

Suggested answer to Mock Test 1 Paper 2

1. *A recent article in a local newspaper suggested the abolition of the DSE Exam so that students are less stressed. Write to the editor of a local newspaper expressing your views on the following:*

- *why students are stressed; and*
- *whether or not continual assessments will solve the problem.*

Some parts of the letter have been given to you.

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the article ‘Call to abolish DSE Exam’, published on 15 May. The author said the DSE Exam is the main cause of many students’ stress and their situation would improve if it was abolished. I disagree for several reasons.

No doubt, the DSE Exam is one main source of our stress. There is pressure everywhere to urge us to get good grades so that we can get into university and realize our dreams. The competition is tough, and if we can’t do it, we will be seen as a ‘failure’. Certainly, social life is another source of our stress. Boyfriend / girlfriend issues, conflicts with our parents, having too much homework and too little time for sleep all contribute to our stress.

Replacing the exam with continual assessments does not help as they only serve to keep us on our toes all year round, which means that we are stressed all year round. Besides, the intense competition to get into a good university is still there. And what about other stress sources? I believe that teaching us how to deal with stress is the solution, not taking away the DSE Exam.

(197 words)

Yours sincerely,

Chris Wong

2. ***Learning English through Sports Communication***

A number of your classmates have expressed their dissatisfaction towards the new coach, saying that the new training is a waste of time. As the chairperson of the Sports Club, you have decided to reflect your classmates’ opinions about this to your PE Teacher, Mr Chan.

Write a letter to Mr Chan explaining why your classmates are unhappy about the new training. You should then suggest two things that could be introduced in future training sessions and explain why students would find them useful.

Dear Mr Chan,

As chairperson of the Sports Club, I am writing to you to express concerns from our basketball team about our new coach, Mr Lee. After meeting several times to discuss our feelings, we would like to discuss with you the reasons we are dissatisfied with Mr Lee’s coaching style and suggest a few ways we can work together better.

Mr Lee has his own training style and many good ideas, but they do not often connect from theory to practice. For example, every practice starts with him talking about the strategies and theories used by NBA teams. This can often take up to half of the practice time. But when we do practise, he asks us to do very simple drills that we have been doing since last year. We have not tried any new moves or strategies, and we are not improving as a team.

We understand that learning about what professional basketball teams do is good for us. Knowing how they train and the exercise they do will help us become stronger, faster and come together as one team. The topics Mr Lee chooses to focus on are very informative, and we do enjoy his talks. However, we wish that what we learn from his talks would then be put into practice. That way, we would be able to better concentrate on our upcoming games and put all our focus into winning the upcoming championship game.

The championship competition is coming up in two months. We are currently worried about our performance and think we will not make it to the finals without a major change in how we practise. We have come up with some ideas on how to make our practice time more focused on the championship. This includes reducing time spent on talking about theories and strategies. Instead, we would like to spend the first 15 minutes polishing our existing skills and spend the rest of the time learning new skills and putting them into practice. Then, we can combine our new and old skills by creating new drills that the team can practise together. Mini-basketball competitions with other classes or teams could be done at least twice a week so we can get a good feel for how it will be during real games.

We hope we have clearly stated what we would like to see happen before the championship. We also hope you could talk to Mr Lee about the situation on our behalf. We are more than happy to help out where we can, including organizing mini-competitions and booking the basketball court if we decide to have extra practices.

Thank you for your time and attention.

(444 words)

Yours sincerely,
Chris Wong

3. *Learning English through Drama*

Your school joined the Interschool Drama Competition for Secondary School Students. The theme was 'Lion Rock Spirit'. You watched all the performances. Write an article for your school magazine on the competition. Describe briefly the plot of the winning performance, why that school deserves the prize and suggestions on how your school can do better next time.

Working Together for the Lion Rock Spirit

Last Saturday, I attended the Interschool Drama Competition, where the theme was 'Lion Rock Spirit'. I'm happy to report that all the performances were great! Our school drama team did a wonderful job and Mary Chan did an amazing job in the lead role. However, I think we can all agree that Hong Kong Secondary School's drama team took the Lion Rock theme very seriously and delivered a performance that will be the standard for years to come!

The Lion Rock theme was seen in every performance. The theme centred around a community of hard-working, self-reliant people who helped each other in order to build a prosperous future. Most of the performances were about the struggles of the community and how a person succeeded even in the face of difficulties. The HKSS drama team's performance was a reproduction of the story of Chan Cheuk Ming, better known as Ming Gor. Despite complaints, business setbacks, jail time and financial hardships, he kept his restaurant open to feed the poor.

This performance was different from the others because everyone in the story had the Lion Rock spirit. Ming Gor's wife, staff and even the people he served shared the Lion Rock spirit. Everyone helped out with the cause, whether spreading the word, donating time or money, or helping Ming Gor in the kitchen. While the dialogue and actors were incredible, so were the details. The makeup and costumes were subtle yet outstanding, especially as the actors had to look several decades older. The lighting and music expanded on the emotions, helping the audience to really feel part of the play. It's no wonder many audience members were in tears by the end!

After watching this play, I think our own school can learn a lot on how to be better next year. Whatever the theme, I think we should interpret it more creatively and not be afraid to be different. Instead of showing the story just through the main character, imagine how much more relatable it could be by seeing the situation through different characters in the same situation, or creating sub-plots for the audience to see how everything is connected. And let's not forget the details. We need to remember the importance of lighting, makeup, background music and everything else that is behind the scenes. While the audience may not know how much effort goes into these parts, they will certainly know if they are missing. Our props were great, but correct lighting could have moved us closer to first place. All in all, outstanding performances all around and I can't wait until next year!

(434 words)

4. *Learning English through Social Issues*

Many children are having neck pain because of the long time they spend on texting and looking at their mobile devices. Write an article for your school magazine examining two reasons for this phenomenon. You should also discuss the impact of this on the children in the short run and long run.

Control our Smartphone Addiction

Hong Kong citizens have a reputation for being addicted to their phones. It's not just adults; kids are, too. When you're waiting for a bus, on the MTR or just walking down the street, you'll probably see lots of people concentrating on their phones, with their necks bent. Let's look at two reasons why we are addicted to our phones and try to understand the impact it will have on our children.

One reason for the addiction may be that smartphones are everywhere today. Almost everyone has their own smartphone, and it has so many functions, from connecting with friends, updating their social networking websites to listening to music and downloading TV dramas. It is no wonder that everybody is so busy bending their necks looking at their phones.

Another reason is that adults often use smartphones as rewards. While parents themselves may bend their necks, hence setting a bad example for their children, they often give kids their phone so the child

will be quiet. Even toddlers learn to rely on the phone for entertainment and will become angry if they don't have the phone when they want it. Looking down has become a habit since we were little.

Smartphone addiction can have both short-term and long-term effects on children. When children are bent over their phones, their necks and shoulders will start to hurt, and if they do not correct their posture, this pain could grow. In the short-term, this pain could affect their ability to concentrate on their studies; in the long-term, the pain could be pinched nerves, affecting the movement of arms and fingers. And let's not forget eye issues, such as short-sightedness and dry eyes, as well as headaches, which can come from staring at a screen for too long.

These impacts are not just internal. If children grow up with too much electronic influence, their face-to-face interaction skills will suffer. They may find it hard to develop social skills, which they will need to succeed at university and their jobs. If not monitored, it can develop into a real addiction and could negatively affect children's general health.

Clearly, technology is now part of our everyday life. We can embrace it, but we must also monitor it to make sure we are in control of our phones, and not that our phones are in control of us.

(392 words)

5. ***Learning English through Debating***

The land next to your school has been used as an open car park for several years. The government proposes taking it back and building a public library while others argue that such areas should be used to build a park with facilities such as jogging track and children playground. Write to the editor of the student newspaper stating your opinion either for or against building it as a park. Justify your point of view with three reasons.

Dear Editor,

For several years, we have had a car park next to our school, creating a danger for students walking past and parents walking to pick up their children. I'm very happy to hear that the government is taking back this land to redevelop it. Many have supported turning it into a park, but I disagree. I support building a library.

The library will benefit our low-income neighbourhood. Books and extra tutoring sessions are quite expensive. Building a library can help students and the whole family have a place to study and learn new things for free. There are short-term and long-term benefits. In the near future, this library could become a central meeting point for students and families to meet and study or learn together. In the long-term future, the library and librarians could help educate the local population. Studies have shown that a more educated population raises the quality of life. It also helps improve the image of the city and the people. Over time, as the library becomes more popular, it will encourage others to come to the library for self-learning. Reading will become more popular throughout our community.

Building a library is essential for students especially due to the location. Students can just walk across the street for a quiet place to study. The library is a rich resource for study and learning materials. It is also quiet and spacious, so students will have plenty of room to study comfortably, whether in groups or alone. The library also opens for long hours. It is usually open until 9 or 10pm, and is open every day of the week, so students will have plenty of time to study in the library.

While I understand the need for more parks in Hong Kong, the library is a better idea because of the quiet environment. Parks are great for encouraging sport and physical activities for people of all ages. However, having a park next to our school would be a distraction. The noise coming from the park would interrupt classes and distract students. The library, on the other hand, would not do this and students would be able to keep their concentration.

While health is important, we also need to exercise our minds, and a library is the perfect place to do this. The great location, ability to benefit students, families and the whole community, and the quiet concentration a library provides are great reasons to support turning the car park into a library. I hope the government will take these factors into consideration when planning the use of this piece of land.

(433 words)

Yours faithfully,
Chris Wong

6. *Learning English through Workplace Communication*

You are a summer intern working at School Companion, an organization which provides English Language courses for Hong Kong secondary schools. Your job is to handle complaints from schools. You recently received a complaint about the course outline and the tutor of a senior secondary course the company is providing. Write an email to Joe Cheung, the programme coordinator, summarizing details of the complaint and suggest three possible actions that could be taken to deal with this complaint.

Dear Mr Cheung,

This morning, we received a complaint from Ms Mary Chan from Hong Kong Secondary School. She has several complaints about our drama tutor and the drama course outline we are currently providing her school. I also have several suggestions on how we can take care of this.

We are providing HKSS with a drama course and tutor. Students taking the course will perform on the school's Speech Day. Ms Chan says our tutor constantly arrives late so that the class is only just over one hour rather than the full hour and a half. She also has several complaints about the tutor's performance. He is underprepared and doesn't seem to know what the day's tasks are. He teaches by reading from the notes we have provided him, and the students say they have not seen any evidence of his drama skills. What's more, his classroom management skills are poor. The students take this time to do other work or socialize since he does not discipline them.

Overall, there has been no teaching of drama skills and the students and Ms Chan are worried that they will not be able to put on a performance for Speech Day. Ms Chan is requesting additional lessons free of charge to make up for the missing hours along with a new tutor.

I have several suggestions I would like to share with you. First, I think we need to talk to this tutor to understand what has happened. We need to ask him about his punctuality, classroom management and teaching style and get his side of the story. This will help us be more prepared when we talk to Ms Chan. Secondly, we need to talk to Ms Chan about the course so she knows the different stages of the course and how all of these together will prepare students for their performance. In that way, we can find out how prepared the students are for their Speech Day performance. Finally, I suggest sending

our own staff to observe the tutor's lessons so we can collect first-hand information. After we have looked into all sides of the story, we can decide if we are giving Ms Chan what she asked for.

Ms Chan requests that you call her at 5432 9876 after 3pm. Please let me know if anything is unclear about the complaint or if there is anything else I can do to help.

(401 words)

Regards,
Chris

7. *Learning English through Popular Culture*

You are working on a project entitled 'Music in Hong Kong' and have found that fewer people are buying CDs than before. Write a report to explain why this is happening and to suggest what could be done to encourage people to buy CDs. Give reasons to support your suggestions.

CDs in the Internet Age

1. Introduction

While working on my 'Music in Hong Kong' project, I visited several music stores throughout Hong Kong. While looking for CDs, I noticed that in all these stores, there were not many customers. I talked with staff from at least five different stores, asking why there were so few customers. Everyone I talked to said their sales have gone lower this year, since downloading music from the Internet is easier. Here, I'd like to report in detail why CD sales are getting lower every year and what the CD industry can do to encourage people to buy more CDs.

2. Reasons why CD sales are getting lower

Many people have access to the Internet these days, and that means they can easily download music (often for free) from YouTube and purchase music from iTunes. Being able to download music and albums means we can delete the songs we don't like. We can easily make playlists that only contain our favourite songs and we don't need to skip songs we don't like anymore.

While CD purchases are still stable among older consumers, they have fallen dramatically with young people. Youths, especially in Hong Kong, are always on their phones, which can download and play music and access the Internet. From their phones, young people can watch music videos on YouTube, use iTunes and download and purchase music. Because of this, buying CDs has become less popular among this age group.

3. Actions to raise sales

For stores trying to raise CD sales, there are several things they could do. For example, people will buy more when stores provide a certain discount for buying a certain number of CDs. Promotions are also an effective way to bring in more customers. Marketing campaigns like competitions in malls or lucky draws will help people remember dates of new albums that are coming out and will create excitement for purchasing these new albums.

One more option is benefits. Immediate benefits, like discount coupons or being upgraded to a limited-edition version of the CD will create customer loyalty. Surprises can also help. For example, the 500th customer buying a certain CD will receive an autographed version instead. These benefits appeal to all ages of customers and will help bring them back for more CDs.

4. Conclusion

CD sales are down but there is hope to bring them back up. Promotions, benefits and creative marketing can help draw in new customers and keep new and old customers coming back for more. The Internet is a powerful force that will always be popular, but CDs still play an important part in the music business.

(438 words)

8. *Learning English through Poems and Songs*

Your school plans to organize a Poetry Week to enhance students' interest in learning English.

Write an email to the chairperson of the school's Poetry Club suggesting two interesting activities for that week. You should also explain how these activities would increase students' interest in learning English.

Dear Mary,

I am glad to hear that Poetry Club is organizing a Poetry Week to raise students' interest in learning English. Being an active member of the Poetry Club, I would like to suggest two activities for the Poetry Week.

First, I suggest hosting a series of poetry appreciation and writing classes. We could organize a foundation class and an advanced class for students of different abilities. The foundation class can teach simpler poetry styles like haiku, acrostics and shape poems. Students are made aware of not only the spelling of words, but also their number of syllables and meanings, and that knowing these numbers and meanings can be fun. These poems are also simple enough for students of all levels to understand and write.

As for the advanced class, more complex poems, such as sonnets and ballads, can be covered. Students will be able to discover the rhyme and rhythm in English words; and sonnets by famous poets such as William Shakespeare and P.B. Shelley can be used in class. Students will be encouraged to be creative with their English in class, and try writing a sonnet or ballad themselves. A poetry competition can be organized in the two classes with prizes to keep students motivated.

Another activity we could hold during the Poetry Week is to invite local writers and poets to give a talk to our students. With our school's long history, it should not be difficult to invite poets or writers who are our alumni. Apart from sharing the love of English and their writing styles, these speakers can also share with students how the school has shaped them into who they are now. Inviting alumni also has the advantage in that the speakers are close to the students. In these talks, our students not only learn about English and poetry, but also attitudes they need for the challenges in life. After all, these poets were once students like us, and we can be just like them if we study hard enough. We could even consider inviting these guest speakers to teach a poetry class. I'm sure this could bring some major excitement to the week.

I'd like to voice my total support of Poetry Week and say that I'm willing to help organize the week. I hope you will take my ideas into consideration and we can work together to bring a new love of both poetry and English to all our students, no matter at what level of English they are currently.

(419 words)

Regards,

Chris Wong

9. ***Learning English through Short Stories***

The school newspaper is introducing a new section, 'Film and book'. As the chairperson of the Reading Club, you have been asked to choose a book, which has also been made into a film, to introduce in the section. Write an article, mentioning your choice. Explain why you have selected that title, and suggest activities that can be organized in relation to the title.

Book and Film Review: Cinderella

Hello everyone. Welcome to our new Film and Book section of the student newspaper. Today I'll be talking about the live-action Cinderella that came out in early 2015 and the two original *Cinderella* books, dating from 1697 and 1814. The books and two films — one animated from 1950 and the new version — have been very well received.

As you probably already know, Cinderella is about a girl who is ill-treated by her evil stepmother and stepsisters. When the prince throws a ball, she goes with the help of her fairy godmother and she leaves her glass slipper at the ball. When the prince finds her, they live happily ever after. Although the plot stays the same, many details are different between the books and the 2015 version of the film. In the film, the ball only lasts for one night, making it more dramatic that Cinderella has to leave before midnight. However, in the books, the ball lasts for several nights. Another big detail is that in the film, Cinderella's father dies, leaving her alone with her new family. In the books, he is still alive although Cinderella doesn't complain to him about her mistreatment. Perhaps the biggest difference is that in the books, the stepsisters cut off their toes to fit in the glass slipper!

I would recommend both versions of the books to everyone. Readers can see how the details have changed over time for more modern audiences. After all, we would never show the stepsisters cutting off their toes — that would be too violent for kids today! But centuries ago, that was fine for kids to read. It's also interesting to see how the idea of happiness has changed. In the book, the stepsisters get to marry lords and live in the castle with Cinderella and the prince. In the film, the stepsisters and stepmother must leave the town and only Cinderella gets to be happy.

Students can organize many activities around the book. First, they can have a reading circle to share views and learn about others' opinions. A more interactive option is short drama performances of important scenes, like when the prince comes to find Cinderella. Finally, students can enter a book review competition, and the winning entry will be published in this student newspaper.

I highly recommend the two books on which the Cinderella film is based. They show how our ideas of happiness have changed over the years. They help students learn new vocabulary and they are a good way to escape from the pressure of the real world.

(429 words)