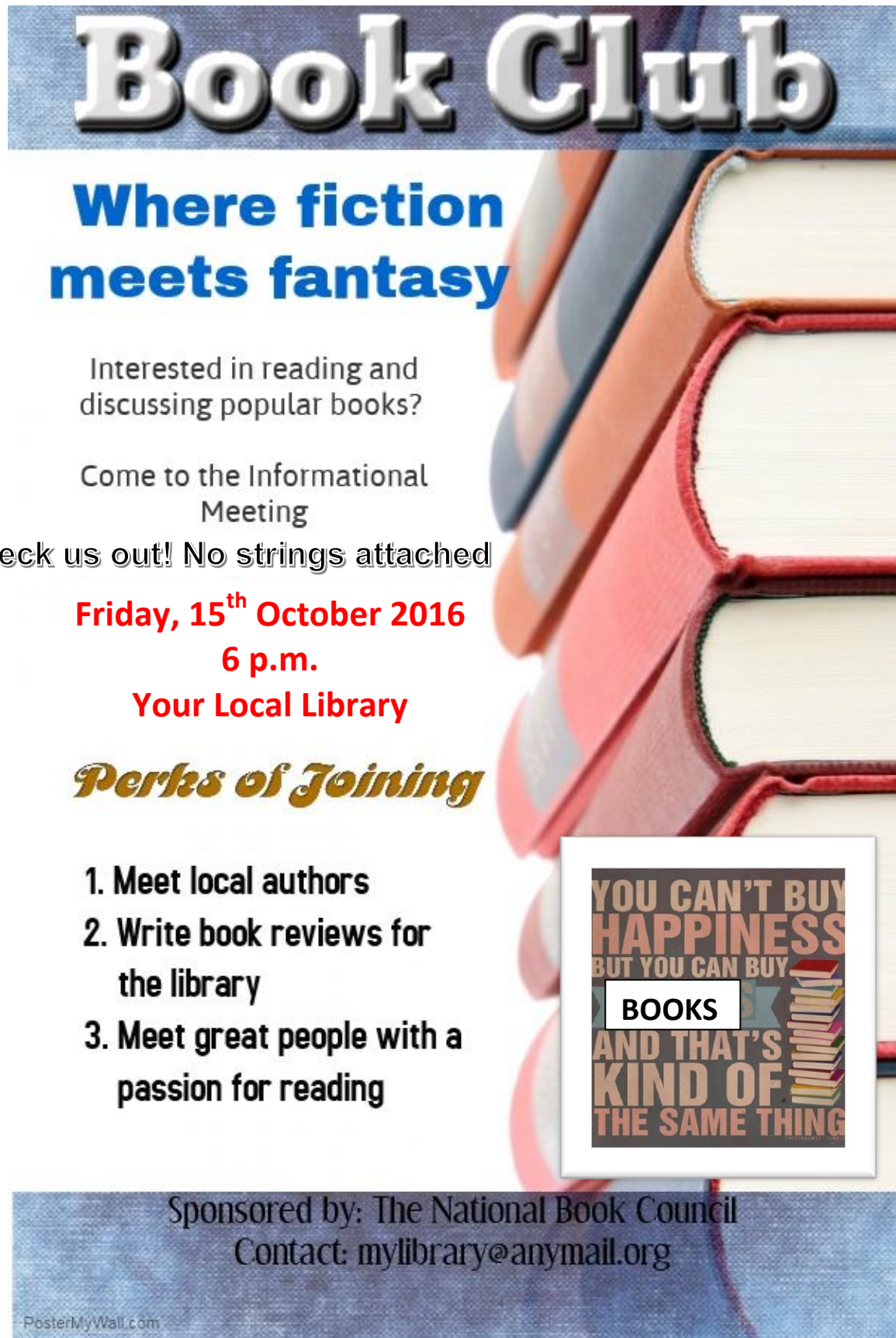


Section A

Text 1

Study the poster below and answer Questions 1 – 4 in the Question Paper Booklet.



Book Club

Where fiction meets fantasy

Interested in reading and discussing popular books?

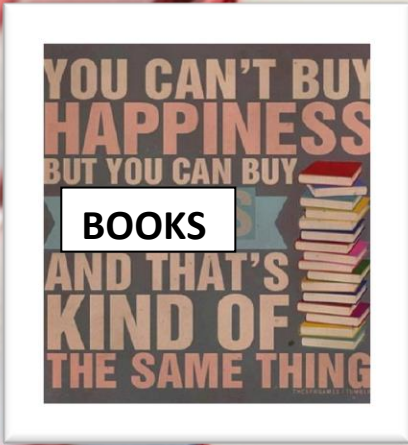
Come to the Informational Meeting

Check us out! No strings attached

Friday, 15th October 2016
6 p.m.
Your Local Library

Perks of Joining

1. Meet local authors
2. Write book reviews for the library
3. Meet great people with a passion for reading



YOU CAN'T BUY
HAPPINESS
BUT YOU CAN BUY
BOOKS
AND THAT'S
KIND OF
THE SAME THING

Sponsored by: The National Book Council
Contact: mylibrary@anymail.org

PosterMyWall.com

Section B [20 marks]

Text 2

The text below describes Jeff Brydon and a companion's experiences when they were caught in the aftermath of a volcanic eruption in Chile. Read it carefully and answer Questions 5 – 13 in the Question Paper Booklet.

- 1 When we awoke, the world was too quiet. Too quiet and too dark. It was 8:30 a.m., but the sun hadn't risen. I flicked on my headlamp, unzipped the tent, and a half inch of ash dumped off the rainfly. My beam of light illuminated ash falling from the sky like a fine snow. It looked like all the colour had been sucked out of the world. Gone were the orange and red leaves, golden grasses, and sparkling blue lakes, and in their place a depthless, dull grey. The lake next to our campsite looked like sludge. My headlamp cut only 5 feet through the haze, and when I turned it off—total blackness. We had no idea how long this ash would fall or when the rivers might run clear again, and we had less than a day's worth of water. 5
- 2 Two days earlier, my new traveling companion, Aviv Bromberg, 24, and I had set out on the 32-mile Villarrica Traverse, a few hundred miles north of Patagonia, in Chile's lakes region. We hiked in the predawn darkness with an orange plume of smoke glowing 6 miles in the distance. I had a foreboding feeling as I gazed up at Villarrica, an active volcano that had erupted a month earlier. Employees at the park service office told us the park was closed; recent snow would make the trail hard to follow. But the weather forecast called for sun, and we'd come all the way out here for the legendary journey that weaves through the volcanic, snow-capped Andes. This was our only chance to experience this remote wilderness, and we'd have to do it without the blessing, or knowledge, of the park service. 10 15
- 3 The first stretch of trail brought wild variation in scenery. We ascended past bamboo and alien trees called monkey puzzles. We weaved through a mossy forest, crossed a ridge brightened with orange and red leaves, and traversed black volcanic hills. We reached the snowline of a volcano and saw no footprints—we were all alone out here. On the second day, we cut a track through ancient lava fields, barren plains, and ascended to a view of mountain peaks and red forests below. By the end of day two, we had hiked 25 miles and the once-distant Lanín Volcano now stood 8,000 feet above us. After setting up camp, we hiked a few miles to swim in a nearby lake, feeling nothing but lucky. Around sunset, I heard a distant boom, but wrote it off as rockfall. When we awoke in the blizzard of ash, we were ready to run for our lives. Was the ash toxic? Would slag soon fall from the sky like meteorites? "What a beautiful day for a hike!" I exclaimed, trying not to let fear overwhelm us. I wasn't sure what the blast range was for molten rock, but it was time to evacuate. 20 25 30
- 4 Even with headlamps, we could barely see the ground, let alone the trail markers. We made ninja masks out of shirts to keep the ash out of our lungs. Squinting through the grey blizzard, we set out in the direction of the last trail marker we had seen. We guessed it was 200 feet away. Aviv's headlamp was too weak to cut through the gloom, so he stayed right behind me in our tiny pocket of light. The red, 3-foot-tall metal posts we'd followed to get here were nowhere to be found. We tripped our way across a field. A wall of bushes appeared in front of us, forcing us to double back. In the gloom, we lost track of where we had come from and ran into more dead ends. As we circled, I felt a rising panic. We might be wandering farther and farther from the trail. Then, Aviv remembered he had a compass on his phone. After 20 minutes, we found the first trail marker. Six miles to go. 35 40
- 5 We began to stumble down what we thought was the trail, comparing the compass direction to our map. I knocked into branches that appeared out of the darkness, dumping blinding clouds of ash over our heads. Every new trail marker was a beacon of 45

hope. We lost the trail again and again, but my tracking skills steadily improved. I started noticing broken branches, worn logs, and faint footprints, which were now as good as trail markers. In the forest, we made good progress, but the open areas were blank, with no trail to follow and no indications of which way to go.

50

- 6 All we saw was ash continuing to sleet through our little sphere of light.

Adapted from: <http://www.backpacker.com/survival/survival-stories/out-alive-volcanic-eruption/#sthash.7qsiqPbu.dpuf>

Section C [25 marks]

Text 3

The article below is about China's cram schools. Read it carefully and answer Questions 14 – 19 in the Question Paper Booklet.

- 1 Students taking China's hypercompetitive college entrance exam, according to a popular saying, resemble an army of 10,000 rushing across a narrow log. So what happens to those who fall off? Each year, more than 9 million Chinese students endure the *gaokao*, as the exam is known. A gruelling two or three days' experience — it varies by region — the test covers Chinese, mathematics, a foreign language, chemistry, physics, geography, and history, among other subjects. The test results, which range from the 200s to the 600s, comprise almost the entirety of a student's college application portfolio. While some of the multiple-choice questions would be familiar to U.S. teenagers sweating over Advanced Placement exams, *gaokao* essay prompts are sometimes so bizarre that even Chinese state media challenged its mostly adult readers to answer some of the more notorious essay prompts, such as this one: "It flies upward, and a voice asks if it is tired. It says, 'No.'" 5
- 2 Because Chinese parents often expect their children to become family breadwinners, the pressure to perform is intense. Faced with the *gaokao*'s high stakes and frustrating unpredictability, tens of thousands of test takers choose to sit through the ordeal again, when their scores fall short of their — or their parents' — expectations. Having already graduated from high school, some of these re-takers hunker down at home for a year to study. Others attend cram schools like Maotanchang High School, which lies tucked away in a small town in the mountains of central China's Anhui province and specializes in the dark art of military-style test prep. With an annual enrollment of more than 10,000 students, the school, known as Maozhong, has earned the dubious honour of being called "China's Largest *Gaokao* Factory" in Chinese state media. 15
- 3 A Sept. 18 article in *China Youth Daily*, a Beijing-based newspaper, offered an inside look at the topsy-turvy economic and social life of this exam-obsessed town. The piece, which incited a debate on the benefits and drawbacks of the *gaokao* system, immediately became popular on Chinese social media. The *China Youth Daily* article claims that Maotanchang, a speck of a town with only 5,000 registered residents, becomes home to more than 50,000 people when school is in session; classes are so crowded that teachers must use loudspeakers to address the hordes of students. The article describes schedules that run from 6:10 a.m. to 10:50 p.m., with students' waking hours consumed by endless lectures and repetitive practice exams that abate only for two 30-minute meal breaks and one hour of downtime. (Some teachers have suggested a scheduled bathroom time for "easier management.") According to the article, one year in Maozhong's cram program can reportedly cost up to \$8,000, roughly three times the average annual disposable income in Anhui. 25
- 30
- 35

- 4 The article depicts a local economy so tightly bound to the cram school that townspeople have refrained from opening up the karaoke parlours and Internet cafes otherwise ubiquitous in China. Instead, enterprising locals rent out their rooms or dwellings for about \$1,300 to \$3,300 annually — exorbitant for a Chinese town of that size — to parents who accompany their children for the academic year. 40
- 5 The gaokao is not just difficult and sometimes arbitrary, but also administered in a way that deliberately stacks the odds against students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The score cut-off for admission to elite universities is lower for test-takers from rich cities like Beijing and Shanghai, where those same elite universities are located. Favourable quotas aid these students, who already have a leg up. 45

Adapted from: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/11/chinas-cram-school-from-hell/>

Section A [5 marks]

Text 1

Refer to the poster (Text 1) to answer Questions 1 – 4.

1. The poster begins with the words ‘Where fiction meets fantasy’. What effect is this intended to have on the reader? [1]

It is intended to give the reader the impression that they can escape from the mundane world by joining this Book Club.

2. Refer to the caption ‘You can’t buy happiness but you can buy books and that’s kind of the same thing’. Identify **two** types of people the Book Club is trying to attract by using that caption. [2]

(i)	avid readers
(ii)	people looking for joy

3. Look at the illustration in the poster. How is it effective in persuading its intended audience to join the book club? [1]

The pile of books signifies the large number of stories they will read and discuss when they join the Book Club and this will attract the avid readers they are looking for.

4. Explain what is the most attractive perk of joining the Book Club. [1]

The most attractive perk is meeting local authors because avid readers of local books would be able to discuss the books they enjoy with the authors themselves which is something that they may not be able to do on their own.

OR

The most attractive perk is being able to write reviews for the library because it gives them the opportunity to share their views on a book with the general public.

OR

The most attractive perk is meeting other avid/passionate readers because it gives the members a chance to make friends / be acquainted with others who share the same passion.

Section B [20 marks]

Refer to Text 2 to answer Questions 5 – 13.

5. From paragraph 1, give **two** ways in which the writer emphasises the silence and darkness of his surroundings. [2]

(i)	The writer uses hyperbole/exaggeration to state that ‘the world was too quiet’.
(ii)	The writer uses a quantifier ‘too dark’ to show the degree of darkness.

6. Which **one** word in paragraph 1 suggests the scenery was two dimensional? [1]

depthless

7. Explain why the author and his companions were in a dire situation in paragraph 1. [2]

They only had a day of water left [1] and with the lake looking like ‘sludge’, they had no way of replenishing their supply. [1]

- 8(a) Paragraph 2 highlights **three** reasons the writer should not go on into the area. Explain fully what these three reasons are. [3]

Reason 1	The active volcano in the area and had erupted recently and it could erupt again.
Reason 2	The park service office had told them the park was closed and this means that even the authorities felt it was a dangerous area.
Reason 3	The recent snow would hide the trails and make it highly likely they might get lost.

(b) Explain in your own words, why the writer chose to continue on his journey. [1]

This was the only time they could experience the isolated nature in Chile's lake region.

9(a) In paragraph 3, the writer says that he was 'feeling nothing but lucky'. In what **two** ways is this expression particularly effective in introducing what happened to him later? [2]

(i)	It provides a contrast between the pristine setting they were in and the disaster they were about to encounter.
(ii)	It is verbal irony that injects some dark humour into the prose.

(b) Identify another expression by the writer that is sarcastic. [1]

"What a beautiful day for a hike!"

10. In paragraph 4, the writer says 'We made ninja masks out of shirts...'. What does he mean by this expression? [1]

They used their clothing to make a covering for their face with only thin slits for them to see through.

11. In paragraph 4, which word suggests the writer was finding it hard to see in the gloom? [1]

"squinting"

12(a) Explain why 'Every new trail marker was a beacon of hope.' (line 46) for the writer. [1]

Every trail marker provides them with a direction to head out of the disaster area so finding each one gives them a way to escape their predicament.

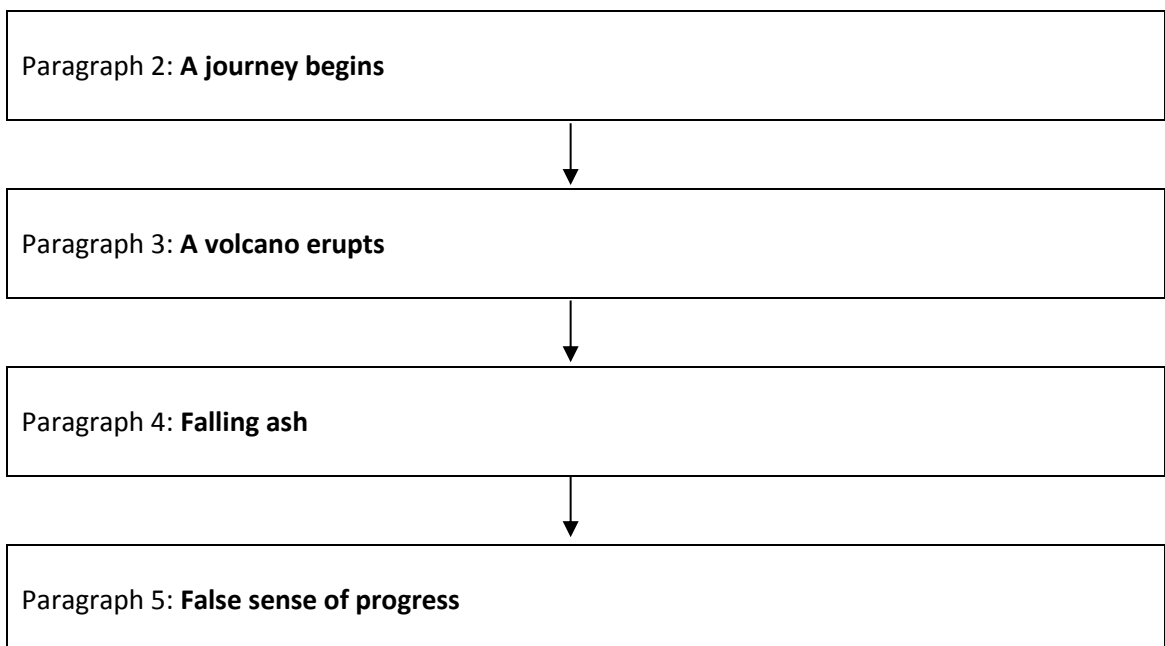
(b) What is the tone of the last paragraph? [1]

Desperate/ Hopeless

13. The structure of the text reflects the main stages of the writer's attempt to find safety from the volcanic eruption. Complete the flow chart by choosing one description from the box to summarise the stage described in each part of the text. There are some extra words in the box you do not need to use. [4]

Main Stages

A journey begins	Falling ash	Miles to go
A volcano erupts	False sense of progress	A loud sound



Section C [25 marks]

Refer to Text 3 to answer Questions 14 – 19.

14. (i) In paragraph 1, in what way do students taking the college entrance exam resemble that of “an army of 10,000 rushing across a narrow log” (line 2)? [1]

Only a few will achieve their objective. [1]

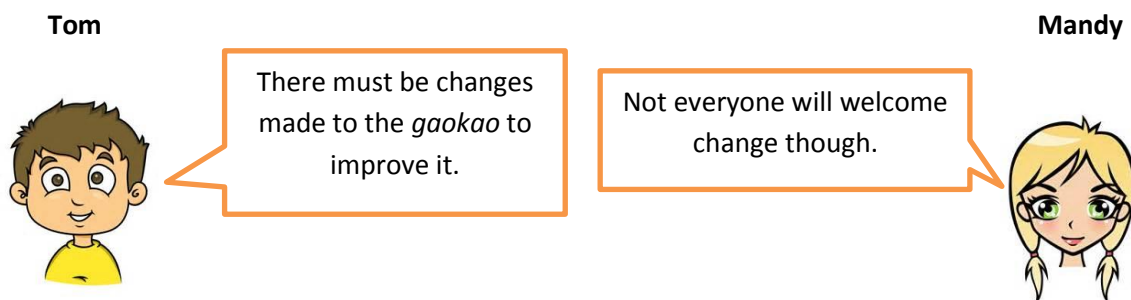
- (ii). How is this expression effective in conveying the idea that the entrance exam is ‘hypercompetitive’ (line 1)? [1]

It effectively conveys the idea that there are many students vying for an entry to college by taking the exam but only the top few scorers who do well will be able to do so. [1]

15. Why do test takers choose to ‘sit through the ordeal again.’ (line 15)? Answer in your own words. [2]

They need good results to secure a good future[1] and due to the test’s irregularity, the results may not meet their hopes which prompts them to try again [1].

16. Here is a conversation between two students, Tom and Mandy, who have read the article.



- i. Identify one group of people who would welcome improvements to the *gaokao*. [1]

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds [1].

ii. Identify two groups of people who would not welcome changes to the gaokao. [2]

Any 2:

- parents of students from advantaged backgrounds [1]
 - students from advantaged backgrounds [1]
 - people who rent out rooms to students and their parents [1]
-

17. What attitude to Maozhong's cram programme is suggested in lines 33 – 35? [1]

A cynical/ negative/ attitude. [1]

18. With reference to paragraph 5, explain in what ways the gaokao may be biased? **Answer in your own words.** [2]

Students from affluent [1]cities do not need to do as well to get into a top university [1].

19. **Using your own words as far as possible**, summarise the negative aspects of the gaokao and its impact on the local economy. [15]

Use only information from paragraphs 2 to 4.

Your summary must be in continuous writing (not note form). It must not be longer than 80 words (not counting the words given to help you begin).

Parents exert a lot of pressure on their kids because _____

- **they expect them to earn a living for the family**
- **The gaokao is a crucial exam yet it is very unpredictable**
- **Many have to resort to the cram schools which are regimental**
- **Classes are so crowded that teachers have to use loudspeakers**
- **And the schedules are long**
- **Endless lectures and repetitive practice exams with only two 30 minute breaks**
- **Very costly to attend these schools**
- **No karaoke parlours and internet cafes**
- **Instead, locals take advantage by renting their rooms**
- **They can earn a lot for a small town**

Word count: