THE WORDS IN THE PASSAGE IN YOUR ANSWER.

Passage A

- 1 There is something about Lijiang that makes you want to immerse yourself in its very centre. After a month, with mornings spent walking the quiet side streets, chats with the local food sellers and waking up to a view of mountain ranges has slowly but surely worked Lijiang into the corners of my heart.
- 2 When I came here I wanted to make a difference; now that I am leaving I realize that this notion was arrogant and naïve because I will leave this place with more than I walked in with. I do like to think though that I brought some happiness and friendship to the children in the days of my stay. Today is the day I fly home, and I have to say goodbye to the children before I go. I walk into the orphanage, but when I reach there it is quiet. It is a fine day, sunny and still, and so the children are out playing. I sit and wait for their return, letting the enfolding hush of this little sanctuary wash over me. 5
10
- 3 My journey begins with a landing. It is a few hours to dusk as my plane descends, and the last warm rays of the day slant in to fill my window seat with golden liquid pools. The simple pleasure of sunlight on my face makes me breathe with happiness; I am unbelievably excited about this month-long passage I have decided to set my feet upon. I have come to the ancient town of Lijiang, Yunnan, in Southwest China to be another part of willing hands in the small orphanage for a period of four weeks. I don't know how much difference I can make in this short time or how much help I can provide but I do know, at least, that there is no excuse for not trying. 15
- 4 As I look out the small window of the descending aircraft, I see next to the runway a small padi field being tended by an old man in blue. My reaction is one of surprise, for although I knew Lijiang was rural you never really expect what you expect until it arrives before you. The juxtaposition of grey airport and green field startled my expectations; concepts of norms borne of the naïve belief that the rest of the world resembled mine. 20
25
- 5 The story began in 1996. An earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale spread out across Lijiang in great destroying waves, debilitating 80% of the city's buildings. At least 322 people were killed and another 17,000 injured. More than 320,000 were left homeless. The story told is that the earthquake occurred shortly after dinner, when parents were in houses and kitchens while children were outside, playing in the fading light of the day. As homes collapsed, children watched helplessly as their parents were buried alive. When the dust had settled and the last of the trembles gone, orphanhood proclaimed itself as the next devastation. 30
- 6 I step through the heavy wooden doors of the Lijiang Ethnic Orphanage, and into a riot of light and colour. It is a courtyard encircled by four panels of house with sunlight flooding, tumbling, whirling into a room of air. A room of air with a ceiling of sky, with shouts and laughs bouncing off the walls. A feeling of lightness perches itself upon my shoulder as I enter; it is a lightness of being, some unfathomable thing woven from the very dust in air. Anyone who has walked into a crowd of children playing in sunlight will have felt this feeling. 35
40

- 7 Children run and chase, shrieking in delight, leaving glinting flashes of shiny hair and dark eyes in the spaces before. They are oblivious to my entrance. Dried maize and chilli hang in garlands upon the second floor, the red and yellow spilling downwards to the green of potted plants clustered in the corner. I met Yang Jie, who tells me I am to share the receptionist duties with her and Peli, another volunteer from Tonga rotating six hours shifts at the reception from eight in the morning to eight at night. Duties entail speaking to the many tourists that come into the orphanage everyday. Explaining to them what we are, selling the books and souvenirs donated to help support the orphanage, making sure the visitors do not ask the children awkward questions or take their pictures, and essentially hoping that they will drop a token of love into our donation box as they leave. I discuss with the teachers and after some scheduling, arrange an English class to be held three times a week. 45
- 8 I start work on a Tuesday, on the morning shift. It is eight o'clock and the children are having their breakfast. I seat myself at the reception, watching the children finish up and start to begin the madness of waking up the day. Some cluster in corners playing a game of who-can-throw-the-card-hardest, quiet and hushed in concentration. Others talk and walk around the courtyard, arguing in groups and generally picking among themselves like a flock of starlings hopping and flying at one another. As the momentum of the day builds up, they start running and hopping and chasing and shouting, and a pandemonium of noise begins to rise. 55
- 9 One hour later the children have decided unanimously that I am the next best thing to play with. The girls insist on playing with my hair, braiding it and combing it through with their fingers. The boys insist I read to them Noah's Ark ten times over. The littlest boy demands a piggyback ride. A mistake – after that I couldn't say no to the others in line. Their boundless energy amazes me and I am forced to ingeniously fall to the floor in a faint, hoping they would finally see that I am old and weary and tired. Crowding around me they peer anxiously down, suddenly hushed into murmurs. Looking into their vexed faces, I cannot help myself – jumping up with a roar as they scatter in delight, shrieking and screaming, I chase them round and round the courtyard grabbing and tickling and shouting until finally I really am old and weary and tired. Little bundles of effervescence bounce and chatter into my face until it starts all over again. 65
- 10 Two o'clock. My shift is over, and I have never felt such relief. I have the rest of the day to traipse around Old Town, exploring the shops and streets and little roadside hole-in-the-walls. This I do, resisting the urge to just go home and go to sleep. I pass silversmiths and woodcarvers, hollering waitresses and crying babies. Walking home in the dimmed streets among the thinning flow of people, a smile plays across my lips. Lijiang is more than it seems to be. 75

Adapted from 'The Orphanage in Lijiang', Asian Geographic, Issue 4/2004

Passage B

- 1 A visit to Kyoto is a glimpse into the faces of Japan's past – flashes of stunning white, bright crimson lips, and elaborate hairstyles – which evokes a bygone era and epitomizes the very essence of being Japanese.
- 2 The image of the geisha runs deep into the collective consciousness of the Japanese. Generations have celebrated them in poems, songs and legends, and *ukiyo-e* 5

(woodblock) artists have also printed immortal images of these women. Throughout the centuries, they have been revered both as symbols of sacrifice as well as the joys of life.

- 3 At the heart of the Japanese culture are ideals of self-sacrifice, discipline, and loyalty towards one's family and countrymen. These ideals form the foundation of a geisha's training, life, and profession. While Westerners are prone to confuse geishas with common prostitutes, nothing could be further from the truth; a geisha is defined by her dedication to Japanese ideals and not the sexual element. In fact, the first geishas were not women but men. 10
- 4 I arrived at Kyoto Station, which is a massive modern structure of concrete and steel, rebuilt to commemorate the 1,200th anniversary of Kyoto as the capital. It was here in Kyoto where the story began for these women, way back in the middle of the 18th century. During that time, aristocrats in Kyoto started demanding more entertainment as their fortunes grew. They devoted many of their waking hours to the pursuit of aesthetic elegance, refined pottery, calligraphy, art, and dance. Thus a group known as the Taikomochi emerged. 15
20
- 5 The Taikomochi consisted solely of men who placed themselves and their skills at the disposal of the Kyoto aristocracy and called themselves 'geisha' which means 'accomplished person'. At the same time, members of the *chonin*, or lower merchant class, educated their daughters in these same skills, with hopes of attracting the patronage of the aristocracy. The popularity of these young female performers soon grew while the Taikomochi lost the favour of the aristocracy. With this, a new breed of geishas emerged – females. 25
- 6 Female geishas often use the *shamisen* or *jabisen*, a stringed musical instrument, for entertainment as it could be easily mastered. Apart from playing the *shamisen*, many were also trained in the art of serving tea, known as *chanoyu*. A geisha lives in an *okiya* but they entertain in an *ochaya* (teahouse). The *ochaya* in which I was served tea was small and illuminated only by a warm, orange glow. As I received tea, I felt entirely at peace. 30
- 7 When I left the tearoom, it was late in the morning and I made my way to the Gion district, in hopes of catching a glimpse of these women from another time. Descriptions of this district in the tourist guidebooks led me to believe that geishas were as common as the numerous small shops lining the streets. I spent the rest of the morning and early afternoon seeking them but left for the popular Philosopher's Path sorely disappointed. 35
40
- 8 Today, geishas continue to entertain those who can afford their company, which often costs more than US\$150 per two-hour session. Most geishas today are young single Japanese women who choose this profession by their own free will and leave it once they get married. The geisha population is steadily dwindling as fewer women join the profession due to the immense sacrifices required and the rigours of their strict training. As these faces continue to fade, Japan is left with but mere glimpses into the past of this class of unique women. 45

Adapted from 'Geisha – A dreamlike encounter', *Asian Geographic*, Issue 1/2006

From Passage A:

From paragraph 1:

- 1 What are two reasons that make you 'want to immerse yourself in its very centre' (lines 1-2)? [1]

From paragraph 2:

- 2 Explain in your own words what the author means by 'I will leave this place with more than I walked in with' (lines 6-7). [2]

From paragraph 3:

- 3 What are the purposes of doing such a work, according to the author? Answer in your own words. [2]

From paragraph 5:

- 4 What does the author mean when she says 'orphanhood proclaimed itself as the next devastation' (line 33)? Use your own words to explain. [1]

From paragraph 7:

- 5 Suggest a reason why the visitors are not allowed to ask children awkward questions or take their pictures. [1]

From paragraph 8:

- 6 Give two examples of how the children 'begin the madness of waking up the day' (line 55). [2]

From paragraph 10:

- 7 Explain what is meant by 'I have never felt such relief' (line 73). [2]
8 What does the author mean when she says 'Lijiang is more than it seems to be' (line 78)? [1]

From Passage B:

From paragraph 2:

- 9 In what 2 ways are the images of the geishas 'immortal' (line 6)? [1]

From paragraph 3:

- 10 What two reasons are given by the author to invalidate the misconception /ignorance of Westerners that geishas are similar to prostitutes? [1]

From paragraph 6:

- 11 Name two skills a geisha must master. [1]

From paragraph 7:

- 12 Why did the author describe the geishas as 'women from another time' (line 36)? [1]

From paragraph 8:

- 13 How are the modern geishas different from those in the 18th century? [2]

- 14 Why is the number of geishas steadily dwindling? Answer in your own words. [2]

From Passages A and B:

- 15 For each of the following words or phrases, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage

From Passage A:

- a. debilitating (line 27)
b. unfathomable (line 38)

From Passage B:

- c. collective (line 4)
d. commemorate (line 16)
e. pursuit of (line 19)

[5]

- 16 **Passage A** provides an account of the author's experiences at the Lijiang Ethnic Orphanage.

Imagine you are the author. Using your own words as far as possible, describe the sights and sounds as you enter the orphanage and what you see and have to go through with the children the day you start work until your shift is over.

USE THE MATERIAL IN PASSAGE A FROM PARAGRAPH 6 TO THE END OF THE PASSAGE.

Your summary, which must be in continuous writing (not in note form), must not be more than 150 words, (not counting the words given to help you to begin).

Begin your summary as follows:

As I step through the wooden doors of the orphanage...

[25]

END OF PAPER

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE MID-YEAR EXAMINATION 2006
TEMASEK SECONDARY SCHOOL
SECONDARY THREE EXPRESS**

ANSWERS

Please note:

- Major grammatical errors should be penalised.
- Minor grammatical errors and obvious slips of the pen should not be penalised.
- Lifting from the passage is acceptable unless the question cannot be answered in such a way or the question forbids it by stating that candidates must answer in their own words. However, lifting must be accurate and succinct. The inclusion of chunks of irrelevant material should be penalised.
- For in your own words questions, key words are selected for substitution. No marks are awarded for derivatives.
- If a candidate offers what appears to be an acceptable answer, but which is not on the marking scheme, the scheme can be changed after consultation with other markers.

From Passage A:

From paragraph 1:

- 1 What are two reasons that make you 'want to immerse yourself in its very centre' (lines 1-2)? [1]
Any 2 of the following:
- mornings spent walking the quiet side streets
 - chats with the local food sellers
 - waking up to a view of mountain ranges

From paragraph 2:

- 2 Explain in your own words what the author means by 'I will leave this place with more than I walked in with' (lines 6-7). [2]
It means that she would have gained more experience from this place than with whatever knowledge she first came with [A comparison must be made before and after]

From paragraph 3:

- 3 What are the purposes of doing such a work, according to the author? Answer in your own words. [2]
Answer from passage: She wants to make a difference and help the orphanage as much as she can
[Zero for LIFTING]
- Answer in YOW: She wants to contribute significantly / make an impact [1] and assist the orphanage as best as she can / to the best of her ability [1].

From paragraph 5:

- 4 What does the author mean when she says 'orphanhood proclaimed itself as the next devastation' (line 33)? Use your own words to explain. [1]
After the natural disaster killed many parents, many children became orphans which consequently became another suffering/misery.

From paragraph 7:

- 5 Suggest a reason why the visitors are not allowed to ask children awkward questions or take their pictures. [1]
To protect the children's privacy.

From paragraph 8:

- 6 Give two examples of how the children 'begin the madness of waking up the day' (line 55). [2]
- Some talk and walk around the courtyard, arguing in groups, picking among themselves [ED if candidate lifts the simile 'like a flock of starlings hopping and flying at one another']
 - Some start running and hopping and chasing and shouting

[Zero for: Some play a game of who-can-throw-the-card-hardest, because this is done 'quietly and hushed in concentration']

From paragraph 10:

- 7 Explain what is meant by 'I have never felt such relief' (line 73). [2]
The author is glad that her shift is over [1] as she is exhausted having to play with the children/ having to entertain the children [1]
- 8 What does the author mean when she says 'Lijiang is more than it seems to be' (line 78)? [1]
It means Lijiang which seems an ordinary place actually offers varied / a myriad of experiences [1].
{Must contain the underlined phrase for 1 mark}

From Passage B:

From paragraph 2:

- 9 In what two ways are the images of the geishas 'immortal' (line 6)? [1]
They are celebrated in poems, songs and legends and their images are printed as art work.
{Must have both points for 1 mark}

From paragraph 3:

- 10 What two reasons are given by the author to invalidate the misconception / ignorance of Westerners that geishas are similar to prostitutes? [1]
- A geisha is defined by her dedication to Japanese ideals and not the sexual element
 - The first geishas were men not women
- {Must have both points for 1 mark}

From paragraph 6:

- 11 Name two skills a geisha must master. [1]
The two skills are playing the shamisen for entertainment and the art of serving tea.
{Must have both points for 1 mark}

From paragraph 7:

- 12 Why did the author describe the geishas as 'women from another time' (line 36)? [1]
The geishas' appearance and make-up are totally different from ordinary people.

From paragraph 8:

- 13 How are the modern geishas different from those in the 18th century? [2]
They choose to be geishas by their own free will and leave it once they get married [1]
unlike in the 18th century where geishas are trained to sacrifice their happiness for others [1].
[Zero if no comparison is made]

- 14 Why is the number of geishas steadily dwindling? Answer in your own words. [2]
Answer from passage: 'due to the immense sacrifices required and the rigour of their strict training' [Zero for LIFTING]

Answer in YOW: It is because of the huge /great sacrifices that are necessary and the harshness/severity/rigidity of their rigorous /stringent training or lessons

From Passages A and B:

- 15 For each of the following words or phrases, give one word or short phrase (of not more than seven words) which has the same meaning that the word or phrase has in the passage

From Passage A:

- a. debilitating (line 27) – wearing out; weakening; enervating; enfeebling
b. unfathomable (line 38) – incomprehensible; that cannot be understood; indecipherable, mysterious; mystifying; obscure

From Passage B:

- c. collective (line 4) – common; shared; mutual
d. commemorate (line 16) – celebrate; mark
e. pursuit of (line 19) – striving towards; aspiration for; quest after/for; search for

[5]

- 16 Passage A provides an account of the author's experiences at the Lijiang Ethnic Orphanage.

Imagine you are the author. Using your own words as far as possible, describe the sights and sounds as you enter the orphanage and what you see and have to go through with the children the day you start work until your shift is over.

USE THE MATERIAL IN PASSAGE A FROM PARAGRAPH 6 TO THE END OF THE PASSAGE.

Your summary, which must be in continuous writing (not in note form), must not be more than 150 words, (not counting the words given to help you to begin).

Begin your summary as follows:

As I step through the wooden doors of the orphanage...

[25]

No.	Points from the Passage	In your own words
Sights and sounds as I enter the orphanage		
01	into a riot of light and colour [lines 34-35]	<i>a varied display of colours greets me.</i>
02	...a courtyard encircled by four panels of house [line 35]	<i>There is a courtyard enclosed/surrounded by four walls of house</i>
03	with sunlight flooding, tumbling, whirling into a room of air [lines 35-36]	<i>with brightness and ventilation.</i>
04	A room of air with a ceiling of sky [line 36]	<i>The room has no ceiling</i>
05	with shouts and laughs bouncing off the walls [lines 36-37]	<i>which echoes/reverberates the shouts and laughter of children</i>
06	Children run and chase, streaking in delight... [line 41]	<i>who run and chase each other happily./ Children playing</i>
07	Dried maze and chilli hang in garlands upon the second floor, [lines 42-43]	<i>The second floor is garlanded /decorated /adorned /festooned with dried maze and chilli.</i>
08	the red and yellow spilling downwards to the green of potted plants clustered in the corner [lines 43-44]	<i>the red and yellow ones cascade downwards to the green potted plants positioned/arranged in the corner</i>
What I see and have to go through with the children the day I start work until my shift is over.		
09	I start work on a Tuesday, on the morning shift...and the children are having their breakfast [lines 53-54]	<i>As I begin work on Tuesday morning, the children are having their breakfast.</i>
10	I seat myself at the reception, watching the children finish up and start to play [lines 54-55]	<i>I waited and observe the children complete their meal and start to play.</i>
11	Some cluster in corners playing a game of who-can-throw-the-card-the-hardest, quiet and hushed in concentration [lines 55-56]	<i>Some gather/bundle/group in corners playing a game of card throwing silently</i>
12	Others talk and walk around the courtyard, arguing in groups and generally picking among themselves [lines 56-58]	<i>while others talk and walk around the courtyard, quarrelingsquabbling./bickering in groups and teasing each other</i>
13	As the momentum of the day builds up, they start running and hopping and chasing and shouting, and a pandemonium of noise begins to rise [lines 58-60]	<i>Soon they start running and jumping and pursuing and yelling, increasing the noise level.</i>
14	One hour later... the girls insist on playing with my hair, braiding it and combing it through with their fingers [lines 61-63]	<i>An hour later, the girls persist on playing with my hair</i>
15	The boys insist I read to them Noah's Ark ten times over [line 63]	<i>and the boys demand that I read to them Noah's Ark countless times.</i>
16	The littlest boy demands a piggyback ride [lines 63-64]	<i>I gave the smallest boy a piggyback ride</i>
17	A mistake – after that I couldn't say no to the others in line [lines 64-65]	<i>and a long queue ensues which I cannot refuse</i>

No.	Points from the Passage	in your own words
18	Their boundless energy amazes me and I am forced to ingeniously fall to the floor in a faint, hoping they would finally see that I am old and weary and tired [lines 65-66]	<i>Their limitless energy fatigues me that I am forced to brilliantly pretend to faint.</i>
19	Looking into their vexed faces, I cannot help myself -- jumping up with a roar as they scatter in delight, shrieking and screaming, [lines 67-69]	<i>However, their worried faces compel me to jump up with a roar to their delight</i>
20	I chase them round and round the courtyard grabbing and tickling and shouting until finally I really am old and weary and tired [lines 69-70]	<i>I chase them in circles until I become exhausted</i>
21	Little bundles of effervescence bounce and chatter into my face until it starts all over again [lines 71-72]	<i>Unfortunately, the children expect me to react and the chasing game continues until my shift is over.</i>

NB:

Candidates must provide at least 5 points from the first section or not more than 10 from the second section of the summary.

Content: 15 marks [Award one mark for each point up to a maximum of fifteen]

Language: 10 marks

Use of own words: 10 marks

} Average marks – STYLE: 10 marks

[Add the marks for 'Own Words' and 'Use of English' together and divide by two. Raise any half marks to the nearest whole number]

Refer to O Level marking Criteria

Suggested answer:

As I step through the wooden doors of the orphanage a varied display of colours greets me [1]. There is a courtyard enclosed by four walls of house [2], bright and well-ventilated [3]. The room has high ceiling. [4] reverberating children's shouts and laughter, [5] running and chasing each other happily [6]. As I begin work on Tuesday morning, the children are having, their breakfast [7]. After breakfast, some children play a game of card throwing silently [8] while others talk and walk around the courtyard, bickering and teasing each other [9]. Soon they start running, jumping, pursuing and yelling, increasing the noise level [10]. Later, the girls persist on 100 playing with my hair [11] and the boys demand that I read to them Noah's Ark countless times [12]. Their limitless energy fatigues me that I brilliantly pretend to faint [13]. However, their worried faces compel me to jump up with a roar to their delight [14]. I chase them in circles until I become exhausted and the game continues until my shift ends [15].

[150 words excluding opening words]