

## A. Reading Comprehension

(20 marks)

Please read the story carefully before working out the exercises.

### The founding of the Lion City

Hundreds of years ago, Prince Sang Nila Utama lived a charmed life. What we now call Indonesia, was at peace, and the prince spent his days with his friends, hunting, feasting and singing.

However, there came a time when the prince got tired of his usual activities. He decided to set off in search of adventure. Sailing from island to island, he went where the wind took him and saw many new and strange things.

One day, the prince set sail in a number of ships as in a fleet. He and his men reached the Riau Islands and were welcomed by the queen. A few days later, Sang Nila Utama went to one of the islands on a hunting trip. As he looked out across the sea, he saw a new island with a white sandy beach which had the appearance of a white sheet of cloth. He was told that it was called Temasek. "I must go there!" he declared. "I cannot rest until I set foot on that island."

When the prince decided to visit Temasek the captain **protested**, for he could see that a storm was **brewing**, but the young man insisted. Sure enough, when they were halfway to the island, the winds blew, and mighty waves **crashed** over the boat.

In desperation, the captain ordered his men to throw all the cargo overboard, so that the boat would not sink. Yet, water kept entering the ship. Finally, the captain turned to his noble passenger. “My Lord, throw your crown overboard,” he begged, “or we shall all **perish.**”

Sang Nila Utama’s crown was made of gold and jewels. Reluctantly, he threw it into the rough sea. Amazingly, the boat began to ride the waves, and eventually, the storm calmed down and the travellers reached their island safely.

It was beautiful, bright with flowers and birds. Suddenly, as he walked along the silvery sands, the prince saw a strange animal with an orange body, black head and a white breast. It was large, fierce and magnificent. It moved with great speed as it disappeared into the jungle.

The prince’s companions told him it was a lion.

“Then I will call this place *Singa Pura*, the Lion City,” said Sang Nila Utama, “and I will rule it myself.” He did, and the city of Singapore flourishes to this day.

Adapted from ‘*Around the World in 80 tales*’ by Nicola Baxter