

Candidates' Performance

Paper 1 Section A

There were 40 multiple-choice questions in this paper. The average number of questions answered correctly by candidates was 25. The overall performance of the candidates was satisfactory.

In item 3, more than two thirds of candidates either chose Option A or B. Those who chose Option A may have interpreted the water level of the reservoir at the mean sea level at 0 metre, thereby using an inaccurate vertical distance between the two points of the footpath when calculating the average gradient.

Q.3 Which of the following is the average gradient of the footpath from spot height 178 (284776) to 282780?

- A. 1:3 (33%)
- *B. 1:5 (36%)
- C. 1:7 (22%)
- D. 1:9 (9%)

In Item 22, the second most popular answer was Option D. Although the percentage of the rural population in country X decreased from 60 to 50, the size of the rural population actually increased from 1.2 million to 1.25 million. Thus Option D which includes 'rural depopulation' is incorrect.

Q.22 Refer to the table below which shows the population statistics of country X in 2000 and 2010.

	2000	2010
Percentage of rural population	60	50
Percentage of urban population	40	50
Total population (million)	2.0	2.5

Which of the following processes have taken place in country X?

- (1) urbanisation
- (2) urban growth
- (3) rural depopulation

- *A. (1) and (2) only (39%)
- B. (1) and (3) only (11%)
- C. (2) and (3) only (13%)
- D. (1), (2) and (3) (37%)

In Item 26, the most popular answer was Option B. Candidates who chose Option B may have overlooked the possibility of traffic congestion caused by the container trucks along the narrow road in the rural area.

Q.26 Refer to the photograph below.



Which of the following are the possible problems brought about by the land use shown in the above photograph?

- (1) noise pollution
- (2) traffic congestion
- (3) land use conflict

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| A. (1) and (2) only | (3%) |
| B. (1) and (3) only | (42%) |
| C. (2) and (3) only | (14%) |
| *D. (1), (2) and (3) | (41%) |

In Item 31, more than half the number of candidates chose Option A, overlooking that drier climate is also a possible consequence of the agricultural activity.

Q.31 Refer to the photograph below which shows an agricultural activity in the Sahel region.



Which of the following are the possible impact brought about by the agricultural activity?

- (1) intensifying desertification
- (2) slowing down the recovery of vegetation
- (3) causing drier climate

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| A. (1) and (2) only | (60%) |
| B. (1) and (3) only | (6%) |
| C. (2) and (3) only | (2%) |
| *D. (1), (2) and (3) | (32%) |

Paper 1 Section B

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	19	Good. Most candidates were able to identify the two coastal landforms correctly. However, some candidates wrongly identified coastal landform X as a bay.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to draw the annotated diagrams correctly and clearly explain the formation of coastal landform Y. However, some candidates did not place the annotations appropriately on the diagrams but wrote all the explanations outside the diagrams.
(iii)		Fair. Although most candidates were able to state the major work of waves at sites 3 and 4 correctly, some of them were not able to use the evidence from the map extract and Table 1b in their explanations. Some candidates simply copied the information from Table 1b.
(b)		Good. Most candidates were able to use the information from the specified grid squares in the map extract to discuss the reasons for and against the development of site 2 into a holiday resort. However, some candidates did not study the map extract carefully and overlooked some important map evidence, e.g. the effect of the restricted road on accessibility in the region.
2. (a) (i)	46	Good. Most candidates were able to describe the locational advantages of iron and steel plant A. However, some answers were not based on the information provided in the question but common locational advantages of industry taken from textbooks, e.g. close to market.
(ii)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain the constraints on the development of iron and steel plant B, using the information provided.
(iii)		Fair. Many candidates did not fully understand the government policies implemented in the different development stages of the iron and steel industry in China. Some candidates wrongly applied the 'Reform and Opening-up' policy in the 1980's and the 'Go West' policy after 2000 to the 1st and 2nd 5-Year Plans.
(b) (i)		Fair. Although many candidates were able to describe the trends of the amount of imported iron ore and coal shown in Table 2d, they were not able to elaborate on the influence of technological advancement on the changing location of the iron and steel industry in China. Most candidates did not have a good knowledge of the development of the iron and steel industry in China. Only a few candidates were able to explain the locational change of the iron and steel industry in China, e.g. changing from 'raw material-oriented' to 'market-oriented'.
(ii)	Fair. Some candidates were able to explain the unchanging location of iron and steel plant B with the concept of industrial inertia. Some explanations given made reference to technological advancement only.	

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a)	69	Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to describe and explain the favorable factors for farming development in the Central Valley, using the information in Figure 3a and Table 3b. However, some candidates just copied the monthly temperatures and rainfall from Table 3b as an answer.
(b) (i)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain the climatic constraints on farming in the Central Valley. However, some candidates gave irrelevant answer such as soil fertility.
(ii)		Fair. Many candidates were able to discuss appropriately the reasons for and against the adoption of sprinkler irrigation. However, few candidates were able to describe the changes after the adoption of sprinkler irrigation. Some candidates confused the operation of sprinkler irrigation with drip irrigation or precision farming. When giving reasons against the adoption of sprinkler irrigation, most candidates were able to state its possible result in salinization, but only a few of them were able to explain the causes, such as a speeding up in evaporation and an acceleration in capillary action.
(c)		Fair. Although many candidates were able to illustrate their understanding on precision farming, some of them were only able to list the characteristics of precision farming in brief with limited explanation on how precision farming might help tackle the climatic constraints. Some candidates confused precision farming with drip irrigation. Some candidates gave answers not related to climatic constraints, such as a rise in farming cost, using chemical fertilisers to replace labour, etc.
4. (a) (i)	67	Good. Most candidates were able to describe the climatic conditions of the tropical rainforest shown in Table 4a.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Many candidates were able to explain how climatic conditions influence the characteristics of the vegetation shown in Figure 4b. However, a few candidates based their answers on knowledge from textbooks, without referring to the information provided in the question.
(b)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to describe and explain the negative impact of human interference shown in Figure 4c on the physical environment of the tropical rainforest. However, some candidates were not able to mention the changes brought about by human interference to the tropical rainforest but instead described phenomena taking place in the tropical rainforest, e.g. intensification of leaching. Some candidates gave irrelevant answer such as global warming.
(c)		Fair. Many candidates showed limited knowledge on selective logging. They were also not able to evaluate in detail the effectiveness of selective logging in conserving the tropical rainforest.

Paper 1 Section C

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5	24	<p>Fair.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, most candidates were able to describe and explain the tectonic activities in the Himalayan region. However, some candidates gave incorrect explanations such as the subduction of the oceanic plate under the continental plate. A few candidates wrongly stated that volcanic eruptions and tsunamis would occur in the Himalayan region.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, some candidates incorrectly suggested volcanic ash and lava flow as challenges, and fertile soil from lava as an opportunity for development in the Himalayan region. This is likely due to their wrong identification of volcanic eruption as a tectonic activity in the region. Some candidates stated earthquake as a hindrance to development in the region but few mentioned other factors such as cold climate and rugged relief.</p>
6	21	<p>Poor.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, many candidates simply gave a brief description of the housing problems commonly found in cities, without describing and explaining the local housing problems in Hong Kong. Some candidates showed little understanding of the causes of housing problems in Hong Kong.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, many candidates wrongly interpreted 'developing the green belts' as 'urban greening'. As a result, they gave irrelevant answers such as increasing areas of greening, roof top greening, etc. to improve the living environment.</p>
7	55	<p>Fair.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, most candidates were only able to explain how human activities increased the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, without mentioning the major source of carbon dioxide coming from the use of fossil fuels in industries, power generation and transportation. Some candidates wrongly stated that wet-rice cultivation and cattle rearing would generate large amount of carbon dioxide.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, many candidates were only able to discuss briefly how the cooperation between the MDCs and the LDCs could reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Some candidates mentioned only the measures adopted by the MDCs and the LDCs individually to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, without discussing how they could cooperate.</p>

General comments and recommendations

1. Candidates should interpret the questions with care and study the information provided in detail. They should utilise the information provided to formulate their own answers, not simply copy figures and parts of the question as their answers.
2. Candidates should master the skills of drawing annotated diagrams, especially paying attention to the correct positioning of annotations.
3. Candidates should be more familiar with the different development stages of the iron and steel industry in China.
4. Candidates should be more familiar with the current geographical issues in Hong Kong, China and the world, and not rely on textbook knowledge only. Teachers are recommended to incorporate such issues in their teaching whenever appropriate.

Candidates' Performance

Paper 2 Section D

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
1. (a) (i)	52	Excellent. A large number of the candidates were able to identify the rock type and the location of the rock.
(ii)		Good. Most candidates were able to explain the formation of the rock clearly.
(b) (i)		Good. Most candidates were able to identify landform X.
(ii)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to explain the formation of landform X. However, a small number of candidates were not able to point out how the characteristics of the rock favour the formation of landform X.
(iii)		Fair. Most candidates were only able to discuss briefly the effectiveness of tree-planting in slowing down the formation of landform X. A more thorough understanding of the functions of tree-planting would result in a better performance for this question.
2. (a) (i)	20	Excellent. A large number of the candidates were able to identify the season shown in Figure 2a correctly.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates were able to describe briefly the pressure pattern but they were not able to name the continents and oceans accurately. Full marks would have been awarded for a specific description.
(iii)		Fair. Most candidates were able to explain at least one controlling factor of the pressure pattern, although it is recommended they have a thorough understanding of the multiple factors controlling air pressure pattern.
(iv)		Satisfactory. Most candidates were able to explain the pressure gradient force but some of them confused monsoon wind system with planetary wind system.
(b)		Poor. Many candidates were not able to identify and explain the weather conditions in Hong Kong before the arrival of the typhoon. Some of them wrongly stated that Hong Kong was under the influence of the front vortex of the typhoon.

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
3. (a) (i)	10	Fair. Most candidates were able to describe at least one characteristics of air transport but a better knowledge of the characteristics of this transport mode is required.
(ii)		Poor. Only few candidates were able to deduce the factors favouring the Hong Kong International Airport as a regional aviation hub from the information in Figure 3a.
(b) (i)		Fair. Most candidates simply described the development trend of passenger and cargo traffic without any explanation. Candidates should read the question more carefully.
(ii)		Poor. Candidates were only able to suggest the challenges facing the Hong Kong International Airport from the competition with neighbouring airports. A more thorough understanding of the characteristics and constraints of air transport is required.
(iii)		Poor. Candidates need a thorough understanding of the concept of air traffic management to be able to properly discuss the suggestion presented.
4. (a) (i)	17	Good. Most candidates were able to describe the trend of the industrial development correctly.
(ii)		Fair. Most candidates were able to account for the challenges encountered by industries in the 2010s. However, quite a number of candidates explained the challenges in the early 1990s instead.
(b) (i)		Fair. Candidates should suggest the measures entrepreneurs might take to tackle the challenges in the 2010s. Candidates should make good use of the information provided in Table 4b rather than common knowledge from textbooks.
(ii)		Poor. Candidates had little knowledge of how the policy of "Emptying the Cage for New Birds" caused the changes in industrial patterns. A discussion on social impact was irrelevant to this question.

Paper 2 Section E

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
5	16	<p>Fair.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, most candidates were able to explain the formation of metamorphic rocks briefly. However, candidates should explain how sedimentary rocks changed into metamorphic rocks in terms of the rock cycle, elaborating on the concepts of 'foliated metamorphic rock' and 'non-foliated metamorphic rock'. They should also provide correct examples to illustrate each concept.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, candidates should point out the nature of different types of sedimentary rocks in terms of their structure, mineral composition and resistance to weathering and erosion. They should then relate the formation of specific landscapes with reference to the nature of the rocks, and illustrate with examples in Hong Kong. Candidates with better performance were able to state that though sedimentary rocks occupied only around 15% of the total area of Hong Kong, they still formed distinctive landscapes.</p>
6	38	<p>Fair.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, candidates with higher abilities were able to state the impact of drought on HEP generation and navigation, which in turn hindered the industrial production and transportation of goods and agricultural produces. However, most candidates were only able to discuss briefly how drought would affect agriculture and industries in North China. They should also discuss the impact of drought on agriculture in terms of the length of growing season, productivity and quality of farm produces. Candidates should have a thorough understanding of the importance of water as a raw material, as well as for cooling and cleaning purposes in industries.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, candidates showed a limited knowledge on the concept of water resource management. They should evaluate the effectiveness of water resource management regarding the appropriate allocation of water resource in terms of time (e.g. building reservoir), spatial distribution ('South-to-north Water Transfer' project), water-saving and recycling of water. They should evaluate how these measures could reduce the impact of drought on farming and industrial production.</p>

Question Number	Popularity %	Performance in General
7	14	<p>Poor.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, candidates should explain how the transport problems were induced by the urban land use distribution in Hong Kong rather than simply described these problems. For instance, when explaining how traffic bottleneck occurs at the entrances of the cross-harbour tunnel, candidates should relate it to the commuting pattern generated by the distribution of residential land use and commercial or industrial land use in Hong Kong.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, candidates showed very little knowledge of electronic road pricing. Many candidates mixed up electronic road pricing with Autotoll of the tunnels and were not able to evaluate the effectiveness of the system correctly.</p>
8	32	<p>Fair.</p> <p>In the first part of the question, candidates should discuss both the positive and negative impact on agricultural production brought about by land use conflict and labour shortage in the Zhujiang Delta Region in the last decade. They should provide in-depth explanations with examples for higher marks. Furthermore, they should apply geographical concepts, such as the impact on types of crops, types and intensity of farming production, size of farms and mechanisation of production in the discussion.</p> <p>In the second part of the question, some candidates misinterpreted the use of greenhouse as a solution to land use conflict. Candidates should explain how 'hydroponic' and 'greenhouse farming' could raise unit area production with less labour input for higher marks. They should not include the misuse of modern farming technology and the resulting environmental problems in the answer which were irrelevant to this question.</p>

General comments and recommendations

- Candidates should interpret the data and information provided in the questions carefully. They should also apply geographical knowledge and concepts to specific situations or cases in the questions.
- Candidates should organise their ideas systematically and logically. Neat and clear handwriting is also important to facilitate marking.
- Candidates should provide relevant examples to demonstrate the understanding of the concepts and spatial location of the cases. They should refer to websites of government departments for updated information. Teachers are recommended to make good use of such information in their teaching.
- In the short essay questions, candidates should put forward concrete arguments and state their stands clearly and logically. They should avoid giving vague and ambiguous descriptions, arguments and conclusions.
- Candidates should have a solid foundation in 'Transport' and 'Regional Study of Zhujiang Delta'. In addition, they should study and analyse current issues thoroughly.
- Candidates should study the questions, especially those from 'Regional Study of Zhujiang Delta', carefully to avoid giving wrong answers because they may have overlooked key words.