

SEC 4E/5NA SOCIAL STUDIES PRELIM EXAMINATION 2019
~MARKING SCHEME~

Section A (Source-based Case Study)

1(a)	Study Source A. What does the source tell you about social mobility in Singapore? Explain your answer.	[5]
L1	Description/lifting of source (or superficial interpretation) / misinterpretation / not answering question directly E.g. The source tells me that there is social mobility in Singapore. E.g. The source tells me that Singapore ranks highly in terms of social mobility. E.g. The source tells me that the social gap has shrunk considerably over the years.	1
L2	Valid inference(s) without support <i>Award 3 marks for 2 inferences</i> E.g. The source tells me that <u>social mobility</u> has improved over the years in Singapore. E.g. The source tells me that one's <u>social mobility</u> can be affected by the education level of one's parent(s).	2-3
L3	Valid inference(s) with support <i>Award 5 marks for 2 inferences or a well-developed inference</i> E.g. The source tells me that <u>social mobility</u> has improved over the years in Singapore and that one's social mobility can be affected by the education level of one's parent(s). This is clear from "In the 1950s, someone born to parents with only upper secondary education stood a less than 20 per cent chance of completing tertiary education. Now, such a person has about a 60 per cent chance of making the grade" and "Across all age groups, those with more qualified parents are likely to end up better educated than their peers". This shows that social mobility across all levels and age groups has improved significantly.	4-5

1(b)	Study Sources B and C. Do you think both politicians in Source B would agree with the cartoonist in Source C? Explain your answer.	[7]
L1	Answers based on provenance or general statements without explanation or support from source E.g. They would agree with the cartoonist because the cartoonist is reflecting what is happening in Singapore. E.g. They would not agree with the cartoonist because they are politicians and therefore hold different views from the cartoonist.	1
L2	Answers based only on NMP or Minister <i>Award 2 marks for answers based on NMP or Minister but based on single source only</i> <i>Award 3 marks for answers based on both Sources B and C</i>	2-3

	<p>E.g. (Only) the NMP would agree with the cartoonist because the cartoonist depicted the failure of our system of meritocracy. Two babies are standing at the same starting line in life but one is clearly more advantaged than the other. One has the luxury of a good pram and is taken care off not only by its parents, but also by a domestic helper, a driver and even a tuition teacher. The other baby is with a single parent who needs to take care of its sibling and an elderly person. [2 marks]</p> <p>This is similar to the NMP's concern about how one's family situation could affect one's development. He offered several examples on how children from the low-income families were at a disadvantage and explained how some of their performance in school could be affected by personal circumstances that did not allow them to study at home. [3 marks]</p> <p>E.g. (Only) the Minister would not agree with the cartoonist because the cartoonist depicted the failure of the system of meritocracy. Two babies are standing at the same starting line in life but one is clearly more advantaged than the other. One has the luxury of a good pram and is taken care off not only by its parents, but also by a domestic helper, a driver and even a tuition teacher. The other baby is with a single parent who needs to take care of its sibling and an elderly person. [2 marks]</p> <p>The Minister would not agree with this view as he stood by our system of meritocracy. He said "Meritocracy remains the right approach for Singapore and its education system". He did not believe that tuition or redistributing resources was the cause of the failure of meritocracy, which the cartoonist seemed to suggest. [3 marks]</p>	
L3	<p>Answers based on both NMP and Minister but on single source</p> <p>E.g. The NMP would agree with the cartoonist because the cartoonist depicted the failure of the system of meritocracy. Two babies are standing at the same starting line in life but one is clearly more advantaged than the other. One has the luxury of a good pram and is taken care off not only by its parents, but also by a domestic helper, a driver and even a tuition teacher. The other baby with a single parent who needs to take care of its sibling and an elderly person.</p> <p>The Minister would not agree with the cartoonist because the cartoonist depicted the failure of our system of meritocracy. Two babies are standing at the same starting line in life but one is clearly more advantaged than the other. One has the luxury of a good pram and is taken care off not only by its parents, but also by a domestic helper, a driver and even a tuition teacher. The other baby is with a single parent who needs to take care of its sibling and an elderly person.</p>	4
L4	<p>Answers based on both NMP and Minister and with both similarity and difference in views of NMP and Minister</p> <p><i>Award 6 marks for well-developed answers (i.e. both similarity and difference are included in answers)</i></p> <p>I think both the NMP and Minister would agree with the cartoonist as he depicted the failure of meritocracy in Singapore. Two babies are standing at the same starting line in life but one clearly is more advantaged than the other. One has the luxury of a good pram and is taken care off not only by its parents, but also by a domestic helper, a driver and even a tuition teacher. The other baby is with a single parent who needs to take care of its sibling and an elderly person. This is similar to NMP's concern about how one's family situation can affect one's development. He offered several examples on how children from low-income families were at a disadvantage and explained how some of their performances in school could be affected by personal circumstances that do not allow them to study at home. The Minister also acknowledged that meritocracy "may have given rise to unfairness in the system".</p> <p>However, I do not think both the NMP and Minister would agree with the cartoonist. The Minister cannot agree with this view as he stands by our system of meritocracy.</p>	5-6

	He said “Meritocracy remains the right approach for Singapore and its education system”. He did not believe tuition or redistributing resources that the cartoon seems to suggest as the cause of the failure of meritocracy.	
L5	L4 + Suggestion of politicians and cartoonist’s attitude towards meritocracy L4+ I do not think that both the NMP and Minister <u>could</u> agree with the cartoonist as the cartoonist is clearly here making a criticism of our system of meritocracy. The NMP similarly seems to be making <u>criticism</u> of the system, that there are clearly people who have fallen through the cracks as he offered “several examples on how children from low-income families were at a disadvantage”. The Minister, on the other hand, seems to be <u>defending</u> the system. As a member of the Cabinet, it is natural/expected that he defended the system and stressed that meritocracy is still the “right approach” for Singapore.	7

1(c)	Study Source D. Are you surprised by what the Minister said? Explain your answer.	[6]
L1	Surprised or not surprised based on provenance E.g. No, I am not surprised by what he said because he is a Minister and he was at a ceremony giving out scholarships.	1
L2	Surprised or not surprised based on context E.g. No, I am not surprised because meritocracy has come under fire recently in Singapore and hence he made the speech to defend it.	2
L2a	Surprised or not surprised based on content with/without cross reference but does not link back to message of source	3
L3	Surprised or not surprised based on message of source <i>Awarded 4 marks for well-developed answers (with explicit mention of other sources)</i> E.g. Yes, I am surprised by what the Minister said because he seemed to continue to suggest the success of the meritocratic system in Singapore which is no longer so. He said “Our promise to each and every generation of Singaporeans is this, that so long as you are capable and committed, our country will provide you with the best opportunities possible for you to fulfill your potential. I believe such a system will continue to attract the best to serve the nation.” But we have seen in Source B where the continued merits of the system are being questioned. In Source B, NMP Azmoon explained how children from low-income families can be put at a disadvantage in a meritocratic system. Therefore, I am surprised he can continue to talk so positively about meritocracy. E.g. No, I am not surprised by what the Minister said because he was defending meritocracy. He said “Our promise to each and every generation of Singaporeans is this, that so long as you are capable and committed, our country will provide you with the best opportunities possible for you to fulfill your potential. I believe such a system will continue to attract the best to serve the nation.” We have seen also how in Source B, his colleague Education Minister Ong Ye Kung was defending meritocracy as the “right approach for Singapore”. As a member of the Cabinet, it is only natural/expected that he sung the same tune as another Minister and reiterated the merits and positive effects of the meritocratic system.	3-4

L4	Surprised and not surprised based on message of source Both aspects of L3.	5
L5	Not surprised based on purpose of source E.g. No, I am not surprised by what the Minister said because he is a Cabinet Minister and therefore needed to defend the current meritocratic system. He wanted Singaporeans to understand that meritocracy is the right approach for Singapore as it will ensure that it will continue to get the best talent. Singaporeans need only to be “capable and committed” to get themselves the “best opportunities”. The system is good because it values not just “high intellect and academic excellence” but also qualities like “resilience and determination”. He spoke to the scholars in the hope that Singaporeans understand that we are not building an exclusive and elitist system so that they will not be swayed by criticism of the system and continue to support it.	6

1(d)	Study Sources E and F. Both sources are from the United States. Does this mean that they are both useless in understanding meritocracy in Singapore? Explain your answer.	[7]
L1	Answers based on utility of only one source, based largely on provenance or superficial interpretation of source E.g. Source E is useless because it is from an American writer and an American newspaper and there is no explicit mention of Singapore in the article. E.g. Source F is not useless/ is useful because even though it is from an American newspaper, it is written by an associate professor from NUS about Singapore. I can learn about meritocracy in Singapore from it and hence it is not useless.	1
L2	Answers based on utility based on provenance of <u>both</u> sources E.g. Source E is useless because it is from an American writer and an American newspaper and there is no explicit mention of Singapore in the article. On the other hand, Source F is not useless because even though it is from an American newspaper, it is written by an associate professor from NUS about Singapore. I can learn about meritocracy in Singapore from it and hence it is not useless.	2
L3	Answers based on utility of both sources (with no clear reference to Singapore) <i>Award 4 marks if answers talk about both sources</i> E.g. Source E is not useless because it does tell me about the debate about meritocracy. There are people according to the source who view meritocracy positively “as a political system in which economic goods and/or political power are vested in individual people on the basis of talent, effort and achievement”. On the other hand, there are also people who see it as “a system [which] discriminates against the less highly educated and those who perform less well on ability tests”. Hence, it is not desirable. Source F is clearly useful because from this source, we can see an acknowledgement about the drawbacks of meritocracy in Singapore and growing elitism and what is being done to address them. It tells us about how the	3-4

	government is attempting to develop a more “compassionate, inclusive and lifelong” meritocracy.	
L4	<p>Answers based on utility of both sources with clear reference to Singapore in answer <i>Award 5 marks if answers talk about both sources</i></p> <p>E.g. Source E is indeed useless because while it does tell me about the debate about meritocracy, it is about meritocracy in general or perhaps in the US and not at all about Singapore. There are clearly people in the US according to the source who view meritocracy positively “as a political system in which economic goods and/or political power are vested in individual people on the basis of talent, effort and achievement”. On the other hand, there are also people in the US who see it as “a system [which] discriminates against the less highly educated and those who perform less well on ability tests”. But this information/debate is not related to Singapore.</p> <p>In contrast, Source F is clearly useful because from this source, we can see an acknowledgement about the drawbacks of meritocracy and given in the localised context of Singapore and growing elitism and what is being done to address them. It tells us about how the government is attempting to develop a more “compassionate, inclusive and lifelong” meritocracy.</p>	5
L5	<p>Answers based utility of both sources, arguing both sources are useful <i>Award 7 marks for well-developed answers</i></p> <p>E.g. Both sources are not useless at all. In fact they are both useful. Source E is useful because while it tells me about the debate about meritocracy in general or perhaps in the US, it can still be useful as it applies to Singapore as well. There are clearly people in the US according to the source who view meritocracy positively “as a political system in which economic goods and/or political power are vested in individual people on the basis of talent, effort and achievement”. On the other hand, there are also people in the US who see it as “a system discriminates against the less highly educated and those who perform less well on ability tests”. Hence, it is not desirable. From the example of the US, we can better reflect on what is happening in Singapore and hence it is not useless.</p> <p>Source F is clearly useful because from this source, we can see an acknowledgement about the drawbacks of meritocracy in Singapore and growing elitism and what is being done to address them. It tells us about how the government is attempting to develop a more “compassionate, inclusive and lifelong” meritocracy.</p>	6-7

1(e)	<p>“Some are born great, some achieve greatness.”</p> <p>Using the sources in this case study, explain how far you would agree with this statement.</p>	[10]
L1	<p>Writes about statement, no valid source use</p> <p>E.g. This is indeed a statement that is of much truth. Some people are just born with a silver spoon in their mouths and seldom need to work hard to achieve anything. On the other hand, there are people who are born into trying circumstances. These people often need to work hard to achieve something in life. Jack Ma is a good example of someone who has worked hard and succeeded with his eCommerce firm Alibaba.</p>	1

L2	<p>Yes/No, supported by valid source use</p> <p>E.g. Yes, I agree with this statement because Sources A, C and D support it. From <u>Source A</u>, “Singapore ranks among the top in the world when it comes to upward mobility in education, with nearly six in 10 adults attaining higher qualifications than their parents do”. This shows that there are people who can outshine their parents and achieve things greater in life. [Arguing on the existence of such people.] It is also clear from <u>Source C</u> that there are people who are privileged by birth. As shown in the cartoon, there is a child who is born into a good life with rich parents who provide it with material care such as a pram and domestic helpers and even a tuition teacher right from his birth. It is also true that “some achieve greatness” as shown in <u>Source D</u>. From the source, “Some of our scholarship recipients come from challenging family and personal circumstances. That they have done so well shows their resilience and determination-qualities that are as vital as high intellect and academic excellence”. Clearly some people have succeeded in life due to their own efforts even though they may not be born as privileged.</p> <p>No, I disagree with this statement because Sources A, E and F do not support it. From <u>Source A</u>, “Singapore ranks among the top in the world when it comes to upward mobility in education, with nearly six in 10 adults attaining higher qualifications than their parents do”. If in Singapore, only 60% can consider to have attained success, I shudder to think what happens to the less advantaged and the disadvantaged people in those countries trailing behind Singapore. It must be hard for them to achieve anything despite their hard work. In <u>Source E</u>, we see that “meritocracy privileges an arrogant, complacent and entrenched elite with the money, the resources and the connections to jump to the head of the line”. What the system guarantees here are only bad qualities and traits, not greatness. It is stated in <u>Source F</u> that Singapore’s system of meritocracy has been “criticized for streaming students into pathways that determine their life prospects at a very early age”. If a system indeed can discriminate against people right from the start and put them at a disadvantage, then how can it even be possible for anyone to achieve greatness?</p>	2-4
L3	<p>Yes + No, supported by valid source use <i>i.e. both elements of L2</i></p> <p><u>General guide:</u> Consider the number of sources used and quality of analysis in deciding marks for L2 & L3.</p> <p>L2: 1 source → 2-3 marks; 2 sources → 3-4 marks; 3 sources → 4 marks L3: 2 sources → 5 marks; 3 sources → 6 marks; 4 sources → 7-8 marks; 5 sources → 8 marks</p>	5-8
<p>** To score additional 2 marks, candidates can take one of these 3 routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> through analysing at least one source in relation to its reliability, utility or sufficiency <p>E.g. No, I disagree with the statement because in <u>Source E</u>, we see that “meritocracy privileges an arrogant, complacent and entrenched elite with the money, the resources and the connections to jump to the head of the line”. What the system guarantees here are only bad qualities and traits not greatness. But I question the reliability of this source. The author seems to be unduly harsh on people who are so called born with a silver spoon in their mouths. He is dismissing categorically anyone who are born lucky and viewing them in very negative light as “arrogant” and “complacent”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by sharing example(s) from their <u>contextual</u> knowledge (cite concrete examples) 		

E.g. Yes, I agree with this statement because Source A supports it. From Source A, "Singapore ranks among the top in the world when it comes to upward mobility in education, with nearly six in 10 adults attaining higher qualifications than their parents do". This shows that there are people who can outshine their parents and achieve things greater in life. In Singapore, our President Scholarship is the best example to show how one can achieve greatness regardless of one's birth or upbringing. We have many recipients of the scholarship whose parents are already successful professionals but there are also many recipients who come from humble families.

- by giving a **balanced** conclusion/resolution

E.g. This question of nature versus nurture is a complicated issue and one that has been hotly debated time and again. Confucius and Mencius are well-known Chinese sages who had expounded greatly their views on this issue. Perhaps it is both the environment one is born into and the hard work one puts in their work which really matters. All in all, I believe it is more acceptable to think that what one is born without can be supplemented with hard work. Smart people are not always born smart, they need hard work and great perseverance to eventually succeed.

Section B (Structured-Response Question)

2 (a)	In your own opinion, suggest what can be done to prevent the negative impacts of such technological advancements. Explain your answer using two ways.	[7]
L1	<p>Describe the topic i.e. negative impacts of technological advancements</p> <p>E.g. There are many negative impacts, which can arise from technological advancement. For one, teenagers are becoming less comfortable and adept at face-to-face interaction with one another. They prefer to communicate via social media and text messages. Jobs are also becoming redundant due to technological advancements. People can be displaced and lose their livelihood because they cannot keep up with the pace of change.</p>	1
L2	<p>Identifies / describe ways to prevent negative impacts of technological advancements</p> <p><i>Award 2 marks for identifying one way and 3 marks for identifying two ways. Award 3 marks for describing one way and 4 marks for describing two ways.</i></p> <p>E.g. There are many negative impacts, which can arise from technological advancement. For one, teenagers are becoming less comfortable and adept at face-to-face interaction with one another. They prefer to communicate via social media and text messages. One way to overcome such a negative impact is for schools to teach young children the importance of daily communications between themselves and their families and friends so that they will not rely solely on text messages or social media to reach out to others. Public speaking enrichment classes in school can teach children how to engage an audience and give them the confidence of doing so instead of hiding behind computer or phone screens.</p> <p>Jobs are also becoming redundant due to technological advancements. People can be displaced and lose their livelihood because they cannot keep up with the pace of change. Robots and artificial intelligence are now lurking fears of many. The only way for us to be able to deal with this challenge is a constant upgrading of our skills to enhance ourselves with greater adaptability and flexibility in the face of certain changes. The Singapore government is in fact equipping its citizens with its Skillsfuture initiative to provide Singaporeans with the chance to constantly upgrade themselves in the face of advancing technologies.</p>	2-4
L3	<p>Identifies / describe ways to prevent negative impacts of technological advancements</p> <p><i>Award 2 marks for identifying one way and 3 marks for identifying two ways. Award 3 marks for describing one way and 4 marks for describing two ways.</i></p> <p>E.g. There are many negative impacts, which can arise from technological advancement. For one, teenagers are becoming less comfortable and adept at face-to-face interaction with one another. They prefer to communicate via social media and text messages. One way to overcome such a negative impact is for schools to teach young children the importance of daily communications between themselves and their families and friends so that they will not rely solely on text messages or social media to reach out to others. Public speaking enrichment classes in school can teach children how to engage an audience and give them the confidence of doing so instead of</p>	5-7

	<p>hiding behind computer or phone screens. Through such classes, they will then understand how face-to-face communication is an integral aspect of a human life and hopefully choose to explore more direct channels of communication instead of relying on social media and text messages.</p> <p>Jobs are also becoming redundant due to technological advancements. People can be displaced and lose their livelihood because they cannot keep up with the pace of change. Robots and artificial intelligence are now lurking fears of many. The only way for us to be able to deal with this challenge is a constant upgrading of our skills to enhance ourselves with greater adaptability and flexibility in the face of certain changes. The Singapore government is in fact equipping its citizens with its Skillsfuture initiative to provide Singaporeans with the chance to upgrade themselves constantly in the face of advancing technologies. With such opportunities easily available, Singaporeans will take on this mindset of constant self-improvement, which will help us overcome any challenges that the advancements in technology will bring us. With flexibility and adaptability due to the range of skills we master, we will easily be able to take on new jobs as and when they come our way.</p>	
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2 (b)	Do you think that the government has a more important role in managing cyber security challenges than individuals? Explain your answer.	[8]
L1	<p>Writes about the topic (i.e managing cyber security challenges) but without addressing the question</p> <p>E.g. Everyone has to play their part so that no one can steal our confidential data and everyone is safe to surf the Internet.</p>	1-2
L2	<p>Describes government and individuals roles in managing cyber security challenges</p> <p><i>Award 3 marks for describing government OR individual.</i> <i>Award 4 marks for describing government AND individual.</i></p> <p>E.g. The government plays an important role in managing cyber-security challenges. The government has a responsibility to keep their citizens safe and to make the policy decisions required to do this. In Singapore, the government does this by ensuring strong security in the cyber infrastructure.</p> <p>E.g. Individuals also play an important role in managing cyber-security challenges. Individuals have a responsibility of ensuring that their computers are fully guarded against cyber security threats.</p>	3-4
L3	<p>Explains government and individual roles in managing cyber security challenges</p> <p><i>Award 5-6 marks for explaining government OR individual.</i> <i>Award 6-7 marks for explaining government AND individual.</i></p> <p>E.g. The government plays an important role in managing cyber-security challenges. The government has a responsibility to keep their citizens safe and to make the policy decisions required to do this. In Singapore, the government does this by ensuring strong security in the cyber infrastructure. For example, the Singapore government has established the Cyber Security Agency, which is an agency dedicated to ensuring the safety of Singapore's critical infrastructure. This ensures that our infrastructure is protected from cyber-attacks by dangerous organisations.</p>	5-7

	<p>(Also acceptable: international collaboration, collaboration with private organisations)</p> <p>E.g. Individuals also play an important role in managing cyber-security challenges. Individuals have a responsibility of ensuring that their computers are secured fully against cyber security threats. Individuals can do this by ensuring that their cyber-security tools such as their anti-virus programs are up-to-date so that they do not fall victim to malware or spyware. This ensures that dangerous software do not gain a foothold in Singapore's cyber-infrastructure and start to spread to other computers.</p> <p>(Can also accept using strong passwords, being vigilant on privacy, not visiting suspicious websites.)</p>	
L4	<p>Both aspects in L3 plus explains the relative importance of government and individual roles in managing cyber security challenges</p> <p>E.g. L3 + While both are important in managing cyber security challenges, I believe that the government plays the more important role. This is because there are limits to what individuals can achieve. For example, if there are highly sophisticated cyber-criminals, individuals may not have the resources to deal with these cyber-criminals. Having more resources at their disposal, and being able to impact the infrastructure directly, the government is thus in a better position to deal with these cyber-security challenges. (Argument based on resource availability)</p> <p>E.g. L3 + While both are important in managing cyber security challenges, I believe that individuals play the more important role. This is because the government can only act from a centralized location, while most cyber-attacks are decentralized. As a result, it is important for individuals to personally be responsible for their own cyber-security, since in the long-run, cyber-attacks are likely to eventually bypass detection from large centralised organisations like the government. (Argument based on short vs long term impact)</p>	8