



# Communications 12

Examination Booklet  
August 2006  
**Form A**

**DO NOT OPEN ANY EXAMINATION MATERIALS UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.**  
**FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS REFER TO THE RESPONSE BOOKLET.**



## PART A: LITERARY TEXT

Value: 12 marks

Suggested Time: 20 minutes

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the following selection and answer the multiple-choice questions. For each question, select the **best** answer and record your choice on the **Answer Sheet** provided.

The narrator looks back on his family's experience during an earthquake on Vancouver Island in 1946, which caused the brick chimney at the family home to collapse.

### Earthquake

by Jack Hodgins

(adapted)



- 1 Now what does it feel like to be an eight-year-old boy on a Sunday morning in June with the world deciding to throw itself into convulsions and scare everyone half to death? Why, how had I got to such an age, I'd like to know, still believing that the earth would stay steady beneath your feet forever, fathers stay capable of heroic rescues forever, mothers stay calm in every sort of emergency forever, and houses you lived in stay solid and still and safe and true till the end of time?
- 2 Let me tell you this: When I was two my mother came up into the attic bedroom to tuck me in every night carrying a coal-oil lamp. One night when she had kissed me she turned to go down the stairs but tripped and fell, and fell down the length of the stairs to the landing. I ran to the head of the stairs and looked: there she was in a heap, surrounded by flames, with fire already starting up the trail of spilled oil towards me.
- 3 In no time at all, my father had beat those flames out with a blanket and helped my mother away. I didn't have even the time to think he might not. Let me also tell this. When I was in my first year of school my father did not come home one day from work in the logging camp at the time he was supposed to. He did not come home that night at all: He came home the next morning from the hospital with his head wrapped up in great white bandages, nothing of him showing but two eyes, two nostrils and a gaping mouth. He laughed. A falling limb had nearly taken off one ear, and had severely cut his nose. But he laughed. I could take him to school tomorrow for show-and-tell, he said, and tell that teacher and all those other kids I'd dug him up in the yard where he'd been buried by the Egyptians five or six thousand years before. He would lie stiff, he said, until everyone was through poking at him and smelling him and making notes for an assignment on the pleasures of archeology, and then he would let out a long groan and sit up and scare the teacher into immediate retirement. "This isn't funny," my mother said. "You might have been killed." But of course my father could laugh in the teeth of anything that would try to kill him in the world. The earth beneath our feet stayed firm.  

\* \* \*
- 4 Then this. What do you make of it? The chimney bricks stopped falling. The house settled. Not a sound could be heard. It was as if the earth, worn out from its convulsion, had taken in a deep breath and held it, while it gathered up its strength to buck and heave some more and go into another fit. Still we didn't move—my father down on one knee with his spilled milk bucket not far

away in the grass, my mother holding my crying sister in her arms, my brother no longer giggling but looking as though he just might get scared at last. We held our positions as if we waited for someone's permission to move. Something foul-smelling had been released into the air. The light was wrong. Far off, if you listened hard, a rumbling could be heard going away beyond the trees.

- 5 Inside, one final piece of china crashed to the kitchen floor. This was a signal. Now, could you heave a sigh and laugh to show that it was all right? Nobody laughed. My brother, like the baby, started to cry. My father stood up and whipped off his cap to slap the dirt from his knees. He picked up the pail, and stood looking into it. Was he wondering where the milk had gone? It was splashed out all around him and already drying on the leaves of grass and on the gravel along the lane. My mother made a tentative move down onto the top step, and staggered a little. "What was that?" she said. "What was that? I thought for a moment the war might have started up again, an invasion or something."
- 6 "Quake," said my dad. He took a step towards my mother, found that he could keep his balance after all, and sort of threw himself into a lope in our direction.
- 7 My father took the baby in one of his arms to hush her, and used his other arm to hold my mother against him. "You okay?" he said to me. I nodded. He didn't smile. Not yet. He would make a joke of it later but for the time being he solemnly held my gaze with his to acknowledge what we both now knew what he must have known already himself but had kept secret from me too long. What was this thing we shared? That the world could no longer be trusted to stay steady beneath our feet? Perhaps, and that a father and son in such a world must expect to view each other across a space of falling debris.
- 8 Fifteen minutes later my uncle Neddie was upon us in his pickup truck, to see how much damage had been done. By this time we had already heard on the battery radio that we'd been at the very centre of this quake, and that it had measured 7.3 on the Richter scale—the worst to hit the island since 1918. Uncle Ned was white, and shaky. "My lord, I thought I'd caused it," he said. He wasn't laughing either. He looked as if he could still be convinced he'd been the one to blame.
- 9 "That sounds pretty normal," my father said. "I thought I'd caused it myself. I was just coming across from the barn and thinking how maybe we shouldn't've moved into this old house before I'd finished the renovations. Not with little kids—y'know?"
- 10 "I was making bread," my mother said. "You know how they make fun of the way I punch down the dough like I'm mad. This time I thought well *now* I've gone and done it, this dough's begun to fight back."
- 11 None of this was comfort to Uncle Ned, who was holding his hands together, then putting them into his pockets, then clenching them into fists that he pressed to his sides. "I mean I thought I'd *really* started it!" he said. "I pulled the switch on my electric fence and away she started to rip! I nearly peed my pants." So Uncle Ned told us what it was like: how he pulled the switch, and the earth heaved up, and the cows fell, and chickens exploded out of their pen, and the fence posts shook themselves free of the ground. Naturally we laughed. Naturally he had to laugh himself.
- 12 Then he said, "I guess I had to come over and find out how far my damage had spread. What's the matter with us that we can't believe things happen just because?"
- 13 My father looked at me for a moment before he said anything to that. "I dunno, Ned. Maybe we'd really *rather* be the cause of these things ourselves. On the other hand, maybe we're right. Who's to say it isn't a person's thoughts that do the damage?"

- 14 Uncle Ned shook his head. Of course he wasn't satisfied. He wouldn't be satisfied until he'd made some sense of this. He bent to pick up a brick from the front step, and then another, and stacked them up on the floor of the verandah. "I know this, I'll tell you for sure. I'm gonna dismantle that fence. Barbed wire is good enough for any cow. I know this too: I ain't never gonna flick a light switch on the wall of my house without flinchin' a bit while I do it. Just in case. How's a fellow s'posed to know what to trust?"
- 15 My mother took the baby back inside. The rest of us started collecting the bricks, and stacking them on the verandah, and kept on picking up bricks until my uncle Tobias' truck came roaring in through the gate and down the driveway. We stood up to watch him approach. Uncle Toby was out of that truck before it had even come to its usual stop against the walnut tree, and was running across the yard towards us holding his baseball cap on his head with one of his hands. "You feel that?" he shouted. "You feel that here?" I guess he was too excited to notice our stack of bricks.
- 16 "Feel what?" my father said. "What do you mean? We didn't feel anything here." He put one hand on my shoulder. "You see anything here that's *changed*?"

You have **Examination Booklet Form A**. In the box above #1 on your **Answer Sheet**, fill in the bubble as follows.

Exam Booklet Form/ Cahier d'examen	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
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- What purpose is served by the author's use of questions in paragraph 1?
  - to amuse the reader
  - to create a sense of mystery
  - to capture the reader's interest
  - to raise doubts about historical facts
  
- In paragraphs 1 to 3, which statement best describes the narrator's childhood view of the world?
  - The world is a reliable place.
  - Parents often lack a sense of humour.
  - The world can be dangerous and unforgiving.
  - Parents are often likely to surprise their children.
  
- Which literary device is used in "It was as if the earth, worn out from its convulsion, had taken in a deep breath and held it" (paragraph 4)?
  - simile
  - symbolism
  - understatement
  - personification

4. What did Uncle Ned, the father, and the mother believe after the earthquake?
- A. They had caused the disturbance.
  - B. They had neglected to care for others.
  - C. They were being punished for their mistakes.
  - D. They had forgotten to respect the power of nature.
5. At what point does the boy realize everything is all right?
- A. when Uncle Ned arrives
  - B. when the baby stops crying
  - C. when everyone begins to laugh
  - D. when everyone is out of the house
6. How does the boy view his father?
- A. naive
  - B. heroic
  - C. serious
  - D. careless
7. What is the **main** conflict in the story?
- A. character vs. nature
  - B. character vs. society
  - C. character vs. character
  - D. character vs. supernatural
8. What is the point of view in the story?
- A. objective
  - B. omniscient
  - C. first person
  - D. limited omniscient

## PART B: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Value: 12 marks

Suggested Time: 15 minutes

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the following selection and answer the multiple-choice questions. For each question, select the **best** answer and record your choice on the **Answer Sheet** provided.

**Have you ever had an electronic device that irritated you?  
Read the article to learn one person’s solution to this problem.**

### Gizmo geeks on trial

by Joseph Brean

(adapted)



- 1 It is a fundamental misstep of our techno-culture that my cellphone claims to know my “biorhythm<sup>1</sup>” and yet has an alarm clock that is impossible to program.
- 2 This is no joke. On the screen, under the “special” menu (where else?), clicking on the biorhythm option delivers up a bar graph, five numbers and three letters. Today, I have an overall score of 37 890, the letters PEI, and no idea what it all means.
- 3 On any other device, this utterly useless feature might be tolerable, if a bit flaky. On this shiny gray wafer of a telephone, though, the very fact that the “biorhythm” meter seems to function properly makes me resent it. Why? Because the alarm clock—a function I have use for—cannot be programmed to go off at the time of my choosing, since it will only let me adjust the hour, not the minutes.
- 4 Kim Vicente, a University of Toronto engineer, sees my phone, with its incomprehensible and useless functions, as more than a mere annoyance. Rather, he believes it is a symptom of a vast epidemic of poorly designed technology that is costing billions of dollars and millions of lives.
- 5 Cooped up in high-tech design labs, surrounded by the latest in computing gadgets and soft drink machines, the men and women who design the world’s most important devices—from medical equipment, airplane cockpits and nuclear plant control rooms to more mundane gizmos like cellphones and VCRs—give little thought to the people who will use their creations, Vicente says.
- 6 As long as the technology is sound, their teachers tell them, users will find a way to muddle through. What other choice do we have?
- 7 In the case of my phone, the wizards who cooked up the biorhythm readings did not realize I would far prefer a working alarm. In the book, *The Human Factor*, Vicente shows how a similar design flaw helped bring about the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.
- 8 Chernobyl’s safety alarms and pressure gauges functioned perfectly until the end, giving staff endless data (numbers, letters, etc.) about the coming disaster, but very little useful information about what they could do. The control room was so poorly designed, Vicente says, that the technicians who watched the dials run out of control were bewildered.

<sup>1</sup> biorhythm: *body rhythms (e.g., daily cycle of sleeping and waking)*

(continued on next page)

- 9 To fix technology, Vicente says we first have to get rid of the outdated concept of “human error.” The expression usually means that the human using the technology accidentally did something the technology was not intended to do, such as crash the plane. But if the same human errors keep happening in the same way with the same technology, which human is really at fault, the user or the designer?
- 10 Vicente’s book spends a great deal of time describing design flaws as evidence of the need for a change in how designers of technology are taught.
- 11 For example, a certain type of airplane was involved in several near-crashes because two levers in the cockpit felt the same to pilots, who repeatedly confused them while their eyes were on the sky. One can never change the human tendency to make simple mistakes, the book argues, but changing the shape of the knobs eliminated these near-accidents completely.
- 12 There is hope for progress. Consider the Fender Stratocaster, the Corvette of electric guitars. When Leo Fender designed it in the 1950s, he undertook an extensive consultation process, asking guitarists what they liked and disliked about their instruments—learning, for instance, that the square edges on most guitars irritated the ribcage. Then, he stayed in contact after he sold his early models so he could improve later ones.
- 13 The result was a guitar that was so comfortable and user-friendly that it led to an artistic revolution, influencing rock from Buddy Holly to Jimi Hendrix, and culminating in Eric Clapton’s blistering solo on *Layla*, played on a 1956 Strat he called “Brownie.”
- 14 Still, most design engineers are not Leo Fender and most companies are unlikely to start a similar consultation process before launching a new generation of cellphones. Instead, engineers must become more sensitive to human nature.
- 15 This, says Vicente, will require nothing short of a “conceptual revolution,” similar to the Copernican revolution, in which scientists realized the Earth is not the centre of the universe. “We need to change engineering education so that people get exposed to these sorts of human and social issues as a part of engineering,” he says.

9. For what purpose does the writer describe his cellphone at the beginning of the article?
- to show how advanced technology has become
  - to warn consumers about the flaws in cellphones
  - to demonstrate his expertise on the subject of the article
  - to give a specific example to introduce the main idea of the article
10. Which kind of language is found in “the wizards who cooked up the biorhythm readings” (paragraph 7)?
- literal
  - formal
  - sarcastic
  - exaggerated



11. According to the article, what was needed to prevent the Chernobyl nuclear disaster (paragraphs 7-8)?
- A. better trained staff
  - B. more accurate dials
  - C. earlier warning signs
  - D. information on action to be taken
12. According to the article, what is the correct answer to the question, “which human is really at fault...” (paragraph 9)?
- A. The user is at fault.
  - B. The designer is at fault.
  - C. No one is at fault for an accident.
  - D. The user and the designer are equally at fault.
13. Which of the following seems ironic to the writer about the near-crashes referred to in paragraph 11?
- A. that human mistakes appear to be unavoidable
  - B. that pilots could be inattentive while flying planes
  - C. that a simple change can prevent a serious accident
  - D. that pilots kept repeating their mistake of using the wrong lever
14. According to the article, in what way was Leo Fender’s approach superior to that of other designers?
- A. He specialized in musical instruments.
  - B. He consulted consumers before and after sales.
  - C. He created designs for rich and famous people.
  - D. He had more hope for progress than the other designers.
15. Whose behaviour would Vicente, author of *The Human Factor*, most wish to change?
- A. the behaviour of airplane pilots
  - B. the behaviour of cellphone users
  - C. the behaviour of design engineers
  - D. the behaviour of nuclear scientists

Use the following advertisement to answer question 16.


**NEW!** oPal eLive '06  
Computer Software

AWARD-WINNING DESIGN  
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Create your own music

Make your own DVDs

Edit your photographs



EASIER to use than previous versions  
BUY NOW for the LOWEST PRICE ever!

16. Apply what you have learned from the article to the advertisement above. Which claim about the oPal software would Vicente consider to be the **most** important?
- A. It has won an award.
  - B. It has been made easier to use.
  - C. It is technologically advanced.
  - D. It is offered at the lowest price.

You have **Examination Booklet Form A**. In the box above #1 on your **Answer Sheet**, ensure you filled in the bubble as follows.

Exam Booklet Form/ Cahier d'examen	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
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**PART B: INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

**WRITTEN RESPONSE**

**Value: 12 marks**

**Suggested Time: 15 minutes**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In paragraph form and in approximately **125 words**, answer question 1 in the **Response Booklet**. Write in **ink**. Use the **Organization and Planning** page to plan your work. The mark for your answer will be based on the appropriateness of the examples you use as well as the adequacy of your explanation and the quality of your written expression.

1. Refer to the article **Gizmo geeks on trial** on pages 5 and 6.

According to Vicente, what changes need to be made by designers, and why?  
Support your answer with references to the article.

WRITING ON  
THIS PAGE  
WILL NOT  
BE MARKED.

**PART C: COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS**  
**VISUAL DESIGN**

**Value: 12 marks**

**Suggested Time: 20 minutes**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer question 2 in the **Response Booklet**. Use the **Organization and Planning** page to plan your work.

Read the situation below and create an appropriate visual design (complete with title). Use a variety of text, visuals, and graphics to support the message.

You may use some of the following symbols in your visual design.

- underline words to indicate *italics*
- (circle) words to indicate **bold**
- |                         |
|-------------------------|
| <i>describe graphic</i> |
|-------------------------|

 use a box to indicate the look and placement of a graphic

**2. Scenario:**

You are **MacKenzie Jones**, a grade 12 student at Eaglestream Secondary School. The local newspaper is reporting a proposal to build a new arena in your community.

**Task:**

**Read the information below. Create an effective advertisement to appear in your local newspaper, informing your community about the public meeting to be held regarding the arena proposal. Your advertisement should include information on the issues involved, and should encourage people to attend.**

**Information:**

*You and your high school friends Gregg and Marlo are discussing today's newspaper headline.*

MacKenzie: "What do you think of the plan for the new arena? There's a public meeting to discuss it on May 3."

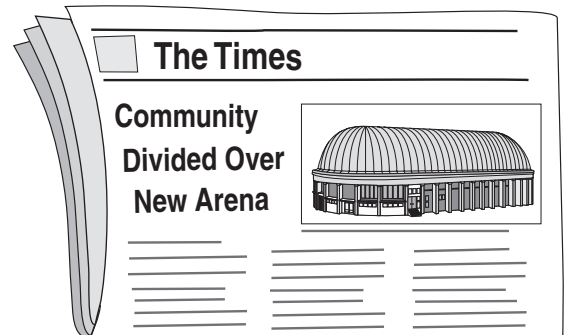
Gregg: "I think we really need it. My hockey team is begging for ice time right now."

MacKenzie: "Yeah, not to mention my figure skating club."

Marlo: "But do you realize what the costs will be? How can our little community afford it?"

MacKenzie: "If you look at the long term, it'll start paying for itself in about ten years."

Gregg: "Right, and meanwhile there's such a thing as a loan."



Marlo: “I don’t know. It seems a little over the top. Plenty of people don’t play ice sports or even go out to watch.”

Gregg: “Don’t forget that the arena could also be used for other kinds of events like concerts, or how about grad?”

Marlo: “But think of the traffic problems it would create.”

MacKenzie: “Okay, but think of the construction jobs. And once it’s built, *we* might even get a job there.”

Gregg: “Well, whether we agree with the arena proposal or not, let’s make sure that as many people as possible attend the meeting. It’ll be at Windsor Hall at 7:30.”

MacKenzie: “Good thinking. Let’s get going!”

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## PART C: BUSINESS LETTER

Value: 9 marks

Suggested Time: 15 minutes

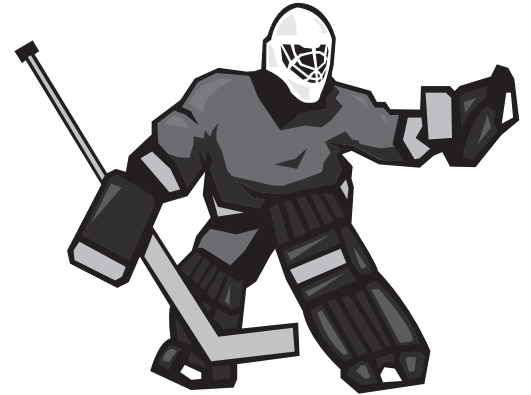
**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer question 3 in the **Response Booklet**. Write in **ink**. Use the **Organization and Planning** page to plan your work.

Writing as the individual below and using the information provided, write a **business** letter of **more than one** paragraph. Use complete and correct sentences.

3. You are **MacKenzie Jones**, a grade 12 student at Eaglestream Secondary School. Your address is 1629 Dogwood Close, Prince Rupert, BC V9X 4N2.

You would like the Prince Rupert Municipal Council to accept a proposal for a new arena to be built in your community. Many families currently have difficulty obtaining ice time for recreational skating, figure skating, and both boys' and girls' hockey.

Write a formal letter of request to Mayor Alexandria Rosner at Prince Rupert City Hall, 1210 Centennial Parkway, Prince Rupert, BC V9X 3T5.



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## PART D: COMPOSITION

Value: 24 marks

Suggested Time: 35 minutes

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer **one** of the following questions in the **Response Booklet**. Write in **ink**. Use the **Organization and Planning** page to plan your work.

Write a multi-paragraph composition of approximately **200 to 250** words based on **one** of the following topics, using standard English.

If you write on more than one topic, only the **first** will be marked.

4. It is important to maintain an active lifestyle.

**OR**

5. You never know what each new day will bring.

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**END OF EXAMINATION**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Brean, Joseph. "Gizmo geeks on trial." *The National Post*. October 10, 2003.  
Volume 5, No. 292, p. A14.

Hodgins, Jack. "Earthquake." *West by Northwest*. Victoria, BC: Polestar Book  
Publishers, 1998. pp. 76–80.



Place Personal Education Number (PEN) here.

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**Course Code = COM                      12**  
**AUGUST 2006**

Exam Booklet Form/ Cahier d'examen    A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H  
                    

**Student Instructions**

1. Place your Personal Education Number (PEN) label at the top of this Booklet **AND** fill in the bubble (Form A, B, C, D, E, F, G or H) that corresponds to the letter on your Examination Booklet.
2. Use a pencil to fill in bubbles when answering questions on your Answer Sheet.
3. Use a blue- or black-ink pen when answering written-response questions in this Booklet.
4. Indicate in the space below which question you have selected:  
 Composition Question: 4    **or**   5
5. Read the Examination Rules on the back of this Booklet.

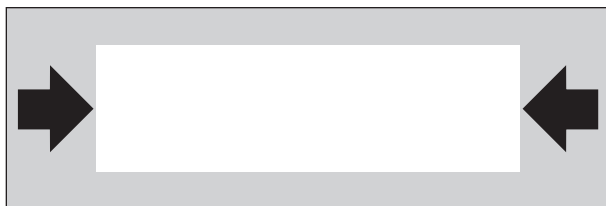
Question 1								
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**MINISTRY USE ONLY**



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**Course Code = COM 12**

**Communications 12**

**AUGUST 2006**

**Response Booklet**

## **Organization and Planning**

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before writing in the **Response Booklet**.

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**PART B: INFORMATIONAL TEXT  
WRITTEN RESPONSE**

**Question 1:**

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**PART B: INFORMATIONAL TEXT**  
**WRITTEN RESPONSE**

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## Organization and Planning

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## **Organization and Planning**

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## **Organization and Planning**

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## PART D: COMPOSITION

### Checklist

BEFORE you write, remember to

- think of ideas on the topic
- support your ideas with examples
- organize your ideas into paragraphs

AFTER you write, remember to

- reread your composition
- check for length
- check paragraph structure
- check that sentences are complete
- check word choice
- check spelling and punctuation

Indicate your choice by placing a checkmark ✓ in one box below and in one box in **Instruction 4** on the front cover of this booklet.

**Question 4**  or **Question 5** :

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## Examination Rules

1. The time allotted for this examination is two hours.  
You may, however, take up to 60 minutes of additional time to finish.
2. Answers entered in the Examination Booklet will not be marked.
3. Cheating on an examination will result in a mark of zero. The Ministry of Education considers cheating to have occurred if a student breaks any of the following rules:
  - Candidates must not give or receive assistance of any kind in answering an examination question during an examination, including allowing one's paper to be viewed by others or copying answers from another student's paper.
  - Candidates must not possess any book, paper or item that might assist in writing an examination, including a dictionary or piece of electronic equipment, that is not specifically authorized for the examination by ministry policy.
  - Candidates must immediately follow the invigilator's order to stop writing at the end of the examination time and must not alter an Examination Booklet, Response Booklet or Answer Sheet after the invigilator has asked students to hand in examination papers.
  - Candidates must not communicate with another student during the examination.
  - Candidates must not remove any piece of the examination materials from the examination room, including work pages.
  - Candidates must not take or knowingly use any secure examination materials prior to the examination session.
4. The use of inappropriate language or content may result in a mark of zero being awarded.
5. Upon completion of the examination, return all examination materials to the supervising invigilator.