

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ (     )

CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_



**FAIRFIELD METHODIST SCHOOL (SECONDARY)**

**PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2024  
SECONDARY 4 NORMAL (ACADEMIC)**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE (SYLLABUS A)**

**1190/02**

Paper 2 Comprehension

**Date: 17 July 2024**

**Duration: 1 hour 50 minutes**

INSERT

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Insert contains Text 1, Text 2, Text 3 and Text 4.

Setter: Mr Joseph Guo

**This insert consists of 4 printed pages including the cover page.**

**[Turn over**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ (     )

CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section A

Study the newspaper advertisement (**Text 1**) and the extract from a blog (**Text 2**) and answer Questions 1-4 in the Question Paper.

**Text 1** is taken from an advertisement published in a newspaper.

<b>Are you passionate about capturing the world through your lens?</b>	
<b>Join our advanced photography workshop!</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learn from professional instructors with decades of experience.</li><li>• Cover everything from basic camera settings to advanced post-processing techniques.</li><li>• Participate in field trips to practise your skills in real-world settings.</li><li>• Create a stunning portfolio to showcase your work to potential employers.</li><li>• Connect with industry professionals.</li></ul>
<b>Transform your passion for photography into a professional career. Enrol now and start your journey to become a renowned photographer!</b>	

*Image Credit: Alamy*

**Text 2** is taken from a blog post written by a former student of the workshop.

When I enrolled in the advanced photography workshop, I was excited but unsure if it was worth the investment. The advertisement promised a lot, and I was curious to see if it would deliver. The instructors were indeed skilled and supportive, providing detailed feedback on my work that pushed me to improve continually. The hands-on workshops, both in the studio and out in the field, offered practical experience that was invaluable. However, if you're aiming to become a better photographer, I believe you don't need to spend a lot of money. With self-motivation and the initiative to network with veterans, you can achieve similar results on your own.

**Section B****Text 3**

The text below describes Brian's situation in the airplane and forest. Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5-14 in the Question Paper.

- 1 Brian Robeson was flying in a small airplane, heading towards his father's house in the Canadian wilderness. The journey was supposed to be straightforward, but as the hours passed, despite the weather forecast predicting clear skies and the route being very familiar to the pilot, Hampton was unusually unresponsive. As the sun dipped lower on the horizon, Brian's heart pounded frantically. His palms grew moist with perspiration, while a faint crackling sound from the radio caught his attention momentarily. Desperate for assurance, Brian started scrutinising Hampton. 5
- 2 Suddenly, Hampton clutched his chest. Within seconds, his face contorted in terror as his breath became shallow and strained. It was then that Brian realised something was terribly wrong with Hampton. Panic surged through Brian as the airplane began to veer off course. Despite his lack of knowledge on flying the plane, the instinct to survive propelled him to act. With short, ragged gasps and trembling hands, Brian grappled with the alien and cold controls, each movement seeming to exacerbate the situation. At the same time, he reached for Hampton, scrambling to recall any first-aid techniques he might have learnt to deal with a heart attack. 10  
15
- 3 Without warning, the airplane plummeted towards the dense forest below. Brian's hands shook vigorously as he fought with the controls to cling onto a glimmer of hope. Like a symphony of impending doom, the roar of the wind filled his ears whilst branches that were outstretched like the hands of a thousand giants swirled past them. Moments later, the airplane slammed into the trees with a resounding thud. Instantly, everything went black. Brian was thrown violently forward, and his consciousness swiftly slipped into darkness. 20
- 4 When Brian regained consciousness, he was disoriented and in pain. The wreckage of the plane littered the forest floor. The dense forest loomed around him — a wall of green that seemed to stretch on forever. The air that was thick with the scent of pine and earth, was a stark contrast to the sterile smell of the plane. The silence of the forest was only broken by occasional rustlings, as if nature itself was assessing the aftermath of the plane's violent intrusion. Hampton lay motionless in the cockpit, his lifeless eyes staring blankly. After some time, he stumbled out of the plane. His body ached with every movement. Each step he took was slow and laborious. His limbs were heavy and uncooperative. 25
- 5 Brian had to find shelter and food. He remembered the survival skills his father had taught him during their camping trips. As he gathered branches and leaves to create a makeshift shelter, his hands trembled from the cold and fear. He then trudged through the underbrush to find a suitable clearing for his refuge. The forest was alive with sounds, each rustle and snap threatening to make his heart race. However, his mind replayed his father's lessons, each memory a lifeline in the overwhelming uncertainty, which helped him to feel unflustered. The sun sank lower in the horizon, casting long shadows that seemed to close in around him, but Brian forced himself to keep working. 30  
35
- 6 Days turned into weeks as Brian slowly adapted to his new reality. He learned to fish and hunt, using a crude spear he fashioned from a stick. Though each day was a battle against loneliness and the elements, he firmly believed that the stars above would soon foretell his prompt rescue! 40

(Adapted from 'Hatchet' by Gary Paulsen, 1987)

**Section C****Text 4**

The article below is about voles. Read the text carefully and answer Questions 15-19 in the Question Paper.

- 1 Voles, a type of small rodent from the Arvicolinae subfamily, play crucial roles in ecosystems across the Northern Hemisphere. Their robust bodies facilitate easy movement through dense vegetation and soil, and their legs excel in underground digging. Positioned near their heads, voles have ears that detect environmental sounds, vital for identifying predators. Their fur varies in shades from brown to grey, aiding camouflage in diverse environments. With continuously growing teeth, voles can chew through plants, roots, and seeds necessary for their diet. 5
- 2 Voles primarily rely on grasses, seeds, and roots for their sustenance. Occasionally, some species supplement their nutritional needs with insects. Their survival is dependent on the complex burrow systems they construct, which serve as pathways for hunting and as protective shelters from predators and environmental challenges. 10
- 3 Voles offer ecological benefits through their burrowing activities, which enhance nutrient mixing and promote robust growth of plant roots. Researchers have studied the behaviour of voles in various habitats to understand their ecological role. Despite their small size, voles facilitate water infiltration, which helps to reduce soil erosion. They also aid in seed dispersal by transporting and storing seeds in their burrows. Often mistaken for mice due to their similar appearance, this confusion sometimes leads farmers to misidentify voles as other rodent pests, impacting their pest control strategies. However, by consuming a wide range of vegetation, voles control the number of invasive plant species to protect native flora. 15
- 4 Related to lemmings and muskrats, voles can cause extensive damage to crops by consuming the roots of various plants. Their extensive burrowing can displace soil, potentially causing damage to infrastructure such as roads. Moreover, the economic impact of vole-induced crop damage and infrastructure repair can be substantial for agricultural communities and governments. Controlled laboratory experiments by researchers have shed light on their social behaviour, further revealing their ecological significance. 20  
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- 5 Despite being depicted in whimsical illustrations and cartoons for entertainment, voles can carry pathogens like hantavirus, posing significant health risks to a large number of animals living in close proximity to them. Their wide geographic distribution across various continents underscores the diverse habitats where voles thrive. Their ability to adjust their reproductive rates according to environmental conditions further exemplifies their resilience to inhabit various challenging ecosystems and climates globally. However, dense vole populations can outcompete native small mammals for food and shelter, potentially resulting in declines in native species populations. 30
- 6 Conservation concerns for voles have arisen due to agricultural practices and climate change. It is a disgrace that farmers have resorted to the conversion of natural landscapes to agricultural fields for their self-serving interests, which caused the disruption of the habitats of voles and hence their population. Climate change poses additional challenges by altering the availability of food resources and suitable habitats for voles. As a result, conservation efforts are increasingly focused on habitat restoration, sustainable agricultural techniques, and climate adaptation strategies. 35  
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(Adapted from '<https://www.britannica.com/animal/vole>' by John P. Rafferty, 2024)

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