



TEMASEK SECONDARY SCHOOL
Preliminary Examination 2024
Secondary 4 Normal Academic

HUMANITIES (SOCIAL STUDIES)

2125/01

Paper 1

2126/01

2127/01

1 hour 45 minutes

Question Booklet

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Do not open the booklet until you are told to do so.

Section A

Answer **all** questions.

Section B

Answer **both** questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each part question.

SECTION A (Source-Based Case Study)

Answer **all** questions.

Exploring Citizenship and Governance

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer all the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use your knowledge of the issue to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 Study Source A.

What is the message of this source? Explain your answer using details from the source.

[5]

2 Study Source B.

Why did the UK government make this speech at that time? Explain your answer.

[6]

3 Study Sources C and D.

How far would Source C and Source D agree with each other? Explain your answer.

[7]

4 Study Source E.

Are you surprised by Source E? Explain your answer.

[7]

5 How far do the sources in the case study show that the plastic bag charge has been beneficial for the UK? Explain your answer.

[10]

Has the plastic bag charge been beneficial for the UK?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

The United Kingdom is a significant contributor to plastic waste, with supermarkets alone releasing 869,853 tonnes of plastic packaging in 2019, leading to environmental damage worth £1.9 trillion. To address this issue, the government implemented a 5p (which is equivalent to 5 cents) charge on single-use plastic bags in 2015. Critics fear this may have increased plastic waste, prompting the government to announce a price hike on single-use plastic bags in all stores from 2021 onwards, aiming to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042. While supporters believe this will promote sustainable choices, there are doubts about whether the fee increase will be sufficient to induce meaningful, long-term shifts in consumer behavior.

Study the following sources to find out whether the plastic bag charge has been beneficial for the UK.

Source A: *A cartoonist's impression of the plastic bag charge, when it was first introduced in 2015.*



Source B: *From a statement released by the UK government when the increase in single-use carrier bag charges were implemented in 2021.*

The single-use carrier bag charge has today increased to 10p and been extended to all businesses in England. The charge has seen a 95% cut in plastic bag sales in supermarkets since 2015 and the move will help drive down sales further. Before the 5p charge was introduced, the average household used around 140 single-use plastic bags a year, and this has now been reduced to four.

By extending the charge to all retailers, we anticipate that the use of single-use carrier bags will decrease by 70-80% in smaller businesses. The 5p bag charge has been hugely successful, but we can go further. We can all play our part in reducing the plastic waste that spoils our environment and oceans.

Source C: *From an article by a UK-based independent research agency, on the plastic bag charge.*

Since the 5p charge was introduced in 2015, many consumers have substituted “single-use” for “bags for life”, with little evidence that these substitutes are being used more than once. But would increasing the price help? This may have the unintended consequence of making people feel that 10p is a fee they would be willing to pay for needing a bag. Furthermore, supermarkets should focus on changing the expectations of consumers. One easy option is to change the default cashier question from asking if we want bags to simply expecting shoppers to have them. Simple and timely nudges to prompt shoppers to bring their own bags will also serve to bring down the use of single-use plastic bags.

Source D: *From a campaign post made by an international environmental campaign group, in response to the increased plastic bag charge.*

The increase in the price that all shoppers will have to pay at all retailers for single-use plastic bags has been welcomed by us. However, the increase in charges still has limitations. We have joined growing calls for the government to introduce new rules to stop the growing problem of ‘bags for life’. Some retailers have reported substantial increases in sales of such plastic-heavy bags since ending the availability of free single-use plastic bags. **It seems that many plastic ‘bags for life’ are being used just once, and not re-used for the bag’s lifetime, as is their purpose.** So while the increased charge for single-use bags should see good results, it won’t fix bigger problems.

Source E: *An extract from a post made by an environmental analyst in 2018, after the raise in charges were announced by the government.*

The result of the policy introduced is clear: taxes change behaviour. People who previously thought nothing of carrying home their supermarket shopping in six flimsy plastic bags seem appalled by the 30p charge, and dig into their handbags for nylon bags instead. A similar behavioural shift will surely be seen now in local stores, although the change may be less obvious because people tend to buy smaller quantities from corner shops, so may be willing to pay an extra 10p for convenience. Nonetheless, the effects are remarkable - we've seen that since the introduction of the plastic bag charge in the UK, the amount we find on the beaches has decreased.

Copyright Acknowledgements:

BI	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carrier-bag-charges
Source A	https://www.retail-week.com/blowers-retail-cartoon/blowers-retail-cartoon-plastic-bag-levy-takes-effect-in-england/5079846.article
Source B	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/10p-plastic-bag-charge-introduced-in-england
Source C	https://www.totalmedia.co.uk/
Source D	https://friendsoftheearth.uk/sustainable-living

SECTION B (Structured-Response Questions)

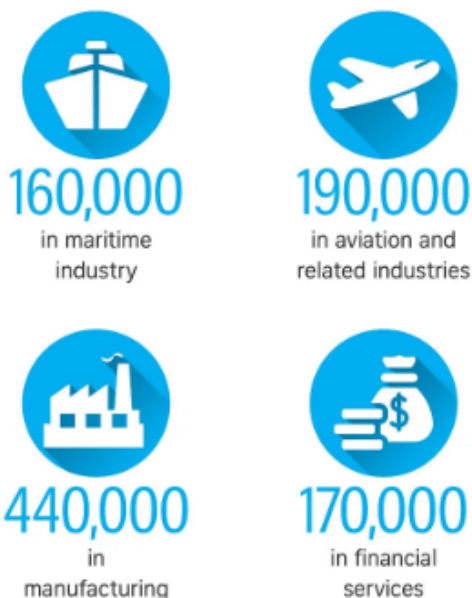
Answer **both** questions.

Being Part of a Globalised World

Study the extracts carefully, and then answer the questions.

Extract 1

The number of jobs supported by Singapore staying open and connected to the world:

**Extract 2**

With economic development taking place in different countries, the economies of these countries have become interconnected. In a global economy, these interconnections are intensified due to increased economic activities across different countries. This has brought about several positive effects on countries.

Extract 3

With globalisation, individuals are able to work in locally as well as overseas. Even when they are abroad, they are able to still stay connected with family back home.

- 6** Extract 1 shows how dependent Singapore is on globalisation.

In your opinion, what are some of the potential problems that individuals face due to globalisation? Explain your answer with reference to **one** problem. [7]

- 7** Extracts 2 and 3 show the importance of globalisation to both countries and individuals.

Explain the positive economic impacts brought about by globalisation on countries and on individuals. [8]

END OF PAPER

What is the message of this source? Explain your answer using details from the source. [5]

plastic bag charge as it might be ineffective/ create a black market for people to still purchase plastic bags. The source shows a man carrying lots of grocery items walking out of the shop, looking at the plastic bag that is sold for 2p. This suggests that consumers may not be willing to pay the 5p plastic bag charge but would perhaps consider buying the plastic bag at a lower price.

Why did the UK government make this speech at this time? Explain your answer. [6]

The UK government made this speech at this time because he wants to convince the British that the plastic bag charges has been effective in reducing the usage of single-use carrier bags [message] given that there were concern the British not being supportive of a further increase in cost of single-use carrier bags [context]. This is so that the British will feel encouraged and support the implementation of the increased plastic bag charges [outcome]. Source B states 'before the 5p charge was introduced, the average household used around 140 single-use plastic bags a year, and this now has been reduced to four'. This suggests that the charge has discouraged people from getting single-use plastic bags as the numbers have decreased.

How far would source C and D agree with each other? Explain your answer. [7]

Sources C and D would agree with each other that the current measures to reduce the use of plastic bags/ plastic bag charge are inadequate. Source C states "since the 5p charge was introduced in 2015, many consumers have substituted single use for bags for life, with little evidence that these substitutes are being used more than once. This suggests that the existing plastic bag charge is limited in effectiveness as people are still buying more bags. Similarly, Source D states "while the increased charge for single-use bags should see good results, it won't fix bigger problems". This suggests that increasing the charges will only have limited benefits as there are greater issues such as people still using reusable plastic bags only once that are not solved.

Both sources disagree as they are different in claiming who should be more responsible in discouraging plastic use. I can infer from Source C that supermarkets should take action while I can infer from Source D that the government should take action. Source C states "supermarkets should focus on changing the expectations. One easy option is to change the default cashier question from asking if we want bags to simply expecting shoppers to have them". This suggests that helpful changes can be made by the supermarket themselves to discourage customers from using plastic. Source D states "we have joined growing calls for the government to introduce new rules to stem the growing problem of "bags for life"." This suggests that helpful changes can only be made by government to discourage customers from using plastic.

Yes both sources would agree with each other as they have a similar purpose in convincing the UK government to reconsider their increase in plastic bag charges [outcome] given that the increase in plastic bag charges will be ineffective [Message]. Source C states "many consumers have substituted "single-use" for "bags for life", with little evidence that these substitutes are being used more than once'. This implies that increasing the plastic bag charge will be ineffective as people will still not feel deterred by the charges and buy more plastic bags when they need to use. Similarly Source D states "So while the increased charge for single-use bags should see good results, it won't fix bigger problems. This implies that current measures are insufficient to solve the issues of using plastic bags once.

Are you surprised by Source E? Explain your answer. [7]

I am not surprised that the government is considering to raise the prices for single-use bags [point - inference]. According to the source, 'we've seen that since the introduction of the plastic bag charge in the UK, the amount we find on the beaches has decreased'[evi]. This tells me that people are deterred by the cost of plastic bags and are choosing not to use it. [explain] This is not surprising to me as if the initial plastic bag charge already brought benefits, it would be expected that there will be an increase as this would bring even more environmental benefits. [link - why are you not surprised, cos it is what is expected]

I am not surprised because Source E is supported by Source B. Source E claims that the plastic bag charge deters people from using plastic bags. Source E says that 'People who previously thought nothing of carrying home their supermarket shopping in six flimsy plastic bags seem appalled by the 30p charge, and dig into their handbags for nylon bags instead'. This implies that people are dissuaded by the cost and would use their own recyclable bag instead. Similarly, Source B claims that the plastic bag charge deters people from using plastic bags. Source B says that 'Before the 5p charge was introduced, the average household used around 140 single-use plastic bags a year, and this has now been reduced to four.' This implies that the 5p charge has caused a decrease in plastic bags used by households. Since Source E supports Source B, they are similar and hence I am not surprised. [cross ref - similar ideas, hence not surprised]

I am not surprised that the environmental analyst will make such a comment. As an environmental analyst, he is concerned with the environment, and would want to reduce the environmental impact caused by plastics. As such, it is expected of him to say positive things about the price increase as he would like there to be a further reduction in plastic bags being used by consumers as well. As such, I am not surprised. [who said what - is it expected of the person?]

How far do the sources in the case study show that the plastic bag charge has been beneficial for the UK? Explain your answer. [10]

Source A shows that plastic bag charge has been beneficial. This can be seen from the cartoon, which shows a customer choosing to carry his large number of groceries instead of paying for a plastic bag. This tells me that people will rather choose to suffer and carry their large number of items as compared to paying for a plastic bag to make his life more convenient, this can become a good habit where consumers will realise they can bear with the inconvenience.

Source C does not shows that plastic bag charge has been beneficial. Source states 'This may have the unintended consequence of making people feel that 10p is a fee they can be happy to pay for needing a bag' This tells me that Instead of discouraging people from using plastic bags, people will just continue to waste money purchase different bags to use as and when they need them as the price is inconsequential/very cheap. Plastic bag charge is not beneficial at all as people will just be paying for nothing, no change in behavior.

Source E shows that plastic bag charge has been beneficial. 'People who previously thought nothing of carrying home their supermarket shopping in six flimsy plastic bags seem appalled by the 30p charge, and dig into their handbags for nylon bags instead'. This tells me that When people think rethink about having to pay for single-use carrier bags as they feel the pinch, the number of single-use bags will decrease and it will lead to less single-use bags being used in the society and environmental benefits.

Source D does not shows that plastic bag charge has been beneficial. The source states that 'So while the increased charge for single-use bags should see good results, it won't fix bigger problems.' This tells me that not solving the root problem and lead to a change in behavior, so consumers will keep using bags for just once out of convenience, contributing to greater environmental problems.

Extract 1 shows that due to globalisation, individuals are increasingly facing more challenges.

In your opinion, what are some of the potential problems that individuals face due to globalisation? Explain your answer with reference to one problem. (expected to give only 1)

One challenge individuals may face would be the loss of jobs/ income (lower wages). For example, Western countries such as the USA lost jobs in the 1970s as many MNCs especially the automobile manufacturing industries closed down their operations to shift to people in China or India at a much lower cost. This results in a lower standard of living of these individuals who may not be able to afford necessities when they loss their source of income.

One challenge that individuals may face would be the competition that workers face when they are unable to catch up with skills. One example is workers who are highly skilled such as engineers can also be easily replaced by equally skilled workers from other countries who command lower wages (such as India and China). This will result in a lower quality of life and financial instability when they are unable to secure their jobs.

Extract 2 and Extract 3 shows the importance of globalisation to both countries and individuals.

Explain the positive economic impacts brought about by globalisation on countries and on individuals.

Countries can experience economic growth. USA and Singapore signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2004 which is a treaty between countries to establish a free trade area where the exchange of goods and services can be conducted, without tariffs (taxes). This benefits Singapore because with FTA, it will increase trading as it makes the prices of Singapore products more attractive than the res. This leads to increased imports and exports which can increase GDP and ultimately economic growth. Also, FTA give Singapore companies access to bigger markets, potentially increase sales and profits.

Through globalization, Individuals have more opportunities and can now work for companies of their choice regardless of their country of residence. For example, Mr Ray Chong, a Singaporean investor. He works for a venture capital firm based in China but he works with them remotely from Singapore. Although most of his colleagues are based in China, he is still able to carry out his duties with his team in spite of the distance due the ease of teleconferencing via the Internet. This gives him the opportunity to pursue better career aspirations and have more options, being able to pursues jobs that offer greater flexibility and benefits