

Class	Index Number	Name
-------	--------------	------

BUKIT MERAH SECONDARY SCHOOL



PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2021 SECONDARY 4 EXPRESS / 5 NORMAL (ACADEMIC)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Comprehension

2021

1128/02

26 August

1 hour 50 minutes

INSERT

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3.

This document consists of **5** printed pages.


Setter: Ms Chong Oi Lin

[Turn over

Section A

Text 1

Study the webpage below and answer Questions 1-4 in the Question Booklet.

	Home	Art Courses & Workshops Guide	Exhibitions	Art Competitions	Contact Us
---	------	-------------------------------	-------------	------------------	------------

Are you seeking to express your passion in Art?

Whether you want to develop your art skills professionally or just enjoy art for fun, the Art Courses and Workshops at the Visual Arts Centre Singapore are exactly what you are looking for.

OUR LOCATION


The Visual Arts Centre is a spacious glass-house exhibition gallery and art studio located directly above the Dhoby Ghaut MRT Station and housed within the beautiful, lush green habitat of Dhoby Ghaut Green.



ART COURSES

We provide what you'll need to build up drawing and painting skills that can create the "WOW" factor! An assortment of classes are curated to meet your needs and interests. Our art courses cover a wide range of mediums: Acrylic Painting, Oil Painting, Watercolour Painting, Drawing and Sketching, Chinese Ink Painting, as well as a comprehensive course on Portfolio Preparation. Classes are available every day throughout the week, and all art materials are provided for you! Most importantly, our teachers are academically trained and have over 20 years of experience in teaching visual arts.




Click [here](#) for more details on the courses available.

ART WORKSHOPS

Our signature art workshops include Portrait Drawing with Artist Guidance Workshop, Landscape Watercolour Painting Workshop, Floral Watercolour Painting Workshop, Chinese Ink Painting Workshop, Therapeutic Art Jamming Workshop and Team-building Art Jamming Workshop.

If you are thinking of engaging us to customise an art workshop for you, feel free to contact us directly at **6255 0711** or drop us a note at info@visualartscentre.sg to enquire today!

We'll tailor a workshop experience just for you and your group – be it a Birthday Party, Company Team-building or Dinner and Dance – incorporating some art to give your audience a memorable experience!




SECTION B

Text 2

The text below describes a journey during the rainy season in India. Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5 -13 in the Question Booklet.

- 1 The captain of the Airbus, speaking at 31,000 feet in a cloudless morning sky, announced our arrival in fourteen minutes. A slight turn to join the inbound traffic revealed that the city was enclosed in a massive grey marquee of rain. From up here, it looked gloomy but calm. However, sinking closer, I saw that it was a sea of undulating water. As I had expected, our ride to the ground was a wild, plunging one and when Bombay could be finally glimpsed through steaming windows, it was a dim, misty abstraction offering mere hints of a city with little hard evidence. The distant downtown skyscrapers were vague and like pillars of smoke. 5
- 2 We landed, taxied up to the stand and parked beside another Airbus awaiting its turn to move to the runway. Rain sheeted off its wings as men in dripping waterproof capes closed the cargo doors. The domestic arrival hall stood sixty metres away with a carwash arrangement of gushing waterspouts ranged across its entrance. I sighed softly as I braced myself for the inevitable task ahead. Passing through had meant immersion and, inside, blood-curdling curses and blasphemies were being uttered by the soaking, gasping passengers. 10 15
- 3 The taxi I hailed outside had come through so many monsoons there was a tide mark of corrosion running around the bottom of the doors. Like a Plimsoll line¹, it seemed to indicate the depth of the water over which the driver was not licensed to operate. Braving the rain he sprang out, seized my bag, ushered me in, threw the bag in after me, then rushed round to board himself. These courtesies were not as astonishing as the cab's interior. It had been transformed into a tiny world of order and tranquility. A gaudy statuette stood on the dashboard with postcards of snowy Himalayan landscapes glued beneath, each illuminated by a coloured Christmas-tree light. Garlands of jasmines filled the car with fragrance. Behind my seat more lights flanked a miniature gilded cage containing a toy nightingale. There was thick crimson carpeting on the floor and, pasted to the rear of the driver's seat, pictures of girls, temples, tigers, cumulus clouds in a dark monsoon sky. A sign fixed to the dashboard said 'Bless Us!' and another, 'This vehicle was purchased with funds from the Union Bank.' 20 25
- 4 The driver, young, intense, took a small bottle from his glove box and beckoned me forward. He placed a dab of sandalwood perfume on my wrists and then plunged his hands into the jumble of wires that hung from the dashboard. These, touched together in sequence, got the engine going. The noise it made was unusual, like steam whistles accompanied by deep percussive bangs. He activated the single wiper, which fitfully stirred the torrent coursing down the windscreen, then turned and smiled at me. 30

'Are you comfortable?'

'Yes, thank you.'

 35
- 5 Cautiously he joined the traffic hurtling into town, the vehicles all semi-obsured by spray and travelling like powerboats. Racing to beat the lights we hit our first billabong of standing water. It thundered into the wheel wells and gushed up past the windows, causing the car to skid wildly; a lorry overtaking on the wrong side missed us by the width of a raindrop. Horns blared and I was torn between raising my hands to my ears and hanging onto my seat. Desperate to regain control of the vehicle, the driver, his thin shoulders hunched, jaw muscles working, gripped the wheel like the reins of a runaway horse. Backwash from the vehicles in front warned that there was more water ahead. 40

- 6 'Puddle,' muttered the driver, slowing.

Puddle? It was a small inland sea, its further coast barely visible to the naked eye, but our crossing was accomplished without difficulty since this one had a benign puddle god. The driver's confidence grew. We entered the next at a fair speed but, midway over, there was a sudden lurch and a muffled, shocking thud; we spun slowly, sheeting water, to face the way we had come. The car lay at an odd angle and all the Christmas-tree lights had gone out. For a few seconds we sat in stunned silence and then the driver threw open the door. What he saw caused him to clutch his head in anguish.

- 7 The front offside wheel had come off. It still occupied the wheel well, but was no longer attached to the axle. We stared at it in dismay while the water enclosed us. We stood in it up to our ankles; it fell on us out of the sky and came at us laterally as surf from passing vehicles. I had never felt so wet or exposed. Moreover, we were marooned amid speeding traffic in conditions of minimum visibility.

¹Plimsoll line: a special marking on a ship indicating the legal limit to which it may be loaded so that it floats safely

Adapted from Alexander Frater; Chasing the Monsoon; © Alexander Frater 1990; Published by Picador

Section C

Text 3

The article below is about bicycles. Read it carefully and answer Questions 14 -19 in the Question Booklet.

- 1 The person generally credited with inventing the modern bicycle was an Englishman named John Kemp Starley. His uncle, James Starley, had developed the penny-farthing, a direct-drive bicycle, in the 1870s. Thinking that there might be a greater demand for bicycles if they were not so scary and dangerous to ride, in 1885 the 30-year-old inventor began experimenting in his workshop with a chain-driven bicycle featuring two much smaller wheels. After testing several prototypes, he came up with the Rover safety bicycle, a 20-kilogramme machine that resembles what we think of as a bicycle today. When first displayed at a bicycle show in 1886, Starley's invention was regarded as a curiosity. Two years later, he included the newly invented pneumatic¹ tyre which cushioned the ride as well as made the new safety bicycle about 30 percent faster. The result was magic. 5
10
- 2 Bicycle makers around the world scrambled to offer their own versions, and hundreds of new companies sprang up to meet the demand. The tools necessary to make a bicycle frame spurred technological development in the steel industry, rubber industry and plastics as inventors sought to make more efficient tools so they could supply the manufacturers in the bicycle industry that were experiencing a boom in the 19th century. The ripple effect extended to advertising as well. Artists were commissioned to create beautiful posters, providing a lucrative market for the newly developed processes that allowed for printing in rich, vivid colors. 15
- 3 During the bicycle craze of the 1890s, newly liberated young people in the United States and Europe were no longer limited to potential marriage partners in their own villages as they roamed the countryside at will, meeting up in distant villages. Later, bicycle clubs and advocacy groups pressed for road improvement, which resulted in the closing of the social gap between rural and urban spaces. Improved roads allowed cyclists from the city to see the countryside in ways they had not been able to before, due to cost as well as absence of access, and vice versa; country folk could visit the larger towns or cities more easily. 20
25
- 4 In modern times, the bicycle is popular as an environmentally-friendly means of transport, partly solving the problem of polluting vehicles, particularly in the crowded cities. It is recommended as an inexpensive alternative to other means of transport such as bus, train or car. People who cycle to work take it as a form of exercise, as cycling reduces the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and obesity, all threats and preoccupations that come with living in the so-called developed world. In fact, some people are so convinced that cycling is good for them that they bypass the bicycle as a means of transport and spend time every day at home cycling nowhere – on an exercise bike! 30
- 5 The bicycle also has recreational uses. Cycling holidays can be taken through organised tours as diverse as riding on the fabled Silk Road, tackling tough trails in Vietnam or meandering through the English countryside. Nowadays competitive cycling events are popular both for participants and for those who are entertained by watching events like the Tour de France each year and the Olympic Games every four years. BMX – Bicycle Motocross – is a modern and popular sport, which has given rise to customised bicycles for better performance and offers fun and fitness to those who participate. 35
40
- 6 In some developing regions of the world, the bicycle a lifeline for the millions of people who walk for kilometres each day just to get to work or school. Charities such as World Bicycle Relief provide bicycles for such people in Africa, South America and Southeast Asia. Children and adults with bicycles are able to reduce their commute times by up to 75 percent. As a result, they have more time to study, are more productive, and experience less fatigue. 45

¹pneumatic: containing or operated by air or gas under pressure