

**NORTHBROOKS  
SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
SOARING YET ROOTED

*Sec 2 Subject  
Information:  
Humanities  
(Exp)*



# Humanities subjects for Exp stream:

- All students will offer a humanities subject comprising Social Studies and an Elective Humanities Subject
- Additionally, students who are keen and are eligible\*, may choose to offer Full Geography or Full History.

Social Studies

Elective Geography/History/English Literature

Full Geography/Full History#

\*Eligibility criteria includes a good pass of 65% in the humanities subjects.

#Subject will be offered, taking into consideration actual demand, resource availability, and timetable planning. Students must choose a different full humanities subject from the elective. i.e. Students cannot take Elective Geography and Full Geography.



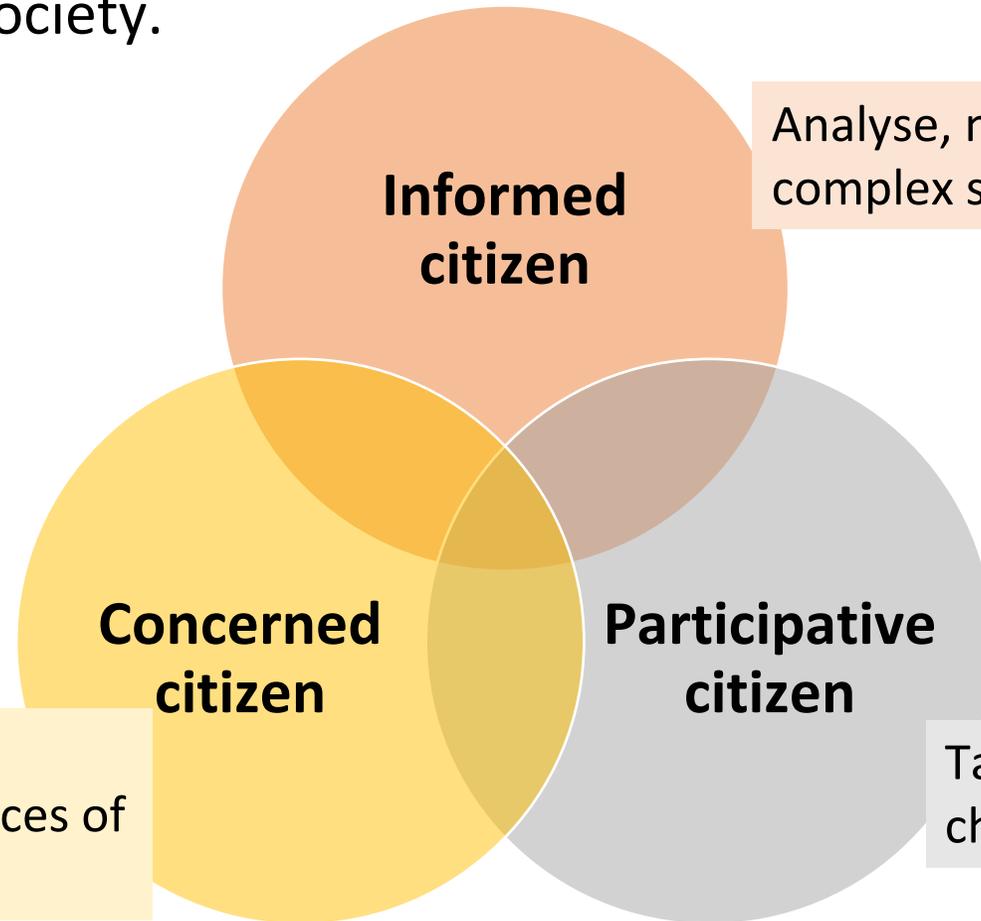
# Difference between Full and Elective Humanities?

- Full Humanities subjects offer greater breadth in terms of content
- Each Full Humanities subject, e.g. History, is considered as one subject in the national examination.
- Humanities is a compulsory subject for all students and is a combination of Social Studies and one elective Humanities subject (either Geography/History/Literature).
- Full Humanities is an optional subject and is of **higher rigour and demand**. Students who have a **strong interest** in the subject can consider offering the subject. Having a strong command of English language would be beneficial as the Full Humanities subjects require a significant amount of writing and elaboration/explanation of concepts.



# Social Studies in a nutshell

- Social Studies trains you to be an effective citizen, with a desire to contribute responsibly to the society.



Analyse, negotiate and manage complex situations.

Awareness of the ethical considerations and consequences of decision making.

Take responsible actions to effect change for the good of society.



# Social Studies Syllabus content

Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship & Governance

Working for the good of society: Whose responsibility is it?



Issue 2: Living in a Diverse Society

Living in a diverse society: Is harmony achievable?



Issue 3: Being part of a Globalised World

Being part of a globalised world: Is it necessarily good?



# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

- Assessment Objective 1: Knowledge with Understanding
- Assessment Objective 2: Interpreting and Evaluating Sources / Given Information
- Assessment Objective 3: Constructing Explanations

# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

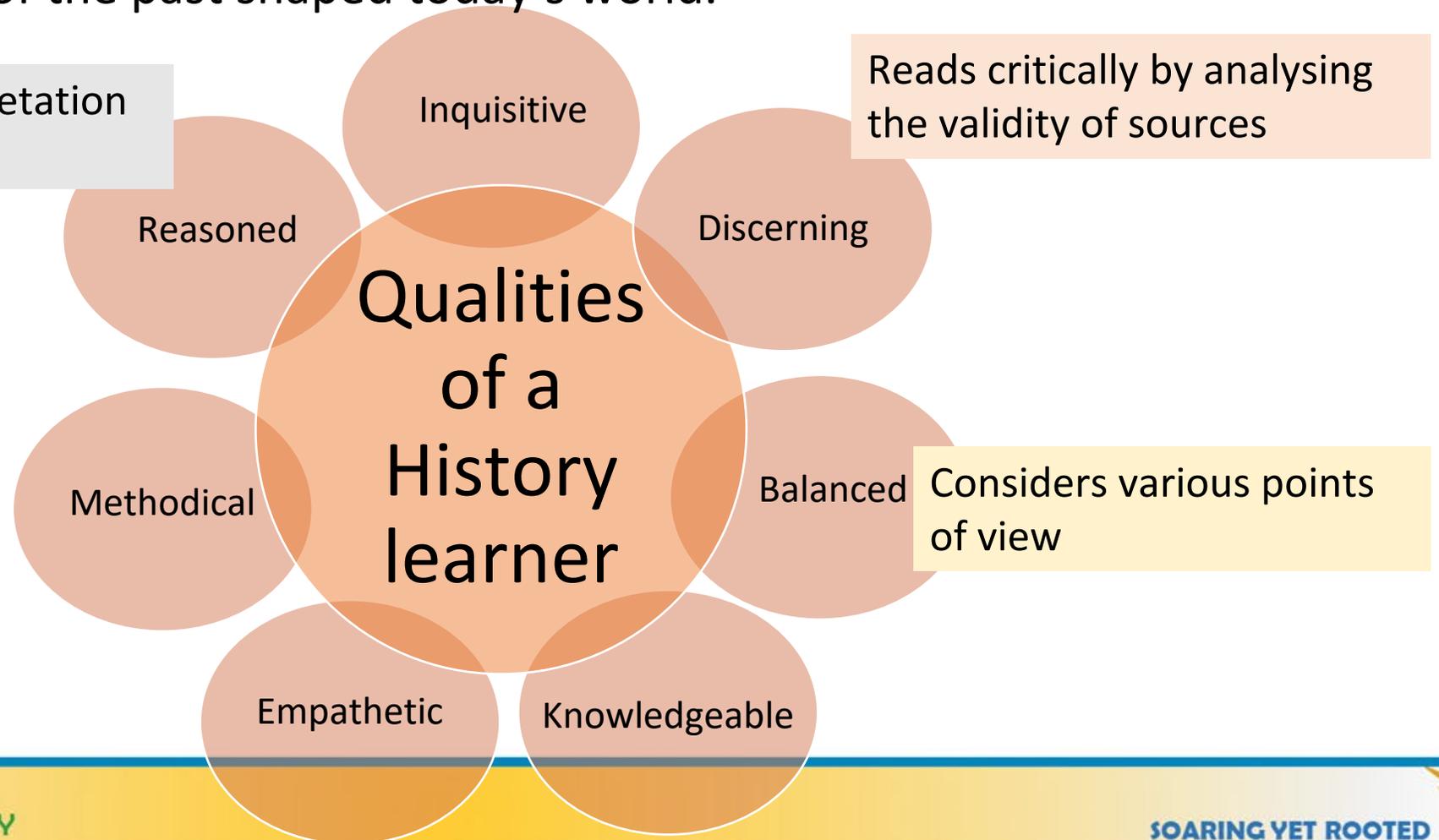
- One paper of 1 hour 45 minutes
- Paper comprises 2 compulsory sections:
  - Section A: 35 marks (Source-based Case Study)
  - Section B: 15 marks (Structured-response Questions)

# Elective History in a nutshell

- History prepares you to thrive as citizens in a complex and fast-changing world by equipping you with the knowledge and skills to understand how forces, events and developments of the past shaped today's world.

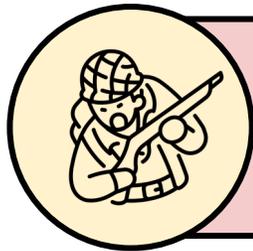
Constructs historical interpretation based on sound arguments

Reads critically by analysing the validity of sources



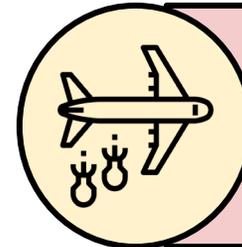
# Elective History Syllabus content

## Challenges to European Dominance after World War I



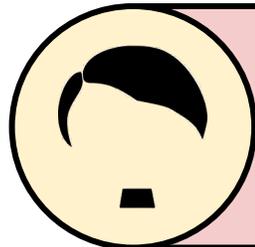
### After World War I

Paris Peace Conference



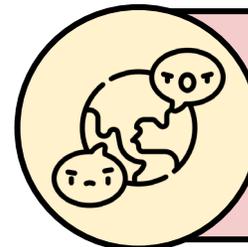
### War in Europe and Asia

Outbreak of WWII in Europe and Asia Pacific  
and reasons for end of WWII



### Rise of Authoritarian Regimes

Nazi Germany  
Militarist Japan



### The Cold War

Korean War  
Vietnam War  
The end of the Cold War



# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

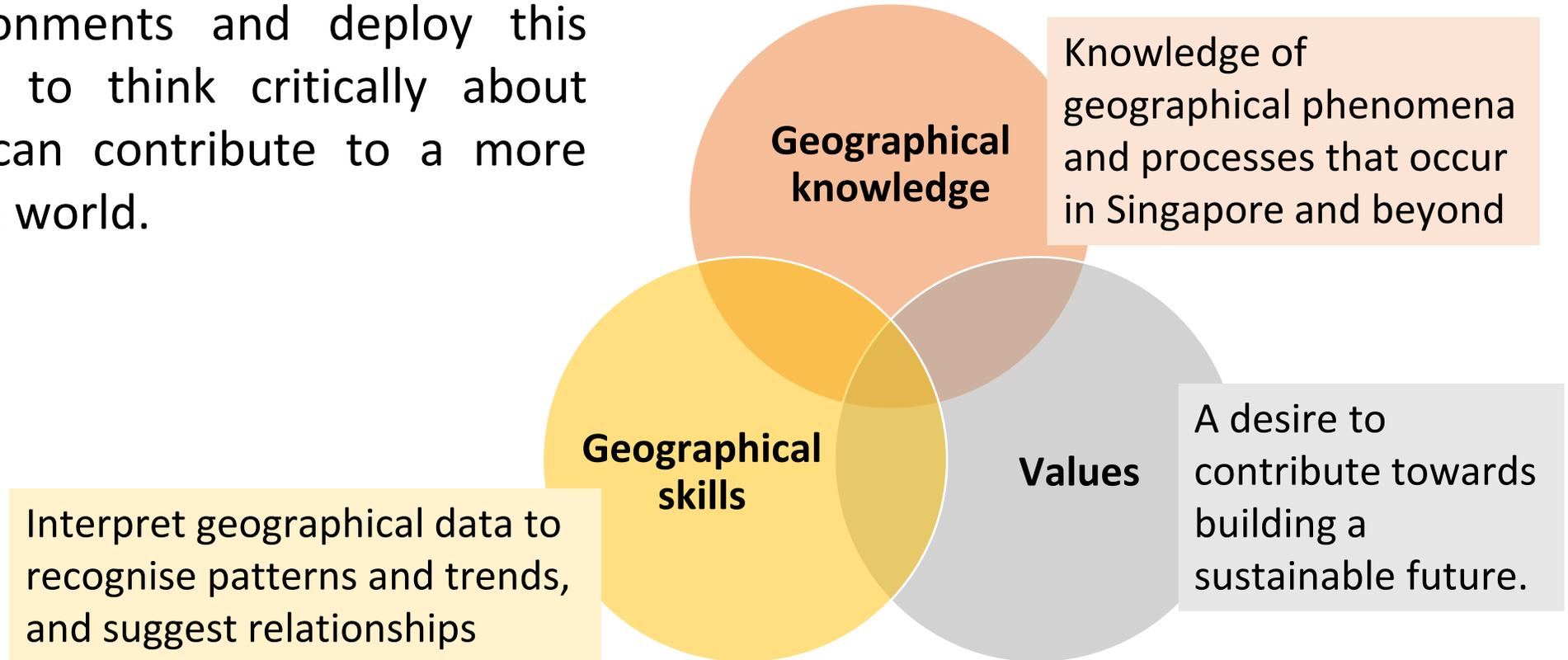
- Assessment Objective 1: Deploy knowledge
- Assessment Objective 2: Construct Explanation and Communicate Historical Knowledge
- Assessment Objective 3: Interpret and Evaluate Source Materials

# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

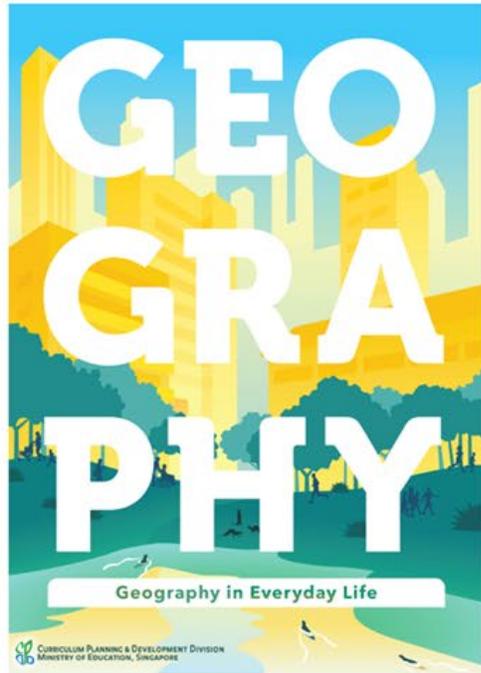
- One paper of 1 hour 50 minutes
- Paper comprises of 2 sections:
  - Section A: 30 marks (Source-based Case study)
  - Section B: 20 marks (Essay Questions)

# Elective Geography in a nutshell

- Geography trains you to see the connections between people, places and environments and deploy this knowledge to think critically about how you can contribute to a more sustainable world.

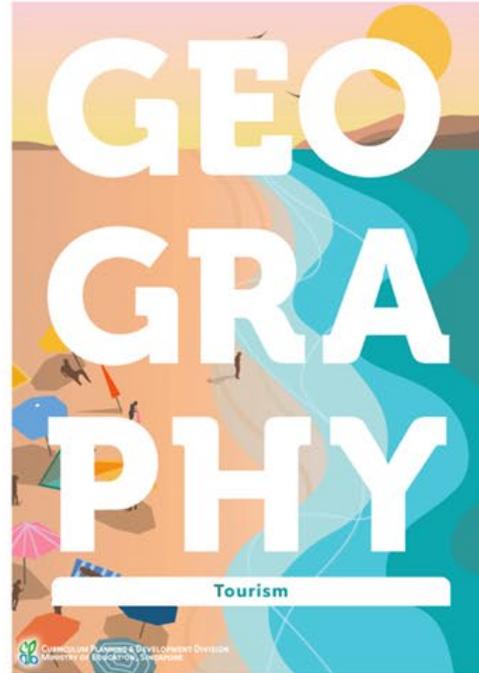


# Elective Geography Syllabus content



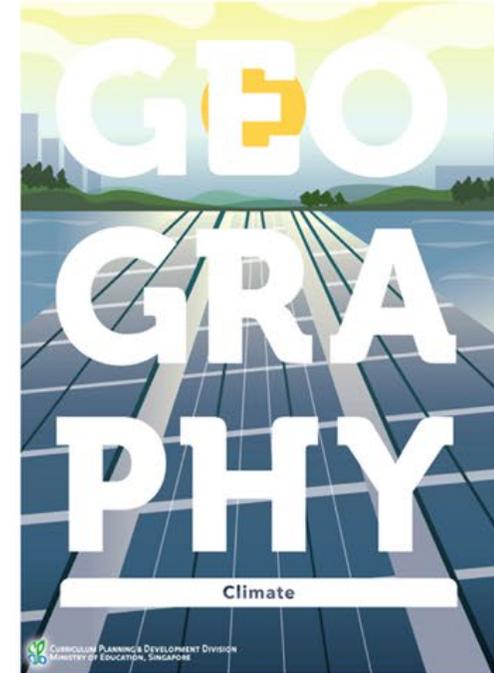
Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Geography in Everyday  
Life***



Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Tourism***



Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Climate***

# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

- Assessment Objective 1: Knowledge with Understanding
- Assessment Objective 2: Skills and Analysis
- Assessment Objective 3: Judgement and Decision-Making

# Objectives & Scheme of Assessment

- One paper of 1 hour 45 minutes
- Paper comprises 2 compulsory sections:
  - Section A: 32 marks
    - Question 1: Structured Question on 'Geography in Everyday Life'
    - Question 2: Structured Question on 'Tourism'
  - Section B: 18 marks
    - Question 3: Structured Question on 'Climate'

# Literature Elective Syllabus in a nutshell

## Syllabus objectives:

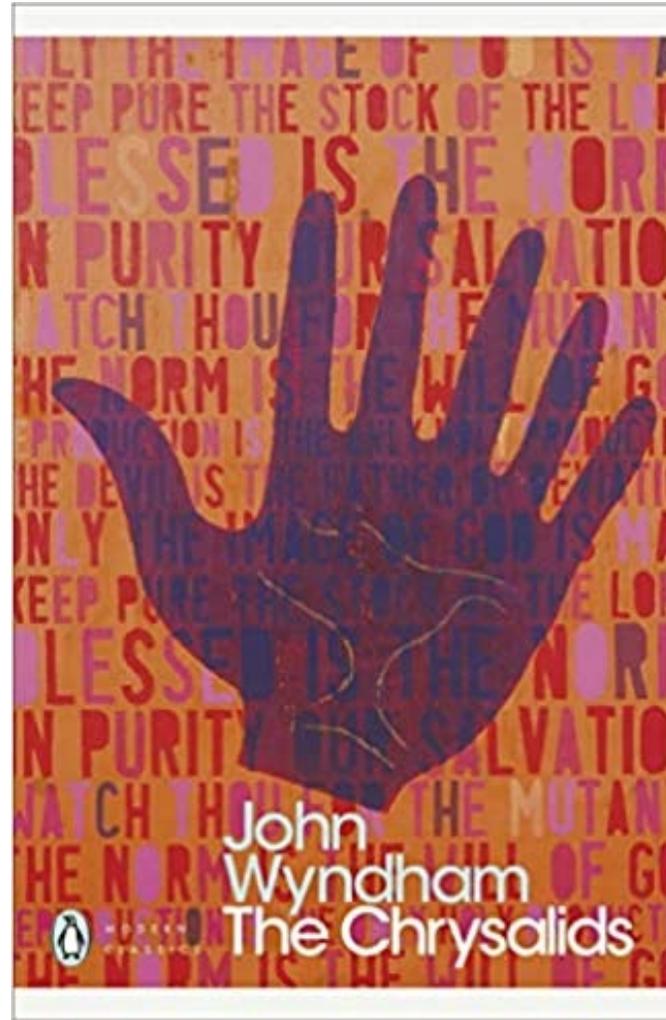
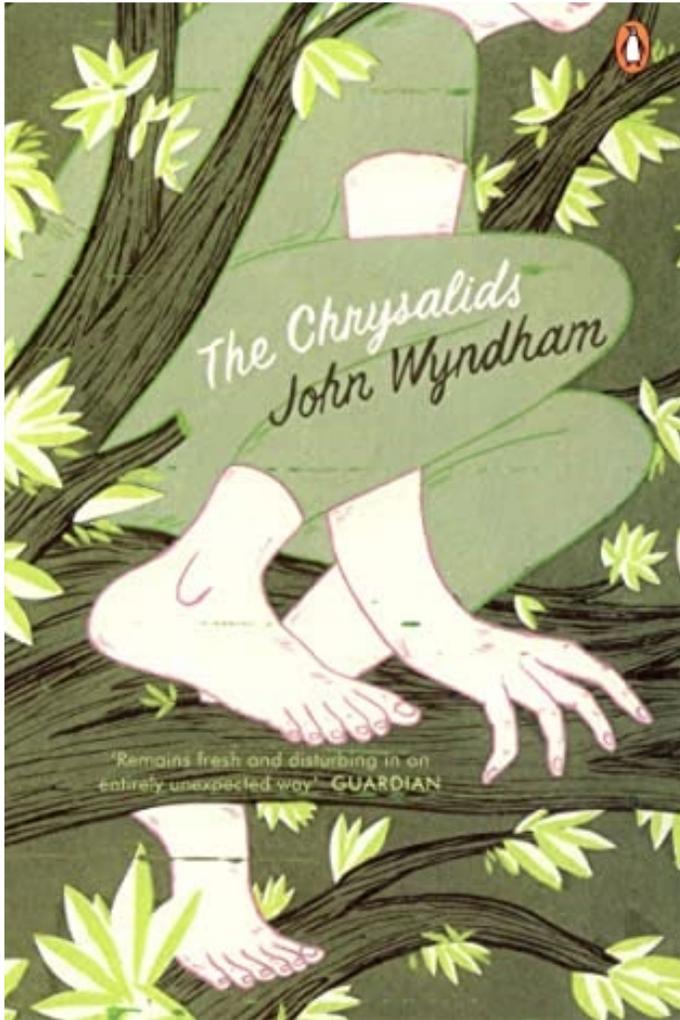
- To empower students to make meaning of texts, and see themselves and the world from diverse perspectives
- To inspire students to empathise with others, to find their own voice as they reflect on the human condition with discernment, and to consider the impact of their beliefs and actions on society

## Exam syllabus:

At the end of the 2-year syllabus, students will sit for a written exam that consists of essay and passage-based questions for the set text and an unseen poem.



# Elective Literature Syllabus content



Over the course of 2 years, students of elective Literature will cover **ONE set text** in-depth through discussions and essay writing practices.

The set text in Northbrooks is ***"The Chrysalids"*** by John Wyndham.

This will form the first 25% combined humanities paper (SS/Lit).

# Elective Literature Syllabus content



Over the course of 2 years, students of elective Literature will cover several poems from local and foreign sources as practice to get them ready to analyse an unseen poem on their own during the national exam.

The final exam will test students for an UNSEEN poem (i.e. not taught in class).

This will form the next 25% of the humanities paper (SS/Lit).



# Assessment

## Humanities (Social Studies, Literature in English) Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (2020) (Syllabus 2274)

### 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 (2274) 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

### SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

One paper will be set (Paper 2274/02). 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
<b>Prose and Unseen Poetry</b>	1 hour 40 minutes [50%]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There will be two sections in this paper.</li><li>Candidates will select <u>one</u> question from each of the two sections.</li><li>In total, candidates will answer <u>two</u> questions.</li><li>Each question is 25% of the total weighting.</li></ul> <p><b>Section A: Prose [25%]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li><li>Candidates will answer <u>one</u> question [25%] based on one of the six set texts.</li><li>For every year of examination, <u>one or two</u> Singapore texts will be set.</li></ul> <p><b>Section B: Unseen Poetry [25%]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There are no set texts in this section.</li><li>There will be a choice of <u>two</u> unseen poems with <u>one</u> question set on each poem.</li><li>Candidates will answer <u>one</u> of the two questions [25%].</li><li>For every year of examination, <u>one</u> question will be set on a Singapore text.</li></ul>

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### Band descriptors for the assessment of O-Level set text questions

	Description
21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pays close attention to the terms of the question. Top answers take advantage of the opportunities offered by the question.</li> <li>Demonstrates sound understanding of the text. Better answers reveal some insights into the text's main concerns and the effects achieved by the author.</li> <li>Demonstrates a consistent viewpoint, and is substantiated through judicious selection of textual evidence.</li> <li>Clear, organised and coherent.</li> </ul>
18–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally well focused on the terms of the question.</li> <li>Demonstrates understanding of the text's main concerns and some knowledge of how the author conveys these.</li> <li>Demonstrates relevant and developed substantiation, with apt selection of textual evidence.</li> <li>Clear and competent, but laboured arguments may be present. The response may lapse into narrative occasionally.</li> </ul>
15–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant to the main thrust of the question.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Response is substantiated with appropriate selection of textual evidence, though not consistently done.</li> <li>Generally coherent, with evidence of the development of an argument with tracts of narrative.</li> </ul>
12–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally relevant to the question though the link may not always be sustained.</li> <li>Demonstrates some understanding of the basic concerns of the text but does not show any attempt at interpretation.</li> <li>Response is in the form of generalisations but selection of textual evidence is generally relevant.</li> <li>Largely narrative in approach and sketchy in development, but a sense of a very basic argument can be discerned.</li> </ul>
9–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has peripheral bearing on the question. Often includes information from the text without perceiving its significance.</li> <li>Demonstrates a little understanding of the text and its concerns.</li> <li>Coherent only in parts. Ideas communicated with some difficulty.</li> </ul>
0–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Some misreading of the text and its concerns.</li> <li>Almost incoherent and lacks direction or focus.</li> </ul> <p>Answers in the lower half of this band (0–4 marks) may reflect no understanding of the text and the question, and may be incoherent, with meaning obscured by poor expression.</p> <p><b>Short work:</b> 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 O-Level unseen questions

	Description
21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an intelligent grasp of subject matter. Top answers will display freshness of insight. There is good analysis and evaluation of content and presentation, and evidence of the ability to critically appreciate the text.</li> <li>Pays close attention to the terms of the question.</li> <li>Sensitive and informed personal response showing close engagement with the text. Ideas are developed effectively and well supported by textual evidence.</li> <li>Highly coherent argument, with clarity of thought and expression.</li> </ul>
18–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows a competent grasp of subject matter. There is evidence of analysis and evaluation which is likely to reflect conscientiousness rather than sophistication.</li> <li>Generally well focused on the terms of the question.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Thorough, though rather unsophisticated, argument. Work is coherent and clear, though it may lack polish and subtlety of expression.</li> </ul>
15–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows sound basic understanding of the text and of how to respond to it. There is some evidence of analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>Addresses the question though it may be brief, mechanical or superficial.</li> <li>Shows some engagement, and is substantiated with appropriate references to the text.</li> <li>Demonstrates coherence, and is clear.</li> </ul>
12–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Does not fully address the demands of the question.</li> <li>Shows engagement with the text but with inappropriate substantiation.</li> <li>Fairly coherent. Expression of ideas may be hampered by a lack of clarity or accuracy but the meaning is still conveyed.</li> </ul>
9–11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only superficial understanding of the text.</li> <li>Shows little awareness of the demands of the question.</li> <li>Shows minimal engagement with the text.</li> <li>Not very coherent but manages to convey thoughts/comments with some difficulty.</li> </ul>
0–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Almost no understanding of the text and question.</li> <li>Demonstrates an attempt to communicate understanding of the text.</li> </ul> <p>Answers in the lower half of this band (0–4 marks) may reflect no understanding of the text and the question, and may be incoherent, with meaning obscured by poor expression.</p> <p><b>Short work:</b> 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>

There are 2 questions in each elective Literature paper, and each question is worth 25 marks.

The questions are marked holistically using the rubrics shown.



**SECTION A [25 marks]**

Answer **one** question from this section.

**PHILLIP HOLDEN (ed.): *Hook and Eye: Stories from the Margins***

**Write the number of the question you have chosen in the margin. Remember to support your ideas with relevant details from the text.**

- 1 **Either** (a) How does Latha make the protagonist such a sympathetic character in *Identity*? 5
- Or** (b) Explore the ways in which Karen Kwek vividly conveys the funeral proceedings of Mun's mother in *The Moral Support of Presence*.
- Or** (c) Read this passage from *The Boy with The Missing Thumb* (by Felix Cheong) carefully, and then answer the questions that follow it:

His hero, Fan, never felt the urge to take a meal, nap, leak or dump. He could charge up Butterfly Mountain, sword flashing, long blue hair fluttering in the harsh wind, and bring down soldiers as easily as a hot knife slicing butter. This killing machine could live out the days and last the nights without feeling a drench of sweat, the pull of hunger and certainly, not a reservoir of urine. He could chop, cleave and cut, without missing a target or beat, till he leapt up the levels to save his beloved, Yan-er, from the evil General Lee. 5

Gregory sat up, encouraging a sigh from his bed that had endured all of his 104 kilos the past 64 hours. He bent over, bones protesting, muscles groaning, and peered under the bed. It was not exactly a pleasant sight or smell that greeted him. There were cobwebs whose creators had long left home; hair balls and streaks of damp dirt of unidentifiable origin; a half-eaten quarter-pounder on which a small industry of ants had already begun work (he might dust it off and microwave it as a snack); four empty Coke cans and a thumb drive containing an illegal download of *The Warriors of Butterfly Mountain 4*. Nothing that looked anything remotely like a thumb. 15

Gregory let his eyes wander around his room. Within reach on his desk was his mobile phone – no one had texted him the last 48 hours – his DS and PSP, still being recharged and, of course, his lifeline, the pinnacle of man's mastery over machines: the Xbox game control. At the far corner, a clutter of homework, half or briefly-done. He would eventually sort it out, he had promised himself. A few copy-and-paste clicks off Google search and it would be a steal. Mrs Lim was not very Internet-savvy so she would not be able to spot his plagiarism anyway. But first, the mission possible of knocking big bully Nick off his big-ass perch. 25

"You never back down from a bully," Dad told Gregory once when he was in Primary 4. Nick's daily taunts of 'Fat-soh, Fat-soh' had threatened to unravel Gregory's sepia-tinged childhood and lead him into the valley of darkness. He often came home close to tears, his shoulders slumped into a shape resembling despair. 30

"Why am I so fat?" he wailed. "Why does Nick have to tease me just because I like food?" Dad, himself a foodie whose ideas of a pub crawl was to pick at finger food along the bars of Clarke Quay, would not hear anymore of his son's whimpering.

"Be a man, son," he said, thumping himself on the chest. "Once you back down, there is no going back. This bully will not stop. He will just continue taunting you until he breaks you. You have to stand up to him." 35

But the next day, Gregory did not – or could not – stand up to Nick when he saw him at a distance. Nick was the proud owner of a something-colour belt in taekwondo and he made sure the world knew about it by demonstrating his kicks and punches during recess. In Gregory's mind, the possibility of trauma to his body was real and far outweighed the fear of verbal abuse. He figured dodging was as much a legitimate strategy as a full-frontal assault. So, he would not leave the classroom during recess, nibbling on a sandwich Mom has packed. Sandwiches tended to taste better anyway in the company of a Gameboy which he would secretly stash away in his bag. 40 45

Over the past four years, as he built his ability in the one area that mattered most to his classmates – the all-conquering *The Warriors of Butterfly Mountain* video game – Gregory knew his one shot at redemption was beckoning. Despite his big build, Gregory was surprisingly adept at the console. By beating Nick's score, he would show he was no pushover, that 'Fat-soh' was, in fact, worth his weight in gaming points. Except now, of course, he weighed slightly less without a right thumb. How heavy was a thumb anyway? 140, maybe 240 grams? Once he located it, he would know. 50

- (i) In what ways does Cheong's writing make **this passage** so memorable?
- (ii) Explore **one** other moment in the story that Cheong's writing makes memorable for you.

**SECTION B [25 marks]**

**Answer Question 2 or Question 3**

**Write the number of the question you have chosen in the margin. Remember to support your ideas with relevant details from the poem.**

- 2 Read this poem carefully, and then answer the questions that follow it.

*Valentine*

Not a red rose or a satin heart.

I give you an onion.  
It is a moon wrapped in brown paper.  
It promises light  
like the careful undressing of love. 5

Here.  
It will blind you with tears  
like a lover.  
It will make your reflection  
a wobbling photo of grief. 10

I am trying to be truthful.

Not a cute card or a kissogram.

I give you an onion.  
Its fierce kiss will stay on your lips,  
possessive and faithful  
as we are,  
for as long as we are. 15

Take it.  
Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding ring,  
if you like.  
Lethal.  
Its scent will cling to your fingers,  
cling to your knife. 20

(by Carol Ann Duffy)

- (i) What vivid impressions do you form of the persona?
- (ii) How does the poet strikingly convey her thoughts and feelings towards love?



# Full Geography



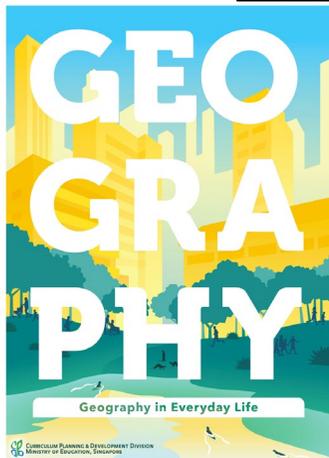
# Full History



# Full Geography in a nutshell

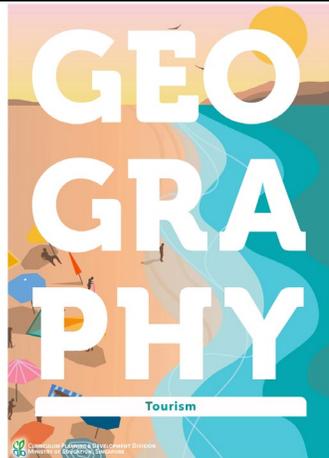
- The Full Geography curriculum offers a greater breadth of geographical content, and therefore the opportunity to understand and appreciate a larger range of geographical issues

***Part of Elective  
Geography syllabus***



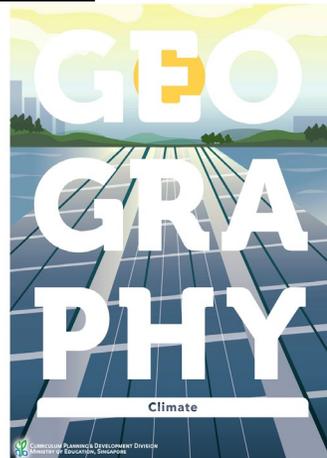
Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Geography in  
Everyday Life***



Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Tourism***

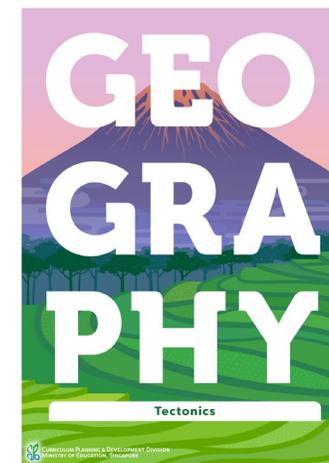


Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Climate***

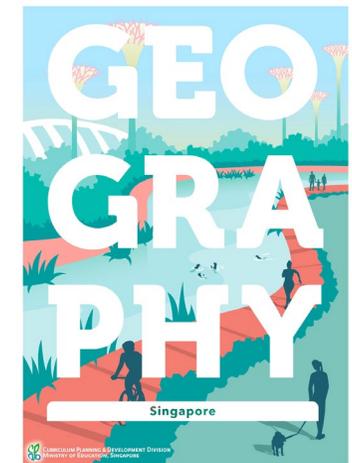


***Additional clusters for Full  
Geography Syllabus***



Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Tectonics***



Upper Secondary Geography Textbook  
Express / Normal (Academic)

***Singapore***

# Assessment

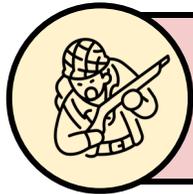
- Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes
  - Paper 1 comprises 3 compulsory structured questions:
    - Question 1: Geography in Everyday Life (20m)
    - Question 2: Tourism (15m)
    - Question 3: Climate (15m)
- Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes
  - Paper 2 comprises 3 compulsory structured questions:
    - Question 1: Geography in Everyday Life (15m)
    - Question 2: Tectonics (15m)
    - Question 3: Singapore (20m)



# Full History in a nutshell

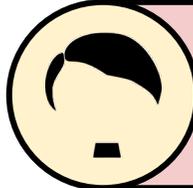
- The Full History curriculum offers a greater breadth of historical content, comprising 20th century history as well as Southeast Asian history.

## *Part of Elective History syllabus*



### After World War I

Paris Peace Conference



### Rise of Authoritarian Regimes

Nazi Germany  
Militarist Japan



### War in Europe and Asia

Outbreak of WWII in Europe and Asia  
Pacific and reasons for end of WWII

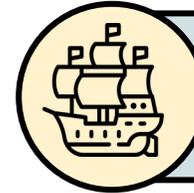


### The Cold War

Korean War  
Vietnam War



## *Additional topics for Full History syllabus*



### Extension of European Control in Southeast Asia

British Malaya  
French Vietnam



### Decolonisation and Establishment of Newly-Independent Nations in Southeast Asia

British Malaya  
French Vietnam



# Assessment

- Two Papers: Paper 1 and 2
- The duration of each paper is 1 hour 50 minutes
- Each paper comprises 2 sections:
  - Section A: 30 marks (Source-based Case Study)
  - Section B: 20 marks (Essay Questions)

# How do I know if Elective Geography, History or Literature is for me?

- Students are encouraged to explore their interest in the topics that would be covered for each syllabus in Upper Secondary.
- They should also consider their post-secondary course choices and identify the more relevant Humanities for the course.
- Students could speak to their subject teachers to find out the skill sets and dispositions that lend themselves well for the study of the Humanities subject.



# FAQs for Elective Literature

**1. Do I need to be good in the English Language to take Literature?**

Not necessarily, however, a good command of the language will be beneficial and helpful in expressing your ideas.

**2. Is there a lot of memorisation needed for Literature?**

You do need to remember the stories and some quotes, in order to respond well, especially for the essay questions. However, pure memorisation of texts is not required. It is more important to be able to understand and express your thoughts and feelings about the text.

**3. It is difficult to score in Literature. Is that true?**

As Literature is marked holistically, the quality of your argument, knowledge of the text, and understanding of how it is a reflection of society would be the key to scoring well. The rubrics will help you to understand where you stand and how you can improve on your writing to do well.

**4. I don't like reading. Can I still take Literature?**

To be honest, it will be difficult to take up the subject if you don't enjoy reading, because half the paper is made up of having to read the set text in detail repeatedly, and the other half involves reading new poems every other week.

**5. Will the set text change if I get retained?**

There's a possibility of the set text being changed beyond 2025 as CPDD (curriculum planning division from MOE HQ) will announce text changes annually. Try not to get retained.

**5. What are the benefits of taking Literature?**

The underlying skills that you will pick up would be close reading and clarity of argument and discussion. These are skills that are transferable to almost any other subjects, including Social Studies and English Language. Being able to explain oneself clearly is also an important soft skill to have in the future when you are working!

**If you have any other queries,  
please feel free to email the Literature team:**

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Ngoh\_huiyi@schools.gov.sg

Mrs Carolyn Leong, SH/ELL  
Quek\_sue\_wen\_carolyn@schools.gov.sg



# Additional information

- Humanities is counted in the computation of L1R5 as a relevant subject in the entry to Junior Colleges.
- Humanities is counted as a critical relevant subject for entry into some Polytechnic courses, e.g. courses related to Humanities, Media and Business. For other courses, the Humanities subject can be used in computing the ELR2B2 score for admission.

We recommend that your child/ward choose the humanities subject based on interest and passion for the subject. See what the experts have to say!

Why Social Studies?



<https://go.gov.sg/whystudyss>

Why Geography?



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