

The Innate Bond Between Man and Nature

Text Type: Playscript
Suggested finishing time: 25 mins



Listen!

Let's Think!



1. Do you often see stars in the night sky?
2. Have you heard about the worldwide movement, Earth Hour?

The Galaxy behind the Veil

Characters Tommy Grandpa Grandma

Narrator: What will our world be like in 2080? Will the future technology be so advanced that the problems we are now facing will vanish into thin air? Will the word 'pollution' become an obsolete word since there will be no such thing as pollution? Now, let's teleport to 2080 and see what it is like.

Scene 1 **In a living room, Tommy is strolling about while Grandpa is asleep in a rocking chair.**

Tommy: *(shakes the rocking chair)* Grandpa! Grandpa! I'm hungry now. Can you light a candle for me? I can't see where my snacks are in the dark!

Grandpa: *(wakes up)* Oh, Grandpa is a bit hungry too. *(stands up)* Let me get some candles before I get you a packet of crisps.
(a click of a lighter)

Tommy: Grandpa, when will we be able to turn on the lights? It's really, really inconvenient having to use candles all the time! And I've had too many biscuits and crisps this week!

Grandpa: It's a good question, Tommy. Both Grandma and I never expected the typhoon would cause a citywide power outage, not to mention one as serious as this one. You know what, Tommy? *(coughs)* Power outages were not something expected from a typhoon in my generation, but they were in my grandpa's.

Tommy: *(frowns)* I only know that I hate this and I'm bored to death! *(walks around)* I can't take the lift, can't surf the Internet, can't have a hot meal. *(stubs his toe)* Ouch! I can't even move around without getting hurt!

Grandpa: Oh Tommy! *(laughs)* That may not be as bad as it seems.

Tommy: That's silly, Grandpa! Don't you feel bored?

Grandpa: Not in the slightest. Tommy, it is indeed a splendid opportunity to try to have a taste of how my grandpa, that's your great-great-grandpa, used to live. Now, in 2080, nearly everything is powered by electricity. But in the distant past, when most electronic devices that we now enjoy were yet to be invented, it seemingly never occurred to people that life was tedious.

Tommy: *(eating crisps)* I can't imagine how I would survive if I were born back in the days. That's crazy!

Grandpa: Let Grandpa show you something. *(walks to a room)*

Scene 2 **In a storeroom, Grandpa is rummaging through a drawer of a cabinet, while Tommy is standing behind him.**

Tommy: What are you looking for, Grandpa?

Grandpa: Hmm...I'm looking for something historical, something invaluable. Oh, here it is!

Tommy: What book is that? *(coughing)* It...it looks ancient, Grandpa.

Grandpa: Yes, it indeed is! I haven't taken it out for almost two decades. Inside it are the masterpieces of your great-grandma, who was an astrophotographer. It was her life's work. *(opens the photo album)*

Tommy: (*astonished*) Wow! What is that? Did my great-grandma take it in space? It looks magnificent!

Grandpa: It is the sky. It was taken—I didn't believe it at first—in the backyard of this house.

Tommy: That's a blatant lie, Grandpa! I've never seen anything like this in the sky since birth. The moon is the only thing that shines above our heads. I'm not that stupid!

Grandpa: (*laughs*) Ha-ha! Believe it or not! Grandpa never lies to you. Light pollution is the reason why the sky nowadays always looks so grey and blurry. Were it not for the excessive artificial light that lights up our city at night, we would have this heavenly sight to behold whenever the night falls.

Tommy: Really?

Grandpa: Sure! Grandpa never—

Grandma's ecstatic scream is heard in the background. Tommy and Grandpa swiftly look in the direction of Grandma's voice, and then start rushing to another room.

Scene 3 **In Grandma's bedroom, Grandma is standing by the curtained window, while Tommy and Grandpa are at the bedroom's door.**

Tommy: Grandma!

Grandpa: (*worried*) Are you all right, Grandma? What's happened?

Grandma: (*looks from the two of them then to the curtained window back and forth*) Outside! It's unbelievable! It's like we are back to... Take a look, quick! Come on!

Grandma pulls the curtain aside, and the three of them look at the sky, where a sea of silver stars are scattered across the skyline and illuminate the city.

Tommy: (*stunned*) Is it...is it true, Grandpa?

Grandpa: (*silent for a few seconds*) Like a paradise, isn't it?

Tommy: (*excitedly*) Yes...what a wondrous sight! Why is it so? Will it stay so forever?

Grandpa: That's the upside of the power outage. Tommy, in the usual sense, nothing stays forever, neither does this starry sky. But we can make it stay forever.

Tommy: How, Grandpa?

Grandpa: Didn't your great-grandma show you how? Ha-ha! But that's not the only way to do it. If every one of us had a genuine love for Mother Nature, we would see what we're seeing every night here at home, perhaps.

Narrator: For the rest of the night, the three of them sit shoulder to shoulder by the window, looking up in the same direction, with the reflection of the delicate clusters of galaxies gleaming in their eyes. This night, the night when they travel back to centuries ago, will be at the back of their minds for some time, if not forever.

~850 words

More to Take Away

In regions that are untroubled by light pollution, you may see a broad band of light that stretches across the night sky. This band of light, known as the Milky Way, consists of numerous planets and stars. In most developed regions, however, the Milky Way is obscured by man-made light.

Looking into Grammar

We may use the sentence pattern 'What + noun (+ subject + verb)' to introduce our feelings towards and present judgment on an idea in an exclamatory manner. Note that the subject and the verb can be left out when the subject is clearly understood in the context.

- ✗ What a gorgeous day is it!
- ✓ What a gorgeous day (it is!)

🔍 Underline a similarly constructed sentence in scene 3.

Part A Multiple Choice Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the playscript.

Choose the best answer by blackening the appropriate circle.



1. In line 5, the word 'obsolete' means

- _____.
- A. less popular
 - B. banned
 - C. no longer in use
 - D. commonly misused

2. In line 15, Grandpa says 'It's a good question'

because _____.

- A. it is easy to answer
- B. it is something that many people would want to know
- C. it is a thought-provoking question
- D. it is difficult to answer

2 Think about why Tommy asks this question.

Q2: Explain to students that what Tommy asks does not seem to intend to inspire new ideas or change others' opinion on a particular subject. It is a question that expects a simple answer.

3. According to scene 1, Tommy is _____ the way of life in the past since it sounds _____ to him.

- A. averse to...odd
- B. disgusted by...old-fashioned
- C. not attracted by...bland
- D. not interested in...uncommon



4. In line 31, 'rummaging through' can best be replaced by '_____'.
_____.

- A. searching thoroughly
- B. examining carefully
- C. going through quickly
- D. peeking through

Q8: What Grandpa means is that the sight can 'stay' forever in two ways: either as a photograph or as a daily occurrence when light pollution is greatly reduced. Only (III) may serve to help achieve the latter.

5. In lines 36-38, the word 'it' refers to _____, and it was 'her life's work' because it was _____.

- A. the book...like a biography
- B. the album...about her as a photographer
- C. the book...about astrology
- D. the album...very precious to her

6. According to scene 2, Tommy may have _____ seen _____, which _____.

- A. seldom...sparkling night views...can only be seen on cloudless nights
- B. seldom...stars...are hidden by neon signs and skyscrapers
- C. never...sparkling night views...do not coexist with light pollution
- D. never...stars...are present all along

7. _____ is not a key factor in the appearance of the 'wondrous sight'.

- A. The disappearance of man-made light
- B. The use of candles
- C. The loss of electricity supply
- D. The clearness of the sky

7 Note the relationship between the options.

8. Which of the following would Tommy probably do after hearing what Grandpa says at the end of the playscript?

- I. take photos
- II. stay outdoors more often
- III. make full use of natural light
- IV. visit the countryside at weekends

- A. I and II
- B. I, II and IV
- C. I, III and IV
- D. all of the above



Self-evaluation Checklist

Please scan the QR code on P.6 to access the checklist for evaluating your own reading progress.

Part B Pre-HKDSE Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the playscript. For questions 1, 5 and 6, answer in complete sentences.



1. In the playscript, which sentence tells you that Tommy is annoyed by the power outage? Explain your answer. (Any reasonable answers)

The sentence 'I only know that I hate this and I'm bored to death' shows that Tommy is annoyed by the inconvenience caused by the power outage, as sensed in words like 'hate' and 'bored to death'.

2. Grandpa shows Tommy his great-grandma's life's work in order to _____.

- A. explain what an astrophotographer does
 B. hint that beautiful moments have to be seized
 C. suggest that nature is stunning and can be a source of enjoyment
 D. prove that people in the past knew how to appreciate Mother Nature

2 Pay attention to what happens in scene 1.

Q2: Note that near the end of scene 1, Grandpa mentions that people in the distant past seemed to have never considered life boring, and then proceeds to 'show' Tommy something.

3. Look for words in the playscript to match the definitions below.

(i)	<u>splendid</u>	(lines 13-31)	(adj.)	excellent
(ii)	<u>masterpieces</u>	(lines 31-42)	(n.)	works of very high quality
(iii)	<u>behold</u>	(lines 43-52)	(v.)	to see; to look at
(iv)	<u>scattered</u>	(lines 55-73)	(adj.)	distributed across a wide area

4. Determine whether each of the following statements is true, false, or undecidable because not enough information is given.

Q4: (iii) The fact that Grandpa has not taken the photo album out for two decades is not an indication of when Tommy's great-grandma died.

Statement	True	False	Not Given
(i) There are more environmental problems in 2080.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
(ii) Tommy's great-great-grandpa used to live in an era where the use of electricity was not as widespread.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) Tommy's great-grandma died in 2060.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

5. Do Tommy and his grandparents 'travel back to centuries ago' that night? Explain your answer. (Any reasonable answers)

No, they do not. The narrator says so only to point out that they are like being in the distant past because what they see in the end used to be commoner.

5 Think about it as a metaphoric expression.



6. In the playscript, which sentence tells you that Grandpa holds an optimistic view on the fact that the city is plunged into darkness? Explain your answer. (Any reasonable answers)

The sentence 'Tommy, it is indeed a splendid opportunity to try to have a taste of how my grandpa, that's your great-great-grandpa, used to live' shows such a view as the phrase 'splendid opportunity' has a positive meaning.

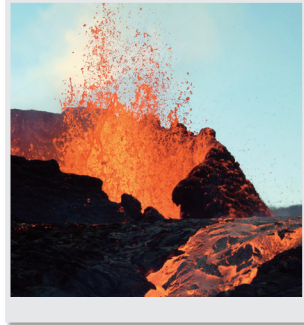
Part C Vocabulary Bank

Label the photos below with the names of some of the natural disasters from the word box.

earthquake flooding hurricane drought
 volcanic eruption landslide tsunami avalanche



1. tsunami



2. volcanic eruption



3. hurricane



4. avalanche



5. landslide



6. drought



7. flooding



8. earthquake

Word Craft

Tsunami (Refer to the same page.)

A number of words in the English language are borrowed from Japanese.

- e.g. origami (=the art of paper folding)
 sensei (=a teacher of Japanese martial arts)
 kimono (=a long traditional Japanese robe)
 tycoon (=a rich and powerful person)

Let's Discuss!

1. Do you think that most city lights in big cities are in fact unnecessary? Explain your thoughts.
2. Some think that technology can help us solve major global challenges while some believe that we should not rely too much on technology. Whose side are you on? Elaborate on your thoughts.

Part D Cloze Passage

Complete the presentation cue cards below with the appropriate nouns introduced on the previous page.

(1) A drought is a dry period of time when rainfall is drastically reduced, usually as a result of a disturbance of the water cycle. One extreme consequence is the visible cracking of ground.

(4) A volcanic eruption occurs when a volcano expels lava, which is hot liquid rock, and a wide range of gases. Note that all of them are lethal, that is, extremely dangerous and destructive. One of the most deadly eruptions in history happened in 1815 in modern-day Indonesia, leading to the death toll as high as 100,000.

When a tropical cyclone occurs in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, the south Pacific or Indian Ocean, it is called a typhoon.

When it occurs in the Atlantic Ocean and northeastern Pacific Ocean, it is called a (6) hurricane. It often causes widespread rain which leads to inland

(7) flooding, with the resultant higher water levels bringing considerable inconvenience to those in the affected areas.

An (2) earthquake occurs when the outer layer of the Earth moves in ways that stimulate violent motions. Its impact can be either so minimal that it cannot be sensed, or so destructive that it can reduce an entire city to rubble. When the violent motions take place in offshore areas, a (3) tsunami, which can be just as deadly, may follow.

When a mass of rocks and soils roll down a slope all of a sudden, it is called a (5) landslide. In Hong Kong, heavy rainfall is usually its cause. This is the reason why the Hong Kong Observatory has a warning signal that is designed to alert the public to stay away from slopes.

Snow has not been seen in Hong Kong for decades. But when you're on your way up a snowy mountain in a foreign country, stay alert to the hazards of an (8) avalanche. If one fails to outrun the sudden slip of snow, one is very likely to get buried and suffocate. In the past decade in the United States, an average of 28 people died because of it every year.