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Answer all of the following questions. (100 marks)

On 27 October 2016, *TODAYonline* published a news report about Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's remarks about the impact of technology and the Internet on Singapore's society, delivered in an interview with *Times* magazine (Source: <http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/pace-globalisation-will-put-social-contract-under-pressure>).

Read the article entitled "Education Reform Needed To Keep Up With The Times" by Tey Siew Min in response to this news report, and write a critique of the text, incorporating the following:

- a) An **introductory paragraph** that identifies Tey's thesis (using your own words as far as possible). This can consist of a few short sentences, or a single all-encompassing sentence that encapsulates the focus of the writer's work. (5 marks)
- b) Your introductory paragraph should also contain a **summary of the Tey's arguments**. You should state these briefly, enumerating them using signals such as *firstly*, *secondly*, etc. You need to state *whether you agree or disagree with Tey's viewpoint on the issue*, and provide brief reasons for your stand. (20 marks)
- c) Your **own assertions about the ideas and issues** in Tey's article, supported by your own arguments and evidence drawn from **at least three** external resources, which agree or disagree with specific points in the reading. This incorporates and synthesises the views of others into your writing. Naturally, your critique will be more robust if you cite more resources. Please present **ONE** agreement point and **THREE** disagreement points. You should recognise Tey's claim, reasons, evidence and assumptions. Develop your position and assertions pertaining to the key issues using the concession and refutation process. (40 marks)
- d) A paragraph recognising the **overall strengths and weaknesses of Tey's arguments**. Please provide **ONE** area of strength and **ONE** area of weakness in the main article. You should also suggest how Tey could make her arguments more convincing. (10 marks)
- e) A **concluding paragraph** that sums up your main points and gives a sense of cohesion to the whole essay. You should reiterate and state briefly the flaws of Tey's arguments. The conclusion should demonstrate an understanding of the question's requirements and summarise key arguments and their implications. (5 marks)

Your essay must:

- f) Be clearly written, logically organised and grammatically correct. Employ resources to synthesise the perspectives of others. (10 marks)

g) Integrate **in-text citations** and **referencing** in **APA Style**.

(10 marks)

The word limit for this assignment is approximately 800-1000 words.

**Education Reform Needed To Keep Up With The Times  
By Tey Siew Min**

01 November 2016

I refer to the report “Pace of globalisation ‘will put social contract under pressure’” (27 October 2016).

The education young Singaporeans require to thrive in the future world is something we are “not quite able to define yet” because of rapid technological advancement — as illustrated by Moore’s law — with which our syllabus attempts to catch up.

What we learn in school is supposed to prepare us for our future occupations, but current job scopes are either evolving or becoming obsolete as the reliance on technology for repetitive and manual work grows.

Many of those who are already in the workforce may crack under pressure, as they perceive technology as a threat to their livelihood. This anxiety could be exacerbated if employees are unable to view the Government’s push for integration of technology into various industries with the right mindset.

Providing the right education and inculcating the right mentality towards technological advancement are the keys to embracing this challenge.

Given the rate at which technology progresses, education should no longer be focused on imparting factual knowledge, especially when this can be easily acquired with the advent of the Internet. The right education should develop students’ skills and values instead.

For example, one may question the need to learn basic laboratory techniques or mathematics in school when machines and algorithms are readily available.

The purpose of technology, however, is to bring convenience and efficiency, not cripple the young’s thinking abilities. To prepare them adequately for work, education should equip them with the ability to apply theories to real-life scenarios.

The emphasis should therefore be on providing both hard and soft skills flexible enough to be applied to an array of circumstances.

On top of educational reform, the onus is on employees to embrace the changes that technology brings. Being proactive in upgrading one’s skills is essential for complementing the Government’s effort to support structural changes faced by employees.

As the Prime Minister has mentioned, employees must recognise the Government's commitment to assist them before they can align themselves with the schemes for skills upgrading.

The economy is an embodiment of the adage "change is the only constant"; both our educational paradigm and people must actively evolve to keep up with the times.

Source: <http://www.todayonline.com/voices/education-reform-needed-keep-times>

— **End of TMA01** —



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