

Text 1**Teachers' union slams TSA, calls for review**

Federation of Education Workers says test questions 'too hard for intended purpose'

By KAHON CHAN

- (1) The teacher union, the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers (HKFEW), has demanded a full review of the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) claiming its questions have become too difficult to carry out their first intended purpose.
- (2) According to a survey done by HKFEW, of the 621 teachers and 35 principals who responded, many were not happy with the TSA. Some 53% of teachers agreed the TSA helped them understand their students' basic capabilities. While 57% felt the test was not being used for its intended purpose to know an individual student's achievement and identify students 'learning problems. It also was not helpful for improving teaching and students learning.
- (3) Two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) felt the questions were too hard for average primary students; therefore, many schools do a lot of intensive drilling. Four in five teachers felt that students would find the TSA too difficult without drilling. Also, 45% felt that their students had experienced "emotional" problems under TSA pressure and this was a "high price" for students to pay.
- (4) The Education Bureau (EDB) has said that schools drill because of their management teams' "misconceptions." However, HKFEW Vice-Chairwoman, Choi Yuk-lin, disagreed. She said some questions seemed to be written to identify the top 1% of students, rather than test "basic competencies."
- (5) EDB officials have contributed to the high sense of competition, added Ken Wong Kam-leung, the union's vice-chairman and a school principal. He said officials would comment on individual schools' results including openly praising and criticizing a school's TSA performance. "They'd [also] tell principals that their school had done poorly in the TSA and needed to work on it. [This puts] a lot of pressure [on us,]" he said. The EDB has said that TSA data is not used to rank schools, but Wong explained schools doubted this due to a lack of trust.
- (6) In the survey, teachers were divided on the future of the TSA. Some 29% wanted easier questions, but 32% wanted to cancel the Primary Three assessment. The union noted some teachers wanted to keep the TSA only because they feared any replacement could be worse. The union called for more flexibility for schools to engage in the test. They also hoped a revised reporting system of the results could help stop excessive drilling.

*Source:*

*China Daily (HK Edition 11/06/2015 page7) – Modified Version*

Word 404

Pre-reading Task - Lesson Preparation - Text 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_)

English Newspaper Worksheet  
February 25, 2016  
SOCIAL ISSUES - Call for Review of TSA

**“Teachers' union slams TSA, calls for review”**

*China Daily* -HK Edition 11/06/2015

**Understanding the Text**

*Directions: Prepare for the lesson by finding the following information in Text 1.  
Answer the following questions with short answers.*

**Title of  
article:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Text Type:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Main Idea:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Who:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**When:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Where:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**What:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Text 2

## TSA has its merits

- (1) A large group of parents of primary school students have announced they will keep their children away from school for three days in protest at the government's refusal to cancel the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) for Primary Three students.
- (2) Such a move is very rare in Hong Kong. University student have gone on strike before, but primary students, on the other hand, are not old enough to understand such issues, and their parents usually do not do anything that might affect their studies.
- (3) The fact some parents have made such a radical decision shows that they and their children are overburdened by the issue and it is a real and serious concern. Recently, some of them gave emotional stories at a Legislative Council hearing of how excessive drilling has tortured them and their children, and it has hurt their relationships. One of the mothers even told how her child has the feeling to commit suicide.
- (4) However, we must remember that the TSA has a practical purpose which is to help schools and teachers plan programs for learning and teaching and to help the government review their policies and provide the needed support to schools. The TSA also assesses students' academic capabilities and EDB officials say it is not practical to wait until the Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) in Form 6. All assessments can have negative side effects, but we should not quickly cancel such a useful assessment without thinking about whether these side effects can be overcome.
- (5) Schools have given useful suggestions to lower pressure on schools, parents and students, such as not giving the public schools' assessment results, not testing all students, and promising schools that the EDB will not use TSA results to keep schools open or close them down.
- (6) The government has appointed a 20-member task force to study this issue which will come up with proposals. Parents should be patience and reasonable. They should give these education experts time to study the issue. This will give the authorities time to decide what they can do to make things better without canceling the assessment right away.

*Source:*

*China Daily (HK Edition 12/01/2015) – Modified Version*

Word Count 366

Pre-reading Task - Lesson Preparation - Text 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_\_)

English Newspaper Worksheet  
February 25, 2016  
SOCIAL ISSUES - Call for Review of TSA

# “TSA has its merits”

*China Daily* HK Edition 12/01/2015

## Understanding the Text

**Directions:** *Prepare for the lesson by finding the following information in Text 2.  
Answer the following questions with short answers.*

Title of article: \_\_\_\_\_

Text Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

Who: \_\_\_\_\_

When: \_\_\_\_\_

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

What: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_)

Stakeholder's Viewpoints

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

**“The Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA) should be canceled?”**

*Directions: Fill in the following table to show the opinions given from the different stakeholders in*

*Text 1 and Text 2:*

Stakeholder	Agree	Disagree
Parents / students	•	•
Principals/ Teachers	•	•
3. Education Bureau (EDB)	•	•

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_)

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**Blog Writing**  
**Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA)**

*Directions: In Kidblog, write your own response as a blog of 100 to 200 words giving your opinion about the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA). Also, reply to another student's blog.*

Use the following questions to guide your writing:

1. **What have you learned about the TSA that you didn't know before watching the two videos and reading the two articles?**
2. **Do you agree or disagree that the TSA should be cancelled?**  
Why or why not?
3. **What did you think of the TSA in P3, P6 and/ or S3?**  
Give some examples from your own experience with the TSA or with other similar assessments.
4. **Do you think the TSA puts a lot of stress on children?**  
Give some examples from your own life or other's life.
5. **Did you find the TSA's questions too difficult or just alright?**  
Share examples from your own experience.
6. **How much drilling is enough?**  
Share examples from your own life or other's.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_\_)

### Spelling / Vocabulary Test - TSA

Marked by: \_\_\_\_\_

ST: \_\_\_\_\_ / 20

VT: \_\_\_\_\_ / 40

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 60

\_\_\_\_\_ %

#### Spelling Test

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____  | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____  | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____  | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____  | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____  | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____  | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____  | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____  | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

**Spelling Corrections: Write each misspelled word 5 times.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary Corrections:**

**Copy each sentence into the notebook using the correct vocabulary word. UNDERLINE or **HIGHLIGHT** the correct vocabulary words so that the teacher knows which word is the correction. Also write the number of the corrected sentence.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_)

1.1 The TSA is an \_\_\_\_\_ that is like a test which students take in P3, P6 and S3.

**Vocabulary Test (1 Mark / blank - Total Marks: 40)**

**Directions:**

- *Use the spelling words to complete the blanks below. Each word will be used once.*
- *Change the word form of the word to make it grammatically correct. (e.g. verb/ noun, noun / adjective, verb/adjective)*
- *Note: “Commit suicide” & “review committee” will be used as a phrase in ONE blank.*

1. The TSA is an (1.1) \_\_\_\_\_ that is like a test which students take in P3, P6 and S3. The TSA is very (1.2) \_\_\_\_\_ . The various (1.3) \_\_\_\_\_ which include parents, students, teachers, principal and the EDB do not agree on its usefulness.
2. The EDB says that schools have big misunderstandings and (2.1) \_\_\_\_\_. They say that the original or (2.2) \_\_\_\_\_ purpose of the exam is to measure or (2.3) \_\_\_\_\_ students' level of basic abilities or (2.4) \_\_\_\_\_. The (2.5) \_\_\_\_\_ from the results can inform schools how to plan for teaching and learning.
3. Many parents, students and teachers feel the TSA is not good for such young children. The early years of life during (3.1) \_\_\_\_\_ should not have so much pressure. They should be encouraged to be (3.2) \_\_\_\_\_ and use their minds for more interesting learning instead of doing (3.3) \_\_\_\_\_ drilling. The drilling (3.4) \_\_\_\_\_(v) students by putting too much pressure on them. Some children even experience (3.5) \_\_\_\_\_ problems like sadness and depression. Some even want to kill themselves by (3.6) \_\_\_\_\_.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_)

4. Recently, the EDB set up a (4.1) \_\_\_\_\_ to decide if changes should be made to the TSA or not. In February, they announced their suggestions or (4.2) \_\_\_\_\_ to the EDB. They don't want to cancel or (4.3) \_\_\_\_\_ the assessment right away. Instead, they recommend that the EDB asks 50 schools to take a (4.4) \_\_\_\_\_ assessment that has been (4.5) \_\_\_\_\_ by making it easier and shorter. Afterwards the EDB can (4.6) \_\_\_\_\_ the TSA by making small changes to it in order to improve it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_)

November 06, 2015

“Teachers’ union slams TSA, calls for review”

1 Why is the teacher’s union asking for a full review?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 What is the intended purpose of TSA?

\_\_\_\_\_

3 Name any THREE reasons why people are against TSA?

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

4 According to Education Bureau, why is there so much drilling for the TSA in schools?

\_\_\_\_\_

5 What do the following refer to:

a) their (Para 1, L. 6)	
b) they’d (Para 5, L. 4)	
c) this (para 5, L. 6)	

6 Decide whether the following statements are True, False or the information is “Not Given” in paragraph 7.

	T	F	NG
a) All the 35 Principals and deputy principals were unhappy with the assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) 90% respondents said TSA affected their teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Teachers felt that less than half of all students experienced emotional problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7 Why do schools care about the TSA results so much?

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_)

8 Find a word or a phrase from the article which means:

a) A wrong or mistaken idea (Para. 4)	
b) Make changes especially to correct or improve something (Para. 6)	

December 1, 2015

“TSA has its merits”

9 What action will the primary students’ parents take to show their discontent with TSA?

\_\_\_\_\_

10 ‘Such a move is very rare in Hong Kong?’ (Paragraph 2) Why is it rare?

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

11 Can you find two adjectives the writer used to describe the parents’ action?

\_\_\_\_\_

12 What is the merit of TSA?

\_\_\_\_\_

13 What will the government do to deal with the crisis?

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

14 According to the last paragraph, what is the tone of the writer?

- a) skeptical    b) angry    c) rational    d) indifferent

15 Critical Thinking Question:

As a Form 4 student, you have experienced TSA yourself. Do you think it should be cancelled? Why or why not? Give reasons and examples from your own life to support your answer.

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_)

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November 06, 2015

“Teachers’ union slams TSA, calls for review”

1 Why is the teacher’s union asking for a full review?

The questions have become too difficult to carry out their first intended purpose.

2 What is the intended purpose of TSA?

To test basic competencies of the students.

3 Name any THREE reasons why people are against TSA?

a) Students do too much drilling.

b) Students experience emotional problem.

c) EDB officials evaluate schools by TSA performance.

4 According to Education Bureau, why is there so much drilling for the TSA in schools?

Because of schools’ management teams’ “misconception”.

5 What do the following refer to:

a) their (Para 1, L. 6)	EDB
b) they’d (Para 5, L. 4)	(EDB) officials
c) this (para 5, L. 6)	EDB’s claim

6 Decide whether the following statements are True, False or the information is “Not Given” in paragraph 7.

	T	F	NG
a) All the 35 Principals and deputy principals were unhappy with the assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) 90% respondents said TSA affected their teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
c) Teachers felt that less than half of all students	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

experienced emotional problems

7 Why do schools care about the TSA results so much?

It is because EDB officials evaluate schools including openly praising and criticising schools' TSA performance.

8 Find a word or a phrase from the article which means:

a) A wrong or mistaken idea (Para. 4)	misconceptions
b) Make changes especially to correct or improve something (Para. 6)	revise

December 1, 2015

### “TSA has its merits”

9 What action will the primary students' parents take to show their discontent with TSA?

They will keep their children away from school for 3 days and protest.

10 ‘Such a move is very rare in Hong Kong?’ (Paragraph 2) Why is it rare?

Primary students are too young to understand such issue and their parents usually do not do anything that might affect their studies.

11 Can you find two adjectives the writer used to describe the parents' action?

“radical” (Para. 3, L. 1), “emotional” (Para.3, L. 3)

12 What is the merit of TSA?

To help schools and teachers plan programs; to help the government review their policies and provide support to schools.

13 What will the government do to deal with the crisis?

The gov has appointed a 20-member task force to study this issue.

14 According to the last paragraph, what is the tone of the writer?

a) skeptical    b) angry    c) rational    d) indifferent

15 Critical Thinking Question: (3 Marks)

As a Form 4 student, you have experienced TSA yourself. Do you think it should be

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: F4 \_\_\_\_\_(\_\_\_\_\_)

cancelled? Why or why not? Give reasons and examples from your own life to support your answer.

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