

1989

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| Q1 | <p>Opportunities to use English in Hong Kong are many, but few young people take advantage of them. Propose a scheme whereby students from certain classes in your school might exchange visits and participate in activities with native English-speaking students in a school nearby. Address your proposal to the teacher in charge of the English Club in your school, outlining your ideas and pointing out the mutual benefits that could result if they were tried out.</p> <p>Sign your proposal 'C.C.Chan'. Do NOT use your real name</p>   |
| Q2 | <p>'Study in sunny Australia', says an AUSTRADE advertisement on the wall of the MTR. You are interested. Do tasks (1) and (2) below:</p> <p>(1) Write to the Education Marketing Officer at the Australian Trade Commission seeking more details about universities and colleges that offer places to foreign students.</p> <p>(2) Following your enquiries to several possible institutions, one of them forwards you an application form requesting that you complete it and send it back together with a handwritten explanatory statement about yourself, giving your reasons for wanting to go to Australia (rather than the U.K. for example), and your expectations of the course you have selected. Write this statement.</p> <p>Sign the letter and the statement 'D.K.Poon'. Do NOT use your real name.</p> |
| Q3 | <p>Speaker A : Freedom is the right to disagree.<br/>Speaker B : True. But it's sometimes better for everyone if you keep quiet.</p> <p>Consider the point of view of both speakers. Write a discussion essay in which you draw on experiences from your own life to illustrate the need to sometimes 'speak up' or 'shut up'.</p>   |
| Q4 | <p>You have been offered two jobs: one is that of a trainee supermarket manager (low pay, boring work, good prospects, good terms of employment): the other is as a factory manager in your uncle's garment factory (low pay, interesting Work, uncertain prospects, possible family privileges).</p> <p>Write a letter to an older brother (now living in Canada), who has often given you good advice in the past. Describe the two jobs, express your opinions and ask him to help you make the right choice.</p> <p>Sign your letter 'Chris'. DO NOT use your real name.</p>   |

1990

Q1 Alan I've just signed up to participate in the 'Help the Aged' Project. I did it last year as well and found it an enjoyable and fruitful experience. Are you involved in any voluntary work?

Betty Of course I am even though I don't particularly like it, And do you know why I do it? It's because you always have to say that you've done some voluntary work when you go for an interview either for a job or for university.

Alan Oh, that's not why I signed up.

You have just overheard these two students talking. Write an article for the school English magazine discussing the two different points of view expressed in the conversation, and also giving your own views.

Sign the article 'C.C.Chan' Do NOT use your real name. Do Not write any address.

Q2 In a recent debate in your school, the topic of environmental pollution was raised. Two main views emerged. One was that restrictions on pollution will harm the present and future prosperity of Hong Kong. The other was that if restrictions are not enforced soon, people's health will be badly affected.

Write an essay discussing these two opposing views and trying to suggest a reasonable way forward.

Q3 Your principal has asked you to organise an end-of-term exhibition for your school. The theme is 'Be a Blood Donor'. Write a letter to all senior students in the school. In your letter, try hard to persuade them to volunteer to help with the exhibition. In addition to persuading them by giving reasons why they should assist you, give them some indication of what you are planning for the exhibition.

Sign the letter 'H.K.Wong'. Do NOT use your real name. Do NOT write any address.

Q4 You have received letters from two friends who are studying at overseas universities. One of them is really enjoying herself. The other one hates everything about life at his university.

You are caught in a dilemma because you have the opportunity to make your own decision — whether to stay in Hong Kong and study in one of Hong Kong's universities, or go overseas to study.

Write a letter to someone you trust discussion your dilemma and indicating what your feelings are at the moment.

Sign the letter 'Chris'. Do NOT use your real name. Do Not write any address.

1991

Q1 The pressures of life are forcing Hong Kong people to forget their traditional roles by neglecting their old people. Discuss this issue with reference to the care of old people in Hong Kong.

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| Q2 | Recent statistics demonstrate that crime, particularly armed robbery, is on the increase in Hong Kong. Attempt to account for this increase in the crime rate.  |
| Q3 | "Animals deserve to be treated with the same consideration and care as human beings." Consider the arguments for and/or against this assertion.   |
| Q4 | Some people say that certain pop and film 'stars' do not provide good role models for the younger generation. However, others maintain that these stars have the right to privacy, and that what they do in their private life is no business of the public. Support <u>or</u> counter the view that 'stars' in Hong Kong have the duty to provide a good example of behaviour for young people. Give reasons for your opinion. |

1992

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| Q1 | <p>There is evidence that, because of relatively low salaries, newly-qualified doctors are reluctant to work in government hospitals. They can earn much more in private practice.</p> <p>Some doctors defend the freedom of all doctors to choose their own place of work. Other people argue that the government should intervene to decide where newly-qualified doctors should, as is the case in some Southeast Asian countries.</p> <p>Discuss these different viewpoints, giving reasons why you agree or disagree.</p>   |
| Q2 | <p>Japanese workers are said to work very long hours. In many companies, workers are reluctant to take holidays, unless they are ordered to do so. When they do take a vacation, it is usually organised by their company and they are usually accompanied by their fellow workers.</p> <p>Briefly, give your own views about the Japanese work ethic and their attitude to holidays as described above. Then discuss the attitudes and practices of Hong Kong people with regard to recreation and leisure, and how they compare with Japanese attitudes and practices.</p>               |
| Q3 | <p>The City Polytechnic and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology have been established recently in Hong Kong. Write an article to be published in the 'Young Post' supplement of the <i>South China Morning Post</i> or the 'Education' supplement of <i>The Standard</i>.</p> <p>Give your views about the advantages and disadvantages of studying at a very new institution rather than at one of the older institutions, such as The University of Hong Kong or The Chinese University of Hong Kong.</p>   |
| Q4 | The pressure of studies and examinations places a great load on young people as they grow up and develop. Some say that schoolwork is so important that romantic relationships between boys and girls should wait until after Form 7. Others say that a healthy romantic relationship between two young people can be of great benefit to both of them. Write an essay for the school's English Magazine discussing these conflicting views. End your essay by giving your own opinion. Finally, as a suggestion for the editor of the English Magazine, provide a title for your article. |

1993

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| Q1 | The pop star Anita Mui ( 梅艷芳 ) sometimes plays the role of a strong, aggressive and dominant woman during her performance on stage. Discuss, with reasons, the extent to which you think this is a role which young women and men can accept, and young women should imitate.   |
| Q2 | Imagine that the government has announced that it has a surplus of \$8 billion because of unexpectedly good trading and revenue collection figures. The Governor has stated he wants to hear the views of young people in Hong Kong as to how the extra revenue should be spent. Write a letter, advising the Governor how the unexpected billions should be allocated in at least three different policy areas. State what your priorities are and provide full reasons for your proposals. Sign your letter 'C. C. Wong'. |
| Q3 | One of the most popular types of film in Hong Kong deals with local gangsters (or 'triads'). Some people claim that the portrayal of triad leaders in these films as attractive, glamorous personalities is not only misleading to young people but actually harmful. Explain briefly why these films are popular and discuss, with reasons, whether or not you think the claims are correct.   |
| Q4 | In recent years articles have appeared regularly in newspapers proposing that car ownership should be restricted in Hong Kong. Write a letter to a local English language newspaper arguing against any such proposals. Sign your name 'L.K.Chan'.  |

1994

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| Q1 | <p>You are Chris Wong, the Editor of the school's new English Club Magazine. You have received a letter from a student called John Lee. In the letter, the student has complained about certain points in the first edition of the magazine. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– poor quality photographs,</li> <li>– not enough students have been involved in the production of the magazine,</li> <li>– the inclusion of two articles which the student feels are of no interest to the students in your school (one on politics, the other about mountain climbing).</li> </ul> <p>Reply to John Lee accepting one of the complaints and saying what you intend to do about it, but rejecting the other two, giving reasons why you have rejected them. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong (Editor)'. Do not write any address.</p> |
| Q2 | <p>In Hong Kong it seems to be common for people to think very highly of expensive brand-name clothes and fashion accessories (e.g. bags and shoes). This is true of students as well as adults.</p> <p>Explain why many Hong Kong people think this way. Say whether you feel that this is a good or bad trend for students to follow. Give reasons for your opinions.</p>  |

Q3 Under a new scheme proposed by the Education Department, Cantonese-speaking students from other Asian countries are being encouraged to come to Hong Kong for one-year period during which they will live with Hong Kong families and study in Hong Kong schools. You and your family have been selected to host one of these students who will attend your school and enter Form six in September 1994.

Write a letter to the students (whose name is Jackie) suggesting how he/she can use the one-year school experience to the fullest advantage both educationally and socially. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'. Do not write any address.

Q4 Comic books are probably the most popular form of reading material for young people in Hong Kong.

Write an essay on comic books which deals with ALL following points:

- why these books are so popular,
- the advantages and disadvantages of reading such books,
- how comic books can be used for educational purposes.

Justify your views by providing reasons.

### 1995

Q1 Many people think that sex education is important. Discuss why this topic is neglected in Hong Kong, the dangers of ignoring it, and how sex education can best be provided for young people.

Q2 There has been much discussion recently of falling standards of discipline in schools. Write an article for your school newspaper discussing the issue. Give your opinion as to whether there should be more or less discipline in your school. Support your views with reasoned arguments.

If you wish to refer to the name of your school, use the name 'Hong Kong College'. Do not use the real name of your school.

Q3 Your best friend is studying in a university in Vancouver. He is a member of a rock and roll band which has become very successful, earning a lot of money. His parents are worried about the effect of this on his studies. He has decided that he must choose either to spend all his time on the band and his music, or give up the band completely and concentrate fully on his studies.

He has written to you asking for your views. Write to him giving your advice, providing at least three good reasons to support that advice. Sign your letter 'Chris'. Do not write any address.

Q4 Many young married couples now choose not to have children, even though their parents put them under great pressure to have children. Explain why this conflict occurs between these couples and their parents. State whether you agree with the views of the young couples or with those of their parents. Justify your opinions with logical arguments.

1996

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| Q1 | <p>When the 'new towns' in the New Territories, such as Tuen Mun and Ma On Shan, were first planned, it was intended that they should provide a new way of life for their inhabitants. It was expected that these new towns would be similar to Hong Kong Island and Kowloon in the provision of facilities, and work and educational opportunities.</p> <p>You believe that these expectations have not been fulfilled. Write a letter to the Editor of the young Post saying why you feel that the new towns have not been successful. Suggest what the government should do to improve the situation. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'.</p> |
| Q2 | <p>Recent reports have stated that more young people in Hong Kong are overweight and unfit than ever before. Health experts are becoming worried about the life styles of young people who do less exercise than they should and who have an unbalanced diet.</p> <p>Write an article for your school magazine giving reasons for this problem and suggesting how young people can improve their fitness. In your article, try to persuade the students in your school to adopt a healthier life style.</p>   |
| Q3 | <p>Since the introduction of Advanced supplementary level (AS-level) subjects, there have been comments by some educational professionals about the need to broaden the sixth-form curriculum. It has been proposed that all sixth formers should take four AS-level subjects (including Use of English and Chinese Language and Culture) and two A-levels instead of two AS-levels and three A-levels.</p> <p>Write an essay on this topic. Discuss whether it is desirable to broaden the sixth-form curriculum. Outline the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal, ending your essay by giving your own opinion.</p>             |
| Q4 | <p>It is common in Hong Kong secondary schools for older students to tutor younger students in schemes organised by the schools. Your school has such a scheme, but there is a shortage of tutors. You are Head Girl/Boy of your school. Your principal has asked you to write a letter to all sixth formers persuading them to join the scheme as tutors.</p> <p>In your letter, discuss the tutor system, mention its difficulties, but emphasise the benefits of the scheme for both the tutors and the younger students. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'.</p>   |

1997

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| Q1 | <p>You are taking part in an essay competition organized by Oxfam, an international charitable organization.</p> <p>Write an essay entitled 'Poverty in the world'. Give reasons for the problem of poverty, and suggest various ways in which governments and charities can help poor people.</p> |
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| Q2 | <p>A recent survey has indicated that more and more Chinese people in Hong Kong have English first names.</p> <p>Write an article entitled 'English Names' for your school magazine. Explain why English first names have become so popular, and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using English first names in Hong Kong.</p>  |
| Q3 | <p>Your school Sports Club aims to encourage more students to participate in sports. You are Chris Wong, the secretary of the sports Club. Write a letter to Pat Chan, the chairperson of the Past Students' Association (P.S.A), requesting its support to promote a particular sport among the students.</p> <p>In your letter, state which sport the Sports Club wants to promote, give reasons why this particular sport has been chosen, and suggest different ways in which the P.S.A. can help. (Do not write any address.)</p> |
| Q4 | <p>More and more Hong Kong people are going on holiday to foreign destinations such as Japan, Thailand and Australia.</p> <p>Write an article for your school newspaper on the topic 'Overseas Holidays'. Give reasons why overseas holidays are popular among Hong Kong people, and compare the benefits of traveling abroad to staying in Hong Kong during holidays.</p>   |

1998

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| Q1 | <p>Tourism in Hong Kong has suffered badly since the latter half of 1997. Write a letter to the Editor of the Young Post giving at least one reason for this decline. Then suggest three possible ideas which might help to promote tourism in Hong Kong in the future.</p> <p>Address your letter to The Editor, Young Post, P.O.Box 323, Tai Po, N.T. Do NOT use your own address. Use the following address. Flat 9C Hong Kong Building, 20 Cannon Street, Causeway Bay. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'.</p> |
| Q2 | <p>Write an essay agreeing OR disagreeing with the following statement. 'The best place to master computer skills is outside school, not in the classroom.' Justify your views, and give your essay a title.</p>   |
| Q3 | <p>Your Principal has banned the use of pagers in the school. You are the Head Prefect and have received complaints from some of your classmates about the ban.</p> <p>Write an article for the school newspaper explaining why the ban has been imposed. Provide not less than three reasons, with supporting arguments, for the ban. Give your article a title.</p>  |
| Q4 | <p>Many of your friends attend tutorial schools. Your teachers, however, feel that attending such schools is highly undesirable. Your class teacher has told you to write an essay discussing the pros and cons of attending tutorial schools.</p> <p>Write the essay, and at the end state your personal view, providing justification for your opinion. Give your essay a title.</p>   |

1999

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| Q1 | <p>You are taking part in an essay competition organized by the United Nations. The title of the essay is 'World peace and international understanding in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'.</p> <p>Write the essay. State briefly why world peace is important, and suggest three ways in which young people can help to promote international understanding.</p>   |
| Q2 | <p><b>Your English teacher has explained to your class that learning to construct a strong argument against a popular belief is a good way of developing your argumentative writing skills.</b></p> <p><b>Since most people believe that a university education is essential for a successful life, your teacher has asked you to write an essay entitled 'A university education is not essential for success'. Write the essay, developing three or four good arguments that strongly support the statement.</b></p>  |
| Q3 | <p>Last year, some universities in Hong Kong admitted a number of students because of their achievements in non-academic areas such as sports, music, the performing arts and community service, although they did not meet normal university entry requirements.</p> <p>Write an article for the school magazine discussing arguments both for and against such an admissions policy. End the article by providing your own opinion on the issue. Give your article a title.</p>   |
| Q4 | <p>You have a friend, Terry, who lives in Canada. Usually, she does not go to the theatre or the cinema, saying it is a waste of time and money. Recently, you have seen a number of plays and films and were very impressed by one of these.</p> <p>Write a letter to Terry, explaining why you liked this particular play or film and suggesting that she should see it. In your letter, concentrate on persuading her to see the play or film. Discuss at least three strong reasons why it is worthwhile to do so. Sign your letter 'Chris'. Do <i>not</i> write any address.</p> |

2000

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| Q1 | <p>Unlike many other places in Asia, e.g. Japan and Korea, Hong Kong provides numerous opportunities for students to use English outside school. Write an article for the school magazine suggesting at least three ways in which students can use English outside school. Explain how this will benefit students. Give your article a title.</p>  |
| Q2 | <p><b>The mobile telephone is the most annoying, unnecessary and time-wasting device ever invented. Write an essay in which you strongly support this statement. Provide at least three reasons in support of your argument. Give your essay a title.</b></p>  |
| Q3 | <p>In Europe and North America, it is quite common for students to work full time for one year before entering university. Recently, some employers and educationalists have suggested that Form 7 graduates in Hong Kong should do the same.</p> <p>Write an article for the school newspaper providing arguments for and against this suggestion. End the article by giving your own opinion. Give your article a title.</p> |

Q4 Last year your school spent a lot of money on upgrading its IT (information technology), computer and sports facilities. This year the Principal, Mrs Chan, has asked the Student Association to provide suggestions for improvements in OTHER areas.

As Chairperson of the Student Association, write to Mrs Chan proposing three changes to improve the quality of education in the school. Give detailed reasons for the proposed changes. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'. Do not write any address.

2001

Q1 You have learnt that, in some schools, younger students are being beaten up and bullied by older students. Write an article an article for school newspaper about this issue. Discuss the seriousness of the problem of bullying in schools. And propose three ways of dealing with it.

Q2 Christmas celebrations have now become very popular in China. In many large cities, shopping malls are full of tall Christmas trees and men dressed as Santa Claus. Write an essay EITHER for OR against the proposition that 'Christmas should not be celebrated in China because it is a foreign custom'. Give reasons for your views.

**Q3 In many parts of the world, it is very common for couples to live together before they decide to get married. Write an essay discussing BOTH the positive and negative aspects of living together before marriage. Give your own opinion about this issue.**

Q4 Recently there have been news reports suggesting that, as in many other societies, there is discrimination against minority groups in our community (e.g. Filipinos, Indians, new immigrants, and so on). Write a letter to the South China Morning Post discussing this issue, and suggest three ways in which multicultural understanding and racial harmony can be promoted in Hong Kong.

Address your letter to The Editor, South China Morning Post, GPO box 47, Hong Kong. Do NOT use your own address. Use the following address: Flat 8A, 321 High street, Hong Kong. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'.

2002

Q1 If you could make three improvements in the life of your family, what would they be? Write an essay on this topic. In your essay you should state what these three improvements would be and explain why your suggestions would help make your family life better.

**Q2 'Because so much information is available on the Internet today, traditional secondary schools and teachers are no longer necessary.' Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Write an essay on this topic, stating your opinion and supporting it with at least three reasons.**

Q3 In recent years, Hong Kong film makers and actors have become popular all over the world. Write an article on this topic for your school magazine. Discuss the reasons for the popularity of Hong Kong film makers and actors, and for the international success of Hong Kong movies. Give your article a title.

**Q4** Many young couples these days are choosing not to have children. What do you think of this choice? Write an essay on this topic, stating your personal view and giving reasons for your opinion.

### 2003

Q1 Is it ever right for a country to fight a war? Write an essay on this topic, stating your opinion and supporting it with at least three reasons.

Q2 'Music, art and literature are of more value to the world than science and technology.' Write an essay in which you EITHER strongly support this statement OR strongly disagree with this statement. Provide at least three reasons in support of your opinion.

Q3 If you were free to choose, would you stay in Hong Kong or live in another part of the world? Write an article for your school newspaper in which you state what you like or would like about living in the place you choose.

Give the article a title. If you choose another part of the world, state clearly the name of the city or country.

Q4 Some employers in Hong Kong have stated that they prefer to employ Hong Kong people who have graduated from local universities rather than those who have graduated from overseas universities. Do you think that a degree from a university in Hong Kong is better or worse than a degree from a university overseas? Write a letter to the South China Morning Post giving your opinion and discussing the issue.

Address your letter to The Editor, South China Morning Post, PO Box 323, Tai Po, NT. Do NOT use your own address. Use the following address Flat 9C, Hong Kong Building, 20 Cannon Street, Causeway Bay. Sign your letter 'Chris Wong'.