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南洋女子中學校
NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

**End-of-Year Examination 2017
Secondary Three**

**Language Arts
Paper 2**

**1 hour 45 mins
50 marks**

THURSDAY

28 SEPTEMBER 2017

1145 to 1330 hrs

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST.

Answer **all** questions.

Leave a line between answers to different questions.

Begin your **summary** answer on a **fresh sheet** of paper.

At the end of the examination, submit your summary answer **SEPARATELY**.

Write your name and register number on every sheet of paper used.

Write in dark blue or black ink on both sides of the answer paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction tape/fluid.

Setters:

AN and SGK

This document consists of 8 printed pages,
including this cover page.

[Turn over]

Read the following passage carefully before attempting any questions.

Generations at Work

- 1 When you take members of different generations, blend them together, and ask them to work side by side, you have both an opportunity and a challenge: the opportunity to engage a mix of people who bring their unique experiences and skills to an organization and the challenge of dealing with the generational differences that distinguish them. 5
- 2 The 21st century has ushered in a new, generation-bending era in the U.S. workplace. Fifty-five year old Baby Boomers are on project teams with 22-year-old Millennials and reporting to 45-year-old GenXers while Vets, though fewer in numbers, retain positions of power and influence. Within the context of this new generational reality, dynamic change— 10
economic, social, political — is continuously affecting individuals, organizations, and workplaces.
- 3 This merging of generations is happening amid an economic climate that has changed plans and altered expectations. “We see both individuals and organizations looking to survive and to prepare for 15
what’s next, whatever that looks like,” says Ginny Baxter, Applied Knowledge Network Lead at Herman Miller.
- 4 **Baby Boomers**
Born between 1943 and 1961, and now between 49 and 67 years old, Baby Boomers got their name from the massive increase (“boom”) in births in the United States that followed the Great Depression and World 20
War II and peaked in the late 1950s. They hit society with huge, game-changing numbers—72 million strong. Growing up during the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the fast-ascending women’s movement, Boomers witnessed radical change, social upheaval, and 25
changing mores. “They emerged with strong beliefs in themselves and their ability to set and achieve goals,” says Patty Bergquist, Applied Knowledge Research Manager at Herman Miller.
- 5 Technology has brought tremendous changes during their careers—to life in general and the workplace in particular. Two-thirds of Boomers, 30
for example, say that laptop use during in-person meetings is distracting; less than half of Millennials agree. Having to adjust to new technologies has been a necessity and in some cases a challenge, not just the use of these technologies but the protocols of acceptable office behavior.
- 6 Yet, interestingly, one recent survey found that a significant 52 percent 35
of working adults ages 50 to 64 plan to delay their retirement. Forty-four percent of participants in another study said they will continue working either “much later” or a “little later” than age 65. That compares with 38 percent of those in their 40s and only 25 percent of workers under the

age of 40.

40

- 7 That Boomers will be working longer shouldn't be a problem given their can-do attitude; they believe they can do anything they set their sights on, and they're used to working hard and long hours to accomplish it. Sixty-eight percent of them feel that younger people lack the strong work ethic that they have cultivated. Thirty-two percent of GenXers feel the same way. 45

Generation X

- 8 People born between 1962 and 1977 have been defined as Generation X, a name derived from the 1991 Douglas Coupland novel *Generation X: Tales of an Accelerated Culture* and picked up by the media and advertisers to describe a hard-to-define target market. In the context of the novel, X represents an unknown value, a symbol of searching for an identity and not finding it. Even though Herman Miller prefers not to describe any cohort with a letter, we will use X since it's become the prevailing term for this generation. 50

- 9 Now between 33 and 48 years old, the 57 million GenXers in the U.S. have searched for and created a distinguishing kind of "Generation Tech" identity. "Early on, GenXers found themselves in a world where Boomers were occupying most of the important positions of employment and dramatically changing institutions everywhere," says Katya Filippetti, Marketing Manager at Herman Miller. "This left many GenXers feeling on the outside, unsure of their futures and roles in a Boomer-dominated world." 55 60

- 10 But, like Boomers, GenXers learned to adapt and even thrive in an ever-changing world. They found that the technological savvy they had developed as the first generation to have grown up with computers and video games made them highly employable in what had seemed to be a saturated market that they were born into. "Taking advantage of continuing and dramatic shifts in technology, they've become digital pioneers who value the attributes that technology offers, such as adaptability, user control, and mobility," says Filippetti. "They are the first generation that was told to explore and not 'sit still' in class ." 65 70

- 11 Highly autonomous, GenXers value flexibility and equality at work and they want a voice in how things are done. Having seen their parents downsized after years of service, many are skeptical regarding big-company loyalty and are often attracted to smaller, less-bureaucratic businesses. At the same time, GenXers appreciate the stability that larger firms can offer as long as they can be part of empowered teams within them. 75

- 12 For GenXers, much has changed since the days, not so long ago, when they were seen as free agents negotiating their own deals, seeking special incentives, and switching employers at a moment's notice. Even though there may be less talk about "the war for talent," the challenge of 80

winning over the best talent will be an ongoing one. GenXers who are the most agile—significantly fewer in numbers than Boomers or Millennials—will still be among those in high demand. 85

Millennials

- 13 The youngest generation in the workplace, Millennials got their name from their connection with the new millennium: The first Millennials reached adulthood in 2000-01. Sometimes called Generation Y or Generation Next, the 76 million Millennials born between 1978 and 1997 are now 13 to 32 years old, the most ethnically and racially diverse generation in U.S. history. 90
- 14 To Millennials, technology is a given that's thoroughly integrated into everyday life. Their ease with it allows them to move fast and efficiently, whether they're searching the Internet, taking photographs, sending text messages, watching YouTube—all on their cell phones. 95
- 15 Millennials have received the kind of individual attention in the classroom that Boomers didn't. "Even more than GenXers, Millennials may expect individual feedback, reinforcement, and direction at work, just as they have received at school and often at home as well," says Bergquist. "They believe that employers should encourage active engagement for the benefit of the whole as well as the individual." 100
- 16 Millennials work well in groups and look to peers for information (two-thirds of them prefer face-to-face communication), but they are also high performers as individuals. They prefer office environments that offer choice, depending on the task at hand, and expect that such choice will be provided. Millennials are happier, more motivated, and more efficient in a well-designed workplace. They seek open, dependable work communities where knowledge is shared, the pace is rapid, and new ideas are openly sought. Ideally, they want the freedom to select the location of their work with no set boundaries, with access to technology expected. 105
110
- 17 Even as job opportunities begin returning after an economic downturn, Millennials still face high levels of competition, unemployment, and stress. More and more of those fortunate enough to "get in the door" of an organization are doing so as unpaid "interns" — a practice that's become so common that both the federal government and individual state governments are cracking down on offending employers for violating minimum wage laws. 115
- 18 But, like Boomers, Millennials are typically optimistic and used to challenges. They want jobs that are socially meaningful, and they trust companies that strive to have a positive impact on society. They believe they have a good work ethic but are not given credit for it. 120

Adapted from "Generations at Work" by Herman Miller

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Nanyang Girls' High School

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

30 marks

Answer ALL the questions.

It is recommended that you answer them in the order set. Mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalised in any part of the paper.

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

From Paragraph 1

1. When one asks members of different generations to work together, what opportunity and challenge can one expect? [2]

From Paragraph 2

2. "Fifty-five year old Baby Boomers are on project teams with Millennials and reporting to GenXers while Veterans, though fewer in numbers, retain positions of power and influence." (lines 7-9) [2]

What do you think the writer is trying to illustrate with this example of the 21st century? State two possibilities.

From Paragraph 3

3. "We see both individuals and organizations looking to survive and to prepare for what's next, whatever that looks like," says Ginny Baxter. (lines 14-16) [1]

Why do you think Ginny Baxter uses the phrase 'whatever that looks like' in this context?

From Paragraph 4

4. Identify the adjective that implies that the baby boomers had a great impact on the development or transformation of society. [1]
5. "Boomers witnessed radical change, social upheaval, and changing mores." (lines 24-25) [3]

How did these experiences affect the boomers? **Use your own words.**

From Paragraphs 5 and 6

6. "Two-thirds of Boomers, for example, say that laptop used during in-person meetings is distracting..." (lines 29-31) [1]

Based on the writer's description of the Boomers, infer their *ultimate* response to such distractions which may be a challenge to them?

7. What are the writer's possible reasons for comparing the desired retirement age of the different age groups? [2]

From Paragraph 7

8. "That Boomers will be working longer shouldn't be a problem." (line 41) [2]

Why, according to the writer, is this so? **Identify two reasons, using your own words.**

From Paragraph 8

9. Why was Generation X in the 1990s seen as "a hard-to-define target market"? (line 50) [1]

From Paragraphs 9 and 10

10. Name two challenges that GenXers faced in the earlier years. **Use your own words.** [2]

11. GenXers were born into 'what seemed to be a saturated market'. (lines 66-67) [2]

What does a 'saturated market' suggest about the challenges the GenXers faced?

12. What do you think would have happened to the GenXers if they had not been the digital pioneers? [1]

13. What two possible advantages do you think GenXers have for being told not to 'sit still' in class? [2]

From Paragraph 11

14. Identify the word that reflects the freedom GenXers enjoy. [1]

- 15a. What attracts the GenXers to work in smaller businesses? [1]
- 15b. On what grounds would the GenXers consider working in larger firms? [1]

From Paragraph 12

16. '...seeking special incentives and switching employers at a moment's notice ...' (lines 80-81) [2]

What does this phrase suggest about how GenXers were viewed?

17. Identify and explain the metaphor in this paragraph. [2]

From Paragraph 13

18. What might be the writer's purpose in highlighting that the Millennials are "the most ethnically and racially diverse generation in U.S. history" (lines 90-91)? [1]

SUMMARY

19. Using only material from Paragraphs 15 and 16, answer the following question. [20]

What do Millennials expect at work and what conditions enable them to thrive?

Answer in your own words as far as possible.

Your summary, which must be in continuous writing (not note form), must not be longer than 120 words, including the two words given below.

Write your summary on a fresh sheet of paper.

Begin your summary as follows:

Millennials expect ...

At the end of your summary, write down the total number of words you have used.

END OF PAPER