

# HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

## HKDSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### RECOMMENDED TEXTS FOR THE SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT COMPONENT (For Part A of the SBA Component)

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## TEXT SELECTION CRITERIA

The items on the lists of recommended texts have been selected according to the following criteria:

1. The texts must be of a language level that will suit the range of ability in Secondary 4 to Secondary 6 classes. Students should be able to read / view them on their own without too much help from teachers.
2. They must be of some educational or moral value, have a reasonably positive attitude and be unlikely to cause offence to any members of the community.
3. The content must be suitable for the age group concerned.
4. The texts should not be too culturally unfamiliar, but have some relevance to the lives and experience of the students.
5. They should be likely to interest students so that the act of reading / viewing them should be pleasurable and possibly inspire further reading and viewing.
6. The length of the texts may vary but there should be sufficient material for students to comment on and reflect upon in preparation for the oral assessment.
7. The print texts should be in English and can be either original works or simplified versions. The soundtracks of non-print texts should also be in English although there may be Chinese subtitles.
8. Overall, the texts should be supportive of the aims of the *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6)* jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.

**NOTE:** For the purpose of the SBA component, a text is defined as a piece of written or audiovisual material. Students need to read / view four texts over the course of three years, one from each category – print fiction, print non-fiction, non-print fiction, and non-print non-fiction. Teachers / students should refer to the text selection criteria in determining whether a text is appropriate and choose texts that are similar to the recommended ones in terms of length and level of difficulty. The publishers and the ISBNs of the print texts are given for reference only and teachers / students are free to use different editions from other publishers as long as they find the level of difficulty appropriate.

**PRINT FICTION**

[\* indicates relative level of difficulty]

1. Across the Nightingale Floor \*\*\*  
Lian Hearn  
Publisher: Riverhead Books  
ISBN: 1573222259  
Approx 290 pages  
This may well be the most difficult book on the list and is offered for the stimulation of students with a high level of English and an interest in reading. The story is set in a land that is and is not Japan, a pre-modern Japan with magic thrown in. The teenage hero undergoes training in martial and supernatural arts, undertakes dangerous missions and falls in love. Readers who think highly of Chinese martial arts novels and have the skill and perseverance to read a lengthy book will be attracted to this novel.
2. A Christmas Carol \*  
Charles Dickens  
Publisher: Oxford Bookworms Stage 3  
ISBN: 0194230007  
Approx 70 pages  
This is a simplified version of the famous classic. Ebenezer Scrooge is a miser who has no interest in celebrating Christmas. On Christmas Eve he is visited by the ghost of his old partner and by the spirits of Christmas past, present and future. What Scrooge sees changes him into a caring man who now rushes to help his clerk, Bob Cratchit. This is a heart-warming Christmas tale about human values and the insufficiency of material possessions.
3. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time \*\*\*  
Mark Haddon  
Publisher: Random House Group / Vintage  
ISBN: 0099456761 / 1400032717  
Approx 270 pages / 240 pages  
This is a rather unusual book that has attracted quite a lot of attention and become a best seller (there are actually two versions, one for younger readers and the other for older ones). The narrator is Christopher Boone, a teenager with Asperger's Syndrome. He is an excellent mathematician and lives in a carefully rule-governed world, but cannot understand emotions. This is especially unfortunate as his parents have recently broken up and the atmosphere is swirling with strong emotion. A neighbour's dog has also been killed and Christopher is determined to find the culprit. The book is written in short sentences, but the vocabulary is demanding. Occasional strong language.
4. Daddy-Long-Legs \*\*\*  
Jean Webster  
Publisher: Puffin Books  
ISBN: 0140374558  
Approx 190 pages  
An orphan girl does not seem to have much of a future until a kind benefactor (Daddy-Long-Legs, so named after his shadow) offers to cover the cost of a college education for her. In return she has to write him regular letters about her experiences. The book consists of the letters. This book dates from 1912, but has survived by inspiring many young women.
5. Dracula \*  
Bram Stoker  
Publisher: Macmillan Readers Intermediate Level  
ISBN: 0435272209  
Approx 60 pages  
This is a much simplified version of the classic vampire tale in which Jonathan Harker travels to Transylvania and meets Count Dracula, who in turn moves to London with his supernatural powers. The story has been filmed many times and has enormous appeal to any reader intrigued by the supernatural.
6. Emma \*\* / Emma \*  
Jane Austen  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 4 / Oxford Dominoes Stage 2  
ISBN: 0582417945 / 0194243451  
Approx 60 pages  
One of the Austen novels that continue to delight readers of all ages, perhaps especially young women, this one tells the story of rich, good-hearted but rather spoilt Emma Woodhouse and her attempts at match-making that end in her own

falling in love with the handsome Mr Knightley. Amusing and romantic, the novel has been turned into a fine film at least once.

7. Ghost in the Guitar \*  
Paul Shipton  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 0582319137  
Approx 50 pages  
This story with a contemporary setting involves a teenage couple mad about pop music. A new guitar, however, has mysterious and dangerous properties. The story, told in very simple English, fits into the horror/ghost category.
8. Gladiator \*\*  
Peter Gram  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 4  
ISBN: 0582471176  
Approx 80 pages  
This is an exciting historical novel with plenty of action. The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius wants to return to the republic of early Rome and asks his great general Maximus to help with his plan. The emperor's corrupt and ambitious son, Commodus, learns of this, murders his father and orders the destruction of Maximus. Maximus' family are killed and he ends up as a slave-gadiator in North Africa. Commodus coincidentally wants to win the support of the people of Rome by putting on games in the Colosseum. After many fights and adventures, Maximus ends up facing the villainous emperor in the arena and killing him. The book has been made into a famous film.
9. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets \*\*\*  
J.K. Rowling  
Publisher: Bloomsbury  
ISBN: 0747538484  
Approx 250 pages  
A fairly demanding but immensely popular book, the second in the series, this story of Harry Potter, the student wizard, contains all the well-loved characters: the Weasley family, the clever Hermione, the enormous Hagrid and the benevolent Dumbledore, as well as some less wholesome people like Draco Malfoy and his unpleasant father. Special to this book are Dobby the elf, the vain and ineffective Gilderoy Lockhart, Moaning Myrtle with her toilet home and a giant spider, Aragog. There is plenty of humour and suspense as someone threatens Harry's life and he bravely faces the powerful basilisk in the chamber of secrets. Obviously, the book can be read in conjunction with viewing the excellent film version.
10. The Last Polar Bear \*\*  
Harry Horse  
Publisher: Puffin Books  
ISBN: 0140363823  
Approx 80 pages  
A humorous fantasy, the book is a series of letters about the journey of Grandfather and Roo, an intelligent dog, to the North Pole to see the Last Polar Bears. The animals talk and there is even a penguin supermarket. The style is fairly simple, but the vocabulary demanding.
11. Martin's Mice \*\*  
Dick King-Smith  
Publisher: Dell Publishing  
ISBN: 0440403804  
Approx 120 pages  
Martin, a cat on a farm, likes mice and keeps some as pets giving them a great deal of love. He does not understand why they run away, preferring freedom until he is himself made into an adored pet. This is a pleasing animal fantasy with a message for readers.
12. The Maze \*  
Peter David  
Publisher: Random House  
ISBN: 0679882642  
Approx 160 pages  
This belongs to the Dinotopia series of books, games (and film). Dinotopia is a secret continent where highly intelligent dinosaurs live and are close friends with people. In this story Gwen, who has relationship problems with her father, joins up with Jason, a student of ancient lore, and Booj, a very intelligent but insensitive velociraptor, to save the world from an outbreak of the deadly zinx disease. They travel through a mysterious maze to locate Odon the Healer, who at

first refuses to help them as he dislikes humans, but their comradeship impresses him and all turns out well. This is an imaginative story in simple English.

13. Nineteen Eighty-Four [1984] \*\*  
George Orwell  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 4  
ISBN: 0582777313  
Approx 70 pages  
For those with an interest in politics, this simplified version of the classic story of totalitarianism, thought-control, Big Brother and Newspeak will have a strong appeal. Winston Smith tries to evade the system and retain some dignity and freedom, but finds it impossible. A rather depressing tale, this book is for the thoughtful. It has been filmed, but the film is not easily available.
14. A Pair of Ghostly Hands and Other Stories \*  
Publisher: Oxford Bookworms Level 3  
ISBN: 019423018X  
Approx 80 pages  
The book contains five simplified ghost stories. *A Pair of Ghostly Hands* is about a child ghost; *Lost Hearts* involves black magic; *Mrs Amsworth* locates a vampire in an English village; *The Waxwork* has images that come alive at night, and *John Charnington's Wedding* is about a man so determined to get married he carries on although he is dead. A good choice for those with a taste for the supernatural, without being too frightening.
15. The Pearl \*\*\*  
John Steinbeck  
Publisher: Heinemann Educational Books New Windmill Series  
ISBN: 0435120255  
Approx 85 pages  
This book is written in full native-speaker English, but has a simple style and relatively straightforward vocabulary. It should suit the average to better-than-average student. The story takes place in Mexico and raises issues of poverty and exploitation. Kino, a poor pearl-diver, is devoted to his wife Juana and their baby Coyotito. He is devastated when the child is stung by a scorpion and the doctor will not help as Kino cannot pay. At this point Kino finds an immense pearl and suddenly the doctor is helpful. Kino's attempts to sell the pearl for its true worth are, however, blocked by the local dealers. Tensions build in this tragic tale as the pearl brings the family more and more misfortunes. Although a simple tale, this is a major work of literature.
16. Romeo and Juliet \*  
William Shakespeare  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 0582505143  
Approx 60 pages  
This is a greatly simplified version of the famous play. The teenage heroes of this tragic, but beautiful love story will appeal to their modern counterparts. The text will also suit anyone interested in drama rather than pure prose fiction.
17. The Royal Park Murder \*\*  
Alanna Knight  
Publisher: Contemporary Books Thumbprint Mysteries  
ISBN: 0809206870  
Approx 100 pages  
Written in clear, simple English, this is a crime/detective story set in Scotland. Teenage Ann Kelty is in a difficult situation when, just as she is getting on well with a new young policeman boyfriend, a man is found murdered shortly after an argument with her slightly mysterious father. There are plenty of twists and turns in the plot with disguises, coincidences and clues. Ann nearly dies when she is thrown down a mine, but the real criminal is found at last. This is a lively story with a strong female lead character.
18. The Speckled Band and Other Stories \*  
A. Conan Doyle  
Publisher: Macmillan Readers Intermediate Level  
ISBN: 0435272446  
Approx 80 pages  
Three of the Sherlock Holmes stories are included in this book. *The Speckled Band* with its venomous snake, *The Dancing Men* and the ingenious *The Red-Headed League*. The famous stories are retold in simplified English and should have a wide appeal.

19. **The Spiderwick Chronicles: Book 1, The Field Guide \*\***  
 Tony DiTerlizzi (Illustrator) & Holly Black  
 Publisher: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers  
 ISBN: 0689859368  
 Approx 130 pages  
 This book (and series) will appeal to the sort of readers who like Harry Potter, but find the Potter books rather too difficult in English. The Grace family consists of Mother, Mallory and the twins, Jared and Simon. They move into an old house and strange things start happening. There's a hidden room and an old book about magical creatures. The first one they meet, who has been causing the strange happenings, is a boggart. Peace is only restored when he is compensated for the accidental destruction of his home. The book is beautifully illustrated and has an interesting map. It will give pleasure to lovers of fantasy.
20. **The Story of Tracy Beaker \*\***  
 Jacqueline Wilson  
 Publisher: Corgi  
 ISBN: 0440862795  
 Approx 140 pages  
 Tracy lives in a children's home and is desperate to have a chance at a family life. The book deals with serious issues such as broken families and bad relationships in an approachable, even light-hearted way.
21. **Striker \***  
 Peter & Karen Viney  
 Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
 ISBN: 058250547X  
 Approx 50 pages  
 This is a choice for students with limited English. The story is about an injured goalkeeper and takes the form of a law case about his injury.
22. **Superbird \***  
 Brian Tomlinson  
 Publisher: Cambridge English Readers Level 2  
 ISBN: 0521656087  
 Approx 50 pages  
 This is very simple book. Extra-terrestrials land on Earth and find humans not very attractive. The interest in the story is that it is told by means of interviews and from the point of view of the 'aliens'. This gives it the benefit of encouraging readers to look at questions from different perspectives.
23. **Tomorrowland \*\*\***  
 Michael Cart (Editor)  
 Publisher: Scholastic Signature  
 ISBN: 0590376799  
 Approx 200 pages  
 This is a collection of short stories about the future written by young people themselves on the occasion of the new millennium. The ten stories cover issues such as our increasing alienation from nature, sports and technology, artificial insemination, species rivalry, virtual reality and the usual problems of human relationships. This is a stimulating collection for students with a confident grasp of English.
24. **Tuesdays With Morrie \*\*\***  
 Mitch Albom  
 Publisher: Doubleday  
 ISBN: 0385484518  
 Approx 200 pages  
 The author, a very busy and successful man who hardly has time to enjoy what he has, learns that his old teacher is dying. Feeling guilty that he did not keep in touch over the years, he starts visiting him regularly and learns a lot from him about life and human values. This is a book for thoughtful students.
25. **The Witches \*\***  
 Roald Dahl & Quentin Blake (Illustrator)  
 Publisher: Puffin Books  
 ISBN: 0141301104  
 Approx 210 pages  
 In this book by one of the most famous writers of children's books, a young boy gets involved with some real witches, outwardly ordinary women but filled with hatred for children. The boy is turned into a mouse, but then with the help of his grandmother manages to turn all the witches into mice. The book is full of fun and humour.

**PRINT NON-FICTION**

[\* indicates relative level of difficulty]

1. Albert Einstein: A Life of Genius \*  
Elizabeth MacLeod  
Publisher: Kids Can Press  
ISBN: 1553373960  
Approx 30 pages  
The book is designed as a scrapbook with plenty of graphics and cartoon illustrations. The text is simple and covers the main interests and motivations of Einstein's life. Some of the information is presented in the form of question and answer. There is no difficult science.
2. Book of the Future \*\*\*  
Phil Taylor  
Publisher: BBC Books  
ISBN: 0563487712  
Approx 130 pages  
The BBC asked people to post on their website their views of what the world would be like in 2020. Experts then chose the best 75. The book has a slight British bias and varies from the funny to the very serious and scientific. It will take a very able student to tackle this book.
3. Boy: Tales of Childhood \*\*  
Roald Dahl  
Publisher: Puffin Books  
ISBN: 0141303050  
Approx 180 pages  
This is the famous writer's autobiography covering the early years of his life. He had a most interesting childhood and was an extremely mischievous little boy. A good read for anyone interested in the art of writing.
4. Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction \*\*\*  
Damien Keown  
Publisher: Oxford University Press  
ISBN: 0192853864  
Approx 150 pages  
The book introduces the teachings of the Buddha and discusses their development over the centuries, showing how they can help people face the problems of the modern world. This would be a good choice for a young person of a serious frame of mind able to read fairly difficult English.
5. Cantonese Culture \*\*  
Shirley Ingram & Rebecca S. Y. Ng  
Publisher: Asia 2000  
ISBN: 9627160377  
Approx 100 pages  
Students may be interested to see how outsiders see them, and decide whether they agree with the remarks of the authors on local behaviour. The book is intended to help newcomers settle into Hong Kong society and should provoke students into some interesting reflections on their way of life.
6. Chinese Cinderella \*\*\*  
Adeline Yen Mah  
Publisher: Laurel Leaf  
ISBN: 0440228654  
Approx 220 pages  
This true story of an unwanted girl whose mother dies giving birth to her and whose father starts a new family, losing interest in the children of his first marriage, takes place during the Japanese occupation of China. The story is a very moving one and there is plenty of period detail and information about the old China.
7. The Day that Shook the World \*\*\*  
Publisher: BBC Worldwide  
ISBN: 0563488026  
Approx 225 pages  
This is a serious book that involves a good knowledge of current events and will only appeal to strong students with an interest in politics and public affairs. Various chapters discuss terrorism, the attack on the World Trade Centre,

Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Palestinian question, economic implications and the reactions of Russia and the UK to events. For a student to be able to talk about only a couple of these issues would be impressive.

8. **Fighting Fat /Fighting Fit \*\***  
Janette Marshall  
Publisher: BBC Books  
ISBN: 0563384905  
Approx 190 pages  
This is a sensible book on healthy eating and the need for exercise. After considering the drawbacks of modern lifestyles, the author asks readers to consider their eating habits and to ensure that exercise is a regular part of their lives. Books of this type are extremely successful commercially, so a moderate one has been included here.
9. **Free at Last: The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. \***  
Angela Bull  
Publisher: Penguin D K Readers Level 4  
ISBN: 075132857X  
Approx 50 pages  
The book tells the inspiring life-story of the famous civil rights leader. There are plenty of pictures and a vocabulary glossary. This is a relatively easy choice.
10. **Gangs and Bullies \*\***  
Rosemary Stones  
Publisher: Evans Books, Life Files  
ISBN: 0237518104  
Approx 65 pages  
This short book examines the phenomenon of gangs and bullying and suggests how schools and ordinary people can handle the problem. The book is intended to make teenagers think more deeply about social issues they are likely to meet.
11. **Genetic Engineering \*\***  
Sally Morgan  
Publisher: Evans Books, Moral Dilemmas  
ISBN: 0237524848  
Approx 65 pages  
A presentation of the moral issues raised by this new science, the book contains case studies and encourages critical thinking and careful analysis.
12. **Global Warming \*\***  
Fred Pearce  
Publisher: Gardners Books, D K Essential Science Series  
ISBN: 0751337137  
Approx 70 pages  
This is a lavishly illustrated book, written for schoolchildren, but with fairly technical language. A student with an interest in the topic will find learning the vocabulary rewarding.
13. **Great Football Stories \***  
Russ Williams  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 0582416701  
Approx 60 pages  
This fairly easy book contains a brief history of football, details of some of the trouble football has caused, and accounts of cheating and the wild behaviour of fans, both male and female. Obviously, it will appeal to soccer fans.
14. **Houdini: Master of Illusion \*\*\***  
Clinton Cox  
Publisher: Scholastic  
ISBN: 0590949608  
Approx 190 pages  
A book of interest to those with a fascination for magic and illusion. The author relates the life of the great escapologist and reveals the secrets behind some of his amazing tricks.

15. **The Human Body \*\***  
Richard Walker  
Publisher: Gardners Books, D K Guides  
ISBN: 0751339261  
Approx 60 pages  
This book has won awards, and is an exquisitely illustrated and detailed description of our bodies and how they work. The book will delight biology students and instruct any reader.
16. **Louis Braille: The Boy Who Invented Books for the Blind \***  
Margaret Davidson  
Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks  
ISBN: 059044350X  
Approx 80 pages  
The book is part of a series written for teenagers and includes a copy of the Braille alphabet. The book tells the story of Braille's life and includes an account of the resistance to his invention.
17. **Making Friends \*\***  
Andrew Matthews  
Publisher: Seashell Publishers / Media Masters  
ISBN: 981001953X / 0843129697  
Approx 145 pages  
The book discusses how to make friends and covers the whole topic of friendship in some detail. Plenty of examples and cartoons are included to make the book easily approachable.
18. **Mother Teresa: In My Own Words \*\***  
Publisher: Gramercy  
ISBN: 0517201690  
Approx 130 pages  
This is an illustrated collection of sayings, prayers and stories from Mother Teresa.
19. **Pole to Pole \*\*\***  
Michael Palin  
Publisher: BBC Books  
ISBN: 0563521988  
Approx 320 pages  
The famous traveller tells of his journey from the North Pole to the South. The book is full of insight into different cultures and countries and filled with humour and tolerance. For high calibre students interested in travel, this is a choice that will bring pleasure.
20. **Princess Diana \***  
Cherry Gilchrist  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 058241685X  
Approx 50 pages  
The book tells the familiar tale of the princess who caught the heart of millions and did a great deal of charitable work before the sad end to her marriage and early death. A simple book.
21. **The Ring of Bright Water \***  
Gavin Maxwell  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 0582416884  
Approx 50 pages  
The author lived in the north of Scotland and became friends with three otters. Although the place is far way, this true story of man's ability to become close to nature should travel well and please many students.
22. **Robot \*\***  
Roger Bridgman  
Publisher: Gardners Books, D K Eyewitness Guides  
ISBN: 1405303182  
Approx 60 pages  
Any student with an interest in mechanical objects and Artificial Intelligence will be fascinated by this attractive book. The book is written for schools but naturally demands a bit of technical vocabulary.

23. Stories of Courage \*  
Clare Swain  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 3  
ISBN: 0582829844  
Approx 50 pages  
In this slim book we read about eight people who showed great courage and moral strength. They are Anna Quirot, an athlete who suffered bad burns; an anonymous refugee; Odette Sansom, a housewife who worked against the Nazis; Chico Mendez, the defender of the Amazonian rain-forest; Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese political heroine; Aaron Ralston, an American who had to face a terrible choice; Erin Brockovich, who fought for ordinary people's right to compensation; and Dr Fumio Shigeto and the Oe's, all affected by the Hiroshima bomb. An inspiring book.
24. Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am? \*\*\*  
John Powell  
Publisher: Thomas More Association  
ISBN: 0883473232  
Approx 150 pages  
The book discusses various different personality types (e.g. the martyr, the cynic, the clown, the competitor, etc.) and asks readers to explore their own character and image, learning to accept themselves and face the world without fear. The book is not an easy one, though it has helpful graphics and captions. It should appeal to the philosophically minded.
25. Women in Business \*\*  
David Evans  
Publisher: Penguin Readers Level 4  
ISBN: 0582453275  
Approx 65 pages  
The book relates the success stories of a number of famous women: Coco Chanel and her fashion empire; Hanae Mori, the Japanese designer; Anita Roddick with her natural beauty products; Oprah Winfrey of television fame; and Madonna, the actress and singer. The book relates their stories to world events, and discusses the issue of career and family from a woman's point of view. The book may help some students think about important issues in their own lives.

## NON-PRINT FICTION

[\* means a film may have some accents that might be slightly unfamiliar to Hong Kong students; ratings are given at the end of each entry]

### Films

1. **About a Boy** [Weitz, 2002]  
This is a romantic comedy starring Hugh Grant. He plays a rich, self-indulgent London bachelor who pretends to have a son as a means of meeting attractive women. His deception leads him to get reluctantly involved in the problems of Marcus, a boy with a difficult mother and problems at school. As Marcus and the spoiled William get to know each other better, they both gain from the experience. [12]
2. **Bend it like Beckham** [Chadha, 2002] \*  
This British film about a girl with an Indian/Sikh background in London and a passionate love of football has proved to be very popular. It raises very gently issues of gender, the generation gap, the immigrant experience, friendship, jealousy and young love. [12]
3. **The Client** [Schumacher, 1994]  
A fairly tough 11-year-old boy, Mark, gets accidentally involved in some very dangerous criminal business. The police and the Mafia both suspect that he knows a lot, but he is not willing to speak. He decides he needs a lawyer and contacts the very unheroic Reggie Love. Mark has to grow fast to cope with the situation. The story is both exciting and touching and falls largely into the legal drama category. [15]
4. **Erin Brockovich** [Soderbergh, 2000]  
This film offers a strong female main character. Erin Brockovich is an unemployed single mother with a lot of problems. Her lawyer reluctantly gives her a job, but her manners and dress make serious people look down on her. This makes it hard for her to get attention when she uncovers a corporate cover-up of a toxic waste pollution scandal. Nothing, however, can stop Erin and she triumphs in the end. [15]
5. **Finding Nemo**, [Stanton and Unkrich, 2003]  
This cartoon is undoubtedly one of the easier films in the list. Marlin, a clown fish, is very protective of his son Nemo and does not allow him to leave the reef. Nemo, however, ignores his father's advice and is caught by a diver and ends up in an aquarium in a Sydney dentist's office. Nemo with the help of his new tank-mates has to grow up fast. Meanwhile, Marlin in the company of a fish with memory problems searches the ocean for Nemo. The film is visually beautiful and there is plenty of humour. [U]
6. **Freaky Friday** [Waters, 2003]  
Mother and daughter are on very bad terms. Daughter wants to play in her band, and mother wants her to be an obedient teenager, stay at home and be nice to the man the widowed mother wants to marry. Suddenly everything is confused by a little eastern magic - mother and daughter find themselves in each other's bodies. This leads to lots of comic situations. The film is based on a well-known book for teenagers and should offer no difficulties to students. [PG]
7. **Gattaca** [Niccol, 1997]  
This film tackles the possible repercussions of DNA analysis and portrays a future society where everything is decided by your genes. One character tries to get beyond his destiny by borrowing the identity of a genetically superior being that has suffered a rare physical accident. There is plenty of excitement as well as an opportunity to think about the impact of science on society. [15]
8. **The Hunt for Red October** [McTiernan, 1990]  
This film is for lovers of hi-tech thrillers. Ramius, the captain of a top-secret new Soviet nuclear submarine, is heading towards the United States. It is not clear whether he is out of control and about to attack the States or trying to go over to the Americans. It is tense on board the *Red October* and powerful marine forces are playing a cat and mouse game. Students who want excitement will be drawn to this film. [PG]
9. **Jurassic Park** [Spielberg, 1993]  
Dinosaurs brought to life by means of genetic engineering are the stars of an island theme park where suddenly everything goes wrong. A t-rex runs amok and raptors hunt some of the main characters while some more peaceful species browse on the island. A very exciting and famous film. [PG]

10. Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring [Jackson, 2001]  
This is the first part of the famous trilogy and introduces the main characters: Frodo, the hobbit who must travel to Mount Doom to destroy the all-powerful magic ring that has come into his possession; Gandalf the great wizard; and a selection of elves, dwarfs, humans and hobbits. There are plenty of evil creatures eager to stop Frodo and get their own hands on the ring for less benign purposes. Exciting and full of brilliant special effects. The plot is complex but the film is adored by lovers of fantasy. [PG]
11. The Matrix [Wachowski brothers, 1999]  
The trilogy of which this is the first episode has developed a cult following among science fiction and computer fans. The world we think we live in turns out to be a simulation to hide the awful truth that we are imprisoned slaves being used to power artificial intelligence machines. A humble computer hacker is told that is it his mission to defeat he machines. The plot is complex, but that does not worry fans. [15]
12. Mr Holland's Opus [Herek, 1995]  
The film tells the life-story of a music teacher in the States and takes us through some of the recent history of that country. This may not mean much to students, but the teacher's highs and lows and interactions with students should be meaningful to them, and give them a chance to reflect on teachers they have known and the nature of schooling. [PG]
13. My Fair Lady [Cukor, 1964]  
A famous musical based on the play *Pygmalion* by GBS Shaw, the film tells the story of the attempt by Professor Higgins, the phonetics expert, to turn a poor flower girl into a 'lady', accepted in polite society. The girl, Eliza Doolittle, is a great success but Higgins has forgotten that she has feelings of her own. The concept of accents defining social class may be an unfamiliar one to learners, who will need some help, but the film is a very attractive one and directly related to issues of oral English and pronunciation. [U]
14. October Sky [Johnston, 1999] \*  
The launch of the Soviet Sputnik satellite in 1957 fills the head of Homer Hickam, a schoolboy in a very ordinary U.S. mining town, with rocket building ambitions. Many things are against Homer, especially his father who thinks he is just being immature. For a time, Homer actually gives up his dream, but then he returns to his efforts. The film has plenty of humorous moments and is rich in inspiring messages about the rewards of perseverance. [PG]
15. Rabbit-Proof Fence [Noyce, 2002] \*  
This is an Australian film about the forced removal of some black Australian girls to a special training school to prepare them to be maids. One of them, Molly, will not accept this and leads her sister and cousin on a 1,500-mile walk home through the outback, using the fence built to keep rabbits from spreading as a direction finder. Issues of racism and the treatment of native peoples are raised in an acute form. [PG]
16. Seabiscuit [Ross, 2003]  
This fits into the inspirational story category. Seabiscuit is a horse with a bad attitude that no one wants to ride. A young jockey from a poor background dedicates himself to the horse and they achieve wonderful results. Then disaster strikes the young man, but he fights on and proves he cannot be beaten. A touching tale with plenty of grit. [PG]
17. Shrek [Adamson & Jenson, 2001] \*  
The film tells the story of an ogre, happy being bad-tempered in his swamp, suddenly faced with lots of visitors, driven from their home by the wicked Lord Farquaad. To get rid of them Shrek needs to rescue Princess Fiona; so off he goes with his very annoying donkey companion. The cartoon/computer animation is full of humour and entertainment. [U]
18. Spiderman [Raimi, 2002]  
This is included for fans of superheroes. Peter Parker is bitten by a special spider and as a result develops amazing powers. The murder of Peter's uncle makes him dedicate his gift to fighting evil in the world. His main enemy turns out to be the father of his best friend and rival for the love of Mary Jane Watson. This creates all the tensions and conflicts that make a good story. [12]
19. Titanic [Cameron, 1997]  
A film that hardly needs any introduction - Jack and Rose fall in love on the doomed liner, but are separated by position and class. Rose's intended husband, Cal Hockley, is truly detestable and despicable. The sinking of the ship draws forth varying responses from the passengers, from selfishness and sheer panic to nobility and great dignity. The music and special effects add to the drama. Many people watched the film ten or more times. [12]
20. Whale Rider [Caro, 2002] \*  
In this New Zealand film, a young girl is convinced that she has the skills and sensitivities to be the next chief, but her grandfather, despite his deep love for her, cannot accept that a girl can occupy this position. He stubbornly tries to keep traditional matters away from Pai while trying to instruct the uninterested boys. Pai finally gets a chance to prove that it is she who has a special relationship with whales, making her the chosen of the ancestors. [PG]

## Television programmes

21. **Band of Brothers**  
The miniseries  
This series won a great many awards, and follows the story of a group of soldiers in the Second World War from their training in the United States to their arrival in Europe at one of Hitler's homes and headquarters. The series naturally contains plenty of fighting and violent action.
22. **Buffy the Vampire Slayer**  
The Complete First Season  
This consists of 12 episodes and students will probably wish to be selective in their viewing. Buffy Summers is both an ordinary teenager coping with the usual problems of life at Sunnydale High School, and a powerful vampire-slayer dedicated to ridding the world of this terrible scourge. The characterization is excellent and the dialogue highly amusing. Students will easily become addicted to the material.
23. **ER**  
The Complete First Season Review  
Students will need to concentrate on only a few episodes, as there is so much material here, not only the show itself but also a lot of information on the origin and development of the series. Many episodes are emotionally charged as patients recover or die, and doctors and nurses try to handle a whole range of problems at once.
24. **Sherlock Holmes**  
Series 1, from the BBC  
This fine television adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Master Blackmailer* and *The Last Vampire* will give students some of the necessary background to appreciate these classic stories as more than just detective work.
25. **The X-files**  
The Sixth Series  
This world famous series follows the investigations of Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully into the supernatural and alien. Mulder is always willing to believe the incredible while the scientifically minded Scully demands proof. The series is imaginative and usually intelligent. The sixth series is thought by some to be the best of the nine. Students would not need to study all the episodes, just those that interest them.

**NON-PRINT NON-FICTION**

1.     Animal Games  
BBC DVD  
An amusing look at which animals are the fastest, strongest and so on. Animals ‘take part’ in six Olympic events.
2.     Anne Frank Remembered [Blair, 1995]  
This is an award-winning documentary about the background, life and tragedy of the well-known diary-writer.
3.     Beethoven: Sound and Fury  
A & E Biography DVD  
The life of the famous classical composer is examined with interviews with great musicians.
4.     The Boys of Sudan [Mylan, 2003]  
This is the story of two Sudanese refugees fleeing the dangers of their home country and trying to adjust to life in the United States.
5.     Bruce Lee: The Immortal Dragon  
A & E Biography DVD  
The documentary tells of the Hong Kong star’s rise to fame and early death.
6.     Christopher Reeve: Triumph, Tragedy and Courage  
A & E Biography DVD  
Reeve was a successful actor, famous around the world in the role of Superman, when he suffered a terrible spine injury that left him paralysed. This is the story of his bravery.
7.     Confucius: Words of Wisdom  
A & E Biography DVD  
An inquiry into the life of the great Chinese thinker.
8.     Dive to Bermuda Triangle  
Discovery Channel DVD  
Scientists investigate whether there really is a mystery in the area, and look into the various strange theories about the Bermuda Triangle.
9.     Genghis Khan: Terror and Conquest  
A & E Biography DVD  
The story of the great Mongolian warlord who changed the course of history.
10.    George Lucas: Creating an Empire  
A & E Biography DVD  
The life story of the famous film director who developed the *Star Wars* films and revolutionized special effects in film.
11.    Great Wildlife Moments  
BBC DVD  
The DVD contains David Attenborough’s favourite scenes from his many award-winning series. Students can watch gorillas, killer sharks, tigers and a host of other magnificent animals.
12.    Haunted History  
History Channel DVD  
This is an examination into places in the United States that have been reported to be haunted. Eyewitnesses tell of their experiences and historians reveal tragic old stories.
13.    In Search of the Trojan War  
BBC DVD  
The programme investigates how much truth there is in the old stories of the Trojan War and where it might have happened (if it did happen).
14.    Kitty Hawk: The Wright Brothers’ Journey of Invention [David Garrigus, 2003]  
The film tells the story of Orville and Wilbur Wright and their determination to fly.

15. The Making of the 'Lord of the Rings' [Costa Botes, 2002]  
This documentary explains how the famous trilogy was made. There are interviews with the director and leading actors. It will naturally appeal to fans of the films and students will learn about the art of film making.
16. Michael Palin: Pole to Pole  
BBC DVD  
The film details the journey from the North to the South Pole, going down through Russia and then the length of Africa before taking to the sea.
17. Napoleon Bonaparte: The Glory of France  
A & E Biography DVD  
The story of one of history's great military commanders.
18. Parasites: Eating Us Alive  
Discovery Channel DVD  
A documentary on microscopic creatures that live on and in us.
19. Serpent  
BBC Wildlife Special DVD  
For nature-lovers this documentary offers a detailed look at the world of snakes. Plenty of use is made of the latest in computer graphics and special photographic techniques.
20. Steve Wozniak: the Wizard Of Apple  
A & E Biography DVD  
Unlike his partner Steve Jobs, Wozniak (who invented the personal computer) tired of the business world and having made his fortune moved on to other activities, including teaching.
21. Super Size Me [Spurlock, 2004]  
A controversial examination of the effects of living off fast food, the documentary has a great deal of humour of the satirical type.
22. Walking with Cavemen  
Discovery Channel DVD  
The documentary films presents the story of our species' early days and the lifestyles of our distant ancestors.
23. Wild Weather  
BBC DVD  
The latest technology gives viewers a feeling of what it is like to experience nature's power. There are four episodes: Wind, Wet, Cold and Heat.
24. Winged Migration [Cluzaud & Perrin, 2003]  
A popular and beautiful film about migratory birds, this should be of general interest. The DVD also has a documentary on the making of the film. The photography is exceptionally fine.
25. World Class Trains - The Royal Canadian Pacific [DVD]  
The documentary covers the history of the line, its rolling stock and the magnificent scenery through which it runs.

## NOTES ON COPYRIGHT AND END-USER AGREEMENT

The use of films and documentaries is recommended in the New Senior Secondary English Language Curriculum because it provides an authentic context for language learning as well as active language use. While students are encouraged to view films/documentaries of their choice using fully-licensed materials for private viewing at home, teachers may find it useful at times to arrange for class viewing of these materials in schools for the purpose of group instruction and/or discussion. Under such circumstances, schools' attention is drawn to the following matters:

### Copyright

The following information regarding the use of sound and video recordings has been extracted from pages 20 and 21 of the booklet "Copyright in Education in Hong Kong" issued by the Intellectual Property Department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2000:

#### **"Playing sound and video recordings of radio, TV and cable programmes**

You *may* show or play a sound or view recording or a broadcast or cable programme (even if there is a licensing scheme in existence) without infringing copyright provided that all three of the following conditions are satisfied:

- the playing is in an educational establishment (an exhaustive list of 'educational establishments' is given in Schedule I of the copyright Ordinance.)
- the playing is to an audience consisting only of teachers, pupils and their parents or guardians
- the playing is for the purpose of instruction

You can see from this that you *cannot* play video or sound recordings of Radio, TV and Cable Programmes for purposes such as:

- school fairs to raise funds for parent-teacher associations or charities,
- functions to which the public can be admitted,
- entertainment purposes,

without getting a license from the broadcaster in advance .....

Note that you often need **two** categories of licenses: one in respect of the underlying musical, literary or dramatic work, and another in respect of the recording or performance of it.

#### **Playing sound and video recordings (other than recordings of radio, TV and cable programmes)**

You may play a sound or video recording (e.g. a video tape, audio tape or CD) or a broadcast or cable programme (even if there are licensing schemes available):

- the playing is in an educational establishment (an exhaustive list of 'the educational establishments' is given in Schedule I of the Copyright Ordinance.)
- the playing is to an audience consisting only of teachers, pupils and their parents or guardians
- the playing is for the purpose of instruction

without infringing copyright.

You should be aware that rented videos are normally rented for domestic viewing, not use in schools. To show rented videos in school (even where the criteria listed above are met) may be a breach of the conditions of hire of the video. If you plan to show hired videos, please check with the video rental outlet and get their agreement first."

For full details regarding copyright in education, please visit the website of the Intellectual Property Department at <http://www.info.gov.hk/ipd/>.

### End-user Licensing Agreement

The sale of videos/VCDs/DVDs often entails an implicit end-user licensing agreement stipulating certain conditions of use to be observed by the purchaser. This may include, among others, an explicit statement at the beginning of the material that prohibits public display in places such as schools or community halls. The Education Bureau is currently liaising with the relevant parties and authorities regarding the right to use these materials for educational purposes within schools and will inform schools of the final outcome. Meanwhile, schools are reminded that they should closely observe any end-user licensing agreements that may currently be in force at the point of sale.