

**2019-DSE-ME
ENG LANG**

**PAPER 1
PART B2**

Candidate Number						
Candidate Name						

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B2
DIFFICULT SECTION

**HKDSE MOCK EXAM (2019)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1
PART B2
Reading Passages**

1 hour 30 minutes
(for both Parts A and B)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Refer to the General Instructions on Page 1 of the Reading Passages booklet for Part A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART B2

- (1) The Question-Answer Book for Part B2 is inserted in this Reading Passages booklet.
- (2) Candidates who choose Part B2 should attempt all questions in this part. Each question carries ONE mark unless otherwise stated.
- (3) Hand in only ONE Question-Answer Book for Part B, either B1 or B2, and fasten it with the Question-Answer Book for Part A using the green tag provided.

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

Part B2

Read Text 4 and answer questions 48–71 in the Question-Answer Book for Part B2.

Text 4

- 1 [1] There are surprisingly many ways for the power of speech to fail. There are disorders such as stuttering or apraxia, in which syllables are scrambled; motor neurone disease and cerebral palsy, which rob people of the muscle control required to articulate; traumatic brain injury; stroke; anatomical excisions; multiple sclerosis; autism. In the US, more than 2 million people require digital “adaptive alternative communication” (AAC)
- 5 methods to help compensate for speech deficits. A 2008 study by the disability charity Scope estimated that 1% of people in Britain use or need AAC.
- [2] Modern adaptive alternative communication often involves the type of device made famous by Stephen Hawking—a small computer or tablet that plays aloud words typed into it. The 2014 biopic of Hawking’s life, *The Theory of Everything*, contains a stark reminder of the loss that this technology tries to amend. When Hawking
- 10 and his first wife, Jane, first hear what will be Hawking’s new voice, they are stunned. After a moment of speechlessness, Jane offers a timid objection: “It’s American.” The moment is played for laughs, but it marks a trauma. Our voices are coded with information by which others know us—age, gender, nationality, hometown, personality, mood—but they are also coded with the information by which we know ourselves. When your voice is no longer English, what part of your Englishness do you lose?
- 15 [3] The “Stephen Hawking voice” doesn’t belong only to Hawking. In the years since it was created, the same voice has also been used by little girls, old men, and people of every racial and ethnic background. This is one of the stranger features of the world of people who rely on AAC: millions of them share a limited number of voices. While there is more variety now than before, only a few dozen options are widely available, and most of them are adult and male.
- 20 [4] “Walk into a classroom of children with voice disorders and you’ll hear the exact same voice all around you,” said speech pathologist Rupal Patel, founder of VocaliD, a company outside Boston. Ten years ago, she was at a speech disorders conference when she came upon a little girl and a man in his mid-50s who were using their devices to have a conversation. They were speaking in the same adult, male voice. Patel was horrified. “This is just continuing to dehumanise people who already don’t have a voice to talk.”
- 25 [5] This is the problem Patel has set out to solve. In 2007, she began researching technology that would allow her to make customised digital voices that sounded more like the humans they would represent. By 2014, the technology was sufficiently developed for Patel and her team to set up what they claim is the world’s first “voice bank”, an online platform where anyone with an internet connection can “donate” their voice by recording themselves reading aloud on to the VocaliD Voicebank, which is programmed with stories crafted to capture all
- 30 the phonemes in the English language.
- [6] Each donation is catalogued in a library of voices that VocaliD can then use when crafting a new voice for a client. The company offers clients “BeSpoke” voices—custom-made voices that combine the sound of a client’s own voice with the vocabulary supplied by a donor. This way, a teenager could use his brother’s donated voice, or a perfect stranger’s from the Voicebank, whichever is the closest approximation to their imagined vocal quality.
- 35 [7] Donating your voice—unlike, say, a kidney—usually takes a few days, and you’re awake for all of it. There’s no screening process and no equipment involved except a laptop and an internet connection. One lazy day last winter, I decided to donate my voice from bed, which is how I found myself pitched forward with my laptop, mouth to the built-in microphone, insisting: “That tiramisu is to die for! That tiramisu is to die for!”
- [8] Shortly after making my donation, I visited Rupal Patel at VocaliD’s offices. Patel is slight and energetic, with
- 40 bright eyes, a pert, chin-length bob, and brilliant enunciation. She is ardent about how miraculous a personalised voice can be for someone who has been unvoiced. When disabled people have communication impairments, she explained, it increases the likelihood that they’ll be removed from the workforce, isolated socially, mistakenly identified as cognitively impaired, or rendered invisible.

[9] Preprogrammed voices are often inappropriate to their user's age, or frustratingly robotic. Patel told me about
45 one of her clients, a teenager named Sara Young, for whom they were building a new voice. At the time, Sara was
using the same voice ("Heather") as her mother's GPS and some bank ATMs. Like lots of her peers, Sara often
played around with the different preprogrammed voices in her device—trying on different options for a day or
two, or speaking in an adult male voice to give herself a laugh—but still she was frustrated. When I visited the
50 office, Patel and Geoff Meltzner, VocaliD's Vice President of Research and Technology, were putting the
finishing touches on Sara's BeSpoke voice, which they were constructing using a few "ahhh" sounds that Sara had
recorded, and a donated voice.

[10] Sara got her new voice just before Christmas, in the VocaliD offices. Patel and Meltzner shifted nervously on
their feet as they stood before Sara and her mother, making small talk and cueing up the two voices Meltzner had
designed for her to choose between. He played the first, using a sentence he had pre-programmed: "HI, MY
55 NAME IS SARA. I'M 16 YEARS OLD, AND I'M AWESOME."

[11] It sounded tinny and halting, like "Heather's" younger sister, but with a trace of something idiosyncratic and
human at the base of the sound. The second voice sounded clearer, more bell-like. It seemed older than the first in
its assurance, but younger in its vitality.

[12] "OK, which do you like?" Patel asked Sara. After a long pause, Sara asked for the second. "Oh, phew!" Patel
60 laughed. "That was our favourite, too. What do you like about number two?"

[13] After a long pause, Sara said: "IT'S SPUNKY."

[14] They downloaded it on to her device. Patel pointed out to me later that the moment when a person's new
voice is turned on can be anti-climactic, because they're not quite sure how to respond to it. The really interesting
stuff, she says, comes in the days and weeks after, when the client notices how they're treated differently, or in
65 watching how they psychologically internalise the experience of having a voice that sounds like them.

[15] When Sara's voice had finished its transfer and was finally in her control, the team gathered to hear what her
first words in the new voice would be.

[16] "THANK—THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR WORK," she said. "I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT."

[17] Patel laughed. "Thank you for giving us this chance!" The adults stood around aimlessly for a second,
70 looking at Sara. "Do you want to say anything else?"

[18] She thought for a moment, and then stared fixedly at her screen. "YO."

END OF READING PASSAGES

Sources of the materials used in this paper will be acknowledged in the Mock Exam Report released by Oxford University Press
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