

## PART B: READING COMPREHENSION

13 multiple-choice questions

Value: 16%

Suggested Time: 25 minutes

### SYNTHESIS TEXT 1

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the following selection, “The Most Powerful Question a Parent Can Ask...,” and answer the multiple-choice questions. For each question, select the **best** answer and record your choice on the **Answer Sheet** provided.

#### The Most Powerful Question a Parent Can Ask...

by Neil Millar

- 1 The question I have for you drives right to the heart of the matter. It could alter that tired, haggard feeling you have at the end of a day or weekend. It could alter the life of your children for the better and the life of their future partner. More than that, it could even alter your community, because once I've told you the question and you've seen how powerful it is you'll want to share it with your brother, sister, neighbours and friends.
- 2 Before I ask you my question I want to set the scene. You're a loving parent striving to give your children the best life you can offer. You race around the household picking up their dirty underwear from under the bed, collecting the towels from the bathroom floor and spend whatever time it takes to knock up their favourite food while one of your children spends fifty percent of their free time surfing the net and talking in chat rooms and the other catches up on thirty hours of TV a week. Meantime, you...
- 3 Well, sometimes you might feel tired. Sometimes deflated. Sometimes unappreciated and perhaps just a tad grumpy! If you relate to any of what I describe then my question will change it all for you and I recommend you read on.
- 4 For women, age-old family values still play a big part. Values passed on—mother-to-mother—combine with the natural instincts to love, support and nurture. And despite doing a day job you probably still arrive home and strive to take care of your family in the way your mother took care of you. But are your mother's old values working for you and, just as importantly, are they working for your children? So, here is the question...
- 5 What kind of children do you want to raise?
- 6 Do we want to raise well-rounded, confident, considerate children that show gratitude and appreciation for all that is given to them and just a fraction of what you do for them? Do you want strong, loving children, who understand and accept responsibility for their 'self' and the ones they love? If you do then I have a second question for you...
- 7 Will the current behaviour in your household make that happen?
- 8 Will chatting to strangers on the internet during a large part of her free time help your daughter become a confident, considerate woman? Will Homer Simpson help your son to respect his 'self' and the ones he loves? And will you picking up their sweaty, crumpled underwear help them to become responsible for their own lives?
- 9 I recently overheard a woman talking about her 12-year-old son. She confessed to laying out his clothes each morning, packing his school bag with books and food and then she said, "Because if I don't, he'll forget." This shocked me and here is why...
- 10 My own children, since the age of five have done all the things that a lot of mothers still do. Why? Because I am their parent—their guide and leader, not their nanny—and as

such I have a responsibility to first nurture, then educate, then, as soon as they are ready, hand over responsibility for their well-being to them. Children who take part in their own life—picking up their dirty linen, contributing to dinner and tidying their home—go on to become confident, well-rounded, respectful kids; and children who don't...well they're the ones you might moan about to your friends when you witness them disrespecting both other human beings and the environment.

- 11 Begin by directing your children to take on small tasks. Ask them to put their clothes in a washing basket or hang a towel up. Ask them to bring their plates to the sink and wash them after dinner and tell them they are

helping you and that you really appreciate their help. Give them a hug for their help and they might do even more! As they get better, increase the tasks. Ask them to cut the grass for you, iron the clothes or cook dinner. And if you think that is too much responsibility then think about this...

- 12 A Maasai tribe leader appointed a seven year-old girl as the person in charge of two-thirds of his village's wealth. The wealth was not held in money, but in three camels. The girl was responsible for ensuring that these camels stayed safe and well fed and she knew if she failed to do this properly then the villagers may end up starving. Maybe we could trust our children with a vacuum or a mop or a duster once or twice a week!

Percent of Students With Positive School Experience or High Performance, by Work Status and Gender						
Experiences	Males			Females		
	No Job %	Short Hours %	Long Hours %	No Job %	Short Hours %	Long Hours %
A or B Average	69	76	58	78	84	74
Enjoyed School	80	86	78	85	93	80
Found Classes Interesting	70	73	67	79	83	76
Participated in Class as Much as or More than Others	86	89	85	88	91	87
Participated in Extracurricular Activities	69	78	71	67	71	62

Figure 1