

Name: _____ ()

Class: _____



MONTFORT SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2024

SECONDARY 4 EXPRESS / 5 NORMAL (ACADEMIC)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Paper 2 Comprehension [INSERT]

1184/02
19 August 2024 (Monday)
1 hour 50 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

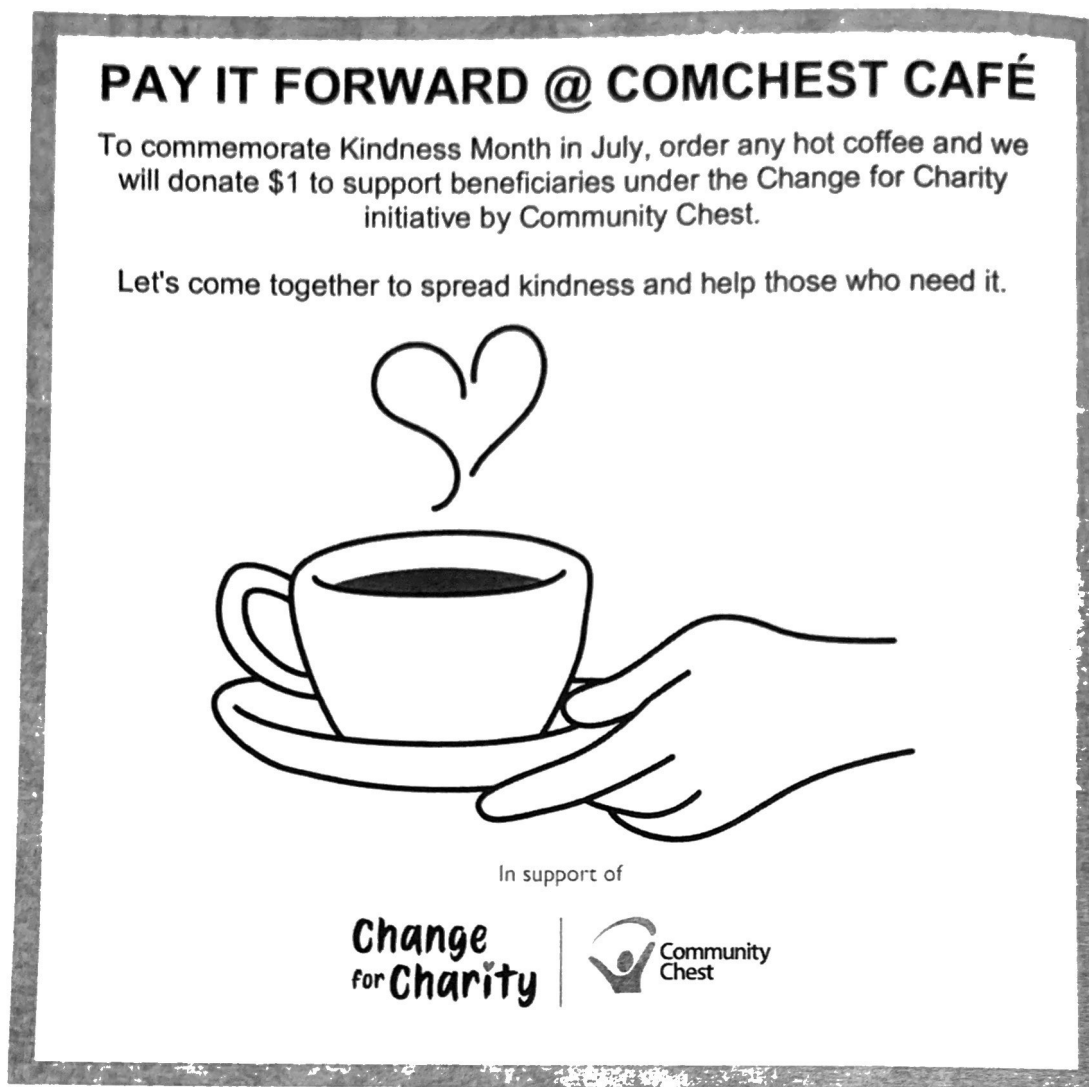
This document consists of **6** printed pages.

Setters: Mr. Casimir Kang & Mr. Joshua Ho

SECTION A

Study the poster (Text 1) and the social media post (Text 2) and answer Questions 1–4 in the Question Paper.

Text 1 is a poster published on the Community Chest webpage.



Text 2 is taken from a social media post written by a volunteer.

I've been volunteering with Community Chest's Change for Charity initiative, and while it's making a huge difference, we're really struggling with a lack of support. It's disheartening to see the programme's potential being held back due to insufficient funds and resources. However, I believe in our community's power to rally around for a great cause. If you can, please consider donating or spreading the word about this vital initiative. Let's show our beneficiaries that we can make a real change in time to come!

SECTION B

Text 3

The text below details a tourist's experience in Paris.

Read it carefully and answer Questions 5–14 in the Question Booklet.

- 1 In the morning, I got up early and went for a long walk through the sleeping streets. I love to watch cities wake up, and Paris wakes up more abruptly, more startlingly, than any place I know. One minute you have the city to yourself: it's just you and a guy delivering crates of bread, and a couple of droning street-cleaning machines. (It might be worth noting here that Paris spends £58 a year a head on street-cleaning compared with £17 a head in London, which explains why Paris gleams and London is a toilet.) Then all at once it's frantic: cars and buses swishing past in sudden abundance, cafés and kiosks opening, people flying out of Metro stations like flocks of startled birds, movement everywhere, thousands and thousands of pairs of hurrying legs. 5
- 2 By half-past eight Paris is a terrible place for walking. There's too much traffic. A blue haze of uncombusted diesel hangs over every boulevard. At the Arc de Triomphe alone thirteen roads come together. Can you imagine that? I mean to say, here you have a city with the world's most pathologically aggressive drivers – drivers who in other circumstances would be confined to their beds with leather straps – and you give them an open space where they can all try to go in any of thirteen directions at once. Is that asking for trouble or what? 10
- 3 It's interesting to note that the French have had this reputation for bad driving since long before the invention of the internal combustion engine. Even in the eighteenth-century, British travellers to Paris were remarking on what lunatic drivers the French were, on 'the astonishing speed with which the carriages and people moved through the streets ... It was not an uncommon sight to see a child run over and probably killed.' I quote from *The Grand Tour* by Christopher Hibbert, a book whose great virtue is in pointing out that the peoples of Europe have for at least 300 years been living up to their stereotypes. As long ago as the sixteenth century, travellers were describing the Italians as voluble, unreliable and hopelessly corrupt, the Germans as gluttonous, the Swiss as irritatingly officious and tidy, the French as, well, insufferably French. 15 20
- 4 You also constantly keep coming up against these monumental squares and open spaces that are all but impossible to cross on foot. My wife and I went to Paris on our honeymoon and foolishly tried to cross the Place de la Concorde without first leaving our names at the embassy. Somehow, she managed to get to the obelisk in the centre, but I was stranded in the midst of a circus maximus of killer automobiles, waving weakly to my dear spouse of two days and whimpering softly while hundreds and hundreds of little buff-coloured Renaults were bearing down on me with their drivers all wearing expressions like the Joker in *Batman*. 25 30
- 5 It still happens now. At the Place de la Bastille, a vast open space where I spent three-quarters of an hour trying to get from the Rue de Lyon to the Rue de St-Antoine. The problem is that the pedestrian-crossing lights have been designed with the clear purpose of leaving the foreign visitor confused, humiliated and, if all goes to plan, dead. This is what happens: you arrive at a square to find all the traffic stopped, but the pedestrian light is red and you know that if you venture so much as a foot off the kerb all the cars will surge forward and turn you into a gooey crepe. So you wait. 35

- 6 After a minute, a blind person comes along and crosses the great cobbled plain without hesitating. Then a ninety-year-old lady in a motorised wheelchair trundles past and wobbles across the cobbles to the other side of the square a quarter of a mile away. You are uncomfortably aware that all the drivers within 150 yards are sitting with moistened lips watching you expectantly, so you pretend that you don't really want to cross the street at all. After another minute, 150 pre-school children are herded across by their teachers, and then the blind man returns from the other direction with two bags of shopping. 40
- 7 Finally, the pedestrian light turns green and you step off the kerb and all the cars come charging at you. And I don't care how paranoid and irrational this sounds, but I know for a fact that the people of Paris want me dead. Eventually I gave up trying to cross streets in any kind of methodical way and instead just followed whatever route looked least threatening. So, it was with some difficulty and not a little surprise that I managed to pick my way by early afternoon to the Louvre, where I found a long immobile queue curled around the entrance courtyard like an abandoned garden hose. 45 50

SECTION C

Text 4

In the article below, experts discuss the management of the Olympics.

Read the article carefully and answer Questions 15–20 in the Question Paper.

- 1 The Olympics have evolved dramatically since the first modern games were held in 1896. In the second half of the twentieth century, both the costs of hosting and the revenue produced by the spectacle grew rapidly, sparking controversy over the burdens host countries shouldered. A growing number of economists argue that the benefits of hosting the games are at best exaggerated and at worst non-existent, leaving many host countries with debts and maintenance liabilities. 5
- 2 Still, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and its supporters contend that hosting can raise a city's global profile and generate economic benefits through tourism and investments in infrastructure. Recent games have highlighted the ongoing debate over the costs and benefits of hosting such a mega-event. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics continued a decades-long streak of overrunning costs, which rose more than expected after an unprecedented pandemic delay. 10
- 3 Once a city is chosen to host, it has around a decade to prepare for the influx of athletes and tourists. The Games are large, attracting hundreds of thousands of tourists to watch over ten thousand athletes compete in about three hundred events. The most immediate need is the creation or upgrading of highly specialised sports facilities such as cycling tracks and ski-jumping arenas. There is also usually the demand for more general infrastructure, especially housing and transportation. Altogether, these infrastructure costs range from \$5 billion to more than \$50 billion. 15
- 4 Many countries justify such expenditures in the hopes that the spending will outlive the Olympic Games. More than half of the Beijing 2008 budget of \$45 billion went to rail, roads, and airports, while nearly a fourth went to environmental clean-up efforts. Operational expenses like electricity, water, heating, and cooling for all venues and facilities make up a smaller but still significant chunk of hosts' Olympics budget. Security budgets have similarly escalated quickly since the 9/11 attacks – Sydney spent \$250 million in 2000 while Athens spent over \$1.5 billion in 2004. 20
- 5 Also problematic are so-called white elephants that, because of their specialised nature, have limited post-Olympics use. These often impose costs for years to come due to the need for maintenance. Beijing's famous "Bird's Nest" stadium cost \$460 million to build, required \$10 million a year to maintain, and sat mostly unused after the 2008 games, until the city used it again to host the 2022 Winter Games. 25
- 6 A consensus has grown among economists that the Olympic Games need reforms to make them more affordable for hosts. Many have pointed out that the IOC bidding process encourages wasteful spending by favouring potential hosts who present the most ambitious plans. In response, the IOC under President Thomas Bach has promoted reforms to the process. Reducing the cost of bidding and encouraging bidders to develop a more sustainable strategy are ideas being mooted. Some think more drastic measures are necessary. Economists argue the IOC should instead "award the games to rich countries that are better able to absorb more of the costs." Others have proposed that one city be made the permanent host, allowing for the reuse of expensive infrastructure. 30 35

- 7 Paris budgeted about \$8 billion for the 2024 Olympics when it won its bid in 2017. Costs are split relatively evenly between operating expenses and new infrastructure. If the final cost stays in that ballpark, Paris will host the cheapest Summer Games in decades. Organisers say the decision to rely almost entirely on existing venues, such as those built for the annual French Open and the 2016 European Football Championship, has held down costs. To directly offset spending, seeking sponsorship is one critical way. The organising committee steadfastly maintains it will reach its goal of \$1.34 billion in sponsorship revenue. But Paris has still spent \$4.5 billion on infrastructure, including \$1.6 billion for its Olympic Village, whose price is at least one-third more than it originally budgeted. 40 45
- 8 The IOC and host communities hope to make the event more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. Alas, only time will tell who emerges victorious when it comes to the true long-term viability of the Olympics.

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Copyright Acknowledgements:

Text 1: Adapted from <https://www.comchest.gov.sg/>

Text 2: Original setter created resource

Text 3: Adapted from Bryson Bill, Neither here nor there

Text 4: Adapted from <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/economics-hosting-olympic-games>