

PEARSON LONGMAN DSE POWER PACK
HONG KONG DIPLOMA OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION

MOCK PAPER (SET 1) ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 3

PART A

Question-Answer Book

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) There are two parts (A and B) in this paper. All candidates should attempt **ALL** tasks in Part A. In Part B, you should attempt either Part B1 (easier section) OR Part B2 (more difficult section). Candidates attempting Parts A and B2 will be able to attain the full range of levels, while Level 4 will be the highest level attainable for candidates attempting Parts A and B1.
- (2) Write your Candidate Number in the space provided on the appropriate pages of Part A Question-Answer Book and both Part B Question-Answer Books.
- (3) Write your answers clearly and neatly in the spaces provided in the Question-Answer Books. Answers written in the margins will not be marked. You are advised to use a pencil for Part A.
- (4) For multiple-choice questions, you are advised to blacken the appropriate circle with a pencil and make sure that wrong marks are completely erased with a clean rubber. Mark only **ONE** answer to each question. Two or more answers will score **NO MARKS**.
- (5) All listening materials will be played **ONCE** only.
- (6) Supplementary answer sheets will be supplied on request. Write your Candidate Number and mark the question number on each sheet.
- (7) The rough-work sheets provided are for you to take notes. They will be collected separately and will not be marked.
- (8) No extra time will be given to candidates for writing their Candidate Number or filling in the question number boxes after the 'Time is up' announcement.
- (9) The two Question-Answer Books attempted by candidates (one for Part A and one for Part B) will be collected together at the end of the examination.
- (10) The other unused Question-Answer Book for Part B will be collected separately at the end of the examination. This will not be marked. Do not write any answers in it.

Candidate Number



AUDIO



MARKING SCHEME &
AUDIO SCRIPT

Do not write on this page.
Answers written on this page will not be marked.

Part A

In Part A, you will have a total of four tasks to do related to the theme of online video games. Follow the instructions in the Question-Answer Book and in the recording to complete the tasks. You will find all the information you need in the Question-Answer Book and the recording. You now have two minutes to familiarise yourself with Tasks 1–4.

Pearson

Task 1 (16 marks)

Cecilia and Lawrence are looking at a new video game console called Joy Station 6. Listen to their conversation and complete the information in the spaces below. The first one has been provided as an example. You now have 30 seconds to study the task. At the end of the task, you will have one minute to tidy up your answers.

About Joy Station 6

Manufacturer: Zony (example)

Place of manufacture: (1) _____

Models available: (2) _____ and _____ editions

Dimensions of console: (3) 39 cm x _____ cm x _____ cm

Weight of console: (4) _____

Price range: (5) _____ Hong Kong Dollars

Comparison with Joy Station 5

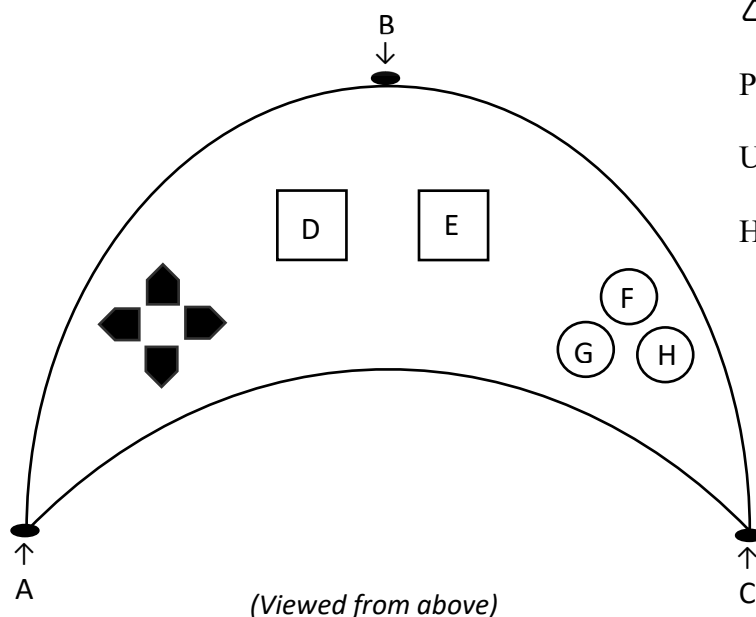
Players can see (6) _____.

Games feel smoother because of (7) _____.

It has a more streamlined (8) _____.

Wireless Controller

(Write *ONE* letter in each space to indicate the location of each button or port)



△ button (9) _____

Power button (10) _____

USB port (11) _____

Headset port (12) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Accessories included in the price of Lawrence's console (13–14)

Accessories	(Tick <i>TWO</i> only)
Wireless controller	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headset	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charging station	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media remote	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web camera	<input type="checkbox"/>

Players' reviews of Joy Station 6

Positive review: (15) _____

Negative review: (16) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 1

Task 2 (13 marks)

Barry is writing a research paper about video games. He is interviewing his supervisor Professor Annie Bligh. Listen to the interview and write the information in the spaces below. The first one has been provided as an example. You now have 30 seconds to study the task. At the end of the task, you will have one minute to tidy up your answers.

Area of Barry's research: Video game development (example)

(17) Nowadays, a video game developer is usually ...

- A. a single person.
- B. groups of friends.
- C. an international team.

A B C
○ ○ ○

Different types of video games

Type	Funded or created by...	Distinguishing feature
Triple-A games	(18) _____	(19) _____ _____
Independent games	(20) _____ and _____ _____	(21) _____ _____

(22–24) Professor Bligh mentions **three** factors which have facilitated the development of independent games. Identify the three factors in **chronological order** (Write **1**, **2** and **3** to show the order in which they appeared).

- Rise of mobile games ☐
- Promotion of the games by companies ☐
- Creation of online distribution systems ☐
- Availability of courses for game designers ☐
- Regulation of smartphones by governments ☐
- Accessibility of game development software ☐

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

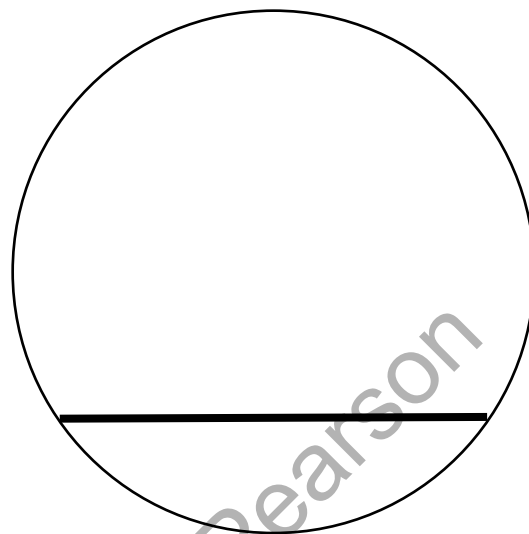
Example of a first-generation video game

Name of game: (25) _____

Month and year of creation: (26) _____

(27–28) What could be seen on the screen when the game was played?

(Draw what Professor Bligh describes in the diagram below)



1 cm
↔

(29) How does Barry feel about developing a video game? He thinks it is ...

- A. simple and easy.
- B. only for the talented.
- C. hard but achievable for anyone.
- D. only for people willing to learn the skills.

A	B	C	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 2

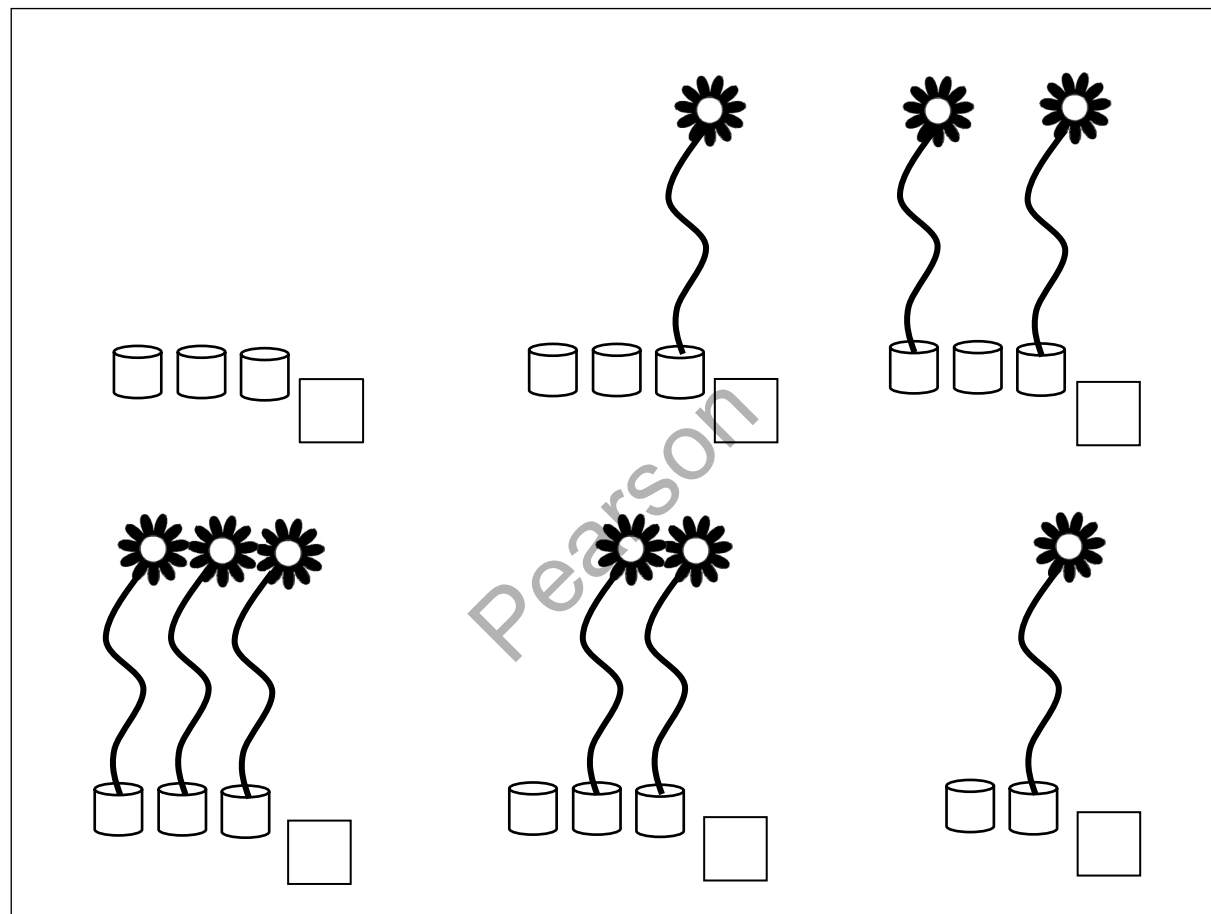
Task 3 (13 marks)

Raymond and his daughter Venus are talking about an educational game website. Listen to their discussion and complete the notes below. The first one has been provided as an example. You now have 30 seconds to study the task. At the end of the task, you will have one minute to tidy up your answers.

Name of website: Fun Classroom (example)

Venus’s experience of the game *Sunflower Farm*

(30–32) Which pictures show Venus’s ‘farm’ on Day 1, Day 2, and Day 3 of playing the game? (Write **1**, **2** and **3** in the appropriate boxes)



About the game *Coral Reef*

Aim of game: To (33) _____

How to play: (34) _____ to discover
how (35) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Fun facts about sea animals

Sea animal	Fun fact(s)
Jellyfish	(36) _____ (37) _____
Sea turtles	(38) _____

(39) How does Venus feel after listening to these facts?

- A. Annoyed
- B. Amused
- C. Hopeful
- D. Saddened

A B C D
○ ○ ○ ○

Starfish

(40) Which part of the dead shark does the starfish crawl to?

- A. Fin
- B. Tail
- C. Head
- D. Stomach

A B C D
○ ○ ○ ○

Parrotfish

(41) What is food for parrotfish?

- A. Reef
- B. Coral
- C. Algae
- D. Oxygen

A B C D
○ ○ ○ ○

(42) What does Venus like best about the experience of exploring the game?

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 3

Task 4 (10 marks)

Listen to *Your Teen*, a podcast about teen issues for parents. You will hear psychologist Dr Paula Lambert talking about addiction to a video game called *World of Warlords*. Answer questions about the podcast below. Please note that you do not need to answer in complete sentences. You now have 30 seconds to study the task. At the end of the task, you will have three minutes to tidy up your answers.

***World of Warlords* – Why is it addictive?**

Addiction

What examples of addiction does Dr Lambert give?

(43) _____

What effect on players of *World of Warlords* does Dr Lambert give as an example?

(44) _____

What kind of game is *World of Warlords*?

(45) _____

How does Dr Lambert define video game addiction?

(46) An excessive use of computer video games which _____

Epic meaning

What does Dr Lambert say is ‘epic meaning’ to the players of *World of Warlords*?

(47) _____

What feature in the design of *World of Warlords* gives players ‘epic meaning’?

(48) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Ownership

What objects do players of *World of Warlords* collect?

(49) _____

How do players of *World of Warlords* obtain more powerful skills?

(50) _____

Avoidance

According to Dr Lambert, what do players of *World of Warlords* try to avoid?

(51) _____

(52) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 4

End of Part A

Now go on to Part B

Do not write on this page.
Answers written on this page will not be marked.

Candidate Number										
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Task 5: Webpage entry *(18 marks)*

Write an entry for your youth centre's website about the online game competition. Use the information in the B1 Data File and your own notes. Write around 100 words.

5

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Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 5

Task 6: Online game recommendation (18 marks)

Write a recommendation of three online games for players' reference. Use the information in the B1 Data File and your own notes. Write around 150 words.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Pearson

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 6

Task 7: Guidelines for online games players (17 marks)

Complete the guidelines below for online game players at your club to follow using information from the B1 Data File and your own notes.

Guidelines for Online Games Players

A. Let us know when you are in the Computer Room

- (1) You must _____
(2) If you leave early, you must _____

B. Keep to the recommended time limits

- (3) You should _____
(4) You should not _____

C. Pay attention to how and where you sit

- (5) You should _____
(6) You should _____

D. Avoid giving yourself too much stress

- You should try to keep calm.
(7) You should not _____

E. Maintain physical health and fitness

- (8) You should _____
(9) You should _____

F. Eat properly

- (10) You should not _____
(11) You should not _____

G. Beware of your body's warning signs

- Stop playing at once if ...
you feel dizzy.
(12) _____
(13) _____
(14) _____

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 7

End of Part B1

Candidate Number										
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Task 8: Newsletter article *(18 marks)*

Write an article for your youth club’s newsletter using information from the B2 Data File and your notes. Write around 150 words.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Pearson

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 8

Task 9: Proposal (18 marks)

Write a proposal to the South Island Foundation requesting funding for the purchase of video game consoles using information from the B2 Data File. Write around 150 words.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Pearson

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 9

Task 10: Email reply (17 marks)

Write an email replying to Mr Chan using information from the B2 Data File and your notes. Write around 200 words.

Subject: <input type="text"/>	
Answers written in the margins will not be marked.	
	5
	10
	15
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25	

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

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55

Answers written in the margins will not be marked.

END OF TASK 10

End of Part B2

MOCK PAPER (SET 1)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 3

PART B1

DATA FILE

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Refer to the General Instructions on Page 1 of the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART B1

- (1) For Part B, attempt **EITHER** those tasks in Part B1 (Tasks 5–7) **OR** those in Part B2 (Tasks 8–10).
(2) You are advised to use a pen for Part B.
(3) The Data Files will **NOT** be collected at the end of the examination. Do **NOT** write your answers in the Data Files.
(4) Hand in only ONE Question-Answer Book for Part B, either B1 or B2.

Not to be taken away before the end of the examination session

Part B

Situation

You are Nico Lin. You work for the South Island Youth Centre, where online video games have recently been made available for members to play. You are an assistant to the director of the centre, Mrs Vivian Law. Mrs Law has asked you to do some tasks.

You will listen to a recording of a meeting in which Vivian Law talks to your centre's Gaming Manager, Tommy Day, and Support Planner, Carol Chan. Take notes under the appropriate headings.

Before the recording is played, you will have five minutes to study the Question-Answer Book and the Data File to familiarise yourself with the situation and the tasks.

Complete the tasks by following the instructions in the Question-Answer Book and on the recording. You will find all the information you need in the Question-Answer Book, the Data File and on the recording. As you listen, you can make notes on page 3 of the Data File.

You now have five minutes to familiarise yourself with the Question-Answer Book and the Data File.

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Listening note-taking sheet for the meeting

Listen to the recording of the meeting in which Vivian Law talks to your youth centre's Gaming Manager, Tommy Day, and Support Planner, Carol Chan.

Events in May:

Online Games Competition:

- Basic details:
- Categories:
- Rules:

'Cybercity 2099':

Guidelines for online games players:

Pearson

Email from Vivian Law to Nico Lin

To:	Nico Lin	Sent: Wed 18 April 20__
From:	Vivian Law	
Subject:	Tasks for this morning	

Good morning, Nico

Could you please help me with three tasks today?

First, write an entry for our website giving details about an online games competition. Include:

- the date, time, and venue of the competition
- the categories participants can enter
- the prizes for the winners (choose the two most popular ones in the members' survey)
- any regulations contestants must follow.

Refer to my last memo to all staff, the questionnaire results, our centre's rules, and listen to the recording of my meeting with Tommy and Carol yesterday. Please write in paragraphs instead of listing everything in point form.

Then, write a recommendation of the top three favourite online games according to the questionnaire results. Include both positive (at least two) and negative aspects (at least one) of each game so that users can make informed decisions about the games they play. Don't mention any benefits to health, as we'll focus on that separately later. Refer to my memo, the questionnaire results as well as the reviews from *PC Tactics Magazine*.

Finally, complete the Guidelines for Online Games Players to be posted on our centre's noticeboard. Refer to the centre's regulations and all the newspaper and magazine articles I have given you. You should listen to the meeting as well. Try to write the guidelines in complete sentences to make them clear, but be concise. Follow the examples given.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you

Vivian

Memo from Vivian Law to all staff

MEMORANDUM

To: All staff
From: Vivian Law
Date: 16 April 20__
Subject: Updates on Provision of Online Games

Dear All

Thank you for your effort in setting up the new online games at our centre. Here are some quick updates on issues regarding this new service.

We need to help recommend games for members to play. There is a sea of options, some of which could be deemed a waste of time or even dangerous – such as *League of Phantoms*. Next week, I will share a recommendation of three games for distribution to members for their reference. One game to put forward is ‘Cybercity 2099’. Some members have shared their thoughts about the game with me. They said it was very easy to navigate. Of course, there is bound to be something bad about every game, but they all agreed this one was the most entertaining online game they had ever played, and entertainment is what games are all about, isn’t it?

I also have some new information to share about the Online Games Competition next week. We will use the multi-purpose room on 6/F as the venue. As you know, it has recently been renovated, so it would be better to hold the competition there than in the Computer Room, where members normally play online games. There will be two categories which contestants can choose to enter. One of them will be strategy games. We need to ensure that each contestant can only enter one of the categories so that both prizes will not be won by the same person. That is all the information I have for you now. Please promote this event to our members.

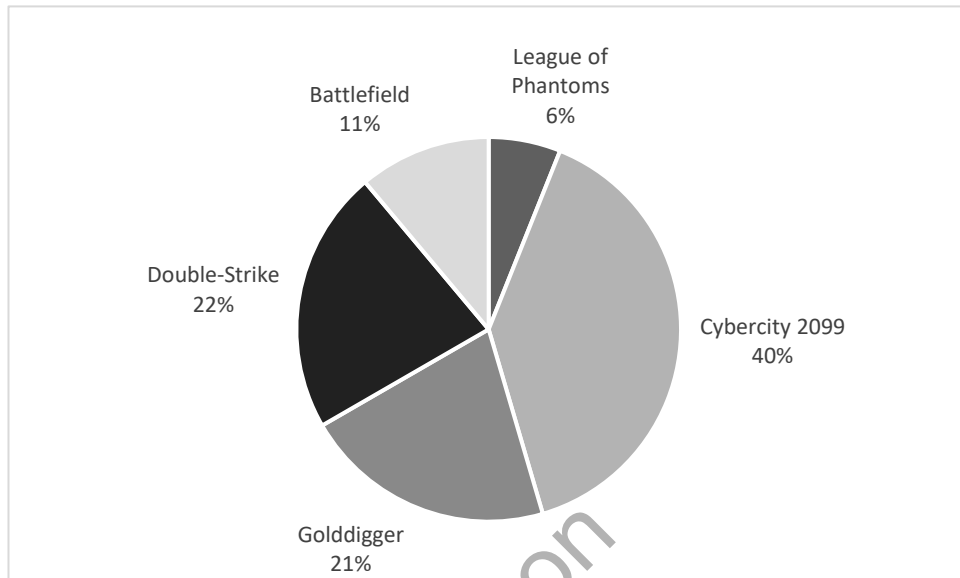
Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks again for your help! I appreciate your hard work in ensuring that our members can make the most from the games we provide.

Vivian

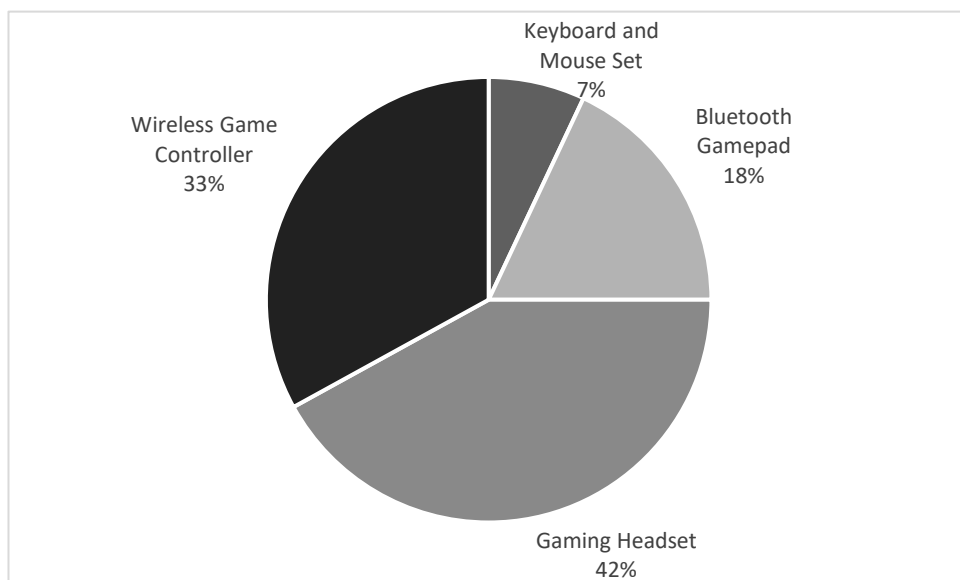
Questionnaire results

These results came from 349 members who returned the questionnaire before the deadline.

Q1 Which online game would you recommend to your peers the most?



Q2 Which is the most suitable prize for an online games competition?



Your Centre — Your Rules!

These rules apply to all members. Disobeying them can mean a ban from the Centre, so please abide by them.

Golden Rule: Join in, have fun, and let others have fun too!

1. No matter what activity members do, they must sign in at the start of every session. If they leave the Centre before the end of their session, they must inform the staff in charge.
2. Members should respect EVERYONE: other members, staff and visitors.
3. The following applies to ALL areas of the Centre:
 - No bullying, swearing, fighting or theft
 - No discrimination: Treat everyone fairly
 - No alcohol, drugs or smoking
 - No running or dangerous games
 - Keep safe: Health and safety rules apply at all times
 - No litter: Use the bins; Keep the Centre clean
 - No damage, vandalism or graffiti of any kind
4. Members must keep computer use clean and safe. Wheeled chairs must stay in the Computer Room. No food or drink is allowed in the Computer Room. Sitting as far away from the computer screen as possible is recommended to avoid damage to the eyes.
5. All classrooms and theatres are OUT OF BOUNDS, unless members are in the company of a coach or staff member.
6. No one should ever be involved in a single activity for more than two hours at a time. Overdoing any activity may bring on related side-effects. If members experience any physical pain (e.g. leg pain from tennis, or wrist pain from computer use), please STOP the activity immediately! If you do not, you risk preventable injuries.
7. Before taking part in any competitions, members must seek a parent's or guardian's permission. Participation will not be allowed if the relevant section in the application form is not completed accordingly.

Thank you for your attention

What's hot this month?

A few exciting new online games have been released on the market this month. We invited game experts to try them out. Here's what they said:

Golddigger

Jason Yip: The goal of this game is simple – find all the hidden treasures in the rainforest. The graphic designers produced high-quality images of exotic animals. Lions and tigers look so realistic, they might jump out of the screen at any time! Some scenes are rather bloody, which is one big drawback of the game. This can be compensated for, I hope, by the knowledge of survival in the wild that players can gain from playing.

Battlefield

Simon Jackson: If you want boredom and disappointment, try *Battlefield*. This is without a doubt the worst game I've ever played in my life. The plot is so predictable – no surprises, whatsoever! You don't need a brain to guess where all the landmines are. The weapons are not powerful enough by any standard. It's neither exciting, nor entertaining.

Double-Strike

Harriet Lee: *Double-Strike* might look like a puzzle game on the surface, but behind its colourful (attractively designed) interface is a classic role-playing game (RPG). There's a huge cast of characters you'll meet along the way, from hard-core fighters to dance-loving fish. You'll love them all. There's just one shortcoming – the plot involves the destruction of future worlds, which is a bit silly if you ask me.

An interview with Dr Sophie Leigh, Chinese University paediatrics lecturer

R = Reporter

Dr = Dr Sophie Leigh

R: Hong Kong's video game-playing teenagers are risking fatal heart attacks! Doctors and experts have warned that youngsters who spend too long playing video games may risk rising cholesterol levels. Is that right, Dr Leigh?

Dr: Yes, indeed. Many Hong Kong children are not very keen on physical exercise. The problem is made worse by relatively limited fitness facilities in the territory. It's essential that games players get plenty of exercise.

R: I guess players should not forget to be physically active.

Dr: Right. Besides that, sitting in the wrong way in front of video screens for a long period of time can damage your neck and back. Remember to sit up straight when you are playing.

R: I've read an article recently about young video game addicts in Britain using their lunch money to pay for access to video games and eating fast foods too often.

Dr: These trends are just as bad, if not worse here in Hong Kong. If nothing is done about it, the problem is likely to get worse.

R: The impact on health will be disastrous.



Dr: Yes, but if young game players act now, their health will improve. This means that games enthusiasts shouldn't skip meals and they should not eat fast foods too often instead of having well-balanced meals.

R: What other advice would you give to teenagers to remain healthy, Dr Leigh?

Dr: It's always important to ensure that they get enough sleep, so they shouldn't let video games interfere with their rest.

R: So there you have it, readers. Are you prepared to put your video games aside for a while to eat well, get enough rest and engage in some healthy exercise?

Computer games can be a health hazard

Online computer games are not only potentially addictive, they may also over-excite players, causing them to become over-emotional and even lose their temper, according to Dr Anthony Yuen. 'The games can make players frustrated and angry. Some may get so over-excited that they can't sleep afterwards,' he said. 'Players should always try to keep calm.'

Playing Yii, Zbox or any of the scores of games on the market for hours on end may also cause aching fingers and even dizziness. One unfortunate player twisted his spine through continually sitting badly for a long time. Dr Yuen gave advice on the matter, saying, 'In addition to always sitting with the correct posture, one should never play for more than two hours at a time.'

For those who overdo things, wrist strain is an unavoidable side-effect. You should stop playing immediately if your wrists hurt. It's also important to avoid becoming too competitive by setting yourself unrealistic targets. Dr Yuen advised players to take a ten-minute rest in every hour of play.

THIS IS THE LAST PAGE OF THE PART B1 DATA FILE.

Pearson

MOCK PAPER (SET 1)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 3

PART B2

DATA FILE

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Refer to the General Instructions on Page 1 of the Question-Answer Book for Part A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART B2

- (1) For Part B, attempt **EITHER** those tasks in Part B1 (Tasks 5–7) **OR** those in Part B2 (Tasks 8–10).
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Part B

Situation

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You will listen to a recording of a meeting in which Vivian Law talks to your centre's Gaming Manager, Tommy Day, and Support Planner, Carol Chan. Take notes under the appropriate headings.

Before the recording is played, you will have five minutes to study the Question-Answer Book and the Data File to familiarise yourself with the situation and the tasks.

Complete the tasks by following the instructions in the Question-Answer Book and on the recording. You will find all the information you need in the Question-Answer Book, the Data File and on the recording. As you listen, you can make notes on page 3 of the Data File.

You now have five minutes to familiarise yourself with the Question-Answer Book and the Data File.

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Listening note-taking sheet for the meeting

Listen to the recording of the meeting in which Vivian Law talks to your youth centre's Gaming Manager, Tommy Day, and Support Planner, Carol Chan.

Events in May:

Online Games Competition:

- Basic details:
- Categories:
- Rules:

'Cybercity 2099':

Guidelines for online games players:

Pearson

Email from Vivian Law to Nico Lin

To:	Nico Lin	Sent: Wed 18 April 20__ 10.49AM
From:	Vivian Law	
Subject:	Tasks for this morning	

Good morning, Nico

Could you please help me with three tasks today?

First, draft the Word from the Director article for the next issue of our youth centre's newsletter. You can start by looking at the minutes of last week's Newsletter Editorial Board meeting. Also listen to the recording of my meeting with Tommy and Carol yesterday. Both our teenage members and their parents are our target readers. Remember to use an appropriate tone.

Then, write a proposal to apply for funding from our sponsoring organisation, the South Island Foundation, to be used for purchasing more video game consoles for members' use. In the proposal, give full details of what we need to purchase and describe exactly how they will be used. Also explain how video games can benefit our members. Start by reading the book extracts and newspaper cuttings I've given you.

Finally, I need you to write an email reply to a letter from Mr John Chan, the father of one of our members. He's obviously unhappy about our decision to allow members to play online games, particularly one called 'Cybercity 2099'. Start by reading the letter he sent us, which was discussed in the meeting as well. Reaffirm our position on the installation of the game consoles by responding to his criticisms with the evidence we have, but be tactful in your response. Avoid saying anything negative about online games.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Vivian

Minutes of Newsletter Editorial Board meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 11 April 20__

Time: 9.30 a.m.

Venue: Director's Office

In attendance:

- Mrs Vivian Law – Centre Director
- Mr Raymond Chow – Chief Editor of newsletter
- Ms Beatrice Simpson – Senior Journalist of newsletter

Mr Chow outlined the four articles / columns to be included in the May issue of our Centre's newsletter – Word from the Director, Expansion Plans, Promotion of the Online Games Competition, and Letters from Members.

1. Word from the Director

1.1 Mrs Law said that she planned to let readers know about the upcoming events for May, which she would be briefed about in her meeting with Tommy Day and Carol Chan next week.

1.2 Ms Simpson suggested also giving details about the recent installation of game consoles at our centre since not many members were aware of this. Mrs Law agreed, saying the installation was only completed on 5 April, so making the announcement in the May newsletter was appropriate.

1.3 Mr Chow noted that there was already concern among parents of members who played online games at our centre, and advised Mrs Law to address that in her article. Specifically, Mr Chow mentioned several worries that parents had – about the possibility of their children playing for too long, even overnight, at our centre; getting injured; being in contact with gang members, and focusing too much on just one single activity. Mrs Law said she would address all these concerns. She would emphasise, among other things, the provision of guidelines for players and the wide variety of activities available at the centre other than online games, citing one indoor activity and one outdoor sport as examples.

1.4 Ms Simpson suggested mentioning our membership fee, which was relatively low among similar youth centres, despite our provision of more facilities and services. Mrs Law agreed to the idea.

2. Expansion Plans

Letter from John Chan

1H, Fairview Building
Causeway Bay
Hong Kong

14 April 20__

Mrs Vivian Law
Director
South Island Youth Centre
Aberdeen
Hong Kong

Dear Mrs Law

I am greatly disturbed to hear that you have recently made online games available to members and installed game consoles in your youth centre. These are irresponsible decisions, and parents like me whose children regularly visit your centre have been kept in the dark about the matter. I wonder how long these consoles have been in operation. I only became aware of their existence because my son informed me about them yesterday.

Do the Youth Centre Committee not realise that video games keep children confined in dark and airless spaces? I am particularly worried about a game called 'Cybercity 2099', which my son is crazy about. There have been reports of youngsters who suffered severe muscular strain in their shoulders and wrists after playing the game.

My son showed me videos of people playing 'Cybercity 2099' and I found the continually flickering lights very disturbing. I believe they can give people a disorder called epilepsy. Moreover, the violent content of the game is bound to encourage children to behave more and more aggressively towards each other and even commit crimes.

I hope you will end this dangerous form of so-called recreation at your centre and remove the consoles and the games before it is too late.

Yours sincerely
John Chan

South Island Youth Centre



(Updated 7 April 20__, 1.30 p.m.)

About Us

Mission

The South Island Youth Centre aims to promote social harmony and civic education by providing a safe and relaxing environment that allows young people to socialise and discover their strengths through constructive and character-building activities.

Background

Our youth centre is operated on a non-profit making basis and is managed and sponsored by the South Island Foundation. (An annual HK\$100 membership fee covers operational costs only).

Facilities

We provide a range of facilities including a movie theatre, music studio, library, multi-purpose area, computer room, hostel, tennis courts, basketball court, retail shops and offices to facilitate youth development activities. The opening hours of all facilities are from 2.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. every day. Adult supervision is always available at the Library and Computer Room during opening hours.

What's New

The South Island Youth Centre are conducting events in April 20__ under two major themes, namely 'Tech and Games' and 'Community Involvement'.

Tech and Games

Three video game consoles (each costing HK\$5,000) have recently been installed in our brightly-lit and well-ventilated Computer Room on 3/F. They have been extremely popular among members. In view of this, we will apply for funding from our sponsoring body to purchase ten more consoles to make online games available to more members.

Community Involvement

Visits to Cheshire Home for the Disabled and Cambridge Home for the Elderly were held on two consecutive weekends in April. Staff there commented favourably on the programmes that our members organised for the residents. Both events were big successes.

Rethinking the role of computer games in education

As a teacher, I believe there are several advantages for students who learn from computer games. First, computer games support learning in a non-threatening environment, as the computer is not an authority figure. Second, learning through computer games allows students to learn at their own pace. Many people think these advantages make the computer friendlier than a human teacher, but some educators disagree. They argue that relating to a machine is unhealthy, and that this prevents proper socialisation. However, they should be reminded that children who like to create 'imaginary playmates' usually do not suffer any harm from it!

Computer games should be part of the school curriculum because they represent an enjoyable recreational activity which rewards students for success, even for small gains in performance. There are plenty of recreational activities available at school that the school already supports, including reading novels in the library and playing football. In each case, the school has good reason for supporting the activity, for example, the improvement of reading skills or increasing the knowledge of literature and culture in the first case, and the provision of exercise and practice of team sports in the second. Since computer games have proven advantages, they should be promoted at school in the same way.

Schools allow games to be played in the school playground as long as they don't disturb anyone, and no one is likely to get hurt. Since similar arguments can be made for computer games, they should be supported instead of banned as they are by some schools. Video games teach players to manage many processes at the same time and to infer rules and strategies from repeated actions. Both these important skills are useful to problem solving, a key twenty-first century skill.

The Interactive Computer Game

A major reason given for why video games are fun is that they are ‘responsive’. People are often too busy to pay attention to you, but games always ‘interact’ with you. As a player, you will get feedback all the time.

When we watch a movie or read a book, we passively ‘observe’ the fantasies. When we play a computer game, we actively participate in the fantasy world created by the game.

For this reason, video games might be an ideal vehicle for learning.

Newspaper cutting from the *Hong Kong Morning Post*

Education the name of the game

Educational video games should be included in all youth centres, a Legislative Councillor suggested yesterday.

At a Council meeting to discuss licensing guidelines for youth centres, Mr Albert Chiu proposed that local youth centres be encouraged to install game consoles for their members to play online video games for educational purposes. He cited research showing how such games improved children’s memory and concentration.

Currently amusement game centres and internet or cyber cafes must be at least 100 metres away from education institutions. However, a councillor, Mrs Ora Kwo, an educator, questioned the effectiveness of this regulation. ‘My students will go to a game centre no matter how far it is from their school, so why not encourage them to play at a youth centre?’ she said.

Also attending the meeting was Dr Xenia Foster, physical therapist and expert in early childhood education, who emphasised the suitability of video games for improving children’s hand and eye co-ordination. ‘My research has demonstrated that compared with toys, video games are a more engaging tool for that purpose.’

Dr Norton's Problem Page

This week: Do computer games cause epilepsy?



Dear Readers

This week I am taking the opportunity to reply to the number of letters I have recently received asking me if video games can cause epilepsy.

Many parents are worried about reports in the press which suggest that flickering video games screens could cause epileptic seizures. Some of you have asked about what this means, and if it is likely to happen to your children.

Epilepsy is a disorder in which a person's brain activity becomes abnormal and may result in seizures. If someone has a seizure, they temporarily lose control of their body movements, and they may sometimes even lose consciousness.

Video games cannot cause epilepsy, they can only trigger an epileptic seizure in someone who already has a tendency for them. The flashing lights at discos or other sources of flickering lights could bring on an epileptic attack in people who may not know that they are prone to them.

If a person feels disturbed by flickering lights, he or she should probably avoid playing video games. However, the number of people who are likely to be affected in this way is very small. Most children should not be affected if they are encouraged to play sensibly by keeping to the recommended time limits.

Dr Tina Norton

Extract from Hong Kong Action Against Crime Committee Report

Violent Crime

Although violent crime rates are still a cause for concern, the recent downward trends should be pleasing to all residents in Hong Kong. Claims that the recent rise in popularity of violent online games is causing more violent crime have not been substantiated. Researchers agree that there is no connection between the two.

The falling crime rates can be credited to better policing of high-risk areas, such as amusement game centres and cyber cafes where teenagers gather and conflicts between them are likely. The presence of patrols has not only led to a greater detection rate by the police but also acted as a deterrent. These factors have contributed to the successful reduction in crime overall for this age group.

Another effective factor in the fight against violent crime has been our own publicity campaign which graphically informs would-be lawbreakers of the consequences of their actions. Young offenders have clearly benefited from being made aware that ill-considered, impulsive actions can have very serious repercussions. The committee is now examining ways in which to extend and develop our publicity efforts to try to tackle preventable crime in other related areas.

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Pearson