Sample Assessment Task 19 (Part B)

Name of Task: Discussion on social issues: Swine flu/domestic violence/genetic engineering

Oral Text-type for the Assessment: ☒ individual presentation ☒interaction

Communication Functions:

☐ describing ☐ reporting ☒ explaining ☒ discussing

☐ classifying ☐ comparing ☐ persuading ☐ others: _____

Audience--teacher plus:	**Target audience:**	**Role(s) of audience:**
☐ a student partner	☒ fellow students	☒ giving non-verbal responses only
☒ small groups	☐ students from other classes	☐ questioning/commenting
☐ class	☐ teacher(s)	☐ interacting with no limitations
☐ more than one class	☐ others: _____	

Where on this continuum would you place the assessment task?

☒ spontaneous, informal dialogue, e.g. small group interaction	☐ interactive, planned yet dialogic, e.g. semi-formal group discussion	☐ individual long turn of planned, spoken text, e.g. news reporting, story telling	☐ individual long turn that is planned, formal and coherent, e.g. spoken report, a speech

Choice/task of the elective(s) used for the assessment:

☐ Drama ☐ Poems and Songs ☐ Short Stories ☐ Popular Culture

☐ Sports Communication ☒ Social Issues ☐ Debating ☐ Workplace Communication

Topic/text/materials/resources used for the assessment activities(e.g. websites, debate topics/social issues, books):
Family problems (adapted from HKALE UE Section D 1999-Set 2) (see Appendix 23), and Genetic Engineering (adapted from HKALE UE Section D 2000-Set 14) (see Appendix 24) and Swine Flu *(adapted from HKALE UE Section D 2004-Set 16)* Worksheets on Six Thinking Hats *(adapted from http://www.debonogroup.com/six_thinking_hats.php and http://www.cap.nsw.edu.au/bb_site_intro/secondary_modules/genetic_engineering/g_e_scaffold.doc)* (see Appendix 25)

Description of activities leading to assessment	1. Teacher gives students a newspaper cutting exercise on one theme (swine flu, domestic violence and genetic engineering, etc.) (see Appendices 23 and 24). 2. Students give a two-minute individual presentation on the newspaper cutting exercise. The rest of the class jot notes while listening, and one student reports back the main points. 3. Teacher talks about the Six Thinking Hats (see Appendix 25). 4. Students read 4 passages about family problems from HKALE UE Section D 1999-2 (see Appendix 23) and complete a short writing task as preparation for a two-minute presentation on the next day. 5. Students do an oral practice using past papers of the HKALE UE.

Assessment activity (Group Interaction)	Task – Swine Flu Your class has been asked by your English teacher to think of some ideas for a drama concerning health issues in Hong Kong. In your group, consider some of the effects of Swine Flu on Hong Kong people and the city itself that you would like to feature in your drama. Your play may include personal experiences and information that is relevant to the topic of Swine Flu and Hong Kong. *(adapted from HKALE UE Section D 2004-Set 16)* Task – Domestic Violence RTHK is planning to produce a radio programme on domestic violence in Hong Kong. Your group has been asked to think of some ideas for the programme. In your group, consider the reasons for and problems associated with domestic violence, and how children may be affected by it. *(adapted from HKALE UE Section D 1999-Set 2)* Task – Genetic Engineering TVB is planning to produce a programme on young people's attitudes towards genetic engineering. It has invited a group of students to take part in a live discussion on air. Your group is meeting together to discuss what points you want to make. You may talk about food engineering, as well as human and animal cloning and what the possible developments will be in the 21st century. *(adapted from HKALE UE Section D 2000-Set 14)*
Post assessment activity	1. Students complete the self-reflection form. 2. The teacher asks for the best aspects of their interaction / areas for improvement. 3. The teacher gives feedback to the students on how to improve next time.

Adapted from an assessment task developed by Buddhist Mau Fung Memorial College

Part One – Individual Presentations *(1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)*

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

(A)

China's only-children

China's one-child policy is of great interest to the rest of the world. It is a bold experiment in controlling the problem of over-population. When this policy came into effect a number of people voiced their concern and now, over 10 years later, the world is watching to see how the only-children in China are growing up.

The children born under the one-child policy are now teenagers and they live in a country which is more open than when they were born. When their parents were young, life in China was extremely hard. Many people lived in poverty and hunger. Now that these people have a child of their own, it seems they are doing everything possible to give them a better life than the one they experienced. Parents are providing their children with more food and clothing, better schooling, and imported luxuries to compensate for their own lack of childhood comfort.

However, some parents are now worrying that they may have spoiled their children by giving them too much. There have been examples of children behaving in an extreme way if their parents ignore their requests. Recently, a teenage boy threatened to jump from the roof of a building because his mother had refused to cook his favourite dumplings for breakfast. It seems that some only-children do not like to be told 'No' and will resort to violence and even murder to get what they want.

David Wu, a social scientist at the University of Hong Kong, believes it is too early to say what these children will be like when they grow into adults. 'There are many possible outcomes. The children may grow into rebels who will throw out the Chinese Communist Party, or, equally, they could become even more nationalistic and extreme in their communist views.'

(B)

Are youngest children different?

The position you were born into in your family may have a very strong influence on your personality, according to American social scientist Doctor Frank Sulloway. For more than 20 years the doctor has been working on a study of the lives and families of over 6,000 famous people.

Doctor Sulloway's research seems to suggest that the youngest children in families are more hardworking and more prepared to accept new and different ideas than their older brothers and sisters. The results of his studies indicate that, because a person is born the youngest in the family, he or she has to fight and adapt in order to survive. Consequently the personalities of these children are affected by this early experience of competition with their older siblings. They have the ability and the motivation to try and find their own route through life.

In all areas of life, the youngest will try to do things differently from the older children in the family. This could be because they are not as good as their brothers and sisters in certain areas. Perhaps, for example, a younger sister has tried but failed to play the same sport as her older sister. This failure may have prompted the younger sister to choose a totally different sport in order to succeed. More likely though, she knows it will be safer not to even attempt anything which her older sister is already successful at.

Some famous youngest children in Hong Kong families include Emily Lau Wai-hing, a politician who has spent many years fighting for democracy and human rights. She is the eighteenth child – her father married twice. Also, Canto-pop singer Josie Ho is the youngest daughter in her family and is famous for her outrageous stage shows.

adapted from HKALE UE Section D 1999-Set 2

(c) First-born children

If you are the oldest child in your family, you might be interested to hear what some psychologists say about being the first-born. These psychologists have developed theories about how people's personalities are shaped by their position in the family. Apparently, the first-born is likely to be the most similar to its parents. When the child grows into an adult it may share similar views on the world to its parents and possibly even have the same occupation. For example, it is very common for the first child of a teacher to become a teacher as well.

For the first few years of life, it is the parents who have the greatest influence on the child. Even when there is a domestic helper or grandparent in the home, research shows that the parents will still have the strongest effect on the child's personality. In fact, many psychologists now believe that a child's basic personality is formed by the age of three, so the later influences of school, college and work, however important, will do little to change the character of a child.

Perhaps it is not surprising that the oldest child grows into a younger version of its parents. Firstly, there are no older children in the family to copy or learn from. The first-born child's only role model at home is its parents, who demonstrate every day, deliberately or unknowingly, their views on the world, their sense of style, taste in food, clothes, humour and other things.

Another important factor, of course, is that the mother and father are experiencing and experimenting with their new roles as parents, which must have an effect on the first-born child. By the time the second child is born, parents are generally more relaxed and experienced at the job.

(d) One-parent families

Not everybody grows up in a home with both parents. There are more one-parent families around than you might imagine. In fact, there are many situations which can arise causing either a mother or father to be left alone to take care of the children at home.

Some parents separate and divorce, leaving the children with only one parent. It's not always the mother who becomes the main child-carer, sometimes the father looks after the children. Alternatively, the parents could share the responsibility so that the children spend an agreed amount of time in each of their respective homes.

It is not unusual in the modern world for one parent to live and work abroad. Many families are split because one of the parents has to take a job overseas. The children have to adjust to living without one of their parents for long periods of time. In Hong Kong there are many Filipinas who have left their children at home in the Philippines with their fathers. Hong Kong Chinese fathers can also be away from home for months at a time if they work on the Mainland. Holidays may be the only time when the whole family is reunited.

Perhaps the saddest situation is when one parent dies and the children are left with the surviving parent. For local teacher Robert Chan it was a tragic shock when his wife became ill with cancer. She died within months and suddenly Robert and his two children became a single-parent family. Robert chose to leave his teaching job because it meant he didn't see enough of his children, and he started writing books from home. Now he spends a lot of time with his children and fits in his writing work when they are at school or asleep.

Part Two – Group Discussion *(Total time: 12 minutes)*

The Drama Club at your school has decided to put on a play about families. Students have been asked to think of some ideas for the drama.

You and your friends want the story-line to be about the problems most families face and how children may be affected by them. Along with these issues, you may also wish to talk about how you will present the drama.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

The examiners cannot answer any questions about the instructions or the task you have to discuss. If you have any questions, you may discuss them among yourselves and that will be an acceptable part of your group discussion which will be assessed.

Part One – Individual Presentations *(1½–2 minutes each; total time: 8 minutes)*

Read the following passage. You may make notes to use as the basis for your presentation. If you wish, you can add your own opinions or ideas.

(A)

A change for the better?

The process of mixing two types of plants together to make a whole new type of plant is called genetic, or food engineering. This may seem like a very modern thing to do, but in fact, studies of old civilizations have revealed that ancient farmers in Central America were using similar techniques 7000 years ago.

The natives of Mexico were practising food engineering when they took one variety of wild grass and crossed it with another type of grass to make what we know as corn or maize. For hundreds of years the farmers selected the best crops and mixed them together so that the good genes, or biological strengths, of the corn continued and the bad genes were lost, thereby improving crops. Eventually the gene for the new corn crop was fixed to produce the corn we all eat today.

The food engineering which takes place nowadays still involves corn, as well as many other plants we eat, especially fruit. There are completely new fruits, such as the green kiwi, and new types of apples which are sweeter and more juicy than other varieties. As well as these, there are seedless grapes and oranges, all of which are easier to eat than the original varieties which contain pips and seeds. Another result of genetic engineering is crops which are resistant to insects.

Recently, however, there has been a lot of controversy about changing the genes of natural food crops. Some people are afraid that new developments in food engineering may affect the environment in ways we cannot predict. For example, crops which are more difficult for insects to attack may result in a drop in insect numbers. This in turn could result in a shortage of food for birds, which depend on insects to survive.

(B)

Improving the human race

A famous British scientist, Professor Stephen Hawking, recently gave a speech in London about the future of science. Much of what he talked about concerned research into the creation of human life in a laboratory. At one time, such an idea would only have appeared in science fiction and horror stories. Now, however, it is close to becoming a reality.

Professor Hawking made many references to the discovery of DNA, the chemical code which makes up all living creatures. In each living cell, this code appears in a line, just like a supermarket bar code which tells the cash machine the price of an item. Hawking made the point that every DNA code can be copied. This means that scientists will be able to copy the DNA contained in human cells and create new cells from them. Eventually, they will be able to make 'clones', or copies of naturally-born humans.

Even if they are unable to reproduce a whole human, Hawking explained, scientists will be able to use their research to alter the genes of future generations of babies. They may, for example, be able to change the babies' genetic code in order to get rid of weaknesses. In theory, scientists will be able to help mothers produce children with strong physical and mental attributes, such as healthy bones and teeth and highly-developed brains.

Professor Hawking, along with many other scientists and religious leaders, believes this kind of scientific experimentation should be banned by the government, however. He does not think it is a healthy or useful branch of science. He warns that copying human cells raises many ethical issues which have not been adequately discussed. He realizes, though, that even if DNA experiments are forbidden, some scientists will perform them anyway.

adapted from HKALE UE Section D 2000-Set 14

Improving the quality of food

Everyone knows that scientists are able to modify and improve plants and crops. These scientists can actually take the genes, or biological information, from a fruit and change it so that the fruit grows bigger and more tasty. Farmers regularly try to improve the quality of the food they produce with the help of scientists, but recently people have become concerned that 'genetically modified' (GM) food may not be totally safe.

Many experts claim that there are no risks attached to eating GM food. However, other experts are worried that not enough tests have been conducted on GM food and that little is known about its long-term effect on health. Those who support GM food claim there is no evidence to prove it is dangerous. Those who are against it say there is no evidence to prove it is *not* dangerous, because it will take many years before any negative effects are seen.

Environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth have asked governments to pass laws that force food producers to label any food that has been genetically modified. Officials have responded positively in many countries, believing that consumers need to know what they are buying if they are concerned about the safety of GM food. The British government, for example, has agreed to label GM food in shops and restaurants.

Some pressure groups in Britain would like to ban GM food altogether. They argue that the government is putting money before health and safety with respect to GM food. However, as the rest of Europe, America and Asia are selling GM food, the British government believes it needs to sell it too so that UK food producers can continue to be competitive. It remains to be seen whether GM food will ever be fully accepted.

Changing the nature of animals

Three years ago, scientists from all over the world were talking about a sheep called Dolly. Dolly was special because she had been created by scientists who were experimenting with DNA. They had taken a cell from a normal sheep, developed this cell in a laboratory, then planted it inside a female so that it would grow normally and have a natural birth. When she was born, Dolly caused a great deal of discussion on the subject of cloning (creating animals from the cells of an existing one).

Since that time, there have been many more experiments involving the creation of 'test-tube' animals. The public usually only get to hear the success stories, but last year, Doctor Griffin, a British scientist working in the institute which produced Dolly the sheep, wrote a report highlighting some of the failures.

The report covered some of the latest experiments which involved the cloning of cows. Many of the cows died at birth or several weeks later as a result of ill-formed body organs. Several of the cows that survived were born with deformities such as missing legs. The report also revealed that there could be sudden changes in the cows' immune system, meaning that they could easily die of something as harmless as a common cold. Those cows that survived are not expected to have a very long life.

Doctor Griffin concluded that there are clearly problems attached to making clones of animals. 'It's not at all surprising that it doesn't work all the time,' he said. 'We know very little about this new area of science.' In spite of the current high rate of deaths, scientists who support the idea of cloning are confident that after a lot more research into the subject, they will soon be able to produce healthier animals.

Part Two – Group Discussion ***(Total time: 12 minutes)***

RTHK is planning to produce a programme on young people's attitudes to genetic engineering. It has invited a group of students to take part in a live discussion on air.

You are a member of a group of four students who have been invited to take part. You are meeting together to discuss what points you want to make. You may want to talk about food engineering, as well as human and animal cloning and what the possible developments will be in the 21st century.

You do not need to come to a final decision or to reach a conclusion to your discussion. You should try to discuss both the content and procedures involved in your discussion task. You cannot take notes or write during the discussion.

The examiners cannot answer any questions about the instructions or the task you have to discuss. If you have any questions, you may discuss them among yourselves and that will be an acceptable part of your group discussion which will be assessed.

1. Select a topic
2. Revise the function of each hat before starting your research
3. Place your notes under the relevant hats

CHOSEN TOPIC: _____

Remember the Six Thinking Hats?

6 Thinking Hats

- White hat – Facts & Information
- Red hat – Feelings & Emotions
- Black hat – Critical Judgement
- Yellow hat – Positive Judgement
- Green hat – Alternatives and Creativity
- Blue hat – The Big Picture

Application

- **Initial Ideas - Blue, White, Green, Blue**
- **Choosing between alternatives - Blue, White, (Green), Yellow, Black, Red, Blue**
- **Identifying solutions - Blue, White, Black, Green, Blue**
- **Solving Problems - Blue, White, Green, Red, Yellow, Black, Green, Blue**
- **Performance Review - Blue, Red, White, Yellow, Black, Green Red, Blue**

	Before you do any research, write in the space below how you currently feel about the topic. Write only one sentence and DO NOT give examples or justify your answer.
	Use the white hat to list the facts. It can be used to report on someone else's feelings BUT NOT your own. Use the white hat to separate fact from speculation and to identify areas that need further actions or research. Include a brief description or definition of your chosen topic and any other relevant factual information.

adapted from http://www.debonogroup.com/six_thinking_hats.php and http://www.cap.nsw.edu.au/bb_site_intro/secondary_modules/genetic_engineering/g_e_scaffold.doc

	Use the yellow hat to list the values of an idea, its benefits. Give reasons or examples to support the idea. List the advantages and support each with an example and/ or a reason.

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	Use the black hat to point out difficulties and potential problems. Give reasons or examples to support the idea. List the disadvantages and support each with an example and/ or a reason.
	Use the green hat to think about alternatives and new ideas. Explain what can be done and why.
	Use the blue hat for summaries, overviews and conclusions.

adapted from http://www.debonogroup.com/six_thinking_hats.php and http://www.cap.nsw.edu.au/bb_site_intro/secondary_modules/genetic_engineering/g_e_scaffold.doc