Name: **Register Number:** **Class:**

南僑中學

NAN CHIAU HIGH SCHOOL

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2023
SECONDARY FOUR EXPRESS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **1184/02**

Paper 2 Comprehension **16 August 2022, Wednesday**
INSERT

1 hour 50 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Setters: Mr Fu Kaidi and Mrs Tan Jie Ying

This paper consists of **6** printed pages including the cover page.

Downloaded from SingaKids.com

Section A

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

Text 1 is adapted from the website of The Chandler Institute of Governance.



The Chandler Institute of Governance is a non-profit organisation devoted to building government capacity and good leadership through training programmes, research initiatives and advisory work.

Text 2 is taken from a social media post.

Do you know that Singapore has come out tops on the annual Chandler Good Government Index, edging out Finland, which has topped the index since it was first published in 2021?

I read that the Chandler Institute of Governance uses more than 50 publicly available data sources to rank over a hundred countries for this index. How they do it is super amazing and you should really check it out too!

Downloaded from SingaKids.com

Section B

Text 3

The text below is the account of a long-distance runner at her first marathon when she was just thirteen years old.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5–14 in the Question Paper.

1 It was a strange feeling for her. In typical races, the tension doesn't cease after the starting gun goes off. Your legs fire off the line. You can't relax, your muscles burn. You begin to breathe hard. You can't speak or smile or wave.

2 Maureen was doing all three in the first miles. She'd never felt so wistful and at ease during a competition before. Even though this was Maureen's first marathon, she felt like she could run forever. She was happy to be away from the starting line. A thirteen-year-old girl did stand out after all among the twenty-eight or so grown men. And she was finally doing what she loved to do. She was running, albeit running really, really slowly. For her, that is.

3 In practice, Coach could tell her to run 400 metres in seventy-five seconds. She usually missed that time by less than a second. She knew that with the smallest adjustment in how hard her foot struck the ground or how quickly breath was sucked into her lungs and blown out of her nose, she could change her pace.

Mile four: seven minutes and thirty seconds.
Mile five: seven minutes and thirty seconds.

4 She needed to hit this pace perfectly at each mile marker, like a metronome. The nervousness from the start line had completely melted away as to Maureen, this felt less like a race and more like everything she had come to love about running – the repetitive bounce of moving forward, the whispering caress of the wind, and a mind free to roam as she leapt onward.

Seven minutes and thirty seconds.
Seven minutes and thirty seconds.

5 The pressure peeled away like an onion. Maureen had not worn a watch as she could feel herself locked in on the pace. It had not crossed her mind that she could be off; course marshals, teammates and parents frequently yelled out the time. She had not slowed down since mile twenty, and she was very certain of that. Around mile twenty-five, running north on Keele Street, up a little hill, Maureen saw her mom. Margaret checked her watch again then looked up furtively.

"You're too slow, you are not going to make it!" Margaret yelled as Maureen hustled by.

The news hit Maureen like a slap. She turned her head, midstride. "What do you mean I am too slow?" she yelled, already too far away to hear a response. She didn't understand. She thought she'd hit each and every mile at the right pace.

6 The twenty-fifth mile of a marathon is a disorienting place. Your vision strays as you try to get the sweat out of your eyes and a little voice gets louder and louder. Ease off. Slow down. Take a breather. Why bother when you can't beat the time you wanted anyway?

Downloaded from SingaKids.com

7 Unless you're fiercely competitive. Then you ignore the voice and try anyway.

8 Maureen changed gears. She accelerated like you would in a sports car on an empty freeway. If she wasn't going to break a world's best time, she could at least prove she was capable of finishing a marathon. She took a left on Steeles Avenue. She could see the little white poster on the wood stake that read 'Marathon Finish'. She zeroed in on it single-mindedly. Her hair whipped higher as her elbows punched the air by her neck. She sprinted. Her brother Gord, who had been standing on the side of the road with a quarter mile to go, jumped in beside her, keeping by her side, stride for stride, willing her forward. As she bolted to the finish line, Maureen knew only one thing: there was a finish line a few feet away, and she was going to burst across it using every ounce of gas left in the tank.

Adapted from 'Mighty Moet' by Rachel Swaby and Kit Fox

Downloaded from SingaKids.com

Section C

Text 4

The article below talks about the domestication of cats in ancient Egypt. Read it carefully and answer Questions 15-24 in the Question Paper.

1 The ancient Egyptians' special love for cats is well known. Admired for her hunting abilities, the sleek feline achieved divine status, becoming a fixture of ancient Egyptian society. Lavish tomb paintings, lofty statues, and intricate jewellery all show the Egyptians' great fondness for cats. In the land of the Pharaohs, the cats were pampered, respected, and protected. While ritual killings of the sacred felines were allowed, unsanctioned murder would be harshly punished, with the culprit sentenced to death.

2 For centuries, cats in ancient Egypt maintained their exalted position, recorded by ancient sources in minute detail. Regime changes did not diminish the feline's position. People in Ptolemaic[1] and Roman[2] Egypt continued to revere the cat. Only with the arrival of Christianity did the cat lose her preeminent position.

3 Ancient Egyptian life depended on the flooding of the Nile River, which provided the arable land and, thus, food surpluses necessary for the kingdom's growth. However, the large granaries and silos, which stored precious food stock, were constantly threatened by small but persistent enemies — mice, rats, and other pests. It was here that the cat entered the Egyptian stage, becoming an inseparable part of its history.

4 The cat probably arrived in Egypt on board ancient trading ships around 2,000 BCE. Although, according to another theory, cats in ancient Egypt were an offshoot of the native African wildcat (*Felis silvestris lybica*), "domesticated" by local farmers. These first cats slunk into Egyptian farming villages, attracted by the numerous rodents. Recognising their worth, the Egyptians began to treat the newcomers well, leaving them food remains to encourage them to stay. Slowly, the cat became accustomed to humans. Yet, the crafty feline was never to be fully tamed, unlike the other important domestic animal — the dog. Instead, cats in ancient Egypt domesticated themselves, deciding whether to jump into humans' laps.

5 Cats kept the vital crops safe from rodents, becoming an object of admiration. However, the cats did not only chow down on mice and rats; they also killed snakes (many of them venomous) and scorpions, keeping the people safe. The ancient Egyptians also admired the cat's other qualities, like the mother's care for their offspring and their graceful posture. Thus, it is not surprising that the cat's status only continued to rise as the centuries progressed, with the sleek feline turning into a divine creature.

6 Egyptians considered cats as vessels the gods chose to adopt. Cats were respected for being fierce hunters and protectors of their homes and young, qualities the cat shared with its larger cousin, the lion. Consequently, one of the first Egyptian feline deities, Sekhmet – the warrior goddess and protector of the pharaohs – sported the head of a lioness.

7 Another important member of the Egyptian pantheon of gods, Bastet – who sported a cat's head – was revered as the goddess of motherhood, fertility, and the household. Just like how the mother cat keeps her kittens safe, Bastet was

[1] the years 305 BCE (**B**efore **C**ommon **E**ra) to 30 BCE
[2] the years 30 BCE to 641 CE (**C**ommon **E**ra)

Downloaded from SingaKids.com

considered a family protector. Ancient Egyptians would wear cat amulets to invoke Bastet's protection and blessing.

8 However, the arrival of Christianity and its establishment as the main religion across the whole Roman Empire in the fourth century CE brought the ancient tradition of feline worship to an end. Deprived of their lofty status, cats in ancient Egypt were once again humble domestic animals — protecting humans from various pests.

9 In the following centuries, the sleek and crafty felines gradually conquered the entire world, reaching even the barren shores of Antarctica. Then, they left Earth's orbit, venturing into space. With the arrival of modern technologies and high-speed communication, cats have taken control of the internet, becoming the protagonists of countless memes, Instagram photos, and YouTube videos. Perhaps cats in ancient Egypt have lost their sacred status, but their modern cousins' achievements is something that they should definitely be proud of.

Adapted from 'Cats in Ancient Egypt: The Wild Companions Who Became Gods' by Vedran Bileta

Downloaded from SingaKids.com