**Assessment Task for Reading**

**Topic: Doting Parents**

This assessment task focuses on developing senior secondary students’ reading skills.

This set of materials contains the following:

* **The reading text**
* **A set of questions**
* **Suggested answers**

**Reading Text**

**Ad 1**

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| --- | --- |
| **It's Time City’s Children and Their Doting Parents Grew up**BY VIOLETTA YAU 30 December 2010**[1]** It should have been a moving scene when the first batch of stranded Hong Kong students arrived home from the snowbound London Heathrow Airport last week and raced out into the loving arms of their parents in tears of joy as if they were some lucky survivors from a holocaust reuniting with their beloved. But one cannot help but frown upon these spoiled youngsters. The first thing they did was nothing but whining and complaining about the poor treatment they received at the Heathrow and the messy management of airlines companies.**[2]** What caused eyebrows to raise was their parents joining in their chorus to complain of the lack of care of the airlines and the government. It was an exhibition of over-protective parents and their over-pampered children. The infamous “Hong Kong kid phenomenon” came to the fore.**[3]** I am just dumbfounded by the parents’ over-indulgence. What is wrong with the kids and their doting parents these days?**[4]** A closer look into their so-called ordeal will make one wonder if it was their princess and little prince syndrome or the miserable conditions at the Heathrow that made them really suffer. Because of fierce snowstorms that paralyzed the Heathrow Airport, hundreds of Hong Kong students who were to come home for Christmas were stuck there for five days among thousands of others. Some of them were transferred to a nearby hotel function room by Cathay Pacific while others either slept in the airport in bitter cold or were left to their own devices. At their anxious parents’ urgings, the SAR government also acted promptly to tell its trade representative’s office in London to render immediate assistance to the stranded students who were provided with pocket money, food, necessities and medical care in the function room.**[5]** However, the greenhouse flowerets were quick to flex their Hong Kong-kid muscle. Some blamed the airlines’ poor management for the dreadful conditions they were in. Other described their hotels as a concentration camp and the airport a war zone. Some even concocted stories of their fathers' death in their desperate attempt to board first flight to head home. I don't know how their parents would react if they knew how “clever” their children were. I also bet that if the youngsters had ever experienced the actual life of a concentration camp, they would be grateful for the affluent and carefree life and the little ordeal they have today.**[6]** What is more, as if it were going to be a terrorist attack or Heathrow would really turn into a war zone, their worried parents requested the SAR government to dispatch charter flights to bring their children home. Even our Under Secretary for Security Lai Tung-kwok entertained the idea, saying the government would consider this option if necessary.**[7]** It is natural for parents to be anxious about their children. But didn’t they go overboard with their concerns about their children’s well-being? In a snow-struck situation like this and with only one runway operating, the problem was not a lack of flights but a shortage of runways for flights to touch down. Besides, the Heathrow was only hit by a snowstorm, not a terrorist attack. The students were not stranded on a deserted island. No lives were at stake nor was it a life-threatening emergency. The parents should know that when public money is involved, there should be a valid reason to justify the special arrangement.**[8]** In fact, their mindset and mentality explain the prevalent Hong Kong-kid phenomenon in this affluent city, where a growing number of children are too pampered and vulnerable to adverse situations. This strange phenomenon was well explained by a July survey which showed that over 50 percent of parents with children aged between five and 16, said their children cannot brush their teeth, take showers and eat independently compared with 70 percent whose children cannot carry their schoolbags on their own. There were also cases of teens not knowing how to tie their shoelaces. Experts attributed their “symptoms” to their over-reliance on their parents or servants for self-care and problem-solving, resulting in their outrageously poor basic life skills.**[9]** To seek a cure, Hong Kong students, as well as their doting parents, should take this experience as a valuable lesson in life. This is something that cannot be learned in school and books. Parents should teach their children not to take everything for granted and should appreciate the fact that life is not always a bed of roses but a series of ups and downs. One’s fortune is as fickle and unpredictable as England’s weather. They should learn how to solve problems, overcome setbacks and turn adversity into advantage. Only through a transformation in their mindset could they live a fulfilling and meaningful life in the future.**[10]** It is high time Hong Kong’s children and their doting parents grew up.The article is taken from: <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hkedition/2010-12/30/content_11773608.htm>with permission from *China Daily* (Hong Kong Edition) | 51015202530354045505560 |

**END OF READING TEXT**

**Questions**

**Refer to the text and answer Questions 1-25. Write your answers in the spaces provided. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only.**

1. In which country are the stranded Hong Kong students mentioned in the article studying in?

A. The United States of America

 B. Finland

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D |
| ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ |

 C. Holland

 D. The United Kingdom

2. Whichwords in Paragraph 1 mean the same as the following?

 A. complaining in an annoying, crying voice \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 B. group \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 C. people who stay alive \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 D. ran \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. The writer says she is ‘dumbfounded’ in Paragraph 3. Decide which of the following best describes her reaction to the parents’ attitude.

 A. depressed

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D |
| ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ |

 B. anxious

 C. surprised

 D. curious

4. Explain why the writer uses ‘greenhouse flowerets’ in Paragraph 5 to describe the Hong Kong students.

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5. While some students said the conditions of their hotels were as poor as those of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the writer thought they had not actually had such \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , and that if they had, they would have been more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for their own comfortable life.

6. Name TWO things that the Hong Kong government provided to students at the airport.

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7. Why is the word “clever” put in quotation marks in Paragraph 5?

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8. Decide if the following are true (T), false (F) or not stated (X). Put appropriate symbols in the boxes below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. | A student’s father died while he was waiting for his son to return home. |  |  |
| b. | The aeroplanes at Heathrow Airport could not take off because of the bad weather. |  |  |
| c. | The Hong Kong students showed tolerance and flexibility while stranded at the Heathrow Airport. |  |  |

9. Does the writer support the idea of sending charter flights to bring the stranded children home? Justify your answer by quoting one sentence from the text.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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10. Find idiomatic expressions from the passage that have the following meanings.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paragraph | Expression | Meaning |
| a. | 2 |  | shocked us |
| b. | 2 |  | became more obvious |
| c. | 7 |  | over-react |
| d. | 9 |  | a pleasant or easy situation |

11. Find TWO examples that the writer gives to show Hong Kong children’s poor basic life skills.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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12. What is the writer’s main purpose in writing this article?

 A. to explain what ‘Hong Kong Kid phenomenon’ is

 B. to inform the general public about how some Hong Kong parents and their children reacted to the ways the London Heathrow Airport handled problems

 C. to discuss the influence parents can have on their children

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D |
| ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ |

 D. to show the negative effects of doting parents on their children in Hong Kong

13. Which of the following is unlikely to be the writer’s thoughts?

 A. ‘What is happening to the kids in Hong Kong?’

 B. ‘Our children should be grateful for how lucky they are!’

C. ‘Why didn’t the SAR government respond more quickly?’

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D |
| ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ |

D. ‘Shouldn’t parents train their children to become more

 independent?’

14. According to the writer, what is the cause of the symptoms of the little prince / princess syndrome?

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

15. What is the overall tone of the article?

A. bitter

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D |
| ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ | ⭘ |

B. amusing

 C. critical

 D. objective

Explain your answer with reference to the article.

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| ***Letter to the Editor of China Daily***Your mother has written a letter to the editor of *China Daily* to share her views on the article. Read the letter below and help her choose the most appropriate words to express her ideas by ***underlining*** the best option as shown in the example.

|  |
| --- |
| **Our Children Must Learn to Stand on Their Own (Hands / Feet / Body)**I am writing in **(16)** *respond / response / return* to Violetta Yau’s article, ‘It’s Time City’s Children and Their Doting Parents Grew up’, which definitely serves as a good reminder to all parents in Hong Kong. As a mother myself, I also think it is time I **(17)** *revealed / reviewed / reflected* on my mode of parenting to see if I am too **(18)** *pampered / spoilt /* *indulgent* to my children. I surely don’t want my way of **(19)** *bringing / raising / rising* children to result in their poor basic life skills.It is obvious from the London Heathrow Airport incident that children nowadays are not as **(20)** *tough / fragile / vulnerable* as children in the olden days. They complain a lot in the face of **(21)** *conflict / fortune / adversity* because they have taken the comfortable life they enjoy for **(22)** *sure / granted / good*, without realising how lucky they are to live in a modern and affluent city like Hong Kong. I believe **(23)** *anything / nothing /* *something* should be done to develop our children’s problem-solving skills but a real change won’t happen **(24)** *if / unless / despite* parents change their mindset. Instead of focussing **(25)** *solely / barely / hardly* on children’s academic achievements, parents should perhaps pay more attention to their children’s personal development. **Mrs Lo, North Point**  |

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**END OF QUESTIONS**

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| **Suggested Answers** |
| 1. | D |
| 2a. | whining |
| 2b. | batch |
| 2c. | survivors |
| 2d. | raced (out) |
| 3. | C |
| 4. | The Hong Kong students are very well-protected in their bringing up, just like little flowers that are grown in a greenhouse with the best conditions provided. |
| 5. | concentration camp / experience / grateful |
| 6.  | pocket money / food / necessities / medical care (any two) |
| 7. | ‘clever’The writer does not think the children are really ‘clever’ because they lied (used deception) to achieve what they wanted. Such behaviour was more selfish than clever and the writer disapproves of it.  |
| 8a.8b.8c. | XTF |
|
|
| 9. | No. ‘Didn’t they go overboard with their concerns about their children’s well-being?’ / ‘The parents should know that when public money is involved, there should be a valid reason to justify the special arrangement.’ |
| 10a. | caused eyebrows to raise  |
| 10b. | came to the fore |
| 10c. | go overboard |
| 10d. | a bed of roses |
| 11. | The children cannot brush their teeth / take shower / eat independently / carry their school bags on their own / tie their shoelaces. (any two) |
| 12. | D to show the negative effects of doting parents on their children in Hong Kong |
| 13.  | C‘Why didn’t the SAR government respond more quickly?’ |
| 14. | The children’s over-reliance on their parents or servants for self-care and problem-solving *(lines 52-54)* |
| 15. | CThe articles tries to show the harmful effects that over-protective parents have on their children (i.e. the children are spoilt, unable to cope with adversity and lacking basic life skills). The writer expresses her clear disapproval of the doting parents’ and their pampered children’s behaviour and ends the article by advising both the parents and children in Hong Kong to grow up. |
| 16. | response |
| 17. | reflected |
| 18. | indulgent |
| 19. | raising |
| 20. | tough |
| 21. | adversity |
| 22. | granted |
| 23. | something |
| 24. | unless |
| 25. | solely |

**END OF SUGGESTED ANSWERS**

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