



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Normal (Academic) Level (2026)**

Humanities
(Social Studies, Literature in English)
(Syllabus 2127)

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Humanities

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Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Normal (Academic) Level (2025)

(Syllabus 2127)

INTRODUCTION

This Humanities syllabus aims to enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding of events and phenomenon, issues and perspectives, and human actions and behaviours.

Humanities syllabus (2127) comprises two components: Social Studies and Literature in English. Both components are compulsory.

The examination format is shown in the table below.

Paper No.	Component	Marks	Weighting	Duration
1	Social Studies	50	50%	1 hr 45 min
2	Literature in English	50	50%	1 hr 40 min

Paper 1

Social Studies

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy of the Singapore Social Studies Curriculum

At the heart of the Singapore Social Studies curriculum is the preparation of students to be effective citizens by helping them to better understand the interconnectedness of Singapore and the world they live in and appreciate the complexities of the human experience.

Drawing on aspects of society that are of meaning and interest to students, Social Studies seeks to ignite students' curiosity to inquire into real-world issues that concern their lives. Through inquiry and authentic learning experiences, Social Studies helps students to attain relevant knowledge and understanding about these issues, develop critical and reflective thinking skills, and appreciate multiple perspectives.

Social Studies seeks to inculcate in students a deeper understanding of the values that define the Singapore society, nurture dispositions that will inspire them to show concern for the society and the world in which they live and demonstrate empathy in their relationships with others. The curriculum therefore envisions students as informed, concerned and participative citizens, competent in decision-making with an impassioned spirit to contribute responsibly to the society and world they live in.

Figure 1.1 reflects the philosophy underpinning the Singapore Social Studies curriculum.

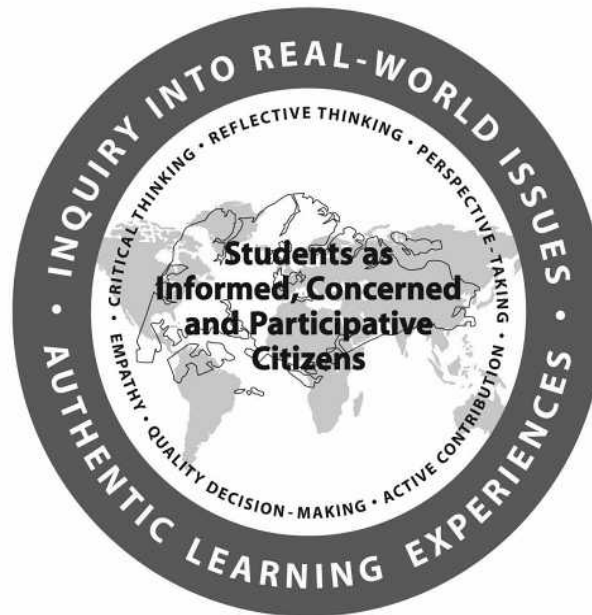


Figure 1.1 The Singapore Social Studies Curriculum

The syllabus content is organised around three Issues and is anchored in a set of knowledge, skills and values outcomes. The three Issues correspond to societal issues that have been shaping Singapore, the region and the world. The knowledge, skills and values acquired through exploring these Issues will develop students' competencies to be informed, concerned and participative citizens. The following table shows an overview of the three Issues in the Social Studies Normal (Academic)-Level syllabus.

Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship and Governance
<p><i>Inquiry Focus – Working for the good of society: Whose responsibility is it?</i></p> <p><i>Why this Issue matters</i></p> <p>This Issue invites students to begin exploring what it means to be an informed, concerned and participative citizen. Students will deepen their understanding of citizenship and governance and learn how citizens and government play complementary roles in working for the good of society. In a complex society and world, understanding their roles as citizens will influence how they respond to various situations and issues in Singapore and the world. This will serve to develop a stronger sense of civic consciousness, enhancing the roles they play as citizens who are rooted in Singapore with a global outlook.</p>
<p><i>Key Understandings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship is varied and complex. • Government is a political institution with important functions and roles to govern. • Different groups of people in society have differing needs, interests and priorities, and experience unequal sharing of costs. Managing these differences often requires trade-offs to be made. • Both citizens and government can play complementary roles in working for the good of society.
Issue 2: Living in a Diverse Society
<p><i>Inquiry Focus – Living in a diverse society: Is harmony achievable?</i></p> <p><i>Why this Issue matters</i></p> <p>This Issue helps students appreciate diversity and the importance of harmony. Students will develop an understanding of who they are as individuals and accept, respect and celebrate diversity as well as common practices and values in a diverse society. This will heighten students' awareness of the need to develop personal and collective responsibility in promoting and maintaining harmony in a diverse society.</p>
<p><i>Key Understandings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identities are diverse and complex. • Living harmoniously in a diverse society means respecting our differences and appreciating what we share in common. • People respond to diversity in a variety of ways to achieve harmony.

Issue 3: Being Part of a Globalised World

Inquiry Focus – Being part of a globalised world: How can we respond to globalisation?

Why this Issue matters

This Issue helps students understand and make meaning of their lives in a globalised world where countries and individuals are interconnected and interdependent. Students will explore the impacts of globalisation on the economy. They will understand the complex process of globalisation through examining how the impacts of globalisation result in trade-offs and different responses from countries and individuals. Students will therefore appreciate the complex decision-making process behind the responses towards the impacts of globalisation. This understanding will help them to make well-reasoned and responsible decisions as informed, concerned and participative citizens in a globalised world.

Key Understandings

- Globalisation shapes the interconnections and interdependence among countries and people.
- Globalisation creates impacts in the economy.
- The impacts of globalisation result in differing responses from countries and people.

AIMS

As **informed** citizens, students would:

- understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the role of the government in society
- understand their identity as Singaporeans, with a regional and global outlook
- understand the Singapore perspective on key national, regional and global issues
- analyse and negotiate complex issues through evaluating multiple sources with different perspectives; and
- arrive at well-reasoned, responsible decisions through reflective thought and discernment.

As **concerned** citizens, students would:

- have a sense of belonging to the nation, appreciate and be committed to building social cohesion in a diverse society
- be motivated to engage in issues of societal concern; and
- reflect on the ethical considerations and consequences of decision making.

As **participative** citizens, students would:

- take responsible personal and collective actions to effect change for the good of society; and
- be resilient in addressing concerns of society in spite of challenges faced.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1 – Knowledge with Understanding

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of societal issues.

AO2 – Interpreting and Evaluating Sources/Given Information

Candidates should be able to:

- comprehend and extract relevant information
- draw inferences from given information
- analyse and evaluate evidence
- compare and contrast different views
- distinguish between fact, opinion and judgement
- recognise values and detect bias
- draw conclusions based on reasoned consideration of evidence and arguments.

AO3 – Constructing Explanations

Candidates should be able to:

- analyse societal issues through different perspectives
- construct reasoned arguments and make informed judgement and recommendations.

N(A)-LEVEL ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION GRID FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Assessment Objective	Weighting
Objective 1 + Objective 2	35%
Objective 1 + Objective 3	15%
Total	50%

Note: Objective 1 is inevitably part of the testing of Objectives 2 and 3.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

N(A)-LEVEL SOCIAL STUDIES

- One paper of 1 hour 45 minutes.
- Paper comprises 2 sections:

Section A: (35 marks)

One source-based case study testing Assessment Objectives 1 and 2.

Section B: (15 marks)

Two structured-response questions testing Assessment Objectives 1 and 3.

- Candidates are required to answer the compulsory source-based case study from Section A and the compulsory structured-response questions from Section B.
- Candidates will receive the question paper in hard copy. A digital answer booklet will be provided with this question paper. Candidates are required to type their responses in the digital answer booklet.

Source-Based Case Study

The compulsory source-based case study can be set on any of the three Issues:

- Exploring Citizenship and Governance
- Living in a Diverse Society
- Being Part of a Globalised World

Candidates will be expected to have an understanding of the ways in which sources may be evaluated. The case study will be set on one of the three Issues of the syllabus and will require the skills and concepts taught during the course. The issue of the case study will be related to the syllabus and may or may not be covered in the syllabus content. Candidates are expected to use their knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding developed during the course to help them use the given sources to answer the questions.

The source-based case study comprises five questions:

Question	Skills Tested	Mark Allocation
1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source-handling skills on specific sources 	25
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source-handling skills requiring use of multiple sources – question will relate directly to the issue of the case study 	10

A 'Levels of Response Marking Scheme' (**LORMS**) will be used to assess candidates' responses.

Structured-Response Questions

The compulsory structured-response questions will be set on any of the three Issues in the syllabus. However, in an examination, the question set will not be on the same Issue as the source-based case study.

The structured-response questions comprise two questions:

Question	Skills Tested	Mark Allocation
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing explanation by giving reasoned argument and/or making recommendation on an issue (single strategy / mono-causal) – question will require candidates to consider the issue in the context of Singapore 	7
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing explanation of two factors / perspectives on an issue 	8

A 'Levels of Response Marking Scheme' (**LORMS**) will be used to assess candidates' responses.

Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship and Governance		
Descriptor	Key Understandings	
<p>Inquiry Focus – Working for the good of society: Whose responsibility is it?</p> <p>Why this Issue matters This Issue invites students to begin exploring what it means to be an informed, concerned and participative citizen. Students will deepen their understanding of citizenship and governance, and learn how citizens and government play complementary roles in working for the good of society. In a complex society and world, understanding their roles as citizens will influence how they respond to various situations and issues in Singapore and the world. This will serve to develop a stronger sense of civic consciousness, enhancing the roles they play as citizens who are rooted in Singapore with a global outlook.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship is varied and complex. • Government is a political institution with important functions and roles to govern. • Different groups of people in society have differing needs, interests and priorities, and experience unequal sharing of costs. Managing these differences often requires trade-offs to be made. • Both citizens and government can play complementary roles in working for the good of society. 	
Knowledge Outcomes	Skills Outcomes	Concepts
<p>Students will be able to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • different attributes can shape one's understanding of citizenship • the functions and roles of government in working for the good of society • the challenges of determining what is good for a society, with decisions guided by the principles of governance • how citizens and government can work together for the good of society. 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine societal issues critically by gathering, interpreting, analysing and evaluating information from different sources to make well-reasoned and substantiated arguments, recommendations and conclusions on societal issues • demonstrate sound reasoning and responsible decision-making that considers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Singapore's unique contexts, constraints and vulnerabilities; and – the consequences of one's actions on those around them • demonstrate perspective-taking when encountering differing views • demonstrate reflective thinking when reviewing their understanding of societal issues and examining personal assumptions and beliefs about others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship • Governance • Trade-offs

Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship and Governance	
Guiding Questions	Content
1 What does citizenship mean to me?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes can shape one's understanding of citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Legal status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rights and obligations of citizens – A sense of identity – Shared values – Civic participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participate in public affairs as individuals and community groups
2 What are the functions and roles of government in working for the good of society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions and roles of government in a representative democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Functions of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Makes and passes laws ○ Implements and enforces laws ○ Interprets and applies laws – Roles of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintains law and order ○ Ensures economic and social well-being of citizens ○ Promotes and protects a country's national interests
3 How do we decide what is good for society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciding what is good for society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Challenges in deciding what is good for society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Differing needs and interests ○ Differing priorities ○ Unequal sharing of costs – Managing trade-offs – Principles shaping governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having good leadership ○ Anticipating change and staying relevant ○ A stake for everyone, opportunities for all ○ Practising meritocracy
4 How can we work together for the good of society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens and government working together for the good of society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Addressing the needs of society – Influencing decision-making in public affairs – Strengthening citizens' sense of belonging

Issue 2: Living in a Diverse Society		
Descriptor	Key Understandings	
<p>Inquiry Focus – Living in a diverse society: Is harmony achievable?</p> <p>Why this Issue matters This Issue helps students appreciate diversity and the importance of harmony. Students will develop an understanding of who they are as individuals and accept, respect and celebrate diversity as well as common practices and values in a diverse society. This will heighten students' awareness of the need to develop personal and collective responsibility in promoting and maintaining harmony in a diverse society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identities are diverse and complex. Living harmoniously in a diverse society means respecting our differences and appreciating what we share in common. People respond to diversity in a variety of ways to achieve harmony. 	
Knowledge Outcomes	Skills Outcomes	Concepts
<p>Students will be able to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the factors that shape identities of people and contribute to a diverse society the experiences and effects of living in a diverse society the various ways in which individuals, communities and governments can respond to the effects of living in a diverse society. 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine societal issues critically by gathering, interpreting, analysing and evaluating information from different sources to make well-reasoned and substantiated arguments, recommendations and conclusions on societal issues demonstrate sound reasoning and responsible decision-making that considers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore's unique contexts, constraints and vulnerabilities the consequences of one's actions on those around them demonstrate perspective-taking when encountering differing views demonstrate reflective thinking when reviewing their understanding of societal issues and examining personal assumptions and beliefs about others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity Diversity Harmony

Issue 2: Living in a Diverse Society	
Guiding Questions	Content
1 What are the factors that shape the identities of people and contribute to a diverse society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors that shape the identities of people and contribute to a diverse society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Race and ethnicity – Religion – Socio-economic status – Nationality
2 What are the experiences and effects of living in a diverse society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions in a diverse society and common space • Experiences and effects of living in a diverse society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cultural exchange and appreciation – Exchange of knowledge and skills – Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination – Competition for resources
3 How can we respond to diversity in society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens and government responding to socio-cultural diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses of citizens as individuals and community groups – Responses of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assimilationist policy and its tensions ○ Integration policy and its tensions • Citizens and government responding to socio-economic diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responses of citizens as individuals and community groups – Responses of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A government-financed approach and its challenges ○ A shared responsibility approach and its challenges

Issue 3: Being Part of a Globalised World		
Descriptor	Key Understandings	
<p>Inquiry Focus – Being part of a globalised world: How can we respond to globalisation?</p> <p>Why this Issue matters This Issue helps students understand and make meaning of their lives in a globalised world where countries and individuals are interconnected and interdependent. Students will explore the impacts of globalisation on the economy. They will understand the complex process of globalisation through examining how the impacts of globalisation result in trade-offs and different responses from countries and individuals. Students will therefore appreciate the complex decision-making process behind the responses towards the impacts of globalisation. This understanding will help them to make well-reasoned and responsible decisions as informed, concerned and participative citizens in a globalised world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Globalisation shapes the interconnections and interdependence among countries and people. Globalisation creates impacts in the economy. The impacts of globalisation result in differing responses from countries and people. 	
Knowledge Outcomes	Skills Outcomes	Concepts
<p>Students will be able to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the key driving forces of globalisation different responses of countries and individuals to economic impacts of globalisation. 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine societal issues critically by gathering, interpreting, analysing and evaluating information from different sources to make well-reasoned and substantiated arguments, recommendations and conclusions on societal issues demonstrate sound reasoning and responsible decision-making that considers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore's unique contexts, constraints and vulnerabilities the consequences of one's actions on those around them demonstrate perspective-taking when encountering differing views demonstrate reflective thinking when reviewing their understanding of societal issues and examining personal assumptions and beliefs about others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Globalisation Interconnectedness Interdependence

Issue 3: Being Part of a Globalised World	
Guiding Questions	Content
1 What are the factors that contribute to globalisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving forces of globalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Technological advancements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developments in transportation ○ Developments in digital technology – Growth of Multinational Corporations
2 How can we respond to the economic impacts of globalisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic impacts of globalisation and responses of countries and individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economic impacts of globalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic growth and economic vulnerability experienced by countries ○ Employment opportunities and challenges experienced by individuals – Responses to economic impacts of globalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Government support ○ Acquisition of knowledge and skills by individuals

Paper 2

Literature in English

AIMS OF TEACHING SYLLABUS

The aims of the syllabus are to:

- Ethical**
- raise awareness of timeless issues concerning society
 - promote the appreciation of multiple perspectives; and
 - build empathy and global awareness.
- Aesthetic**
- inculcate the habit of close reading
 - promote heightened appreciation of nuances of language; and
 - sensitise students to artistic decisions made by writers.
- Intellectual**
- cultivate metacognitive habits of mind as students pay attention to the impact of language on one's thoughts and feelings
 - develop greater acceptance for ambiguity and open-endedness; and
 - equip students with the skills to convince others of their interpretations, based on sound reasoning with evidence.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- (i) demonstrate, through close analysis, knowledge of the literary texts studied
- (ii) respond with knowledge and understanding to literary texts from the genres of prose, poetry and drama
- (iii) demonstrate understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings
- (iv) communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read; and
- (v) express responses clearly and coherently, using textual evidence where appropriate.

The Assessment Objectives are inter-related. Candidates' responses will be assessed holistically on the attainment of these Assessment Objectives in an integrated and meaningful way.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

One paper will be set (Paper 2127/02). Candidates are expected to answer a total of two questions. Total examination time will be 1 hr 40 minutes.

Please see table below.

Paper 2	Duration and Weighting	Details of Paper and Sections
Prose and Unseen Poetry	1 hour 40 minutes [50%]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be two sections in this paper. • Candidates will select <u>one</u> question from each of the two sections. • In total, candidates will answer <u>two</u> questions. • Each question is 25% of the total weighting. <p><u>Section A: Prose [25%]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each of the six set texts in this section, <u>one</u> passage-based question and <u>two</u> essay questions will be set. • Candidates will answer <u>one</u> question [25%] based on one of the six set texts. • For every year of examination, <u>one or two</u> Singapore texts will be set. <p><u>Section B: Unseen Poetry [25%]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no set texts in this section. • There will be a choice of <u>two</u> unseen poems with <u>one</u> question set on each poem. • Candidates will answer <u>one</u> of the two questions [25%]. • For every year of examination, <u>one</u> question will be set on a Singapore text.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Band descriptors for the assessment of N-Level set text questions

N(A)-Level	Description
21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally well-focused on the terms of the question. • Demonstrates understanding of the text’s main concerns and some knowledge of how the author conveys these. • Demonstrates relevant and developed substantiation, with apt selection of textual evidence. • Clear and competent, but laboured arguments may be present. The response may lapse into narrative occasionally.
18–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to the main thrust of the question. • Demonstrates some understanding of the more obvious concerns of the text but fails to note the wider implications. Attempts to analyse and evaluate can be observed but these are often not successfully done. • Response is substantiated with appropriate selection of textual evidence, though not consistently done. • Generally coherent, with evidence of the development of an argument with tracts of narrative.
15–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally relevant to the question though the link may not always be sustained. • Demonstrates some understanding of the basic concerns of the text but does not show any attempt at interpretation. • Response is in the form of generalisations but selection of textual evidence is generally relevant. • Largely narrative in approach and sketchy in development, but a sense of a very basic argument can be discerned.
12–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has peripheral bearing on the question. Often includes information from the text without perceiving its significance. • Demonstrates a little understanding of the text and its concerns. • Coherent only in parts. Ideas communicated with some difficulty.
0–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects almost no understanding of the demands of the question. Answers may be extremely brief or are obviously prepared scripts that have little to do with the question. • Some misreading of the text and its concerns. • Almost incoherent and lacks direction or focus. <p>Answers in the lower half of this band (0–5 marks) may reflect no understanding of the text and the question, and may be incoherent, with meaning obscured by poor expression.</p> <p>Short work: Can be presented in various forms, e.g. note form or a series of hurriedly sketched-in paragraphs. It is essential that Examiners mark short work strictly on the basis of what is given. The work should not be marked on the grounds of quality elsewhere in the scripts.</p>

Band descriptors for the assessment of N-Level unseen questions

N(A)-Level	Description
21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a competent grasp of subject matter. There is evidence of analysis and evaluation which is likely to reflect conscientiousness rather than sophistication. Generally well-focused on the terms of the question. There is a personal response showing evidence of close engagement with the text, though this may not be sustained throughout the answer. Ideas are often supported by relevant substantiation. Thorough, though rather unsophisticated, argument. Work is coherent and clear, though it may lack polish and subtlety of expression.
18–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows sound basic understanding of the text and of how to respond to it. There is some evidence of analysis and evaluation. Addresses the question though it may be brief, mechanical or superficial. Shows some engagement, and is substantiated with appropriate references to the text. Demonstrates coherence, and is clear.
15–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates some awareness or understanding of the text, largely through paraphrase. There may be some misreading, but not enough to undermine significantly the general ideas put forward. Does not fully address the demands of the question. Shows engagement with the text but with inappropriate substantiation. Fairly coherent. Expression of ideas may be hampered by a lack of clarity or accuracy but the meaning is still conveyed.
12–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only superficial understanding of the text. Shows little awareness of the demands of the question. Shows minimal engagement with the text. Not very coherent but manages to convey thoughts/comments with some difficulty.
0–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost no understanding of the text and question. Demonstrates an attempt to communicate understanding of the text. <p>Answers in the lower half of this band (0–5 marks) may reflect no understanding of the text and the question, and may be incoherent, with meaning obscured by poor expression.</p> <p>Short work: Can be presented in various forms, e.g. note form or a series of hurriedly sketched-in paragraphs. It is essential that Examiners mark short work strictly on the basis of what is given. The work should not be marked on the grounds of quality elsewhere in the scripts.</p>

PRESCRIBED TEXTS

Yu-Mei Balasingamchow (ed.): *How We Live Now*

Anthony Doerr: *All the Light We Cannot See*

William Golding: *Lord of the Flies*

Mildred D Taylor: *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

John Wyndham: *The Chrysalids*

If a Secondary 4 Normal (Academic) student chooses to study the same texts when he/she progresses to Secondary 5, schools should ensure that the selected texts will continue to be examined in that year.

All texts will continue to be examined in the year 2027.

Schools are NOT to select screenplays or abridged versions of the texts for study.