


# KIASU ExamPaper



## 2019 H1 General Paper

### JC2 Prelim Paper

1	ANGLO-CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE
2	ANDERSON SERANGOON JUNIOR COLLEGE
3	CATHOLIC JUNIOR COLLEGE
4	DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL
5	EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
6	HWA CHONG INSTITUTION
7	JURONG PIONEER JUNIOR COLLEGE
8	MILLENNIA INSTITUTE
9	NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE
10	NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE
11	RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
12	ST. ANDREW'S JUNIOR COLLEGE
13	TEMASEK JUNIOR COLLEGE
14	TAMPINES MERIDIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE
15	VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
16	YISHUN JUNIOR COLLEGE

**Bonus: P1 answer for ASRJC, CJC, NYJC, SAJC, TJC, TMJC**

Bonus



**ANGLO-CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019**

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

Paper 1

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your index number and name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **2** printed pages.



Anglo-Chinese Junior College  
General Paper Department

GP 8807\_1  
ACJC 2019

**[Turn over]**

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. 'Small actions can eventually change the world.' How far do you agree?
2. 'We are merely paying lip service to the arts.' How true is this in your society?
3. Do you agree that family is more important than ever in the modern world?
4. Is a focus on beauty necessarily harmful?
5. Examine the view that there is still a glass ceiling for women in sports.
6. 'In the age of information, ignorance is a choice.' Comment.
7. Consider the view that science solves all problems.
8. 'The real heroes of environmentalism are rebels.' Discuss.
9. 'A strong economy is the foundation of progress.' To what extent is this true in your society?
10. Is capital punishment ever justifiable?
11. 'In the modern world, speed is everything.' Discuss.
12. 'The power of the masses is overrated.' Do you agree?

**ANGLO-CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019**

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages.



Anglo-Chinese Junior College  
General Paper Department

GP 8807\_2  
ACJC 2019

**[Turn over]**

*Stephen Buranyi makes several observations about the worldwide revolt against plastic.*

- 1 Plastic is everywhere, and suddenly we have decided that is a very bad thing. Until recently, plastic enjoyed a sort of anonymity in ubiquity: we were so thoroughly surrounded that we hardly noticed it. You might be surprised to learn, for instance, that today's cars and planes are, by volume, about 50% plastic. More clothing is made out of polyester and nylon, both plastics, than cotton or wool. Add this to the more obvious expanse of toys, household bric-a-brac and consumer packaging, and the extent of plastic's empire becomes clear. It is the colourful yet banal background material of modern life. Each year, the world produces around 340 million tonnes of the stuff, enough to fill every skyscraper in New York City. Humankind has produced unfathomable quantities of plastic for decades, first passing the 100 million tonne mark in the early 1990s. But for some reason, it is only very recently that people have really begun to care. 10
- 2 The result is a worldwide revolt against plastic, one that transcends both borders and political divides. Protest groups from the US to South Korea have dumped piles of what they say is unwanted and excessive plastic packaging at supermarkets. Earlier this year, angry customers in the UK posted so many crisp packets back to their manufacturers, in protest at the fact they were not recyclable, that the postal service was overwhelmed. Prince Charles has given speeches about the dangers of plastic, while Kim Kardashian has posted on Instagram about the 'plastic crisis', and claims to have given up straws. At the highest levels of government, the plastic panic can resemble a scrambled response to a natural disaster, or a public health crisis. The United Nations has declared a 'war' on single-use plastic. In Britain, Theresa May has called it a 'scourge', and committed the government to a 25-year plan that would phase out disposable packaging by 2042. India claimed it would do the same, but by 2022. 15 20
- 3 All this has added up to a feeling that we might be on the verge of a great environmental victory, of the kind not seen since the successful action against acid rain and CFCs three decades ago. But getting rid of plastic would require more than a packaging-free aisle at the supermarket and soggy cardboard drinking straws at the pub. Plastic is everywhere not because it was always better than the natural materials it replaced, but because it was lighter and cheaper – so much cheaper, in fact, that it was easier to justify throwing away. Customers found this convenient, and businesses were happy to sell them a new plastic container for every soda or sandwich they bought. In the same way steel enabled new frontiers in building, plastic made possible the throwaway culture that we have come to take for granted. To take on plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself. It requires us to recognise just how radically our way of life has reshaped the planet in the span of a single lifetime, and ask whether it is too much. 25 30
- 4 The most astounding thing about the anti-plastic movement is just how fast it has grown. To travel back even to 2015 is to enter to a world in which almost all of the things we currently know about plastic are already known, but people are not very angry about it. Sometimes alarming stories about plastic did break through into the media and catch the interest of the public – the garbage patch was a media favourite, and every so often there was a new panic about overflowing landfills, or the massive quantities of waste we ship overseas – but it was nothing like today. 35
- 5 What exactly caused this change is a question of great debate. The most plausible answer is not that the science on plastic reached a critical mass, or that we became saturated with images of adorable sea creatures choking on our waste (although those things are important). It is that, at a deep level, the whole way we think about plastic has been transformed. We used to see it as litter – a nuisance but not a menace. That idea has been undermined by the recent widespread acknowledgment that plastic is far more pervasive and sinister than most people had ever imagined. 40 45
- 6 The shift in thinking started with the public outcry over microbeads, the small, abrasive grains of plastic that companies began pouring into cosmetic and cleaning products in the mid-1990s to add grit. Scientists began raising the alarm about potential dangers posed to sea life in 2010,

- and people were shocked to learn that microbeads were in thousands of products, from Johnson & Johnson's spot-clearing face scrubs, to supposedly eco-friendly brands like the Body Shop. Microbeads were only the beginning. After scientists started showing how microfibres from our laundry ended up lodged in the guts of fish, newspapers ran articles with headlines such as 'Yoga pants are destroying the Earth'. Then tyres, which are about 60% plastic, were revealed to shed plastic fibres while in motion, potentially more harmful than microbeads and clothing combined.
- 7 People now realise that plastic is in our household products, coffee cups, teabags and clothing – but it seems to have escaped our ability to catch it. It slips through our fingers and our water filters and sloshes into rivers and oceans like effluent from a sinister industrial factory. It is no longer embodied by a Big Mac container on the side of the road. It has come to seem more like a previously unnoticed chemical listed halfway down the small print on a hairspray bottle, ready to mutate fish or punch a hole in the ozone layer. The appeal of the fight against plastic is that there is the sense that you have joined an insurgent political campaign and organisations benefit from a chance at opportunism. We have entered a phase where every brand, organisation and politician strains to be seen to be doing something.
- 8 However, the anti-plastic movement is not without its problems. Framing litter as a personal failing was remarkably convenient. In 1988, the year global plastic production pulled even with steel, Margaret Thatcher, picking up litter in St James's Park for a photo opportunity, captured the tone perfectly. 'This is not the fault of the government,' she told reporters. 'It is the fault of the people who knowingly and thoughtlessly throw it down.' Noticeably absent from her indictment was anyone who manufactured or sold plastic in the first place. The packaging and drinks industries were quick to push the idea that recycling could keep their products out of landfill. The plastic industry made grand claims about the potential for recycling their products. The problem with these rosy claims was that plastic is one of the worst materials for recycling. Glass, steel and aluminium can be melted and reformed a nearly infinite number of times to make new products of the same quality as the first. Plastic, by contrast, significantly degrades each time it is recycled. A plastic bottle cannot be recycled to make a plastic bottle of the same quality. Instead, recycled plastic becomes clothing fibres, or slats for furniture, which then might go on to be road filler, or plastic insulation, neither of which are further recyclable. Each stage is essentially a one-way ratchet towards landfill or the ocean.
- 9 Although the public's enthusiasm for anti-plastic campaigns is partly motivated by the feeling that it is a simpler and more solvable problem than climate change, the two issues are more closely connected than most people realise. This is the paradox of plastic, or at least our current obsession with it: learning about the scale of the problem moved us to act, but the more we push against it, the more it begins to seem just as boundless and intractable as all the other environmental problems we have failed to solve. And it brings us up against the same obstacles: unregulatable business, the globalised world, and our own unsustainable way of life. We need to recognise that plastic is not just an isolated problem that we can banish from our lives, but simply the most visible product of our past half-century of rampant consumption.

**ANGLO-CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019**

CANDIDATE  
NAME

INDEX  
NUMBER

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

Additional Materials: 1 insert

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your index number and name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen in the spaces provided on the Question Paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

The insert contains the passage for comprehension.

Note that up to 15 marks out of 50 will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

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This document consists of **6** printed pages.



Read the passage in the insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

**NOTE:** When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

- 1** Using your own words as far as possible, explain the author's use of the phrase 'anonymity in ubiquity' (line 2).

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[2]

- 2** What is the author's purpose in describing plastic as a 'colourful yet banal' background material of modern life (lines 6-7)?

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[2]

- 3** Explain what the author means when he describes the revolt against plastic as 'worldwide' (line 11). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 4** What does the author mean by 'to take on plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself' (line 30-31) and why is this so? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 5 Explain the author's use of the word 'even' in the phrase 'To travel back even to 2015' (lines 33-34). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 6 Why is framing litter as a personal failing described as being 'remarkably convenient' (line 66)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[1]

- 7 In paragraph 8, what does the author imply by using the words 'grand' (line 72) and 'rosy' (line 73) to describe the claims made by the plastic industry?

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[1]

- 8 How does the author illustrate his assertion that the plastic industry has 'made grand claims about the potential for recycling their products' (line 72)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[3]

- 9 Why are the problems of plastic and climate change 'more closely connected than most people realise' (lines 81-82)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]



- 10** Using material from paragraphs 5-7 (lines 40-64) only, summarise how and why people's attitude towards plastic has changed.

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

People's attitude towards plastic has changed. They \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

[Number of words: .....]

- 11 Stephen Buranyi discusses the motivations behind the anti-plastic movement and the issues that come with it. How far would you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society?

[illegible]

Band	
Marks	



# ACJC General Paper Department

## JC2 Preliminary Exam 2019 Paper 2 Answer Scheme

1. Using your own words as far as possible, explain the author's use of the phrase 'anonymity in ubiquity' (line 2). [2m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
Plastic is <b>everywhere</b> ... (line 1)  Plastic enjoyed a sort of anonymity in <b>ubiquity</b> : ... (line 2)  we were so <b>thoroughly surrounded</b> ... (line 2)	Plastic is so widely used/ pervasive in our everyday lives
Plastic enjoyed a <b>sort of anonymity</b> in ubiquity: ... (line 2)  ...that we <b>hardly noticed</b> it. (lines 2-3)	that we never paid much attention to it/ take it for granted.

Question type: *Literal*

Examiners' notes: Some students mistakenly thought that 'hardly noticed' means that plastic is 'not seen'.

2. What is the author's purpose in describing plastic as a 'colourful yet banal' background material to modern life? (lines 6-7). [2m]

From Passage	Inferred
(author's intention/ function)	The author is offering a contrast/ utilising a paradox/ stating a contradiction
It is the <b>colourful</b> (line 6)	to show how plastic allows us to live a rich/ vibrant/ exciting/ varied modern life,  OR to show how the use of plastic allows us to create a variety/ an array/ a range of products,
...yet <b>banal</b> background material of modern life. (lines 6-7)	despite being a material that is commonplace/ mundane/ ordinary.

1-2pts=1m, 3pts=2m

Question type: *Use of language / Inference*

Examiners' notes: Most students did not pick out the author's purpose and the function of the phrase as intended with the word 'yet'. Some students mistakenly thought that the word 'banal' is derived from 'bane' and means 'detrimental' and 'harmful'.



3. Explain what the author means when he describes the revolt against plastic as 'worldwide' (line 11)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
The result is a worldwide revolt against plastic, one that <b>transcends</b> both <b>borders</b> ... .. (line 11)	The revolt against plastic extends over/ crosses/ goes beyond physical boundaries/ geographical territories/ countries/ nations and <b>(2-part answer)</b>  OR The revolt against plastic is global in nature and
and (transcends) <b>political divides</b> . (lines 11-12)	extends over/ crosses/ goes beyond different/ polarising/ dissimilar  political beliefs/ ideologies/ allegiances/ convictions. (allow lift for 'political')  <b>(2-part answer)</b>

Question type: Literal

Examiners' notes: Some students did not accurately paraphrase 'political divides' and did not capture the idea of 'divides' as differences.

4. What does the author mean by 'to take on plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself' (line 30-31) and why is this so? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
<b>To take on</b> plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself. (lines 30-31)	Tackling/ Confronting/ Battling the problem of plastic is thereby/ therefore battling the problem of consumerism. <b>(idea of causation)</b>  OR Tackling/ Confronting/ Battling the problem of plastic is akin to/ like/ equivalent to/ partially tackling/ confronting/ battling the problem of consumerism. <b>(idea of similarity)</b>
In the same way steel enabled new frontiers in building, plastic made possible the <b>throwaway culture</b> that we have come to <b>take for granted</b> . (lines 29-30)  OR It requires us to recognise just how <b>radically</b> our <b>way of life</b> has <b>reshaped</b> the planet in the span of a single lifetime, and ask whether it is too much. (lines 31-32)	This is because plastic made possible habits/ a lifestyle which are/ is wasteful/ that involves thoughtless/ mindless/ careless disposal/ discarding of waste.  OR This is because tackling the problem of plastic requires us to acknowledge how drastically/ severely our habits have/ culture has changed/ transformed our planet. OR (Inferred) This is because tackling the problem of plastic requires us to confront the severity/ magnitude of both the problems of consumerism and plastic.

Question type: Literal

Examiners' notes: Some students did not capture the idea of causation or similarity and merely copied the structure of the phrase. Some students also inaccurately paraphrased 'throwaway culture' to be merely 'consumerist lifestyle', a description which is not sufficiently specific. The extent/degree suggested by the word 'radically' was often not captured.

5. Explain the author's use of the word 'even' in the phrase 'To travel back even to 2015' (lines 33-34). **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
The most <b>astounding</b> thing about the anti-plastic movement is just how <b>fast</b> it has <b>grown</b> . To travel back <b>even</b> to 2015 is to enter to a world in which almost all of the things we currently know about plastic are already <b>known</b> , but people are not very <b>angry</b> about it. (lines 33-35)	<b>Function</b> The author uses the word 'even' to emphasise how...  as recent as 2015/ only a few years ago/ not too long ago <b>(idea of recentness)</b>  OR in just a few years/ in a matter of a few years/ in such a short time <b>(idea of short duration)</b>  OR surprisingly/unexpectedly quick/ swift <b>(idea of speed or rate of change)</b>
	<b>Context</b> people were aware/ cognisant of the problem of plastic yet not upset/ indifferent about it. <b>(focus on change in people's attitude)</b>  OR the anti-plastic movement has progressed/ advanced/ gained traction/ become more significant. <b>(focus on growth of anti-plastic movement)</b>

Question type: Use of language

Examiners' notes: Some students did not capture the function of the word 'even'. Many students who chose to focus on the change in people's attitude did not reflect the idea that people were already aware of the problem.

6. Why is framing litter as a personal failing described as being 'remarkably convenient' (line 66)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1m]

From Passage	Paraphrased/Inferred
"This is not the <b>fault</b> of the government," she told reporters. "It is the <b>fault</b> of the people who knowingly and thoughtlessly throw it down." Noticeably absent from her <b>indictment</b> was anyone who manufactured or sold plastic in the first place. (lines 68-70)	Framing litter as a personal failing is described as remarkably convenient as it absolves the government and companies from any blame/ accountability/ responsibility for the problem.  OR Framing litter as a personal failing is described as remarkably convenient as it allows the government and companies to make consumers the scapegoats.

Question type: Literal/ Inference

Examiners' notes: Some students mistakenly thought that 'remarkably convenient' merely means it is easy and practical to blame consumers.

7. In paragraph 8, what does the author imply by using the words 'grand' (line 72) and 'rosy' (line 73) to describe the claims made by the plastic industry? [1m]

From Passage	Inferred
The plastic industry made grand claims about the potential for recycling their products. The problem with these rosy claims was that plastic is one of the worst materials for recycling. (lines 71-73)	These claims are exaggerated/ distorted/ false/ misleading/ overly optimistic.

Question type: Inference/ Vocabulary (Use of Language)

Examiners' notes: This question was quite well done.

8. How does the author illustrate his assertion that the plastic industry has 'made grand claims about the potential for recycling their products' (line 72)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
The problem with these rosy claims was that plastic is one of the <b>worst</b> materials for recycling. (lines 72-73)	The author illustrates this by stating the fact that plastic is actually one of the most difficult/ challenging materials for recycling.  OR The author illustrates this by stating the fact that plastic is in reality one of the least suitable materials for recycling.
Glass, steel and aluminium can be melted and reformed a nearly infinite number of times to make new products of the same quality as the first. Plastic, by contrast, <b>significantly degrades</b> each time it is recycled. (lines 75-76)  A plastic bottle <b>cannot be</b> recycled to make a plastic bottle of the <b>same quality</b> . (line 76)	(In comparison to other materials,) plastic breaks down/ deteriorates considerably/ to a large extent each time it is recycled. <b>(Note: extent/ degree word needed)</b>  OR (In comparison to other materials,) recycled plastic products are unable to maintain/ retain the standard/ grade/ condition of the original items. (allow lift for 'cannot be')  OR (In comparison to other materials), recycled plastic products will not be of similar/ equal standard/ grade/ condition as the original. (allow lift for 'cannot be')
Instead, recycled plastic becomes clothing fibres, or slats for furniture, which then might go on to be road filler, or plastic insulation, <b>neither of which are further recyclable</b> . Each stage is essentially a <b>one-way ratchet</b> towards landfill or the ocean. (lines 77-79)	Eventually, some plastic can no longer be reused/ cannot be repurposed anymore (and end up as waste). (allow lift for 'recyclable')  OR The process is irreversible/ cannot be undone.

Question type: *Literal*

Examiners' notes: Many students did not accurately paraphrase the degree/extent of words and phrases like 'worst' and 'significantly degrades'. The words 'same' and 'quality' were often lifted.

9. Why are the problems of plastic and climate change 'more closely connected than most people realise' (lines 81-82)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2m]

From Passage	Paraphrased
Although the public's enthusiasm for anti-plastic campaigns is partly motivated by the feeling that it is a <b>simpler</b> and <b>more solvable</b> problem than climate change, the two issues are more closely connected than most people realise. (lines 81-83)	Although most people think that the problem of plastic is less challenging to overcome,  OR Although most people think that the problem of plastic is easier to deal with/ overcome,
...seem just as <b>boundless and intractable</b> as all the other environmental problems we have failed to solve. (lines 85-86)	the truth is that it is just as widespread/ limitless <u>and</u> hard to manage/ control, <b>(2-part answer)</b>
And it brings us up against the <b>same obstacles</b> : unregulatable business, the globalised world, and our own unsustainable way of life. (lines 86-87)	and poses similar/ identical challenges/ difficulties.  OR (Accept if students paraphrase <u>all</u> 3 obstacles, instead of paraphrasing 'same obstacles')

1-2pts=1m, 3pts=2m

Question type: *Literal*

Examiners' notes: Most students focused on how the problems of plastic and climate change are similar and did not answer the question of why they are 'more closely connected than most people realise'.



10. Using material from paragraphs 5-7 (lines 40-64) only, summarise how and why people's attitude towards plastic has changed. Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible. **"People's attitude towards plastic has changed. They..."**

From the passage		Paraphrased	
1	We <b>used to see</b> it (line 43)	1	(People's attitude towards plastic has changed. They...) previously/ formerly perceived/ viewed/ understood
2	as litter – a <b>nuisance</b> (line 43-44)	2	it to be annoying/ bothersome/ inconvenient
3	but <b>not a menace</b> (line 44)	3	but not harmful/ dangerous/ hazardous.
4	That idea has been <b>undermined</b> by the recent <b>widespread acknowledgment</b> (lines 44-45)	4	That idea has been challenged/ weakened/ discounted by the recent common/ extensive understanding/ recognition
5	that plastic is <b>far more pervasive</b> (lines 45)	5	that plastic is so much more/ even more ubiquitous/prevalent <i>(allow lift for 'more') *must have the comparative element</i>
6	and <b>sinister</b> ... (lines 45)	6	and insidious/ threatening
7	than most people had ever <b>imagined</b> . (lines 45-46)	7	than we had ever thought/ perceived it to be.
8	The shift in thinking started with the <b>public outcry</b> over microbeads (line 47)	8	The shift in thinking started with the mass/ popular uproar/ commotion over microbeads.
9	Scientists began <b>raising the alarm</b> about potential <b>dangers</b> posed to sea life in 2010, (line 49)  After scientists started showing how microscopic fibres from our laundry ended up lodged in the guts of fish (lines 52-53)	9	Scientists started to highlight/ draw attention to possible harms/ threats to sea life
10	and people were <b>shocked to learn</b> ... (line 50)	10	and people were surprised/ stunned to realise/ find out
11	that microbeads were <b>in thousands of products</b> , from Johnson & Johnson's spot-clearing face scrubs... (lines 50-51)  People now realise that plastic is in our household products, coffee cups, teabags and clothing... (lines 58-59)	11	that microbeads (plastic) are (is) found in many/ numerous items/ goods, OR (inferred) that microbeads (plastic) are (is) found in everyday items, OR (inferred) microbeads (plastic) are (is) ubiquitous/ everywhere in our lives/ found in everything,
12	to <b>supposedly eco-friendly</b> brands like the Body Shop. Microbeads were only the beginning. (lines 50-51)	12	including in products apparently/ seemingly /ostensibly less detrimental/ harmful to the environment.
13	<b>newspapers</b> ran articles with <b>headlines</b> such as "Yoga pants are destroying the Earth". (lines 53-54)	13	The media began to report/ publicise the harmful effects of microscopic fibres (plastic).
14	Then tyres, which are about 60% plastic, were revealed to shed plastic fibres while in motion, potentially <b>more harmful</b> than microbeads and clothing combined. (lines 54-55)	14	Plastic fibres were then shown to be possibly more detrimental/ worse than microbeads.
15	People now realise that plastic is in our household products, coffee cups, teabags and clothing – but it seems to have <b>escaped our ability to catch it</b> . It <b>slips through our fingers</b> and our water filters and sloshes into rivers and oceans like effluent from a sinister industrial factory. (lines 56-58)	15	The hidden/ invisible/ evasive nature of plastic prevents people from managing the problem/ tackling the issue.
16	It is no longer embodied by a Big Mac container on the side of the road. It has come to seem more like a previously unnoticed chemical listed halfway listed down the small print on a hairspray bottle, ready to mutate fish or punch a hole in the ozone layer (lines 58-61)	16	(Inferred) The severity/ magnitude of the problem is highlighted.
17	The <b>appeal of the fight</b> against plastic... (line 61)	17	The movement/ campaign/ effort against plastic is attractive/ draws people
18	is that there is the <b>sense</b> that you have joined an <b>insurgent political campaign</b> . (line 62)	18	because people feel/ think that they have participated in a revolt/ revolution/ rebellion
19	and organisations benefit from a chance at <b>opportunism</b> . (lines 62-63)	19	and organisations gain from being able to take advantage of/ exploit on the situation.  <i>*must have negative connotation</i>
20	We have entered a phase where every brand, organisation and politician <b>strains to be seen</b> to be doing something. (lines 63-64)	20	In the fight against plastic, we have reached a stage where everyone strives/ endeavours to be visible/ noticed (in their efforts).

#### Mark allocation:

No. of Points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10-11	12-13	14 & above
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**11. Stephen Buranyi discusses the motivations behind the anti-plastic movement and the issues that come with it. How far would you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society?**

### **Requirement**

Students should...

- a) explain the motivations behind the anti-plastic movement and the accompanying issues
- b) describe the underlying motivations and the issues of the anti-plastic movement
- c) show understanding and engage with the ideas and views raised in the passage
- d) support their views with relevant examples from their own society

### **Explanation**

Students should discuss some of the following in relation to their own society:

- a) the motivations behind the anti-plastic movement and the prevalent problems
- b) the various political, economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of the anti-plastic movement
- c) how people participate in the anti-plastic movement and the positive and negative outcomes of it

### **Evaluation**

Students should...

- a) question/show reasons to explain if the author's ideas are applicable or not applicable to their own society
- b) provide insightful analysis of the anti-plastic movement in their own society and raise relevant issues that have emerged/are emerging
- c) critically evaluate the underlying motivations of various stakeholders and the issues of the anti-plastic movement
- d) provide cogent development of arguments
- e) give examples from their own society to support their views

### **Coherence**

Students should...

- a) adopt a consistent viewpoint
- b) argue logically
- c) organise answers into cohesive, themed paragraphs
- d) link paragraphs to show continuity and direction of argument
- e) maintain relevance to the task in everything they write
- f) end with a summative or concluding paragraph/ sentence

### **Examiners' notes:**

- Some students did not choose appropriate references. They chose references that were not claims and offered examples, facts about plastic or context instead.
- Some students were often not explicit in indicating whether they were talking about a motivation, an issue, or both when providing references.
- Some students were often only talking about waste or recycling in general, without linking their discussion to the motivations of the anti-plastic movement, specific issues brought about by the use of plastic in their society, or the obstacles faced in getting various stakeholders to reduce the production of an array of plastic products and disposal of plastic waste.
- Some students merely gave observations and descriptions of Singapore society without considering specific underlying reasons, motivations and implications.



11. Stephen Buranyi discusses the motivations behind the anti-plastic movement and the issues that come with it. How far would you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society?

References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Motivation 1:</b> The urgency of the problem is raised as notable celebrities, governments and international organisations are creating awareness.</p> <p>'Prince Charles has given speeches about the dangers of plastic, while Kim Kardashian has posted on Instagram about the "plastic crisis", and claims to have given up straws. At the highest levels of government the plastic panic can resemble a scrambled response to a natural disaster, or a public health crisis. The United Nations has declared a "war" on single-use plastic. In Britain, Theresa May has called it a "scourge", and committed the government to a 25-year plan that would phase out disposable packaging by 2042. India claimed it would do the same, but by 2022.' (lines 15-21)</p>	<p>Do we have local celebrities or government officials rallying us to support the anti-plastic movement?</p> <p>Do we react positively to them or are we unmoved by them?</p> <p>Are we responding to the international call to reduce and to curb the use of plastic and acknowledging the harm it has on the environment?</p>	<p>There is a growing recognition that recycling is a sector for growth and investment, with the potential for improving city infrastructure, offering many employment opportunities, and creating a way less toxic and way more liveable environment for everyone.</p> <p>The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is bringing businesses in Singapore together under PACT – a Plastic Action commitment to stop excessive and unnecessary plastic production and ensure existing plastic is effectively recovered and recycled, supported by the National Environment Agency and Zero Waste SG. PACT pools together the knowledge and experience of companies, complementing their will to change, rethink business models, and innovate, such that the existing linear system of excessive and wasteful consumption is disrupted and replaced by a circular economy that is regenerative and restorative by design.</p> <p>Member of Parliament, Louis Ng called on the government to do more to tackle the city-state's chronic plastic over-use problem and move "towards a plastic-lite Singapore" by banning single-use plastic in the public sector and to put a charge on plastic carrier bags.</p> <p>Several policies have been put in place to tackle plastic waste, e.g. the Singapore Packaging Agreement, Public Sector Sustainability Plan 2017-2020 to call on the public sector to eliminate single-use plastic from catering and events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rather than celebrities and high ranking governmental officials, the raising of awareness of the plastic crisis seems to be more of a ground up movement, from the community. Singaporeans taking part in the anti-plastic movement may not necessarily be notable figures of society.</li> <li>17 year-old Ang Zyn Yee is an advocate of a straw-free environment, through her initiative, 'Straw-Free Singapore'. To date, she has managed to convince corporations such as Wildlife Reserves Singapore to go straw-free and more than 20 F&amp;B establishments in Changi Airport to go straw-lite.</li> <li>Plastic-Lite Singapore, a community and volunteer-based platform started in early September 2016 to inspire and encourage Singaporeans towards a lifestyle where the usage of plastics, particularly single-use plastics, can be minimised, with simple programmes and initiatives.</li> </ul>

References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Motivation 2:</b> We now want to tackle 'inconsiderate' waste management and discourage a throwaway culture</p> <p>'Customers found this convenient, and businesses were happy to sell them a new plastic container for every soda or sandwich they bought. In the same way steel enabled new frontiers in building, plastic made possible the throwaway culture that we have come to take for granted. To take on plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself. It requires us to recognise just how radically our way of life has reshaped the planet in the span of a single lifetime, and ask whether it is too much.'</p> <p>(lines 27-32)</p>	<p>Are consumers too reliant on convenience such that they pay no attention to the environmental damage caused by their use of plastic, or are they willing to inconvenience themselves in exchange for a greener environment?</p> <p>Are businesses feeding our desire for convenience and keeping us lazy and indifferent towards changing our consumption habits nurtured by our excessively consumerist culture?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Singapore society is well aware of the impact of the throwaway culture and the environmentalist movement here is growing. Businesses are also concerned about their consumers' consumption habits especially with regard to the use of plastics, in takeaway containers and packaging.</li> <li>Four major supermarket chains, namely NTUC FairPrice, Sheng Siong, Dairy Farm Singapore Group and Prime Group, have teamed up with the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) and DBS Bank to engage customers to take fewer single-use bags and opt for reusable bags instead. The "One Less Plastic" campaign, launched in December 2018 aims to reduce the consumption of disposable plastic bags by 25% over 2019, with hopes of spurring permanent change in consumers' use of plastic bags.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumers assume that supermarkets that sell reusable bags might be trying to profit from the sale of these bags. This act undermines the intention of encouraging reduced use of plastic and limits the throwaway culture and mindset prioritises convenience above all.</li> <li>With Singapore's fast-paced society, plastic is favoured as we crave convenience at a low cost. This can be seen through the pervasive use of plastic (hawker centres, shopping malls, wet markets, convenient stores). The cost for plastic packaging, or even plastic takeaway containers is usually very nominal. The additional 10 cents or 20 cents does not have that great an impact on the consumer, and most would be happy to pay for the convenience plastic brings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motivation 3:</b> People now know that plastic has far more harmful consequences than earlier believed.</p> <p>'That idea has been undermined by the recent widespread acknowledgment that plastic is far more pervasive and sinister than most people had ever imagined.'</p> <p>(lines 44-46)</p>	<p>How aware are we of the extent of the plastic problem and its effects on us and our environment?</p> <p>Do we think of plastic as being dangerous to our health or well-being?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Singaporeans are educated and well aware of the dire effects of plastic use. The younger generation has long grown up in a climate of environmentalism, and public education on the 3 Rs: reuse, reduce, and recycle. Recent studies show that in Singapore, an average person uses 146 bags from supermarkets alone. With our wasteful model of consumption, we are rapidly producing and consuming plastic at a rate that will leave a toxic plastic legacy on Earth. As plastic does not decompose, it will continue to be in our land, water and air for the next 400 years, or 16 generations. As such, there are now concerted efforts to change our lifestyles, whether it is using metal straws or carrying our own bags and containers for takeaway in a bid to cut down on single-use plastic.</li> <li>The Singapore Environment Council School Green Awards is a voluntary environmental programme which serves as a platform for students to develop and showcase their environmental efforts, through customised activities which will help them gain better understanding of the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even though there has been growing awareness of the issues surrounding plastic, the majority of Singaporeans either choose to be ignorant, or have no sense of urgency with regard to the plastic crisis.</li> <li>The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) has told The Straits Times that while microplastics is an emerging area of concern, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has indicated there is no evidence currently that it has an impact on human health. This might imply that Singapore agencies do not understand the origin of this issue and do not place sufficient emphasis on plastic use and its impacts.</li> <li>Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Environment and Water Resources, Dr Amy Khor, has stated that unlike other countries with mandatory plastic bag charges, Singapore incinerates plastic waste before putting it in landfills and hence does not face the land and water pollution issues that plague those countries. The Ministry's stand is that plastic bags were "necessary for responsible and hygienic bagging of waste" in Singapore's hot and humid climate. These points of play on the concerns that the everyman has in Singapore, whether it is industries or consumers. We do not even see that plastic is harmful.</li> </ul>



References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Motivation 4:</b> Individuals are drawn to the cause of fighting against plastic use.</p> <p><b>Corporations and organizations use the opportunities presented to fight for the environment. As a consequence, their brand image may become more visible in society.</b></p> <p>‘The appeal of the fight against plastic is that there is the sense that you have joined an insurgent political campaign and even presented opportunism for any organisation.’ (lines 62-64)</p>	<p>Do Singapore companies and organisations come together in a concerted effort to fight against plastic?</p> <p>Do organisations see the anti-plastic movement as bringing them opportunities – to reduce cost, to change their processes, to boost their image, etc.?</p> <p>Are organisations genuinely concerned about the environment or is this just corporate social responsibility that has become obligatory?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) announced on 3 June 2019 that more than 270 F&amp;B outlets in Singapore will remove straws completely from their premises or provide them only on request from July 1 onwards. Conscientious businesses and early adopters such as Plain Vanilla Bakery, KFC, Deliveroo, Millennium Hotels and IKEA have reduced single-use plastic waste as they shift their businesses towards sustainable practices. This could also be seen as opportunistic in furthering their corporate image as they jump on the bandwagon of environmentalism.</li> <li>15 businesses have also pledged to longer-term goals to reduce their plastic production and use by 2030. For example, the Lo and Behold Group (with 13 restaurants and businesses) is now looking at biodegradable alternatives for delivery and takeaway packaging.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This call for action has mostly fallen on deaf ears in Singapore, as consumers may not be as convinced by the fight against plastic. Since there is no rubbish piling up in the streets, Singaporeans do not perceive a waste problem or feel personally responsible to reduce waste. Some consumers have also raised the concern that going straw-free is insufficient and may just be ‘corporate green washing’.</li> <li>Businesses in Singapore have conflicting interests, as they are mostly still profit-driven and could be concerned with the high costs or inconvenience of going plastic-free. Supermarkets, convenience stores, and most food &amp; beverage companies still rely on plastic, not to mention factories and heavy industries. Joining the plastic-free movement is not even a consideration at all.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motivation 5:</b> The acknowledgment that the problem of plastic is closely linked to the problem of climate change has prompted urgent and immediate action.</p> <p>‘Although the public’s enthusiasm for anti-plastic campaigns is partly motivated by the feeling that it is a simpler and more solvable problem than climate change, the two issues are more closely connected than most people realise.’ (lines 81-83)</p>	<p>Do Singaporeans see any link between the two issues?</p> <p>Will tackling the problem of plastic aid our efforts against climate change?</p> <p>Can we make a difference to environmental issues by taking on plastic?</p> <p>Do we think that the anti-plastic movement is more likely to succeed than attempts at dealing with climate change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Singaporeans are not blind to the fact that plastic use impacts our environment. As a tiny island state situated near the equator, we will most likely face the brunt of climate change. This is not far from the public consciousness, and many Singaporeans are now taking action to address plastic use.</li> <li>The Singapore society is beginning to understand the urgency of the issue of using plastic and how it impacts climate change as cafes now see more consumers purchasing “keepcups” for their takeaway drinks. Some retailers, such as Starbucks and Dutch Colony, also give incentives when consumers bring their own cups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a rather cautious society, Singaporeans are sceptical about whether they can meaningfully make a difference as individuals. At the same time, some people think plastic is better for the environment as no water (a scarce resource in Singapore) is required to wash it. Others think everything can be recycled so it does not harm the environment. These ignorant perspectives are still prevalent in the Singapore society, especially since disposable plastic is now part of the culture and convenience wins in our society.</li> <li>Though some pockets of corporations are encouraging their consumers to bring their own cups, containers and dining utensils for takeaway, some large F&amp;B retailers are still opposed to the idea, harping on the notion that it might compromise cleanliness – a big deal in spotless Singapore, where plastic bags are seen as necessary to hygienically dispose wet waste. None of the major retailers, however, seem worried by the reputational risk of being associated with plastic wastefulness, as the majority of their customers are still nonchalant about the plastic issue and how it is related to environmental degradation and climate change.</li> </ul>

References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Issue 1:</b>  <b>The problem of plastic is much larger than we perceive it to be because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It stems from our pervasive consumerist culture</li> <li>- It is too big for us to handle</li> <li>- It is intertwined with several other issues which are as challenging to deal with.</li> </ul> <p>‘To take on plastic is in some way to take on consumerism itself.’ (lines 30-31)</p> <p>‘People now realise that plastic is in our household products, coffee cups, teabags and clothing – but it seems to have escaped our ability to catch it. It slips through our fingers and our water filters and sloshes into rivers and oceans like effluent from a sinister industrial factory.’ (lines 57-59)</p> <p>‘This is the paradox of plastic, or at least our current obsession with it: learning about the scale of the problem moved us to act, but the more we push against it, the more it begins to seem just as boundless and intractable as all the other environmental problems we have failed to solve.’ (lines 83-86)</p> <p>‘And it brings us up against the same obstacles: unregulatable business, the globalised world, and our own unsustainable way of life. We need to recognise that plastic isn’t just an isolated problem that we can banish from our lives, but simply the most visible product of our past half-century of rampant consumption.’ (lines 86-89)</p>	<p>Are Singaporeans motivated to act in the interest of the environment, or are they defeated by the enormity of the task?</p> <p>Does consumerism fuel plastic use in Singapore?</p> <p>Are Singaporeans able to tackle our lifestyles and our consumptive behaviour alongside the problem of plastic? Do Singaporeans see any link between the two issues?</p> <p>Is the pervasiveness of plastic recognised and addressed as a problem in Singapore?</p> <p>Are we able to control the problem? Is it within our means?</p> <p>Does Singapore’s position in the globalised world contribute to this problem?</p> <p>What conditions are Singapore facing that might limit the success of tackling the plastic problem?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retailers and companies are set up to feed Singapore’s obsession with convenience, efficiency, and cost-cutting as plastics are cheap and easy to use. This habit of using plastics for many decades now has ingrained a certain psyche in most of us. The average Singaporean uses an unconscionable 13 plastic bags a day, and this has become a big part of our convenience culture where deliveries and take-out meals are becoming increasingly common.</li> <li>• It is also undeniable that Singapore, being a highly globalised city, is also engaged in global capitalism and consumerist behaviour. In an international economy that prioritises economic growth and development, the unsustainability of the plastic problem is far larger than just what Singaporeans alone consume.</li> <li>• As much as Singaporeans are usually concerned about cost-savings, economic disincentives fail to work on the general populace. It is unlikely that charging or taxing single-use plastics will work in the long run if people lack social conviction and political will for change.</li> <li>• As a developed country in the relatively poorer region of Southeast Asian nations, Singapore is guilty of dumping its plastic waste in developing countries. Singapore exported almost 42,000 tonnes of plastic waste to countries including Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia in 2016, according to the latest United Nations trade data.</li> </ul> <p>This essentially puts the problem ‘out of sight and out of mind’. Just as quickly as plastic trash is thrown away and removed by Singapore’s efficient cleaning system, it vanishes from the consumer consciousness once Singaporeans have engaged in excessive consumption of plastics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singapore recognises the problem and has pledged to take steps against plastic waste. It says it aims to become a “zero waste” nation, meaning it will eventually not send any waste to landfill, and this is mostly supported by non-governmental organisations in Singapore. The NEA has also said that it will be implementing initiatives aimed at increasing recycling rates and reducing waste at the source.</li> <li>• Some companies are in fact exercising self-regulation and have taken concrete measures to reduce their plastic footprint, at the same time serving their economic interests and garnering social goodwill. KFC became the first fast food chain in Singapore to remove plastic straws and lids from its restaurants, a move that will save 17.8 metric tonnes of single-use plastic a year.</li> <li>• Government agencies are collaborating to get the best possible outcome. Let’s Recycle Together is a new campaign by Zero Waste SG which aims to encourage more HDB residents to recycle using the existing blue recycling bins in their estates, and to educate them on recycling correctly. This ground-up campaign complements the National Recycling Programme by the National Environment Agency (NEA). This is part of a long-term approach which requires time for results to show, but would be highly effective in mitigating environmental impact if successful.</li> <li>• Several initiatives which have been proposed may alleviate the problem or buy the authorities more time to work out more comprehensive responses. For example, RedMart, one of the largest online supermarkets in Singapore, switched to oxo-biodegradable bags which are designed to harmlessly biodegrade in the presence of oxygen. This allows people to stick with their consumption habits while being more environmentally-friendly.</li> </ul>

References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Issue 2:</b> Individuals, corporations and politicians are jumping onto the bandwagon to deal with the problem of plastic, with no genuine concern, rather focusing on being visible.</p> <p>‘We have entered a phase where where every brand, organisation and politician strains to be seen to be doing something.’ (lines 64-65)</p>	<p>Are the responses of individuals, organisations and the government merely a form of lip service to the severity of the problem?</p> <p>Are the different stakeholders in Singapore genuinely concerned about and doing something about the plastic problem?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While many agree with the common-sense argument to reduce plastic use, attempts to bring results are not always well thought-out or received. Some groups and organisations faced major backlash as their efforts came across as opportunistic or unrealistic. National University of Singapore (NUS) launched straw-ban campaign iReject in October 2018 at certain food and beverage outlets on campus. Students were not upset over the message of being environmentally conscious, but rather the abruptness of the ban and how it was executed as the campaign felt like a half-hearted attempt to care. In this case, the university only notified students via email about the campaign one day before it was implemented. This top-down ban did not go well as more feel that education and choice should go hand in hand. Others feel that more focus should be on changing students' consumption habits.</li> <li>Applying quick solutions like banning or charging for plastic bags without fully understanding its environmental effect can be a waste of resources, in terms of manpower, time and taxpayers' money, especially when government resources are limited. A more rational approach argues that focusing simply on banning or charging for plastic bags can be a distraction from the real problem, giving a false sense of achievement in thinking that we have reduced our environmental impact when in fact we have not. Besides, Singapore should invest in innovative plastic waste treatment technologies to minimise use of plastic packaging and increase plastic waste recycling rate. The Closing the Waste Loop research grant by NEA and National Research Foundation aims to do just that. We should be striving towards zero waste instead of zero plastic bags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are evident efforts to encourage recycling in Singapore, with blue bins conveniently housed in neighbourhood estates around the island. These blue bins have been in existence since April 2001, when they were launched under the National Environment Agency's (NEA) National Recycling Programme (NRP). The NRP collects paper, plastic, glass and metal recyclables together in the blue recycling bins that are emptied and processed by public waste collectors (PWCs), working towards becoming a Zero Waste Nation by reusing and recycling all materials.</li> <li>In April 2017, ten Singaporean environmental groups called for stronger action against plastic waste by co-signing an op-ed "Plastics: Enough Trash Talk". This is the first of such a united show of support which was spearheaded by WWF. "Plastics: Enough Trash Talk" reveals the true extent and impact of the plastic problem and shows how convenience can numb common sense. This shows concerted advocacy to fight against the problem of plastic.</li> </ul>



References	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Applicable	Less / Not applicable
<p><b>Issue 3: Corporations and governments are shifting the responsibility of the problem of plastic waste onto individuals.</b></p> <p>'Framing litter as a personal failing was remarkably convenient.' (lines 66-67)</p> <p>In 1988, the year global plastic production pulled even with steel, Margaret Thatcher, picking up litter in St James's Park for a photo opportunity, captured the tone perfectly. "This is not the fault of the government," she told reporters. "It is the fault of the people who knowingly and thoughtlessly throw it down." Noticeably absent from her indictment was anyone who manufactured or sold plastic in the first place. (lines 66-71)</p>	<p>Is the excessive use of plastic and littering seen as the fault of the individual in Singapore?</p> <p>Do the Singaporean government and local companies take responsibility for this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rhetoric behind the numerous anti-litter campaigns in Singapore is built on individual responsibility, and any offences are deemed to be the individual's fault. Just last year, the National Environment Agency (NEA) issued 39,000 litterbugs fines. The lurid yellow vests worn by offenders served with Corrective Work Orders (CWOs) and made to clean the streets have also been redesigned to make them even more readily distinguishable, in a bid to deter offenders. This leverages on the importance Singaporeans place on their personal reputations, and the problem of litter (amongst other environmental issues) is hence framed as a personal failing and not so much as something larger to be tackled by other stakeholders. This is fairly reasonable given how there are indeed countless cases of individuals carelessly disposing of (single-use) plastic product by the roadside or near waterways, including plastic bags which were unnecessarily taken when purchasing just one item that could have been stored in one's pocket or bag.</li> <li>Last year, MP Louis Ng called on the government to do more to tackle the city-state's chronic plastic over-use problem and move towards a plastic-lite Singapore by banning single-use plastic in the public sector, and putting a charge on carrier bags to address this urgent public safety issue. This was met with a familiar response from the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) – that plastic pollution will be tackled through public education not policy, in order to build "a national consciousness to care for the environment". This clearly shows the approach in viewing plastic use as a personal responsibility. (Also mentioned in Motivation #1 Applicable)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There have been ground-up efforts in Singapore as several companies in the supermarket, hotel, food &amp; beverage industries have pledged to take targeted measures to reduce plastic use, taking responsibility of the issue. The companies are committed to taking measures to cut plastic use within the stipulated time frames they set, starting with the removal of unnecessary plastics from their operations. Four major supermarket chains will be working with the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) and DBS Bank to encourage customers to take fewer single-use plastic bags and opt for reusable bags instead.</li> <li>The Singapore government acknowledges the problem of plastic and has set aside resources for relevant research to tackle it. Singapore is at the forefront of scientific research, which may involve finding better materials, improving waste management or removing plastics from nature. The government offers research grants for companies and organisations to develop sustainable waste management technologies, and has planned to make it mandatory for large generators of packaging waste to report the types and quantities they use and their reduction plans by 2021.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Issue 4:</b></p> <p><b>The plastic industry is making exaggerated claims about the potential of recycling their products.</b></p> <p>'The problem with these rosy claims was that plastic is one of the worst materials for recycling.' (line 74)</p> <p>'Each stage is essentially a one-way ratchet towards landfill or the ocean.' (lines 79-80)</p>	<p>Are the recycling efforts in Singapore truly effective?</p> <p>What happens to all the plastic in Singapore?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MEWR, as part of Zero Waste SG, proposed a circular economy approach where they launched research for the sustainable design for plastic materials, with the aim of allowing plastics to be more reusable and easier to recycle. At this point, it is still not known if this approach has been effective or feasible in businesses and corporations.</li> <li>In an effort to go green, BreadTalk introduced biodegradable bags. However, as there are many varieties of biodegradable plastic, some only degrade at higher temperatures, and when they do, form microplastic particles that are harmful to the oceans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Singapore is at the forefront of research into new technologies to recycle plastics. A team of researchers from the National University of Singapore and the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology have converted polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles into a highly insulating and absorbent material called aerogel, that turns the plastic waste that ends up in oceans and landfills into a life-saving material, say, for making cheap fire-resistant jackets for all people. They are making true the claim that certain plastics can indeed be recycled and put to other use.</li> </ul>







# ANDERSON SERANGOON JUNIOR COLLEGE

## JC 2 Preliminary Examination 2019

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

**PAPER 2**

**26 August 2019**

**INSERT**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### **READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

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Rasheeda Ackbar considers the benefits and problems with clothing.

- 1 There is no direct evidence to suggest when exactly our early human – ‘hominin’ – ancestors stopped wandering around naked and started draping their bodies with animal furs and skins. Clothes do not fossilise, so anthropologists studied the evolution of lice, revealing that we started wearing clothes about 170,000 years ago. Our direct ancestors did not have much body hair, so to shield themselves from the scorching summers and the freezing winters, they donned rudimentary clothing. Thus began history’s endless ‘catwalk’. At first, people’s clothing choices were limited to the resources that were readily available. An abundance of animals offered hide and thick forests offered leaves. More advanced civilisations pioneered the use of linen, cotton and other forms of woven fabric. As trade routes grew, people were able to expand the materials they used, and with it, a change in what clothing came to represent, how it looked like and how it affected our lives. 5 10
- 2 Before the Industrial Revolution, the lower classes made fabric out of homespun fibers. They had neither time nor money to waste – clothes were seen as merely a necessity – often cobbling makeshift garments from scraps and hand-me-downs. In contrast, the upper classes had access to luxurious imported fabric, intricate adornments and the labour of skilled artisans. Fashions became ostentatious, with hoops, wires and stays for the women and matching three-piece suits for the men. As clothing soon turned into fashion, it came to represent wealth, status, gender identity, and much more. 15
- 3 In fact, clothing has often reflected the major changes that society undergoes. When non-western societies came under the rule of a colonial master, they were forced to accept, among other things, the western style of clothing. For instance, the British colonial administration in India forbade women from wearing their traditional clothing and demanded that they wear jackets like the English would. By the time of Indian independence in 1947, the “too-sexy” sari had given way to long-sleeved blouses and petticoats, which were seen as an indication of a civilised society. Indian women in such clothes represented a visible recognition of British colonial authority. Conversely, items of clothing were also resisted as tools of subjugation. With the rise of women’s movements, the strict code of femininity that had always been imposed was rejected. Clothing became the feminists’ tool, as they refused to be subject to the restrictive corset and the voluminous folds of fabric that hindered the slightest movement any longer, signifying their defiance of patriarchal standards that had dictated their appearance for far too long. 20 25 30
- 4 In fact, no other garment has reflected the changes in what clothing represents as much as the humble blue jean. First designed as workwear for labourers on American farms and mines in the late 19th Century, jeans soon became a staple fashion item in almost every wardrobe. In the post-WWII era, it was a symbol of rebellion, aligned with the cowboys of old, and in the 1960s hippie era, apart from representing freedom from more structured clothing, protesting college students began wearing them as a token of solidarity with the working class who were most affected by racial discrimination and the Vietnam War draft. What’s more, they were also an equalising force as they were mass produced and made accessible to almost everyone. Today, jeans come in all shapes and sizes – skinny, baggy, bell-bottom, high-waisted... there’s something for everyone, and its history tells a clear story of how clothing can be a powerful symbol for individuals. 35 40
- 5 Indeed it is undeniable that clothing continues to be used in positive ways by individuals and societies. Clothier Rae Tuteru knows this more than most. His job now sees him working with the LGBTQ community to create suits for his transgender clients that help them mirror on the outside who they are on the inside. These visual clues not only provide a confidence boost for the wearer, but also help others be more sensitive to their preferred identity. Even when groups 45

- of people dress the same way, there are still benefits. In institutions – schools, corporations, the military – uniforms take away class segregation and the possible discrimination that wearing our own clothes might bring. Corporations too have recognised the benefits of dressing alike, such that airlines have even collaborated with famous designers to create a uniform in order to enhance their professional image and to reflect the values of the company. In general, what a person wears can be a positive way to project one’s national identity to the international community. Participants representing their countries at international events use it to demonstrate patriotism, as in the Miss Universe Pageant. Contestants’ outfits are regularly seen as a way to display what is most valuable about their respective cultures. Today, much of traditional clothing has been modernised for everyday use and is a way of keeping culture alive. 50
- 6 Other people have made use of clothing to call attention to social issues, such as gender, politics, the environment, and so on. Take for instance the political fashion statements on the red carpet, as in the case of celebrities wearing black to protest against sexual harassment and misconduct. The powerful visual effect was a unifying force that galvanised support for the movement in Hollywood and beyond. Others have taken part in the Green Carpet movement by wearing and designing eco-friendly fashion and showing their support for the use of more sustainable materials. This increased social awareness has clearly taken effect – the demand for eco-friendly fashion is trending. More clothing companies are no longer just setting up a few racks of eco clothing in the corner of a store but considering how to make their entire range more sustainable. 60
- 7 However, clothing is also fraught with many issues. While clothing is a powerful way to assert your identity and express your beliefs, it can become a point of conflict when outsiders don traditional clothing in a disrespectful manner. For example, the sale of native American headdresses has been banned at music festivals because it is seen as offensive and a form of cultural appropriation. In addition, those who are unaware of the origins of their clothing (Is it made of organic cotton? Was child labour employed? Did any communities benefit from its making?) have been subject to criticism. Moreover, because clothing is so highly symbolic today, telling others what they can or cannot wear is seen as an infringement on personal rights. But this ignores necessary standards of propriety, modesty, and even practicality in a given context or society. In this way, what you wear (or don’t wear) often invites unwanted commentary, and can become a divisive force. In other instances, dressing in a way that is not acceptable to the majority can subject the wearer to abuse, as in the case of transgender women, or the attacks on Jews wearing the kippah or other overtly Jewish signs in an atmosphere of increasingly brazen anti-Semitism. 70
- 8 All of these simply reinforce the idea that clothing is not as neutral as it may seem. As the debate heats up, it can only get more complicated and more problematic, masking a hidden hypocrisy that exists among us all. Fashion companies that lack plus-size lines are routinely criticised for their lack of inclusivity, with empty threats from consumers to boycott brands that do not heed their protests. Millennials who have jumped on the environmental bandwagon have also made a big deal of choosing sustainable materials, yet are still as susceptible to fast fashion as their predecessors, buying cheap clothing and quickly throwing them away after a few wears to make room for more. 75
- 9 Ultimately, the usual refrain that “I don’t know what to wear” has never been more true today, but not in the way that you would expect. Today, when it comes to clothing choices, you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t. When every decision you make invites inevitable criticism, you would not be alone in wishing for a return to the simple days of the hominin where our relationship with clothing was straightforward – protection from the elements, with little to no symbolic meaning. 80

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Candidate's Name:	Class: <b>19/</b>	GP Tutor's Name:
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**ANDERSON SERANGOON JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019**

**GENERAL PAPER**  
**8807/02**  
**Paper 2**

**26 August 2019**  
**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.  
Additional Materials: Insert

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class and GP tutor's name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction tape/fluid.

Answer **all** questions.  
The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.  
Note that **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

This document consists of **6** printed pages, **2** blank pages and **1** Insert.

**[Turn over**

Read the passage in the insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

- 1 According to paragraph 1, why is there 'no direct evidence' to suggest when exactly our early ancestors first started wearing clothing? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....[1]

- 2 In paragraph 2, how did the clothing worn by the poor differ from those worn by the rich? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[3]

- 3 In paragraph 3, the author says that 'clothes reflected the major changes that society undergoes'.

a. Identify the **two** major changes the author raises.

.....  
 .....[1]

b. How did clothes reflect these changes? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- 4 What is the author implying about the British colonial authority by writing “too sexy” (line 23) in inverted commas?

.....  
 .....[1]

- 5 What does the author mean by ‘resisted as tools of subjugation’ (line 26)?

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- 6 Explain what the author means by ‘token of solidarity’ (line 37)?

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- 7 Explain the author’s use of the three dots (...) in line 40.

.....  
 .....[1]

- 8 What does the author want us to understand by the series of questions in brackets in paragraph 7?

.....  
 .....[1]

- 9 What examples does the author use to support her statement regarding fashion “masking a hidden hypocrisy” (lines 83-84)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]



- 10 Why does the author use the phrase “you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t” (lines 91-92)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....[1]

- 11 Using material from paragraphs 5 to 7, summarise what the author has to say about the benefits of clothing to individuals and societies, and the issues associated with it.

Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

*Clothing is beneficial to individuals as it.....*

[8]

- 12 Rasheeda Ackbar argues that 'clothing is not as neutral as it may seem' (line 82) as it can be used in positive ways but is also fraught with many issues.

How applicable do you find this observation to yourself and your own society?

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# Essay Outlines for Teaching

## General Comments on P1 (not question-specific) by Mr Lionel Loh

- Some students did better than most by virtue of the question selection (i.e. the question was less demanding in terms of the question requirements and it was easier to pass in terms of content).
- The poor performance can then be attributed to either poor question selection or poor question analysis where the key words/phrases of the question were not explicitly and consistently addressed in the response.
- This was a tad disappointing given how because these phrases were not adequately addressed, the response becomes either NAQ or overly descriptive.
- The better responses were able to give a wide range of examples, across different domains and contexts, to clearly support their lines of reasoning.
- In each paragraph, these candidates were discerning in their choice of examples and gave the relevant supporting details.
- Conversely, the weaker responses were those that often contained examples only from one society, despite this not being a question requirement.
- Weaker paragraphs were often largely descriptive and example-driven with the line of reasoning vaguely hinted at, rather than explicitly articulated.
- The examples used in these responses were often vague with the relevant and essential details missing.
- These candidates often attempted to convince the readers of the veracity of their examples by using phrases like “a study/report showed that...” without providing any details as to who, where and when was this study/report done.
- Varying levels of competency were demonstrated in the crafting of the introduction paragraphs.
- The better responses were those that were able to address the question requirements and issues in the question directly. The stand was extremely clear and the introduction paragraph provided a clear road map/ outline of arguments that charted out how the stand will be supported by the subsequent paragraphs.
- Comparatively, the weaker responses were those where a passing and tangential reference was made to the issue involved and erroneously focused on the topic in the question. Often, there were abrupt leaps in logic before the stand was presented.

## Question-Specific Comments

### Question 1

To what extent do international agreements ensure a peaceful world?

#### Analysis of Keywords

**International agreements** – trade, Brexit, US-China, bilateral deals amongst nations, environment treaties

**Peaceful world** – does not have to pertain only to military or violent conflict (i.e. there are other forms of non-peace); a broad understanding of lack of peace/conflict is accepted but just not trivial ones limited to the experience of just one person. It could include tensions between countries, trade wars, or cultural clashes, etc.

**Ensure** – working effectively to lead towards a peaceful world; evaluation of effectiveness of solutions (in international agreements) is needed; when international agreements break down, peace is not ensured anymore; how international agreements are structured to provide a host of mutual advantages/benefits such that if these countries get into conflict, benefits would be jeopardised, thereby keeping the world peaceful.

#### Question Requirements

1. Sufficient detail about international agreements needed to **explain how they may or may not lead to peace** with reasons for why – limitations of agreements, examining of root causes of conflicts needed
2. Students could also examine how international agreements could lead to a lack of peace in the world.

<p><b>Possible Pitfalls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may talk about situations of strife without linking it to international agreements.</li> <li>• Students may merely describe international agreements and not link to how it “ensures a peaceful world”.</li> <li>• Students may talk about international agreements without clear, concrete references of international agreements provided.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Possible stand 1:</b> International agreements ensure a peaceful world to a large extent.</p>	<p><b>Possible stand 2:</b> International agreements ensure a peaceful world to a limited extent.</p>
<p><b>TS1:</b> By fostering cooperation and interdependence between countries, international agreements make inter-state war less viable and attractive, and hence play a very significant role in ensuring international peace.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> The roughly 420 trade agreements already in place in the world today facilitate ease of trade between countries, fostering economic ties and providing opportunities for mutual economic benefit. And because of the increase of bilateral trade flows, the probability of war decreases because (i) resource acquisition—one of the common objectives of war—is now achieved more efficiently through trade; (ii) going to war would mean foregoing the existing trade between the involved countries, which would constitute an immense economic cost; and (iii) trade breeds interdependence and reduces resource self-sufficiency, which means that countries heavily engaging in international trade have a reduced ability to conduct long wars.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> The Paris Agreement was historic because, for the first time, it brought all nations to fight for a common cause—to “keep a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels”. Arguably, by promoting the narrative that the international system is a community of nations united against a common crisis, such an agreement fosters an ethos of compromise and cooperation between countries</p> <p>Sources:  <a href="https://voxeu.org/article/free-trade-agreements-do-they-help-keep-peace">https://voxeu.org/article/free-trade-agreements-do-they-help-keep-peace</a>  <a href="https://unfccc.int/news/finale-cop21">https://unfccc.int/news/finale-cop21</a></p> <p><b>TS2:</b> Additionally, international agreements have been wielded as a highly effective tool for dispute resolution, in many cases preventing wars from happening.</p>	<p><b>TS1:</b> As opposed to fostering cooperation and integration, international agreements may in fact generate strife.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> The U.S. withdrew from the Paris Agreement, and one of Trump’s main reasons was the unfair restrictions placed on the U.S. which, to him, advantaged countries like China and India, on whom restrictions are much more relaxed. Thus, though it may seem on the surface as if international agreements contribute to peace by fostering cooperation and compromise between nations, they may in fact breed further enmity by providing a stage for clashes of national interests to occur.</p> <p>Source: <a href="https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/fact-check-trumps-paris-agreement-withdrawal-announcement/">https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/fact-check-trumps-paris-agreement-withdrawal-announcement/</a></p> <p><b>TS2:</b> In certain situations, poorly conceived international agreements that aimed to ensure world peace have in fact backfired spectacularly, contributing instead to reduced prospects for peace.</p> <p><b>e.g. [Note: The following example represents a very particular viewpoint in which Iran is a bad actor and the JCPOA is a seriously defective agreement. It goes without saying that there are competing viewpoints which one should explore.]</b> The Iran nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan for Action) aims to block Iran from attaining nuclear weapons by imposing restrictions (e.g. limits to uranium stockpile, limits to level of uranium enrichment, nuclear facility spot checks, etc.) and incentivising compliance by lifting existing sanctions (that had been placed on Iran by the international community). However, some have fairly criticised this deal for its poor implementation (e.g. the spot checks are not prompt enough, giving Iran a generous 24-day period before they need to grant access to IAEA to inspect any suspicious nuclear activity in any site)* and its limited effectiveness (merely delaying Iran’s nuclear ambitions without really stopping it). Seen in this light, the Iran nuclear deal fails in its ultimate goal to ensure peace by keeping Iran’s hands off nuclear weapons. In</p>



<p>e.g. “Supporting the idea that the world has become increasingly peaceful since World War I is the shift away from large-scale violent deaths and heavy militarisation, towards democracy. Battle deaths in the last 25 years make up only 3% of battle deaths in the last 100 years, or 7% excluding World War II deaths. The number of alliance agreements in place in 2012 was 77 times the amount of alliances in 1918. This suggests an increase in the use of diplomacy as a dispute resolution tool” <i>Quoted from <a href="http://visionofhumanity.org/peace/world-become-peaceful-since-wwi/">http://visionofhumanity.org/peace/world-become-peaceful-since-wwi/</a></i></p>	<p>fact, it could also be seen as counterproductive, as sanctions relief on Iran further takes pressure off the current regime and empowers them. And this regime is a threat to world peace not just due to its nuclear ambitions, but is also because it is, by most accounts, the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism.</p> <p>*Read this for more information:  <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y2w52fcy">https://tinyurl.com/y2w52fcy</a></p>
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#### Marker comments

- Very few students attempted this question.
- There was a limited understanding or knowledge of the international agreements they were referring to.
- The value of ensuring peace through international trade and cultural agreements was superficially addressed or not addressed at all.
- Very weak scripts talked in general terms about international agreements without making it clear how they pertained to peace.
- Better scripts were able to give a range of examples, as well as evaluate the degree to which international agreements ensured peace.

#### Question 2

‘There is little value in preserving tradition.’ How far is this true in your society?

#### Analysis of Keywords

**Little value** - the idea of little worth; who are the stakeholders and who decides the value of tradition? Various domains of value/importance/worth to be explored – law, moral, economy, identity, social cohesion, etc.

**Preserving tradition** - the perpetuation, continuation of particular beliefs, practices, rituals that may be linked to culture, religion or even the nation; what is the function/purpose/value of tradition today?

**How far is this true** – extent

**In your society** – characteristics of local society

#### Question Requirements

- Evaluation of the worth of preserving tradition needs to be done.
- This worth must in turn be linked to the characteristics of one’s society so as to draw out the significance/impact as to why there is value or little value in preserving tradition.
- Extent question.

#### Possible Pitfalls:

- Mere description of the traditions practised in one’s society without an assessment of its worth.
- No attempt to articulate the characteristics of one’s society and link it to the reasons as to why preserving traditions have value or little value.
- Gross misinterpretation/ conceptual misunderstanding of tradition (e.g. Conflation between tradition and places: saying “Mamak shops are tradition”)
- Because the nature of this question is such that students must still do a lot of evaluative work to show how an example demonstrates value (or the lack of it), a common pitfall is failing to provide this critical bit of evaluation.

**Possible stand 1:** There is very little value in preserving tradition in Singapore.

**Possible stand 2:** There is much value in preserving tradition in Singapore.

<p><b>TS1:</b> In today's liberal society, there is little value in preserving traditions that are reflective of archaic beliefs and value systems that oppress or marginalise particular groups of people.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Patriarchal beliefs held by some conservative Chinese Singaporeans that the only place for women is in the domestic sphere should be abolished. Not only are educated women marginalised, in a society with a falling total fertility rate, the need for both male and female Singaporeans to be productive and continue to contribute to the economy has never been direr.</p> <p><b>TS2:</b> Attempts to preserve tradition fail to factor in the dynamism of how culture changes over time, and such attempts may result in the perpetuation of outdated practices that has no value in the modern day context.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> The Taoist Federation in Singapore attempted to modernise their religious rituals and traditions by providing detailed explanations and even used social media platforms such as Facebook to raise awareness of Taoism. This is because there was a steep decline in the number of Singaporeans who subscribe to Taoism in the 2000s, as educated Singaporeans were unable to relate to these practices, which they perceived as superstitious and outdated. As such, there is little worth in preserving traditions which people perceive to be obsolete.</p>	<p><b>TS1:</b> Given the fears of acculturation* due to the processes of globalization, these traditions function as an anchor to preserve our sense of identity and function as a cultural ballast.</p> <p><i>*the process of changing so that you become more like people from a different culture, or of making someone change in this way (Source: dictionary.cambridge.org)</i></p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Aside from the National Day Parade held annually to commemorate the founding of the nation, the lead-up to national day involves the singing of national day songs. The announcement of the national day theme song each year is always done with great aplomb and Singaporeans are often quick to voice their thoughts about these theme songs. Comparisons are often made with older songs like 'Home' and the playing of these older songs is still often well received today as such songs are seen as signature songs that capture one's love for the country. This tradition of singing these national day songs is something that continues to be symbolic of the Singapore identity, holding great value as far as building and retaining a shared sense of belonging to the nation in the face of globalisation and the accompaniment erosion of national identity.</p> <p><b>TS2:</b> The rise in this nostalgic remembrance of the past in today's rapidly modernising Singapore means that the preservation of these traditions will translate into economic opportunities.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Naiise is a curated destination for original, well-designed products and daily design inspiration. The profitability and popularity of Naiise, to the extent that there is even an outlet at the iconic Jewel, are due to the sale of merchandise that capitalises on Singaporeans' nostalgia for the past. Items such as an ice-cream sandwich cushion and tutu kueh cushion, which are popular snacks that were once more commonly found in the past, remain popular with Singaporeans. This shows how tradition can be commodified in the form of traditional items that appeal to the consumer through nostalgia.</p>
<p><b>Marker comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The cohort rarely attempted this question.</li> <li>-Some candidates did not do well because of a conflation between tradition and heritage. Some students took a rather liberal interpretation of what constitutes traditions and tried with varying degrees of success to justify their choice of 'tradition'.</li> <li>-The better candidates were able to clearly evaluate the worth of tradition and contextualise this worth in relation to what their society holds dear. The concept of value was clearly articulated. These candidates were</li> </ul>	

often the ones who were able to support their reasoning with a range of examples and adapt their examples in a way that showed great awareness of their society's unique characteristics.  
 -The very poor scripts merely described the traditions practised in one's society **without an assessment of its worth**. (e.g. CNY is still practiced in SG.)

### Question 3

How far should people be held accountable for their behaviour on social media?

#### Analysis of Keywords

**Should** - moral or pragmatic reasons

**held accountable** - to be blamed/responsible, to be punished by law, society, employers or netizens; informal forms of being held accountable such as being ostracised by society; having to explain their actions/back up their actions

**behaviour on social media** - words or deeds done on social media such as cyberbullying, trolling, doxing, perpetuating hate, spreading fake news, making racist comments or videos, stealing identities, preying on victims, cheating and so on.

**How far** – the degree to which people should be held accountable

#### Question Requirements

- The question requires students to unpack the various types of poor online behaviour and provide reasons why netizens should or should not be blamed or punished for their behaviour.
- Students must provide arguments (either pragmatic or moral) for holding the netizens accountable or not accountable for what they do online.
- A student may bring in other parties but must steer clear of the usual pitfalls (e.g. changing the topic to something else)

#### Possible Pitfalls:

- Students are unable to explain the reasons for the degree to which one should be held accountable and simply describe wrong behaviour on social media.
- Essays may not show an understanding of what 'held accountable' means. Consequences of (not) holding accountable social media users not addressed.
- Student may make an argument like: "We should be careful with what we do online because our employer's reputation will be damaged." ← this is definitely a relevant consideration. But how does it address the matter of the degree to which social media users should be held accountable?
- Some students may define 'behaviour on social media' too broadly, including even something as insubstantial as watching videos. This does not qualify as 'behaviour on social media unless student can explain how watching videos on Youtube constitutes a form of behaviour on social media.

**Possible stand 1:** People should be held accountable for their behaviour on social media to a limited extent.

**TS1:** Individuals have the right to the freedom of expression, especially when they are talking about their personal opinions within their private social media space. Punishing anybody who expresses their personal opinion, even if it is controversial, is violating this fundamental right.

**e.g.** "One of the founding principles of the United States that Americans cherish is the right to freedom of speech. Enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution, freedom of speech

**Possible stand 2:** People should be largely held accountable for their behaviour on social media.

**TS1:** As long as a person has the power to publish content that can be consumed by the masses, he or she, journalist or not, has the duty to ensure that the information is accurate and that their opinions do not cause harm to the public.

**e.g.** Marcel Fontaine – "A few days before the Parkland shooting, a photo of Fontaine wearing a T-shirt of Marx, Lenin, Mao and other communist luminaries dressed in party hats had been grabbed from his Instagram feed and posted by an anonymous user on 4chan, where they were

grants all Americans the liberty to criticise the government and speak their minds without fear of being censored or persecuted." **Quoted from** <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/12/learning/why-is-freedom-of-speech-an-important-right-when-if-ever-can-it-be-limited.html>

**TS2:** Even though spreading fake news and conspiracy theories is wrong, it is unfortunately a response based on human instinct and mostly unintentional. Thus, unwitting offenders ought to be less culpable for their actions (than malicious spreaders of misinformation), and should not be held accountable to the same extent (as malicious spreaders of misinformation). Misinformation and unusual or unexpected fabricated stories which confirm personal bias naturally trigger emotions of high intensity which makes netizens more likely to share or spread the news.

**e.g.** "Researchers analysed more than 126,000 stories shared by 3 million users approximately 4.5 million times. They found that "falsehood diffused significantly farther, faster, deeper and more broadly than the truth in all categories of information". True information took six times more than false information to reach an audience of 1,500 Twitter users while 'fake news' stories were 70% more likely to be retweeted." **Quoted from** <https://coinform.eu/why-do-people-believe-in-fake-news-and-share-it-on-social-media/>

**TS3:** When people are persecuted by employers or governments, it will create an unhealthy culture of fear of potential consequences, resulting in their avoidance to participate in political debate or to provide constructive feedback. Eventually, such silence and apathy will cost the country or company's development.

**e.g.** When the court ruled that the sacking of Michaela Banerji from the Department of Immigration for writing tweets critical of Government policy was justified, public servants are always going to second guess themselves as they do not know where the line is drawn. Even if perhaps legally they might be able to participate in political debate, they won't for fear of potential consequences if they overstep the line.

**Source:** <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-08/high-court-free-speech-banerji-folau-public-service/11392974>

promptly derided as a "lefty dimwit". In the conspiratorial bubble of 4chan, it was but a small step from ridiculing Fontaine to casting them as the Parkland shooter. Within two hours of the massacre, the image had been reposted on the bulletin board, now saying: "Florida Shooter Was A Commie! From there, Alex Jones's conspiracy theory site, Infowars, leapt into the fray. Its reporter lifted Fontaine's photo directly from 4chan and, without any attempt at verification, ran with it on the front page. "Shooter is a commie. Alleged photo of the suspect shows communist garb," the outlet screamed. The false rumor quickly spread from Miami to Beijing." **Quoted from** <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/jan/23/conspiracy-theories-internet-survivors-truth>

**TS2:** Netizens involved in flaming, cyberbullying and doxing should be held accountable for the long-term emotional and psychological damage they have caused for the victims. In extreme cases, such actions have resulted in the loss of lives and cyberbullies must be severely punished to redress the grievances faced by the victim's family members.

**e.g.** Police in Florida have charged two 12-year-old middle-school students with cyberstalking after the suicide of another student, Gabriella Green. The accused girl told officers she intended to cause problems between Gabbie and another child and made derogatory comments verbally and electronically, a police report said. "Her actions consisted of starting rumors of the victim having sexually transmitted diseases, vulgar name-calling ... and threats to 'expose' personal and sensitive details of the victim's life." The suspect deleted messages upon learning of the death, police said. The accused boy said Gabbie texted him to say she was having a bad day and had attempted to hang herself and had marks on her neck, police said. During a video chat, she discussed taking her life, and the boy said something to the effect of, "If you're going to do it, just do it" and ended the call.

**Source:** <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/01/23/us/florida-cyberstalking-charges-girl-suicide/index.html>

**TS3:** Posting hate comments and spreading hate of specific groups of people can reinforce one's twisted beliefs. These comments may seem like harmless discussions on the surface, but they play a major part in the lead up to catastrophic extremists' mass shootings.

**e.g.** Two of the chief sites for online white nationalist radicalisation are 4chan and 8chan that resulted in the Christchurch Shooting. The site is totally anonymous, with no logins required, usernames optional, and threads set to expire after a certain time; users are often known as

	<p>“anons.” 8chan is a more extremist version of /pol/. The site has become a cesspool of anti-Muslim conspiracies, neo-Nazism, and other far-right content. 8chan’s version of /pol/ has a single purpose: to radicalize their fellow anons to ‘real-life effortposting,’ i.e. acts of violence in the physical world. The culture of both 4chan and 8chan is deliberately ironic, over the top, and extreme. This gives cover for users to claim their posts are merely joking—and accounts for some of the deliberate trolling found inside the Christchurch manifesto. In part, throwing in random references to unconnected topics or online memes is a strategy to get the media to pick up and amplify the message through stories on unrelated topics. The dehumanization involved in racist jokes also hardens participants, wearing away any residual empathy for others.</p> <p>(Source: <a href="https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/04/online-racism-4chan-8chan-shootings-elpaso-dayton-texas-ohio/">https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/04/online-racism-4chan-8chan-shootings-elpaso-dayton-texas-ohio/</a>)</p> <p><b>TS4:</b> Netizens should be responsible for spreading seemingly innocuous fake news because they have proven to be destructive to a country’s political and social stability.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Vaccine hesitancy has made it to the top 10 threats of WHO threats in 2019. Due to the anti-vax movement, Measles, a preventable disease, has seen a 30% increase in cases globally. This is due to the spread of Fake news that there is a connection between vaccination and autism, as well as other brain disorders,</p> <p>(Source: <a href="https://www.who.int/emergencies/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019">https://www.who.int/emergencies/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019</a>)</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> In Singapore, the now defunct The Real Singapore published a false report about Filipino’s complaints about the noise of Thaipusam musicians. The Real Singapore (TRS) were arrested after a police report was made against the website for inciting hatred against the Filipino community in Singapore. This could have created tension between Indian and Filipino communities in Singapore.</p> <p>(Source: <a href="https://www.imda.gov.sg/imsilver/whats_new/the-danger-of-fake-news">https://www.imda.gov.sg/imsilver/whats_new/the-danger-of-fake-news</a>)</p>
<p><b>Marker comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Students who attempted this question provided a good spread of knowledge on the various online sagas.</li> <li>-Most are able to point out the severity of impact thereby proving that they should be accountable.</li> <li>-However, arguments tend to be limited to outcomes and most of the students did not bring in the point on their duty as content publishers.</li> <li>-Some students who did not do well because they did not show understanding of the term ‘accountability’ or even ‘should’. For example, they fail to understand the underlying assumption of the behaviour as something bad. They tried to provide examples of individuals doing the right things.</li> </ul>	

-Some students treated this as an absolute question “Only people should be held accountable for their behaviour on social media.” and disagreed by bringing in other players like social media platforms. However, there are students who managed to prove limited extent of individuals’ accountability using other players by consciously evaluating that social media platforms and the way algorithms work are the reasons why individuals behave in a certain way.

-Weaker scripts simply repeated the same line of reasoning that social media users should be held accountable because they have done something wrong. They did not consider other factors/complications that muddy the issue of the extent to which we can or should hold people accountable for their behavior on social media.

-Stronger scripts demonstrated the appropriate extent of accountability based on their extent of damage social media users have caused. These scripts also addressed a variety of pertinent issues ranging from individuals’ duty as content publishers and one’s obligations to their employers, to means of deterrence and punishment for bad behaviour.

#### Question 4

“The result is more important than the process.” To what extent is this true in your society?

##### Analysis of Keywords

**The results** – focus on outcomes; tangible and measurable observations of success. Eg. Academic results, economic growth rates in percentages, rankings etc

**The process** – focus on the journey by which success is attained; could also include how the value is in the journey itself; attention is on making sure steps are in place to lead to a possible success

**More important** – which one bears more significance; a discussion on the relative importance between the two

**In your society** – highlight the characteristics of your society to bring up reasons for why one is valued over the other

##### Question Requirements

- This question requires a constant engagement of the characteristics of the student’s society in providing reasons for, not just descriptions of, why one would be valued over the other.
- Both the idea of ‘results’ and ‘process’ should be discussed or at least implied in each paragraph of the essay
- An overall evaluation in terms of the (relative) significance of results and process must be made in the course of the essay. Students may choose to tackle one aspect in each paragraph but it must be apparent that there is a comparison an evaluation of importance being made for both aspects.
- Students may argue that both are equally important but that they simply are so in different aspects of society, followed by the reasons why this is so.
- Students may consider how characteristics of their society could lead to why something should be perceived as more important

##### Possible Pitfalls:

- Students might merely highlight how one (either results or process) is important and why it is so without comparing the two in the entirety of the essay.
- Students might not bring in characteristics of their society in their reasoning and simply focus on providing examples in their society, which is not wrong, but does not give them the full potential for doing well in this question.

**Possible stand 1:** The result is more important than the process in my society.

**Possible stand 2:** The process is more important than the result in my society.

**TS1:** As a small nation, we have a lot to prove in the international community for our survival as a nation, causing us to focus more on getting the

**TS1:** With the decline in mental health of society, has led to the education sector taking a harder relook at its



tangible results than the processes that led to it, out of this pragmatic need to establish ourselves as a leader in the world in spite of our size and short history.

**e.g.** Local media often highlight accolades that range from Singapore's Changi Airport being voted world's best airport for the sixth year in a row or how Singapore's education system is considered the best in the world because it consistently ranks at the top of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a triennial test of 15-year-olds in dozens of countries. This is despite criticism that the results of the PISA often hide a weakness in an education system that prioritises rote learning rather than true innovation.

This singular focus on results is one that ensures the continued success of a nation as locals and foreigners alike remain confident of Singapore's reputation as a thriving hub for leisure, business and education, and continue to invest in it or pay attention to it as a world leader in particular fields, even though it is a small country.

**TS2:** Our focus on the results to be achieved has gotten us thus far since our fledgling years, leading to a pursuit of results over a relatively more sidelined establishment of process because our focus on achieving results has a proven track record for bringing us success as a nation.

**e.g.** According to World Bank, which provides a definitive understanding of the economies of each country, Singapore is known as one of the world's most business-friendly regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs and is ranked among the world's most competitive economies. This reputation did not come out of the blue. It arose from Singapore's consistent focus on its GDP growth, contributed by the twin pillars of manufacturing and services. As a result, Singapore's reputation grew from the early days as a low-income country to a high-income country and has remained so today. GDP growth in the city-state has been amongst the world's highest, at an average of 7.7% since independence and topping 9.2% in the first 25 years. Value-added manufacturing, particularly in the electronics and precision engineering sectors, remain key drives of growth, as are the services sectors, particularly the information and communications industries, which grew 6.0% year-on-year. Comparatively little is heard about the grit and resilience of our Merdeka and Pioneer

stressful emphasis on results to favour the value of the process more.

**e.g.** The reduction of exams by over 25% especially in the transitions years of primary and secondary school systems were a bold move by the Ministry of Education to reduce the emphasis on academic results to favour the due process that learning entails, by freeing up more time for teaching, exploration and innovation. This was seen by many as an attempt to address the growing trend of youth suffering from mental illness. It is estimated that about 18% of Singapore's youth suffer from depression with children and young adults tending to face an increased chance of developing depression and anxiety due to societal and academic pressure. This leads to another worrying trend of youth suicides, which has been in the spotlight recently with the tragic death of a 11-year-old boy who committed suicide on the day he was to show his parents his mid-year examination results.

**TS2:** Considering the changing global landscape where the innovative process is prized over booksmarts, focusing on the process more than the results means that success will be more sustainable.

**e.g.** PM Lee's recent National Day Rally speech put bluntly the impacts on Singapore amidst the US-China trade war, which is but one example of how the ever-changing global landscape could affect us. With GDP growth slowing down to between zero to one percent in 2019, Singapore realizes that it cannot solely rely on producing these concrete results to instill confidence in investors of this country or to grow Singapore for the long run. While economic fundamentals must be strengthened, the economy has to be transformed to secure long-term competitiveness. These must take place with the "integrate" and "innovate" process, as highlighted by Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing in order for countries like Singapore to continue to grow and flourish. With the support of the government, companies are now encouraged to innovate, digitalise their operations, expand to overseas markets and train their employees, all of which are processes to ensure the longevity of their businesses. To much success, old-time restaurants like Jumbo Seafood restaurant has joined Enterprise Singapore's Scale-up SG programme which helps promising local companies grow rapidly and stand out in their fields. All 25 participants from the pioneer batch came from a range of industries – from F&B to education, from furniture and maintenance to hospital and dental, demonstrating how this emphasis on process is one set to transform Singapore as a whole. New schools within polytechnics are even being set up with a focus on



generation in the midst of achieving these results as being instrumental to our quick rise to success. Given that these indicators were what gave Singapore its rapid transition to a first world country, it makes perfect sense for the city-state to focus on merely achieving such results instead of the circumstances that got us there.	innovation such as the new Aquaculture Innovation Centre at Temasek Polytechnic which aims to attract and train Singapore's next generation of experts in order to scale up the country's seafood production industry.
<p><b>Marker comments</b></p> <p>-Scripts tended to loosely use the terms 'process' to mean 'effort' which is not wrong but made the paragraphs less clear in their focus.</p> <p>-Scripts were sometimes not coherent because paragraphs were mostly descriptive of instances where results were emphasised over process, only stumbling on points of reasoning towards the end of the paragraph or sometimes not at all.</p> <p>-Scripts which attempted to highlight clear characteristics of their society generally did better than those who attempted generic TSs with little anchor to a society of their choosing.</p> <p>-Weaker scripts relied too heavily on clichéd and personal anecdotes. Often, this meant writing exclusively about Singapore's education system.</p> <p>-Better scripts were able to go beyond a mere description of how things are in Singapore, but convincingly discuss Singapore characteristics that influence the comparative value of results vs process.</p>	

<p><b>Question 5</b></p> <p>'Governments play too big a role in people's lives today.' Do you agree?</p>
<p><b>Analysis of Keywords</b></p> <p><b>Governments...role</b> – overall it is the role to safeguard the interests of citizens by looking at societal needs. The government plays an important role as intermediary between the global effects and its citizens. Its attempt to safeguard the welfare of the citizens sometimes restricts the freedom of the people.</p> <p><b>People's lives</b> – The citizens of the country under that government. Students should highlight the various roles of the government in different aspects of society and QoL</p> <p><b>Too big*</b> – there is an assumption that this is problematic and that perhaps this should be reduced</p> <p><b>Today</b> – characteristics of today must be brought in. for eg. Increasingly educated populace in developed societies, rise of social media and grounds-up movements, growth and increase in sphere of influence of NGOs and IGOs, globalization etc.</p> <p><i>*A note about the importance of the stand the student picks: If a student's stand is that governments do not play too big a role in our lives today, they can argue that the current size of the government's role is important/beneficial/needed.</i></p>
<p><b>Question Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This question requires students to examine an existing role of the government and its current relevance/necessity in today's world that may lead to or prevent some negative outcome</li> <li>Students may argue using existing, perennial arguments on how the acts of governments essentially infringe upon our basic rights but must provide current examples to address the idea of 'today'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Pitfalls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may merely describe the role of the government in various aspects of life with little evaluation or consideration for how this might be problematic in today's world.</li> <li>Students may ignore a consideration of the context of today's world in their arguments, resulting in TSs with little contention.</li> <li>Students may focus their arguments on a particular society with little range of example or scope of argument.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overgeneralisation of key terms. For example, assuming that all governments are the same all over the world.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Possible stand 1:</b> Governments do not play too big a role in people's lives today – it is justifiable.</p>	<p><b>Possible stand 2:</b> Governments play too big a role in people's lives today.</p>
<p><b>TS1:</b> Given the social media movements that capitalise on outrage more than dealing with issues founded on truth, governments are needed to be fair and safeguard the interests of all groups in society.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> While the online #MeToo movement provided for many victims of sexual assault, the boldness to come forward and report such acts of crime to the police, there have been fears of false accusations because of how easy stories can go viral, and the people involved 'punished' without having gone through fair trial.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Local vigilante group SMRT Feedback has also played a role in doxing individuals who have been surfaced by the online community as having done wrong, sometimes to the extent of encouraging other people to unfairly harass the family members of those who are seen as perpetrators of a yet-to-be-confirmed crime. Jover Chew, a handphone shop owner who had apparently cheated a Vietnamese tourist of a large sum of money was the target of one such endeavor, causing him to be harassed by many individuals who frequent the group's site.</p> <p><b>TS2:</b> In such a globalised and volatile world where international forces exert pressure on all segments of society, governments are even more needed to ensure the welfare of citizens are met.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> During the Great Recession of 2009 due to the bursting of the U.S. housing bubble and the global financial crisis, Singapore was the first East Asian country to slip into recession, with many individuals affected as they lost their means of livelihood. This was when the government sought the President's approval to draw a total of \$4.9 billion from the past reserves to help cover Budget expenditure. The money was used to fund the Jobs Credit Scheme, a wage subsidy given to bosses to keep workers employed, and the Special Risk-Sharing Initiative, which helped cash-strapped firms get credit. These was a means to help citizens tide over the recession.</p> <p><b>TS3:</b> Ageing population in developed countries with fewer taxable individuals require the government to</p>	<p><b>TS1:</b> Given the bureaucracy that is typical of governments being a large part of the equation, outrageously heavy costs are transferred to the citizens for simply trying to meet their basic needs in what is deemed to be a free-er and richer world today.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> Despite being in the global 1% in terms of wealth since 2012, with the American middle class being among the richest in the world, nearly one-quarter of Americans put off or postpone getting the healthcare they need each year because of its costs, which have doubled since 2013. These costs are the result of the healthcare industry's bureaucratic processes that lead to doctors spending more than two-thirds of their professional time on paperwork – mostly filling out the Electronic Medical Records requirements – rather than attending to patients. Because paperwork does not equate to money earned, doctors end up charging more for productive, consultation time with their patients. As it is, healthcare in the U.S. is about twice as expensive as it is in any other developed country. If the \$3 trillion U.S. healthcare sector were ranked as a country, it would be the world's fifth largest economy, according to Consumer Reports.</p> <p><b>TS2:</b> The growth of civil societies in recent years due to the advent of social media spurring grounds-up movements, make the role of the government in campaigning the interests of minority groups one that is increasingly unnecessary, and maybe even an impediment, given the speed at which civil societies could accomplish their goals.</p> <p><b>e.g.</b> The start of the #BlackLivesMatter movement followed high-profile police killings of black men in Baton Rouge and Minneapolis in 2013. It has played a significant role in moving the conversation forward about the United States' deep-rooted problems with race and inequality. It is backed up by a recent news report on the city of Baltimore by the Department of Justice, which has found that black residents of low-income neighbourhoods are more likely to be stopped and searched by police officers, even if white residents are statistically more likely to be caught carrying guns and drugs.</p> <p>è Looking at the years of indifference to this issue prior to this movement, it is clear that the rise of the civil society has drummed up more awareness, action and support in the past few years than the past decades have in the hands of the government.</p>

step in, because government still holds the main budget.

**e.g.** While Japan continues to shift towards a super-aging society, the working age population needed to support that society is shrinking, making necessary restructuring of the contributions and benefits framework. According to data compiled by the Japanese government, social security benefit costs will increase 1.6-fold from 2018 to ¥190 trillion in 2040. This is an amount only governments would have access to.

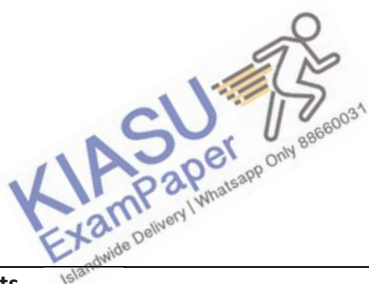
**TS3:** With the nature of domestic problems being increasingly global in nature, the internal politicking associated with governments today become an obstacle to solving them, not just for the country but for the whole world, as they go against IGO priorities.

**e.g.** Global warming is the biggest environmental problem of our time. Russia is seeing its effects with its own eyes as a viral picture of polar bears from Far North Novaya Zemlya archipelago rummaging through human trash for food became a visual reminder of the severity of rising global temperatures. Yet, Russia is the largest emitter that has not yet ratified the Paris Agreement, with approximately 5% of global emissions in 2015. Its pledge to the deal, proposed to reduce emissions 25% to 30% below 1990 levels by 2030.

There is a lack of consensus amongst the government due to their different interests. Nationally, large state-owned fossil fuel companies, support Russia's energy needs and wield huge political power. However, there is also a pro-Paris lobby made up of businesses and climate groups: the Russian Partnership for Climate Protection.

**TS4:** When the government plays a larger role in governing our lives, our rights will necessarily be infringed upon to the point when fair access to necessities and wants is denied.

**e.g.** China is setting up a vast ranking system that will monitor the behavior of its enormous population, and rank them all based on their "social credit". People can be rewarded or punished according to their scores, with scores moving up and down according to their behavior. While the system is piecemeal at the moment – some are run by city councils, while others are scored by private tech platforms that hold personal data, the country aims to be able to rank all its citizens by 2020. Some punishments could include preventing you from getting on your train, slowing down your internet speeds, banning you from getting the best jobs, or stopping somebody from enrolling their child in the best schools – all these, dependent on your social credit score. This system highlights how a situation of maximum government could infringe on some basic rights or access to the basic needs and wants of the 21st century.



**Marker comments**

- Some scripts highlighted points on how the government was only acting on the people's wishes or described how the government's actions was balanced with that of the people's individual choices. These arguments were an attempt to prove that the government was not playing too large a role. These attempted arguments however, do not fully engage with the crux of the question which was whether government intervention (in any form or amount) is justified and if so, why?

-Paragraphs focusing on how the government was indeed playing too large a role were able to do better by comparison, because such arguments directly addressed the issue of government involvement being problematic.

-Some scripts made arguments that said the government was in fact playing too small a role. This does not deal with the question directly and perhaps would be acceptable at the end of the essay only after the main crux of the question had been dealt with sufficiently. Such an argument should not form the bulk of the argumentation in response to the question.

-Some students merely listed roles of government with little addressing of whether this is problematic (no evaluation). Other problematic scripts wrong about governments doing undesirable things without linking it to the issue of the size of the government's role. In other words, the poor scripts ignored the phrase 'too big'.

-The better scripts consistently evaluated the phrase 'too big', and showed an awareness that not all governments are the same—an assumption that the weaker scripts conveniently made.

#### Question 6

'Every country should open their borders to all refugees.' Discuss.

#### Analysis of Keywords

**Every country** – Absolute proposition saying that all countries regardless of wealth, geographical location, development status, state of governance, QoL of citizens

**Should** – a cost-benefit analysis is required, highlighting the moral and pragmatic considerations of the issue

**Open their borders** – to welcome refugees into society; to provide for refugees in a similar manner as countries would do for their citizens

**All.. refugees** – without exception of number, nationality, race, religion, age, financial status, skill set, intention/reasons, distance between country of origin and receiving country, etc

**Refugees** – individuals who have been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster; this could include economic refugees who have *chosen* to become refugees

#### Question Requirements

- This question requires students to examine the absolute propositions of 'every' and 'all' to assess if this is a practical possibility today in the statement's entirety.
- Students should examine the consequences of countries opening their borders to all kinds of refugees as well as the moral obligation or positive outcomes of doing so.

#### Possible Pitfalls:

- Students may write TSs that focus on similar domains, leading to similar sounding arguments that are not distinct enough from each other to provide a range of arguments.
- Students may also detract from the focus on refugees to talk about migrants instead.
- Essays that say every country ought to do so may end up discussing the shallow benefits of welcoming all refugees with little consideration for the deeper implications of such an action.
- Students may contradict themselves in their arguments if they continue using the absolute propositions in their paragraphs.

**Possible stand 1:** Every country should open their borders to all refugees

**Possible stand 2:** Not every country should open their borders to all refugees

**TS1:** The refugee crisis is a large-scale problem with spillover effects and costs that will end up on everybody else's shores anyway, if not all countries tackle it in a show of solidarity. Hence, every country should partake in this solution without discrimination on who they take in.

**TS1:** Expecting every country to do so without a cap on the numbers of refugees taken in risks putting countries who cannot even manage existing matters within their own borders for their own citizens under greater pressure, and at the cost of the lives of their own citizens and the refugees they take in.

**e.g.** As of 2017, 65.6 million individuals have been forcibly displaced worldwide because of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations, per the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Of these, 5.4 million were Palestinian refugees, which are not under UNHCR but under UNRWA's mandate. Countries of origin with more than 3% of the country being refugees are that of Syria, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Somalia, the Central Africa Republic, Eritrea, and Iraq. A disproportionate number of refugees have been taken in by only a handful of countries, some developing nations themselves, like Malawi, who then expect the international community to compensate for the costs incurred in providing asylum to the refugees. A World Bank-sponsored study of uncompensated public expenditures arising from the refugee presence in Malawi recommended an emergency assistance programme in 1990-91 of up to \$ 25 million.

**e.g.** For Lebanon, which hosted 913,000 refugees as of February 2014, the influx raises its risk of a civil war by 53.88% (from a 0.045 predicted probability to a 0.07 probability). For Jordan, its 596,800 refugees raise its conflict risk by 53.51% (from 0.037 to 0.057). Thus, while the absolute values for new civil wars may remain low, the relative risk of conflict spillover increases notably with these massive refugee figures. Moreover, the particular history between Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, with transnational militants that span their borders can increase the risk of conflict even further. Finally, although this set of statistics looks only at the onset of new civil wars, the influx of refugees can also contribute to the exacerbation of conflicts Iraq and Turkey.

These are issues with the potential to affect and disrupt the world further if we only expect a handful of countries, mostly the developing ones, to take in all refugees.

**TS2:** Without taking in refugees of all sorts, we risk stalling the progress on the refugee crisis as everybody adopts a self-serving mentality, causing the loss of many innocent lives which do not fall under the category of refugees they would take in.

**e.g.** Poland's right-wing government has decided that they would not receive refugees from Africa and the Middle East, which rules out a majority of refugees in the world today. They have stated that

**e.g.** The influx of Syrians since 2011 has put a great strain on Jordan, who has remained committed to welcoming Syrian refugees who might have been refused entry to the other neighbouring country of Lebanon. Jordan has reached its maximum capacity, given its resources. Social infrastructure, housing, government services are overstretched, negatively impacting its ability to provide services for Syrian refugees. Their hard-earned development gains are threatened. The presence of some 1.2 million Syrian refugees means Jordan would be unable to provide for its citizens as well as two million Palestinian refugees who depend on the UNRWA for support, if the UN agency has to cut educational or health services due to US defunding. After the 2011 Arab Spring, Egypt stopped the supply of cheap natural gas, making energy costs for manufacturing and households extremely high. They are the second most water-poor country in the world and are struggling to support the increased numbers of refugees who have entered the country to seek asylum. Jordan needs to increase exports and investment but cannot compete with goods manufactured in Gulf countries or export to Europe.

**TS2:** In not discriminating which individuals ought to enter a country's borders as refugees, countries run the risk of welcoming individuals who might be terrorists in disguise or felons bringing crime into the country, turning this into a new domestic problem for the country and the world to handle.

**e.g.** The Federal Intelligence Service of Germany (BND) warns of jihadist fighters being specifically trained to hide among migrants and "not to attract attention." German media reported how the terrorists are schooled in how to perform during police checks and while applying for asylum in Germany. They also claimed that all nine of the Paris attackers of a year ago came to the continent disguised as refugees. The 1.3 million-plus refugees who poured into Germany as a result of Chancellor Angela Merkel's liberal open-door policy meant scant - if any - security checks on the bulk of them.

they would never close the door to orphans but are strongly against accepting young men from these countries of origin. They have cited the fear of Muslim refugees not being able to integrate in their homogenous society without affecting their security or radically changing their culture. But this self-serving mentality could lead to the death of millions of young children like Alan Kurdi, a 3-year-old Syrian boy of Kurdish ethnic background who has come to represent the direct impact of rich, European countries refusing entry to Muslim refugees, leaving them adrift in the Mediterranean Sea. The number of migrants who died crossing the Mediterranean Sea surpassed 3,000 for the fourth year in a row in 2017, despite an overall drop in the number of refugees making the journey. The International Organization for Migration has called the Mediterranean "by far the world's deadliest border," as more than 33,000 migrants have died at sea trying to enter Europe since 2000.

#### **Marker comments**

- Some scripts confused "not every country should" to mean "every country should not", which is a step further along the discussion and not quite the contention of the question.
- A common point offered were that accepting refugees could bring diversity to the nations. But unless this is a common world goal, this point digresses from the contention of the question requiring a focus on "every country" accepting "all refugees". Points like these appear to approach the question of "should a country accept refugees?" instead of addressing the contention that such acceptance should be unconditional and for all kinds of countries.
- Some scripts made good points on the moral obligation of every country in tackling the refugee crisis today, some with good use of examples.
- This question saw a lot more candidates skipping over the use of examples, choosing to focus on the reasoning of the argument. Such scripts would not have done as well as those who have provided concrete examples to illustrate their points.
- The poor scripts conflated refugees and migrants.
- Poorer scripts also had serious coherence problems, asserting in one paragraph that countries are morally obliged to accept all refugees, and then self-contradicting in the next para by saying that practical considerations made accepting all refugees impossible.
- The better scripts saw that different countries had different contexts which influenced their duty towards refugees.
- Better scripts also addressed the key phrase 'all refugees', considering the issues of number of refugees as well as the nature of the refugees.

#### **Question 7**

Consider the view that we have nothing to fear from artificial intelligence.

#### **Analysis of Keywords**

##### **1. 'we':**

People in general, or even society at large. The scope here is rather wide.

##### **2. 'have nothing to fear':**

Absolute statement; implies that AI poses no risk/bears no threat. Having nothing to fear from something is a rather broad concept. As long as a student talks about AI-related things that warrant



fear/concern, he would not be off-topic! However, this means that students do need to be familiar enough with AI to be able to discuss the concerns/fears typically associated with it.

### 3. 'artificial intelligence'

Cambridge definitions as follows:

- the use of computer programs that have some of the qualities of the human mind, such as the ability to understand language, recognize pictures, and learn from experience.
- computer technology that allows something to be done in a way that is similar to the way a human would do it.
- Further Note: AI has many broad definitions, but all of them involve the element of computers performing human-like tasks. AI has also been categorised into three classes by some: Narrow AI (e.g. Siri, Cortana, Alexa, Google Assistant), Strong/General AI (unlike narrow AI, able to understand context and perform more than just a narrow task), and Super AI (distinguished by superiority to the human intellect!).

Useful Source: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/cool-tech/what-is-artificial-intelligence-ai/>

#### **Question Requirements**

- Address concerns/fears of AI
- Demonstrate understanding that AI involves outsourcing some mental processes to machines/computers (i.e. machine/computer does some of the thinking for us)
- Provide an evaluation of how founded/justified the fears of AI are (this could well be a consideration of an eventuality, rather than current reality)

#### **Possible Pitfalls:**

- Student misunderstands AI, defining it to broadly and therefore including irrelevant examples in the essay.
- Student has a narrow/limited definition of AI, thus failing to include important examples.
- Student fails to see that essay question is inviting students, primarily, to consider the potential fears/concerns of AI. Such a student would focus primarily on extolling the virtues of AI, which alone will not be enough to pass (the question is asking students to evaluate the fears related to AI!).

**Possible stand 1:** 'We should be wary of AI' or 'We should be fearful of AI'

*Note: To disagree with the question's central proposition, it is not necessary for students to argue that AI warrants fear. The student may simply argue that an attitude of fearlessness is reckless/overconfident.*

**Possible stand 2:** 'We have nothing to fear from AI' or 'For the most part, we have nothing to fear from AI'.

**TS1:** AI's advancement and proliferation threaten to make many jobs obsolete. And if the rate of job creation is outstripped by the rate of job destruction, or if the skills gap generated by AI proliferation cannot be bridged quickly enough—both of which are highly plausible scenarios—significant sections of society will experience unemployment.

**TS1:** Far from threatening an unemployment crisis, AI will in fact enhance employment by creating new and more interesting jobs.\* After all, AI is just another technology humans have created in human history, which has shown that technological revolutions tend to give us new and better jobs (not fewer and poorer). (ß Note: A student may draw a parallel between AI and other technologies in history that



e.g. AI experts such as Elon Musk (CEO of SpaceX and Tesla) and Lee Kai-Fu (eminent American computer scientist) have warned that advancements in AI could risk the automation of a vast number of jobs, threatening the employment of countless individuals. Lee Kai-fu estimates that up to 40% of the world's job will eventually be replaced by **robots powered by ever more sophisticated AI**, and that even supposedly complex jobs are not safe from becoming obsolete.

Source:

<https://fortune.com/2019/01/10/automation-replace-jobs/>

Additional Readings:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2016/09/29/adidas-brings-jobs-back-home-but-not-for-people/#775a6ab1402b>

**TS2:** Because of the way AI is used to supposedly enhance our lives, it is often well-placed to violate our privacy, subject personal information to being exposed to third parties, and may even be used as a means of social surveillance and control.

(see: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/cool-tech/what-is-artificial-intelligence-ai/> )

e.g. Advanced facial recognition systems (which are enabled by AI), allows extensive camera networks to surveil populations, watching individuals' goings-in and comings-out. This Orwellian vision has become a reality, with China's social credit system heavily employing facial recognition technology to monitor Chinese citizens, assigning them a personal score based on how they behave—do they jaywalk, and do they smoke in non-smoking areas?

Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/11/19/is-artificial-intelligence-dangerous-6-ai-risks-everyone-should-know-about/#70d283a72404>

threatened to cause widespread unemployment.. BUT the main focus of the para must still be on AI!!)

e.g. Avidbot's flagship robot, the Neo, is a 'self-driving floor scrubber' that has been deployed to clean the floors of countless airports, universities, stadiums, and warehouses. Its sophisticated AI means that it can avoid obstacles and navigate within extremely large compounds/facilities without the need for a custodian.  $\beta$  This example illustrates how hard, manual work can be outsourced to AI-enabled robots, freeing human hands to engage in other more interesting tasks.

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/09/robots-handle-dull-dangerous-work-creating-new-jobs-for-humans.html>

e.g. A 2018 report by the World Economic Forum estimates that AI will create 58 million new jobs by 2022. IT service company Cognizant predicts that many new, interesting job opportunities will arise thanks to the proliferation of AI. Some examples include big data analyst, personal data broker, machine-learning analyst, financial wellness coach, cyber city analyst, etc...

Sources:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/amitchowdhry/2018/09/18/artificial-intelligence-to-create-58-million-new-jobs-by-2022-says-report/#6d8dafa74d4b>  
<https://www.cognizant.com/whitepapers/21-jobs-of-the-future-a-guide-to-getting-and-staying-employed-over-the-next-10-years-codex3049.pdf>

**TS2:** Fears of AI invading our privacy are overblown, failing to consider our ability to mitigate risks to personal privacy (whether it be the actions of individuals, or the putting in place of effective privacy legislation).

e.g. Privacy laws such as Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the U.S.'s California Consumer Privacy Act are already in existence, offering individuals some measure of protection from their personal data being accessed without consent.

<p>e.g. “<u>What AI brings to the table</u> is the ability to gather, analyze, and combine vast quantities of data from different sources, thus increasing the information-gathering capabilities of social actors that use this technology.”</p> <p>Source: <a href="https://towardsdatascience.com/ai-and-the-future-of-privacy-3d5f6552a7c4">https://towardsdatascience.com/ai-and-the-future-of-privacy-3d5f6552a7c4</a></p> <p><u>Other possible TSeS (in point form):</u>          -In the far future, AI could outdo us, make us obsolete, and even turn against us. (← this sort of argument could only work if a student has enough evidence to show that it is not speculative, but based on legitimate reasons)          -In a less obvious way, AI diminishes out humanity, whether by outdoing us in tasks that humans were previously uniquely capable of, or by performing for us tasks that seem mundane but which are in fact essential to the human experience. (← this sort of argument will require some linguistic finesse to work.)</p>	<p>e.g. Bernhard Debatin, director of the Institute for Applied and Professional Ethics, contends that effective privacy legislation relating to AI can be achieved if laws (i) require AI systems to be transparent to the user; (ii) prevent AI from accessing data it has no right to access (e.g. outside of its jurisdiction or no consent was given); (iii) ensure that consumers can opt out of data collection systems and delete their data in the system upon request. Debatin also notes that some existing legislation, such as the GDRR, already contains some of these requirements.</p> <p>Source: see: <a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/insights-intelai/2019/03/27/rethinking-privacy-for-the-ai-era/">https://www.forbes.com/sites/insights-intelai/2019/03/27/rethinking-privacy-for-the-ai-era/</a></p> <p><u>Other possible TSeS/ideas (in point form):</u>          -[As a *further point* to TS2] The fear of AI invading our privacy seems even more ludicrous when we consider that the cost of losing some privacy is more than justified by the immense benefits of AI-enabled convenience/efficiency. Seen in this light, the thing to fear is not AI, but rather the lack of it, for without it our lives are so much poorer!          -It is pure speculation that we will successfully create powerful AIs that threaten our relevance or even existence. Such speculations are premised on the unfounded assumptions that (i) we are clever enough to create AI cleverer than us and (ii) we are powerless in restricting how powerful AIs can be.</p>
<p><b>Marker comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, students who attempted this question had satisfactory to excellent content knowledge.</li> <li>• Weaker scripts missed the question at certain points by focusing too much on describing the benefits of AI, which does not fully answer the question of whether we should fear AI.</li> <li>• The better scripts showed a deep understanding of AI, explaining how certain technologies we take for granted are in fact enabled by AI, and pointing to certain characteristics of AI that could threaten us in the future. Evaluation focused on how founded/justified the fears of AI are.</li> <li>• The better scripts also had a wide range of well-developed examples relevant to AI.</li> <li>• By contrast, weaker scripts described AI in vague terms, and did not give concrete examples to support their claims.</li> <li>• Essays that are able to explain the mechanism of <u>how</u> AI works would warrant higher marks.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Question 8</b>          “Fighting for animal rights” should be encouraged not dismissed.” Is this a fair statement?</p> <p><b>Analysis of Keywords</b>  <b>‘fighting for animal rights’</b> – to lobby for humane treatment of animals; to actively protest (either violently or non-violently) the use of animals in animal testing for vaccines or cures for incurable diseases. Extent of the fight should be considered – should this be done at all costs to the neglect of humanity’s needs? An examination of how fighting for animal rights could be linked to issues of the environment as well as a consideration of whether animals indeed have rights, is needed.</p>
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<p><b>‘should’</b> – moral and pragmatic considerations needed; a cost-benefit analysis is required</p> <p><b>‘be encouraged’</b> – be given support by the government and society at large</p> <p><b>‘not dismissed’</b> – to be ignored and not actively supported in favour of other issues</p>	
<p><b>Question Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students should acknowledge what animal rights are and the reasons that animals have rights</li> <li>Students should examine how animals’ relationship with humans in various scenarios mean that there are a range of different rights that animals may be given</li> <li>Students must evaluate these rights by arguing if any particular right should be encouraged or dismissed.</li> <li>Reasons for whether fighting for animal rights should be encouraged or dismissed must be discussed in the length of the essay, without leaving either one out.</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Pitfalls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simply describing animal rights with no evaluation.</li> <li>No range of issues.</li> <li>A lot of students do not know much about animal rights (and so their examples are generic and poor)</li> <li>Students are unclear about what (specific sort of) animal rights they are addressing.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Possible stand 1:</b> Fighting for animal rights should be encouraged, not dismissed.</p>	<p><b>Possible stand 2:</b> Fighting for animal rights should be dismissed, not encouraged.</p>
<p><b>TS1:</b> People should be encouraged to fight for animal rights instead of dismissing them, so that animals are free from needless suffering, which would not result in any quantifiable gain for both humans and animals.</p> <p>Eg. Over 100 million animals are tormented and killed in U.S. laboratories each year. These animals are sometimes kept in barren cages and electro-shocked, poisoned, socially isolated, cut open, starved, crippled, and intentionally inflicted with brain damage in nightmarish experiments. Animals used for experimentation are treated like disposable laboratory equipment rather than the thinking, feeling, sensitive individuals they are. According to the National Institutes of Health in the US, 95 percent of all drugs that have been shown to be safe and effective in animals fail in the application stage for humans because they either do not work or are actually dangerous. In fact, imprecise results from animal experiments may result in clinical trials of biologically faulty or even harmful substances, thereby exposing patients to unnecessary risk and wasting scarce research resources. Animal toxicity studies are poor predictors of toxic effects of drugs in humans.</p> <p>Eg. An Alzheimer's study, published in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, showed that</p>	<p><b>TS1:</b> While many organisations have lobbied for a total stop in animal testing, the reality is that animals are needed to gain progress in the area of drug and medical testing for human health. The fight for animal rights should therefore not be overly encouraged and dismissed when it comes at a potential loss to the welfare of the human race.</p> <p>Human volunteers would be unlikely to come forward for studies which involves surgery that is not necessary for them or to test drugs which have only been tested in computer models. This sets the crucial progress in medical research back. An important part of most animal studies is examination of tissues and organs post mortem, which would not be possible for human volunteers. Animal models are also often selected for a particular study because of the ways that they differ from humans, as well as the ways they are similar.</p> <p>Eg. For example mice share many of the same genes as humans, but breed quickly and give birth to many young, so the effects of an experiment on future generations can be studied, which would not be possible in human testing. Animals can also be bred and kept in controlled conditions and fed standard diets to reduce experimental variables, hence ensuring more accurate results. 26 Nobel prizes have gone to discoveries where research on mice has been key, including work on vitamins, the</p>

caffeine could slow down the build-up of protein plaques, which are the signature of the disease and cause the damage to the brain. The mice were given the equivalent of five cups of coffee per day, containing around 500mg of caffeine, and showed almost a 50% reduction in the levels of the protein plaques in their brains after two months. But the scientists cautioned that, though caffeine was a relatively safe drug, there was no indication yet about the amounts of the chemical that would act successfully against Alzheimer's in humans.

*Other possible eggs:* animals in entertainment, hunting exploits, illegal animal trading etc

**TS2:** Fighting for animal rights by levelling pressure on governments and society in outlandish ways catches the attention of the public and in fact, pushes laboratories to be more effective in their methodologies for achieving scientific breakthrough, something that would not be expedited if this were dismissed.

Eg. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is dedicated to establishing and protecting the rights of all animals and is the largest animal rights organisation in the world. They have launched many controversial advertisements and campaigns in their typical shock-and-awe strategy in order to bring attention to the issues of animal abuse, one of which was the comparison between the serial killings of thousands of animals in slaughterhouses every day with a cannibalistic serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer, in 1991. Such attempts have certainly shed light on the issues as scientists, and professional organizations around the world move toward these humane methods and away from cruel experiments on animals. In many countries, tests on animals for cosmetics are even against the law. As of September 2018, animal testing is illegal in India, the European Union, New Zealand, Israel, and Norway. Such laws are also being proposed in South Korea, Argentina, the United States, Taiwan, and Canada. Modern non-animal research methods like organs-on-chips technology, computer modelling, statistical analysis, and studies of human populations and volunteers have also increasingly become more touted as a less expensive, faster, and more accurate

discovery of penicillin, the development of numerous vaccines and understanding the role of viruses.

*Other possible eggs:* farming (food for human consumption and survival), food industry and employment

**TS2:** Animals are not human beings and by that extension, should not have rights, meaning that where such 'rights' conflict with the need for human well-being and survival, they should be dismissed instead of encouraged.

The goal of the animal rights movement is for animals to be free of human use and exploitation. Animal rights is based on a recognition that non-human animals are sentient and therefore have their own rights and interests. However, animals are not liable to the same sort of responsibilities a human being has to another and are fundamentally different in their psyche and emotional make-up compared to humans.

Eg. On May 28, 2016, a three-year-old boy visiting the Cincinnati Zoo fell into the moat at the Gorilla World habitat. This resulted in the male silverback, Harambe being shot by zookeepers in order to keep the boy safe, as the gorilla displayed dominant male behaviour that could have hurt the boy. The incident was recorded in a dramatic video by an anonymous bystander and uploaded to YouTube, where it went viral, sparking global publicity and controversy, leading director Thane Maynard to state, "The child was being dragged around ... His head was banging on concrete. This was not a gentle thing. The child was at risk."

**TS3:** In addition, to encourage the fight for animal rights to the point that animals as essential food sources are to be totally excluded from society, as veganism encourages, is to put the well-being and longevity of the human race at risk.

Eg. About 20% of the human body is made up of protein. Because the body does not store protein, it is important to get enough from our diet each day. While animal proteins tend to contain a good balance of all the amino acids that we need, some plant proteins are low in certain amino acids, such as methionine, tryptophan, lysine and isoleucine. Animal protein sources, such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs and dairy, are similar to the protein found in your body. These are considered to be complete sources of protein because they contain all of the essential amino acids that a body needs to function effectively.

<p>route for testing of new medication or products than tests on animals.</p> <p><b>TS3:</b> Encouraging the fight for the rights of animals through encouraging veganism could also arguably be a way to slow down the growing deterioration of the environment – one of the most pressing issues of our time, meaning that this should not be dismissed.</p> <p>Eg. In “ENVIROCIDAL – How Livestock Farming is Killing the Planet”, published by animal welfare charity Viva!, it is revealed that livestock farming will have devastating effects on the environment if the global consumption of animal products continues at the same rate. ENVIROCIDAL also follows a significant study released in 2018 which concluded that ditching meat and dairy was the most impactful step an individual could take to lessen their impact. It argued that a global switch to diets that rely less on meat and more on fruit and vegetables could save eight million lives by 2050 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two thirds, which is far bigger than cutting down on air flights or buying an electric car.</p> <p>(Source:  <a href="https://www.plantbasednews.org/news/go-vegan-save-planet-new-environmental-report">https://www.plantbasednews.org/news/go-vegan-save-planet-new-environmental-report</a>)</p>	<p>On the contrary, plant protein sources, such as beans, lentils and nuts are considered to be incomplete, as they lack one or more of the essential amino acids that your body needs</p> <p><i>Other possible egs: safety and security of farmers and farming land, killing of rogue animals that have threatened or attacked human beings.</i></p> <p>A good coverage of these issues is in the links below  <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights_1.shtml">http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights_1.shtml</a>  <a href="https://www.thoughtco.com/what-are-animal-rights-127600">https://www.thoughtco.com/what-are-animal-rights-127600</a></p>
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### **Marker comments**

- Students showed limited ability to name and explain what animal rights are.
- They tended to write about treatment of animals without linking the treatment to rights
- There was a poor focus on evaluation of “encouraged” or “dismissed”.
- Students had very poor evaluation that linked to the question words and wrote more about treatment of animals was good or bad.
- This was not a popular question and done by very few students.
- Better scripts would avoid self-contradiction, having an understanding of some issues and good examples and evaluation. Such scripts would also show an awareness that the question assumes that animal rights are being dismissed at present. Arguments attempted would contain wide-ranging, clear, and coherent understanding of issues with high quality examples and illustrations. The student would understand the nuances of animal rights (types of animals, treatment/uses of animals, animals’ relation to humans, etc.)

### **Question 9**

Should discrimination ever be tolerated?

### **Analysis of Keywords**

#### **1. ‘Should’:**

Reasons, both pragmatic and moral, for the toleration of discrimination should be discussed.



## 2. 'discrimination'

Cambridge definitions as follows:

treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skincolour, sex, sexuality, etc.

## 3. 'ever be'

Question is asking if there are any situations in which discrimination may be tolerated, the presumption being that discrimination is prima facie a bad thing' synonymous to 'sometimes', 'always', 'never'...

## 4. 'tolerated'

Endured, though not necessarily endorsed. This question is inviting students to consider cases of discrimination which may be unpleasant, or even controversial, but for which there may be reasons to abide. In other words, are there situations in which discrimination is a necessary evil, or where discrimination should be allowed to persist (note that this is not the same as endorsing discrimination!). Here, a consideration of the Cambridge definition of 'tolerate' would be helpful: 'to accept behaviour and beliefs that are different from your own, although you might not agree with or approve of them.'

### Question Requirements

***Student must stay focused on discrimination-related issues, addressing moral and pragmatic concerns, with the better script engaging on a deeper level with the key word 'tolerate'.***

### Possible Pitfalls:

- Misunderstanding of what discrimination is (e.g. student just talks about prejudicial attitudes that do not manifest at all in discriminatory actions)
- Misunderstanding of what tolerated means
- Students pick strange examples of 'discrimination' (e.g. setting aside seats for elderly on trains)
- Student defines 'discrimination' too narrowly, or focuses only on a narrow range of types of discrimination.
- Students could take the absolute stand without taking the necessary step of addressing the situations in which, plausibly, one could justifiably tolerate discrimination.

**Possible stand 1:** 'Yes, there are situations in which discrimination should be tolerated.'

*Note: This stand is a lot more doable than Possible Stand 2. It allows for a student to affirm that discrimination is by and large a bad thing, but also acknowledge that there are exceptional situations in which we should allow discrimination to persist.*

**Possible stand 2:** 'No, there is no situation in which discrimination may be tolerated.'

*Note: This is a very absolute stand! To take this stand is to take on the task of addressing the very situations in which, arguably, discrimination could be tolerated.*

TS1: Positive discrimination is necessary for ensuring that past (and even present) injustices are righted and gross social inequalities are reduced. Thus, even though positive discrimination has some negative side-effects, we ought to tolerate it.

e.g. In a country like the U.S., many have argued that unequal social outcomes between African-Americans and the average arise from past and present injustices/discrimination. Some examples of these injustices include slavery (abolished 1865), Jim Crow laws (enforcing segregation, abolished 1964), and the alleged discrimination against black job

TS1: Positive discrimination is often held up as a necessary (or even virtuous) form of discrimination. But it should not be tolerated because it is just discrimination by another name, begetting the very evils for which we usually condemn discrimination\*.

*\*the exclusion of certain ethnic classes due to affirmative action policies; exhibit racist attitudes in the form of the 'bigotry of low expectations'*

e.g. The 2017 Singaporean Presidential Election was reserved only for Malay candidates, in a bid to ensure that minority race presidents are elected from time to time. Yet, many in the Malay community saw this as a bigotry of low expectations (or, as

applicants (See [tinyurl.com/yyso6njw](https://tinyurl.com/yyso6njw)). In light of these injustices/disadvantages, it is only fair to use positive discrimination to level the playing field (even if positive discrimination has been criticised for being un-meritocratic).

Sources:

<https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/9/18/16307782/study-racism-jobs>

TS2: Certain forms of discrimination cannot realistically be dealt with, undesirable as they are. Trying to combat these forms of discrimination would therefore be a waste of resources. It follows that we should tolerate these forms of discrimination.

e.g. On an individual level, the best way for an individual from a minority race to deal with casual racism is sometimes not to combat it, but simply to tolerate it and to get on with his life. Deep-seated prejudices take time to change, and often positive developments in race relations only occur across generations (e.g. older generations of ethnically Chinese Singaporeans are generally not in favour of a non-Chinese Prime Minister, but younger generations are increasingly open-minded about the issue). If the sort of discrimination encountered stems from deep-seated, hard-to-change attitudes, and is not so severe as to impede one's basic rights and freedoms, it might be a better use of one's resources to work hard to get ahead in life, rather than wrestle with intangible forms of discrimination which are hard to prove and even harder to enforce laws against.

*economist Nizam Idris put it, a 'vote of no confidence' that a Malay president would be able to run on his/her own merit against candidates from other races and still win Singaporeans' votes).*

Source: <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/big-step-backwards-for-malay-community>

TS2: Some argue that discrimination should be tolerated in instances where the need for efficiency can only be fulfilled by operating according to statistical likelihoods (the sort of which are inherent to prejudicial stereotypes, such as certain ethnicities being likelier to commit certain types of crimes). But this utilitarian calculation must be rejected not only because it is morally bankrupt, but also because it is likely to be counter-productive.\*

e.g. Racial profiling at security checks, in which security personnel pay closer attention to certain groups of individuals (e.g. members of a certain race/religion) racialises and divides society, alienating members of targeted groups. For instance, the mere allegation that police officers conducting checks at Bishan MRT station targeted Malays to the exclusion of other races was enough to ignite an internet firestorm. And despite forceful denials of any sort of racial profiling, the sentiment on the ground in Singapore is that Malay males are disproportionately targeted during security checks, and this has been a sore point for many.

*\*\*Quite inevitably, the focus of this paragraph would be about security checks, or even hiring policies.*

### **Marker Comments**

- This was a very popular question. Unfortunately, many students who attempted this question lacked the content knowledge for it. Perhaps they were driven to it as a last resort or perhaps they assumed it was one of the more forgiving questions.
- Many students produced simplistic arguments about why discrimination is bad. This approach only \*begins\* to answer the question. Of course discrimination is bad—the phrasing of the question makes it clear that there is a presumption against discrimination.
- Thus, students were supposed to consider reasons for why there should never be any situation in which we accept discrimination. To achieve this, they should have examined 'fringe' cases of discrimination, where one could make a plausible argument to support the toleration of such forms of discrimination.
- Good scripts would demonstrate thoughtfulness about the issues of discrimination and its possible justifications (or reasons why it can be tolerated despite being bad), containing discrimination-related examples which are wide-ranging.



**Question 10**

'Any punishment that does not aim to rehabilitate the criminal is unjustified.' Discuss.

**Analysis of Keywords****1. 'any':**

This question requires students to consider the question of whether there are indeed punishments which (i) do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal but which (ii) are justified.

**2. 'punishment':**

Penalty meted out for wrongdoing.

**3. 'does not aim to rehabilitate'**

Equivalent to 'whose purposes do not include the intent 'to return someone to a good, normal life or condition' after they have been punished

**4. 'criminal'**

The wrongdoings discussed in this essay have to be crimes. As long as the wrongdoing is against the law, the example will be accepted as valid. That said, clear-cut and significant examples of crime will receive more credit.

**5. 'unjustified'**

No good reason can be given for such a punishment.

**Question Requirements**

- Students have to keep their discussion focused on crimes (or any breaking of the law). They also have to consider the idea that rehabilitation is a necessary ingredient of any just/justified punishment.
- Students should discuss the various reasons for why some punishments that do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal could be seen as morally wrong or pragmatically unsound, or conversely, morally right and pragmatic ways of dealing with different types of crime.
- An understanding of proportionality of crimes to the punishment is needed for depth of evaluation.

**Possible Pitfalls:**

- Student ignores the absolute nature of the statement, and agrees with it without having the necessary arguments to support such an absolute stand.
- Student misunderstands 'rehabilitation'
- Student fails to understand that a punishment can seek to achieve multiple things at once (e.g. imprison someone and eventually rehabilitate him once he has served his time)
- Example-driven approach
- Students might focus only on rehabilitation and its benefits without dealing with 'punishments that do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal' at all.

**Possible Stand 1:**

'Yes. Any punishment that does not aim to rehabilitate the criminal is indeed unjustifiable.'

OR

'The statement is largely true, though there are certain exceptional situations in which we can justify punishments that do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal.'

**Possible Stand 2:**

'No. Certain punishments do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal. Yet, these punishments can be justified.'

TS1: Punishments that neglect to rehabilitate the criminal typically violate the widely-held principle that people deserve a second chance, scorning the virtue of forgiveness, as well as

TS1: Certain crimes are so heinous that they must be met with the severest of punishments—the sort of which leave no room for the rehabilitation of criminals. In committing these crimes, criminals have

the social value of reforming criminals to become productive members of society.

E.g. Reformed drug kingpin "Freeway" Rick Ross may have established a drug empire in Los Angeles, California and presumably destroyed many lives with trafficked drugs, but after his release from prison, Ross has been actively giving back to the community, regularly speaking to school children and warning them of the consequences of pursuing a life of crime.

Source: [tinyurl.com/y2bad7l5](https://tinyurl.com/y2bad7l5)

E.g. Bruce Reilly, deputy director of VOTE, a New Orleans organization that advocates for the formerly incarcerated, was paroled in 2005 after serving time for a 1992 murder.

Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/02/business/bruce-reilly-murder-conviction-lawyer.html>

TS2: Punishments that do not aim to rehabilitate the criminal have a dehumanising effect on society, inclining us to accept vengeance as the default response to wrongdoing, and even to incline us to breed an unhealthy tolerance towards violence.

e.g. The FBI Uniform Crime Report described a trend indicating that the death penalty brutalises society--in the US, there are more murders in states where the death penalty has not been abolished. This would suggest that the presence of the extreme form of punishment that rejects rehabilitation degrades society's conscience, devalues human life, and conditions us to be more accepting of violence.

Source:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/capitalpunishment/against\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/capitalpunishment/against_1.shtml)



perpetrated such vile acts that they have forfeited their right to a second chance; the only way for justice to be satisfied is for them to pay with their lives, or to be locked away forever.

E.g. the 2011 Norway attacks, a domestic terrorist attack perpetrated by right-wing extremist Anders Behring Breivik, killed 110 innocents (many of which were youths participating in a summer camp) and injured at least 309. Motivated by anti-Islam and anti-immigrant hatred, this attack represented the deadliest mass shooting in recent history. Given the severity of the crime, it would be unjust to afford Breivik the privilege of rehabilitation; he has forfeited the right to be re-integrated back into society. This is reflected in how Breivik is currently serving 21 years of preventive detention, with the detention likely to be extended indefinitely to ensure that he remains isolated for the rest of his life.

Source: <https://www.tnp.no/norway/panorama/3111-breivik-will-never-be-released-from-prison>

TS2: Certain profiles of criminals defy rehabilitation, and therefore must be permanently incapacitated for society's security.

E.g. Famous killers such as Ted Bundy, Richard Ramirez, and, locally, Anthony Ler, demonstrated no remorse right to the last, often taking a perverse pride in their crimes. There is little reason to think that individuals such as these are rehabilitatable, and hence a punishment that aims to permanently incapacitate them is the only responsible course of action to ensure society's safety. In fact, many murderers had previously been incarcerated, but the misguided notion that they could be rehabilitated was what returned them to society, allowing them to once again predate on innocents (e.g. of repeat murderers: Kenneth McDuff, David Maust, Steven Pratt). An explanation for why some individuals cannot be reformed could be underlying psychological conditions like psychopathy and sociopathy, which entail a lack of remorse and guilt, a disregard for the rights of others, and a tendency for violent behaviour. There is currently no known medical cure for these conditions.

Source:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/wicked-deeds/201409/the-sociopath-serial-killer-connection>

### Marker Comments

- Not a very popular question.
- The better scripts avoided sweeping statements ('All criminals deserve a second chance!'), but instead acknowledged that different crimes called for different approaches.

- The evaluation of consequences of different profiles of crime and the discussion of proportionality with regard to the purpose of punishment (ie. Rehabilitation, retribution, deterrence) would have been consistently and clearly done in better scripts. A consistent use of illustration that pertain to punishment of criminals (that do not aim to rehabilitate them) as well as the presumption against such punishments are needed for well considered essays.
- Generally, students reasoning ability was not advanced enough to successfully pull of the arguments they were trying to make. Two examples are provided below to illustrate this point:

e.g. Many students asserted that a punishment cannot exclude rehabilitation because that would violate the moral principle that people deserve a second chance. Yet, no satisfactory explanation was given for why people deserve a second chance; it was just asserted as if it were a self-evident fact.

e.g. Many students asserted that capital punishment (which obviously does not aim to rehabilitate the criminal) is not justified because it violates the criminal's right to life. While this may be true, these students rarely, if ever, addressed the counterargument that one's right to life can be forfeit in certain circumstances (e.g. when one has committed a heinous enough act). This unbalanced approach made for extremely shallow and unconvincing argumentation.

### Question 11

**'Given how unpredictable the world is, it is pointless to plan for the future.' Comment.**

#### Analysis of Keywords

1. How unpredictable:

need to articulate the reasons as to why the world today is unpredictable; unpredictable in what sense? In what particular domains?

2. Pointless:

the idea that it is of no worth and value; magnitude of this word needs to be captured in the line of reasoning

3. Plan for the future:

what are some of the reasons as to why people plan for the future? Who will be interested in planning for the future? Who are these stakeholders?

#### Question Requirements

- The topic sentence needs to capture the reason as to why the world is unpredictable or the characteristics of the world that give rise to this volatility.
- This line of reasoning will then need to be linked to what is the value of planning for the future.
- Candidates need to show an assessment of the value of planning and one way by which this can be done is via the articulation of the consequences should there be planning or no planning.

#### Possible Pitfalls:

- Candidates only discuss about how unpredictable the world is but there is no attempt to link this to the value of planning for the future or vice versa.
- Mere description of a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world but no articulation of any line of reasoning.

**Possible stand 1:**  
**Given how unpredictable the world is, it is largely pointless to plan for the future**

**TS1: The anthropocentric world we live in have effected changes on such an unprecedented scale that the planned for eventualities do not materialize, resulting in the ineffective use of resources.**

**Possible stand 2:**  
**Given how unpredictable the world is, there is largely still value in planning for the future**

**TS1: Even if the planned for eventuality does not materialize, planning allows for the mobilization and utilization of resources to deal with other possible emergencies.**

E.g. Japan is a leading example of disaster-risk reduction and readiness. One of their key missions

E.g. Singapore currently stockpiles a three-month supply of rice by requiring importers to import a minimum of 50 tonnes every month and to maintain two months' worth of imports in government warehouses for up to a year. However, such national-level measures can be costly, and are vulnerable to factors such as volatility in the prices of production inputs, availability of land, labour and capital, environmental hazards, trade policies of exporting countries, the import capacity of a country, and even losses from spoilage. The Philippines made international headlines in 2011 when a local non-governmental organisation reported that 500,000 tonnes of rice were rotting in government warehouses due to poor management.

**TS2: Excessive planning in an uncertain world reduces the ability to react swiftly and decisively to sudden changes.**

E.g. In less than a decade, Nokia emerged from Finland to lead the mobile phone revolution. It rapidly grew to have one of the most recognisable and valuable brands in the world. At its height, Nokia commanded a global market share in mobile phones of over 40 percent. While its journey to the top was swift, its decline was equally so, culminating in the sale of its mobile phone business to Microsoft in 2013. Nokia's mobile phone story exemplifies a common trait we see in mature, successful companies: Success breeds conservatism and hubris, which, over time, results in a decline of the strategy processes leading to poor strategic decisions. Where once companies embraced new ideas and experimentation to spur growth, with success they become risk averse and less innovative in their planning. As a result, excessive planning leads to companies being less nimble to adapt to the sudden changes that is the new norm today.

includes raising awareness on natural disasters to educate people to better protect their lives. As the focal point, schools implement courses, which educate people on disaster causes, consequences and how to prepare for and respond to the impacts of hazards. By making this information readily available and easy to understand, communication becomes smoother, and individuals increase their chances of survival. Even if there are no immediate disasters, this constant vigilance is important to prepare for other unplanned contingencies.

e.g. Brexit: We do not know when exactly it will happen, or what form it will take, but countries need to start planning anyway.

**TS2: Even in an unpredictable world, there is still a need to plan in order to ensure that sacrosanct basic human rights and needs continue to remain inviolate for posterity.**

E.g. Sensitive to the current impetus for sustainable environmental outcomes, municipalities in the United States seeking to demonstrate they are "green" are looking beyond environmental metrics. Sustainable environmental outcomes encompass the effective application and utilization of all public resources—natural, human, economic and technological—to improve service delivery and create sustainable outcomes in municipal operations and programs. Pend Oreille Public Utility District (PUD) took an all-encompassing view in project planning—from addressing the environmental impacts to using the latest technology to maintain peak efficiency. In addition to maintaining nine community drinking water systems providing potable water to 590 homes, the district maintains a wildlife management area: fish-passages, a trout habitat restoration area and natural resource management for minimal erosion and low impact on wildlife. This version of environmental stewardship ensures that there will still be a future for posterity.

**Marker comments**

- This was another question that was not very popular among the cohort. The weaker candidates who attempted this question often made contradictory arguments regarding the value of planning in an unpredictable world. This may be due to poor attempts to demarcate the parameters of each idea or the poor use of language.

- Some candidates questioned the underlying premise of the question and argued that the world today is in fact, not unpredictable. This is an example of a very poor analysis of the question and these candidates naturally did not do well for this question.
- The better candidates were able to clearly articulate the reasons as to why in an unpredictable world, there is still value to plan or not plan for the future. The idea of “pointless”, of how there is no worth, was often well addressed in their responses and well substantiated by a wide range of examples across domains and societies.
- Students may well point out that unpredictability does not preclude macro-trends that could help us plan for the future; students could also point out that there are different senses in which the world may be unpredictable (i.e. individual events may be unpredictable, but broad patterns may be much less unpredictable)

### Question 12

**‘Technology is the most effective solution to environmental problems today.’ How far do you agree?**

#### **Analysis of Keywords**

##### **Most effective solution -**

Compare between technology and at least 2 other types of solutions (international cooperation, government policies, non-governmental organizations, individual efforts); alternatively, student can show that technology is the **ONLY** real solution (although comparison here is not explicitly done, the inadequacies of alternative solutions are implied)

**Technology** - use of scientific solutions to address env problems (e.g. fuel efficiency tech, green tech, etc.)

**Environmental Problems today** - Climate change, global warming, different types of pollution, noise pollution

#### **Question Requirements**

- A comparison between technological solutions to environmental problems and other sorts of solutions has to be made.

#### **Implicit comparison is possible as an approach**

- Students could bring in other solutions but mention that technology is fundamental to the success of these other solutions.
  - “Technology being the only solution....”
  - “Technology is the cornerstone of other solutions...”

#### **Possible Pitfalls:**

- Students **totally** do not compare technology with other solutions (i.e. only technology is evaluated as a solution without implied or explicit comparison to other solutions).

#### **Possible stand 1:**

**Technology is not the most effective solution.**

TS1: Social campaigns and activism is a ground-up movement which rallies individuals to take action to fight climate change through creating awareness and persuading people to change their consumption patterns, eating habits and lifestyle one person at a time. This is a slow but sure method in dealing with the fundamental causes of environmental problems instead of technological solutions are merely a response to tackle the symptoms. In

#### **Possible stand 2:**

**Technology is the most effective solution.**

TS1: Green technology and renewable forms of energy will serve as practical options to replace existing practices which are not sustainable and practical since ongoing activism online or offline to reduce consumption has not seen much results as it is idealistic to think creating awareness can change human behaviour.

E.g. Unfortunately, skipping straws might not be enough to stop marine pollution. An estimated 8



<p>fact, such movements are the ones that gave rise to technological and scientific research for alternatives that are more environmentally sustainable.</p> <p>E.g. The Zerowaste movement, which is to create as little garbage as possible, is gaining traction in different countries and the demand has given rise to zero-waste businesses Zero-waste stores in Germany (Original Unverpakt), Austria (Lunzers), Spain (Granel), Italy (Effecorta), the UK (The Zero Waste Shop). Similarly, many have jumped on to the anti-straw bandwagon and stopped using straws or replacing it with metal ones. (<a href="https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/1/28/18196057/zero-waste-plastic-pollution">https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/1/28/18196057/zero-waste-plastic-pollution</a>)</p> <p>e.g. In response to the plastic waste crisis, Bakery's, an Indian cutlery company created the edible cutlery. The utensils are made mostly with millet. The vegan edibles come in three different flavours — plain, sweet, and spicy — and have a shelf life of about three years. If users don't feel compelled to eat their cutlery at the end of their meal, the spoons and forks will naturally decompose within four to five days — if they're not eaten by an animal first. But the edible cutlery cannot be reused. (<a href="https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/bakeys-edible-cutlery-1.4763171">https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/bakeys-edible-cutlery-1.4763171</a>)</p> <p>e.g. The rise of veganism is also people's response to reduce the real threat of livestock farming. When there is a greater awareness of how the livestock sector is one of the most significant contributors to environmental degradation, there are more vegan converts. The demand for more vegan options increased the number of vegan food businesses and vegan menus. In fact, this drove the research for plant-based meat that gave rise to The Impossible Burger or Beyond Burger. (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/apr/01/vegans-are-coming-millennials-health-climate-change-animal-welfare">https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/apr/01/vegans-are-coming-millennials-health-climate-change-animal-welfare</a>)</p> <p>TS2: Government policies and laws are more effective than technological solutions because they can be implemented in a timelier manner given the urgency of dealing with environmental problems. They tend to be less costly, more fool-proof and more clear-cut compared to technological solutions which can be complex and unpredictable.</p>	<p>million tonnes of plastic trash enter the ocean every year, and plastic straws make up only a very small percentage of it. China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Sri Lanka were ranked as the top five producers – out of 192 countries – of mismanaged plastic waste in 2010. In Singapore, Singapore's solid waste disposal infrastructure consists of four waste-to-energy plants where the heat from the combustion generates superheated steam in boilers, and the steam drives turbogenerators to produce electricity. Tapping on technology, Singapore is able to manage the waste and prevent causing additional damage to the marine life and in fact, created a sustainable model energy source from waste. (<a href="https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/skipping-plastic-straws-might-not-stop-marine-pollution-10555340">https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/skipping-plastic-straws-might-not-stop-marine-pollution-10555340</a>) (<a href="https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/waste-management/waste-management-infrastructure/waste-to-energy-and-incineration-plants">https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/waste-management/waste-management-infrastructure/waste-to-energy-and-incineration-plants</a>)</p> <p>TS2: International cooperation has proven time and again to fail due differing national interests that can never be reconciled; hence, technology offers the most objective, logical and viable means to tackle mega problems like water pollution and air pollution and global warming.</p> <p>E.g. U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the Paris agreement in 2017, saying the accord would have cost America trillions of dollars, killed jobs, and hindered the oil, gas, coal and manufacturing industries. (<a href="https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/10/i-sincerely-hope-that-the-us-will-come-back-says-ban-ki-moon.html">https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/10/i-sincerely-hope-that-the-us-will-come-back-says-ban-ki-moon.html</a>)</p> <p>e.g. Bill Gates' Reinvent the Toilet campaign has seen results using technologies create sustainable smaller-scale waste-treatment plant so as to prevent further pollution of water. (<a href="https://www.businessinsider.sg/bill-gates-wants-world-to-move-past-flush-toilets-2018-11/?r=US&amp;IR=T">https://www.businessinsider.sg/bill-gates-wants-world-to-move-past-flush-toilets-2018-11/?r=US&amp;IR=T</a>)</p> <p>TS3: The nature of technological solutions is that it is meant to target specific problems and be tailor-made to deal with it directly whereas government initiatives and policies, particularly in less developed countries, hardly work due to poor enforcement.</p> <p>E.g. According to the World Health Organisation, 1.6 million people die each year from diarrhoeal diseases attributable to lack of safe drinking water as well as basic sanitation. Researchers in India have come up with a solution to this perennial problem with a water</p>
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E.g. Taiwan announced ban on all single-use plastic bags, straws and utensils in phases by 2030. Despite the implications on businesses, such bans will push individuals to be innovative and also eventually get used to live without the convenience of single-use plastic and lead a sustainable lifestyle. This is a more straightforward solution as opposed to doing further research on biodegradable plastic options which tend to be confused with compostable or oxo-degradable plastic. All of them have different characteristics and plastics termed 'biodegradable' has proven to persist in the environment.

(<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/taiwan-ban-on-plastic-bags-straws-utensils-contain/>)  
(<https://environmentjournal.online/articles/public-warned-not-to-confuse-compostable-and-biodegradable-bags/>)

e.g. Technological solutions such as nuclear power as an alternative source of energy has proven to be unstable and to have caused unprecedented damage which was beyond calculation and prevention.

(<https://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-accident.aspx>)

TS3: International cooperation is definitely going to create greater changes due to the combined efforts of many countries as opposed to technological solutions which tend to only be accessible by countries who are rich enough.

E.g. At COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015, Parties to the UNFCCC reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future. The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and – for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort.

(<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement>)

e.g. For developing countries, the most obvious and widely publicized barrier to renewable energy is cost—specifically, capital

purification system using nanotechnology. The technology removes microbes, bacteria and other matter from water using composite nanoparticles, which emit silver ions that destroy contaminants. "Our work can start saving lives," says Prof Thalappil Pradeep of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras. "For just \$2.50 a year you can deliver microbially safe water for a family." It is a sign that low-cost water purification may finally be round the corner – and be commercially scaleable.  
(<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/new-water-technologies-save-planet>)

e.g. Residents of the Pearl River Delta have been shocked recently to hear reports that more than half of the waterways in Shenzhen, the most developed city in Guangdong, are black, polluted and smelly. This is despite 30 billion yuan (HK\$38 billion) spent since 2000 on an official campaign to restore the city's long-suffering rivers.

(<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1596367/shenzhen-losing-its-fight-against-pollution-main-rivers>)

costs, or the upfront expense of building and installing solar and wind farms. Like most renewables, solar and wind are exceedingly cheap to operate—their “fuel” is free, and maintenance is minimal—so the bulk of the expense comes from building the technology. (<https://www.ucsusa.org/clean-energy/renewable-energy/barriers-to-renewable-energy>)

#### **Marker comments**

- This was a popular question. Many students probably thought they have examples on technological solutions to environmental problems and have sufficient information to tackle this question.
- However, most of the students, unfortunately, treated the question as “To what extent is technology effective at solving environmental problems?”
- Students tried to use limitations of technology to prove that technology is not the most effective solution. They failed to see that even if a solution has limitations, it could still be the most effective. They did not do well because they failed to bring in any other types of solutions to compare with technology.
- Others tried to prove that it is not the most effective because technology is dependent on government policies or other factors. Some credit is given but it still does not show it is not the most effective. This type of arguments is addressing a different question - “Technology is the key to solving environmental problems.”
- Examples provided can be quite problematic. Some of them tried to prove effectiveness by showing what the solutions can potentially do without realizing that it’s insufficient to show real outcomes. Others tried to prove effectiveness by dropping random statistics that cannot be verified.
- Better scripts would have had the student evaluating comparative effectiveness (whether implicit or explicit comparison) of technology vs other solutions. Stronger scripts should compare using different criteria for comparison such as sustainability, long-term versus short-term effects, the reach/significance of outcome, and engagement of root causes. Stronger scripts would also unpack environmental problems and go beyond just talking about climate change. Additionally, such scripts would explore a range of traits/characteristics of technology.





## Anderson Serangoon Junior College: JC2 Prelims 2019

1. According to paragraph 1, why is there 'no direct evidence' to suggest when exactly our early ancestors first started wearing clothing? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]

From passage	Paraphrased	Remarks
There is no direct evidence to suggest when exactly our early human – 'hominin' – ancestors stopped wandering around naked and started draping their bodies with animal furs and skins. <b>Clothes do not fossilise</b> , so anthropologists studied the evolution of lice, revealing that we started wearing clothes about 170,000 years ago.	There was no direct evidence because clothes disintegrate without a trace/ no remains of clothing can be found [1]  <u>Do not accept:</u> Because they had to study lice to find evidence (effect of having no direct evidence)	Accepted: - Decompose (completely) - No preserved evidence of clothing  Not accepted: - Biodegradable (has a specific meaning about not harming the environment)

2. In paragraph 2, how did the clothing worn by the poor differ from those worn by the rich? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
Before the Industrial Revolution, the lower classes made <b>fabric out of homespun fibers</b> . They had neither time nor money to waste – clothes were seen as <b>merely a necessity</b> – often cobbling makeshift garments from scraps and hand-me-downs. In contrast, the upper classes had access to <b>luxurious imported fabric, intricate adornments</b> and the labour of <b>skilled artisans</b> . Fashions became <b>ostentatious</b> , with hoops, wires and stays for the women and matching three-piece suits for the men. As clothing soon turned into fashion, it came to represent wealth, status, gender identity, and much more.	<u>Fabric Cost/Quality/Origin</u>  a) The poor used <b>cheap/ low quality</b> materials while the rich could afford <b>expensive / high quality</b> fabrics.  OR  The garments of the poor are often <b>simple/basic</b> while the rich owned <b>ornate/elaborate</b> outfits.  OR  (homespun vs imported)  The poor used <b>material from their own house</b> , whereas the rich <b>bought them from overseas</b> .  <u>Who made the clothing</u>  b) The poor <b>made their own clothes</b> while the rich could <b>employ expert seamstresses</b> to create their garments.  Note: If 'skilled' is not captured, cannot award	<u>Quality of clothing/Design</u>  Not accepted for (a): - Locally sourced (has a specific meaning)  - The poor made their own clothes whereas the rich bought from overseas          Accepted for (b): - E.g. The poor made clothes from whatever they can find, whereas the rich could get experts to make it for them

	<p><u>Purpose of clothing</u></p> <p>c) The poor saw clothes as <b>something they needed/purely functional</b> whereas the rich wore clothes to <b>display/show off</b> their affluence/social background.</p> <p>Note: Wealth, status can be lifted because it is not part of the answer</p>	<p>Accepted for (c):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The poor saw clothing as a basic need</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (c):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wearing clothes is compulsory</li> <li>- A way to show social well-being</li> </ul>
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3. In paragraph 3, the author says that 'clothes reflected the major changes that society undergoes'.

a. Identify the two major changes the author raises. [1]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
<p>In fact, clothing has often reflected the major changes that society undergoes.</p> <p><b>When non-western societies came under the rule of a colonial master...</b></p> <p><b>With the rise of women's movements</b>, the strict code of femininity that had always been imposed were rejected.</p>	<p>1. When non-western societies came under the rule of a colonial master</p> <p>2. Rise of the women's movement/feminism</p> <p>Note: Do not accept specific e.g. as they should only be found in part b</p>	<p>Not accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- British colonial rule in India (cannot accept specific e.g.)</li> <li>- Westernisation of societies (no context of colonialism)</li> <li>- Defiance of patriarchal standards (identify wrong part of the text)</li> </ul> <p>Accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Colonisation</li> <li>- Gender revolution</li> </ul>

b. How did clothes reflect these changes? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
<p>In fact, clothing has often reflected the major changes that society undergoes.</p> <p>When non-western societies came under the rule of a colonial master, they were forced to accept, among other things, the western style of clothing. For instance, the <b>British colonial administration in India forbade</b> women from wearing their traditional clothing and <b>demanding that they wear</b> jackets like the English would. By the time</p>	<p>a) <u>Colonial rule was reflected by</u></p> <p><b>the British disallowing Indian women from wearing the sari/forcing them to wear western clothing.</b></p> <p>Note: context of the British and Indian women must be present</p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Indian women now adopting/accepting western</b></p>	<p>Not accepted for (a):</p>

<p>of Indian independence in 1947, the “too-sexy” sari had given way to long-sleeved blouses and petticoats, which were seen as an indication of a civilised society. <b>With the rise of women’s movements</b>, the strict code of femininity that had always been imposed was rejected. Clothing became the feminists’ tool, as they <b>refused to be subject to the restrictive corset and the voluminous folds of fabric that hindered the slightest movement</b> any longer, signifying their <b>defiance of patriarchal standards</b> that had dictated their appearance for far too long.</p>	<p><b>dressing/ wearing western clothing instead of the sari</b></p> <p>Note: idea of ‘given way to’ has to be reflected, Indian <b>women</b> must be present</p> <p>b) <u>The rise in women’s power was reflected by</u></p> <p><b>women rejecting clothing that prevented them from moving freely</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p>Women not wearing clothing that <b>men</b> made them wear/suited <b>men’s</b> interests/ suited what <b>men</b> liked</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indian women wearing clothes from the West (no idea of change)</li> </ul> <p>Accepted for (a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indian women <b>choosing</b> to wear western clothing</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anything that makes corsets or amount of fabric the subject. Subject must be clothing.</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women rejected clothes <b>society</b> forces them to wear (doesn’t reflect understanding of ‘patriarchal’)</li> </ul>
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4. What is the author implying about the British colonial authority by writing “too sexy” in inverted commas? [1]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
<p>By the time of Indian independence in 1947, the “too sexy” sari had given way to long-sleeved blouses and petticoats, which were seen as an indication of a civilised society.</p>	<p>She is implying that that the British are prudish/ conservative</p> <p>OR</p> <p>not accepting/ignorant of local customs/traditions.</p> <p>Note: ‘too’ conservative not necessary</p> <p>Answer must be an assessment of the British themselves (and should not have a positive connotation), not what they think about the sari</p>	<p>Not accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The author is implying that the British feels that the sari is too revealing</li> <li>- It implies that the British are using it as an excuse to force Indian women to change their clothing.</li> <li>- The British are unreasonable</li> <li>- Did not understand the cultural significance of the sari</li> </ul> <p>Accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Too strict (about clothing)</li> </ul>

5. What does the author mean by ‘resisted as tools of subjugation’ (line 26)? [2]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
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<p>Conversely, items of clothing were also <b>resisted as tools of subjugation</b>. With the rise of women's movements, the strict code of femininity that had always been imposed was <b>rejected</b>. Clothing became the feminists' tool, as they <b>refused</b> to be <b>subject to</b> the restrictive corset and the voluminous folds of fabric that hindered the slightest movement any longer, signifying their <b>defiance</b> of patriarchal standards that had <b>dictated</b> their appearance for far too long.</p>	<p>The author means that some types of clothing (necessary subject)</p> <p>a) were <b>opposed/fought against</b> by women [1] b) because they were used to <b>oppress/control women</b>. [1]</p> <p>Note: For (a), do not accept 'rejected' as it does not convey the same degree as 'resisted'</p> <p>No subject = 0m</p>	<p>Not accepted for (a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women decided not to wear</li> <li>- Refused to wear</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clothing society said they must wear (does not capture 'subjugation')</li> <li>- Clothing that men said they have to wear (no degree captured)</li> </ul> <p>Accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clothing men forced women to wear</li> <li>- Restrict women's freedom</li> <li>- Used as a way to impose/force male standards on women</li> </ul>
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6. Explain what the author means by 'token of solidarity' (line 37)? [2]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
<p>In the post-WWII era, it was a symbol of rebellion, aligned with the cowboys of old, and in the 1960s hippie era, apart from representing freedom from more structured clothing, protesting <u>college students began wearing them as a token of solidarity with the working class</u> who were most affected by racial discrimination and the Vietnam War draft. What's more, they were also an equalizing force as they were mass produced and made accessible to almost everyone.</p>	<p>The author means that <u>college students wearing jeans</u> (necessary subject)</p> <p>a) was a small/ simple way/ a symbol/ representation/ sign [1] b) of unity <u>with the working class</u> [1]</p> <p>Wrong/No subject = 0m</p>	<p>Not accepted for (a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demonstrate/ an indication of/ show their unity...</li> </ul> <p>Accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to support/ empathise with</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sympathise with</li> <li>- show allegiance to</li> <li>- poor people (for working class)</li> </ul> <p>E.g. The author means that wearing jeans represents the college students' unity with the working class. (2m)</p> <p>Accepted for (a+b):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A simple way to demonstrate unity with the working class</li> </ul>

		- a symbol of unity with the working class
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7. Explain the author's use of the three dots (...) in line 40. [1]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
Today, jeans come in all shapes and sizes – skinny, baggy, bell-bottom, high-waisted... <b>there's something for everyone</b> , and its history tells a clear story of how clothing can be a powerful symbol for individuals.	<p>The author wants to highlight the endless list <b>of jeans types/designs</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p>The author is highlighting that there are <b>more types of jeans not mentioned</b> here.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jeans must be specified.</li> </ul>	<p>Accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long list</li> <li>- Large variety</li> <li>- Many types of jeans</li> <li>- More types of jeans not listed by the author</li> <li>- List is not exhaustive</li> <li>- The author cannot finish listing the types of jeans</li> </ul>



8. What does the author want us to understand by the series of questions in brackets in paragraph 7? [1]

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
In addition, those who are unaware of the origins of their clothing (Is it made of organic cotton? Was child labour employed? Did any communities benefit from its making?) have been subject to criticism.	<p>He wants to highlight...</p> <p><u>Nature of the problem</u></p> <p>...the <b>ethical concerns</b> surrounding choice of clothing</p> <p>... the <b>social issues</b> surrounding choice of clothing</p> <p>... the <b>complexity</b> of the problems surrounding clothing</p> <p><u>Quantity of problem</u></p> <p>... <b>the many problems</b> associated with clothing</p> <p>... the <b>many negative effects</b> from production of clothing</p> <p>Note: Answer must include the context of choice/production of clothing AND <u>the problems</u> associated with it</p>	<p>Accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clothes may have a long string of impacts to other parties (quantity)</li> <li>- Many things people need to consider about the origin of clothing before buying clothes</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are underlying issues with clothing that we are unaware of (no conclusions drawn from the questions)</li> <li>- There are possible factors/issues that we should consider when buying clothes (no nature or quantity)</li> <li>- There are potential issues with origins of clothing</li> </ul>



9. What examples does the author use to support his statement regarding fashion “masking a hidden hypocrisy” (lines 83-84)? **Use your own words as far as possible. [2]**

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
As the debate heats up, it can only get more complicated and more problematic, and <b>masks a hidden hypocrisy that exists among us all. Fashion companies that lack plus-size lines</b> are routinely criticised for their <b>lack of inclusivity</b> , with <b>empty threats</b> from consumers to <b>boycott brands</b> that do not heed their protests. <b>Millennials who have jumped on the environmental bandwagon have also made a big deal of choosing sustainable materials</b> , yet are still as <b>susceptible to fast fashion</b> as their predecessors, <b>buying cheap clothing and quickly throwing them away after a few wears</b> to make room for more.	<p>A1) Consumers say they will stop buying products from clothing companies who do not cater to people of all sizes.</p> <p>A2) but do not really do it/ but they still buy from them [1]</p> <p>B1) And millennials (necessary subject) who are vocal about being environmentally friendly.</p> <p>B2) but still indulge in consumerism</p> <p>OR</p> <p>But still purchase low-cost clothing and dispose of them soon after [1]</p> <p>Note (b): Students must either paraphrase “fast fashion”, or paraphrase with detail “buying cheap clothing and quickly throwing them away”.</p> <p>Note: Answer must demonstrate understanding of ‘hypocrisy’</p>	<p>Accepted for (B1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Young people/ youth</li> </ul> <p>Not accepted for (B1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People</li> </ul> <p>Accepted for (B2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (fast fashion) → Still do not actually change their buying habits.</li> <li>- (paraphrase with detail) → But they purchase low-priced clothing and discard them soon after</li> </ul>

10. Why does the author use the phrase “you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t” (lines 91-92)? **Use your own words as far as possible. [1]**

From passage	Suggested answer	Remarks
Ultimately, the usual refrain that “I don’t know what to wear” has never been more true today, but not in the way that you would expect. Today, when it comes to clothing choices, you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t. When every decision you make	<p>The author uses it to emphasize the fact that any <u>clothing choice</u> you make will offend someone.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The author is trying to highlight the fact that even if you try to</p>	<p>Not accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whether you wear clothes or not</li> <li>- No matter what you wear there will be critics</li> </ul> <p>Accepted:</p>



<p>invites <b>inevitable criticism</b>, you would not be alone in wishing for a return to the simple days of the hominin where our relationship with clothing was straightforward – protection from the elements, with little to no symbolic meaning.</p>	<p>make the right <u>clothing choice</u>, you can still be condemned.</p> <p>Note: Must mention context of clothing choice</p>	<p>- The author wants to show that the issue of making clothing choices is extremely complex.</p>
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11. Using material from paragraphs 5 to 7, summarise what the author has to say about the benefits of clothing to individuals and societies, and the issues associated with it.

Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

*Clothing is beneficial to individuals as it...*

TEXT	BANNED WORDS	PARAPHRASE	REMARKS
<b>Benefits of clothing to individuals and societies</b>			
A. ... mirror on the outside who they are on the inside.	Mirror Outside Inside	Helps to reflect the <b>hidden</b> identity of the person/ who they <b>really</b> are/ their <b>inner/ true/ authentic</b> self	X Show who they are
B. These visual clues not only provide a confidence boost for the wearer,	Confidence Boost	Wearer feels <b>more</b> sure of themselves/ has <b>increased</b> self-esteem/ self-worth/ <b>more</b> self-assured/ <b>more</b> affirmed in their identity	Note: Idea of 'boost' must be captured for point to be awarded.
C. but also helps others be more sensitive to their preferred identity.	Sensitive	(inferred point) Others can be <b>more</b> understanding/ respectful of the wearer ('s chosen identity)	Note: Idea of 'more' must be captured. ✓ Identity → chosen gender

D. ... <u>Uniforms</u> take away <b>class segregation</b>	Class segregation	<u>Uniforms</u> (necessary subject) removes <b>social</b> distinctions/ <b>economic</b> differences  <i>Note: As long as subject of uniforms is present in D or E, can award for both. If not present at all, both cannot be awarded.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Removes distinctions</li> <li>X Removes hierarchy</li> <li>✓ Unite people of different social status</li> </ul>
E. <u>clothing</u> as in a <u>uniform</u> takes away ... the <b>discrimination</b> that wearing our own clothes might bring.	Discrimination	<u>Uniforms</u> (necessary subject) removes bias/ treat people more equally/ prevents prejudice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Greater acceptance in society</li> <li>X Treat people fairly</li> <li>✓ Remove the chance of being ostracised</li> </ul>
F. <u>Corporations</u> too have recognised the benefits of dressing alike... to <b>enhance their professional image</b>	Enhance Professional image	<u>Companies</u> (necessary subject) <b>improve</b> how they are seen/ make themselves <b>look better</b> / <b>improve</b> their standing/status/ make them look <b>more</b> credible through the use of <u>uniforms</u>  <i>Note: As long as subject of companies AND uniforms is present in F or G, can award for both. If not present at all, both cannot be awarded.</i>	<p>Idea of 'enhance' must be captured</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Allows <u>workers</u> to improve their credibility (focus is on workers' image, not company's image)</li> </ul>
G. and to <b>reflect the values of the company</b>	Reflect Values	Show what is important to the <u>company</u> / demonstrate the beliefs/principles of the <u>company</u> / what the <u>company</u> stands for through the use of <u>uniforms</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Morals, qualities/characteristics of the company</li> <li>✓ Ideology, mottos</li> </ul>

H. a positive way to <b>project one's national identity</b> to the <b>international community</b> .	Project  National identity  International community	Demonstrate distinctiveness of one's country on a global platform/ Show who they are as a country to the world  Note: 'identity' must be unpacked	X Present their country to the world (does not unpack "national identity")  ✓ Present their country's culture/heritage/traditions to the world
I. Participants representing their countries at international events use it to <b>demonstrate patriotism</b>	Demonstrate  Patriotism	Display pride for their country	✓ Show love/loyalty/support for their country
J. Contestants' outfits are regularly seen as a way to display what is <b>most valuable</b> about their respective cultures.	Valuable	Display the <b>most</b> significant/meaningful/important/ worthwhile/treasured traits of the country	Idea of 'most' must be captured  ✓ Most unique traits
K. ... clothing has been modernised for everyday use and is a way of <b>keeping culture alive</b> .	Alive	Clothing helps one's culture to remain relevant	Allow for lift of 'culture'  ✓ Culture → heritage, tradition ✓ Preserve/ sustain heritage
L. Other people have made use of clothing to <b>call attention to social issues</b> , such as gender, politics, the environment, and so on.	Call attention  Issues	Raise awareness of problems in today's world  Note: - Answer must reflect idea of society or the world today	X Raise awareness of problems (does not reflect 'social issues')  X Tackle social problems (this is about taking action, not raising awareness)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Raise awareness of problems in <u>society</u></li> <li>✓ Raise awareness of social issues</li> </ul>
M. The powerful visual effect was a <b>unifying force</b> that <b>galvanised support</b> for the movement in Hollywood and beyond.	Unifying  Galvanised support	(inferred point) way to bring people together for a <u>cause</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rallied behind a common cause</li> </ul>
<b>Issues associated with clothing (The issues associated with clothing is that it ...)</b>			
N. it can become a <b>point of conflict</b> when outsiders don <u>traditional clothing</u> in a <u>disrespectful manner</u> .	Point of conflict	<p>When outsiders wear <u>traditional clothing</u> in a <u>disrespectful manner</u> (necessary context), it causes tension/friction/hostility</p> <p>Note: Paraphrasing context not necessary, but if they attempt, can award for language. E.g. When worn by someone outside the culture/ When people wear another culture's clothing in an insensitive/offensive way/ when clothing is culturally appropriated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ When foreigners wear traditional clothing insensitively, locals get angry</li> <li>x When outsiders do not care about the significance of/disrespect traditional clothing (must</li> </ul>	

				include outsiders wearing traditional clothes)
O. In addition, those who are <u>unaware of the origins of their clothing</u> (Is it made of organic cotton? Was child labour employed? Did any communities benefit from its making?) <b>have been subject to criticism.</b>	Subject to criticism	<u>People who are not socially conscious of their choices</u> (necessary subject) are condemned/ judged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>x Insensitive about the origins of their clothing</li><li>x Criticism → Looked down on by others</li><li>✓ Ignorant about their origins of their clothing</li></ul>	
P. Moreover, because clothing is so highly symbolic today, <b>telling others what they can or cannot wear is seen as an infringement on personal rights.</b>	Infringement  Personal	Imposing restrictions on clothing/forcing people to wear certain things is considered a violation of individual freedom/ choice.	Allow for lift of 'rights' <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>x Violation of human rights (specific meaning)</li></ul>	
Q. In this way, what you wear (or don't wear) often <b>invites unwanted commentary,</b>	Invites  Unwanted  Commentary	Wearers are often subjected to <b>uninvited/unsolicited</b> criticisms on their clothing	Idea of 'unwanted' must be captured <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Unnecessary</li></ul>	
R. and can become a <b>divisive force</b>	Divisive  Force	Can cause disharmony/ split society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Can cause segregation</li><li>✓ Can undermine unity</li></ul>	
S. In other instances, dressing in a way that is not acceptable to the majority <b>can subject the wearer to abuse...</b>	Subject  Abuse	<u>People who dress outside the norm</u> (necessary subject) can become a target of violence/ aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Dressing outside the norm can lead to the person being harmed/harassed</li></ul>	

Points	Marks
1-2	1
3-4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10-11	6
12-13	7
14+	8









**Catholic Junior College**  
**JC2 Preliminary Examination**  
**Higher 1**

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

**Paper 1**

**22 August 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name and class on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **2** printed pages including this cover page.

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Can one be optimistic given the bleak realities of today's world?
- 2 How far is it true that people today will believe anything the media presents?
- 3 'It is a mistake for education in this technological age to ignore the Arts.' To what extent do you agree with this comment?
- 4 'Sport and politics should always be kept separate.' Comment.
- 5 Assess the view that attempts to reduce inequality in your society can never be effective.
- 6 'Artificial intelligence enhances our lives.' To what extent do you agree with this view?
- 7 How far do you agree that religion is a unifying force today?
- 8 Do young people in your society have what it takes to ensure that the nation remains successful?
- 9 In a world dominated by superpowers, can small countries play a significant role on the global stage?
- 10 Evaluate the claim that the artist's only responsibility is to his art.
- 11 To what extent would you agree that city life today is exciting and vibrant?
- 12 'Freedom is not about doing whatever you want, but is about doing what is right.' Discuss.

**END OF PAPER**

**Passage 1.** *Stan Rogers highlights the problems of the modern diet.*

- 1 For most people across the world, life is getting better but diets are getting worse. This is the bittersweet dilemma of eating in our times. Our free and comfortable lifestyles are undermined by the fact that our food is killing us, not through lack of it but through its abundance – a hollow kind of abundance.
- 2 At no point in history have edible items been so easy to obtain. Yet, where humans used to live in fear of disease, now the leading cause of mortality worldwide is diet. Most of our problems with eating stem from the fact that we have not yet adapted to the new realities of plenty, either biologically or psychologically. 5
- 3 “Everything in moderation” doesn’t quite cut it in a world where the “everything” for sale in the average supermarket has become so sugary and so immoderate. This is paradoxical and sad, because good food – good in every sense, from flavour to nutrition – used to be the test by which we judged the quality of life. A good life without good food should be a logical impossibility. 10
- 4 As things stand, our culture is far too critical of the individuals who eat junk food and not critical enough of the corporations who profit from selling them. A survey of more than 300 international policymakers found that 90% of them still believed that personal motivation – or, willpower – was a very strong cause of obesity. This is absurd. It makes no sense to presume that there has been a sudden collapse in willpower across all ages and ethnic groups. What has changed most is not our collective willpower but the marketing and availability of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods. Some of these changes are happening so rapidly it is almost impossible to keep track. Sales of fast food grew by 30% worldwide from 2011 to 2016 and sales of packaged food grew by 25%. 15
- 5 Almost every country in the world has also experienced radical changes to its patterns of eating over the past five, 10 and 50 years. For a long time, nutritionists have held up the “Mediterranean diet” as a healthy model for people in all countries to follow. But recent reports from the World Health Organisation suggest that even in Spain, Italy and Crete, most children no longer eat anything like a “Mediterranean diet” rich in olive oil and fish and tomatoes. These Mediterranean children are, as of 2017, among the most overweight in Europe. In every continent, there has been a common set of changes from savoury foods to sweet ones, from meals to snacks, dinners cooked at home to meals eaten out, or takeaways. 20 25
- 6 The nutrient content of our meals is one thing that has radically changed; the psychology of eating is another. We are often told in a slightly hectoring way that we should make “better” or “smarter” food choices, yet the way we eat now is the product of vast impersonal forces that none of us asked for. The choices we make about food are largely predetermined by what are available and by the limitations of our busy lives. Many people use food as a coping mechanism to deal with feelings such as stress, boredom, anxiety, or even to prolong feelings of joy. While this may help in the short term, eating to soothe and ease our feelings often leads to regret and guilt, and can even increase the negative feelings. We are not actually coping with the problem causing the stress. Furthermore, our self-image may suffer as we gain weight. 30 35
- 7 It is becoming abundantly clear that the way most of us currently eat is not sustainable – either for the planet or for human health. Thankfully, various countries have made some headway through the provision of information and working through schools. In 2014, Ecuador passed a mandatory traffic light labeling policy for packaged foods, while voluntary labeling schemes are used in countries such as Denmark and Sweden. Peru, Uruguay, and Costa Rica have all banned “junk food” in public schools since 2012, and the UK released new school food standards in 2014, limiting fried foods and desserts, and emphasising water, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. 40
- 8 One can only hope that more countries around the world will take action to create environments in which it is easier to feed ourselves in a manner that is both healthy and joyous.

*Adapted from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/mar/16/snack-attacks-the-toxic-truth-about-the-way-we-eat>*

**Passage 2.** *Bee Wilson argues that clean eating is a flawed solution to the problems of the modern diet.*

- 1 At its simplest, clean eating is about ingesting nothing but “whole” or “unprocessed” foods. Some versions of clean eating have been vegan, while others espouse various meats and something mysteriously called “bone broth” (stock, to you and me). At first, clean eating sounded modest and even homespun: rather than counting calories, you would eat as many nutritious home-cooked substances as possible. 5
- 2 But it quickly became clear that “clean eating” was more than a diet; it was a belief system, which propagated the idea that the way most people eat is not simply fattening, but impure. Once the concept of cleanliness had entered the realm of eating, it was only a matter of time before the basic idea spread contagiously across Instagram, where fans of #eatclean could share their artfully photographed green juices and rainbow salad bowls. Among the affluent classes who already ate a healthier-than-average diet, the Instagram goddesses created a new model of dietary perfection to aim for. For the rest of the population, however, it simply placed the ideal of healthy food ever further out of reach. 10
- 3 However much the concept of clean eating has been logically refuted and publicly reviled, the thing itself shows few signs of dying. Even if you have never knowingly tried to “eat clean”, it is impossible to avoid the trend altogether, because it changed the foods available to all of us, and the way they are spoken of. Why has clean eating proved so difficult to kill off? The interesting question is not whether clean eating is nonsense, but why so many intelligent people decided to put their faith in it. 15
- 4 Clean eating is perhaps best seen as a dysfunctional response to a still more dysfunctional food supply: a dream of purity in a toxic world. To walk into a modern western supermarket is to be assailed by aisle upon aisle of salty, oily snacks and sugary cereals, of cheap, sweetened drinks and meat from animals kept in inhumane conditions. Affluence and multinational food companies replaced the hunger of earlier generations with an unwholesome banquet of sweet drinks and convenience foods that teach us from a young age to crave more of the same. Wherever this pattern of eating travelled, it brought with it dramatic rises in ill health, from allergies to cancer. 20
- 5 When mainstream diets start to sicken people, it is unsurprising that many of us should seek other ways of eating to keep ourselves safe from harm. Our collective anxiety around diet was exacerbated by a general impression that mainstream scientific advice on diet – inflated by newspaper headlines – could not be trusted. First these so-called experts tell us to avoid fat, then sugar, and all the while people get less and less healthy. What will these “experts” say next, and why should we believe them? 25
- 6 Into this atmosphere of anxiety and confusion stepped a series of gurus offering messages of wonderful simplicity and reassurance: eat this way and I will make you fresh and healthy again. However, this way of thinking is especially dangerous because it obscures the message that, in fact, small changes in diet can have a large beneficial impact. If you think you cannot be healthy unless you eat nothing but vegetables, you might miss the fact that there are substantial benefits from raising your fruit-and-veg intake from zero portions a day to just two. 30
- 7 Among its many other offences, clean eating is a series of claims about food that are all or nothing – which only serves to underline the fact that most people, as usual, are stuck with nothing. 35

*Adapted from <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/aug/11/why-we-fell-for-clean-eating>*

**END OF INSERT**



CATHOLIC JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

CANDIDATE  
NAME

CLASS

## GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

**8807/02**

**22 August 2019**  
**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use paper clips, glue or correction fluid and tape.

Answer **all** questions.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.  
At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

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This document consists of **8** printed pages.

Read the passage and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

**NOTE:** When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words and phrases from the passage.

### From Passage 1

- 1 According to the writer, what is the 'bittersweet dilemma of eating in our times' (lines 1-2)?  
.....  
..... [1]
  
- 2 What does the author mean by 'a hollow kind of abundance' (line 3)?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
..... [2]
  
- 3 In Paragraph 4, why does the author think that the survey results are 'absurd' (line 15)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**  
.....  
.....  
.....  
..... [2]
  
- 4 What does the word 'even' in Paragraph 5 (lines 23-24) suggest?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
..... [2]



- 5 In Paragraph 6, why does the author use inverted commas for the words 'better' and 'smarter' (line 28)?

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 6 In Paragraph 7, how does the author make his point about attempts at tackling unhealthy eating?

.....

..... [1]

- 7 In Paragraph 8, why does the author begin the last sentence with 'One can only hope' (line 43)?

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

### From Passage 2

- 8 In Paragraph 1, why does the author use the word 'mysteriously' (line 3)?

.....

..... [1]

- 9 According to the author in Paragraph 2, why was it apparent that clean eating was 'more than a diet' (line 6)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- ..... [2]

- Clean eating .....

**From both passages**

- 12** Stan Rogers highlights the problems of the modern diet and some solutions to combat them, while Bee Wilson offers a critical view of a particular solution to these problems.

How far do you agree with the views expressed in both passages? Support your answer with reference to your own experience and that of your society.

[illegible]

[10]

www.KiasuExamPaper.com



**1. Can one be optimistic given the bleak realities of today's world?**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Optimism vs pessimism
- Fear and change
- Reality vs perception

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS:**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- The term '**can**' expresses skepticism about whether it is possible for this optimistic outlook to endure and invites us to assess how optimism might be sustained
- The term '**given**' signals to us the condition that threatens this optimistic outlook - that is, the 'bleak realities of today'- providing the basis of why there might be such skepticism about being optimistic
- To pass, students have to make reference to the context of 'today's world'. The context of '**today's world**' situates this discussion in the context of our current times and world.

**2. Clarification of key words**

- '**one**' - An average individual in today's world. While arguments must consider various global contexts, it should eventually explain how and why an individual is directly affected by these contexts.
- '**Bleak realities**' - 'Bleak' has an extremely negative connotation, indicating that the realities of today are perceived with a certain hopelessness and helplessness. **Arguments should negotiate whether this sense of deep despair is indeed justified.**
- '**Optimistic**' - Hopeful, having a positive outlook on life. Having the stance that the realities of the world are not perceived to be as bad as they seem.

**Possible stands:**

- **No, it is impossible** to be optimistic given the bleak realities of today's world.
- **Yes, we can be optimistic / have some optimism in spite of** the bleak realities of today's world.

**Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

- 1) Would be able to address the assumptions in the question
  - a) **The question assumes that there is something wrong or problematic about the state of our world today, to the extent that it might have implications on the average individual's psychological and emotional outlook**
- 2) Stronger scripts will consistently demonstrate how the context drives their arguments and will be able to evaluate whether the context of today justifies us being optimistic.

**POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

**Reasons for Pessimism**

(-) Problems are systemic in nature and complex to address, every stakeholder in the solution equation tends to be flawed:

- Governments tend to be short-sighted or have their own political agendas such that some issues take a backseat to other priorities
- Non-governmental organisations tend to have limited resources such that their ability to intervene or provide assistance/ to mitigate the issues is limited

- Businesses and corporations are primarily profit-driven and not incentivised to protect humanity from some of the problems that we face today, in fact their goals might sometimes even contribute to the worsening of the problem

(-) Global problems have gone past the tipping point and there is little that can be done to resolve the issue (e.g. climate change, violence and conflict that have worsened/ have not abated)

(-) Society is becoming increasingly divisive and polarised. We are as a human race becoming more self-interested, choosing to be insular and unkind in our approaches. Certain recent geopolitical developments have led to rising nationalism and the prevalence of social media has resulted in echo chambers and tribalism which worsen these fault lines.

### **Reasons for Less pessimism/ Some Optimism**

(+) Although the problems that are faced within society appear to be impossible to resolve, governments, non-governmental organisations, groups within society have come up with initiatives/steps to address or mitigate these problems which give us reason to be less pessimistic. The lack of perfect actors should not paralyse us into inaction as there are always ways to make a difference.

(+) We can trust in the ingenuity and creativity of mankind to come up with solutions to address the various issues that plague our world today. Society has advanced and progressed over time as a result of our commitment to better our lives, making use of technology and tools to improve our well-being. As such, we can have a lot to hope for.

(+) In spite of apparent divisiveness, we are also at a point in human history when we have access to and enjoyment of the greatest diversity and collaborations.

### **Global issues that can be raised as examples in the discussion**

- **Divisions within society**

We live in an increasingly fractured world (socio-economic inequalities/ racial and religious divides) which has come under further pressure from populist rhetoric and rising nationalist agendas which serve to further widen the fissures within societies.

- **Emerging Technologies / Disruptions**

There is a lot of concern about the direction of technology and its impacts on our society. Increasing fear that the Fourth Industrial Revolution will lead to a further hollowing out of the jobs that can only be performed by humans which could result in widespread displacement as a result of AI and other emerging technologies.

- **Environmental Issues**

There is a perception that we are living through the worst-case scenario with greenhouse-gas emissions leaping back up in 2018 accelerating like a “speeding freight train”. With the increase in global temperatures come the increased risk of drought and increased intensity of storms and there is a fear that we face a direct existential threat from climate change.

- **Violence and Conflict**

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. Violence cuts short the lives of millions of people across the world each year, and damages the lives of millions more and is not limited by geography, race, age or income. Massacres, forced displacement of populations and political violence, are often some of the main causes of mortality.



## 2. How far is it true that people today will believe anything the media presents?

### RELEVANT CONCEPTS

- Power/authority and control/influence
- Reality/truth vs perception/distortion
- Value laden vs value free
- Rational vs emotional

### REQUIREMENTS TO PASS

#### 1. Value term requirements

- **'will'** and **'anything'**: the question suggests that everything in the media is believable and that this is an inevitable conclusion. The absolute nature of the question opens it up to challenge on the basis of alternatives/exceptions.

#### 2. Clarification of key words

- **'believe [anything]'**: clear criteria for evaluation should be set - have blind faith, be unquestioning/undoubting, accept at face value, be fully reliant on, consider trustworthy
- **'people'**: public perception of the media is the focus of the question; different groups of people and their perception of the media should be discussed (e.g. young people, people with different political affiliations, academics )
- **'the media presents'**: this can refer to the factual reporting or commentary, or even reality TV programmes, YouTube videos, in sum, any information or knowledge disseminated through different platforms, including traditional media and new media. Limiting the discussion to social media would be too narrow a scope - forms of media that can be discussed include:
  - Traditional media: print (magazines, newspapers; should not solely focus on books, and does not include brochures/pamphlets) and other forms (television, radio)
  - New media: digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies including the Internet and social media, where anyone can be both a producer and consumer of content disseminated around the world
- **'today'**: current global forces and trends should be the context in which the arguments are situated; these global forces and trends should be used to account for the current perception people have of the trust that can be placed in the media

### Possible stands:

People **believe everything** the media presents.

People **do not believe anything** the media presents.

People **mostly believe** what the media presents.

People **seldom believe** what the media presents.

### Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Discuss a range of types of media
2. Reasons are contextualised to specific and relevant global forces and trends that influence public perception of the media and its trustworthiness

### POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

#### People are more likely to believe what the media presents *today*

1. With ***increasing personalization of content on social media***, what people see in the media often conforms to their existing worldview, so confirmation bias makes it more likely that people will simply accept the information as true instead of challenging or questioning it.
  - As new media is a platform for socializing and interacting, algorithms are used to expose users to content from friends, family and groups that they like or support. This creates filter bubbles that narrow down information and perspectives to what people already accept as true or valid.

2. With ***the scourge of fake news raising widespread fears of the dangers of misinformation***, people see traditional media as an ally they can rely on a source for factual reports in their search for truth.
  - As immense reportorial and editorial effort is expended by traditional news outlets to ensure that what their readers or viewers see is factual, they are a more convenient means for readers or viewers to access credible information, as compared to the tedious fact-checking and cross-referencing they would otherwise have to do.
3. The ***digital age necessitates an evolution in the critical literacy skills*** people possess, and ***in the absence of such skills***, people are more likely to have blind faith in the information the media offers them, allowing the media to act with impunity and entrenching the culture of shoddy journalism that people unthinkingly accept at face value.
  - Apart from the basic skills of being able to differentiate between fact and opinion, and understand how language can be used to influence readers, critical literacy in the digital age requires additional skills and knowledge, including an awareness of how and why information is created, disseminated and consumed in the digital environment.
  - Exploiting the absence of such skills and knowledge, the media may be used in this post-truth world to appeal to emotions instead via catchy click-bait headlines and direct 'hard-sell' personal appeals, making it more difficult for the public to logically process and reject the information as misleading or deceptive.

#### **People are less likely to believe what the media presents today**

1. With the politicization of the media, the public's wariness of the media follows from its ***increasing distrust of the government or politicians***, making it more likely that the public will scrutinize the information the media offers instead of blindly accepting it as truth.
  - The classification of the media according to ideological lines in the United States is nothing new, but with President Trump's efforts to depose mainstream media in favour of the media he likes, his supporters and critics alike have reason to question whether media outlets are beholden to the Trump administration or its political opponents, making them suspicious of prejudiced reporting or commentary and discouraging blind faith in the media's reliability.
2. People see the media as aiding and abetting the spread of fake news, and with ***widespread fears that fake news could be weaponized*** to undermine democracy, divide society, and damage reputations, people are more likely to be suspicious of reports in the media instead of accepting them at face value.
  - The 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer found that concern over fake news caused the mainstream media to lose credibility as an authoritative source of information, and people actively chose to ignore and exclude it from their media diet, much less rely on what it presents as true and factual.



3. 'It is a mistake for education in this technological age to ignore the Arts.' To what extent do you agree with this comment?

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Continuity vs Change
- Utilitarianism/Pragmatism and idealism
- Individual vs society
- Culture and values

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS :**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- The absolute terms '**mistake**' (misguided/ wrong) and '**ignore**' (disregard/ pay no attention to) have to be addressed and students are expected to challenge this claim and evaluate the extent to which the comment is valid.
- Students should expound on the various functions of the Arts both as an end in itself (art for art's sake) and consider how the Arts is or is not as important as the Sciences for the individual, a society and its economy
- Students should evaluate the reasons that support their stand with regard to the statement and point out the positive and negative consequences of ignoring the Arts.
- To pass, students should show some awareness of the context of the technological age when discussing the value of the Arts.

**2. Clarification of Key Words**

- **Education** - The **process of facilitating learning & the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values & beliefs**. This should encompass all areas of education within the society in question - namely, the plans, initiatives and educational policies implemented within a country, especially its formal education system - the subjects that are being taught, the programmes held, as well as the way citizens view what education means to them.
- **The Arts** - Establish the parameters that encompass the various branches of creative activity, such as the Humanities (especially Literature and History), language arts, dance, drama, music, visual arts, design and new media. These are subjects that are taught at all levels in an education system.
- **Age of Technology** - A culture in which technology has affected everything in which case, the emphasis in education would be on STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) which focus explicitly on scientific concepts and skills.

**Possible stands:**

- It is wrong to ignore the Arts which are **as important as** the Sciences and Technology in education.
- It is wrong to ignore the Arts which **continue to have some value but** in the current context where the Sciences and technology are key to our progress, **the focus must still remain on/ more emphasis must still be placed on science and technology**.
- In the current context where the Sciences and Technology are key to our progress, the Arts **contribute little to the real world** and Arts in education **can be disregarded** (this is difficult to defend).

**Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

- 1) Would be able to address assumptions in the question
- The question assumes that in a modern world that focuses on technology, education systems focus on the sciences and math and so ignore the Arts. The statement implies that the Arts can be useful and is an important contributor to society even in an age where technology is perceived as key to society/progress

2) Good scripts might expound on the Arts as inherently leaning towards aestheticism (art for art's sake) and to flesh out the various benefits that the Arts can bring to the individual and its society rather than utility.

3) Better scripts would be able to contextualise the argument in terms of STEAM and how the arts should be part of the curriculum in schools and courses in institutions of higher learning.

## POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

### **An emphasis on the Arts in education is justified due to the immense benefit a student/society can derive from the development of an Arts education**

- The Arts are a fundamentally important part of culture being time honoured ways of learning, knowing and expressing and should be included in every child's education. An education focusing only on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) without the Arts would lead to an impoverished society.
- The Arts are an integral part of a well-rounded education, contributing to the overall development of a student, and should not be sacrificed in the development of STEM in education.
- People increasingly recognise the need to integrate the Arts and the Sciences for greater innovation and economic prosperity. There is a growing awareness that the arts are critical to innovation which stimulate economic growth Eg. The STEM to STEAM initiative (Championed in Rhode Island School of Design) which recognises the importance of visual learning and creative thinking

### **An emphasis on the Arts in education may not be justified due to the lack of viability against the dominantly pragmatic mindset that governs society**

- In a world where science and technology are ubiquitous and play a key role in developing solutions to solve real world problems, it is impractical for students to spend time on the Arts which contribute little to advancing society.
- To succeed, we need to be an innovative and knowledge-based society and so students need the requisite skills and scientific literacy (i.e. to recognise scientific language/ asking how good is the evidence or how valid is the underlying science when science is funded by taxpayers) to participate in this society so as not to be left behind.
- It is not economically viable to specialise in the Arts, especially in societies that do not fully support the Arts and so there is limited support from government and society with limited job opportunities in these areas



#### 4. 'Sport and politics should always be kept separate.' Comment.

##### RELEVANT CONCEPTS

- Power/authority and control/influence
- Value laden vs value free
- Empowerment vs disempowerment
- Drive for progress
- National identity and pride

##### REQUIREMENTS TO PASS

###### 1. Value Term Requirements

- '**always**': renders the statement in quotation marks an absolute statement which opens itself to challenge based on its exceptions.
- '**should**': give reasons to justify the recommendation
  - criteria for evaluation: obligation/duty, desirability, correctness
  - consider the consequences/benefits/disadvantages of the recommended action, and its alternatives, in order to present a strong case in support of, or militating against, the recommendation in the question

###### 2. Clarification of Key Words

- '**be kept separate**': this presents the recommended course of action that is controversial; candidates need to identify the extreme/absolute/problematic nature of this recommendation to demonstrate understanding of the controversy and take a stand on it.
- '**sport**': can discuss professional sport at the national and global level, or amateur/recreational sport, as long as there is room to discuss how the government and politicians can impinge on these areas/types of sport
- '**politics**': the discussion must relate to the activities of government and politicians, and/or the citizens' awareness of and participation in such matters

##### Possible Stands:

Sport and politics should **never** be kept separate.  
Sport and politics should **always** be kept separate.  
Sport and politics should **mostly** be kept separate.  
Sport and politics should **seldom** be kept separate.

##### Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Address the assumption in the question e.g. while sport and politics mix, it is possible to compartmentalize sport and politics so that they do not encroach into the other's territory
2. Wide scope of argumentation, demonstrating knowledge of the functions and impacts of sport from the perspective of different groups in society

##### POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

###### They should not be kept separate

1. It is necessary for the government to use international sporting events as a vehicle to enhance the prestige and profile of the host nation on the global stage.
  - Countries such as China and Singapore use the hosting of international sporting events at the highest level to show off their spending and organisational power.
  - Hence, political backing is required through the allocation of ministers to front and lend credibility to a country's campaign to host events of such a nature and scale, and for million-dollar budgets to be passed to build the necessary infrastructure.
2. Sport is a highly effective means the government can use to excite patriotic passions, uniting the nation amidst divisions and fault lines that threaten to rend society apart.
  - Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, elected officials urged people to get back to everyday life. In New York City, the epicenter of the attacks, America's pastime, baseball, made a comeback with the city's beloved New York Yankees baseball team



reaching the 2001 World Series, with people turning up in droves for Game 3 of the World Series just 49 days after the terror attacks and a few miles from Ground Zero.

- The government threw its weight behind this new development, with then-President George W. Bush throwing the ceremonial first pitch in a bulletproof vest at this iconic game, where anxiety and gloom momentarily gave way to the defiant display of national solidarity seen in the collective refusal to allow daily life to be interrupted, and in people around the country pulling for the New York team's symbolic victory.
3. Allowing sport and politics to mix is an important way to compel an examination of privilege that is so often blind to the injustice faced by those who have been disadvantaged by sport perpetuating prejudice and discrimination.
- Chilling parallels between racism in segregated 1930s America and in Nazi Germany were observed during the 1936 Berlin Olympics, which prompted criticism by American journalists of how black athletes were treated at home and abroad.
  - Although these Olympic Games were envisaged as a showcase for supposed Aryan superiority, some black American athletes ironically commented that they felt more welcome in Berlin than at home. This was unsurprising given that even Jesse Owens, who won four gold medals and smashed several records, was snubbed by the then-President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and even had to attend a reception held in his honour via a freight elevator as being black prevented him from entering through the main doors.
  - These Olympic Games were a critical opportunity to reflect on white privilege in America, with media coverage on how all the black Olympians came from northern universities that served mostly white students, revealing the inferiority of training equipment and facilities at traditionally black colleges in the 1930s.

#### **They should be kept separate**

1. Politicising sport by using it as a platform for protest detracts from the simple pleasures that sport can offer.
2. Politicising sport is bad for the business of sport as it repels viewers, slashing cable network subscriptions and attendance at sporting events, which in turn affects the bottom line of sporting teams and their training of talented athletes.
3. Politics and sport are powerfully evocative and come together in a potent mix that could heighten conflict and divisions in society.



**5. Assess the view that attempts to reduce inequality in your society can never be effective.**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Equality vs Equity
- Idealism vs Realism
- Meritocracy
- Individual vs Society

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Key words**

- **‘Attempts’**: Specific national policies and strategies must be identified and evaluated with regard to their degree of effectiveness (ideally past, present and future)
- **‘Can never be’** : Absolute question. It means that there are no exceptions.
  - Students will first need to prove that there are no situations where attempts to reduce inequality are effective
  - For balance, students will need to prove that **there are indeed exceptions**, whereby attempts to reduce inequality have been / somewhat effective

**2. Clarification of Key Words**

- **‘Attempts’**: on-going efforts, strategies, policies primarily by the government In Singapore, though the student may discuss secondary efforts by NGOs and other grassroots organisations
  - Irrelevant essays: no reference to structural, systemic inequalities (and the attempts/policies to address them), instead, only focuses on emotions/attitudes/beliefs (prejudice & discrimination)
- **‘Inequality’**: measured according to **equality of rights/status/opportunities/representation** in the following areas
  - Income
  - Social class
  - Political power
  - Gender
  - Disability
  - Race
  - Age
  - Inequality refers to **difference, not deprivation**
- **‘Reduce’**: to bring down to an acceptable level (either socially or politically)
  - Income: Gini coefficient can be one possible criterion
  - Social class: Greater proportion of the middle class in relation to the upper and lower classes in society (Ref to Prof Tommy Koh’s description of how Singapore has changed from an olive shaped distribution of income to one that is now pear-shaped)
  - Gender / Disability / Race / Age: Opportunities, pay, privilege
- **‘Effective’**:
  - Real and sustained progress in mitigating the problem (long-term)
  - Addresses the root cause of the problem
  - Degree / scale of the strategy / policy’s impact
  - Success of the strategy / policy



### Possible Stands:

- National policies and strategies to reduce inequality **have been effective and will continue to be effective**
- National policies and strategies have been effective so far in reducing inequality but **may be less effective in the future**
- National policies and strategies **can be effective in reducing only some types of inequality**
- Attempts to reduce the various forms of inequality **may be effective but limited in terms of sustained success as new factors arise**, making the battle an uphill task (a continuing challenge).

### Characteristics of Good Scripts:

1. Would be able to address the assumptions in the question
  - That the issues of inequality are persistent and likely to be systemic
  - The fault lines be they class / gender / age will always exist.
2. Good scripts will be able to address several types of inequality (2-3)
3. Good scripts will be able to recognise that some forms of inequality can be more effectively reduced than others
4. Good scripts will be able to identify a range of national policies and strategies to reduce different types of inequality
5. Good scripts will be able to identify specific indicators that assess whether inequality is reduced effectively and the actors / stakeholders / groups (private / public) that implement measures to reduce inequality

### **POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### **National policies and strategies to reduce socio- economic inequality: degree of effectiveness**

- Create a society of opportunities for all at every stage of life
- Provide multiple pathways for social mobility
- Greater focus now on strengthening support for Singaporeans from lower income and disadvantaged backgrounds
- Singapore has been successful in reducing income inequality through economic development, job creation, income growth, affordable quality healthcare for all, the public housing programme with generous subsidies to promote home ownership, investments in education and our people of all ages and backgrounds
- Supporting data of effectiveness of these policies:
  1. In 1980 nearly 45% of P1 cohort dropped out of sec school. Today it is less than 1%.
  2. In 1965 only 10% made it to post-secondary education. Today it is more than 90%.
  3. Home ownership: 60% in 1980, 90% today.
- Conditions that will enable effectiveness of policies to reduce socio-economic inequality and political inequality: economic freedom (free enterprise), meritocracy, corruption-free institutions (no cronyism, nepotism)
- Inequality is acceptable as long as it is due to difference in ability, not difference of opportunity. Hence , the ramping up of investment in pre-school and early childhood education that is of high quality and affordable. Massive increase in subsidies for undergraduates this year. 55,000 will benefit. The cost of medical undergrad studies has been reduced from \$25000 to \$5000 annually for students from lower income families.

#### **Obstacles in reducing socio-economic inequality further in the future:**

- As the economy prospers, the number of wealthy individuals will go up.

- As the economy re-structures, the changes in technology, automation and AI will cause a greater divide between higher-skilled and lower-skilled workers
- Harder to **further** reduce inequalities arising from discrimination according to age, race, gender and disability due to the difficulty in changing mindsets/attitudes/beliefs

**Attempts to address inequality may be effective only in the short term and do not really address the root cause**

- Laws / policies in place to address different forms of inequalities e.g employment laws regarding the re-employment of people over the legal retirement age BUT private companies may prefer to employ younger workers instead
- The government uses the education system to address the social class inequality by providing more aid in terms of early intervention. But social class inequality may persist as those who have succeeded earlier pass on their advantages (wealth, connection and so on) to their descendants.
- The issues with inequality may be addressed for the time being but new factors like changing norms (cultural, social or political) may tap into latent fault lines of gender, race and so on.

**Attempts to address inequality may be effective when it comes to rectifying the physical barriers, in terms of the design of infrastructures, but the changing of mindsets is far more challenging.**

- Regulations / changes made to the design of public infrastructures like overhead bridges, traffic crossings, access to public areas have addressed some of the existing concerns over access or usage by groups like the elderly or the physically disabled.
- But the changing of mindsets through education would take a far longer time.

**6. 'Artificial intelligence enhances our lives.' To what extent do you agree with this view?**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Ideal vs Reality
- Hope vs Fear
- Benefit vs Harm

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- **Absolute question**
  - Students must explain why AI enhances lives
  - For balance, students will need to challenge this absolute view by acknowledging situations whereby AI may be detrimental to some aspects of people's lives

**2. Clarification of key words**

- **'Artificial Intelligence'**: AI is where computer programmes **can learn** through solving problems and be able to **apply the new information** in a new context, simulating human intelligence.

Types of AI:

Strong AI: the development of a machine's intellectual capability till it is functionally equal to a human's.

Weak AI: the development of a machine's intellectual capability for a specific task.

- **'Enhances our lives': improves / increases the quality** of our lives
  - Safer
  - More convenient
  - More efficient
  - Better deployment of resources

- Maximisation of talent, ability, enjoyment

### Possible Stands:

- AI **does enhance** our lives in many ways **but we need to be aware** of its **impact on several segments** of society / the **opportunity cost** / the **unintended consequences**.
- AI **may seem like it enhances** our lives but in **actual fact, can be a danger to humanity** in the long run. AI causes a worsening/ severe deterioration in the quality of life.

### **Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

1. Should be able to address the assumption in the question
  - AI is touted as a **great help** to make lives better / easier / more secure
  - Students need to recognise that corporations and governments are **investing heavily** in AI, and its **increasing prevalence** in many aspects of our lives.
2. Good scripts would recognise the **inevitable spread** of AI and acknowledge the need to regulate it to some extent, be it how it is used or how people can be protected from its more intrusive elements
3. Identify weak AI and distinguish it from strong AI, which is more likely to pose a threat to our lives

### **POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### Artificial Intelligence enhances our lives:

- 1) AI may make us feel / be safer (personal and national) :
  - Identity recognition software can enhance security for sensitive information;
  - Vast databases give the police and armed forces greater capabilities in monitoring suspicious activities
- 2) AI may free us to do more creative / value added / higher order work:
  - AI can be taught to take over monotonous / dangerous work.
- 3) AI may help us make better use of our resources:
  - AI can optimise the allocation of resources be it energy or time in contexts like the smart home or smart city. Having more free time enables individuals to use it more productively, eg engage in more creative tasks, spend more time on hobbies, hence enhancing quality of life.
- 4) AI may give us better control of our lives
  - AI may help us track our lifestyle choices (like diet, exercise...), make recommendations, and allow us to take the necessary actions to lead healthier / more meaningful lives.

#### Artificial Intelligence (especially for strong AI) SEEMINGLY ENHANCES but is more of a threat to / has detrimental effects on society:

- 1) AI could be a danger to humanity if it progresses unabated / has loose legal regulation and therefore worsens quality of life
  - With the potential to mimic human intelligence, AI could become a threat to mankind IF governments or corporations do not control the speed of development and the areas where AI is deployed
- 2) AI could hasten the loss of privacy
  - Using data from various sources, AI could potentially go beyond recognising individuals and even predict our future behavior.
- 3) Ethical issues of using AI (e.g perpetuation of bias)
  - AI may execute decision making that is not really fair and just, that it exhibits some form of bias. This could be problematic when AI is used in areas like law enforcement or human resource management.

## 7. How far do you agree that religion is a unifying force today?

### RELEVANT CONCEPTS

- Ideal vs reality
- Self-interest vs greater good
- Unity vs division

### REQUIREMENTS TO PASS

#### 1. Value term requirements / Question Type

- Absolute term 'is': Students must assess the absolute claim that religion brings people together and evaluate the extent to which this is true.
- Students must contextualise arguments to the context of today's world to assess the extent to which religion unites or divides

#### 2. Clarification of key words

- 'Religion' - a **system** of faith and worship.
  - Students need to recognise that religion goes beyond the self and deals with a community.
  - Discuss major religions of the world with the most influential being Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism.
- 'Unifying force' - causes people to rally around a collective identity, even for people who may not have much in common.
  - Students can discuss unification at different levels e.g. society, nation, world
  - People can be unified against another group, resulting in conflict, obvious instances being conflict between different religious groups, or conflict within religious groups upholding conservative values, on the one hand, and groups espousing liberal values, on the other
- 'Today' - Students need to contextualise their arguments to the current realities of today and refer to current examples/situations; unpack the context of today
  - Many hot-button issues in our world today have some sort of ideological root in religious beliefs
  - Globalisation as a competing force of unity, there are plural societies in our world today and the "global citizen" identity can be quite strong
  - Nationalism as a competing force of unity
  - Religion has received a bad reputation, especially when there are an increasing number of "religion-related" terrorist acts reported on the media

### Possible Stands:

- Agree, religion seems to be a unifying force in the world today, precisely because it transcends the traditional ways of categorising people (i.e. race, language).
- Disagree, religion is a source of division today, especially when used as a political tool.
- (Conditional Stance) Although religion can unite people in terms of the values of peace and harmony that most religions espouse, because of the fundamental differences in beliefs **when used for purposes other than religion, or when different interpretations of the same religion arise**, religion has the power to divide as well.

### Characteristics of Good Scripts

- 1) Should be able to discuss the assumption in the question
  - Religion has the power (to unite **or** divide people), and it goes beyond mere belief in something **transcendental/ beyond the material world**
- 2) Good scripts show an appreciation for the role of religion as a unifying force, especially in today's pluralistic world.

- 3) Good scripts would extend their focus beyond conflicts between religions and the conflict religions bring to others (believers and non-believers) and refer to divisions within religions (based on differing interpretations/ liberal vs conservative)

## POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

### Religion is a unifying force:

1. Religion could even be a unifying force precisely because of the religious plurality that we experience today, **religion unites by functioning as a moral compass as well as a peacemaker for society.**
  - a. For example, inter-faith dialogues that are held, inter-religious organisations that are founded etc.
  - b. In February 2017, a Catholic nun Sister Lucy Kurien, founder of Maher NGO, founded the *Interfaith Association for Service to Humanity and Nature* in Pune, India. She defines interfaith spirituality as, "We respect and love all religions. We never put down anyone's religion, or uphold one religion to the exclusion of others. What we want is to believe and respect interfaith religion, inclusive of all faith traditions. In our community spiritual practices, we invoke our prayers to the Divine, rather than invoking any particular name or form of God to the exclusion of others."
  - c. *Especially In times of societal conflict and tension*, religious leaders and institutions are often called upon to help out as they are deemed to be highly respected and influential in the community. In the face of potentially volatile racial and religious tension and discrimination in Singapore following a string of extremist bombings in the region, many inter-faith dialogues have been set up to promote better communication, understanding and respect amongst the nation's major religions. This sought to ensure that the local community would not be vulnerable to false teachings/ prejudices, or liable to instigate violent retaliations against any group. The dialogue also sought to find common ground between the religions, thus uniting rather than dividing the nation's citizens during an otherwise volatile time.
2. Especially in our world where heterogeneity seems to be the norm within national boundaries, religion is a **unifying force that can be as powerful as nationalism** today.
3. Religion has shown to be able to **unite** rather than divide people **during times of crisis**, by providing a **common denominator called faith** through which strangers can reach out and relate to one another.
  - a. For example, in the aftermath of the 2019 Easter Bombings in Sri Lanka, Colombo, Muslims and Catholics came together to condemn the act of terror that was linked to the Islamic State group. Such an attack on religious places precisely during these religious festivals such as Easter are perpetrated to create a divide between people of various faiths and communities. However, the leaders of both the Catholic and Islamic communities have expressed their closeness with Christians everywhere, sharing their sorrows and pains, and have issued a joint statement vehemently condemning the Easter Sunday suicide bomb attacks in Sri Lanka. They also plan to send an inter-faith delegation as a gesture of their condolence and solidarity with the victims. It was reported that some mosques even offered their space to the Catholics (and on top of that, they promised to protect the Catholics during their mass by forming a human barricade) so that they could celebrate their Holy Mass in peace. This example shows how such a crisis can unite communities and pull the nation together as one as all shared in the immense grief and shock following the tragedy.

### Religion is a source of division:

1. Religion as a great adhesive force becomes a force of discord, disunity and conflict **when used to pursue a political agenda or used as a political ideology**. Religion has also been a cause of conflict when used by a group or section of society or a state for internal hegemony or foreign conquests and expansion (religion exploited for political ends).
2. Even when communities seem to be religiously homogeneous, **different interpretations** of the faith, taking the shape of sects and schools of thought, **intolerance of others within the same religion arise**.



- a. In Indonesia, which was once lauded as a beacon of “tolerant” Islam is now a battlefield for religiously charged politicking.
  - b. The increasing persecution of minorities and rise in terrorist attacks are characterised as reflective of an increasing radicalism that may eventually go the way of the Caliphate.
  - c. Conflict between the Shia and the Sunni sects of Islam
3. **There are many hot button issues across the world**, and often **religion creates schisms** not only between groups of people but within groups of people who identify with the same religion.
- a. For example, abortion, reproductive rights, gay rights, the death penalty, **all of which have ideological roots in religious beliefs** that are either archaic or have been cherry-picked to support specific points of view → Resulting in schisms even between people of the same religions (conservatives vs liberals)
  - b. Jesuits are known to be “liberal” in their Catholic teaching, and the recent spate of events (gender politics - educational institutions) in the USA highlights how even within Catholicism there can be division. A Catholic high-school run by the Jesuits (Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School) refused to terminate a member of staff who publicly declared to be in a same-sex marriage. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has removed the “Catholic” title from their college name because they were not compliant with the Catholic Church.
4. Today’s **religious extremists** - who have waged war and suicide bomb attacks on innocents, all **in the name of religion** and their twisted mission to ‘avenge’ or ‘bring glory to God’s name’ - have caused division.
- a. Examples include the recent Sri Lankan Easter Bombings.



8. **Do the young people in your society have what it takes to ensure that the nation remains successful?**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Self-Interest v. The Greater Good
- Duty/Obligation v. Freedom
- Education v. Experience
- Progress v. Status Quo/Tradition

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- **'Have what it takes'** - students must acknowledge the doubt and skepticism embedded in the question about the skills, qualities and disposition of young people in present day Singapore

**2. Clarification of key words**

- **'Young People'** - students need to focus on young people (UN defines youth as persons aged 15-24. It also accepts member states' definition as 18-30. Singapore's National Youth Council considers youth as those between 15 and 35 years old.) and identify the different traits of young people in Singapore that can contribute/hinder a nation's success
  - Sheltered, spoiled
  - Highly educated
  - Competitive
  - Highly affluent
- **'Remains'** - continues to be
  - Students must contextualise arguments to current ways in which Singapore is known for being successful.
- **'Successful'** - economically vibrant and thriving, politically stable with good international and bilateral relations i.e. a good reputation economically and politically, built upon sound moral and ethics, has garnered international acclaim in areas like science and educational standards, quality of life/standard of living

**Possible stands:**

- Yes, the young have what it takes, given that they are highly competitive and used to hard work.
- No, the young do not really have what it takes because they have grown up in a fairly sheltered environment so they lack the grit, strategy and resilience in order to ensure that Singapore remains competitive in a world that is even more volatile than before.
- A majority of the young have what it takes, but the future is uncertain.

**Characteristics of Good Scripts**

- 1) Would be able to address the assumption in the question
  - The success of a country cannot be derived from the current generation of leaders and workers.
  - The question assumes that the country is already successful.
- 2) Good scripts might argue that the definition of success in Singapore can and should change in the future and based on such a definition, the young have what it takes to ensure success.

**POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

**Yes, the young have what it takes**

1. Young people possess far more knowledge about issues because they are more highly educated and information today is more readily available. Therefore, they are well-equipped intellectually to predict challenges and suggest solutions that ensure the nation overcomes them to retain its current successes.
2. Young people today are more exposed to global issues and strongly influenced by international trends resulting in greater drive for and belief in values such as equality and freedom. As such,



their confidence and strength of belief allow them to have the courage to ensure that Singapore continues to be built and grounded on enduring values such as inclusivity and graciousness.

**No, the young do not really have what it takes:**

1. The young in Singapore merely possess theoretical knowledge and not the physical experience of hardship. As such, they lack the resilience and tenacity to overcome real challenges that will ensure that Singapore remains successful.
2. The young in Singapore are used to success and organised solutions to problems that are conceptualised by the government which might actually prevent them from being able to emotionally and mentally cope with problems or unexpected crises in the country. Thus, their sense of entitlement and the privilege of having been raised in a structured, organised forward-planning environment might prevent them from possessing the requisite flexibility, adaptability and innovativeness that help them to ensure that Singapore remains economically and politically vibrant.
3. Although the young in Singapore may be more interconnected, they are unfortunately, more apathetic and lack initiative. As such, they may not actively plan ahead and create the positive changes needed in order to maintain Singapore's current economic and social standing.



**9. In a world dominated by superpowers, can small countries play a significant role on the global stage?**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Sovereignty
- Balance of power
- Competition vs cooperation
- Hard power vs soft power

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- The question word **can** requires students to address the contexts in which it is possible for small countries to play a significant role on the global stage.
- Students would need to unpack the **condition** 'world **dominated** by superpowers' and allow those conditions to drive the arguments they are making.

**2. Clarification of Key Words**

- **'Superpowers'** - A **superpower** is a state with a dominant position characterized by its extensive ability to exert **political influence** or project power on a global scale. Such extremely powerful nations are **capable of influencing international events, and the acts and policies of less powerful nations**. This is done through the combined-means of (1) military, (2) economic, (3) technological might, and cultural strength, diplomatic and soft power influence. A country must fulfil most of the 'criteria' to qualify as a superpower.
  - Eg. USA, China, Russia, Germany
- **'Dominated'** - suggests that power (and control) is involved; these superpowers call the shots
- **'Small countries'**
  - Several indicators can be used to assess if a country is small, mainly, size of territory, size of population, GDP. (Eg. Luxembourg, Qatar, Singapore, Greenland, Hong Kong, Bahrain, Bahamas, Colombia, Cyprus, Fiji, Estonia, Guyana, Iceland, Macao, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, Qatar, Samoa, Slovenia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Swaziland, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Kuwait, Jamaica, Kosovo, Latvia)
  - However, students should recognise that these cutoffs are completely arbitrary. A small country could be one with large geographical size but it does not have influence.
- **'Significant role'** - **criteria** for assessing the impact they have on global affairs (not just politics).
  - Degree / scale of impact (level of influence)
  - Long term impact
  - Importance/value
- **'Global stage'** - world level

**Possible Stands:**

- Some small states may/do have a significant role to play on the global stage precisely because of their small size, they are able to reduce power asymmetry between states, decrease the transaction costs of diplomacy, and impose constraints on large states.
- No, small states do not have a significant role to play on the global stage, especially in today's world dominated by superpowers.

**Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

1. Good scripts are also able to unpack the meaning of small states well and go beyond the traditional idea of territorial and population size as the main criterion for classifying a state as "small".
2. Better scripts might argue that conventional wisdom about power (small states, while not completely powerless, are unlikely to achieve much of significance when faced by great power opposition) rests on resource-based and compulsory understandings of power; and that small states/countries can also have other sources of power:

- a. Derivative power: (coined by Michael Handel) states rely upon the relationship with a great power.
  - b. Collective power: involves building coalitions of supportive states, often through institutions.
  - c. Particular-intrinsic power: states rely on the assets of the small state trying to do the influencing. Small states specialize in the bases and means of these types of power, which may have unconventional compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive aspects.
3. Better scripts will recognise that despite their unique vulnerabilities (small states have different needs, adopt different foreign policies, and have a harder time achieving favourable foreign policy outcomes than large states), they use it to their advantage, and small states have some clout in international politics/ influence global affairs.

## POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION

Yes, small countries can play a significant role:

1. Successful small countries that have **gained international respect, including that of superpowers, have influence** because the world is **willing to listen to them**.
  - a. Singapore, although not a G20 member, has been invited to participate in the G20 Summits and its related processes in 2010 to 2011 and from 2013 to 2019.
  - b. Taking Singapore as an example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs administers a multimillion-dollar programme to assist other developing countries called the Singapore Cooperation Programme. Singapore does not give money to other countries because of the risk that it will be diverted. However, Singapore has been extremely generous in sharing our experience, knowledge or expertise. To date, Singapore has trained more than 100,000 officials from over 75 countries. On the global stage, at the United Nations, Singapore took the initiative to establish the Forum of Small States, consisting of 107 small countries. Singapore also took the initiative to establish the Global Governance Group, consisting of 30 small and medium economies. Our leadership of the two groups has contributed to our diplomatic power.
2. In a world dominated by superpowers, small countries with advanced economies can serve as a **good barometer of the health and functioning of the global economic system**. They are acutely exposed to the global economy, so global dynamics - often shaped and influenced by superpowers - show up cleanly and quickly in these countries.
3. In today's context where superpowers have the loudest voice, an increasing number of small countries are able to **collaborate with other small countries to amplify their voice**.
  - a. This is best exemplified by the formation of blocs and coalitions. Through strategic alliances, the world is more likely to take the views of small countries seriously because of the greater credibility they attain by joining regional bodies.
  - b. For example, Denmark's participation in the European Union (EU) allowed Denmark to take the lead in peace-building and tackling issues of the existing political and bureaucratic institutions' incompetency in dealing with post-conflict building. Denmark, a country that is highly reputed for its efficient public safety and security, now enjoys a certain legitimacy related to peace-building.
4. Although relative to the superpowers, small countries are deemed to have little to no influence in world affairs, small countries that **have or are working on developing their comparative advantage and their niche** can play a significant role in the world today, as this gives them a larger sphere of influence and hence a greater voice in world affairs.
  - a. For example, Ivory Coast has a niche in producing cocoa beans and many large economies are highly dependant on Ivory Coast for their cocoa beans. This allows Ivory Coast to establish market power and control the demand and supply of the beans.
  - b. Another example that illustrates how small nations also have the ability to build up their military capacity, enabling them to rise in times of crisis in other countries, is the Republic of Singapore Armed Forces (RSAF). The RSAF has a strong military capacity and has played a pivotal role in rescue efforts during calamities such as the Nepal earthquake. Therefore, it is conclusive that a country's size is not proportional to the influence it can have on the world because so long as a country has an abundance of resources, like a

strong labour and military capabilities, it will be able to play a significant world on the global stage.

- c. It may seem at first blush that small countries seem to have little to no influence on the global stage relative to superpowers. However, if the small country has worked hard to develop a niche that affords them a larger sphere of influence (and a niche that makes them respected on the world stage), it allows them to have a greater voice in world affairs.

No, small countries cannot play a significant role:

1. Small states do not have the clout to effect or create any change on the global arena because they **lack the military might** to reinforce decisions, and are dwarfed by large states.
2. In our current economy, small states cannot compare to large nations. Large states have stronger **labour forces** and military strength, which leads to stronger and **wealthier economies** which gives them the voice and the clout to dominate.
3. The **overpowering voices** of some superpowers completely silence out those of the small countries. This renders any international agreement as futile because large economies will always have an inherent greed to have their concerns addressed and met, rendering small economies insignificant.
  - a. An on-going example would be the South China Sea disputes.
  - b. China has been claiming areas that are deemed to be the Philippines' territory, as China has claimed that areas within the 'nine-dash line' belong to her. The United Nations Conventions on law off the Sea (UNCLOS), which sets regulations on the areas of seas which a country can claim, is practically pointless in this case because China's aggression blatantly violates the UNCLOS, and the Philippines has no say in what should be done because of China's abilities to threaten the Philippines using her military prowess. Therefore, small countries still cannot have their voices heard if large countries continue to pursue their self-interests without giving small countries a say.

**10. Evaluate the claim that the artist's only responsibility is to his art.**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Aestheticism - Art for Art's Sake
- Beauty vs Utility
- The Individual vs Society

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- **'Only'** - an absolute word that must be challenged
- **'Responsibility'**: possible conflict between the intrinsic value of art and the role that artists have as members of a society

**2. Clarification of Key Words**

- **'His art'**
  - The creation of a work of art that is the self-expression of the individual artist.
  - The arts comprise the visual, literary and performing arts, and even popular music.
- **'Responsibility'**
  - A duty to something. In this case can the artist focus only on creating artworks/be true to his own voice without taking into account the social/ethical impact of his works on society.
  - Being held accountable. Should an artist be aware of his/her role as a social commentator, social critic etc.

**Possible Stands:**

- The sole aim of an artist is self-expression through his creations. Art does not have to serve any social purpose. True art is divorced from any didactic, moral or utilitarian function.

- While the artist's main aim is self-expression, he also has a responsibility to society as a social commentator. He should bear in mind the impact that his art work may have on society. Morality and social criticism have always been necessary ingredients in all the arts.

### **Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

- Comparative evaluation of Art for Art's Sake (private role) and Art for Life's Sake (public role)
- Issues regarding the violation of censorship laws on decency and offensiveness by artists eg nudity and offensive behaviour in dramatic performances, offensive language in pop songs.
- A wide range of examples of art works from a range of art forms. These examples should include art works that have a moral or social theme eg Guernica by Pablo Picasso, war poems by Wilfred Owen, plays by William Shakespeare, "Helena" by Marco Evaristti, religious art.

## **POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **Responsibility of the artist is to his art:**

1. Art for Art's sake - Art sits outside a frame of responsibility such that Art might be seen as amoral. As such the artists' primary, if not only responsibility would be to aesthetics, focusing on self-expression, working towards original artistic creations, revolutionising his ways of creating, thinking or perceiving. The artist should seek only to create the best art that he can and not be concerned about the consequences of creating art with a particular content. His creativity should not be limited by a fear of any potential backlash to his art.

### **Responsibility to society:**

1. The artist has a duty to society to promote 'the fine and the noble' and ensure that his art not only does not have a negative impact on society, but even better society in some way. Artists work to illuminate issues that they feel strongly about so as to stimulate debate and possibly changes in various perceptions/attitudes or beliefs within society by creating new understandings or empathy through his artwork.
2. An artist needs to be responsible for his actions and the impact that his art might make on others, and with that in mind, the artist needs to be socially responsible when practicing his art. Art being an evocative medium has the power to incite and inflame emotions. Although an artist does not control the impact of his art, nevertheless the artist should insofar as it is possible, not to create art that is inflammatory.
3. Artists create a sense of community. Some local artists donate art works for auctions that benefit local causes and charities / support communities by teaching their art and craft, setting examples for young people who might be considering a career in the arts.

### **Responsibility to both his art and to society**

Artists owe their audience the truth.

**Truth to materials:** following the natural flow of whatever they are working with, allowing it to inspire the form and meaning of their work.

**Truth to themselves:** putting their passion into the work without editing it or trying to make it conform to other people's expectations.

**Intellectual truth:** artists convey their ideas without dumbing them down, making them less complex so they will be more easily understood or even censoring their views. They are responsible to their audience by giving them **the most authentic experience that can be created.**



**11. To what extent would you agree that city life today is exciting and vibrant?**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Urbanisation
- Lifestyle
- Diversity vs homogeneity/monotony
- Change

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- Identification of the **qualities of an exciting and vibrant city life today**
- Specific examples of some cities besides Singapore
- Some balance in the essay - recognition that not all cities are exciting and vibrant, assessing the extent of agreement with the question

**2. Clarification of Key Words**

- **City:** an extensive human settlement with a large population living fairly close to one another and has a sophisticated system of transport, communication, sanitation and housing. Buildings occupy between 70 and 80 % of every city.
- **Exciting:** stimulating, exhilarating, electrifying, full of action
- **Vibrant:** full of energy and life in a way that is exciting and attractive, very lively, dynamic

**Possible Stands:**

- While many contemporary cities are considered to be exciting and vibrant, there are also some cities that are deemed to be boring.
- Cities can be evaluated for their exciting and vibrant life on a sliding scale, though in general urban living is usually considered to be exciting and vibrant as opposed to life in the country or the suburbs.
- There are people who find city life today to be boring as many contemporary cities may be deemed to have similar lifestyles and architectural design. These people are likely to prefer to live in the countryside or outside cities.

**Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

- Cities can be evaluated for their exciting and vibrant life on a sliding scale
- Specific examples of a range of cities besides Singapore
- A comparison between an exciting city and a boring city.
- A comparison of cities in the past and in the present, how cities have evolved.

**POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

- **Diversity of urban population:**
  - ❖ Cities have grown bigger and more diverse since the 20<sup>th</sup> century because of migration and ease of travel compared to the past
  - ❖ **The diversity of major metropolitan areas allows urbanites to broaden their spectrum of personal and professional relationships.** Urbanites have many opportunities for learning about other cultures and discovering shared interests with someone from a different background. A social lifestyle in an urban area will expand their horizons and make interactions more meaningful.
- **Wide range of choices for things to do in cities:**
  - ❖ **a wide array of entertainment options for any day or night of the week.** Visit a museum to take in a well-known art collection or learn more about a subject that

interests you. Experience a special date night with a play at the theater. Or find tickets to your favorite band and see a live concert at the local music hall or bar.

- ❖ **Cities give residents myriad fine dining and shopping options.** Cities like Chicago, London and Paris have served as cultural melting pots for decades, bringing together different types of people and expanding ethnic restaurant options.
- ❖ **Varied sites and landmarks, distinctive city skyline** that contribute to the variety of urban living eg Sydney's Sydney Harbour, Hong Kong's Victoria Bay, Singapore's skyline in the CBD with the iconic MBS, Shanghai's the Bund.

- **Novelty: Not one day is ever the same in the city**
- **Stimulating atmosphere:** Fast pace of life, the crowded streets, the traffic, stimulating places, streets full of people and activities all contribute to the buzz of city life.
- **Vibrance of city lights:** Walking down the streets at night, the lights become more than what they are. As you look up the sparkle of office lights makes the city feel more crowded and exhilarating. Hong Kong, New York and Tokyo are famous for their neon lights, colourful billboards and advertisements in Causeway Bay, Times Square and Harajuku respectively.
- **Reasons why some cities may be boring:**
  - ❖ Unfriendly environment because there are too many people too engrossed in their own lives
  - ❖ Boring cities lack charm, character or show-stopping attractions compared to other cities. For example, Canberra, Australia's capital city, suffers in comparison to its more famous East Coast neighbors, lacking Sydney's spectacular natural beauty and Melbourne's cutting-edge cultural scene. Canberra is a quiet, pleasant place with several interesting museums, but its somewhat remote inland location, lack of walkability, and subdued nightlife make it feel rather bland.
  - ❖ **Cities considered too clean and tidy may be viewed as sterile e.g. Zurich in Switzerland and Singapore (ranked 31<sup>st</sup> among a list of 32 cities in a survey of exciting cities).**
  - ❖ Cities that have been revived ironically have been accused of being monotonous instead of being diverse. Gentrification of decaying parts of cities has been identified as creating a monotonous urban design that leads to cities appearing to be bland and boring. For example, roads are widened and straightened, old buildings are demolished leaving little variation between different parts of the city. Old cities that are exciting keep their old centres that become quaint and picturesque eg the Latin Quarter in Paris, Chinatown and Little India in Singapore, Mongkok, Cat Street in Hong Kong, the former French Concession in Shanghai.



**12. 'Freedom is not about doing whatever you want, but is about doing what is right.' Discuss.**

**RELEVANT CONCEPTS**

- Freedom of choice of speech and expression, of action
- Human rights
- The individual vs society
- Democracy vs authoritarianism
- Idealism vs utilitarianism

**REQUIREMENTS TO PASS**

**1. Value Term Requirements**

- Evaluation of the **absolute word 'not'**; awareness of the false dichotomy (freedom can consist of doing both)
- Comparative analysis of freedom of action and speech vs moral/ethical obligations and responsibilities
- Evaluation of conflict between individual freedom and the obligation to consider the greater good

**2. Clarification of Key words**

- **'Freedom'**: no restrictions placed on individuals in what they say or do
- **'Doing whatever you want'**: acting purely based on individual interest, desire
- **'Doing what is right'**: actions that follow ethical principles and benefit society or other individuals

**Possible Stands:**

- **Freedom means freedom to do something rather than freedom from interference.** Hence freedom should be our ability to choose to do what is right, for the greater good.
- **We should be free to do what we want regarding our own lives as long as our actions do not harm anyone else even if the action is not considered morally right** e.g. homosexuality as a private personal choice even though it is often still taboo in many societies. The government should not interfere and legislate in private matters.
- **You either have freedom or you do not.** There is no middle ground. Freedom is the absence of restriction. Good/Evil are not descriptors of the concept of freedom. They are subjective interpretations of the results of freedom. Currently no one is really free, what we call freedom is merely pseudo freedom.

**Characteristics of Good Scripts:**

- Extensive comparative analysis of freedom of action and speech vs moral/ethical obligations and responsibilities
- Extensive evaluation of conflict between individual freedom and the obligation to consider the greater good
- Discussion of dilemmas individuals face when they want to exercise their freedoms
- Address the assumption that ethical principles are a necessary condition to consider when individuals exercise their freedom.
- Address the assumption of a democratic framework
- Cite current examples from a range of countries

**POSSIBLE AREAS FOR DISCUSSION**

- **Conflict between the desires, needs and beliefs of an individual and the needs of society:** selfishness (doing what we want) vs selflessness (doing what is right). Freedom is not about doing whatever we want. This would result in anarchy. Freedom stands for

something greater than just the right to act however I choose—it also stands for securing to everyone an equal opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We are expected as moral agents to give up freedoms for the sake of morality, which is what you might call “free to do what is good”. Freedom comes with responsibility ie we must not infringe on the rights of others/harm others when we are exercising our freedom of choice of action.

- **Freedom is not about doing whatever is right because any restriction placed on the individual deprives him of true freedom.** Absolute vs relative freedom: **absolute freedom** (absence of restriction) vs **relative freedom** (rights do not exist in a vacuum and must be exercised considering the interests of others in society)
- **The relationship between freedom and responsibility:** The individual has the freedom to act, but it is his/her responsibility to act correctly. Freedom without responsibility is dangerous.
- **The rule of law:** Freedom entails the necessity for self-restraint in choice of action or restraint by a system of governance and the law.
- **Cultural and geopolitical factors:** Varying degrees of freedom of choice of action and speech in different cultures and societies; different ideological frameworks



**2019 CJC General Paper Preliminary Examinations**  
**Paper 2 Answer Scheme**

**From Passage 1**

1. According to the writer, what is the “bittersweet dilemma of eating in our times” (lines 1-2)? [1]

From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
For most people across the world, <b>life is getting better</b> but <b>diets are getting worse</b> .	<p>The dilemma is that for the global majority,</p> <p>a) our living standards are <b>improving</b>,</p> <p>b) but <b>the food we eat</b> is becoming <b>poorer</b> in quality/ our <b>eating habits</b> are becoming <b>poorer</b></p> <p><i>Answer should include both the ‘bitter’ and ‘sweet’ aspects of the dilemma.</i>  <i>‘This’ in ‘this is the bittersweet dilemma’ refers to the previous sentence.</i>  <i>‘better’ needs to be paraphrased</i>  <i>Acceptable lift: ‘life’ and ‘diets’</i></p> <p><i>BOD: ‘consumption habits are degrading’</i>  <i>DNA: ‘deproving’ for ‘getting worse’</i></p>

2. What does the author mean by ‘a hollow kind of abundance’ (lines 3-4)? [2]

From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
Our free and comfortable lifestyles are undermined by the fact that our food is killing us...through... <b>a hollow kind of abundance</b> .	<p>He means having</p> <p>a) an exceedingly/a <b>very large</b> quantity of food</p> <p>b) which is <b>actually meaningless</b>.</p> <p><i>Answer should be about the illusion of abundance being good vs. actually meaningless.</i>  <i>Award 1 point per mark.</i>  <i>DNA: benefit vs harm, ‘shallow meaning’ for (b)</i>  <i>Accept: ‘rich supply’ and ‘great amount’ for (a)</i></p>

3. In paragraph 4, why does the author think that the survey results are “absurd” (line 16)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
... still believed that <b>personal motivation – or, willpower</b> – was a very strong cause of obesity. This is absurd. It makes <b>no sense</b> to presume that there has been <b>a sudden collapse in willpower across all ages and ethnic groups</b> .	<p>The author finds the survey results were based on</p> <p>a) the <b>foolish/illogical</b> assumption that</p> <p>b) there was <b>an abrupt/immediate/a rapid loss/destruction of individual resolve/conviction</b></p> <p>c) <b>across every demographic</b>.</p>

	(a) only with (b) or (c) attempted = 1m (a) must be attempted for (b) or (c) to be awarded (a) + (b) + (c) = 2m
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4. What does the word 'even' in Paragraph 5 (line 24) suggest? [2]

From the Passage	Inferred
<p>For a long time, nutritionists have held up the “Mediterranean diet” as a healthy model for people in all countries to follow. But recent reports from the World Health Organisation suggest that <b>even</b> in Spain, Italy and Crete, most children no longer eat anything like a “Mediterranean diet” rich in olive oil and fish and tomatoes. These Mediterranean children are, as of 2017, among the most overweight in Europe.</p>	<p>The word ‘even’ here</p> <p>a) <u>Function</u>  <b>emphasises/shows the extent/demonstrates the extent of how widespread/prevalent</b> the epidemic of poor eating habits is, [1]</p> <p>b) <u>Context</u>  that <b>Mediterranean children, whom you expect to eat the staple healthy “Mediterranean diet”</b> and the last people you would expect to eat unhealthily, are not spared and <b>have succumbed to eating unhealthily</b>. [1]</p> <p><i>Answer must capture the idea of poor eating habits being widespread, and demonstrate the understanding that ‘even’ is an intensifier.  Point (a) must be attempted for (b) to be awarded.</i></p>

5. In Paragraph 6, why does the author use inverted commas for the words “better” and “smarter”? (line 30) [2]

From the Passage	Inferred
<p>We are often told in a slightly hectoring way that we should make “<b>better</b>” or “<b>smarter</b>” food choices, yet the way we eat now is the <b>product of vast impersonal forces</b> that none of us asked for. The choices we make about food are largely <b>predetermined</b> by what are available and by the limitations of our busy lives.</p>	<p>He does so</p> <p>a) <u>Function</u>  to convey his <b>disagreement</b> with the idea that</p> <p>b) <u>Context</u>  <b>we can actually make decisions about what we eat, when it is beyond our control.</b></p> <p><i>DNA: ‘mock’ for (a) as it is too strong.  BOD for (a): ‘doubt’  Answer must capture lack of choice for (b).</i></p>

6. In paragraph 7, how does the author make his point about attempts at tackling unhealthy eating? [1]

From the Passage	Inferred
<p>Thankfully, various countries have made some headway through the provision of information and working through schools. In 2014,</p>	<p>The author <b>lists</b> the <b>efforts</b> of <b>various</b> countries at addressing this problem.</p>

Ecuador passed a mandatory traffic light labeling policy for packaged foods, while voluntary labeling schemes are used in countries such as Denmark and Sweden. Peru, Uruguay, and Costa Rica have all banned “junk food” in public schools since 2012, and the UK released new school food standards in 2014, limiting fried foods and desserts, and emphasizing water, whole grains, fruits and vegetables.	<p><i>DNA: answers that merely lift or paraphrase the descriptions of examples, ‘thankfully’ or the author’s word choice</i></p> <p><i>Accept: ‘evidence’, ‘examples’, but it must be plural</i></p>
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7. In paragraph 8, why does the author begin the last sentence with "One can only hope" (line 45)? [2]

From the Passage	Inferred
<p><b>One can only hope</b> that <b>more</b> countries around the world <b>will take action to create environments</b> in which it is <b>easier to feed ourselves in a manner that is both healthy and joyous</b>.</p>	<p>a) <u>Function</u> The author is <b>not confident</b> that/ wants to <b>express his pessimism at the unlikely scenario</b> that</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The author <b>believes that it is unlikely</b> that [1]</p> <p>b) <u>Context</u> <b>many authorities</b> around the world will <b>implement/bother to implement policies/initiatives</b> to encourage <b>healthy eating</b>. [1]</p> <p><i>For (a), accept ‘sceptical’ but DNA the stronger word choice ‘cynical’, ‘nearly impossible’, ‘long way to go’</i> <i>For (b), accept ‘willing to/will tackle’ but DNA ‘will act on’ for lifting</i></p>

## From Passage 2

8. From Paragraph 1:

Why does the author use the word ‘mysteriously’ in line 3? [1]

From the Passage	Inferred
<p>Some versions of clean eating have been vegan, while others espouse various meats and <b>something mysteriously called “bone broth” (stock, to you and me)</b>.</p>	<p>a) <u>Function</u> She is <b>disapproving/critical</b> of the</p> <p>AND</p> <p>b) <u>Context</u> esoteric / unusual names/ labels associated with clean eating.</p> <p>OR</p>

	<p>a) <u>Function</u> She finds it <b>dubious/ridiculous</b> that</p> <p>OR</p> <p>She is <b>mocking</b> those who call it 'bone broth' as</p> <p>AND</p> <p>b) <u>Context</u> these names make the foods sound healthier than they actually are.</p>
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9. From Paragraph 2:

According to the author, why was it apparent that clean eating was 'more than a diet' (line 6)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
Clean eating was <b>a belief system</b>	(a) Clean eating was <b>an ideology/ a set of principles/ values</b>
which <b>propagated</b> the <b>idea</b>	(b) which <b>spread/ promulgated/ promoted</b> the <b>notion/ concept</b> <i>DNA: belief for idea</i> <i>Accept 'disseminated'</i>
that the way most people eat is <b>not simply fattening</b> ,	(c) that most people's diets are <b>not merely high in calories/ likely to make them overweight</b> , <i>DNA: make them fat (lifted) /unhealthy (too vague)</i>
<b>but impure.</b>	(d) <b>but tainted/ polluted/ unclean/ the wrong way to eat</b> <i>Award for any paraphrase that suggests that current ideologies of eating are under attack</i> <i>DNA: detrimental/ to health [pt. (c)]</i> <i>Any 2 points for 1 mark</i>

10. From Paragraph 2:

What contrasts does the author make in lines 10-13 about those who eat healthily and those who do not? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
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<p>Among the <b>affluent</b> classes who already ate a healthier-than-average diet, the <b>Instagram goddesses</b> created a new model of dietary <b>perfection</b> to aim for. For the <b>rest</b> of the population, however, it simply placed the ideal of healthy food <b>ever further out of reach</b>.</p>	<p>(a) <u>Concept: <b>Financial accessibility</b> of healthy eating</u></p> <p>Those who can afford to eat more healthy diets are more well-off and belong to an upper class that is not accessible by the majority of the people. [1]</p> <p><i>Answer must capture affordability, not just the amount of wealth people have.</i></p>
	<p>(b) <u>Concept: Use of <b>social media</b> to create and popularise ideals about healthy eating</u></p> <p>Those who eat healthy food have the ability to create/define and popularise the ideals of healthy eating, but those who are not eating healthily/ not wealthy/ not social media influencers are incapable of creating such ideals.</p> <p><i>DNA answers about people sharing what they eat.</i></p>
	<p>(c) <u>Concept: <b>Attainability</b> of the ideals</u></p> <p>Those who eat healthy food can aspire towards achieving the ideals of healthy eating. But these ideals are increasingly unattainable for the masses.</p> <p><i>Answer must mention ideals.</i> <i>Any 2 points for 2 marks.</i></p>

**Students are required to pair the points based on concept/area of comparison.**

11. Using material from Paragraphs 3 to 5 only, summarise what the author has to say about the reasons behind the popularity of clean eating. [8]

Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible.

Clean eating.....

Pt	From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrase
Paragraph 3		
A	clean eating shows <b>few signs of dying</b>	Clean eating is <b>unlikely to wane/ lose prominence/ is likely to persist</b> <i>Answer must capture a sense of likelihood or unlikelihood.</i>
B	<b>impossible</b> to <b>avoid</b> the trend	It would be <b>very difficult not to follow/</b> go along with the fad <i>Accept: 'ignore'</i>



C1	because it <b>changed</b> the foods <b>available</b> to all of us	as it <b>transformed</b> the foods that we have <b>access</b> to <i>DNA: 'differed'</i>
C2	and the <b>way they are spoken of</b>	and <b>the manner</b> in which people <b>discuss</b> food <i>Answer must capture the act of speaking about these foods. Accept: 'described', 'mentioned' DNA: 'public perception/attitude/impressions'</i>
D	so many <b>intelligent</b> people decided to <b>put their faith in it</b>	Numerous <b>smart/ clever people</b> chose to <b>believe in it</b> . <i>Answer <u>must</u> contain the quantitative phrase 'so many', especially since it is intensified ('so'). 'So many' is an acceptable lift. DNA: 'intellectuals', 'academics' (too specific in circling out a specific group in society)</i>
<b>Paragraph 4</b>		
E	dysfunctional <b>response</b> to a still more <b>dysfunctional</b> food supply	<b>answer/solution/reaction</b> to a <b>flawed/broken</b> food supply
F	<b>dream of purity</b> in a <b>toxic</b> world	<b>fantasy/delusion/illusion/imagination</b> of <b>cleanliness</b> in a <b>harmful/noxious/pernicious/lethal</b> environment
G	<b>assailed</b> by aisle upon aisle of unhealthy food	<b>overwhelmed/confronted with</b> rows of unhealthy food <i>Accept: 'inundated by'</i>
<b>Paragraph 5</b>		
H	When <b>mainstream</b> diets start to <b>sicken</b> people	When <b>common/dominant/average</b> food/meals begin to <b>afflict/nauseate/disgust/repulse</b> people/ <b>make them fall ill</b> <i>Accept: 'standard daily food intake' DNA: 'infect' as a paraphrase for 'sickens'.</i>
I1	It is <b>unsurprising</b> that	It is <b>to be expected/expected</b> that <i>Award this point only if H is attempted.</i>
I2	many of us should <b>seek other ways</b>	<b>we look for/explore/find/follow/discover/pursue alternatives</b>
I3	to keep ourselves <b>safe from harm</b>	To <b>protect/secure</b> ourselves from <b>danger/risks</b> <i>DNA: 'to remain healthy', 'to prevent infections' Accept: 'to prevent illnesses'</i>

J1	Our <b>collective anxiety</b> around diet	Our <b>shared/mutual apprehension/misgivings/concerns/mistrust/disquiet/nervousness/jitters</b> about what we eat/our meals
J2	was <b>exacerbated</b> by	was <b>aggravated/provoked/intensified/heightened/inflamed/ made worse</b> by
J3	the impression that mainstream <b>scientific advice</b> on diet	<b>empirical/objective/experimental guidance/help/instruction/recommendation/proposal/instruction</b> on our meals/what we eat
J4	<b>inflated</b> by newspaper <b>headlines</b>	<b>sensationalized/magnified/overblown/exaggerated</b> by media <b>titles/captions</b> <i>Answer must capture the deliberate placement of the 'scientific advice', because headlines serve a specific function</i>
J5	<b>could not be trusted</b>	that is <b>deceitful/dishonest/unreliable/false/dubious</b> <i>Answer must capture the issue with the credibility of the source. Accept: 'could not be believed' DNA: 'stopped believing in them' (focuses on the reaction of the people, rather than the issue with the source)</i>
K1	<b>First...</b> What will these "experts" <b>say next</b> ,	Experts make <b>a series of claims</b> about diet
K2	these so-called experts <b>tell us to avoid fat, then sugar, and all the while people get less and less healthy.</b>	that may <b>keep changing/ be confusing/ not be helpful</b>
K3	and <b>why</b> should we <b>believe</b> them?	and therefore the <b>public's distrust</b> will <b>persist/</b> there is <b>no point</b> in trusting them  <i>The author implies that the experts will continue to make these claims (as in K1)</i>

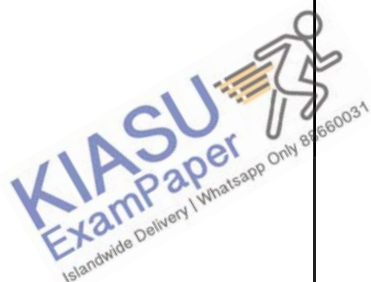
No. of points = 20

Points	1-2	3-4	5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14 or more
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

12. Stan Rogers highlights the problems of the modern diet and some solutions to combat them, while Bee Wilson offers a critical view of a particular solution to these problems. How far do you agree with the views expressed in both passages? Support your answer with reference to your own experience and that of your society. [10]

Passage 1: The problems of the modern diet and some solutions to combat them			
Para	Main Claim	Largely Agree (Contextual alignment)	Largely Disagree (Contextual misalignment or logical flaw -- over-generalisation/ sweeping statement, flawed assumption, bias)
2	<p>(Today,) the leading cause of mortality worldwide is diet.</p> <p>At no point in history have edible items been so easy to obtain.</p> <p>Most of our problems with eating stem from the fact that we have not yet adapted to the new realities of plenty, either biologically or psychologically.</p>	<p>[EV] It is true that many Singaporeans may have succumbed to the ready availability of an abundance of edible food items, due to the convenience that they offer. Singaporeans' preference for convenience over nutritional value in their dietary habits, exacerbated by a lack of physical exercise, is a cause for concern.</p> <p>[EX] According to the National Nutrition Survey 2018, Singaporeans' high sugar and salt intake needs to be addressed. Singaporeans' total sugar intake has increased to 60g in 2018, from 59g in 2010, contributing to about 10 per cent of total energy intake.</p> <p>Singaporeans are consuming less sugar from drinks, but more from food, for example, confectionery and desserts. Nonetheless, pre-packaged sugar-sweetened drinks remain the single largest source of sugar in the diet, and more needs to be done to reduce sugar consumption from this source.</p>	<p>[EV] This claim may not be true in the context of Singapore, as the leading cause of death in Singapore is cancer, which results not only from unhealthy diets but from numerous other factors as well, including genetics, stress and environmental factors. Compared with diet, these other factors could play a bigger role in Singaporeans dying from cancer.</p> <p>[EX] Based on 2017 figures by the Ministry of Health, 29% of total deaths in Singapore were attributed to cancer, as opposed to 18.5% attributed to heart disease.</p> <p>[EV] The writer's attribution of mortality to unhealthy eating seems rather simplistic, as he has not considered the other factors that contribute to mortality.</p> <p>[EV] In addition, it is not true that Singaporeans have not been able to adapt, mentally or physically, to the ready and abundant supply of food. Singaporeans are pragmatic and want to live well. They have become more health-conscious in recent years, possibly due to the effectiveness of various campaigns by the</p>

		<p>In addition, Singaporeans are consuming too much salt, with 90 per cent exceeding the recommended amount of 5g per day. The average daily salt intake was 9g in 2018.</p> <p>The survey also noted that palates have shifted towards richer, sweeter and saltier foods, [EV] which suggests that Singaporeans are still adjusting to the realities of plenty. [EV] The ready availability and plentiful supply of desserts, sweetened drinks and inexpensive snacks that are high in salt, is likely to have contributed to this trend.</p>	<p>Health Promotion Board to encourage Singaporeans to eat more healthily and exercise more regularly. Singaporeans have shown the ability to adapt, by ensuring that the nutritional value of their diets has improved, without compromising taste.</p> <p>[EX] According to the National Nutrition Survey 2018, Singaporeans' dietary habits have shown improvement over an eight-year period:</p> <p>Singaporeans are consuming fewer calories, with the average daily energy intake dropping five per cent from 2,600kcal in 2010 to 2,470kcal in 2018, although this is still higher than in 2004. The Singaporean diet has also shifted towards one that is lower in carbohydrates. The overall diet composition is in line with international guidelines.</p> <p>Singaporeans are also consuming better-quality carbohydrates, with a shift from refined to unrefined carbohydrates. Between 2010 and 2018, the proportion of unrefined carbohydrates as a proportion of total carbohydrates went up by three percentage points, from 14% to 17%. This was largely the result of increased consumption of wholegrain, as well as fruit and vegetables. This shift is corroborated by market trends, where sales of wholegrain rice and bread, as well as fruit and vegetables have been on the rise. While the shift to</p>
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			<p>unrefined carbohydrates is encouraging, there is room for further improvement.</p> <p>Similarly, the dietary quality of fats in the Singaporean diet has improved, with unsaturated fat displacing saturated fat. In fact, saturated fat as a proportion of total fat decreased by two percentage points in 2018 when compared to 2010, from 38% to 36%.</p> <p>The survey noted that on the whole, Singaporeans are eating less and diet quality has improved.</p>
3	<p>“Everything in moderation” doesn’t quite cut it in a world where the “everything” for sale in the average supermarket has become so sugary and so immoderate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literally speaking, Singapore’s supermarkets do reflect the author’s critique considerably with the widespread use of sugar from candy and sauces to coffee and tea, and excessive in frozen or ready-to-eat meals.</li> <li>• Even many of the seemingly ‘healthier’ foods are guilty (think high-calorie bliss balls made of dates, honey, nuts, <i>and</i> coconut oil, and vegan, gluten-free ‘sinful’ chocolate cake).</li> <li>• Perhaps due to our <b>tastes, high stress</b> levels of working in one of the world’s richest economies, and <b>deceptive advertising</b> by ‘clean eating’ companies</li> <li>• But it largely has to do with our <b>culture</b> too, where our sauce and marination-heavy foods serve a crucial social and economic function of bonding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thankfully, moderate eating in Singapore <b>is possible</b>. The Singapore government is cautious of the likelihood that if left on its own, the supermarket business here can be dominated by existing sweet-foods giants such as Nestle and Unilever.</li> <li>• In fact, intervention started in the 1990s with the Healthier Choice Symbol for healthier foods in the supermarket.</li> <li>• It also came in the form of restraining hawker centres in their use of sugar and other tasty ingredients that become unhealthy when overeaten, such as salt and oil.</li> <li>• Perhaps this is because of our great need for a healthy workforce where people is our largest viable resource,</li> <li>• and also because of the increasingly sedentary lifestyles that we started adopting, as we grew in wealth as a first-world country.</li> </ul>

		<p>friends and families together and inviting tourists to this 'food paradise'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As much as this is undesirable, the truth is that eating moderately is generally difficult in Singapore.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOH and HPB's recent <b>War on Diabetes</b>, the second leading cause of ill health in Singapore, shows our faithful commitment to this, and also shows how moderate eating is possible, because we have the government's use of its resources and authority to intervene.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Our culture is far too critical of the individuals who eat junk food and not critical enough of the corporations who profit from selling them.</p> <p>Rephrase: We should be more disapproving of the businesses that profit from selling junk food, rather than of those who consume junk food, which is the norm.</p>	<p>[EV] The practice of fat-shaming, or commenting on others' dietary preferences, is gaining ground among Singaporeans. However, not much discussion or questions have been raised about the effect that sales and marketing campaigns of major F&amp;B companies have on the eating habits of Singaporeans.</p> <p>[EV] Most Singaporeans, as end-consumers, may not be cognisant of the sales and marketing strategies and tactics adopted by companies to increase the sales of their products, healthy and unhealthy. The average consumer is drawn by the hype and perceived benefits/pleasure obtained from consuming the food and do not consider how these strategies are cultivating their eating habits and choices.</p> <p>[EX] Despite the health advisories put out by the Health Promotion Board, the attractiveness of unhealthy food options like bubble tea stores and deep fried food shows no signs of abating among Singaporeans. New outlets by fried chicken chain, Jollibee; new</p>	<p>[EV] The need to be more aware of the kind of food we eat and how much we consume of that has become increasingly important for health-conscious Singaporeans. Rather than take jabs at people who indulge in junk food, Singaporeans are more likely to be aware of the sales and marketing tactics adopted by companies to drive sales.</p> <p>[EX] Singapore's obesity rate in 2012 was one of the highest in the region with one out of five persons being obese. As a result, 14 of the biggest food and drinks companies operating in Singapore pledged to only advertise to children under 12 years of age products that "meet agreed nutritional criteria based on accepted scientific evidence or applicable national and international dietary guidelines" in October 2012. The companies – among them Coca-Cola, chocolate makers Ferrero and Mars, General Mills, Kellogg's, McDonald's, Nestlé and Unilever – also committed not to promote their products in primary schools unless requested to by, or agreed with, the schools for educational purposes or to "promote active, healthy living".</p>



		<p>brown sugar bubble tea joints and promotional menu items by Old Chang Kee and McDonalds draw in the crowds on a daily basis. In 2018, fast food outlets recorded an increase of 10.8% in sales over the previous year.</p>	<a href="https://www.ft.com/content/64391ed6-20d2-11e2-9720-00144feabdc0">https://www.ft.com/content/64391ed6-20d2-11e2-9720-00144feabdc0</a>
6	<p>We are often told in a slightly hectoring way that we should make “better” or “smarter” food choices, yet the way we eat now is the product of vast impersonal forces that none of us asked for.</p>	<p>In PM Lee’s recent rally speech, we have been advised to eat more healthily and drink less sugary drinks, to combat rising diabetes rates in Singapore. However, this is easier said than done, especially with the rise of a few enticing but unhealthy options lying in our midst. One of them, it has to be said, are the food apps - such as Grab Food, Food Panda and Deliveroo - which not only offer the much needed convenience we crave for (our busy work life demands it) but also mostly offer unhealthy food (and it does not help that these usually are the ones that come discounted too, which entices us even more). Let us not forget the many Kopitiam found in every district and mall, which offer affordable but oily and sugary foods for the average, thrifty Singaporean trying to save up so as to live in this high-cost country. Granted, although we do have healthy segments in supermarkets such as Cold Storage, and healthier food options like Salad Stop and A Poke Theory, more thrifty Singaporeans are mostly deterred from visiting these aisles and shops</p>	<p>Though Singapore is a haven and food paradise, known for having a myriad of foods that come from many different cultures, some of which are unhealthy to say the least - think char kway teow and laksa - Singaporeans generally are strong-willed and very careful not to overstep the boundary of eating ‘comfort foods’, or at least not too much them. And this is due to a few reasons. Firstly, we have a government (PAP) who actively promotes not only healthy eating (think PM Lee’s recent rally speech warning against our rising diabetes rates) but also actively reaches out to Kopitiam owners and stalls to sell healthier options that offer more vegetables and less salt (we see labels of these sort in all stalls); we are after all rather obedient citizens, living under an arguably paternalistic government, so it is within our nature to comply. Secondly, there has also been a rising trend to be healthy (rising yoga and spin classes are testament to that) and this ideal has permeated into much of our eating psyche as well as the food chains in Singapore - we have countless fruit stores, shops like Salad Stop and A Poke Theory, that offer that healthier</p>



		<p>because of their priciness. Al in all, I would say that I largely agree with the author's argument as I find it largely true and applicable in Singapore.</p>	<p>alternative, cashing in on this new trend. And though these pricier but healthier options might deter some of the more thrifty Singaporean, most are well-to-do enough to afford them. Plus, there are always the cheaper but healthier Kopitiam options I mentioned before which these aforementioned people do visit. So, all in all, I would say that I largely disagree with the author's argument as I find it largely untrue and inapplicable to my society, as we have an active government that works against unhealthy eating by laying out certain choices for us to take, and a society that is wealthy and health-conscious enough to follow it.</p>
7	<p>It is becoming abundantly clear that the way most of us currently eat is not sustainable – either for the planet or for human health.</p> <p>Thankfully, some cities and countries have taken steps to combat this problem.</p>	<p>EX: Despite their lower nutritional value and higher caloric intake, fast food is a quick and convenient option for Singaporeans looking for a fuss-free meal, made even easier by the widespread availability of fast food joints.</p> <p>EX: The country's obsession with the unhealthy, high-sugar content bubble tea; HeyTea and Chicha San Chen's first stores outside of China and Taiwan were in Singapore. Despite the over-saturation of bubble tea shops, Singaporeans were willing to queue hours for this</p> <p>EX/EV: Culture of excess: over-consumption of food has led to extremely high levels of food waste (23% of all waste in Singapore),</p>	<p>EX: There is an increasing popularity of healthier food choices, as seen in the popularity of health foods such as quinoa, chia seeds, acai bowls, kale and salads... Shops offering these healthier options are often trendy and popular amongst the youth, such as Boost, Salad Stop, Haakon.</p> <p>EV: Singaporeans are very exposed to and influenced by trends overseas, especially those in the Western cultures. With the increased focus on sustainability worldwide, especially focusing on the impact of our actions on the environment, Singaporeans have jumped on the bandwagon and are also paying more attention to these matters.</p>

		<p>which has even prompted an NEA initiative - Year Towards Zero Waste campaign that aims to reduce food wastage locally</p> <p>EV: Although some health fads are popular in Singapore, most Singaporeans see their diet choices as a highly personal matter that is influenced more by their taste preferences rather than determined by its impact on the world. As foodies at heart, Singaporeans tend to prioritise taste above all other factors</p>	
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Passage 2: A critical view of clean eating as a solution to the modern diet			
Para	Main Claim	Largely Agree (Contextual alignment)	Largely Disagree (Contextual misalignment or logical flaw -- over-generalisation/ sweeping statement, flawed assumption, bias)
1 & 2	<p>At its simplest, clean eating is about ingesting nothing but “whole” or “unprocessed” foods. But it quickly became clear that “clean eating” was more than a diet; it was a belief system, which propagated the idea that the way most people eat is not simply fattening, but impure.</p> <p>Main idea: Clean eating became <b>an ideology</b> of eating <b>pure</b> food instead of <b>unprocessed/wholemeal</b> or fattening food.</p>	<p>[EV] In recent years, Singaporeans are becoming more concerned about the source of their food and whether it was free from pesticides and additives in addition to consuming the wholegrain option if available. The increasing popularity of organic and clean food soon overshadowed the emphasis on eating a diet that consists of more wholegrains, vegetables and fruits.</p> <p>[EX] Oh my goodness!, a Singapore company that makes healthy food more readily available to</p>	<p>[EV] The Health Promotion Board (HPB) in Singapore has been instrumental in persuading and changing the eating habits of Singaporeans, especially when almost 60% of the population have one to two meals at a food court or restaurant instead of a home-cooked meal. Clean eating, promoted by HPB, was to reduce the amount of salt, saturated fats and oils in the food sold in food courts and hawker centres in Singapore.</p> <p>[EX] All eating establishments in Singapore carry a hygiene rating, indicating the food handling and preparation standards of the</p>

		<p>the public, has a food stall at the NTUC Food Fare in Clifford Centre selling dishes like paleo beef jerky and frozen acai tubs. NTUC Fairprice, a large supermarket chain in Singapore, now stocks more than 800 organic items in their stores, an increase from the 200 items in 1998.</p> <p><a href="https://www.herworld.com/lifestyle/dining/eat-clean-healthy-restaurants-food-dining-singapore">https://www.herworld.com/lifestyle/dining/eat-clean-healthy-restaurants-food-dining-singapore</a></p>	<p>establishment. In addition, HPB encourages all F&amp;B companies to provide healthier meals to their customers through the Healthier Dining Programme, an initiative that promotes lower calorie meals, using whole grains and healthier cooking oil in their food preparation.</p> <p><a href="https://www.hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/healthier-dining-programme">https://www.hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/healthier-dining-programme</a></p>
2	<p>The affluent classes who already ate a healthier-than-average diet, the Instagram goddesses created a new model of dietary perfection to aim for. For the rest of the population, however, it simply placed the ideal of healthy food ever further out of reach.</p> <p>Main idea: The <b>rich</b> proffered <b>novel standards or their own interpretations</b> of what clean eating is that proved to be <b>too expensive for most people</b>.</p>	<p>[EV] The wealthy in Singapore are generally more educated about the importance of a healthy diet, and have the means to eat more healthily, compared with their less affluent counterparts.</p> <p>[EX] They enjoy wholesome, home-cooked meals prepared by their domestic helpers and are less likely to eat at hawker centres or coffeeshops as frequently as the average Singaporean, for whom quick, inexpensive and often oily and salty meals are not only the more convenient option, but the only option during the work week.</p>	<p>[EV] This claim is not particularly relevant to Singapore. The affluent classes' influence on Instagram extends more to fashion (particularly luxury bags and shoes) than food (of the mainstream, unhealthy variety), let alone ideals of healthy food.</p> <p>[EX] Wealthy Instagram goddesses like Calista Cuaca, Kim Lim and Arissa Cheo have made waves on Instagram not for their ideals on healthy food, but the size and range of their glamorous wardrobes.</p> <p>[EX] Popular food bloggers like Seth Lui, Brad Lau and Leslie Tay have influenced the public's taste in good food, but not clean eating.</p> <p>[EV] The posh ideals of clean eating have not really made an impact on social media in Singapore, probably because Singaporeans are aware that clean eating does not have to be expensive.</p>
3	<p>It is impossible to avoid the trend altogether, because it changed the foods available to all of us, and the way they are spoken of... why so many</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With our deep connectedness to the rest of the world, clean eating has had a similar effect on Singaporeans,</li> </ul>	<p>[can be paired with Passage A, Para 3]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perhaps it is a guilty blessing in disguise that Singapore has many</li> </ul>

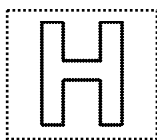
	<p>intelligent people decided to put their faith in it.</p> <p>Main idea: <b>No way of escaping or opting out</b> of the prevailing forces of clean eating - a movement which may have been misappropriated or perverted by the rich and intelligentsia/elite.</p>	<p>especially through the fitspo 'fitness inspiration' movement on Instagram.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By posting advice, motivation and success stories on what to eat (or do) to lose weight or stay healthy, some of the Instagram users have gained influencer status and reaped personal gain through sponsorships and personal coaching. There is clear personal benefit in this.</li> <li>• However, there has to be people willing to give up their money to these fitspo influencers as well. The popularity of fitspo in Singapore shows the perennial human desire to look and feel good, and perhaps also as a way to control one's future health in a country where treatment and cures for major illnesses often exceed what the average Singapore can afford.</li> </ul>	<p>defenses against the onslaught of clean-eating - both institutional and ground-up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For a young country like Singapore, food has become <b>a major distinctive of our national identity</b> and serves the <b>political function</b> of unifying a generation increasingly sceptical of government propaganda, and the <b>economic function</b> of tourism. Even Crazy Rich Asians had to have an opening scene about our satay and oyster omelette at Newton Hawker Centre!</li> <li>• This year, our government is submitting a request for our hawker culture to be recognised as <b>UNESCO World Heritage</b> - this cements our vanguard against clean eating.</li> <li>• As for the average and richer/smarter-than-average Singaporean, food is a <b>national pastime</b> - not because of the healthy sort of food, but because of its taste - and that often means lots of fats, salt, and sugar. It is how we bond and explains for the persistent success of Italian coffees and desserts despite their high fat and sugar content. It also explains why our char siew rice, Hokkien mee, fried chicken, prata...remain a staple in malls and hawker centres.</li> <li>• For these reasons, it is difficult to see how clean eating has actually prevailed in Singapore.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Dysfunctional response to a still more dysfunctional food supply: a dream of purity in a toxic world.</p>	<p>Even if we can say that clean eating has been taken up by some Singaporeans, as seen in the growing number</p>	<p>Even though clean eating in a country, such as Singapore, where 'toxic' foods laden with oil, lard, salt and sugars, is a difficult thing to achieve, it is</p>

	<p>Main idea: Clean eating is a <b>flawed reaction</b> to the kind of unwholesome and sugary foods that are pushed to us by profit-driven companies.</p>	<p>of foodstalls at Kopitiams that offer 'healthier' options - such as brown rice, less salt and more vegetables - and the rising trend of clean eating cafes such as A Poke Theory, they are in truth few and far between. This is because we are constantly tempted, in our food paradise, by 'toxic' food all around us. One need only to look at the majority of the local dishes - such as 'rojak', 'satay', 'bak cho mee' and 'nasi lemak', all of which incidentally not only contain high salt and carbohydrates content, and offer little nutrients to our diet, but are also very cheap relative to the healthier options aforementioned - to understand why the author's claim is mostly applicable to Singapore. And it is not something that can easily be removed as we have mostly grown up eating these foods, and are in fact picky about how tasty they are - often seen in the phenomenon of comparing reviews of which stall offers the tastier, 'more flavourful' local dishes, which obviously is laden with MSG. And we care very little for how unhealthy they are because the majority of us, as Minister Indranee Rajah rightly noted, are living in an era of risky inequality where we are experiencing a huge gap between the rich</p>	<p>inaccurate to exaggerate and conflate to such a dream as being dysfunctional. In fact, the persistent efforts put in by the government and people to create healthier eating lifestyles have all yielded promising results; the majority of Singaporeans have actually joined the clean eating bandwagon. There has been a growing number of foodstalls at Kopitiams that offer 'healthier' options - such as brown rice, less salt and more vegetables - and the rising trend of clean eating cafes such as A Poke Theory to see that this is far from a 'dysfunctional' idea, even though, admittedly, we have that 'dysfunctional food supply' of unhealthy options too - think the unhealthy contents in our staple and national dishes such as 'rojak', 'satay' and 'nasi lemak'. This is largely attributed to the government's efforts to ensure a nation-wide effort (starting from the Kopitiams to individual eating choices) as outlined by PM Lee in his rally speech against diabetes, to the globalised, westernised and, the informed Singaporean who always seeks ways to improve their lifestyle (thanks to our ability to tap into the Internet and learn continually of better ways of eating).</p>
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		and the not so rich - which explains why most would rather be thrifty and eat the tastier and cheaper foods found in hawkers and Kopitiams.	
5	<p>This way of thinking (messages of wonderful simplicity and reassurance) is especially dangerous because it obscures the message that, in fact, small changes in diet can have a large beneficial impact.</p> <p>Main idea: Advice given by lifestyle gurus is very <b>misleading</b> and <b>prevents people from realising</b> that all it takes to eat healthily and better is <b>simply to adjust our current diet to include more fruits and vegetables</b>.</p>	<p>EX: There has been a bombardment of advice on healthy living and healthy eating in Singapore society, with campaigns such as the Eat, Drink, Shop Healthy challenge that aims to change Singaporeans' eating patterns right down to the grocery shopping stage, by enticing them with rewards for making healthier choices.</p> <p>EV: The over-abundance of advice on how to live and eat healthily thereby crowds out the message that even small changes to our lifestyles can make a difference.</p> <p>EV: Moreover, while the majority of Singaporeans are not into clean eating, there is increasing glorification of veganism, as a healthier and more ethical diet.</p>	<p>EX: The Health Promotion Board is one of the main sources of advice on healthy eating (e.g. with campaigns to encourage the intake of two servings of fruit and vegetables, asking for less oily/salty/sweet options at hawker centres) in Singapore. Most of the campaigns have focused on making small changes to one's diet rather than an overhaul of how Singaporeans eat.</p> <p>EX: Healthier Choice Symbol</p> <p>EV: While a minority of Singaporeans make drastic changes to their diet for health or religious reasons, most Singaporeans have remain foodies who have not taken to clean eating. The relative success of HPB's campaigns in reaching out to the masses have instead made Singaporeans more conscious about how to make small changes in their food choices, with many indulging in healthier versions of their favourite foods.</p>







DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

## YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE  
NAME

QUESTION  
NUMBER

CLASS

INDEX  
NUMBER

0	0		
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### GENERAL PAPER

8807/01

Paper 1

2 September 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your class, index number, name and Question number in the spaces provided on the question paper and on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

DO **NOT** WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/ 30
Language	/ 20
Total	/ 50

This document consists of 2 printed pages.

[Turn over

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 'It is not the years in your life, but the life in your years, that count.' Comment.
- 2 Is History worth studying when it can be rewritten?
- 3 Is democracy the most effective form of government today?
- 4 'Much has been lost with the passing of the older generation.' To what extent is this true of your society?
- 5 Is it fair to expect advertisements to be truthful?
- 6 'Unlike the Sciences, the Arts do nothing to solve the problems of society.' Discuss.
- 7 Is formal education necessary now that we can learn independently in the digital age?
- 8 'Tackling fake news is mainly the responsibility of the government.' Do you agree?
- 9 Can foreigners really integrate with locals in your society today?
- 10 How far should public opinion matter when meting out punishments in criminal cases?
- 11 How far has technology made our lives more fulfilling?
- 12 'Anything can be considered art, but not all art is of equal value.' What is your view?





DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

## YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

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### GENERAL PAPER

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**2 September 2019**

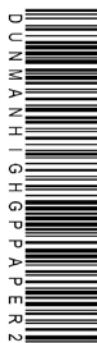
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**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the passage for Paper 2.



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**[Turn over**

*Bernie Greenwood urges us to reconsider our beliefs and actions in order to save the Earth.*

- 1 Those who doubt that human activities have the ability to change the Earth's climate should look to the melting Arctic, and shiver. There is no need to pore over records of Earth's temperatures and atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations. The process is starkly visible in the shrinkage of the ice that covers the Arctic Ocean. In the past 30 years, the volume of ice present in the summer has fallen by three quarters. At this rate of change, the Arctic Ocean will be largely ice-free in summer by 2040. To avert such a catastrophe, we would have to limit the increase in the global average temperature, ideally, to 1.5°C – a mammoth task, to say the least. Current efforts to meet this goal will likely be futile: not only are some key players still unconcerned, policy reforms have been too conservative and are being implemented at a glacial pace. 5 10
- 2 Some evolutionary psychologists have offered the sobering view that humans could be hardwired to lose the fight against climate change. The same instincts that once helped us survive by helping us to focus only on what was most essential to our immediate well-being are working against us today. Viewed through the lenses of survival, our current propensity to hoard and exploit the Earth's riches for ourselves seems much more rational than rationing them for the benefit of our distant descendants. This is compounded by the famous 'bystander effect', which also arises out of a survival instinct: we tend to believe that someone else will deal with a crisis because in the past, if every single member of the group were to spring into action to deal with a threat, they would all be put in danger. It was better to wait for a leader to step up to save the tribe. Today, however, this instinct leads us to assume that our leaders must be doing something about the climate crisis. They are not, and we cannot afford to wait. 15 20
- 3 Crucially, for us to stand any chance of avoiding a climate catastrophe, we must thoroughly reconsider our understanding of what it means to progress. People today tend to measure progress exclusively in materialistic terms. This vision of 'progress' is almost unthinkingly accepted, seemingly immune to criticism, and promulgated with great fervour – it is the religion of the modern world. Championing alternative visions of progress would be tantamount to political suicide: continual economic growth is assumed to lead to better standards of living, and is thus often the yardstick by which political parties seeking power are measured. Woe betide any party that dares suggest that we step away from our fixation with perpetual economic growth. No sooner have they uttered such audacious words than they are instantly dismissed as naïve tree-huggers, ignorant to the 'reality' of the situation. 25 30
- 4 The reality, however, is that the endless impulse for growth and wealth creation has led to an unhampered rise in resource use, pollution, and waste and ineluctably drives climate change. Pursuing this narrow goal will only lead human existence down the path of annihilation. It leads to lacerating the Earth, gouging out its riches, and poisoning its pure air and waters. Those in power aggressively promote industries which boost the economy, no matter how much they contaminate the environment. Decision-makers trade lush forests for concrete jungles without any qualms. They devise ways to keep businesses functioning round the clock, ignoring the drain on resources which goes into keeping everything and everyone working 24/7. In an era where making money matters above all else, businesses are only concerned with getting people to spend more, so the idea of designing products and packaging for maximum reuse, repair and refurbishment is anachronistic. All our items end up in an ever-growing heap in a landfill or in an incinerator. Alarming, many countries are so overwhelmed by their own waste that they export it to poorer countries. And bizarrely, some claim that it is only through these poor countries' participation in the global waste trade that they can lift themselves out of their impoverished state, regardless of the environmental impact! 35 40 45
- 5 Wealth generation requires the relentless consumption of fossil fuels and fuels even more consumption. As a society, we are becoming increasingly preoccupied with the acquisition of consumer goods and the accumulation of luxury experiences because we see these as markers of social status. This is, arguably, exacerbated by the pressure many feel to make the highlight reel of their lives on social media as envy-inducing as possible. Much of 50

- whatever it is that makes our social media feeds look good are terrible for the planet. Think of the outfits-of-the-day that must never be repeated – even innocuous items such as clothing have pernicious implications. Think of the ‘influencers’ who receive package after package of products to promote – where do the items end up when the reviews are over? Think of the regular trips to far-flung corners of the world, and how everyone races to be the first to ‘discover’ a pristine beach untouched by mass tourism, leaving a trail of trash in their wake. Global tourism has expanded so rapidly that it now accounts for eight per cent of greenhouse gas emissions. But would you be willing to give up your annual holiday just to save the planet?
- 55
- 60
- 6 A common refrain we hear nowadays is that green consumerism will allow us to reconcile perpetual growth and planetary survival. But studies have found that higher incomes invariably correlate with higher carbon footprints, regardless of how environmentally-conscious individuals profess to be. Those who see themselves as ‘green consumers’ are typically richer, and mainly focus on ‘eco-friendly’ behaviours that have relatively small benefits, while ignoring – or worse, using these to justify – their other indulgences. They might eschew plastic and tote reusable cups, but if animal-based proteins and trips to faraway locales are staples in their diet and their calendars, all their recycling efforts would have gone to waste. In making us feel less guilt, green consumerism may actually end up making us even more culpable of ravaging our planet.
- 65
- 70
- 7 Optimists may argue that technological advances offer a glimmer of hope in the fight against climate change. There is now a seemingly endless catalogue of technologies being developed which seek to ensure a dignified and secure future for each and every one of us on Earth without destroying it: renewable energy sources, advanced recycling systems, negative emission technologies which remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere... Unfortunately, some of these technologies are just as likely as their environmentally hostile predecessors to throw up unanticipated problems and regrettable side effects. Technical solutions are not the proverbial silver lining. Halving the exhaust pollution from one car is great, but not if the number of cars on our roads doubles! Only a combination of new technologies and changing values can offer any serious hope for the future of our Earth.
- 75
- 80
- 8 That we must consume less is no epiphany. In fact, the environmental movement of the 1970s sagely exhorted us to ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’. The purposefully sequenced slogan made it clear which action would be the most pivotal in tackling our environmental problems. Yet almost half a century later, it is evident that we have got things backwards. How long more, and what will it take, for us to finally warm up to the idea that when it comes to the environment, wanting less is truly more?
- 85

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***Acknowledgements:***

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DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

## YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE  
NAME

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CLASS

6	C		
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INDEX  
NUMBER

0	0		
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### GENERAL PAPER

8807/02

Paper 2

2 September 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your class, index number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction tape / fluid.

DO **NOT** WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

AQ Mark	
For Examiner's Use	
Content	/ 35
Language	/ 15
Total	/ 50

This document consists of 6 printed pages and 1 Insert.

[Turn over

Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words and phrases from the passage.

1 Explain the author's use of the word 'shiver' in line 2.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

2 When the author writes that current efforts to meet this goal will 'likely be futile' (line 8), what does he imply is needed to achieve success? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [2]

3 From paragraph 2, explain how our instincts are working against us in the fight against climate change. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [2]

4 Explain how the vision of progress in materialistic terms is like the 'religion of the modern world' (line 26). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [2]

- 5 Explain why championing alternative visions of progress would be 'tantamount to political suicide' (line 27). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[3]

- 6 a) What is the author's view of human actions when he writes 'lacerating the Earth, gouging out its riches, and poisoning its pure air and waters' (line 35)?

.....

.....

[1]

- b) What response does he want to evoke in the reader?

.....

.....

[1]

- 7 What is the author implying by using the word 'just' in line 59?

.....

.....

[1]

- 8 What is the view the author has of 'green consumers' in lines 64 to 68?

.....

.....

[1]

For  
Examiner's  
Use

**9** Why does the author say that we have ‘got things backwards’ (line 84)?

[2]

**10** Using material from lines 36 to 60 only, summarise what the author has to say about how our endless impulse for growth and wealth creation has an impact on the environment.

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

One negative impact on the environment is due to

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Number of words: \_\_\_\_\_

For  
Examiner's  
Use

- 11 The author argues that 'when it comes to saving the environment, wanting less is truly more' (lines 85-86).

How far do you agree or disagree with this view? Illustrate your answer by referring to the extent to which you and your society demonstrate concern for the environment.

[illegible]

[10]







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## GENERAL PAPER

Paper 1

**8807/01**

**29 August 2019**  
**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, civics group and question number on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Can the belief in superstitions ever be justified?
- 2 How fair is it to say that your society is an inclusive one?
- 3 To what extent should the State be responsible for protecting our privacy?
- 4 'Artificial intelligence should be embraced, since it is inevitable.' Discuss.
- 5 'Our faith in education as the solution to poverty is misplaced.' Do you agree?
- 6 Discuss the view that dissenting voices should be censored in your society.
- 7 'Mental health is more important than physical health.' How far do you agree with this statement?
- 8 'Rights for men and women should always be equal.' What is your view?
- 9 Assess the view that globalisation has only resulted in more inequality in the world.
- 10 How far do you agree that the value of the Arts has diminished in modern society?
- 11 How far should countries prioritise economic development given the serious threats posed by climate change?
- 12 Does humility still have a place in society?



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

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## GENERAL PAPER

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**29 August 2019**

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

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CANDIDATE NAME

CIVICS GROUP

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

**Passage 1.** *Claire Miller thinks parents are harming their children by the way they parent.*

- 1 Helicopter parenting, the practice of hovering anxiously near one's children, monitoring their every activity, is so 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some affluent mothers and fathers now are more like snowplows: machines chugging ahead, clearing any obstacles in their child's path to success, so they don't have to encounter failure, frustration or lost opportunities.
  
- 2 Snowplowing (also known as lawn-mowing and bulldozing) has become the most brazen mode of parenting of the privileged children in the everyone-gets-a-trophy generation. It starts early, when parents get on wait lists for elite preschools before their babies are born and try to make sure their toddlers are never compelled to do anything that may frustrate them. It gets more intense when school starts: running a forgotten assignment to school or calling a coach to request that their child make the team. Later, it's writing them an excuse if they procrastinate on schoolwork, paying a college counsellor thousands of dollars to perfect their applications or calling their professors to argue about a grade.
  
- 3 Yes, it's a parent's job to support the children, and to use their adult wisdom to prepare for the future when their children aren't mature enough to do so. But if children have never faced an obstacle, what happens when they get into the real world? In short, they flounder. In elite colleges today, students rely on their parents to set up play dates with people in their dorm or complain to their child's employers when an internship didn't lead to a job. The root cause are parents who had never let their children make mistakes or face challenges. Such parents have it backward. The point is to prepare the child for the road, instead of preparing the road for the child.
  
- 4 Helicopter parenting is a term that came into vogue in the 1980s and grew out of fear about children's physical safety — that they would fall off a play structure or be kidnapped at the bus stop. Snowplow parenting is an even more obsessive form. There's a constant monitoring of where their child is and what they are doing, all with the intent of preventing something happening and becoming a barrier to the child's success. The destination at the end of the road is often admission to college. For many wealthy families, it has always been a necessary badge of accomplishment for the child — and for the parents. A college degree has also become increasingly essential to earning a middle-class wage.
  
- 5 Learning to solve problems, take risks and overcome frustration are crucial life skills, many child development experts say, and if parents don't let their children encounter failure, the children don't acquire them. When a 3-year-old drops a dish and breaks it, she's probably going to try not to drop it the next time. When a 20-year-old sleeps through a test, he's probably not going to forget to set his alarm again.
  
- 6 Snowplowing has gone so far, they say, that many young people are in crisis, lacking these problem-solving skills and experiencing record rates of anxiety. There are now classes to teach children to practice failing, at college campuses around the country and even for preschoolers. Many snowplow parents know it's problematic, too. But because of privilege or peer pressure or anxiety about their children's futures, they do it anyway.

**Passage 2.** *Matthias Doepke makes a case in favour of being a helicopter parent.*

- 1 We love the idea of “free-range” parenting. Our childhoods in the 1970s followed this approach to the letter — and it was a lot of fun. Our parents did the bare minimum of supervision. Afternoons and evenings were spent at friends’ houses, exploring the neighborhood and the nearby woods, or playing soccer with other children. Worries about the future or our standing in school rarely crossed our minds. 5
  
- 2 Most American parents today follow a very different approach. First-graders have busy schedules, with afternoons filled with activities ranging from music and sports to chess. Even “play dates” are now officially scheduled. Overall, time use data show that American parents spend twice as much time caring for and supervising their children today than what was the norm in the 1970s, even though most families are smaller today with just one or two children, instead of three or four as was common then. 10
  
- 3 Have American parents lost their way? We don’t think so. Research suggests that this radical shift in child rearing, while perhaps more stressful for both parents and children, is a smart response of loving parents to a changed world. Economic shifts have raised the stakes in parenting, giving parents little choice but to give up the free-range approach they enjoyed as children. 15
  
- 4 The main change is a stark rise in both economic inequality and the economic benefits of more education. In the 1970s, inequality was lower than ever before, and unemployment was low as well. College graduates earned more on average than high school graduates, but not by much. In addition to the usual college-prep curriculum of math, English, and history, high schools offered vocational training, which often led to well-paid and stable blue-collar jobs. All of this meant that there was more than one path to a secure middle-class existence, and therefore pushing children to maximum school achievement and onward to top colleges was not a priority for most American parents. 20
  
- 5 Today, there is a much larger gap between those who succeed in education and those who don’t. It’s no secret that the wages of workers who didn’t attend college have stagnated for decades. College graduates now make about twice as much as high school graduates, and face lower unemployment risk. Other gaps have opened up: college graduates are healthier, more likely to get married, and more likely to stay married than adults with less education. All this explains why today’s parents are anxious and willing to put in a lot of effort to give their children an extra push. 25
  
- 6 If today’s parents follow the “helicopter” rather than the “free range” approach, it is because it works. Free time for children is not always productive. Thinking of our own childhoods, in between occasional moments of creative discovery and play we also spent many hours watching mindless TV. Most boys today would admit that they would use additional free time primarily for playing video games. Marathon Fortnite sessions are surely entertaining, but they won’t help much with the math test next week. 30  
35
  
- 7 In fact, intensive parenting is associated with success in school. In the international PISA study of student performance, the children of such parents score substantially higher in math, reading, and science, even if we compare otherwise similar parents with the same level of education. This is true across a large set of countries. Specific activities correlated with child success are reading books with children, telling them stories, and discussing politics with them, although most likely it is less the details but the overall close interaction between parents and children that counts. 40
  
- 8 The “free range” movement may have a point that some of today’s parents are overprotective and stifle their children’s growth. But by and large, today’s parents are doing just fine by their children, given the world we now live in. As much as we like free-range parenting, we don’t expect a return to the old ways unless there is a reversal in the economic changes that have driven up the stakes in parenting. Those who want to go back to an age when parents were relaxed and children were free would do well to remember that it’s not the parents’ fault — it is the economy. 45

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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

Claire Miller, "How Parents are Robbing Their Children of Adulthood" (The New York Times)

Matthias Doepke, "The economic case against free-range parenting — and in favor of being a helicopter parent" (Marketwatch)



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

CANDIDATE  
NAME

CIVICS  
GROUP

## GENERAL PAPER

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**29 August 2019**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

**1 hour 30 minutes**

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, civics group and question number on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

This document consists of **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** Insert.



Read the passages in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this paper.

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

### From Passage 1

For  
Examiner's  
Comments

- 1 Why does the author suggest that parents are now 'more like snowplows' (lines 2–3)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 2 What is the author suggesting when she describes the generation as one that is 'everyone-gets-a-trophy' (line 6)?

.....

.....[1]

- 3 Why does the author say that '[snowplowing] parents have it backward' (line 19)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....[1]

- 4 Explain why the author writes that 'the destination at the end of the road is often admission to college' (lines 25–26). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 5 Explain the author's use of the dash '—' (line 27).

.....  
 .....[1]

- 6 Why is it ironic that parents 'do [snowplowing] anyway' (line 38)?

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

### From Passage 2

- 7 According to the author in paragraph 1, what was 'free-range' parenting like for children in the 1970s? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- 8 Explain the author's use of the metaphor 'free-range' (line 1) to describe parenting in the 1970s .

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- 9 Compare the amount of supervision parents had over their children using 'free-range parenting' in the 1970s (line 1) and 'most American parents today' (line 6). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....[1]

- 10 Explain the author's use of the word 'even' in line 7.

.....  
 .....[1]

- 11 Explain why the author does not think 'American parents [have] lost their way' (line 12) by having more supervision over their children. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

- Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

Today's parents practise intensive parenting because .....

[8]

- [illegible]

[10]

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**Short Answer Questions**

**Passage 1**

**From paragraph 1** [Literal paraphrase]

1. Why does the author suggest that parents are now ‘more like snowplows’ (lines 2-3). Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
machines chugging ahead, <b>clearing any obstacles in their child’s path to success, so they don’t have to encounter failure, frustration or lost opportunities.</b>	a) Parents go before their children to <b>remove all hindrances from their offsprings’ road to doing well</b> [1]
	b) such that the children <b>would not have to experience defeat/vexation/ or missed chances.</b>
	Any one of the paraphrases above [1]

**From paragraph 2** [Figurative Expression]

2. What is the author suggesting when she describes the generation as one that “everyone-gets-a-trophy”? [1]

From the passage	Inferred
Snowplowing (also known as lawn-mowing and bulldozing) has become the most brazen mode of parenting of the privileged children in <b>the everyone-gets-a-trophy</b> generation.	The author is suggesting that this is a generation where children’s self-esteems are so pandered to/ where there is a very strong affirmative culture. [1]

**From paragraph 3** [Inference]

3. Why does the author say that ‘[snowplowing] parents have it backward’ (line 20)? Use your own words as far as possible. [1]

From passage	Inferred
Such parents have it backward. The point is to prepare the kid for the road, instead of preparing the road for the child.	The purpose of parenting is to equip one’s child with skills to navigate the future, as opposed to navigating the future for him/her. [1]

[Inference (Writer’s Craft)]

4. Explain the author’s use of the dash “—” (line 29). [1]

From passage	Suggested answer
--------------	------------------

For many wealthy families, it has always been a necessary badge of accomplishment for the child — and for the parents.	<p><u>a)Function:</u> The author uses the dash to emphasise the</p> <p><u>b)Context:</u> unexpectedness / ridiculousness / incredulity of the fact that college admission is a means of showing off / source of pride for parents, and not just the children (despite the former not being the ones attending college).</p> <p>[1]</p>
--	--

**From paragraph 4** [Literal Paraphrase]

5. Explain why the author writes that “the destination at the end of the road is often admission to college” (line 27). Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Paraphrased
The destination at the end of the road is often admission to college. For many wealthy families, it has always been a <b>necessary badge of accomplishment for the child — and for the parents.</b> A college degree has also become <b>increasingly essential to earning a middle-class wage.</b>	a) For the privileged class, admission to college is requisite testament to a child’s and parents’ success, [1]
	b) and is becoming key to securing a high income. [1]
	Intensity of qualifiers needs to be captured

**From paragraph 5** [Illustration]

6. Why is it ironic that parents “do [snowplowing] anyway” (line 40)? [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
Many snowplow parents know it’s problematic, too. But because of privilege or peer pressure or anxiety about their children’s futures, they do it anyway.	a)Expectation: One would expect that if parents know the harmful effects that snowplowing has on their children, they would refrain from it. [1]
	b)Reality: However, this is not the case in reality as many parents still continue to snowplow despite knowing how detrimental it is to their children.
	All Or Nothing [1]

**Passage 2**

**From paragraph 1** [Hybrid: Inference + Literal Paraphrase]

7. According to the author in paragraph 1, what was “free-range” parenting like for children in the 1970s? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

Text Reference	Possible Paraphrase
Our childhoods in the 1970s followed this approach to the letter –	“Free-range” parenting was characterised by:
(a) and it was a lot of fun:	a) Much enjoyment
(b) Our parents did the bare minimum of supervision. Afternoons and evenings were spent at friends’ houses, exploring the neighbourhood and the nearby woods, or playing soccer with other kids.	b) A significant amount of leisure time in nature and in the company of peers/other children without our parents worrying incessantly about our safety;
(c) Worries about the future or our standing in school rarely crossed our minds	c) and not having to be concerned about the academic pathways we will take as we get older.  1-2 pts = [1]    3 pts = [2]

[Figurative Expression – Metaphor]

8. Explain the author’s use of the metaphor “free-range” to describe parenting in the 1970s (line 1). [2]

From the passage	Inferred
We love the idea of “free-range” parenting.	The author is suggesting that...
	a) Literal Meaning Just as how “free range” describes animals which are not confined and allowed to roam at will, [1]
	b) Contextual Meaning children should also be given the same liberty for exploration.  All Or Nothing [1]

[Literal Paraphrase: Compare & contrast]

9. Compare the amount of supervision parents had over their children using “free-range parenting” in the 1970s (line 1) and “most American parents today” (line 6). Use your own words as far as possible. [1]

From passage	Suggested answer
Our parents did the bare minimum of supervision. vs.	a) Parents who used free-range parenting in the 1970s <b>maintained the least amount of management / control possible</b> over their children,

Overall, time use data show that American parents spend <b>twice as much time caring for and supervising</b> their children today than what was the norm in the 1970s, even though most families are smaller today <b>with just one or two kids, instead of three or four as was common then.</b>	b)whereas American parents today have <b>double the amount of supervision</b> despite the fact that they have around <b>half the number of children per family.</b>  (a) + (b) = [1]
---	--

## From Paragraph 2

[Inferential – Use of Language]

10.Explain the author’s use of the word “even” in line 8. [1]

From the passage	Inferred
Even “play dates” are now officially scheduled.	a)Function The author finds it unbelievable/ ridiculous
	b)Context That something like ‘play’ which is supposed to be spontaneous has to be scheduled.
	(a) + (b)= [1]

## From paragraph 3 [Literal paraphrase]

11. Explain why the author does not think “American parents [have] lost their way” (line 12) by having more supervision over their children. Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
Research suggests that this radical shift in child rearing, while perhaps more stressful for both parents and children, is <b>a smart response of loving parents to a changed world.</b> Economic shifts have <b>raised the stakes in parenting</b> , giving parents little choice but to give up the free-range approach they enjoyed as children.	a) The author feels it is an intelligent move by parents <b>given the economic circumstances of the modern world</b> [1]
	b) where <b>children stand to lose out a lot more</b> if parents do not exercise that amount of supervision. [1]

## Summary Question

12. Using material from paragraphs 4-7, summarise the reasons that parents practise intensive parenting and the ways that they do it. [8]

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

*Today’s parents practise intensive parenting because...*

Point	From the passage	Paraphrased
1	a stark rise in both <b>economic inequality</b> [line 17]	Reason [Literal] of the significant hike in income divide

	OR  In the 1970s, <u>inequality was lower</u> than ever before, [line 18]	
2	and the <u>economic benefits</u> of more education  [lines 17-18]	Reason [Literal] and financial promise for those who stay in school longer
3	and <u>unemployment was low</u> as well [line 19]	Reason [Literal] and joblessness were [very] insignificant in the past.
4	College graduates <u>earned more</u> on average than high school graduates, but <u>not by much</u> . [lines 19-20]	Reason [Literal] Graduates had higher remuneration/salaries/income than non-graduates, though not significantly more  (comparison bet. grads and non-grads necessary)
5	In addition to the usual college-prep curriculum of math, English, and history, high schools offered <u>vocational training</u> , which often led to <u>well-paid and stable blue-collar jobs</u> [lines 21-22]	Reason [Literal] Beyond mainstream education, skills training afforded non-graduates high salaries and job security
6	there was <u>more than one path</u> to a secure middle-class existence [lines 22-23]	Reason [Literal] There were multiple ways to ascend the social ladder/ there was greater social mobility
7	Today, there is a much <u>larger gap</u> between those who <u>succeed</u> in education and those who don't. [lines 25-26]	Reason [Literal] there is now greater disparity between those who excel academically and those who have not (allow lift of education)
8	the <u>wages</u> of workers who <u>didn't attend college</u> have <u>stagnated</u> for decades. [line 27]	Reason [Literal] Income of non-graduates has plateaued/ not changed/ not increased
9	College graduates now <u>make about twice as much</u> as high school graduates, [line 27]	Reason [Literal] The income of graduates is double that of non-graduates (allow lift of graduates)
10	and face <u>lower unemployment risk</u> . [line 28]	Reason [Literal] and they have a greater chance of finding jobs
11	Other gaps have opened up: <u>college grads are healthier</u> [line 29]	Reason [Literal] Other factors include graduates having fewer diseases,
12	, <u>more likely to get married</u> [line 29]	Reason [Literal] a lower inclination towards singlehood

		(Intensity of qualifier needs to be captured)
13	, and <b>more likely to stay married</b> [line 29]	Reason [Literal] and higher sustainability of their unions  (Intensity of qualifier needs to be captured)
14	If today's parents follow the "helicopter" rather than the "free range" approach, it is because <b>it works</b> . [lines 32-33]	Reason [Literal]  Intensive parenting is effective
15	<b>Free time</b> for children is <b>not always productive</b> [line 33]	Reason [Literal] Children often do not make good use of their time/ do not spend time constructively/ do not make meaningful use of time  (allow lift of time)
16	intensive parenting is <b>associated</b> with <b>success</b> in school [line 38]	Reason [Literal] Helicopter approach is tied to academic excellence,
17	In the international PISA study of student performance, the children of such parents score substantially higher in math, reading, and science, even if we compare otherwise similar parents with the same level of education [lines 38-40]	Reason [Inferred]  It is the parenting approach, not parents' education level that results in successful children.  [PISA example provides context but need not be included in answer]
18	This is <b>true</b> across a <b>large set of countries</b> . [line 41]	Reason [Literal] This is corroborated/proven/ratified/confirmed by evidence from other nations.
19	<b>Specific activities correlated with child success</b> are reading books with children, telling them stories, and discussing politics with them, [lines 41-42]	Method [Inferred] Some parental interventions can promote excellence in their children.
20	it is less the details but the overall <b>close interaction between parents and children</b> that counts. [lines 43-44]	Method [Literal] Afterall, what matters is the time spent between parent and child.  (allow lift of parent and children)

No. of points	Marks
1-2	1
3-4	2

5-6	3
7-8	4
9-10	5
11-12	6
13-14	7
15 and above	8



### Application Question

One writer thinks that intensive parenting is harmful for children, while the other believes that it is necessary. How far do you agree with the opinions expressed in these two passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society. [10]

### Question requirements:

- Address Claire Miller's argument that intensive parenting is **harmful** for children.
  - Pick a claim that outlines one way that it is detrimental for children.
  - Agree or disagree with it with support from SG's context.
  - Argument should be about whether or not there is harm or not in SG or not, and if so, whether such harm is to the extent that Claire Miller outlines.
- Address Matthias Doecke's argument that intensive parenting is **necessary**.
  - Pick a claim that outlines the conditions that make such parenting necessary for children.
  - Agree or disagree with it with support from SG's context.
  - Argument should be about whether one really needs to subscribe to intensive parenting in SG or not, and if so, whether the necessity is to the extent that Matthias Doecke outlines.
- Balance will be present where students are able to see some validity in the opposing view of whatever stand they are taking for each of the claims they choose (e.g. if there really is harm, are there situations where this harm may not be present?).

### Potential response possibilities

#### Passage 1

Possible text references	Relevant SG examples / evaluation
if children have never faced an obstacle, what happens when they get into the real world? In short, they flounder. (lines 15-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In a recent survey, <u>SG young people indicated by an overwhelming majority</u> that they did not feel equipped adequately for their jobs. Many felt that they were not taught the particular skills that their jobs eventually required. This shows the lack of adaptability and resourcefulness on their part, as they are possibly too used to being prepared by their parents and schools for exams and tests, and are hence unable to face the obstacle of having to learn something new by themselves without structured help to guide them.</li></ul>
if parents don't let their children encounter failure, the children don't acquire [crucial life skills] (lines 32-33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children are routinely exposed to high-stakes summative tests from a young age (#SSF), all of which have major implications for their futures. This makes failure very costly, and not an option that is viewed favourably or charitably (#B&amp;V). As a result, SG children are unaccustomed to the idea of failure being a good thing, and do not know how to embrace it as a way of learning.</li></ul>
many young people are in crisis, lacking these problem-solving skills and experiencing record rates of anxiety (lines 36-37)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many employers have branded SGreen millennials as unemployable because of their poor attitudes towards hard work and being resilient enough to weather through various circumstances.</li><li>• Yet, on the other hand, it seems that <u>SGreen students are top in the world in terms of problem-solving skills</u>. However, it is notable that the credit for this phenomenon should go to Singapore schools' curriculums and pedagogies, and not parents.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health issues among young people have soared in recent years (e.g. <a href="#">suicide rates for boys have reached an unprecedented high recently</a>), especially for young people, who are unable to cope with the demands that life throws at them.</li> </ul>
because of privilege or peer pressure or anxiety about their children's futures, they do it anyway (lines 39-40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Singaporean parents are known to be 'kiasu' – fearful of losing out to others (#Identity). Due to our Asian outlook that pays very high regard to education and job prestige as an indicator of success in life, parents are often pressurized to push their children very hard for academic success. Very often, such efforts are driven by fear, and the sense that they must one-up each other, and not provide less for their children than what others are doing.</li> </ul>

## Passage 2

Possible text references	Relevant SG examples / evaluation
Today, there is a much larger gap between those who succeed in education and those who don't. (lines 25-26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In SG, it is true that graduates from Private Universities (perceived to be inferior institutions compared to public universities) do face <a href="#">difficulties in employment and can expect to have lower salaries</a>.</li> <li>As Singapore has moved from a manufacturing heavy economy to a knowledge-based one, it is true that it would be increasingly difficult for one to still get a high paying job without possessing the necessary qualifications for highly specialised jobs.</li> </ul>
If today's parents follow the "helicopter" rather than the "free range" approach, it is because it works. (lines 32-33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In SG, parents who are very 'involved' in their children's education tend to be those with sufficient means, social capital and resources to help their children succeed. Unfortunately in a society as competitive as SG's these differences in resources do make an impact on a child's outcome, as evidenced by how homogenous most of the top schools and universities are in their enrolment.</li> <li>That being said, there are occasionally instances of individuals who have overcome all odds and tribulations in their own childhoods to succeed in life. Such examples are often featured in our local newspaper's segment called "Generation Grit". These would represent individuals who managed to succeed despite having troubled and unsupervised childhoods, although one might cynically feel that they are only being featured precisely because they represent the exception, not the norm in SG society.</li> </ul>
intensive parenting is associated with success in school (line 38)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensive parenting in SG is often associated with packing one's child's schedule with endless tuition sessions and enrichment classes. However, whether the presence or absence of tuition makes a difference in a student's academic performance is not something that is known, and is often debateable, due to the lack of large-scale studies being done on the exact effects of such extra academic help.</li> <li>However, the fact that our tuition industry is a multi-billion dollar one shows that many parents do, despite the lack of empirical evidence, do associate providing their children with such help with guaranteeing success in school.</li> </ul>
today's parents are doing just fine by their children, given the world we now live in. (line 47)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In SG, the stakes of not doing well academically are extraordinarily high compared to other countries, as a child's future is very much tied up with his/her academic results in examinations. Thus, it is perhaps understandable why parents are so desperate for their children to always attain academic success.</li> <li>In a competitive employment scene where graduates are a dime a dozen, prospective employees would need to ensure that they have an extra edge in order to stand out. Parents who manage to foresee this would then be inclined to help their children get a head start by guiding them and exposing them to as many opportunities as possible.</li> </ul>

<p>it's not the parents' fault — it is the economy (line 51)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The harsh realities of Singapore's economy is such that it needs to keep adapting to the changing needs of the global economy in order to even stay afloat. Our lack of natural resources or a hinterland means that our economy will always have an inherent vulnerability to external forces. Thus, staying relevant and employable through getting the right academic credentials and qualifications will be a priority for many Singaporeans, and by extension, Singaporean parents who are thinking ahead for their children's future.</li> </ul>
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**HWA CHONG INSTITUTION**  
**C2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**  
**Higher 1**

**CANDIDATE  
NAME**

**CT GROUP**

**CENTRE  
NUMBER**

**INDEX  
NUMBER**

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

Paper 1

**29 August 2019**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet

1 hour 30 minutes

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**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Write your name, CT group, Centre number and index number in the boxes above.

Answer **one** question.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Note that **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

Write your answer in the Answer Booklet.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction tape or fluid.

**You are reminded of the importance of careful planning,  
legible handwriting, and good presentation.**

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This document consists of **2** printed pages.

[Turn over

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. 'Misunderstood and underestimated.' Is this an accurate description of youth in your society?
2. Does geography still determine a country's prospects in today's world?
3. Should promises always be kept?
4. Is it fair to expect countries to be well-prepared for disease outbreaks?
5. 'Environmental pollution is a catastrophe waiting to happen.' Comment.
6. How far should personal morality be a concern of the state?
7. Why worry about what technological advancement may do to us when we can just enjoy what it can do for us?
8. Do you agree that freedom of speech should never be denied even though it can be abused?
9. 'If people in developed countries are poor, they have themselves to blame.' Discuss.
10. 'People will believe anything they read, hear, or see in the media.' Is this statement reflective of the situation in your country?
11. 'Rather than find fault, focus on the positive side of things!' To what extent is this good advice?
12. 'Art is not meant to instruct or influence; it is only meant to be enjoyed.' Do you agree with this viewpoint?



**HWA CHONG INSTITUTION**  
**C2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**  
**Higher 1**

**Candidate  
Name**

**CT  
Group**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

This 2-page Insert contains the passage for comprehension. Detach it from the Question Paper.  
Bring the Insert for the Post-Prelim Review Lecture.

**Sue Palmer writes about the state of childhood today.**

- 1 Before the miracles of modern medicine and public-health initiatives, many infants did not live to see their first birthday – and if they did, they were expected to grow up on the double, especially in agrarian-based societies. For most of Western history, childhood was short and brutish, even non-existent. Influenced by Puritan beliefs, children were commonly perceived as imperfect miniature grown-ups, burdened with original sin from which they had to be redeemed through rigorous instruction, hard work and perhaps a good hiding or two. 5
- 2 A dramatic departure from this public perception of children occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup> century however. Parental attitudes of detachment toward their offspring (rationalised previously by the distressingly high infant mortality rates in the Middle Ages) underwent a metamorphosis with better medicine and the increasing availability of cheap contraception. Parents could now meaningfully decide on the size of their families; this meant more time and energy could be channelled towards a reduced brood, with childhood regarded as a unique stage of life. This notion of a childhood was backed particularly by the educational theories of philosopher John Locke and an increasing abundance of publications about and for children. 10
- 3 Over time, as mechanisation replaced gruelling labour and led to increasingly industrialised societies, the state took on the mantle to safeguard the interests of children. Institutions clamped down on the use of child labour in the West and the introduction of mandatory education meant children's period of dependency had to be lengthened. Coupled with the rise of dual-income households and a better quality of life, parents were finally able to give their precious progeny even more attention. Such children transmogrified into what Princeton sociologist Viviana Zelizer has memorably described as “the economically useless but emotionally priceless child”. Nonetheless, children became repositories of hope for a better future. Worldwide, a new mindset morphed: no longer are we to suffer the children, we are to suffer for our children. 15 20
- 4 Sadly, the physical spaces where children were growing up in did not improve their lot. Having brought their children up in overwhelmingly urban landscapes, more parents began to perceive childhood as a period of peril. Living amongst strangers rather than close-knit communities, parents justified their need to protect their children even more. Old-school games like Conkers\*, once a staple autumn game of British children, have fallen out of favour, thanks to schools which have banned such treacherous pastimes for fear that they might cause injuries. A recent survey of children aged eight to twelve found that indoor play is now the norm: a third has never splashed in a puddle and the distance children are allowed to play unsupervised has shrunk by ninety per cent since 1970. Little surprise then that the PlayStation is the playground of today. 25 30

\*Players drill holes in shiny brown chestnuts (conkers), thread them onto strings before swinging them at their opponents until one of the nuts breaks.

- 5 Unsurprisingly, evidence is mounting that children today are in fact experiencing a toxic childhood – a lethal concoction of technological and cultural changes that is having a deleterious impact on their development. Sated on diets of junk foods and TV dinners, barred from the rough and tumble of outdoor play, children are also victims of an obesity explosion. Continually exposed to the 24/7 culture of televisual and online entertainment, they are prime targets for exploitation by the anonymous army of marketers lurking behind those omnipresent screens. Regrettably, a generation of mini-consumers who equate happiness with materialism is being created as they learn from their new parents: vacuous screen idols. 35 40
- 6 This commercialisation of childhood has been accompanied by its ‘schoolification’; tots as tiny as three are bused and herded into full-day nurseries, endlessly scheduled and timetabled into routines in order for their parents to work and feed the economy. Back home, these tots spend time with electronic babysitters and are fed yet more visual stimulation. Is it any wonder these mini-mechanicals sleepwalk into formal education bereft of any real interest in anything and without an independent streak whatsoever? School teachers who bewail the precipitous decline in their students’ communication skills and shortened attention spans often point to those early years spent in supervised care and the premature digitalisation of their lifestyles as the culprits. 45
- 7 Strangely, in a world where there are more ways to communicate than ever before, parents now connect less and less with their own children, spawning another new list of problems: cyber addiction, cyber bullying, cyber depression, cyber you-name-it. These are all par for the course as study after study has detected similarities between the brain activity of cocaine addicts and our young digital natives. Meanwhile, education authorities and schools have not been spared the seeping of the cut-throat competitive culture of the adult world into their walls. The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom, leaving these young charges reeling from the – let’s face it – high-stakes Darwinian rat race that helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul. These parents ensure their privileged offspring’s access to the best higher educational opportunities that money can buy, securing the latter’s station in the upper echelons of society. 50 55
- 8 Such hyper-parenting behaviour has exacerbated already massive social inequalities. Parents in underprivileged households, handicapped by a lack of funds, knowledge and connections, can only watch helplessly as crushing new inequalities push the dream of intergenerational social mobility further and further out of reach of their children. But a problem of crisis proportions for children everywhere has ensued with this uneven realisation of socio-economic aspirations across all income groups. National Health Service (NHS) figures published in July 2018 revealed that almost 400,000 children and young people aged 18 and below have been in contact with the health service for mental health related problems. Is it not time to question why, in one of the wealthiest, most technologically advanced eras on Earth, we are unable to raise a generation that is wholesome and healthy, passionate and purposeful, emotionally sentient and sensible...? 60 65
- 9 Still, hope is not lost. Educators and child-development experts are leading the charge to influence institutions to introduce national guidelines regulating screen use. Progressive leaders are eager to level the playing field for those from less privileged backgrounds. We must find ways for all members of the community to re-forge an ‘adult alliance’ to support families in raising their young. The statistics emerging now about children’s mental health must act as a wake-up call to everyone concerned about the well-being of the future. 70 75
- 10 But the main responsibility for rearing children, lies – as it always has – with parents. They have to wise up, stop overreacting to a combination of rapid change, uncertainty and guilt, and find new ways to provide a secure, healthy family life for their offspring. None of this is rocket science, but in terms of our civilisation’s future, it is far more important than rocket science. Given that they are growing up in a time of peace and plenty, apathy and discontentment should not be a natural state for our children. We owe them at least this much. 80



**HWA CHONG INSTITUTION**  
**C2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**  
**Higher 1**

Candidate Name					
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CT Group	
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Centre Number	<b>S</b>				
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Index Number				
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**GENERAL PAPER**

**Paper 2**

**8807/02**

**29 August 2019**

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, CT Group, Centre number and index number clearly on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use paper clips, highlighters, correction fluid or tape.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

<p><b>You are reminded of the importance of legible handwriting and good presentation.</b></p>
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For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

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This document consists of a **7-page Question Paper**, **1 blank page** and a **2-page Insert**.

[Turn over



Read the passages and then answer **all** the questions which follow below. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passages for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passages.

- 1 What is the author implying by using the word “miracles” (line 1) to describe modern medicine and public-health initiatives?

.....  
.....[1]

- 2 Explain why the author claims “childhood was short and brutish, even non-existent” (lines 3-4). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[3]

- 3 Using material from paragraphs 2 to 4, summarise the reasons for the changes in attitude towards children and how they affected the treatment of children. Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. ***Use your own words as far as possible.***

*Parental attitudes toward children underwent a metamorphosis with.....*

[8]

Candidate to declare word count: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4 “Regrettably, a generation of mini-consumers who equate happiness with materialism is being created as they learn from their new parents: vacuous screen idols.” (lines 38-40)

Why does the author describe the above situation as regrettable?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 5 Explain how the examples given in paragraph 6 support the author’s assertion that children today are “mini-mechanicals” (line 45). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

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.....[3]

- 6 Suggest why the author completes the “new list of problems” (line 50) experienced by children with the phrase “cyber you-name-it” (line 51).

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 7 “The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom, leaving its charges reeling from the – let’s face it – high-stakes Darwinian rat race that helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul.” (lines 54-57)

What is the author's intention in inserting “let's face it” in line 56?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 8 What distinction is the author making between the behaviour of privileged parents (in paragraph 7) and underprivileged parents (in paragraph 8)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 9 “We must find ways for all members of the community to re-forge an 'adult alliance' to support families in raising their young.” (lines 72-73).

Why does the author switch to ‘we’ in this sentence?

.....

.....[1]

- 10 What is the author implying about the “new ways to provide a secure, healthy family life” (lines 77-78) by claiming that “none of this is rocket science” (line 78)?

.....

.....[1]



[10]

..[10]

**END OF PAPER**

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**2019 C2 Preliminary Examination**  
**Paper 2 “State of Childhood Today” Answer Key** (as of 23 September 2019)

**Paragraph 1**

**Q1. What is the author implying by using the word “miracles” (line 1) to describe modern medicine and public-health initiatives? [1]**

Before the <b>miracles</b> of modern medicine and public-health initiatives, many infants did not live to see their first birthday	By using the word ‘miracles’, the author is implying that these modern medicine and public-health initiatives had such <b>amazing / astounding / phenomenal / wondrous effects that they seemed heaven-sent / were the result of divine intervention.</b> [1]
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**Q2. Explain why the author claims “childhood was short and brutish, even non-existent” (lines 3-4). Use your own words as far as possible. [3]**

<b>Many infants did not live to see their first birthday – and if they did, they were expected to grow up on the double, especially in agrarian-based societies. Children had to be (redeemed via) rigorous instruction, hard work and perhaps a good hiding or two.</b>	<p>a) Most children tended to <b>have only brief life-spans</b> / many children died early (BOD) / before they were one (BOD)</p> <p>b) They had <b>neither the time nor the luxury for an extended period of time to be carefree</b> like a child / to enjoy themselves OR They had to mature / develop expeditiously / at lightning speed/ very fast ( BOD)</p> <p>c) They were <b>pre-destined / intended to be the necessary labour for the farming communities</b> they lived in</p> <p>d) They were <b>made to toil / labour</b> intensely, supposedly for their own good</p> <p>e) They <b>were beaten callously</b> / physically abused / manhandled / treated like animals (BOD)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Note: Any 3 out of 5 points for [3]</i></p>
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**Paragraphs 2 to 4 (Summary)**

**Q3. Using material from paragraphs 2 to 4, summarise the reasons for the changes in attitude towards children and how they affected the treatment of children. Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible. [8]**

*Parental attitudes towards children underwent a metamorphosis with ...*

1	with <b>better medicine</b> and	<b>with more effective</b> / powerful / improved ... <b>drugs/</b> vaccines/ medical remedies/healthcare
2	the <b>increasing availability of cheap</b> contraception	and the growing / greater <b>access</b> / channels <b>to</b> obtain low cost / <b>affordable</b> /inexpensive/ reasonably priced <b>birth control</b> methods
3	Parents could now <i>meaningfully</i> <b>decide</b> on the <b>size</b> of their families	<b>Parents could make/formulate</b> [informed /careful / thoughtful] <b>judgments</b> /conclusions/ choices <b>on how many children to have</b> / enjoy autonomy over the number of offspring to have Gloss: Parents could choose to have fewer children <i>Note: Word in brackets not necessary for the mark</i>
4	and this meant <b>more time and energy</b> could be <b>channelled</b> towards a <b>reduced brood</b>	<b>and focus</b> /concentrate <b>on/</b> give attention to <b>fewer children</b> / kids / a smaller family (BOD) [and their growth/progress /maturity] <i>Note: Words in brackets not necessary for the mark</i>
5	with childhood became <b>regarded</b> as a <b>unique</b> stage of life	<b>Childhood was acknowledged</b> / accepted/ credited ... <b>as</b> an independent / a separate / <b>distinct</b> / discrete / special ... <b>phase/</b> period / juncture/ time of / for development
6	This notion of a childhood was <b>backed</b> particularly by the educational theories of	which was <b>supported</b> / substantiated / justified legitimized / recognized / affirmed by <b>thought leaders</b> / prominent thinkers



	philosopher John Locke...	
7	...and an increasing abundance of <b>publications about and for</b> children	<b>and books</b> / academic research / published writings.
8	Over time, as <b>mechanisation replaced gruelling labour</b> and led to increasingly industrialised societies,	As our economy becomes more reliant on machinery/ less reliant on human/ physical labour,
9	the state <b>took on the mantle</b> to safeguard the interests of children	<b>governments became responsible for</b> / was obligated to / assumed control over / secure / protect <b>children's welfare</b> / well-being / the state of childhood  Gloss : States took charge of / looked after children
10	Institutions <b>clamped down</b> on the use of child labour in the West	Children were not allowed /were forbidden / prohibited from working.  Gloss : It became illegal for children to work
11	and the introduction of <b>mandatory</b> education	[The establishment of] <b>compulsory schooling</b> / education (allow lift ) OR education dictated / prescribed by the law
12	meant children's period of <b>dependency</b> had to be lengthened	prolonged / <b>extended children's reliance on others</b> (for financial / monetary support / provision)  <i>Note: Words in brackets not necessary for the mark</i>
13	Coupled with the rise of <b>dual-income</b> households...	<b>With the increases in earnings</b> / with more take home pay more material provisions
14	...and a <b>better quality</b> of life	<b>greater access to consumer goods OR improved standards of living...</b>
15	parents were finally able to give their precious progeny <b>even more attention</b>	<b>children received greater care/ concern / control</b> / consideration / custody / guardianship /guidance/ direction  <i>Note: The emphasis is on the increased level of attention paid to children.</i>
16	Such children transmogrified into what Princeton sociologist Viviana Zelizer has memorably described as "the <b>economically useless but emotionally priceless</b> child"	<b>The child is far from being a productive person</b> / cannot contribute to society in a monetary sense / has no utilitarian value <b>yet he is precious</b> / valued  Gloss: The child is loved despite being a financial / material liability.  <i>Note: The answer must point out the inverse relationship OR the incongruity of the level of economic usefulness and the value placed on children to be credited.</i>
17	Nonetheless, children became <b>repositories of hope</b> for a better future.	<b>The dreams / aspirations of societies are placed on</b> children  Gloss: Adults look to children for brighter days ahead.
18	Worldwide, a <b>new mindset morphed</b> : no longer are we to suffer the children, <b>we are to suffer for our children.</b>	[A paradigm shift occurred: we should not just put up with children], <b>we now take on children's burdens / undertake challenges / put up with hardship for children's sake.</b>  <i>Note: Word in brackets not necessary for the mark</i>
19	more parents now <b>perceive</b> childhood as a <b>period of peril</b>	[leading] <b>parents to believe</b> / see / regard ... <b>childhood is dangerous</b> / risky / hazardous
20	Living amongst strangers rather than <b>close-knit</b> communities	[Increasingly], <b>children are not growing up around</b> people related to them / relatives / <b>kin</b>
21	parents have <b>justified their need to protect their children more</b>	which <b>parents use to explain</b> / support / offer as reasons / a defence / corroboration /substantiation <b>for</b> shielding / guarding / safekeeping / <b>safeguarding</b> their <b>children</b> from danger / threats / harm.
22	thanks to schools which have <b>banned</b> such <b>treacherous</b>	Schools <b>prohibit</b> / object / proscribe to such <b>dangerous / perfidious</b> activities

	pastimes for fear they <b>might cause injuries</b>	OR as these activities <b>might harm / hurt</b> them
23	A recent survey of children aged eight to twelve found that <b>indoor play is now the norm</b> : a third has never splashed in a puddle and the distance children are allowed to play unsupervised has shrunk by ninety per cent since 1970.	<b>Children are rarely</b> / hardly to get spend time <b>outdoors</b> OR Children are <b>seldom</b> given the chance to play in an uninhibited manner / <b>roam freely</b> OR Children are <b>only allowed to play in safe / guarded / sanitised</b> areas.
24	Little surprise then that the <b>PlayStation is the playground of today</b>	[ As expected ] <b>Children are left to be entertained by / preoccupied with electronic devices / gadgets</b>

*Note: Words in brackets not necessary for the mark*

#### Paragraph 5

**Q4. "Regrettably, a generation of mini-consumers who equate happiness with materialism is being created as they learn from their new parents: vacuous screen idols." (lines 38–40) Why does the author describe the above situation as regrettable? [2]**

<b>Regrettably</b> , a generation of mini-consumers who equate happiness with materialism is being created as they learn from their new parents: vacuous screen idols.	<p>a) Parents are supposed to be the <b>wise role models</b> who will impart the right set of values to their children. However, the ones who are actually instructing children today are <b>vapid / dim / unintelligent public media personalities</b> / celebrities / influencers.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>b) It is expected that children <b>are taught sound values / good principles to help them navigate through life</b>. However, children today are taught to correlate / associate <b>covetousness / owning things (BOD) with joy / fulfilment in life</b>, which are not the concepts / beliefs they should learn.</p>
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*Note: Candidate's answer must make evident the disparity between an ideal versus the less than ideal outcome to be awarded the full 2m.*

#### Paragraph 6

**Q5. Explain how the examples given in paragraph 6 support the author's assertion that children today are "mini-mechanicals" (line 45). Use your own words as far as possible. [3]**

This commercialisation of childhood has been accompanied by its 'schoolification'; tots as tiny as three are <b>bused and herded into</b> full-day nurseries, <b>endlessly scheduled and timetabled into routines</b> in order for their parents to work and feed the economy. Back home, these tots spend time with electronic babysitters and <b>are fed yet more visual stimulation</b> . Is it any wonder these mini-mechanicals <b>sleepwalk into formal education, bereft of any real interests in anything</b> and <b>without an independent streak whatsoever</b> ?	<p>Children seem to be "mini-mechanicals" because...</p> <p>a) <b>their education / learning itinerary has been pre-arranged/ pre-set / established</b> in advance</p> <p>b) <b>their activities / movements are regimented / controlled</b></p> <p>c) <b>they accept information</b> transmitted by their gadgets <b>passively/ catatonically</b></p> <p>d) <b>they lack vim and vigour</b> / are without liveliness / enthusiasm / zest</p> <p>e) <b>they obey instructions without assessment</b> / have no views/mind of their own</p> <p>f) <b>they are just apathetic</b> / indifferent / bored</p>
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*Note: Any 3 points for [3]*

### Paragraph 7

**Q6. Suggest why the author completes "the new list of problems" (line 50) experienced by children with the phrase "cyber you-name-it"? (line 51) [2]**

<p>...parents now communicate less and less with their own children, spawning another new list of problems: cyber addiction, cyber bullying, cyber depression, <b>cyber you-name-it</b>. These are <i>all on par for the course as study after study has detected similarities between the brain activity of cocaine addicts and our young digital natives</i>.</p> <p>Clue for (c) : repetition of 'cyber'</p>	<p>a) <b>She is implying</b> there is such a <b>plethora of / ever-increasing / constantly evolving / yet to be discovered disorders</b> caused by over-exposure to digital devices / the Internet/social media [1]</p> <p><b>BOD:</b> the list of problems is <b>unending / infinite</b> [1]</p> <p>b) <b>that any disorder /malady we can think of / identify can be attributed to the internet as a cause</b> and we will not be wrong. [1]</p> <p>c) <b>The author blames the over-digitalisation of our lives as the cause</b> of problems faced by children today OR the unending litany of problems was generated by <b>the overuse of gadgets</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Any 2 out of 3 points</i></p>
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**Q7. "The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom, leaving its charges reeling from the – let's face it – high-stakes Darwinian rat race that helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul." (lines 54 – 57) What is the author's intention in inserting "let's face it" in line 56? [2]**

<p>The obsession with tests, and league tables has now infected the classroom, leaving its charges reeling from the – <b>let's face it</b> – high-stakes Darwinian rat race that helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul.</p>	<p>a) He wants to ([1] for either <u>one</u> of the following)</p> <p>i) <b>force the reader to admit / acknowledge / be unable to deny</b></p> <p>ii) <b>'tell it like it is'/ be blunt and forthright / be 'right up front' / not to be euphemistic / not to sugar-coat the situation</b></p> <p>iii) <b>be outspoken and unequivocal</b></p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p>b) in order to ([1] for <u>either</u> one of the following)</p> <p>i) <b>highlight the hypocrisy of those who deny the belief that the educational rat race is about the survival of the fittest is legitimate.</b></p> <p>ii) <b>emphasize that there are parents who would do anything for their children to succeed.</b> [1]</p> <p>Accept: She is <b>disdainful / scornful of hypocritical people</b> [1] who refuse to admit that we live in a dog-in-dog world. [1]</p>
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### Paragraphs 7 and 8

**Q8. What distinction is the author making between the behaviour of privileged parents (in paragraph 7) and underprivileged parents (in paragraph 8)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]**

<p>The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom, leaving its charges reeling from the high-stakes – let's face it – Darwinian rat race that <b>helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul</b></p> <p>These parents ensure their <b>privileged offspring's access</b> to the best higher educational opportunities that money can buy, <b>securing their station in the upper echelons</b> of society. (para 7)</p> <p>Such <b>hyper-parenting</b> behaviour has exacerbated already massive social inequalities. Parents in underprivileged households, <b>handicapped by a lack of funds</b>,</p>	<p><u>Financial means</u> Privileged parents have the <b>financial means</b>, enabling them <b>to engineer their children's success</b> in education <b>unlike the underprivileged ones.</b></p> <p><u>Influence</u> Privileged parents have <b>the right connections</b> / know the right people who <b>can give their children some advantages unlike underprivileged ones who do not have such influence.</b></p> <p><u>Attitude / parenting style</u> Privileged parents are <b>forceful/aggressive/highly driven in playing an active role to ensure their children's success in life</b> / are excessively involved in the lives of their children</p>
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<p>knowledge and connections, can only <b>watch helplessly</b> as crushing new inequalities push the dream of intergenerational social mobility further and further out of reach of their children (para 8)</p>	<p>while underprivileged ones are at a loss / cannot do anything to help.</p> <p><i>3 contrasting pairs; any two pairs for [2] Note: Answers should show <u>contrasts</u> between the 2 parties to be awarded the mark.</i></p>
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### Paragraph 9

**Q9. "We must find ways for all members of the community to re-forge an 'adult alliance' to support families in raising their young." (lines 72 – 73) Why does the author switch to 'we' in this sentence? [1]**

<p>Still, hope is not lost. Educationalists and child-development experts are leading the charge to introduce national guidelines regulating screen use. Progressive leaders are eager to level the playing field for those from less privileged backgrounds. <b>We</b> must find ways for all members of the community to re-forge an 'adult alliance' to support families in raising their young. The statistics emerging now about children's mental health must act as a wake-up call to everyone concerned about the well-being of the future.</p>	<p>The author wants to <b>be inclusive to exhort readers to take action</b> [1] OR The author wants to <b>highlight that every person has an active role to play in resolving this problem</b> OR The author <b>wishes to emphasise that fixing the problems faced by children today is a collective task</b> OR The author wants to <b>gain the readers' support in order to solve this problem collectively</b></p> <p><i>Note: Accept any sensible / reasonable answer as long as it is contextualised.</i></p>
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### Paragraph 10

**Q10. What is the author implying about the "new ways to provide a secure, healthy family life" (lines 77-78) by claiming that "none of this is rocket science" (line 78)? [1]**

<p>But the main responsibility for rearing children, however, lies – as it always has – with parents. They have to wise up, stop overreacting to a combination of rapid change, uncertainty and guilt, and find new ways to provide a secure, healthy family life for their offspring. <b>None of this is rocket science</b>, but in terms of our civilisation's future, it is far more important than rocket science. Given that they are growing up in a time of peace and plenty, apathy and discontentment should not be a natural state for our children. We owe them at least this much.</p>	<p>She is implying that her suggestions on how to fix the problem of rearing children well are <b>so tellingly obvious</b> that <b>no one would quibble with /contest them</b> OR <b>they are very easy to understand</b> / not complex nor complicated [1] OR they are <b>not solutions that can only be carried out by experts</b> / it is <b>not something that requires specialised knowledge</b> OR <b>everyone can solve these problems without too much trouble.</b> [1]</p> <p><i>Note: Accept any reasonable/ sensible answer.</i></p>
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### Application Question

**Q11. Sue Palmer shares her concerns about the state of childhood today and believes that more can be done to make it better. How applicable do you find her observations to you and your society? [10]**

- Students should consider, from a range of points in the passage, whether or not the degree to which situations in Singapore or the students' home countries reflect the perspective of the writer and substantiate what has been done to address the concerns she raises. Balance must be attempted. There will be readings/responses that range from nuanced to merely valid or even trite. Markers should give credit where possible.
- While it might be possible for students to be influenced by their personal experiences, the discerning will recognise that these may not necessarily reflect the situation of others in their society. They will prudently qualify/demarcate the extent or deftly hedge to avoid hasty conclusions or overgeneralisations.
- Given time constraints, students will not be able to manage every expectation or angle (well) and must not be unfairly penalised. If they have presented an adequate answer, credit must be given.
- Students must be strategic about the points they select for application as not every aspect of or observation in the passage has value in being commented on. The following table highlights examples of non-strategic evaluation/application as well as examples that have evaluative/applicatory value:



Text Reference	Ⓢ Non-strategic evaluation/application	Ⓢ Strategic evaluation/application
<b>Paragraph 1:</b> For most of Western history, childhood was short and brutish, even non-existent.	Palmer's historical exposition of children's treatment is inapplicable in Singapore as local children did not historically experience such brutality.	None. Please do not evaluate (generally) historically accurate factual detail. Even if Singapore's historical experience is different, there may be no significant value in pointing out this difference.
<b>Paragraph 3:</b> [T]he introduction of mandatory education meant children's period of dependency had to be lengthened.	Singapore introduced compulsory primary education in 2000, and has recently amended the Compulsory Education Act to include children with special needs.	Singapore's recent amendment of the Compulsory Education Act to include children with special needs <b>attests to our society's continuing efforts to walk the talk on being a more inclusive nation, and so do the best for all our children.</b>
<b>Paragraph 4:</b> Old-school games like Conkers...have fallen out of favour...  [T]he PlayStation is the playground of today.	In Singapore, children no longer play traditional games such as 'chapteh', 'five stones', or 'zero point'. Besides the PlayStation, the Xbox and the GameBoy are also popular gadgets with local children.	None. The AQ is not the platform to list descriptive detail unless it serves the larger purpose of pointing out something <b>significant</b> about the nature of the student's society. (e.g. "Our improved affluence coupled with the desire to protect children from any physical injuries have contributed to the demise of old-school games such as 'chapteh' and 'zero point' as the most convenient recreation tools are now mobile devices with Internet access. We have become so technologically-reliant even in terms of recreation that many children (even adults) do not know what to do / how to entertain themselves without these electronic gadgets / without Internet access.")
<b>Paragraph 7:</b> [E]ducation authorities and schools have not been spared the seeping of the cut-throat competitive culture of the adult world into their walls.  The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom...	Singapore schools are renowned for being academic pressure cookers, pushing students ever more and more to the brink to excel in every subject, every CCA and every Service Learning project. It is unsurprising that our youth suicide rates are soaring while our young, soft bodies hurtle and plummet headfirst into the hard earth. (Exaggerated and extremely one-sided evaluation; imitation is here NOT the best form of flattery!)	While Singapore schools are not spared from the intense academic competitiveness that Palmer outlines, the government has recognised the extremely unhealthy effects of this culture of competitiveness and has taken steps to ameliorate it, such as by reforming the PSLE grading system and refining the Direct Admissions Scheme to de-emphasise the importance of grades. (Evaluation is balanced and objective)

#### Sample detailed answers:

Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
<b>Paragraph 5:</b> Unsurprisingly, evidence is mounting that children today are in fact experiencing a toxic childhood – a lethal concoction of technological and cultural changes that is having a deleterious impact on their development.	Currently, about 10 per cent of five-year-olds are overweight, a concern flagged out by the National Health Group's May 2019 report 'River of Life: NHG's Perspectives on Population Health'. The report predicted that seven in 10 children who were overweight at the age of seven would go on to become obese as adults.  The technologically-driven entertainment and recreation culture is also posing a rather toxic environment for	While there are several aspects of childhood in Singapore that can be improved, it is hasty to claim children in Singapore are experiencing a 'toxic childhood'. The Singapore Government's efforts to improve the rights of children have been commended by a United Nations (UN) committee, who acknowledges that Singapore has made significant progress in advancing children's rights since the last review in 2011. Such efforts include her forthcoming

Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
Sated on diets of junk foods and TV dinners, barred from the rough and tumble of outdoor play, children are also victims of an obesity explosion.	Children here. Cases of excessive use of mobile devices have more than doubled in 3 years and a recent study by global digital group DQ and Singtel revealed that Singapore children spend more time online for entertainment – 35 hours / week – compared to the global average of 32 hours. Those with mobile phones spend 15 more hours online than those without and 70% of them are more exposed to cyber risk. Other than contributing to the obesity rates in children, they are also posing a real addiction risk as there are young children at 5 years old seeking counselling to overcome this problem.	amendments to raise the age limit of the Children and Young Persons Act from 16 years to 18 years to better protect her children, the use of robust screening and reporting tools for child protection, the establishment of the Family Justice Courts, and significant investments in the Early Childhood Education sector. The areas for improvement noted by the UN committee - in abuse prevention and sexuality education – are not issues raised by Palmer.
Continually exposed to the 24/7 culture of televisual and online entertainment, they are prime targets for exploitation by the anonymous army of marketers lurking behind those omnipresent screens.  Regrettably, a generation of mini-consumers who equate happiness with materialism is being created as they learn from their new parents: vacuous screen idols.	Children in Singapore seem to be given a headstart on a toxic childhood – research conducted by Google in March 2019 found that the average age that Singapore children get their first internet-accessed device is eight. This is the youngest age among all the countries involved in the survey and lower than the global average age of ten years.  According to Dr Park, founder of DQ Institute which is dedicated to improving digital education and innovation, “what [children] see and play online...[as well as] who they meet...can influence their development greatly, even more so than parents or teachers”. The excessive use of mobile devices has been associated with poorer sleep quality which affects one's mood and mental capacity and brings about weaker school performance and gadget addiction issues.	Parents are not oblivious to the online dangers faced by children. For example, 96 percent of parents and teachers surveyed in the March Google survey expressed their concerns about the online safety of children, and recognised the need for children to acquire digital literacy education. NLB and MOE have initiated media literacy campaigns to educate children.
<b>Paragraph 6:</b> This commercialisation of childhood has been accompanied by its 'schoolification': tots as tiny as three are bused and herded into full-day nurseries, endlessly scheduled and timetabled into routines in order for their parents to work and feed the economy. Back home, these tots spend time with electronic babysitters and are fed yet more visual stimulation.	There might be some basis for Palmer's claims. The Families for Life Council, which seeks to build strong families, revealed in a 2016 survey that one in 10 of the 700 respondents spend six hours or fewer with their immediate families a week, and about half of the respondents spend over 36 hours a week (or about five hours daily) with immediate family members.  While the commercialisation of childhood which is accompanied by its 'schoolification' is applicable to Singapore to a large extent, as most families here are dual-income ones, the negative impact is not as dire as what Palmer claims. In fact, such a 'schoolification' process that the child undergoes plays an integral role in building the child's development and optimising his/her growth as these	While it is common for Singapore parents to drop their children at daycare centres, the situation is not as dire as Palmer makes it out to be. Many toddlers continue to be cared for by their grandparents. Childcare centres institute fines and other penalties if parents pick their children up late. From organising birthday celebrations to accompanying children on excursions, parents are involved in their toddlers' lives even when they are at daycare. There are many centres established in the workspaces of larger companies so that parents can drop off their children before work and drop in during lunchtime to see how their tots are doing. Singapore parents are increasingly paying more attention to the importance of work-life balance and of spending enough time with their children, especially in their early

Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
	<p>nurseries have scaffolded and structured programmes that cater to the needs and abilities of children at different age groups, to ensure that they are well-supported and developed in their early years, as this is shown to make a significant difference to their overall growth and development later.</p>	<p>years.</p>
<p>Is it any wonder these mini-mechanicals sleepwalk into formal education bereft of any real interest in anything and without an independent streak whatsoever?</p> <p>School teachers who bewail the precipitous decline in their students' communication skills and shortened attention spans often point to those early years spent in supervised care and the premature digitalisation of their lifestyles as the culprits.</p>	<p>Concerns are perennially raised that the education system at all levels is still too grades-focused, stressing children at increasingly younger ages. The pre-school enrichment industry is booming, and some offer remediation for pre-school children, especially in the languages. Anecdotally, teachers and parents have complained about their charges' poor quality of written work and their shortened attention spans.</p> <p>While it may be true that some students do not have any clue or any real interest or passion nor are they independent even as they grow up as teenagers, it is not fair to lay the blame on supervised care and premature digitalisation of their lifestyles as the culprits. Often, these are likely to be children who are not given the autonomy to make important decisions as parents/guardians/teachers often deem them to be too immature to know what is best for themselves. The general reliance on 'tried-and-tested' routes and decisions is the well-trodden path that most parents / guardians would influence their children / charges to take. Very few enlightened adults would allow their children / charges to take the risk of making the wrong decision and suffer the consequences for it. (E.g. which CCA the child should enrol in, the subject combination to offer in secondary schools, junior colleges and/or polytechnics/universities, the kind of friends one should keep etc.).</p>	<p>The increasing emphasis on student-centric learning and learning through experiential play in pre-school education suggest that pre-school educators are fully on board in the attempt to engage early learners in different ways so as to nurture and develop their young interests.</p> <p>There is no established evidence to suggest that Singapore students' oral and written communication skills are as atrocious as Palmer makes it out to be. In fact, a greater emphasis on oral communication and presentation skills at many levels of the education system suggests that oral competency continues to be a key learning outcome of the education system in Singapore.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 7:</b></p> <p>Strangely, in a world where there are more ways to communicate than ever before, parents now connect less and less with their own children, spawning another new list of problems: cyber addiction, cyber bullying, cyber depression, cyber you-name-it.</p>	<p>Youth counselling centres and clinics are seeing more cases of youths struggling with self-esteem issues due to their exposure to social media.</p> <p>Commissioned by international think-tank DQ Institute, the 2018 DQ Impact Report polled about 38,000 children in the age group in 29 countries and found that in Singapore, 54 per cent of children with social media accounts who were polled were exposed to at least one cyber risk, with 43 per</p>	<p>The Cyber Security Awareness Alliance, formed in 2008, runs programmes and initiatives under the 'gosafeonline' tagline that target children and teens. Many Social Service Agencies (SSOs) such as Touch Community Services have given more focus to cyber issues and interventions for minors on such issues.</p>



Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
<p>These are all par for the course as study after study has detected similarities between the brain activity of cocaine addicts and our young digital natives.</p>	<p>cent victims of cyber bullying, 16 per cent involved in online sexual behaviours, and 12 per cent having chatted online with strangers and meeting them.</p>	
<p>Meanwhile, education authorities and schools have not been spared the seeping of the cut-throat competitive culture of the adult world into their walls.</p>	<p>In meritocratic Singapore, a country with high economic inequality, many parents hope their children can outpace their peers to lead comfortable lives in the future. Some might become ferocious “Tiger Moms” intensive parenting by keeping their children’s noses to the grindstone in both academic and non-academic domains to attain stellar achievements.</p>	<p>The government has made addressing inequality a core priority in recent years, and has specifically regarded education as a key weapon in doing so. Recent education reforms have attempted to change parents, students and employers’ mindsets that grades should not be the major indicator of success. However, unless our assessment evolves to include other yardsticks that measure the quality of learning without the obsession with grades/scores, such idealistic notions are likely to remain as they are – mere ideals, given our pragmatic and achievement-oriented culture.</p>
<p>The obsession with tests and league tables has infected the classroom, leaving these young charges reeling from the – let’s face it – high-stakes Darwinian rat race that helicopter parents are desperate to win by means fair or foul.</p>	<p>A study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found that Singaporean students were significantly more anxious about tests and grades compared to their international peers.</p> <p>Based on the latest Household Expenditure Survey, families spent a collective sum of \$1.4 billion on tuition for their children in 2017/2018 and the number of tuition and enrichment centres has increased from 700 in 2012 to 950 in 2019. The stark realities of income inequality can be attested by another key finding: the top 20% of households spends as much as four times the amount on tuition as the bottom 20% and the quality of tutors is very likely to vary widely, depending on the amount these parents are willing to fork out.</p>	
<p>These parents ensure their privileged offspring’s access to the best higher educational opportunities that money can buy, securing the latter’s station in the upper echelons of society.</p>	<p>As of 2019, there are about 47 types of enrichment classes – baby gymnastics, drama, choir and culinary classes – that children can be signed up for and parents who have the means to do so are likely to give their child the desired headstart over other less privileged children. Check them out on <a href="https://www.youngparents.com.sg/education/40-enrichment-classes-in-singapore-preschoolers-and-schoolkids/">https://www.youngparents.com.sg/education/40-enrichment-classes-in-singapore-preschoolers-and-schoolkids/</a>.</p>	
	<p>Even the well-intended DSA admission policy (which aims to acknowledge and give more children a chance to be admitted to a school of their choice based on their talents and other non-academic achievements) has been used as an engineered move by highly competitive parents to</p>	



Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
<p>secure their children's coveted spot. These parents have planned their 'investments' strategically by sending their children for the necessary lessons in the niche area of the school (e.g. golf, performance arts) from a young age to build their portfolio which will 'naturally' allow their children to stand out from the pool of DSA talent. As these parents tend to have time on their hands and the financial means to do so, some may even employ a portfolio-building coach / professional to get this done for their child since young.</p>	<p>In its report to the UN on Singapore's progress in implementing the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), local gender advocacy group Aware called for policies to level the playing field and promote equality among children, such as free childcare for low-income households and an end to discrimination against single-parent or transnational families. It pointed out that government data had revealed that there are a few thousand children in Singapore whose parents cannot afford childcare even after basic and additional subsidies. The current system of subsidy application has been flagged as being overly complicated. Single mothers cannot secure a flat under current HDB family schemes.</p>	<p>To help children from disadvantaged homes level up, a new 8-member, inter-agency task force called Uplift, short for Uplifting Pupils in Life and Inspiring Families Taskforce, was set up in October 2018, headed by Second Minister for Education Indraneel Rajah.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 8:</b> Such hyper-parenting behaviour has exacerbated already massive social inequalities.</p> <p>Parents in underprivileged households, handicapped by a lack of funds, knowledge and connections, can only watch helplessly as crushing new inequalities push the dream of intergenerational social mobility further and further out of reach of their children.</p>	<p>In Singapore, many students from top schools are seeking help at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) for school-related stress. IMH has noted that stress-related, anxiety and depressive disorders are common conditions seen at its Child Guidance Clinics, which treat children aged six to 18. School-related stress could be academic-based (homework, examinations, projects) or relationship-linked (issues with school authorities, friendship and bullying).</p>	<p>Acknowledging that there is a correlation between academic performance and the socio-economic background of families, the panel will be focusing on children of the bottom 20-40 percent households in pre-schools and the early primary years, as research has shown that it is especially critical to intervene in the child's early years to give them a good start in life.</p>
<p>But a problem of crisis proportions for children everywhere has ensued with this uneven realisation of socio-economic aspirations across all income groups. National Health Service (NHS) figures published in July 2018 revealed that almost 400,000 children and young people aged 18 and below have been in contact with the health service for mental health related problems.</p>	<p>The Singapore government's recent moves to reform the PSLE grading system, scrap streaming, and allow more flexibility into the Direct School Admission (DSA) Scheme is in response to concerns about school stress and its deleterious impact on children.</p>	<p>The Singapore government is aware that providing access to early childhood education is one of the key ways to intervene to ensure social mobility stays liquid. PM Lee announced during the 2019 National Day Rally that Singapore's annual spending on early childhood education will more than double over the next few years. The Government also will raise the income ceiling of households eligible for pre-school subsidies to S\$12,000 per month, up from the current S\$7,500. This will result in an additional 30,000 more households in Singapore qualifying for preschool subsidies. There are also plans to increase the percentage of Government-supported pre-schools from 50 per cent to 80 per cent</p>
<p>Is it not time to question why, in one of the wealthiest, most technologically advanced eras on Earth, we are unable to raise a generation that is wholesome</p>		

Reference	Applicable to Singapore	Not very applicable to Singapore
<p>and healthy, passionate and purposeful, emotionally sentient and sensible...?</p> <p><b>Paragraph 9:</b> Still, hope is not lost. Educators and child-development experts are leading the charge to influence institutions to introduce national guidelines regulating screen use. Progressive leaders are eager to level the playing field for those from less privileged backgrounds.</p> <p>The statistics emerging now about children's mental health must act as a wake-up call to everyone concerned about the well-being of the future.</p> <p>We must find ways for all members of the community to re-forge an 'adult alliance' to support families in raising their young.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education has introduced a slew of measures to reduce the stress and nation-wide obsession with grades and scores and to promote the joy of learning. (Read more at <a href="https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/education/fewer-exams-for-students-less-emphasis-on-grades">https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/education/fewer-exams-for-students-less-emphasis-on-grades</a>). Many welcomed this move as the stress levels for children / students here is getting rather unhealthy and debilitating for some. These changes are all part of a new phase in Singapore's education system, which Education Minister Ong Ye Kung termed "Learn for Life – a value, an attitude and a skill that our students need to possess, and it is fundamental in ensuring that education remains an uplifting force in society." One such move is the cutting of the mid-year examinations which will provide students with more time to adjust during "key transition" years, when they have to study new subjects and deal with higher content rigour. It will also free up about three weeks of curriculum time every two years. For this shift to succeed, Mr Ong said, MOE needs to "bring the most important stakeholder - parents - on board" and convince them that the changes do not compromise on academic standards. Schools also need to engage parents differently; instead of telling parents that their children have to get their homework done or comparing results with those of their classmates, the question that matters, said Mr Ong, is: "What makes your child's eyes light up?"</p> <p>In Singapore, campaigns like <i>The Life Beyond Grades</i> serve as a timely reminder to many parents not to pursue grades relentlessly to the detriment of their children's health. Another ambit of the Uplift panel is to look into stepping up parent outreach and parenting programmes to empower less-privileged families. In its submission to the UN on the progress of Singapore in implementing the CRC provisions, the Singapore's Children Society has stressed that it would also be crucial to have a road map for the child rights sector so that all stakeholders – from the State, NGOs and businesses, to families and children themselves – can be on the same page in bringing child rights closer to home.</p>	<p>eventually.</p> <p>Though the Ministry of Education (Singapore) is leading the change to the system by focusing on the joy of learning and reduce the emphasis on grades and scores, their current proposed measures are unlikely to be fruitful because these are but slight adjustments which have minimal impact on the deeply entrenched Singaporean psyche – the need to do well. This is especially so in a meritocracy-driven society like ours where social mobility has been a dream come true for many. Most parents (who are also walking testaments of social mobility) will still do their utmost for their children, especially in terms of sending them for tuition to secure those 'A's (no longer about passing the subjects) out of care and concern for their charges. Not doing so can be seen as poor and irresponsible parenting. Parents would rather err on the side of caution and go with the 'tried-and-tested' method of securing their children's success. In fact, some parents became concerned about the removal of exams which they deem as important checkpoints in their children's learning; they are enrolling their child in tuition centres that conduct internal assessments in order to ensure that the children are not left behind, now that there are fewer yardsticks to indicate where they are in terms of their learning progress.</p>

### Meanwhile, in other parts of the world....

- According to the WHO, childhood obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. The problem is global and is steadily affecting many low- and middle-income countries, particularly in urban settings. The prevalence has increased at an alarming rate. Globally, in 2016 the number of overweight children under the age of five, is estimated to be over 41 million. Almost half of all overweight children under 5 lived in Asia and one quarter lived in Africa. According to the CDC, in the United States, the percentage of children and adolescents affected by obesity has more than tripled since the 1970s. Data from 2015-2016 show that nearly 1 in 5 school age children and young people (6 to 19 years) in the United States has obesity.
- According to Bitkom, an industry association, children are starting on digital devices at ever younger ages. In Germany 67% of 10- to 11-year-olds already have their own smartphones, rising to 88% for 12- to 13-year-olds, in Britain 83% of 11- to 12-year-olds and 96% of 13- to 14-year-olds have their own phones, says Childwise, a research outfit.
- Early-childhood education and care is attracting a surge of interest in most rich countries. Across the OECD, the average enrolment of three- to five-year-olds into pre-schools rose from 75% in 2005 to 85% in 2016. Increasingly, it is moving out of the home and into institutions, a process that experts dub "defamilisation". Across the OECD, average enrolment of three- to five-year-olds rose from 75% in 2005 to 85% in 2016. Child-care costs in Britain as a proportion of average incomes are among the world's highest. In France, the ubiquitous, subsidised écoles maternelles, which take children from the age of two, have long been the envy of working mothers elsewhere in Europe. Denmark, along with other Nordic countries, decided to make institutional care for young children universal 30 or 40 years ago.
- Research examining social media use and shortened attention spans – for example, the 2009 report 'Generation Y: Inside Out' – gives inconclusive or mixed results. According to a new study published in the journal Preventive Medicine Reports, young people who spend seven hours or more a day on screens are more than twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety, were more easily distracted, less emotionally stable and had more problems finishing tasks and making friends than those who use screens for an hour a day, finds Roughly 20% of 14- to 17-year-olds spent this amount of time on screens each day.
- In a study published online in the journal EClinicalMedicine in Jan 2019 analysing data from nearly 11,000 young people in Britain, teenage girls are twice as likely as boys to show depressive symptoms linked to social media use— mainly due to online harassment and disturbed sleep, as well as poor body image and lower self-esteem.
- Psychology professor Jean Twenge opines in her book "iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood—and What That Means for the Rest of Us" that excessive use of the internet and social media makes children lonely and depressed and poses serious risks to their physical and particularly their mental health, sometimes to the point of driving them to suicide. However, Daniel Kardefelt-Winther of the Innocent research office of Unicef, looked at all the evidence he could find on how children's use of digital technology affected their mental well-being, their social relationships and their physical activity, and found less cause for alarm than is often suggested.
- The relationship between the use of digital technology and children's mental health, broadly speaking, appears to be U-shaped. Researchers have found that moderate use is beneficial, whereas either no use at all or extreme use could be harmful. But in either case the effects are very small, and children generally prove surprisingly resilient to moderate or even high levels of screen time. Although there are clear instances of overuse, terms like "addiction" or "compulsive use" may be overblown. There is no real evidence that spending too much time online severely impairs the user's life in the longer term, as drug abuse often does.
- Across all post-industrial economies, the hypothesis of a link between inequality and parenting fits the evidence remarkably well both over time and across space. The intensity of parenting can be measured using the World Values Survey. The proportion of respondents who agree with intensive parenting is closely associated with the level of economic inequality in the country.
- A recent report by the World Bank showed that intergenerational social mobility (the chance that the next generation will end up in a different social class from the previous one) in the land of dreams is now among the lowest in all rich countries.
- The Global Childhood Report 2019 notes that poorer children are not benefiting as much as those from wealthier families, widening the gap between rich and poor children.
- Jane Waldfogel of Columbia University and Liz Washbrook of the University of Bristol separated out the effects of different parenting styles and home learning environments on the cognitive performance of three- to five-year-olds from different income groups in America and Britain. They found that they accounted for between a third and half of the income-related gap.
- Harvard political scientist Robert Putnam in his book "Our Kids" argues that different child-raising conventions are reinforcing a growing divide in American



society. The privileged top third is pulling ever further ahead of the disadvantaged bottom third, whose families are often fractured and whose lives tend to be precarious.

- Mental-health problems represent the largest burden of disease among young people. One study across ten OECD countries found that a quarter of all young people had a mental disorder.
- The Global Childhood Report 2019 notes political commitment by national governments was a critical factor in determining a country's progress in caring for its kids. Ethiopia, for example, made some of the most pronounced improvements over the past 18 years.
- Academics such as James Heckman of the University of Chicago, believe that government investment in early childhood in institutional care pays off both for individuals and for society at large – between 7% and 13%. He cites 2 long-term studies of children from poor homes that began decades ago – The Perry Preschool Project in Michigan and the Abecedarian Project in North Carolina – which suggest that offering extra support for such children pays off not just in academic results but also in social and economic outcomes: better health, less poverty and less crime. Isabel Sawhill and Quentin Karpilow at the Brookings Institution also found that well-targeted interventions—such as providing advice for parents and extra support for struggling children—improved the chances of disadvantaged kids becoming middle class when they grow up.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_



**JURONG PIONEER JUNIOR COLLEGE**

**JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019**

**GENERAL PAPER**  
**Higher 1**

Paper 1

**8807/01**

**16 September 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional materials: Writing Paper

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, civics class, and GP Tutor's name on every sheet of paper you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.  
You are reminded of the need for clear presentation in your answer.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **2** printed pages.

**[Turn over]**

Answer **one** question from this paper.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. Has social media given people too much power?
2. 'Man is helpless in the face of climate change.' Do you agree?
3. 'We are a privileged yet discontented lot.' How far is this true of your society?
4. Should technological advancement be encouraged when it outpaces ethics?
5. Evaluate the claim that governments should not be allowed to restrict the rights of their citizens.
6. 'An ageing workforce is an opportunity, not a burden.' Is this true of your society?
7. Is there any point in remembering the past?
8. 'Trivial news is worthless.' Is this a fair comment?
9. To what extent are the arts a platform for social change?
10. 'It does not pay to be kind.' Discuss.
11. Can migration be justified when it creates social problems?
12. 'The world would be a better place if young people were more involved in politics.' What is your view?



**George Monbiot and Owen Jones write about the power and pervasiveness of advertising.**

- 1 We think we know who the enemies are: banks, big business, lobbyists, the politicians who exist to appease them. But somehow the advertising industry which stitches this system of hyper-capitalism together gets overlooked. That seems strange when you consider how pervasive advertising is. In fact you can probably see it right now. It is everywhere, yet we see without seeing, without understanding the role that it plays in our lives. 5
- 2 For obvious reasons, advertising is seldom confronted by either the newspapers or the broadcasters. But it should not be ignored given that it raises serious concerns. For a start, advertising claims to enhance our choice, but it offers us little choice about whether we see and hear it, and even less choice about whether we respond to it. Since Edward Bernays began to apply the findings of his uncle Sigmund Freud<sup>1</sup>, advertisers have been developing sophisticated means of overcoming our defences. In public they insist that if we become informed consumers and school our children in media literacy we have nothing to fear from their attempts at persuasion. In private they employ neurobiologists to find ever more ingenious methods of bypassing the conscious mind. 10
- 3 Pervasiveness and repetition act like a battering ram against our minds. The first time we see an advertisement, we are likely to be aware of what it is telling us and what it is encouraging us to buy. From then on, we process it passively, absorbing its imagery and messages without contesting them, as we are no longer fully switched on. Brands and memes then become linked in ways our conscious minds fail to detect. As a report by the progressive think tank Compass explains, the messages used by advertisers are designed to trigger emotional rather than rational responses. The low attention processing model developed by Robert Heath at the University of Bath shows how, in a crowded advertising market, passive and implicit learning become the key drivers of emotional attachment. They are particularly powerful among children, as the pre-frontal cortex – which helps us to interpret and analyse what we see – is not yet fully developed. 15  
20  
25
- 4 Advertising agencies build on this knowledge to minimise opportunities for the rational mind to intervene in choice. The research company TwoMinds, which has worked for Betfair, the drinks company Diageo, Mars, Nationwide and Waitrose, seeks to ‘uncover a layer of behavioural drivers that have previously remained elusive’. New developments in neurobiology have allowed it to home in on ‘intuitive judgements’ that ‘are made instantaneously and with little or no apparent conscious effort on the part of consumers – at point of purchase’. 30
- 5 Brands are also increasingly preying on customers’ social awareness. There is no shortage of examples today of profit-driven companies deploying good causes for advertising purposes. In the US, Burger King launched its #FeelYourWay campaign to mark Mental Awareness month, partly trolling its chief competitor, McDonald’s Happy Meals, by selling products such as a ‘Blue Meal’ or a ‘Pissed Meal’ (because you do not always have to be happy to eat there). But we are not just talking about the culinary world: Gillette notoriously launched an advert inspired by #MeToo’s challenge to toxic masculinity; Colin Kaepernick, a US football player and civil rights activist who sank to his knee rather than sing the national anthem to protest against police racism, became the face of a Nike campaign. You do not have to have digested Karl Marx’s Das Kapital to recognise that companies are driven by the profit motive, not changing the world. But can advertising ever have an ethical dimension? According to estimates by the New Economics Foundation think tank, the negative consequences of advertising – from promoting indebtedness to ‘social and environmental damage’ – meant that for every pound of value generated by an advertising executive, £11 worth was destroyed. When brands flash their support for just causes, are 35  
40  
45

<sup>1</sup> Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis.

they not cynically preying on your conscience so you will cough up – a phenomenon known as ‘woke-washing’?

- 6 The power and pervasiveness of advertising helps to explain the remarkable figure from the latest government spreadsheet on household spending. Households in the UK put an average of just £5.70 a week, or £296 a year, into savings and investments. Academic research suggests a link between advertising and both consumer debt and the number of hours we work. The negative impact of advertising is felt in so many ways. People who watch a lot of advertisements appear to save less, spend more and use more of their time working to meet their rising material aspirations. All three outcomes can have further terrible impacts on family life. They also change the character of the nation. Burdened by debt, without savings, we are less free, less resilient, less able to stand up to those who bully us. 50 55
- 7 Invention is the mother of necessity. To keep their markets growing, companies must keep persuading us that we have unmet needs. In other words, they must encourage us to become dissatisfied with what we have. To be sexy, beautiful, happy, relaxed, we must buy their products. They shove us onto the hedonic treadmill, on which we must run ever faster to escape a growing sense of inadequacy. The problem this causes was identified almost 300 years ago. In Robinson Crusoe, published in 1719, the hero remarks, ‘it put me to reflecting, how little repining there would be among mankind, at any condition of life, if people would rather compare their condition with those that are worse, in order to be thankful, than be always comparing them with those which are better, to assist their murmurings and complainings.’ Advertising encourages us to compare ourselves to those we perceive to be better off. It persuades us to trash our happiness and trash the biosphere to answer a craving it exists to perpetuate. 60 65 70
- 8 But perhaps the most important impact is the effect advertising has on our values. We are not born with our values: they are embedded and normalised by the messages we receive from our social environment. Most advertising appeals to and reinforces extrinsic values. People with largely extrinsic values are driven by a desire for status, wealth and power over others. It does not matter what the product is: by celebrating image, beauty, wealth, power and status, it helps create an environment which shifts our value system. Some advertisements appear to promote intrinsic values, associating their products with family life and strong communities. But they also create the impression that these intrinsic values can be purchased, which demeans and undermines them. People regard love, for example, as commingled with material aspiration, and those worthy of this love mostly conform to a narrow conception of beauty, lending greater weight to the importance of image. 75 80
- 9 As sales of print editions decline, newspapers lean even more heavily on advertising. Nor is the problem confined to the commercial media. Even those who write only for their own websites rely on search engines, platforms and programmes ultimately funded by advertising. We are hooked on a drug that is destroying society. As with all addictions, the first step is to admit to it. 85

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_



**JURONG PIONEER JUNIOR COLLEGE**

**JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**Higher 1**

Paper 2

**8807/02**

**16 September 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

**ANSWER BOOKLET & INSERT**

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

The Insert is attached at the back of the Answer Booklet.

Write your name and civics class in the spaces provided above.

Write in dark blue or black pen on the answer booklet.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions in the Answer Booklet.

The Insert attached contains the passage for the comprehension.

Note that **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

You are reminded of the need for clear presentation in your answers.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question.

For Examiner's Use	
SAQ	/ 17
SQ	/ 8
AQ	/ 10
LANGUAGE	/ 15
TOTAL	/ 50

This document consists of **7** printed pages (including the cover page), **1** blank page  
and the **Insert** (2 pages).

**[Turn over]**

## PAPER 2

For  
examiner's  
use

*Read the passage and then answer all the questions which follow below. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this paper.*

*Note: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.*

1. What are the authors suggesting by writing 'We think we know' (line 1)?

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..... [2]

2. Explain the irony in lines 8-9.

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..... [1]

3. How are advertisers 'developing sophisticated means of overcoming our defences' (lines 10-11) in paragraph 2? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [3]

4. Explain what the authors mean by 'the messages used by advertisers are designed to trigger emotional rather than rational responses' (lines 20-21). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [2]

5. What similarities are there between the 'low attention processing model' (line 21) and the 'New developments in neurobiology' (lines 29-30)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [2]

6. Give the two ways in which the authors illustrate how profit-driven companies deploy 'good causes for advertising purposes' (lines 34-35). **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

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..... [2]

7. Why have the authors placed brackets around the comment in lines 37-38?

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..... [2]

8. What are the authors suggesting about the brands by using the phrase 'cynically preying' (line 48)? [2]

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..... [2]

9. Suggest one reason why there is a need to heed the advice given in the last sentence.

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..... [1]

10. Using material from paragraphs 6 to 8 only, summarise what the author has to say about the negative impact of advertising.

One negative impact is .....

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.....[8]



For  
examiner's  
use

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

.....[10]

**END OF PAPER**

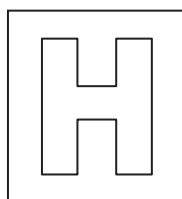
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Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class      Adm No

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## 2019 Preliminary Exams Pre-University 3

### GENERAL PAPER

**8807/01**

Paper 1

**2 September 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and admission number in the spaces provided at the top of this page and on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/30
Language	/20
Total	/50

This question paper consists of 2 printed pages.

Answer **one** question.

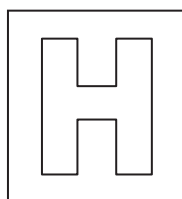
Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Given the global impact of climate change, should every country play an equal part in saving the environment?
- 2 'City life is becoming increasingly unsafe.' Discuss.
- 3 Should effort be rewarded just as much as outcome?
- 4 'If a job can be replaced by machines, it probably should.' To what extent do you agree?
- 5 How far should migration of people be encouraged?
- 6 'The media today has made society less open.' What is your view?
- 7 To what extent can small countries wield substantial influence in the world?
- 8 Examine the view that a good leader should be effective rather than popular.
- 9 To what extent does your society embrace diversity?
- 10 'Myths and legends are purely for children's entertainment.' What is your view?
- 11 'As a society progresses, there is little value in preserving its heritage.' How true is this of your society?
- 12 Should the government support only scientific research that can benefit the majority of the people?

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class    Adm No

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## 2019 Preliminary Exams Pre-University 3

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**2 September 2019**

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your **name**, **class** and **admission number** in the spaces provided at the top of this page.  
This insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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This question paper consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

**[Turn over**

Sam Lien considers how philanthropy can help to address inequality.

- 1 In late 2011, the Occupy protestors set up camp in New York not far from Wall Street, the heart of global capitalism. They represented a diverse set of interests and concerns, but around one slogan they could unite: "We are the 99%." In its campaigning for "the 99%" against "the 1%," the Occupy movement arguably represented the strongest statement yet of concern over one of today's hottest issues—income inequality. Income inequality endures despite numerous attempts to eradicate it. These attempts are akin to the labours of Sisyphus, the mythical Greek king whose eternal punishment is to push a rock up a steep hill, only to find it rolling back on nearing the top. 5
- 2 The common wisdom so far points to an obvious solution: raise the earned income of the low-income, tax the high-income more, or encourage voluntary transfers through philanthropy. Unfortunately, despite numerous governmental efforts, the ratio of chief executive pay to the median worker continues to escalate. CEOs of the largest 350 companies earn more than 300 times what the average worker earns. Conversely, top marginal tax rates for income earners in developed countries have stagnated and even fallen in recent times. The growing global call for philanthropy—for wealthy individuals and companies to aid the poor through their generosity is unsurprising. 10 15
- 3 While the idea that people should help others to overcome the lottery of birth—over which no one has control—is laudable, it is not practical and has elicited cynicism. Has philanthropy made a difference to realities on the ground? Does it entrench existing inequality by preserving the tradition of *noblesse oblige*, that those blessed with good fortune by virtue of birth, luck or opportunities should extend kindness and generosity to those in need? And so, economists argued that societies cannot have both perfect equality and perfect efficiency and must choose how much of one to sacrifice for the other. 20
- 4 Ironically, the forces that drove increasing inequality similarly powered philanthropy's rapid rise. Capitalism increases the likelihood of surplus wealth and the chance that some of the surplus wealth held by the richest among us will exchange hands as charity. While philanthropic organisations have bold rhetoric on inequality, their own practices may not be effective, accountable or inclusive. A recent trend in philanthropy sees the shift from the traditional grant-making to impact investments and venture philanthropy. These new approaches to philanthropy match the soul of philanthropy with the spirit of investment. However, such market-based social solutions promote a win-win narrative that instead perpetuates and preserves the existing social order. Others see big philanthropy as a dangerous plutocratic influence—an exercise of power by the wealthy that is unaccountable (to neither stakeholders nor electorates), non-transparent, donor-directed, and tax-subsidised. 25 30 35
- 5 These criticisms are valid for a proportion of philanthropic practice. Philanthropy can sometimes be more about advancing a self-interested agenda or public relations strategy. However, philanthropy can be a greater force for good. Prevailing views on philanthropy assume that the more people have, the more they give—and this has a mitigating effect on inequality. It can take on important but unpopular issues—as it did on campaigning for the abolition of the slave trade, or, more recently, child marriage. It can take on the issues that governments can, or will, not. 40
- 6 Despite criticisms, more philanthropy is still better than less philanthropy, even if some of the motivations are not entirely altruistic. It can help to bridge some of the social gaps. The root meaning of "philanthropy" is love for humankind. Much more than money, what is critical is the sense of solidarity; the belief in the inter-connectedness between every person. We cannot sit idly by, fretting about how to spend our abundance, when others around us lack 45



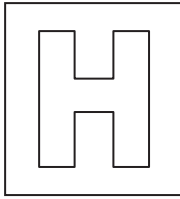
the essentials for life. Given that the top 1 per cent wealthiest in the world own about 45 per cent of the total global wealth, there ought to be giving. With the millennials' inclination towards charity, it makes sense to focus on philanthropy. Millennials grew up with smartphones, Snapchat and Facebook. They believe in their responsibility to create change and are optimistic about their abilities. With the ease of sharing came the ease of giving, as well as the expectation to do so. Young people are finding community through causes and activating each other as they do. Riding on this particular wave to address inequality seems a wise thing to do.

- 7 We should expect inequality to decrease somewhat as philanthropy increases. The increase in philanthropy should mean an increase in at least some exemplary foundations addressing inequality explicitly in their grant-making or at least becoming more effective at achieving broad-based impact. Charitable foundations can prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable and support programmes that might not otherwise be available to communities in need. Foundations can directly challenge systemic inequities and fund advocacy or organisation of community. At the very least, philanthropy can serve to direct private wealth to public purposes. It can increase social capital and ease class tensions by putting disparate groups in touch with one another. 60
- 8 The scourge of inequality should be a priority for philanthropy. Inequality is manifested in so many of our social ills: discrimination, poverty, marginalisation. Without focusing on inequality, we are tinkering at the edges of change. Generosity itself is not enough; justice requires discomfort. Inequality cannot be addressed without acknowledging that some of us have substantially more than others, and that this is not solely due to hard work or talent. Recognising what we take for granted in our own lives is a step towards tackling inequality in the wider world. Philanthropy can do more to challenge inequality by investing in individuals, institutions and ideas. This helps to strengthen democracy: vital work such as quality journalism that can spotlight inequalities cannot be funded by government or corporate grants. Moreover, to truly empower people, we have to be willing to take our directive from them, not the powers that be. 75
- 9 Solving inequality directly requires a comprehensive approach; philanthropy is only a small part of the solution. Direct donations can only help for so long. Tackling inequality requires disrupting the underlying structures and policies that cause so many to work without minimum wage. It is hypocritical to exploit workers, destroy the environment, harm consumers, and then claim credit for aid to remedy the damages. Corporations must ask hard questions about how they make money, not just what they do with their surpluses. 80
- 10 In today's climate, empathy is especially important: empathic leaders imagine what it is like to be a financially insecure person, instead of worrying about votes. Actually involving the marginalised in decision-making about issues that affect them is another step in the right direction to address inequality. The dominant recruitment processes have to be democratised and freed from the previous reliance on academic achievement to prove worth. What if a person's knowledge and leadership skills stem from authentic engagement in their community, rather than academic qualifications? Elite recruitment systems are just one way governments and corporations privilege formal credentials over other forms of knowledge, thus exacerbating inequality. The first step to addressing inequality, particularly in developed countries, is acknowledging alternative forms of expertise. 90
- 11 Thus, we should all be modern day Sisyphus, working tirelessly to create a more equal society. Sisyphus refuses to surrender to gravity, just as we should never surrender to the inevitability of inequality.

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Class	Adm No

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## 2019 Preliminary Exams Pre-University 3

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**2 September 2019**

**ANSWER BOOKLET**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional Materials: INSERT

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class and admission number in the spaces provided at the top of this page and on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

**(Note that 15 marks out of 50 will be awarded for your use of language.)**

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

**This answer booklet consists of 6 printed pages.**

Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow below. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

**NOTE:** When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

### From Passage 1

- 1 In paragraph 1, how does the author demonstrate that the Occupy movement symbolises the 'strongest statement yet' (line 4) of income inequality? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 2 In line 9, what does the author suggest is the 'obvious solution' to inequality?

.....

.....[1]

- 3 Explain the author's use of the phrase 'lottery of birth' (line 17).

.....

.....[1]

- 4 In paragraph 3, what are the reasons for the 'cynicism' created by the idea of philanthropy? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- [2]

- Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....[8]

- 7 Explain the author's claim that 'without focusing on inequality we are tinkering at the edges of change' (lines 66-67).

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 8 Why does the author refer to the actions of corporations as 'hypocritical' (line 79)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 9 In paragraph 10, what suggestions does the author make to address the issue of inequality? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[3]

- 10 In paragraph 11, suggest why the author ends the passage by referring again to the myth of Sisyphus.

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.....[2]

- How far do you agree with the author's observations? Support your answers with examples drawn from your own experiences and that of your society.

[illegible]

[10]







**2019 Millennia Institute  
Preliminary Examinations  
H1 General Paper Answer scheme**

1. In paragraph 1, how does the author demonstrate that the Occupy movement symbolises the ‘strongest statement yet’ (line 4) of income inequality? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
They represented a <b>diverse</b> set of interests and concerns, but around one slogan they could <b>unite</b> : “We are the 99%.” (lines 3-4)  In its campaigning for “the 99%” against “the 1%,” (lines 3-4)	The Occupy movement is ‘the strongest statement yet’ as it a. rallied protestors to <b>come together despite</b> <u>their various causes</u>  b. by showing the <b>overwhelming disparity</b> between the rich and the rest through their slogan.  1 mark each

2. In line 9, what does the author suggest is the ‘obvious solution’ to inequality? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
raise the earned income of the low-income, tax the high-income more, or encourage voluntary transfers through philanthropy. (lines 9-11)	The author suggests that the most direct way to address inequality is <b>the redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor.</b>  1 mark

3. Explain the author’s use of the phrase ‘lottery of birth’ (line 17). [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
While the idea that people should help others to overcome the <b>lottery of birth</b> , over which <b>no</b> one has <b>control</b> , is laudable, it is not practical. (lines 17-18)	The author uses the phrase to suggest that people <b>are not in a position to determine</b> their birth /

	<p>OR</p> <p><b>people's lot in life/destiny</b> depends of the circumstances of their birth</p> <p>1 mark</p>
--	--

4. In paragraph 3, what are the reasons for the 'cynicism' created by the idea of philanthropy? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Has it made (a) <b>a difference to realities on the ground?</b> (b) Does philanthropy <b>entrench the existing inequality</b> by keeping true to the tradition of <i><b>noblesse oblige</b></i> , that <b>those blessed with good fortune</b> by virtue of birth, luck or opportunities should perform kindness and generosity to those in need? (lines 18-21)	<p>The author's reasons for 'cynicism' are related to</p> <p>a. philanthropy <b>has not been proven to be effective</b></p> <p>b. <b>perpetuates socioeconomic disparity</b> <u>through the expectations that the rich should help the poor</u></p> <p>1 mark each</p>

5. In paragraph 4, what link does the author draw between capitalism and the increase in both inequality and philanthropy? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
<p>The forces that drove increasing inequality similarly powered philanthropy's rapid rise. <b>Capitalism increases the likelihood of surplus wealth and the chance that some of the surplus wealth held by the richest among us will exchange hands as charity.</b> (lines 25-26)</p>	<p>a. Capitalism allows the <b>rich to get richer</b>,</p> <p>and</p> <p>b. which means <b>they are more likely to give more money to philanthropic causes.</b></p> <p><i>Accept both references to actual and potential charity.</i></p> <p>1 mark each</p>

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6. Using material from paragraphs 5-7 only (line 36 to 64), summarise what the author has to say about philanthropy being 'a force for good' (line 38).

Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [8]

Philanthropy is a force for good as ....

	From the passage	Suggested answer
<b>Paragraph 5</b>		
A1	The <b>more people have, the more they give</b> (line 39)	It assumes that <b>greater wealth</b> will lead to <b>generous donations</b> which
A2	and this has <b>a mitigating effect on</b> inequality (lines 39-40)	<b>curb</b> inequality,
B	take on <b>important but unpopular issues</b> (line 40)	It addressed <b>significant</b> matters that are <b>not widely discussed/taboo</b>
C1	<b>take on</b> the <b>issues</b> that governments <b>can(not)</b> (lines 41-42)	It also <b>deals with</b> concerns that governments <b>are not able to address</b>
C2	<b>or will, not</b> (line 42)	or <b>avoid</b> .
<b>Paragraph 6</b>		
D	Despite criticism <b>more</b> philanthropy is <b>still better than less</b> philanthropy (line 43)	<b>Regardless</b> of the intention, <b>increased</b> philanthropy <b>remains desirable</b>
Repetition of A2	help to <b>bridge some of the social gaps</b> (line 44)	<b>It minimises disparities</b> in society
E1	"philanthropy" is <b>love for humankind</b> (line 45)	Promotes <b>regard for fellow men</b>
E2	what is critical is the <b>sense of solidarity</b> ; (lines 45-46)	through <b>unity/ fraternity</b> and
E3	the belief in the <b>inter-connectedness</b> between every person (line 46)	interdependence
F	<u>Millennials</u> With the millennials' inclination towards charity, it makes sense to focus on philanthropy	<i>it can be a force for good as</i> it allows the young people <b>to connect with one another</b> and <b>contribute</b> to the society (inferred)

	<b>finding community</b> through causes and <b>activating each</b> other as they do (lines 49-50)	
<b>Paragraph 7</b>		
Repeat A2	expect inequality to decrease somewhat as philanthropy increases. (line 56)	Increased donations will reduce inequality
G1	Addressing inequality <b>explicitly</b> through <b>grant-making</b> (lines 57-58)	Philanthropy <b>directly</b> tackles inequality through <b>awards/endowments</b>
G2	or at least becoming <b>more effective</b> at achieving <b>broad-based impact</b> (lines 58-59)	or <b>benefit more people</b> .
H1	Charitable foundations can <b>prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable</b> (line 59)	They are able to put the essentials of <b>the poor ahead of everyone else</b>
H2	<b>support programmes</b> that <b>might not otherwise be available</b> to communities in need (line 60)	And provide help that <b>might not have been rendered</b>
I	Foundations can <b>directly challenge systemic inequities</b> (line 61)	Philanthropic organisations <b>take on/ confront entrenched unfairness/injustice,</b>
J	<b>fund advocacy</b> or <b>organisation of community</b> (lines 61-62)	<b>finance activism</b> or <b>civil groups</b>
K	serve to <b>direct private wealth to public purposes</b> (lines 62-63)	P distributes <b>individual riches for communal use</b>
L	<b>increase social capital</b> <b>ease class tensions</b> (line 63)	<b>Fosters cohesion through integration of different social classes</b>

points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14>
marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

7. Explain the author's claim that 'without focusing on inequality we are tinkering at the edges of change' (lines 66-67). [2]

<b>From the passage</b>	<b>Suggested answer</b>
'without focusing on inequality we are tinkering at the edges of change' (lines 66-67).	The author suggested that

Inequality is <b>manifested in so many</b> of our social ills: discrimination, poverty, marginalisation ... (lines 65-66)	<p>a. inequality is <b>the root cause of numerous social problems</b>, therefore</p> <p>b. the failure to address the issue <b>will not lead to actual improvement</b></p> <p>1 mark for each point</p>
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8. Why does the author refer to the actions of corporations as ‘hypocritical’ (line 79)?  
**Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
exploit workers, trash the environment, harm consumers, and then claim credit for aid to remedy the damages. (lines 79-80)	<p>The author labels the actions ‘hypocritical’</p> <p>a. they <b>accept recognition</b> for rectifying</p> <p>b. <b>the very problems that they have caused.</b></p> <p><i>(contrast must be captured)</i></p> <p>2 or 0 marks</p>

9. In paragraph 10, what suggestions does the author make to address the issue of inequality? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

From the passage	Suggested answer
<p>In today’s climate, empathy is especially important: empathic leaders imagine what it is (a) <b>like to be a financially insecure person, instead of worrying about votes.</b> (b) <b>Actually involving the marginalised in decision-making about issues that affect them</b> is another step in the right direction to address inequality.</p> <p><b>recruitment</b> processes ...</p> <p>What if a <b>person’s knowledge</b> and leadership skills stem from <b>authentic engagement in their community</b>, rather than academic qualifications? (lines 82-87)</p>	<p>The author suggests that</p> <p>a. we need leaders <b>who care more about the needs of the less privileged than their popularity</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Leaders who <b>genuinely care for the underprivileged</b></p> <p>b. <b>letting them to have a say in policies concerning them</b> and</p> <p>c. <b>hiring candidates based on their ground experience</b> instead of their <b>educational achievements</b></p> <p>1 mark for each point</p>

10. In paragraph 11, suggest why the author ends the passage by referring again to the myth of Sisyphus. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Income inequality endures despite numerous attempts to eradicate it. These attempts are akin to the labours of Sisyphus, the mythical Greek king whose eternal punishment is to push a rock up a steep hill, only to find it rolling back on nearing the top.	The author refers to the myth of Sisyphus again <b>a. To reinforce/ emphasise</b> (function) the point that
We should all be modern day Sisyphus, working tirelessly to create a more equal society. Sisyphus refused to surrender to gravity, just as we should <b>never surrender to the inevitability of inequality</b>	<b>b Even though</b> the fight against inequality <b>may never</b> be successful OR We may never be able to overcome inequality, <b>c. we should not give up trying</b> to address inequality (context)  <i>a – 1 mark</i> <i>b+c =1 mark</i>

11. Sam Lien sees philanthropy as a promising solution in addressing inequality but also acknowledges a number of drawbacks.

How far do you agree with the author's observations? Support your answers with examples drawn from your own experiences and that of your society. [10]

### Philanthropy as a promising solution to address inequality

#### Paragraph 5 (repetition in Para 7)

- Benevolent organisations are able to help those who are often overlooked or neglected by the government as these philanthropic groups can specifically zoom in on marginalised groups that may not be considered a priority by the state.
- Charitable bodies can select to help specific groups who need the most help and who otherwise may not receive help from society or the government. These foundations can be more precise in dealing with unfairness inherent in our systems and rally the public to fight common causes
- (counter) But the fear of not having control of these benevolent organisations would leave us vulnerable to foreign bodies intervening in local affairs as we need to ensure that such organisations do not compromise regulations or upset our social order. (E.g. foreign bodies funding causes in Singapore that seek to promote greater equality and freedom are banned if the causes are deemed political)

#### Paragraph 6

- Philanthropy creates a fraternity of sorts that minimises disparity/segregation in society and bring young people together to serve similar causes
- (counter) However, this form of fraternity can also further segregate groups and create new factions that oppose the causes of the fraternity

Paragraph 7 (counter in Paragraph 4)

- Philanthropy can help to divert more of the private wealth to public purposes which will create wider networks for people from different classes to connect and create greater cohesion
- (counter) However, such efforts may actually create greater divide that actually perpetuates current disparity in society that empowers the wealthy and makes them more influential

## **Drawbacks of Philanthropy**

Paragraph 4

- Philanthropy may lead to detriments when their practices lack transparency and there is poor accountability (inferred: which may easily lead to mismanagement of funds or corruption)

Paragraph 8

- Benevolence alone may be ineffective in addressing inequality if the root causes of inequality are not addressed (inferred: we need the needy/marginalised groups to be involved in the decision making processes and not just expect the authorities to help)
- (counter) Charitable groups may not have the influence and resources to actually impact the root causes of inequality and bypassing the authorities could lead to a problem of law and order

Paragraph 9

- In the long run, philanthropy may not be effective in impacting social order and policies that perpetuate inequality as donation only address short term needs and not inequalities entrenched in the system

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<b>Name</b>	
<b>PM Class</b>	

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**General Paper**

Paper 1

**8807/01**

**23 Aug 2019**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name and PM class on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1** 'Children no longer get to enjoy their childhood.' Is this true of your society?
- 2** 'Artificial intelligence is more dangerous than useful.' Do you agree?
- 3** How far, in your society, are efforts to preserve cultural heritage merely superficial?
- 4** Do all criminals deserve a second chance?
- 5** 'Scientists are too preoccupied with whether they could, instead of thinking whether they should.' Is this a fair comment?
- 6** 'Corporations, rather than individuals, should be blamed for harms done to the environment'. Discuss.
- 7** 'Geography is destiny.' Discuss.
- 8** Assess the view that good leaders are defined by how well they champion human rights.
- 9** 'Censorship undermines the arts.' Comment.
- 10** 'E-sports is not real sport.' How far is this true?
- 11** Given the competitiveness of international firms, how important is it to support local businesses in your country?
- 12** 'Choice is an illusion.' Discuss.

*Eva Wiseman writes about the wave of kindness in today's world.*

- 1 When Britain had just voted to leave the European Union, the author Rachel Cusk wrote an essay about rudeness which she felt was “rampant”. “People treat one another with a contempt that they do not trouble to conceal,” she said. At the airport, she noticed strangers looking suspiciously at one another, not sure what to expect of this new, unscripted reality, wondering which side the other person is on. However, as our new “reality” has bedded in, something is changing. Today, kindness is not only fashionable, appearing in a flood of news stories about everyday heroism; it is also profitable. 1  
5
- 2 On online platforms, hashtags highlight small acts of kindness witnessed in public, and GoFundMe campaigns raise thousands for people in need. The publishing industry is calling the trend for kindness “up lit” – as in, illuminated from below, to expose one’s best angles. After a year of dark thrillers, today they are investing in feel-good stories of empathy and care. Literary agent Juliet Mushens welcomes this move towards hopeful stories. “My feeling is that given the constant depressing news cycle, people are looking for a way to escape into fiction, and into more hopeful narratives. These stories can be political in their own way. They can inspire the audience to fight for change on a personal level, and remind us that the individual choices we make can have a wider impact.” 10  
15
- 3 When Piers Wenger became the controller of BBC drama commissioning in 2016, he announced his intention to bring a lightness back to entertainment. “I would love a Sunday night show which examines heroism and what it means to be a hero.” Note that the preface “super” is missing. To be a hero today is simply to be a person who leans into the vulnerability that comes with seeing other people’s problems. Being a hero today requires no expert skills, no powers of flying or invisibility – in fact, one of the things that has helped devalue kindness over the past 30 or so years is the fact that we all know how to do it. We have done so since we were children, but as a mark of our power and importance, choose not to. Being a hero today is to not look away. 20
- 4 Heroic storytelling extends to the news media too. *The New York Times* features a column called ‘The Week in Good News’, right there on page two. “The intention,” explains columnist Des Shoe, “is to provide an antidote to what can seem like an endlessly heavy news cycle.” Her column presents a curated selection of good news, including regular stories about “average people doing good work for others”. “I think people are yearning for good news because in the age of push notifications, the crush of stories about tragic things happening in the world can seem overwhelming.” We want a reminder that, despite the swamp of death and poverty we scroll through, all is not lost. This “yearning” means there is a market for more. “People want good news. They spend time on good news, they seek it out and they look for more. Our readers have asked for much more of this type of coverage.” And stories of kindness lead to clicks. 25  
30
- 5 The move towards kindness mirrors the rise of “happiness” pursuits earlier this decade, when a political interest in the value of happiness coincided with academic studies, a self-help movement towards joy, and the relentless counting of one’s blessings. In his book *The Happiness Industry*, William Davies reported that a growing number of corporations were employing chief happiness officers, while Google had its own “jolly good fellow”. Soon, however, happiness as a movement began to be questioned. It was pointed out that the political push for happiness grew as cuts in benefits and healthcare deepened. It coincided with a huge rise in prescribed antidepressants. Notions of happiness relied on a fuzzy vagueness: there was the suggestion that this noisy push for happiness was a way to displace attention from the causes of unhappiness itself. 35  
40

- 6 While society views happiness and kindness as undoubtedly linked, it also recognises the difference in that happiness is passive, while kindness is active. At Springwell, a special school in England, where many students have suffered abuse, neglect or poverty, teachers have vowed to approach every child with what they call “unconditional positive regard” – or, as the principal Dave Whitaker says, they “batter the children with kindness”, and it seems to be working. Like happiness, kindness is difficult to quantify – we have no way of knowing whether people are becoming kinder, no apps to mine for data – but we can count the stories of kindness that proliferate, often in tandem with those of the effects of austerity. 45 50
- 7 Kindness is not new. It is old, pretty old. Aristotle said: “It is the characteristic of the magnanimous man to ask no favour but to be ready to do kindness to others.” Kindness is mankind’s “greatest delight,” said Roman philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius. And yet, for a long time it has been seen as sort of suspicious. As religion’s hold on our culture has weakened, and with it the insistence upon loving thy neighbour, a certain selfishness has come to be expected. To be kind is also to be weak, unfocused on achievement. Kindness is seen as a nostalgic throwback to simpler times, or worse, a con. A man who throws his coat over the puddle is a man who onlookers suspect must be protecting something valuable in the mud. To go out of one’s way to be kind suggests an ulterior motive. Who has time to look up from their phone, let alone expose themselves to the discomfort of empathising with a stranger? 55 60
- 8 Cynics claim that kindness is camouflaged egoism, and society has reduced kindness to a covert selfishness. They make the case that, due to these suspicions, we are all battling against our innate kindness. It must be said, however, that kindness unlocks something deep within people. Reading about kindness seems to perform a similar function. Perhaps we are seeking stories of kindness in order to practise the action in our head before performing it – seeing these people in need, stretching the muscle memory required to offer a hand? Kindness has so many benefits. When we are kind to someone, it does not just help that person; it is scientifically proven to improve our own physical and mental health as well. So, at a time when rates of depression and anxiety seem to be skyrocketing, kindness could be a very simple but powerful antidote. 65 70
- 9 Perhaps this is the key to the new wave of kindness. We perform kind deeds in response to darkness and, in turn, our lives are improved. Rather than being an old-fashioned or altruistic notion, kindness is as modern as it gets. Is it rising, not just because in cold times we are compelled to offer scarves to those shivering, but because taking part makes us feel more successful? Well. Small steps, gently. 75

Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

**NOTE:** When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

- 1 What is the change in people's attitude towards each other because of our "new 'reality'" (line 5)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 2 According to Juliet Mushens, why are people drawn to "more hopeful narratives" (lines 13-14)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....[3]

- 3 According to the author in paragraph 3, what does it mean to be a hero today? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

For  
Examiner's  
Use

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[3]

- 4 What is implied by the word "swamp" (line 31)?

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.....

.....

.....[2]

**5** Using material from paragraphs 5-6 only (lines 35-51), summarise what the author has to say about society's perceptions of happiness and kindness.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

Society views the move towards kindness as .....

[8]



- 6 How does the author support her claim that “Kindness is not new” (line 52)?  
.....  
.....[1]
- 7 In paragraph 7, how does the author support the perception that kindness harbours “an ulterior motive” (lines 59-60)?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]
- 8 Explain what is meant by “kindness could be a very simple but powerful antidote” (line 70).  
**Use your own words as far as possible.**  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]
- 9 What does the author imply about “modern” kindness (line 73)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**  
.....  
.....[1]
- 10 Why does the author end the passage with “Small steps, gently” (line 75)?  
.....  
.....[1]



[illegible]







## NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019

H1 General Paper  
8807 / Paper 1

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/1**

**PAPER 1**

30 August 2019

**TIME** 1 hour 30 minutes

### INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your name, class and GP Tutor's name on your answer scripts.

Answer **ONE** question from Paper 1.

### INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

In Paper 1, all questions carry equal marks.

[Note that 20 marks out of 50 will be awarded for the use of language.]

This question paper consists of **2** printed pages.

Answer **one** question from this paper.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. Consider the claim that young people in Singapore today are better educated, but no wiser.
2. Do international organisations have real influence over global affairs today?
3. Results are more important than processes in scientific research. To what extent do you agree?
4. 'Fantasy novels offer little apart from enjoyment.' Discuss.
5. Not enough is done for the vulnerable today. Is this true of your society?
6. Should people be allowed to enjoy greater freedom when they are unwilling to shoulder responsibilities?
7. 'We are too focused on the trivial.' Is this true?
8. How far have people benefitted from changes to the workplace?
9. 'The powerful always get away with crime'. Discuss.
10. Do you agree that it is important to know a foreign language today?
11. Should we really be concerned about consumerism today?
12. To what extent is the use of social media by politicians a positive development?



**NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019**

**8807/2**

**GENERAL PAPER**

PAPER 2:

Friday 30 August 2019

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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This insert consists of 3 printed pages.



*Dennis C. Rasmussen writes about economic inequality.*

- 1 One of the more memorable statements of Barack Obama's presidency thus far has been his claim, in a high-profile December 2013 speech, that the great and growing economic inequality is "the defining challenge of our time." In making his case Obama appealed to the authority of a seemingly unlikely ally: Adam Smith, the purported founding father of laissez-faire capitalism, who is widely thought to have advocated unbridled greed and selfishness in the name of allowing the invisible hand of the market to work its magic. 5
- 2 Many a scholar has made a career, in recent decades, by pointing out that this view of Smith is a gross caricature. It has often been noted, for instance, that Smith never once used the term "laissez-faire" or even the term "capitalism," and that his two books—*The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *The Wealth of Nations* (1776)—are full of passages lamenting the potential moral, social, and political ills of what he called "commercial society." 10
- 3 It is also indisputable that the alleviation of poverty was one of Smith's central concerns, the common caricature notwithstanding. Yet there remains a broad consensus, even among scholars of the period, that Smith was concerned by poverty but not by economic inequality itself. As long as everyone has food on their tables, clothes on their backs, and a roof over their heads, the thinking goes, it does not matter if some have far more than others. Indeed, it is often claimed that Smith saw economic inequality as a good thing. 15
- 4 Such a reading is not entirely unwarranted. Like many of his self-proclaimed followers in the 20th century, Smith did suggest that the great wealth of the few generally benefits the rest of society, at least in material terms and over the long run. In some cases, their luxuries trickle down in an almost literal sense: "The houses, the furniture, the clothing of the rich, in a little time, become useful to the inferior and middling ranks of people," Smith writes. More broadly, he claims that the conspicuous consumption of the rich encourages productivity and provides employment for many. 20
- 5 What has received little attention is that he also identified some deep problems with economic inequality. The concerns that he voiced are interestingly different from those that dominate contemporary discourse. When people worry about inequality today, they generally worry that it inhibits economic growth, prevents social mobility, impairs democracy, or runs afoul of some standard of fairness. None of these problems, however, were Smith's chief concern—that economic inequality distorts people's "sympathies", leading them to admire and emulate the very rich and to neglect and even scorn the poor. Smith used the term "sympathy" in a somewhat technical sense to denote the process of imaginatively projecting oneself into the situation of another person, or of putting oneself into another's shoes. Smith's "sympathy" is thus akin to the contemporary use of the word "empathy." 25 30
- 6 What's more, Smith saw this distortion of people's sympathies as having profound consequences: It undermines both morality and happiness. First, morality. Smith saw the widespread admiration of the rich as morally problematic because he did not believe that the rich in fact tend to be terribly admirable people. In Smith's view, the reason why the rich generally do not behave admirably is, ironically, that they are widely admired anyway (on account of their wealth). In other words, the rich are not somehow innately vicious people. Rather, their affluence puts them in a position in which they do not have to behave morally in order to earn the esteem of others, most of whom are dazzled and enchanted by their riches. Thus, it is precisely the presence of economic inequality, and the distortion of people's sympathies that attends it, that allows—perhaps even encourages—the rich to spurn the most basic standards of moral conduct. Smith goes so far as to proclaim that the disposition to admire the rich and scorn the poor is the greatest cause of moral corruption. 35 40 45

- 7 Smith also believed that the tendency to sympathise with the rich more easily than the poor makes people less happy, and insisted not only that money cannot buy happiness but also that the pursuit of riches generally detracts from one's happiness. Happiness consists largely of tranquillity (a lack of internal discord), and there is little tranquility to be found in a life of toiling and striving to keep up with the Joneses. 50
- 8 Why, then, do the vast majority of people spend the vast majority of their lives longing for and pursuing wealth? Smith saw it as obvious that people do not work so hard in order to obtain food, clothing, and shelter but because of the attention it brings them: "It is the vanity, not the ease, or the pleasure, which interests us." In other words, it is the fact that people sympathise more easily with the rich that leads them to want to become rich themselves, and to (wrongly) assume that the rich must be supremely happy. 55
- 9 Much of Smith's analysis rings true today. The amount of media coverage of the lives and lifestyles of the rich and famous should suffice to confirm that even if people in today's commercial societies do not always admire the wealthy, they do generally sympathise with them in Smith's sense of the term—that is, people tend to put themselves in the wealthy's shoes—far more than they do with other people. Further, even if people do not always admire the wealthy either as individuals or as a group, there is little question that they are disposed to admire and pursue wealth itself with every bit of the fervour and doggedness that Smith expected. Finally, the other half of the distortion of people's sympathies that he describes—the tendency to unduly ignore the poor—is very much still present. 60  
65
- 10 It is perhaps predictable that history's most famous theorist of commercial society would have something to add to contemporary debates about economic inequality. Given his reputation, however, it is striking that Smith had more profound and original things to say in opposition to inequality than in its defence. 70





## NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ GP Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_

### GENERAL PAPER PAPER 2:

**8807/2**

Friday 30 August 2019

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.  
No additional materials are required.

### ANSWER BOOKLET

#### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your Name, Class, and GP Tutor's Name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen in the spaces provided on the Question Paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.  
The insert contains the passage for comprehension.  
Note that 15 marks out of 50 will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
SAQ	/17
Summary	/8
AQ	/10
Language	/15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/50</b>

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This document consists of 7 printed pages.

Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

*NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.*

1. What is the writer suggesting when he uses “thus far” in line 1?

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[1]

2. By pointing out that Adam Smith is a “seemingly unlikely ally” in line 4, what is the writer implying about Barack Obama’s belief?

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[2]

3. Explain **in your own words as far as possible** what the writer means by “this view of Smith is a gross caricature” (line 8).

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[3]

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[2]

- Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible.

A benefit of economic inequality is that \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

6. What does “goes so far” imply about the writer’s view of Smith’s proclamation in line 45?

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[1]

7. **In your own words as far as possible**, explain why “the vast majority of people spend the vast majority of their lives longing for and pursuing wealth” (lines 52-53).

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[2]

8. Explain the use of brackets around the word “wrongly” in line 56.

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[1]

9. According to the writer, “much of Smith’s analysis rings true today” (line 58). How does the paragraph support Smith’s analysis? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[3]

10. **In your own words as far as possible**, explain the contradiction in the last sentence of the passage.

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[2]



11. Dennis Rasmussen presents several observations on economic inequality. How far do you agree with them, relating your arguments to your society?

[illegible]

8807/2



**1) Consider the claim that young people in Singapore today are better educated, but no wiser.**

**A. Key words:**

**Better educated** – When one is better educated, one is expected to possess not just academic knowledge, but also the full gamut of facts, information and skills (critical thinking, knowledge of actions and corresponding consequences, social norms and values etc) to better understand and navigate the world around us.

Note: Students ought to focus on how the young are better educated (i.e. the knowledge, disposition, values inculcated by better educational opportunities, more years of schooling) instead of why young Singaporeans are better educated (while a brief mention is acceptable, a long drawn-out description of why we implemented the compulsory education system runs the risk of irrelevance).

**Wise** - sensible or prudent; having or showing the ability to make good judgment, based on a deep understanding and experience of life. A wise person is able to use his experience and knowledge in order to make sensible/mature/insightful decisions and judgments that are good for self and society.

**Context** - Question requires a discussion of the nature of Singapore society that influences the mindset and attitudes of the young.

**B. Approach**

**Part A:** Why it is perceived that young Singaporeans are better educated but not wiser

**Part B:** Refute Part A

**Part C:** Why young Singaporeans are better educated and wiser

**C. Arguments**

Part A: Why it is perceived that young Singaporeans are better educated but not wiser

- 1. Young Singaporeans may be book smart, but many still display a lack of knowledge and understanding of the complexities and expectations of the real world due to an education system that is excessively focused on grades.**

How young Singaporeans are better educated:

- Singapore's education system has been much lauded for its growing number of achievements and its ability to establish a strong foundation in reading, numeracy and scientific literacy for all students. As a result, Singapore currently ranks at the top of global benchmarking tests such as the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which is a triennial test of 15-year-olds globally, in the three main categories of maths, reading and science.

How young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- However, despite stellar academic accomplishments, Singaporean youth have not managed to apply what is essentially academic knowledge to life outside of school.

- Many youth are often criticised for being either unrealistic in their expectations of life or lacking in real world experience that will enable them to make wise decisions about their lives e.g. in career.
- In a study carried out by online recruitment site Monster.com, fresh graduates in Singapore have high, even unrealistic, expectations after securing their first jobs. They expect quick professional development and the chance to earn higher salaries within the first year, or they will move on. At the same time, they admitted to a lack of industry knowledge and being unprepared for working life and long hours. Singapore employers have thus complained of the millennials' sense of entitlement and their easy inclination to quit when their expectations are not met.

Why young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- Wisdom is cultivated from exposure to the real world and its varied experiences to derive insight into self and the society around us.
- However, an education system like ours that is excessively focused on results and which compromises the accumulation of real world experience naturally inhibits the development of wisdom. More time and energy is placed on drilling to achieve excellent grades and less on exposure to the real world. Service learning, work attachment experiences are superficial because of insufficient time/attention given even though these are valuable opportunities to develop maturity. Even if these programmes were emphasised, the focus is not on the life lessons conveyed but on the pragmatic benefit of how participation may enhance one's testimonial.

## 2. Young people in Singapore may be better educated and yet, they lack wisdom because they grow up in a sheltered and overly protective environment.

How young Singaporeans are better educated:

- Students are exposed to programmes (e.g. CCAs/team or project-based learning) that aim to promote character growth and independent learning. Through reflection of their involvement in these programmes, students are expected to develop independent thought and a better understanding of themselves.

How young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- Despite these programmes, our youth have not developed wisdom. Many students do not question actively, they do not take risks and are afraid of failure even though lessons learned from failure are important in the path towards true wisdom.
- Young Singaporeans are also heavily reliant on instructions from authority figures around them (teachers, parents, government) and fail to demonstrate independent thought which is a hallmark of wisdom. An independent thinker observes more completely and thinks more profoundly about the choices one makes in life. It means one does not follow the opinion of others blindly, but analyses and synthesises all sources of input and information to form a sensible and informed opinion.

Why young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- With growing affluence and with most couples having fewer children, children have become the most precious of all possessions and this has led to the rise of helicopter parenting.

Overprotective, over-controlling and intrusive, helicopter parents orchestrate and monitor the activities of their children and sweep away any obstacles in their path. Similarly, teachers and the government, with its considerable number of regulations on citizens' lives, are constantly telling our youth what they should or should not be doing.

- All these end up stunting the development of independence, savviness and street-smarts in our youth as they are not given the freedom to explore, to fail and learn crucial life lessons.
- A recent MOE Facebook post highlighted ways in which one could be a helicopter parent which include debating with your child's teacher to get one more mark for a grade improvement, doing his project for him, and "flying" to school with his homework when he forgets to bring it, and gave advice on how to avoid such behaviour. That such a campaign had to be implemented highlights how concerned we are about the effects of helicopter parenting on the development of our children.

### **3. Young Singaporeans may be better educated and yet they behave in an irresponsible manner largely due to the influence of social media.**

How young Singaporeans are better educated:

- Schools in Singapore focus on the importance of teaching the young to think critically and to reflect on their actions through civics and life skills lessons. It is assumed that this would instill awareness of consequences and prudence in decision-making. Our education system also stresses on building a society that is caring and cohesive. Schools emphasise character building and subjects like Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) is made compulsory for all students in all schools. These lessons have made the educated realise that life would be more meaningful when guided by values.

How young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- One who is wise would show understanding of the consequences of one's actions and avoid behaving in a way that is wrong, bad or inappropriate for self and society. However, young Singaporeans are easily buoyed by popular culture so much so that they exhibit irresponsible behaviour despite being educated against such actions.
- Recently, an Instagram story of NTU students performing an obscene cheer during freshman orientation sparked controversy and investigation on the kind of childish behaviour exhibited by university (highly educated) students. Campus authorities have condemned the cheer as it does not uphold the 'values of safety, respect and inclusiveness.'
- Another example is the case of a Singaporean youth who was filmed pouring coke and curry down a high rise building for Instagram just because it was perceived to be 'fun' or 'cool'.
- There are also cases of teenage boys who have committed rash acts for social media attention such as throwing an off bike off a HDB block and another case where bikes were thrown off Punggol bridge.

Why young Singaporeans are not wiser:

- Youth are naturally impressionable. Coupled with the fact that our young belongs to the digital generation, where social media's 'liking culture' latches on young people's desire for affirmation – especially from friends – and popularity, as well as the need to be noticed, Singaporean youth often end up acting impulsively and demonstrating poor judgement. Social media platforms inadvertently advocate an individualistic attitude where the young dismiss the impact of their actions on society in favour of media attention.

## Part B: Refute Part A

### 4. **However, our education system acknowledges these criticisms and has already implemented changes in order to nurture a wiser generation.**

How the education system is changing:

- There is growing recognition that our nation's continued growth and progress is at stake if we do not rectify the problem of an immature generation.
- In a major shift from the transactional approach of sitting and clearing exams, the local education ministry has implemented significant changes at all levels to nurture a generation that is prepared for the real world.
  - More secondary school students will also be exposed to applied learning, which integrates learning with real-world situations. There is also stronger emphasis on outdoor education. All secondary students from 2020 onwards will take part in three cohort camps during their school years. Singapore is also taking bold steps to make the transition between study and work seamless. Apprenticeships, extended work stints and internships are in. For example, the Earn and Learn scheme, a SkillsFuture initiative introduced in phases since last year, incentivises fresh polytechnic and ITE graduates to work and gain qualifications at the same time.
- There is stronger partnership between schools and parents to help students develop independence.
  - Schools such as Bukit Timah Primary, CHIJ Primary (Toa Payoh) have issued guidelines to parents to avoid delivering forgotten items to their children and urged parents to teach their children to resolve the problem independently. Most parents have responded well to this guideline.
- Students are also being taught the importance of being a positive peer influence online and responsible use of social media as part of a revised cyber wellness framework

How the changes will lead to wisdom:

- These new changes focus on experiences that go beyond the classroom (grades), so that children are exposed to real world problems, and acquire important values and life lessons that will help them to make sensible and mature decisions in future.

## Part C: Why young Singaporeans are better educated and wiser

### 5. **It is unfair to claim that young Singaporeans are unwise as they have also shown the ability to act in a sensible and mature manner because of better education.**

How better education has led to wisdom.

- Our values-driven education has led to a generation that is more accepting, and hence respectful, of diverse practices and cultures and also a generation that is more socially aware. Moreover, the exposure to diverse opinions in the classroom, especially in liberal arts institutions, has taught students how to engage effectively with perspectives that differ from theirs.

How is wisdom shown:

- There are many young bloggers (e.g. Jeraldine Phneah) in Singapore who give critical and sensible analyses on hot-button issues such as elitism in our education system and discrimination.
- Many young Singaporeans are also involved in acts of kindness as they are aware of their social responsibility and the value of their contributions to the community, and not just for the sake of looking good on a resume.
  - Rise of young social entrepreneurs in Singapore: Foreword Coffee – a café that aims to brew up quality jobs for people with disabilities is opened by two 25-year old NUS graduates - Lim Wei Jie and Anderson Ang. The commitment to do good through business stems from the duo's understanding of the challenges faced by the disabled and their aspiration for a more inclusive society.





## 2) Do international organisations have real influence over global affairs today?

### A. Key Words

#### International organisations

- An international organization is an organization with an international membership, scope, or presence.
- Intergovernmental organizations, also known as international governmental organizations (IGOs): the type of organization most closely associated with the term 'international organization', these are organizations that are made up primarily of sovereign states (referred to as member states). E.g. The United Nations (UN), The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), The European Union (EU), The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) etc.
- International nongovernmental organizations (INGOs): non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that operate internationally. E.g. international non-profit organization such as Amnesty International, International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières etc.
- Their aims include: fostering cooperation between countries to achieve global/mutually beneficial goals e.g. economic advancement, reduction of conflict etc.

#### Global affairs

- Significant political, economic or social events that are of interest to other countries and/or have a global impact
- Includes wars, conflicts, human rights issues, environmental issues, disasters, trade etc.

#### Influence

- Power; ability to alter or affect the outcomes of global affairs through assertion of the organisation's will/authority, or influence other countries to pursue a course of action

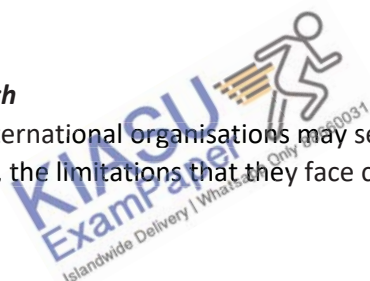
#### Real

- The question requires students to evaluate whether international organisations have actual/significant influence over global affairs.
- Students need to consider what enables international organisations to assert power/control over other countries – military power, economic clout (financial resources), legal authority – as well as the constraints/limitations to its influence.

### B. Approach

**Part A:** While international organisations may seem to be able to influence global affairs,

**Part B:** in reality, the limitations that they face constrain their ability to assert real influence.



## C. Arguments

**Part A:** International organisations are perceived to be able to influence global affairs.

1. **International organisations are believed to be able to put international pressure on governments to modify their policies towards an issue, cease violence, or extend more aid to their people due to their ability to tap on the collective power of the member states to exert political or economic pressure as a whole to make states to bend to their will.**
  - A classic success story would be the case of Libya which took responsibility for the 1988 Lockerbie bombings and renounced its weapons of mass destruction program in 2004 under broad U.S. and UN sanctions pressure. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/un-sanctions-mixed-record>
2. **International organisations which have a large membership, have the ability to amass a significant pool of resources such as funds, manpower and supplies, enabling them to assert their influence when intervening in crises around the world.**
  - E.g. The International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Union came together to provide bailout packages totalling 289 billion Euros over eight years to rescue Greece from its 2009 financial crisis, enabling Greece to remain as a member of the Eurozone, and averting the possibility of financial contagion. As part of its loan conditions, IMF was also able to force Greece to implement austerity measures, structural reforms and privatization of government assets.

**Part B:** in reality, the limitations that they face constrain their ability to assert real influence.

1. **International organisations have little influence over the affairs of countries which have the power and means to resist the economic and political pressure put on them.**
  - **Such countries have abundant resources and clout, and are able to survive even if they are isolated by the international community.**
    - E.g. EU's sanctions on Russia for its annexation of Crimea have failed to coerce Russia into returning Crimea to Ukraine due to its limited impact on Russia's economy. While sanctions have stunted economic growth in Russia, they have done little to undermine Russia's economic stability due to Russia's massive stockpile of reserves which continued to grow partly due to its windfall from higher oil prices, reaching nearly \$460 billion in 2018.
    - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-keeps-getting-hit-with-sanctions-do-they-make-a-difference/2018/08/21/f466db1c-a3ec-11e8-ad6f-080770dcddc2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-keeps-getting-hit-with-sanctions-do-they-make-a-difference/2018/08/21/f466db1c-a3ec-11e8-ad6f-080770dcddc2_story.html)
  - **Such countries have the support of other powerful allies that they can rely on**
    - E.g. Despite the U.N.'s long history of sanctions on North Korea, North Korea has continually refused to cease its nuclear development programme. North Korea was able to cushion the impact of these sanctions due to its strong bilateral ties with rich and powerful friends like China and Russia. China accounts for at least 90 per cent of North Korean trade and is thus a key pillar of the isolated state's economy. Besides China, North Korea has trade relations with Russia. The two countries have signed deals to increase

bilateral trade to US\$1 billion by 2020 and build a railway connecting the Russian border to Rajin in North Korea.

- <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/why-un-sanctions-fail-to-tame-n-korean-menace>

**2. The power of international organisations is dependent on the cooperation of its member states who contribute their military/economic might. Yet, disagreements between countries that make up such organisations as a result of differing viewpoints or conflicting interests can undermine their ability to assert a significant influence in global affairs.**

- E.g. the United Nations Security Council comprises 15 members, 5 of which are permanent members who hold the power to strike down any resolution they disagree with. While the council could theoretically impose collective military action to enforce international peace and security, its ability to do so is often constrained by the failure to achieve compromise amongst member states who end up withholding support for such missions. In 2018, Russia's use of its veto meant there was no prospect of the Security Council authorizing the use of force despite US, UK and France being prepared for military action against the Assad regime for its use of chemical weapons.
- Other material and economic interests are also at play. China, one of the permanent members on the UN Security Council, has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to bypass the UN's directive and maintain significant trade relations with countries (South Sudan) that have been threatened with UN-mandated sanctions.
- This has led many in the international community to regard the UN as a paper tiger with no real power over the nations of the world.

**3. The power that international organisations are able to exert is dependent on the willingness and consensus of countries to accept their authority or jurisdiction. Ultimately, international organisations do not have absolute authority over other states. Countries still reserve their right to assert their sovereignty and reject actions taken by international organisations to meddle in their affairs when it does not fit their strategic interests.**

- E.g. China, which claims 90% of the South China Sea according to the nine-dash line, rejected the Hague Tribunal's 2016 ruling that stated there was no legal basis for China to claim historic rights to resources within the sea areas falling within the nine-dash line and managed to continue its land reclamation efforts on the various reefs in the South China Sea despite international condemnation and pressure.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/12/philippines-wins-south-china-sea-case-against-china>



### 3) Results are more important than processes in scientific research. To what extent do you agree?

#### Key Terms

#### **Scientific research**

The application of the scientific method to investigate any relationships amongst natural phenomena or to solve a technical or medical problem.

#### **Results are more important than processes**

Implication here is that there is **greater significance/value** given to the outcomes of scientific research than the methods which are undertaken to produce the outcomes

#### ***What students need to be aware of: Objectives of scientific research***

*The purpose of research varies across different scientific fields and disciplines.*

#### ***Pure scientific research:***

- is about explaining the world around us and trying to understand how the universe operates;
- is also about finding out what is already there without any greater purpose of research than the explanation itself;
- often has indirect/ incidental benefits, which can contribute greatly to the advancement of humanity. (e.g. pure research into the structure of the atom has led to x-rays, nuclear power and silicon chips).

#### ***Applied scientists, on the other hand,:***

- might look for definitive and comprehensive answers to specific questions that help humanity (e.g. medical research or environmental studies)

#### Suggested Approach

1. Acknowledge the question's assumption that it is generally perceived that the results of scientific research hold greater importance than the processes as the outcomes are used for the betterment of humanity in many different areas. The idea here is that the ends justify the means.
2. Specify the conditions in which the methods used in scientific research become unacceptable/breach moral boundaries and the results are unable to justify the severe repercussions, i.e. means do not justify the end results.

#### Stand

While it is true that the results of scientific research are important in helping us in finding solutions and cures to many of mankind's problems, their value becomes questionable when there is transgression of moral/social limits during the processes of attaining these results. In such cases, the results are not more important.

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### Results are more important than processes

**For many in the scientific community, so long as the results bring about real progress that improves the quality of life of people, the tediousness of the process or the questionable practices involved in acquiring the results are considered worthwhile.**

- The majority of scientific researchers seem to justify potentially questionable practices based on the moral theory of consequentialism, stating that the morality of an action depends mainly on the overall outcome and not how the results are achieved (“the end justifies the means”).
- Additionally, as ethical concerns are often subjective, many believe that it is unjustified to allow the concerns of a few to prevent the larger society from benefitting from the results of scientific research.
- E.g. Hence, animal testing in biomedical research can, despite the pain-causing procedures and sacrifice of animals, be justified because the outcome, e.g. medical progresses that benefit millions of people, give an overall positive outcome (“the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers”).

**For some, the pursuit of self-interest often justifies paying more attention to results rather than the appropriateness of the processes.**

- Results from scientific research are more valuable to businesses. Many companies invest in research and development solely for the securing of vantage points over their competitors.
- Different business industries with science and engineering processes like agriculture, food and beverage, manufacturing, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, computer software, semiconductor, information and communication technology, construction, robotics, aerospace, aviation, and energy have high R&D expenditure because the results of the research are critical to product innovation and to improving services.
- Similarly, countries/governments have invested heavily in scientific research, in a bid to outdo other countries in terms of innovation or military might. The focus on success has at points in history disregarded ethics, e.g. human experimentation

### Results are not more important than processes

**When the morality of scientific practices is compromised and there is in them a severe lack of respect for the sanctity of human life, then far more is lost than could potentially be reaped from such research.**

- One of the main goals of scientific research is to improve the quality of life for humankind. However, if the processes that lead to such a goal threaten the sanctity of life or necessitates the killing of human life, then the potential value of the results (especially if success has not been seen) becomes obviously insignificant.
- E.g. Therapeutic cloning + embryonic stem cell research to provide a ready supply of replacement cells, tissue or organs

**It is more important to look at the ways that scientific research is conducted to ensure integrity and quality results. Funding bias and data faking could skew results which would ultimately be of little value to humanity's progression.**

- Even if ethical considerations may limit possible scientific breakthroughs and discoveries, they are still necessary to keep the methods of scientific research in check. These help to help build public support and sustain funding for research. Without the focus on how scientific research is carried out, the continuity of scientific development itself would be threatened.

- E.g. federal policies on research misconduct, conflicts of interest, the human subjects protections, and animal care and use are necessary in order to make sure that the researchers who are funded by public money can be held accountable to the public.
- E.g. Disgraced South Korean scientist, Hwang Woo-suk, and the faked data in his stem cell studies



4) 'Fantasy novels offer little apart from enjoyment.' Discuss.

Key terms:

Fantasy novels

**Fantasy**

- Make-believe
- Contain unrealistic settings or magic, possibly involving mythical beings or supernatural forms as a primary element of the plot, theme, or setting.

**Novels**

- an invented prose narrative that is **usually long** and complex and deals with human experience through a connected sequence of events.

Enjoyment

- the action of providing or being provided with amusement, entertainment or pleasure

Offer little apart from

- implies fantasy novels do not serve any function other than enjoyment
- this function [enjoyment] is hardly a significant one
- is dismissive of the value of enjoyment

Suggested Approach:

- a) Explain why fantasy novels are perceived by some to be insignificant/has no real value as they only provide enjoyment.
- b) Address the dismissive attitude that people have of enjoyment. Highlight the inherent value of enjoyment.
- c) Refute the claim made in the question by showing that fantasy novel have other significant functions and offer more than enjoyment.

**Part A: Explain why fantasy novels are perceived by some to be insignificant/has no real value as they only provide enjoyment**

- **The genre has been disparaged as popular literature offering only escapism with little relevance to the realities of life or the struggles of day-to-day living.**
  - Magic and the supernatural are the most common central features of fantasy (JK Rowling's Harry Potter series, Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, CS Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia, myths, etc.). In these novels, the protagonists often possess powers that have supernatural or even extra-terrestrial origins. **These powers are not available to real people and have little relevance to everyday life.**
  - They deal with **situations that are unrealistic** and which people are unlikely to encounter (e.g. The Wizard of Oz by Frank Baum, Wicked by Gregory Maguire, On A Pale Horse by Anthony Piers, Screwtape Letters by CS Lewis, etc.)



**Part B: Address the dismissive attitude that people have of enjoyment. Highlight the inherent value of enjoyment**

- The fact that fantasy novels are enjoyable do not diminish their value. Enjoyment is much needed in today's world as it is **a means of diverting people's attention from their demanding and stressful lives** and **amuses them** in their leisure time.
  - Fantasy novels offer **exciting scenarios and possibilities**. They offer, even if only for a short time, a universe filled with wonder and excitement. The popularity of fantasy novels, as evidenced by their consistent inclusion in best seller lists like the New York Times Best Sellers, demonstrates their enduring capacity to distract people, albeit temporarily, from the realities of life.
  - Whether it is terrorist attacks, rising crime rates, the threat of economic disasters, gender inequality or infectious diseases, our world is on a constant knife-edge. In troubled times like these, **people enjoy escapism**, and perhaps secretly wish that there were magic and superheroes around to fix the troubles of the world.
- **Although fantasy novels entertain us with made-up storylines and characters, the themes underlying such stories are universal. They actually make us think about our own struggles in life and what we need to do to overcome them.**
  - The people who consume fantasy books value good, compelling stories featuring characters they can identify with and who **inspire them** to endure their own difficulties.
    - E.g. (Mythological) storylines involving gods, demi-gods, magical creatures and ordinary people, all of whom are involved in the struggles of right and wrong; and the balance of power with responsibility, etc. are **concerns common to all of us**. (E.g. A Game of Thrones, Howl's Moving Castle, The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings trilogy, etc.)
  - The storylines in fantasy novels often **reflect social ills/problems** even though they are set in a make-believe world. While some fantasy novels are written as wish-fulfilment yet others may reflect and **encourage consideration** of current and possible future ills. They may be projection into the future/a made-up universe of the possible and logical development of current trends.
    - E.g. The Bartimeaus Sequence by Jonathan Stroud, a middle grade series for readers looking for their next magical fix, hide powerful, deeply progressive messages about colonialism, civil rights, and inequality within a thrilling, cheekily humorous fantasy story
    - E.g. *Midnight Robber* by Nalo Hopkinson  
A coming-of-age novel by Jamaican-Canadian writer Hopkinson, nominated for the Hugo, Nebula, and Philip K. Dick awards explores the search for identity, the sufferings of marginalized individuals and how they must act to overcome prejudice and discrimination



**Part C: Refute the claim made in the question by showing that fantasy novel have other significant functions which offer more than enjoyment.**

- **The entertainment function of fantasy novels also has important economic value.**
  - Fantasy novels are **important contributors to the publishing business**. Fantasy books are one of the top selling genres especially for children.
  - In the entertainment industry adaptations of fantasy novels are currently amongst the most **profitable franchises for movies**. They set new entertainment trends for society and contribute to the growth of new (and bankable) narratives in Hollywood.
    - E.g. Star Wars, Alice in Wonderland, Lord of the Rings, Wizard of Oz, etc.
- **Fantasy novels also help to promote personal expression and nurture creativity.**
  - It **promotes imaginative thinking** and encourages the expression of that imagination in a way that is fun and non-threatening. Hence, fantasy are effective in nurturing creativity, a core competency for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
  - E.g. Many readers of fantasy novels are not just passive consumers, but find **comradeship** among their fellow fans via writing *fanfiction* which is usually inspired by what they read. They also showcase their **creativity** through activities such as *cosplay*.



## 5) Not enough is done for the vulnerable today. Is this true of your society?

### **Stand 1: Not enough is done for the vulnerable today**

#### **Key Words**

##### **The vulnerable:**

- Students can characterise this group of people as those who are unable to defend themselves from or withstand adverse impacts from multiple stressors in society e.g. skyrocketing living costs, economic uncertainty, societal expectations and norms.
- A broad enough spectrum of individuals should be discussed in the essay: the elderly, the economically disadvantaged, children/ minors, those with chronic health conditions including the mentally ill etc.

##### **Enough:**

as much as is necessary; in the amount or to the degree needed

##### **Not enough is done:**

- Implies that the effort put in by society and our government's policies/reforms aimed at taking care of the interests of the vulnerable are inadequate to ensure that there is social equity.

##### **Today**

- Discussion should be about Singapore's current policies/ measures/ efforts and current situation. (there is no necessity to look at the past or into the future)

### **APPROACH 1**

#### **Stand:** Not enough is being done for the vulnerable today

**Part A:** Acknowledge that Singapore has increased measures/ efforts that cater to the vulnerable members of the Singapore society and how this has given many people the perception that enough is done for the vulnerable.

**Part B:** However, these measures / efforts are not enough to meet the needs of the more vulnerable members of the Singapore society

#### **Arguments**

**Part A:** Acknowledge that Singapore has increased measures/ efforts that cater to the vulnerable members of the Singapore society and how this has given many people the perception that enough is done for the vulnerable.

1. The Singapore government has indeed put in place many measures to meet the needs of the more vulnerable members of the Singapore society, which could have given many people the perception that enough has been done for the vulnerable.

- Elderly – Extension of retirement age; Pioneer Generation & Merdeka Generation package; ComCare Long Term Assistance, Silver Support Scheme

- Intellectually challenged – Pathlight school & Rainbow centre
- Physically Disabled – Physical modification to infrastructure to facilitate mobility
- Low wage workers and their families – Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) scheme for those earning less than \$2,300 per month; Fresh Start Housing Scheme to help families with young children in rental flats buy a second HDB flat of their own; Financial Assistance Scheme to ensure that every young person in Singapore has access to education;
- Minorities – The Presidential Council for Minority Rights (PCMR) is a non-elected government body in Singapore established in 1970, the main function of which is to scrutinize most of the bills passed by Parliament to ensure that they do not discriminate against any racial or religious community.

**2. There has also been increased attention paid to the needs and interests of the more vulnerable by other stakeholders (not just the government) within the Singapore community, further reinforcing the perception that enough is done for the vulnerable today.**

- The rich and powerful in our society have been using their wealth and influence to set up foundations and galvanise others into action in a bid to change the lives of the vulnerable. These foundations aim to provide the vulnerable with the help they need to achieve their dreams as well as serve as a form of intervention to prevent the vulnerable from being left behind.
  - Peter Lim, who owns Thomson Medical Group, donated \$10 million to the Singapore Olympic Foundation in 2010 to set up the SOF-Peter Lim Scholarship, which helps promising young athletes from low-income families achieve their sporting goals.
  - The Lien Foundation donated \$12 million to address the widening gap of inequality and barriers that children in low-income families face in navigating health, social services and education systems.
- Increasing number of self-help groups and charities set up by ordinary Singaporeans who are concerned about the problems faced by the vulnerable. These organisations connect the vulnerable to the institutions that can provide them employment or counselling services as well as establishments that can rectify the injustices they encounter. This allows the vulnerable to get timely assistance and indirectly gives them the support system they need to deal with their problems.
  - Jeremy Chua, who was behind SG Haze Rescue, a community initiative that called for people to donate their excess masks and mobilised hundreds of volunteers to distribute them to the needy.
  - Five Cents Project, a charitable initiative started by a Singaporean youth, Adrian Foo, which collects our 'useless' 5-cent coins to raise money for needy elderly in society.

**Part B: However, these measures / efforts are not enough to meet the needs of the vulnerable members of the Singapore society**

**3. Admittedly, there are many measures and efforts in place to help the vulnerable but their impact on the lives of some of the vulnerable is superficial, as they tend to treat the symptoms and not the root cause of the vulnerability. Most of the measures and efforts target the physical and to some extent, the emotional needs of the vulnerable but not their psychological**

**vulnerability, which is primarily caused by the entrenched mind-set and prejudice of Singaporeans.**

- Not enough is done to tackle ageism as there has not been any fundamental change in Singaporeans personal beliefs, assumptions and attitudes towards older workers especially among employers and even policy makers themselves. The same prejudice is also observed in attitudes towards the disabled. Hence, as long as Singaporeans still hold stereotypes of these vulnerable groups of people and are prejudiced against them, those who are vulnerable would remain vulnerable.
- Based on the findings of the Diversity & Inclusion study, which surveyed more than 100 HR leaders for large companies and small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Singapore, almost 60% felt their companies were not doing enough to support the disabled. The survey also suggests that ageism remains a prevalent issue among Singapore's workplaces. One in four respondents felt older workers faced discrimination in their workplace, while ageism comes in as the second-biggest issue faced by companies in Singapore at 28% after the inclusion of people with disabilities (38%). Only 16% of all companies surveyed had diversity and inclusion policies that covered people with disabilities, and only a third (35%) had policies that cover age discrimination.

**4. To assess whether enough has been done for the vulnerable, one needs to ascertain whether the measures and efforts in place are not mere stopgap measures but are effective in bringing about positive change. In Singapore, unfortunately, efforts to help the vulnerable are often not enough to empower them to make significant change to better their lives in the long term.**

- Though financial help is given to the poor, the aid schemes demand that the poor must exhaust their finances first or show proof that they are really in financial trouble before they can receive help. The monetary aid to the low-income family often does not assuage all their financial woes nor are they able to make any significant change in their way of life to enable them to escape from the poverty cycle. Many remain poor and disempowered and this has serious implications on their children as well. Poor families are not likely to have sufficient financial resources to provide nutritious food for their children and this has long-term impact on their development. Neither are poor families able to provide conducive environment for their children to do well academically. Hence, children from poor families are more likely to experience developmental delays and learning difficulties compared to their peers.
  - People with lower income already forgo spending that higher-income people consider basic needs, including educational needs such as tuition, nutritious food, healthcare, and leisure and social activities important for overall well-being," said Associate Professor Teo You Yenn, head of sociology at the Nanyang Technological University.
- Money alone is a short-term, one-time solution that can only do so much to significantly change the lives of the vulnerable for the better. The weak and helpless require society's sustained attention and assistance, not just because of the complexity of the wide-ranging problems that they may face but also because of their lack of voice in our society. This

means the vulnerable need others in society, ordinary Singaporeans, to help raise their woes and concerns to the relevant authorities.

5. Another criteria that can be used to gauge whether enough has been done for the vulnerable today is to assess whether measures and efforts in place are **inclusive enough so as not to alienate any group**. Based on this criteria, not only is there not enough been done for the vulnerable but Singaporean pro-family legislation and law enforcement openly discriminate the LGBT community as well as unmarried mothers in Singapore. This illustrates how tyranny of the conservative majority has continued to alienate the vulnerable.
- An overwhelming proportion of Singaporeans agree that people in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community still face discrimination in Singapore. Four in five Singaporeans (80 per cent) strongly or somewhat agree that such discrimination exists here, according to findings from an online survey commissioned by Yahoo News Singapore. The survey, conducted by Blackbox Research, polled 887 Singaporeans between 13 and 26 June 2019. From a legal viewpoint, there are several sections of the Penal Code that impede the freedom of the gay community in Singapore. The most prominent, and most frequently challenged, is Section 377A which states that so-called “acts of gross indecency” between men can be met with imprisonment of up to two years. The T Project, a shelter for homeless transgender persons, was not granted registration as a non-profit group by the authorities on the basis that their services were “contrary to national interests”.
  - Currently, unwed mothers do not get the Baby Bonus cash gift and parenthood tax rebates, and have to wait until they are 35 years old to buy a Housing Board flat under the singles scheme. Approximately 10,000 children have been born out of wedlock in Singapore from 2006 to 2016.



**5) Not enough is done for the vulnerable today. Is this true of your society?**

**Stand 2: Enough is done for the vulnerable today**

**A. Key Words**

**The vulnerable:**

- Students can characterise this group of people as those who are unable to defend themselves from or withstand adverse impacts from multiple stressors in society e.g. skyrocketing living costs, economic uncertainty, societal expectations and norms.
- A broad enough spectrum of individuals should be discussed in the essay: the elderly, the economically disadvantaged, children/ minors, those with chronic health conditions including the mentally ill etc.

**Not enough is done:**

- Implies that the effort put in by society and our government's policies/reforms aimed at taking care of the interests of the vulnerable are inadequate.

**B. Approach**

**Stand:** Untrue that not enough is done for the vulnerable in Singapore

**Part A:** State the current efforts meant to address the needs of the vulnerable and why they are considered inadequate.

**Part B:** Show that in reality, there is increased/ adequate attention paid to their needs and interests.

**C. Arguments**

**Part A:** State the current efforts meant to address the needs of the vulnerable and why they are considered inadequate.

- 1. Singaporeans are generally known to be generous with donations but are either unwilling or unable to dedicate time, energy and resources to help improve the lives of vulnerable groups of people.**

*Why effort is considered inadequate*

- Donations do aid the cash-strapped in managing their daily expenses but money alone is a short-term, one-time solution that can only do so much to significantly change the lives of the vulnerable for the better. The weak and helpless require society's sustained attention and assistance, not just because of the complexity of the wide-ranging problems that they may face but also because of their lack of voice in our society (e.g. migrant workers). This means the vulnerable need others in society, ordinary Singaporeans, to help raise their woes and concerns to the relevant authorities.

*Why Singaporeans are unwilling or unable to do more*

- Singaporeans are too caught up in the busyness of their lives so much so they feel there is little time for anything else apart from their personal commitments. In addition, with the

rise of individualism and the pursuit of the material, Singaporeans are more focused on their personal ambitions and aspirations than communal needs. Many also do not understand the struggles Singapore's vulnerable go through because the latter are hardly visible in our rich country and hence people rarely witness or hear their stories.

**2. There are indeed laws and policies that aim to protect the vulnerable but these focus only on their physical needs and may not address the root of the problems faced by the vulnerable.**

*Why effort is considered inadequate*

- Governmental measures are often limited to addressing economic uncertainty and financial hardship faced by the vulnerable as well as building infrastructure that caters to the needs of the elderly and the disabled. The government seems to overlook the anxiety the vulnerable may feel in facing their difficulties due to the lack of a proper support system or as a result of living from pay-check to pay-check. Even when the government does extend monetary aid to the vulnerable, this is often over a finite period of time and usually does not assuage all their financial woes.

*Why government unwilling or unable to do more*

- The Singapore government has always encouraged a culture of self-reliance and this perhaps explains the reluctance to provide long-term assistance to the vulnerable.

**Part B:** Show that in reality, there is increased/ adequate attention paid to the needs and interests of the vulnerable.

**1. We should not be too quick to dismiss the impact donations have on the lives of the vulnerable when the flow of such donations is sustainable and persistent, considering the deep pockets and commitment of some donors.**

*Why effort is considered adequate*

- The rich and powerful in our society have used their wealth and influence to set up foundations and galvanise others into action in a bid to change the lives of the vulnerable. These foundations aim to provide the vulnerable with the help they need to achieve their dreams as well as serve as a form of intervention to prevent the vulnerable from being left behind.
  - Peter Lim, who owns Thomson Medical Group, donated \$10 million to the Singapore Olympic Foundation in 2010 to set up the SOF-Peter Lim Scholarship, which helps promising young athletes from low-income families achieve their sporting goals.
  - The Lien Foundation donated \$12 million to address the widening gap of inequality and barriers that children in low-income families face in navigating health, social services and education systems.
- Furthermore, there is an increasing number of self-help groups and charities set up by ordinary Singaporeans who are concerned about the problems faced by the vulnerable. These organisations connect the vulnerable to the institutions that can provide them



employment or counselling services as well as establishments that can rectify the injustices they encounter. This allows the vulnerable to get timely assistance and indirectly gives them the support system they need to deal with their problems.

2. **While government bodies themselves are seen as extending limited assistance to the vulnerable, the government has empowered charities to fill in the gaps that the government may not be able to fill.**

*Why effort is considered adequate*

- Government funding has helped to cover administrative costs incurred by VWOs in running their programmes and hence enabled them to use their funds to truly address the needs of the vulnerable.
- The government also provides dollar-for-dollar matching on donations to the Empowering for Life Fund (ELF) and this has significantly boosted the money available for the most vulnerable to upgrade their skills and find jobs.
- The government also provides a 250% tax deduction to encourage businesses to do more for the disadvantaged and helpless in our society. This ensures that corporations will be more keen to use their influence and financial capacity to give back to the community. Such a collective effort helps the government to cater to more people in need of help in our society.





## 10) Do you agree that it is important to know a foreign language today?

### *Foreign language*

- Foreign language can be defined from two different perspectives:
  - From the perspective of the society/country: A language that is not commonly spoken in the country e.g. German would be a foreign language to Singaporeans but Malay would not be a foreign language to Singaporeans
  - From the perspective of the individual: A language that is not one's native tongue / that one did not grow up speaking e.g. an immigrant from Syria to the USA would see English as a foreign language

### *To know*

- To have an adequate level of proficiency in a foreign language such that one can communicate sufficiently with speakers of the foreign language

### *Important*

- To prove important: Candidates need to discuss the (more significant) benefits of knowing a foreign language
- To prove not important: Candidates need to explain why it's not important to know a foreign language today but showing that knowing a foreign language is not really beneficial or that it's unnecessary for people to know a foreign language today. Any discussion of the negative costs/impact of knowing/learning a foreign language is not central to the issue in the question.

### *Today*

- The importance of knowing a foreign language needs to take into consideration the current characteristics/context of today's world e.g. globalisation, technological advancements etc.

## **Stand: Agree – It is important to know a foreign language today**

- A) Explain why it is important to know a foreign language today due to the immense economic, political and social benefits it can bring.
- B) Address why some may claim that recent developments seem to have diminished the importance of knowing a foreign language today (given the ease of access to various means of overcoming language barriers)
- C) Point out the limitations of (B)

### **A) Important**

- 1) **With greater global interactions between companies from different countries and more companies trying to break into overseas markets, knowing a foreign language will give both individuals and corporations access to more business/employment opportunities as it will grant individuals the cultural capital that is needed to communicate both effectively and culturally to individuals from the other parts of the world.**

- China is the world's largest trading power, with a total international trade value of US\$4.62 trillion in 2018. It is also a country where business relations are highly socially

embedded. The ability to speak mandarin and navigate cultural gaps would make it easier for foreign investors to establish social relationships or guanxi with Chinese companies, which are crucial to gain access to more opportunities in China's huge market.

2) **Knowing a foreign language is important for fostering social cohesion in countries that are increasingly diverse and multicultural due to globalisation.** For migrants especially, learning the language of their new country indicates a **willingness to integrate and avoid isolation, and enables them to communicate easily without barriers and build more meaningful relationships** with the local community.

- For instance, Germany in 2016 introduced integration laws for refugees and one part involved the learning of German. In the Netherlands, this is the same too, where foreign nationals who migrate to the Netherlands must learn Dutch because the Dutch government believes that every migrant must speak Dutch in order to participate in the Dutch society.

3) Knowing a foreign language is also important in **enhancing national security as terrorist attacks are becoming increasingly transnational and borderless in nature. The knowledge of a foreign language or multiple foreign languages will enable countries to better decode intelligence they gather from espionage or surveillance on hostile countries or terrorist groups.**

- Over the last two decades, Washington has poured millions of dollars into finding and training Arabic and Russian-speaking researchers and analysts as part of their counterterrorism efforts.

**B) Some may claim that it is not important today.**

4) Some may claim that **it is not important to know a foreign language in order to communicate with people who speak a different language due to the ease of access to various means to overcome language barriers.**

- a. The ease of hiring translators to provide accurate translations means that it is not important for companies or politicians to learn a foreign language to do business or build relationships with other countries.
- b. With advancements in technology, translation tools are now widely available and are increasingly accurate, making it unnecessary for the average person to learn a foreign language to communicate with others from a different country for practical purposes.
  - The Japanese company Logbar has created a device that allows for instantaneous translation: you only need to speak into it and it will translate what you say into the target language.
  - The help that is provided in the area of translation leads us to see no need to learn anymore languages than we need to. These days, the reservation of plane tickets is facilitated by online engines that provide the consumer with the option of choosing his/her preferred language. Also, online translation tools like Google Translate have also provided individuals with the added agency to make meaning of alternative languages. Thus, the inability to speak more than one language has been cushioned by the impact of technology in our daily lives.

**C) Rebuttal to (B)**

5) Yet, **the need to rely on external help to get one's point across can be a barrier to forming deeper relationships with others or even create misunderstandings.**

- Having to converse through a translator not only interrupts the flow of conversation but also makes it difficult for people to engage in direct banter with one another, which can help to foster warmer relationships with one another.
- Despite technology's rise in helping with translation, translation technology is simply not good enough yet to catch all the nuances and context of any language to offer a good and proper translation. Thus, miscommunications can still occur.
  - Any translation technology will also not be able to grasp the cultural nuances in manners of speaking and will only look to give the plainest and most direct translations possible. Google Translate is known for its literal translations of idiomatic phrases or proverbs and even complex sentences which fail to convey the original meaning of these phrases or sentences accurately.



## 11) Should we really be concerned about consumerism today?

### A. Key Words

**Consumerism:** the human desire to own and obtain products and goods in excess of one's basic needs.

**Really:** Connotes doubt and scepticism. We need to examine the scepticism built in the question and question our concerns about consumerism.

**Today:** the consumption habits of today's society as well as changing attitudes towards consumerism must be discussed in the essay.

### B. Approach:

**Part A:** Discuss the problems associated with consumerism

**Part B:** Explain why the concerns in part A are no longer as significant/serious.

**Part C:** Discuss how consumerism may actually be a good thing.

### C. Arguments

**Part A:** Discuss the problems associated with consumerism.

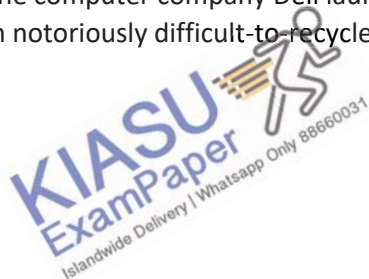
1. **Consumerism may cause overspending that in turn brings about financial problems and affects an individual's mental well-being.**
  - Consumerism encourages purchasing and consumption of goods and services in excess of what people need and at the expense of things like saving and investing. Pursuit of a materialistic lifestyle may hence result in people living beyond their means, incurring punitive levels of debt and working longer hours to pay for their high-consumption lifestyle. This results in them spending less time with family, friends, and community organisations.
  - According to a study in the peer-reviewed monthly journal Psychological Science in 2012, people who are saddled with debts because of over-spending are also likely to suffer from depression.
2. **Environmentalists are also concerned about the detrimental impact rising consumerism has on the planet.**
  - Higher levels of consumption (and therefore higher levels of production) require larger inputs of energy and material and generate larger quantities of waste by products. Increased extraction and exploitation of natural resources, accumulation of waste and concentration of pollutants can also damage the environment.
  - A new study published in the Journal of Industrial Ecology shows that the things we consume — from food to knick-knacks — is responsible for up to 60 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and between 50 and 80 percent of total land, material, and water use.
  - As people continue to demand for more and more material possession, producers will need to use extensive amounts of water, energy, chemicals and raw materials, all of which place heavy demands on Earth's physical environment.

**Part B:** Explain why the concerns in part A are no longer as significant/serious.

1. The concerns that many people have about consumerism having a detrimental impact on the environment may not be as serious as what many environmentalists claim. **With access to new media, consumers today are increasingly more aware of the impact that indiscriminate consumerism has on the environment and are advocating more responsible consumerism.**
  - Such movements are advocating for the production, promotion, and preferential consumption of goods and services on the basis of their pro-environment claims. Such movements have also led to an increase in recycling, purchasing, and use of eco-friendly products that diminish harm to the environment or planet.
  - In Singapore, an online platform Swapaholic is helping women to shop without hurting your wallet or the planet by organising swap meets events held at Marina Barrage, The Capella Sentosa and Chijmes in Singapore.
  - According to Dr Faizal bin Yahya of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy recycling as a culture is clearly catching up and more secondhand goods are being sold in the market and there is also a trend towards renting rather than buying.

**Part C:** Discuss how consumerism may actually be a good thing.

1. **Companies, in trying to woo consumers, are making an effort to be socially and environmentally responsible.**
  - As marketing continues to evolve and get more complex and competitive, companies, in trying to attract more customers, are using honesty and realism to stand out from the competition. In addition to providing a competitive advantage, focusing on honesty helps build deeper connections with consumers. And when a company promotes a promise and delivers on it, it is seen as reliable and credible improving its image and ensuring consumers remain loyal to its brand.
  - Furthermore, in response to consumers shifting preferences towards firms that are more attentive to environmental issues, businesses nowadays are also embarking on ways to decrease their carbon footprint and the destruction of the natural environment. As more and more internationally known companies go green, the idea of going green becomes that much more tantalizing.
  - Examples: Global giant Johnson & Johnson continues to seek out renewable energy options with the goal to procure 35% of their energy needs from renewable sources. Lego will invest \$150 million over the next 15 years with a focus on addressing climate change and reducing waste. The computer company Dell launched a recycling programme that enables customers to return notoriously difficult-to-recycle electronics for free.



## 12) To what extent is the use of social media by politicians a positive development?

- *Note: The question says 'To what extent is ... positive?'*
- *The assumption, therefore, is that the use of social media by politicians is generally beneficial/something to be welcomed.*

### Approach

Part A: Address the assumption that the use of social media by politicians is a positive development for various stakeholders – politicians and their parties, society/electorate, the democratic process (and any other relevant stakeholders)

Part B: Limitations of the perceived positive developments/Overstatement of positive impact

### Part A: The benefits of the use of social media by politicians

- The use of social media has enabled politicians to **communicate more effectively with voters to expand their reach and boost voting numbers.**
  - In today's world, media organisations often have their own agendas and prejudices and politicians cannot expect objectivity or reasonable coverage. However, social media has enabled politicians to have more direct access to the voters. They are thus able to communicate their positions on issues to the electorate without needing the media as their vehicle for dissemination and **avoid being misrepresented** by them i.e. they have **better control** over what is communicated and how it is presented rather than what the media understands, interprets and articulates.
  - When the people hear directly from the politicians, they are likely to have a **better understanding** of the policies and their representatives' position. This might translate into **more informed choices** when they go to the polls.
  - Moreover, not everyone is able to attend a political rally because of the constraints of time and distance, but **politicians can access everyone** who has an internet connection, including those in remote areas or in a different time zone. Not only does social media engagement enable politicians to **widen their sphere of political influence and gain a higher percentage of the votes**, it might also **boost overall voter turnout** which is key to a truly representative democracy.
  - E.g. *The use of social media was considered to be a key factor contributing to Obama winning the election. Using social media expanded his reach increasing voters and strengthened pre-existing audience. Trump's victory is likewise attributed to the clever use of social media.*
- The use of social media by politicians enables them to **receive authentic, instantaneous public feedback** which can help them to **craft more effective policies or clarify the concerns of the people.**
  - Social media has created a **two-way conversation between politicians and electorate** that is necessary for a healthy functioning democracy. Through online discussions, citizens are better able to exercise their freedom of speech and raise pertinent concerns. The ease of expressing their views from the comfort of their homes and the fact that they see others

holding similar or conflicting views may **encourage more people to participate in political debates**. Authentic responses enable politicians to **better gauge how people are reacting to a given issue** without resorting to costly polls and surveys. They could then **clarify concerns/misconceptions, modify or propose new policies based on the public's feedback**. Such interactions enable politicians to build and maintain support amongst their voters.

- E.g. PM Lee Hsien Loong has conducted live Facebook chats where he clarified questions on government policies such as those on the use of the Central Provident Fund (CPF), healthcare costs, housing for singles and bilingualism in the education system.

#### **Part B: Limitations of the perceived positive developments/Overstatement of positive impact**

- Increased reach notwithstanding, the **views of these online users may not be an accurate reflection of the views/needs of the majority**.
  - The use of social media by politicians has indeed enabled better engagement with a social media savvy segment of the electorate but **not everyone is interested in or knows how to work social media** (the poor/elderly/lowly educated).
  - Moreover, the **most vociferous voices online are often people with vested interests**. It is thus questionable if the concerns/opinions raised in these “conversations” with politicians are **truly representative of real problems faced/position adopted by the rest of the population** and if policies would truly benefit society as a whole if they were informed by these views.

*E.g. Today's Democratic Party is increasingly perceived as dominated by its “woke” left wing. But the more extreme views of Democrats on social media often bear little resemblance to those of the wider Democratic electorate. Although Democratic Virginian Governor Ralph Northam was pummeled on social media by online Democrats after a scandal, the majority of ordinary Democrats in Virginia said Mr. Northam should remain in office.*

*The outspoken group of Democratic-leaning voters on social media is outnumbered, roughly 2 to 1, by the more moderate, more diverse and less educated group of Democrats who typically don't post political content online, according to data from the Hidden Tribes Project. This latter group has the numbers to decide the Democratic presidential nomination in favor of a relatively moderate establishment favorite, as it has often done in the past.*

- **Politicians may exploit social media for their own political advantage.**
  - Politicians are able to **employ professionals to monitor trends and manipulate information** so that it's more palatable to their supporters. They can employ staff who will **plug particular issues** and keep them in the forefront of public consciousness and to **play up the importance of their political agendas**. Politicians can even influence the direction and content of online debate themselves by **spreading untruths, manipulating voter anxiety and cherry-picking information for their own agenda**.



- When people obtain much of their information from social media, they might accept, without reflection, what they read as the truth or is considered important, especially if provided by an authority figure/representative of the government. **Real issues may be obscured** as the spread of lies by politicians **affects the people's ability to think critically and independently**. This is why interpretation of issues or events by more knowledgeable media institutions may actually help the electorate to see what the politicians seek to hide.
- E.g. *The former UKIP leader, Nigel Farage, shared a doctored image on Twitter to meet his anti-immigrant agenda. In the U.S., Trump recently retweeted a video pushing a conspiracy theory that the Clintons had somehow managed to murder the convicted sex criminal, Jeffrey Epstein, in jail to further discredit his former Presidential opponent.*
- When politicians fail to exercise due caution in their use of social media, this may serve to create **confusion over policies instead of clarifying the government's stand on key issues**.
  - Politicians who have sent out **unfiltered tweets or Facebook posts** have landed up in embarrassing situations where they have had to backpedal on comments made online. As a result, the people end up receiving **mixed signals on the government's stand**.
  - It is particularly problematic when such irresponsible and thoughtless comments are made on crucial issues like foreign policy where politicians share **opinions that do not align with national goals and end up undermining the credibility of the government**. Hence, the benefits of direct interaction between politicians and the people may be overstated.
  - E.g. *Trump's Twitter declaration to withdraw American troops from Syria created shockwaves around the world that saw top officials within the administration trying desperately to manage the fallout. The abrupt declaration prompted then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to resign and his Republican colleagues to decry the move as "disastrous to our national security". Amidst the confusion, Trump started to backpedal on his comments and sent officials to the Middle East to calm nerves. Till today, there is no complete withdrawal of American troops from Syria.*





## 1. What is the writer suggesting when he uses “thus far” in line 1? [1]

	☺
One of the more memorable statements of Barack Obama’s presidency <b>thus far</b> has been his claim	<p>The writer is suggesting that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barack Obama <u>may/will/has potential to</u> make <u>more/other</u> memorable statements (<i>context: memorable statements</i>) later on in his presidency. OR</li> <li>This is <u>not the only</u> memorable statement Obama <u>may/will</u> make.</li> </ul>

## 2. By pointing out that Adam Smith is a “seemingly unlikely ally” in line 4, what is the writer implying about Barack Obama’s belief? [2]

	☺
In making his case Obama appealed to the authority of a <b>seemingly unlikely ally</b> : Adam Smith, the purported founding father of laissez-faire capitalism, who is widely thought to have advocated unbridled greed and selfishness in the name of allowing the invisible hand of the market to work its magic.	<p>a. <u>Contrary to popular belief</u>, <b>Obama</b> shares the same belief as Adam Smith’s OR It <u>appears</u> that Barack Obama and Adam Smith hold opposing views, but they are <u>actually</u> of the same opinion OR The writer is implying that Barack Obama <u>actually/in reality/unexpectedly/surprisingly</u> shares the same belief as Adam Smith’s [1]</p> <p>b. that is he is <u>a non-believer/non-supporter/critic</u> of laissez-faire capitalism. [1]</p>

## 3. Explain in your own words as far as possible what the writer means by “this view of Smith is a gross caricature” (line 8). [3]

	☺
In making his case Obama appealed to the authority of a seemingly unlikely ally: Adam Smith, the purported <b>founding father of laissez-faire capitalism</b> , who is widely thought to have advocated unbridled greed and selfishness in the name of allowing the invisible hand of the market to work its magic... Many a scholar has made a career, in recent decades, by pointing out	<p>a. The writer means that the perception of Smith as the founding father/ the one who conceived of laissez-faire capitalism (<i>context</i>) is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>highly/extremely/greatly/very inaccurate/distorted</u> [1]</li> <li>OR</li> <li><u>‘wrong/false/incorrect/erroneous/misconception/misrepresentation/mistake’</u></li> </ul>

that this view of Smith is a gross caricature.	
It has often been noted, for instance, that Smith <b>never once used the term “laissez-faire” or even the term “capitalism,”</b>	b. The view is a gross caricature because... 1. Smith never mentioned the terms ‘laissez-faire’ and ‘capitalism’,
and that his two books—The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759) and The Wealth of Nations (1776)—are full of passages <b>lamenting the potential moral, social, and political ills of what he called “commercial society.”</b>	2. and he was <u>critical</u> of laissez-faire capitalism/a commercial society in his books for the possible problems it may bring to society OR he complained that laissez-faire capitalism/a commercial society would bring a lot of <u>problems</u> . [1]

4. In your own words as far as possible, explain why Smith is believed to be less concerned about economic inequality than poverty (line 14). [2]

	😊
As long as everyone has <u>food on their tables, clothes on their backs, and a roof over their heads</u> , the thinking goes, <u>it does not matter if some have far more than others.</u>	a) Smith is believed to think that <u>even though some are less well off than others, the poor still have access to sufficient necessities/fulfil their needs.</u> [1] OR <u>As long as everyone has enough basic necessities/have their basic needs met</u> , it is fine. Smith was more worried about those without the basic necessities.
Indeed, it is often claimed that Smith saw economic inequality as a <u>good</u> thing.	b) and that economic inequality is <u>advantageous/beneficial desirable/ a boon</u> . [1]

5. Using material from paragraphs 4-7, summarise what the writer has to say about the benefits and problems with economic inequality.

A benefit of economic inequality is that ...

Lift	😊
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1	the <u>great</u> wealth of the <u>few</u> generally <u>benefits</u> the <u>rest of society</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <u>immense</u> riches of some/a minority</li> <li>usually/normally are <u>a boon to/favourable to/advantage/aid/help</u> the others/everyone else/the majority in the country</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the others in the country</li> <li>usually <u>gain</u> from the <u>immense</u> riches of some</li> </ul>
2	at least in <u>material</u> terms	<u>tangibly</u> OR <u>economically/financially/in monetary terms/in terms of standard of living</u>
3	and over the <u>long run</u> .	and <u>in the long term/over an extended period of time</u>
4	In some cases, their <u>luxuries trickle down</u> in an almost literal sense: <i>"The houses, the furniture, the clothing of the rich, in a little time, become useful to <u>the inferior and middling ranks of people</u>,"</i> Smith writes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Their <u>possessions</u> (inferred) are</li> <li><u>passed down/given</u> (inferred) to</li> <li><u>the poor and middle class/the lower socio-economic strata/those lower down on the social ladder.</u></li> </ul>
5	the <u>conspicuous consumption</u> of the rich encourages <u>productivity</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <u>heavy/ huge/high/excessive/unlimited</u> (inferred) <u>spending/buying/demand</u> of the wealthy</li> <li><u>brings about efficiency/higher output</u> OR <u>makes people work harder/faster</u></li> </ul>
6	and <u>provides employment</u> for many	and <u>creates jobs</u> for the masses/a lot of people/the country/society
7	it <u>inhibits</u> economic <u>growth</u> ,	<p>inequality <u>stops/</u> <u>halts/</u></p> <p><u>hinders/impedes/obstructs/limits/restricts</u> OR</p> <p><u>slows/weakens</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>economic <u>prosperity/development/progress/expansion</u></li> </ul> <p>Alternative:  <u>causes an economic downturn/recession</u></p>
8	<u>prevents</u> social <u>mobility</u> ,	<u>stops the movement up the social ladder/hinders people from achieving a higher socioeconomic status,</u>

		<p>Alternative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>traps people in poverty/does not allow the poor to pursue a better life</u></li> <li>• <u>reduces the ease of climbing the social ladder</u> OR <u>makes it more difficult to improve one's socio-economic status</u></li> <li>• <u>leads to fewer people advancing to a higher social class/achieving a higher socio-economic status</u></li> </ul>
9	<u>impairs</u> democracy,	<u>weakens</u> democracy OR makes democracy <u>less than functional/ineffective</u>
10	or <u>runs afoul of</u> some standard of <u>fairness</u> .	<u>Is unequal/unjust/biased/partial</u>  OR <u>lacks equity</u>  OR <u>violates/flouts/breaks/goes against the rules of impartiality/equality.</u>
11	economic inequality <u>distorts</u> people's "sympathies"	It also <u>warps</u> people's <u>sympathies</u> or makes people cultivate <u>questionable</u> sympathies OR It leads to the people <u>feeling for/identifying with/relating to the affluent not/rather than/more than the impoverished</u>
12	leading them to <u>admire</u>	causing them to <u>respect/think highly of/ look up to/hold in high regard/adore/idolise/worship</u>
13	and <u>emulate</u> the very rich	and <u>imitate/model after/follow in the footsteps of/become like</u> the ultra-wealthy
14	and to <u>neglect</u>	while <u>ignoring/paying no attention to/not caring about/showing no concern for/disregarding/overlooking</u> OR <u>being unconcerned about/apathetic to/indifferent</u>
15	and even <u>scorn the poor</u> .	• and even <u>showing contempt/treating with disdain/mocking/ridiculing/looking down</u>

		<p><u>on/despise/disrespecting/belittling/being condescending to</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>the impoverished/destitute/needy/disadvantaged/less privileged/less fortunate.</u></li> </ul>
16	<p>It <u>undermines</u> both <u>morality</u> and happiness. First, morality. Smith saw the widespread admiration of the rich as morally problematic because he did not believe that the rich in fact tend to be terribly <u>admirable</u> people. In Smith's view, the reason why the rich generally do not <b>behave admirably</b> is, ironically, that they are widely admired anyway (on account of their wealth)...</p> <p>... Thus, it is precisely the presence of economic inequality, and the distortion of people's sympathies that attends it, that allows—perhaps even encourages—the rich to <u>spurn the most basic standards of moral conduct</u>. Smith goes so far as to proclaim that the disposition to admire the rich and scorn the poor is the greatest cause of <u>moral corruption</u>.</p>	<p>This in turn makes the wealthy act <u>unethically/unscrupulously/dishonourably/</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p>... makes the wealthy <u>lose their sense of righteousness/violate ethical principles/not uphold values/have a bad conduct or character</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p>As a result, the wealthy do <b>not</b> act <u>respectably/in a principled manner</u></p>
17	<p>In Smith's view, the reason why the rich generally do not behave admirably is, ironically, that they are widely admired anyway (on account of their wealth). In other words, the rich are not somehow innately vicious people.</p>	<p>They <b>do not NEED TO</b> act <u>ethically</u> in order to <u>win the respect/veneration of/be looked up to /be held in high regard by society</u>.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>... they will still <b>have the</b> <u>respect of others regardless/no matter what</u> ('they do not have to act ethically' is implied by 'regardless/no matter what')</p> <p>OR</p>

	Rather, their affluence puts them in a position in which they do <b>not have to behave <u>morally</u></b> in order to <b><u>earn the esteem of others</u></b> ,	... they will still <b>have the <u>respect of others even if they do not act ethically</u></b> OR ... they (think they) <b>CAN act <u>however they want</u></b> as people will still <b><u>respect them</u></b>
18	most of whom are <b><u>dazzled and enchanted by their riches</u></b> .	because society is <b><u>blinded by/charmed by/beguiled by/captivated by their wealth /mesmerised by/overawed/spellbound by their wealth</u></b> OR <b><u>adores/idolises/worships/is enamoured with the wealthy</u></b>
19	Smith also believed that the tendency to sympathise with the rich more easily than the poor makes people <b>less <u>happy</u></b> ,	It also makes people <b>less <u>blissful/contented/satisfied/joyful</u></b> . OR ... makes people <b><u>miserable/sad/depressed</u></b>
20	and insisted that <b><u>money cannot buy happiness</u></b>	<b>Affluence/riches/wealth</b> does not <b>make</b> one <b>blissful/contented/satisfied/joyful</b> .
21	but also that <b>the <u>pursuit of riches</u> generally <u>detracts from one's happiness</u></b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Chasing after/Seeking wealth</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>diminishes/lowers/reduces</u></b></li> <li>• one's level of <b><u>bliss/contentment/satisfaction/joy</u></b>,</li> </ul>
22	Happiness consists largely of tranquillity ( <b>a <u>lack of discord</u></b> ), and there is <b>little <u>tranquillity</u></b> to be found in a life of toiling and striving to keep up with the Joneses.	as it leads to <b><u>inner/internal turmoil/chaos</u></b> OR <b><u>hardly any peace/calm in one's life</u></b> OR <b><u>emotional instability</u></b>

1-2 points: 1m; 3-4 points: 2m; 5-6 points: 3m; 7-8 points: 4m;  
9-10 points: 5m; 11-12 points: 6m; 13-14 points: 7m; 15+ points: 8m

6. What does "goes so far" imply about the writer's view of Smith's proclamation in line 45 [1]

😊	
Smith <b>goes so far</b> as to proclaim that the disposition to admire the rich and scorn the poor is the	The writer thinks that Smith's proclamation that the tendency to look up to the rich and look down on the poor is the main reason for moral decay is <b>radical/extreme/far-fetched/exaggerated/too much</b> . OR

greatest cause of moral corruption.	... Smith went <b>overboard</b> with his proclamation... OR The writer does <b>not really/fully agree with/is sceptical of/is doubtful about/is unconvinced by</b> Smith's proclamation...
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7. In your own words as far as possible, explain why “the vast majority of people spend the vast majority of their lives longing for and pursuing wealth.” (lines 52-53) [2]

	😊
Smith saw it as obvious that people do not work so hard in order to obtain food, clothing, and shelter but because of the <u>attention</u> it brings them: “It is the <u>vanity</u> , not the ease, or the pleasure, which interests us.”	<p>VANITY</p> <p>a. They want the people's <u>admiration/respect/validation/acceptance/recognition</u> OR They <u>want to look good in front of others/want to impress others/do it for the glamour/want to be glorified by others</u> OR They do it for <u>fame/popularity/the glamour</u> OR They do it <u>to feel good about themselves or for their pride/ego/self-worth/self-esteem</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p>ATTENTION</p> <p>They want to <u>be noticed/be in the limelight/be in the spotlight/attract people's gaze/others to focus on them/widely discussed</u></p>
In other words, it is the fact that people <u>sympathise more easily with the rich</u> that leads them to want to become rich themselves,	b. as people <u>empathise with/place themselves in the shoes of/ relates to/identify with the affluent more/rather than with the impoverished</u>
and to (wrongly) assume that the rich must be <u>supremely happy</u> .	<p>c. They think wealth brings <u>immense bliss/contentment/satisfaction/joy</u>.</p> <p><i>1-2 points: 1m; 3 points: 2m</i></p>

8. Explain the use of brackets around the word “wrongly” in line 56. [1]

	😊
and to <b>(wrongly)</b> assume that the	<p>[FUNCTION] The writer is <u>interjecting his opinion</u></p> <p>[CONTEXT]</p>

rich must be supremely happy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that the assumption/belief/perception the affluent are very blissful/contented/satisfied OR money can buy immense joy</li> <li>is fallacious/false/incorrect/erroneous OR that the affluent are not necessarily/always extremely happy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternative phrasing of the above answer:</b> [FUNCTION] The writer is <u>showing his disagreement with/disapproval</u> of a popular belief</p> <p>[CONTEXT]  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that the rich are very blissful/contented/satisfied OR money can buy immense joy</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Alternative answer:</b> [FUNCTION] The writer is <u>showing a contrast</u></p> <p>[CONTEXT]  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>between the perception that the rich are very blissful/contented/satisfied or that money can buy immense joy</li> <li>and the reality that they may not be or that it may not.</li> </ul> </p>
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9. According to the writer, “much of Smith’s analysis rings true today” (line 58). How does the paragraph support Smith’s analysis? Use your own words as far as possible. [3]

	😊
<p><b>The amount of media coverage of the lives and lifestyles of the rich and famous</b> should suffice to confirm that even if people in today’s commercial societies do not always admire the wealthy, they do generally sympathise with them in Smith’s sense of the term—that is, people tend to put themselves in the wealthy’s shoes—far more than they do with other people.</p>	<p>The paragraph supports Smith’s analysis on people’s sympathies with rich rather than the poor by citing</p> <p>a) The <u>extensive/frequent</u> (inferred) media/press reporting or news of how the wealthy live, [1]</p>



Further, even if people do not always admire the wealthy either as individuals or as a group, there is little question that <b>they are disposed to admire and pursue wealth itself with every bit of the fervour and doggedness</b> that Smith expected.	b) people's <u>inclination/willingness to worship and accumulate wealth passionately and determinedly</u> [1]
Finally, the other half of the distortion of people's sympathies that he describes—the <b>tendency to unduly ignore the poor</b> —is very much still present.	c) while <u>paying no attention to/not caring about/showing no concern for/neglecting/disregarding/overlooking</u> OR <u>being unconcerned about/apathetic to/indifferent to</u> the impoverished [1]

10. In your own words as far as possible, explain the contradiction in the last sentence of the passage. [2]

	☺
Adam Smith, the purported <b>founder father of laissez-faire capitalism</b> , who is widely thought to have advocated unbridled greed and selfishness in the name of allowing the invisible hand of the market to work its magic.  It is perhaps predictable that history's most <b>famous theorist of commercial society</b> would have something to add to contemporary debates about economic inequality.	a. [REASON] Given that he is believed to have <u>conceived/proposed</u> the concept of laissez-faire capitalism/a commercial society, <u>the cause of economic inequality</u> , [1]
Given his reputation, however, it is striking that Smith had more profound and original things to say in	b. [EXPECTED OUTCOME] Smith was <u>assumed/expected/supposed/thought to advocate/argue in favour of/support</u> inequality  [REALITY] But he was <u>actually critical/disapproving</u> of it.

<u>opposition</u> to inequality than in its <u>defence</u> .	
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**RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**JC2 Preliminary Examination**

# General Paper

## PAPER 1

27 AUG 2019

8807/1

**1 HOUR 30 MINUTES**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

INDEX NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class, index number and question number clearly on all pages of your answer script, including the cover page.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer one question.

Note that **20** out of **50** marks will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the paper, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

<b>QUESTION NUMBER</b>	
<b>CONTENT ( 30 marks)</b>	
<b>LANGUAGE (20 marks)</b>	
<b>TOTAL (50 marks)</b>	

This document consists of **2** printed pages.

**[Turn over]**

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Consider the importance of toys.
- 2 Should privacy be sacrificed for the sake of national security?
- 3 'There are no permanent friends, only permanent interests.' Assess the validity of this statement in international relations.
- 4 Discuss the view that marriage is increasingly irrelevant in your society.
- 5 Is geography still destiny?
- 6 Is self-reliance or interdependence more desirable?
- 7 'There has never been a time of greater peril.' How far is this true of today's world?
- 8 How effective is social media as a tool in bringing about change in society?
- 9 In this age of science, to what extent is religion still relevant?
- 10 Discuss the view that environmental conservation efforts today are nothing more than token gestures.
- 11 'Citizens are too reliant on the government.' How far is this statement true in your society?
- 12 'There is no place for the death penalty today.' Comment.

**END OF PAPER**



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

## JC2 Preliminary Examination

### GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

INSERT

**8807/02**

**27 Aug 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

**[Turn over]**

George Monbiot writes about a crisis of loneliness...

- 1 What greater indictment of a country could there be than an epidemic of mental illness? Yet, plagues of anxiety, stress, depression, social phobia, eating disorders and self-harm now strike people down all over the world. The latest, catastrophic figures for children's mental health in England alone reflect a broader global crisis – that of loneliness. There are many secondary reasons for this crisis, but it seems to me that the underlying cause is the same everywhere: human beings, ultrasocial mammals whose brains are wired to respond to other people, are being peeled apart. 5
- 2 Economic and technological change plays a major role in this crisis, but so does ideology. Though our well-being is inextricably linked to the lives of others, everywhere we are told that we will prosper through competitive self-interest and extreme individualism. In England, we are instructed to stand on our own two feet. Employment is a fight to the near-death with a multitude of other desperate people chasing ever fewer jobs. The modern overseers of the poor tell us that dignity comes from being able to provide for our families, and they blame us for our own economic plight. The result of all this is a populace that feels alone in an intense race for individual survival. 10  
15
- 3 Against this backdrop, consumerism fills the social void. But far from curing the disease of isolation, it intensifies social comparison to the point at which, having consumed all else, we start to prey upon ourselves. Networking sites online seem to cut both ways: bringing us together and driving us apart, allowing us to quantify our social standing precisely, and to see that other people have more friends and followers than we do. It helps us to stay in touch, but also cultivates a tendency to persuade our followers that we are having a great time, which surely enhances other people's sense of isolation. FOMO – fear of missing out – seems, at least in my mind, to be closely associated with loneliness. 20
- 4 It is not just about how we want others to perceive us, but how we view ourselves that exacerbates the feeling of loneliness. Many girls and young women routinely alter the photos they post, to make themselves look smoother and slimmer. Some phones, using their "beauty" settings, do it for you without asking; now you can become your own *thinspiration*. Is it any wonder, in these lonely inner worlds, where the human touch has been replaced by the retouching of photos, that young women are drowning in mental distress? A recent survey in England suggests that one in four women between 16 and 24 have harmed themselves, and one in eight now suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Anxiety, depression, phobias or obsessive compulsive disorder affect 26% of women in this age group – this is what a social health crisis looks like. And despite the agony of isolation, the chasms that have emerged between us are ever-widening. 25  
30  
35
- 5 There are several possible reasons for the atomisation now suffered by the supremely social mammal. Work, which used to bring us together, now disperses us, as many people have neither fixed workplaces nor regular colleagues and regular hours. Our leisure time has undergone a similar transformation – cinema replaced by television, sport by computer games, time with friends by time on Facebook. Children's lives in particular have been transformed: since the 1970s, their unaccompanied home range (in other words, the area they roam without adult supervision) has declined in Britain by almost 90 per cent. Not only does this remove them from contact with the natural world, it also limits their contact with other children. When kids played out on the street or in the woods, they quickly formed their own tribes, learning the social skills that would see them through life. These days, however, children are growing up lonelier than ever. 40  
45

- 6 The word “sullen” evolved from the Old French *solain*, which means “lonely”. Loneliness is associated with an enhanced perception of social threat, so one of its paradoxical consequences is a tendency to shut yourself off from strangers. When I was lonely, I felt like lashing out at the society from which I perceived myself excluded, as if the problem lay with other people. To read any comment thread online is, I feel, to witness this tendency: you find people who are plainly making efforts to connect, but who do so by insulting and abusing, alienating the rest of the thread with their evident misanthropy. 50
- 7 If this social rupture is not treated as seriously as broken limbs, it is because we cannot see it. But neuroscientists can. A series of fascinating papers suggest that social pain and physical pain are processed by the same neural circuits. This might explain why, in many languages, it is hard to describe the impact of breaking social bonds without the words we use to denote physical pain and injury. In both humans and other social mammals, social contact reduces physical pain. This is why we hug our children when they hurt themselves: affection is a powerful analgesic. Conversely, self-harm is used as an attempt to alleviate emotional distress, an indication that physical pain is sometimes seen to be not as bad as emotional pain. As the prison system knows only too well, one of the most effective forms of torture is solitary confinement. 55
- 8 It is not hard to see what the evolutionary reasons for social pain might be. Survival in the wild is greatly enhanced when animals are strongly bonded with the rest of the pack. The isolated ones are most likely to be picked off by predators or to starve unnoticed. Similarly, in fragmented societies, the lone rangers drown in the torrents of society’s pressures, while social pariahs gradually fade into obscurity without so much as a whimper given in their absence. 60
- 9 It is unsurprising that social isolation is strongly associated with depression, suicide, anxiety, insomnia, fear and the perception of threat. It is more surprising to discover the range of physical illnesses it causes or exacerbates. Dementia, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, lowered resistance to viruses, even accidents, are more common among chronically lonely people. Loneliness has a comparable impact on physical health to smoking 15 cigarettes a day – it appears to raise the risk of early death by 26%. Studies in both animals and humans suggest a reason for comfort eating, as isolation reduces impulse control, leading to obesity. As those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder are the most likely to suffer from loneliness, might this provide one of the explanations for the strong link between low economic status and obesity? 65
- 10 Anyone can see that something far more important than most of the issues we fret about has gone wrong. So why are we engaging in this competitive, world-eating frenzy of consumerism and social dislocation, if all it produces is unbearable pain and suffering? Should this question not burn the lips of everyone in public life? There are some wonderful charities fighting this tide, but for every person they reach, several others are swept past. This crisis does not require a policy response; it requires something much bigger: the reappraisal of an entire worldview. Of all the fantasies human beings entertain, the idea that we can go it alone is the most absurd and perhaps the most dangerous. We stand together, or we fall apart. 70



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# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

## JC2 Preliminary Examination

**GENERAL PAPER**  
**PAPER 2**

**8807/02**  
**27 AUGUST 2019**  
**1 HOUR 30 MINUTES**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.  
Additional Material: 1 Insert

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class and index number on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.  
The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.  
Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
CLASS \_\_\_\_\_  
INDEX NO. \_\_\_\_\_

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

This document consists of **7** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Read the passages in the insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow below. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

1. In paragraph 1, what does the author consider to be the main reason for the crisis of loneliness worldwide? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

2. What reasons does the author suggest for why people in England are told to 'stand on [their] own two feet' (line 11)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[3]

- Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[8]

4. Explain the paradox in lines 47 to 49. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....[1]

5. Suggest a reason why the author claims in line 55 that neuroscientists can see social rupture.

.....  
 .....[1]

6. Explain the author's use of the word 'conversely' in line 60.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

7. What can be inferred about the prison system from the phrase 'knows only too well' (line 62)?

.....  
 .....[1]

8. In paragraph 8, what parallels does the author draw between animals that are alone in the wild and humans in fragmented societies? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

9. What is the author's purpose of including the phrase 'might this provide' (line 78)?

.....  
 .....[1]

10. In lines 83 to 86, what does the author suggest about what needs to be done to deal with the problem of loneliness? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....[2]

11. What ideas in paragraphs 9 and 10 support the author's claim that going it alone is 'absurd' and 'dangerous' (line 87)?

(i) Absurd: .....  
 .....[1]

(ii) Dangerous: .....  
 .....[1]



..[10]



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## RVHS JC2 GP Prelim 2019 P2 Answer Scheme

1. In paragraph 1, what does the author consider to be the main reason for the crisis of loneliness worldwide? Use your own words as far as possible. (2 marks)

From text	Inference
it seems to me that the underlying cause is the same everywhere: human beings, <b>(B) ultrasocial mammals</b> whose brains are <b>(A) wired to respond to other people</b> , are being <b>(C) peeled apart</b> .	The author believes that it is because humans who are (A) innately designed to (B) require/need/thrive on interaction OR be very cooperative with others (C) are being separated from others. <i>For (B), do not accept anything that reflects interaction being a 'want'</i> 1-2 points: 1m 3 points: 2m

2. What reasons does the author suggest for why people in England are told to 'stand on [their] own two feet' (line 11)? Use your own words as far as possible. (3 marks)

From text	Inference
...we are told that we will <b>prosper</b> through competitive self-interest and extreme individualism.... <b>Employment is a fight to the near-death with a multitude of other desperate people</b> chasing ever fewer jobs. The modern overseers of the poor tell us that <b>dignity</b> comes from being able to <b>provide</b> for our <b>families</b> , and they <b>blame us for our own economic plight</b> .	People are told to stand on their own two feet as (A) it is the way to succeed/thrive/gain wealth (B) and the job market is competitive. (C) Also, the elite/government believe that there is <u>pride in being able to take care of one's household</u> , and that (D) people are expected to be <u>responsible for their own financial situation</u> OR people are seen to be the cause of their own financial situation  <i>Note: For point B, do not accept answers that <b>only</b> mention the scarcity of jobs</i> Any 3 points for 3 marks

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3. **SUMMARY:** Using material from paragraphs 3 to 5 only (lines 16–46), summarise what the author has to say about the effects of loneliness and why people are feeling increasingly lonely.

*The effects of loneliness are...*

	From text	Paraphrase/ Inference
A	<b>consumerism</b> fills the social void	materialism / making more purchases,
B	it <b>intensifies social comparison...</b> <b>OR</b> see that other people have <b>more friends and followers</b> than we do. (line 20)	...which encourages us to <u>measure ourselves against others...</u>  <i>Not 'competitive'</i>
D	...we start to <b>prey upon ourselves.</b>	(inferred) ... and we begin <u>attacking/hating ourselves.</u>
E	<b>Networking sites online</b> seem to cut both ways: bringing us together and <b>driving us apart</b>	People feel lonely as social media distances/ isolates us from others.
F	cultivates a <b>tendency to persuade our followers that we are having a great time.</b>	(inferred) Reading about others having fun OR Constantly convincing others that we are having fun...
G	FOMO – <b>fear of missing out</b> – seems, at least in my mind, to be closely associated with loneliness	...and not wanting to be left out (makes people feel lonely).
H	It is not just about <b>how we want others to perceive us,</b>	Our desire to be liked/ admired by our peers...
I	but how we <b>view ourselves</b> that exacerbates the feeling of loneliness.	...and our self-perception enhance loneliness, (allow lift of 'ourselves'; NOTE: points H & I need to be phrased as a cause)
J	Many girls and young women routinely <b>alter the photos they post,</b> to make themselves look smoother and slimmer	leading to teenage girls regularly enhancing pictures of themselves, (paraphrase of girls and women not required)
L	one in four women between 16 and 24 have <b>harmed themselves</b>	cutting/hurting themselves (context of women is required)
M	young women are drowning in <b>mental distress</b> OR one in eight now suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Anxiety, depression, phobias or obsessive compulsive disorder affect 26% of women in this age group	and suffering from psychological anguish/strain.
N	<b>the chasms that have emerged between us...</b>	Loneliness has caused gaps in society to appear and
O	...are <b>ever-widening</b>	become larger.
P	<b>Work,</b> which used to bring us together, <b>now disperses us,</b>	Our jobs scatter us, (Do not accept divide)
Q	as <b>many people have neither fixed workplaces</b>	as office spaces are flexible,
R	<b>nor regular colleagues...</b>	co-workers change constantly,
S	...and <b>regular hours</b>	and routines are not rigid.
T	Our <b>leisure</b> time has <b>undergone a similar transformation</b> – cinema replaced by television, sport by computer games, time with friends by time on Facebook.	Likewise, group activities have been replaced by individual ones; (Do not accept direct paraphrasing of examples)
U	Children's lives in particular have been transformed: since the 1970s, <b>unaccompanied home range (in other words, the area they roam without adult supervision) has declined...</b>	children are lonelier as they spend more time being monitored,
V	... <b>limits their contact with</b> other children.	reducing their interaction with their peers,
W	When kids played out on the street or in the woods, they quickly <b>formed their own tribes,</b>	(opposite effect) As such, they are unable to find groups/ people to belong to
X	learning the <b>social</b> skills that would see them through life.	(opposite effect) or acquire essential soft/communication skills.

Points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-15	16 +
Marks	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m	8m

4. Explain the paradox in lines 47 to 49. **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1 mark)

From text	Inference
Loneliness is associated with an <b>enhanced perception of social threat</b> , so one of its paradoxical consequences is a <b>tendency to shut yourself off from strangers</b> .	Lonely people would want to connect with others, but they end up keeping from others instead (because they are afraid to do so).

5. Suggest a reason why the author claims in line 55 that neuroscientists can see social rupture. (1 mark)

From text	Inference
If this social rupture is not treated as seriously as broken limbs, it is because we cannot see it. But neuroscientists can. A series of fascinating papers <b>suggest that social pain and physical pain are processed by the same neural circuits</b> .	Neuroscientists can see social rupture as physical and social pain both manifest themselves in the same way in the brain. OR One reason could be that neuroscientists have the necessary equipment to identify the physical effects of social pain when analysing the brain.  <i>Accept all reasonable answers that infer neuroscientists' ability to analyse neural circuit activity</i>

6. Explain the author's use of the word 'conversely' in line 60. (2 marks)

From text	Inference
This is why we hug our children when they hurt themselves: affection is a powerful analgesic. <b>Conversely</b> , self-harm is used as an attempt to alleviate emotional distress, an indication that physical pain is sometimes seen to be not as bad as emotional pain.	Just as affection/a hug can alleviate physical pain, the <u>reverse is also true (1)</u> : physical pain can be used to alleviate emotional distress. (1)  <i>1 mark for explaining the word 'conversely'</i> <i>1 mark for explaining its contextual application</i>

7. What can be inferred about the prison system from the phrase 'knows only too well' (line 62)? (1 mark)

From text	Inference
As the prison system <b>knows only too well</b> , one of the most effective forms of torture is solitary confinement.	It can be inferred that the prison system <u>exploits</u> the emotional pain that comes from solitary confinement. OR The prison system <u>frequently uses</u> solitary confinement as a means of a punishment. OR It can be inferred that the prison system <u>sees many instances</u> of prisoners suffering from emotional pain when in solitary confinement.

8. In paragraph 8, what parallels does the author draw between animals that are alone in the wild and humans in fragmented societies? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2 marks)

From text	Inference
The isolated ones are most likely to be <b>picked off by predators</b> or to starve unnoticed.  the lone rangers <b>drown in the torrents of society's pressures</b> OR while social pariahs gradually <b>fade into obscurity</b>	They are both more vulnerable to external threats OR more likely to disappear/be eliminated...  OR Animals are likely to be overwhelmed by those hunting them, while humans are overwhelmed by the stress of modern life... <i>Do not accept answers about people dying</i>
The isolated ones are most likely to be picked off by predators or to starve <b>unnoticed</b> .  while social pariahs gradually fade into obscurity <b>without as much as a whimper given in their absence</b> .	...and their going missing is unlikely to register in the minds of others/be paid attention to.

9. What is the author's purpose of including the phrase 'might this provide' (line 78)? (1 mark)

From text	Inference
As those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder are the most likely to suffer from loneliness, <b>might this provide</b> one of the explanations for the strong link between low economic status and obesity?	The author wishes to <u>insinuate/suggest that there is a relationship between</u> economic status, loneliness and obesity. OR The author is using the phrase to <u>indicate that it is only but a possibility/it is arguable</u> that loneliness may explain the link between low economic status and obesity.  <i>Contextual explanation of the phrase is required</i>

10. In lines 83 to 86, what does the author suggest about what needs to be done to deal with the problem of loneliness? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2 marks)

From text	Inference
<b>Should this question not burn the lips of everyone in public life?</b> There are some wonderful <b>charities fighting this tide, but for every person they reach, several others are swept past</b> . This crisis does not require a policy response; it requires something much bigger: <b>the reappraisal of an entire worldview</b> .	The author suggests that A. (inferred) people should be talking about the problem of loneliness more/constantly asking how the situation can be made better, B. (inferred) organisations need to help more people/be more effective in providing aid to those who need it, and C. (more than just improving laws,) we need a (major) shift in our perspective/mindset.  <i>1-2 points: 1m; 3 points: 2m</i>

11. What ideas in paragraphs 9 and 10 support the author's claim that going it alone is 'absurd' and 'dangerous' (line 87)? (2 marks)

Description	Ideas from paragraphs
(i) Absurd	<p>The idea that we are "engaging in this competitive, world-eating frenzy of consumerism and social dislocation", when "all it produces is unbearable pain and suffering?" (lines 81-82)</p> <p><i>Need to include the idea that we still persist in it</i></p>
(ii) Dangerous	<p>Social isolation is strongly associated with a range of mental illnesses (lines 70-71)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>There are a "range of physical illnesses it (social isolation) causes or exacerbates" (lines 71-72)</p> <p><i>Do not accept "impact on health": too vague</i> <i>Allow lifting for answers</i></p>

12. George Monbiot raises his concerns about a crisis of loneliness and sheds light on its causes. How far would you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society? (10 marks)





**ST ANDREW'S JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS**



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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/1**

**PAPER 1**

26 August 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

Additional materials: Writing Paper

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, Civics Group and register number on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.  
Note that **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All the questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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**This question paper consists of 2 printed pages.**



Answer **one** question from this Paper.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. Can societies be truly inclusive today?
2. 'Scientific development is always at the expense of morality.' Do you agree?
3. 'Freedom of expression is a luxury we cannot afford.' How far is this true in your society?
4. Should every society be left to define its own ethical standards?
5. 'Champions of animal rights are nothing but hypocrites.' Discuss.
6. 'Any change in society begins in school.' Comment.
7. How far do you agree that artistic expression is always political?
8. How important is it for young people in your society to retain a sense of tradition?
9. 'The real threat for humans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is indifference rather than ignorance.' Is this true?
10. Is it true that your society has paid too high a price for its success?
11. Is greater regulation the answer to fake news?
12. To what extent should society be responsible for criminal behavior?

**INSERT**

**ST ANDREW'S JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (       )

Civics Group: \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

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Paper 2

**26 August 2019, Monday**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

**INSERT**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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This document consists of **x** printed pages.

*Passage 1: David Brooks argues that kindness is innate.*

- 1     The story of evolution, we have been told, is the story of the survival of the fittest. The strong eat the weak. The creatures that adapt to the environment pass on their selfish genes. Those that do not become extinct. In this telling, we humans are like all other animals — deeply and thoroughly selfish. We spend our time trying to maximise our outcomes — competing for status, wealth and mating opportunities. Behaviour that seems altruistic is really self-interest in disguise. Charity and fellowship are the cultural drapery atop the iron logic of nature. 5
  
- 2     All this is partially true, of course. Yet every day, it seems, a book crosses my desk, emphasising a different side of the story. These are books about sympathy, empathy, cooperation and collaboration, written by scientists, evolutionary psychologists, neuroscientists and others. It seems there has been a shift among those who study this ground, yielding a more nuanced, and often gentler picture of our nature. In pursuing our self-interested goals, we often have an incentive to repay kindness with kindness, so others will do us favours when we are in need. We have an incentive to establish a reputation for niceness, so people will want to work with us. We have an incentive to work in teams, even against our short-term self-interest because cohesive groups thrive. 10
  
- 3     But beyond incentives, we might even be born to be good. It has been observed that at an astonishingly early age kids begin to help others, and to share information, in ways that adult chimps hardly ever do. Somehow, the human mind veered away from that of the other primates and we are born ready to cooperate with innate mechanisms of empathy and connection – things like smiles, blushes, laughter and touch. When friends laugh together, their laughs start out as separate vocalisations, but they merge and become intertwined sounds. It now seems as though laughter evolved millions of years ago, long before language, as a mechanism to build cooperation. It is one of the many tools in our inborn toolbox of collaboration. 15  
20
  
- 4     Natural selection takes place not only when individuals compete with other individuals, but also when groups compete with other groups. Both competitions are examples of the survival of the fittest, but when groups compete, it is the cohesive and internally altruistic groups that win and pass on their genes. Human beings are “the giraffes of altruism.” Just as giraffes have long necks to help them survive, humans developed moral minds that help them and their groups succeed. Humans build moral communities out of shared norms, habits, emotions and gods, and then will fight and even sometimes die to defend their communities. 25
  
- 5     If cooperation permeates our nature, then so does morality, and there is no escaping ethics, emotion and religion in our quest to understand who we are and how we got this way. 30

*Passage 2: Jesse Weinberg discusses the power of kindness*

- 1 Happiness researcher Sean Achor demonstrated through his extensive research that if you perform random acts of kindness for two minutes a day for twenty-one days, you can actually retrain your brain to be more positive. Studies such as his show that when your brain is more positive you are more likely to be creative, intelligent and productive. These attributes can spin into what we perceive as ‘quality of life’ attributes – job success, wealth, healthy relationships, and better health. This adage, that happiness breeds success, is counterintuitive to what Western society popularly perceives as the opposite, that success lends itself to happiness. 5
- 2 Kindness is a simple concept, yet so very impactful. It can make the world a better place by ending suffering at the hands of war, hunger, human rights violations, and injustice. It has the power to drastically improve our own well-being as well as that of our families, friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The very act of expressing graciousness to one another can make us more empathetic of other people’s hardships. Within the workforce, kindness towards one another can inspire employees to be more productive and make businesses more profitable. And within our communities, kindness contributes to safer and cleaner schools and neighbourhoods. 10
- 3 Despite the dog-eat-dog world that we live in, unexpected kindness is the most powerful, least costly and most underrated agent in human change. It is also the easiest thing in the world to execute. With very little time (even just two minutes a day) and very minimal effort we can transform a human being’s day, week, or even life. The return on investment is off the charts! How can something so simple and so easy have such a tremendous impact on others and ourselves? 15
- 4 To start a movement of kindness, Kindness & Co created Random Act of Kindness Kits. The kits empower an individual to start their own chain reaction of kindness. Each kit includes a long list of fun and innovative ways in which the recipient can create their own acts of kindness. They found that people increasingly value experiences over material things, Kindness Kits are their way of replacing consumerism in holiday or birthday gift-giving and replacing it with the truly honourable experience of spreading cheer in people’s lives. Additionally, businesses and organisations are using Kindness Kits for employee gifts, thank you’s, and tokens of customer or employee appreciation, to name a few. 20 25
- 5 While it seems inconceivable that benevolence has a place in today’s cutthroat business environment, even the most successful companies are recognizing its virtues. Billionaire and entrepreneur Mark Cuban was recently quoted saying “Nice is way undervalued right now. It’s one of the most valuable assets out there,” when asked about negotiating tips. 30
- 6 Instead of buying bland, typical gifts again this year for your friends and family, and acquaintances, how about saying and doing something more imaginative and creative that will make a bigger difference to both you and them. Rather than giving your employees a logo-emblazoned corporate gift that lacks any real value to them, give them the experience of kindness. Give a positive experience that makes the recipient happy and be beneficial to the world. In the words of Maya Angelou, “People will forget what you did, they will forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.” 35
- 7 Every act of kindness creates a ripple effect that spreads with no end in sight. Let us run with it!

# ST ANDREW'S JUNIOR COLLEGE

## JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS



CANDIDATE  
NAME

CIVICS  
GROUP

INDEX  
NUMBER

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### GENERAL PAPER

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**26 August 2019, Monday**

Comprehension Answer Booklet

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates are to answer in this booklet

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, Civics Group and index number on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid/tape.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.

Note that **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	<b>/35</b>
Language	<b>/15</b>
Total	<b>/50</b>

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This document consists of **7** printed pages.

Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow below. Note that up to 15 marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

*Note: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.*

### From Passage 1

- 1 What is implied about charity and fellowship when they are referred to as 'cultural drapery' (line 6)?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 2 What 'shift' is the author referring to in line 11?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 3 In paragraph 2, explain the reasons why the author claims we are nice? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....[3]

- 4 Suggest how laughter helps to 'build cooperation' (line 24)?

.....  
.....[1]

- 5 In Paragraph 4, what is the author's intention in referring to human beings as giraffes? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]

**From Passage 2**

- 6 Why is it 'counterintuitive' (line 7) to say that happiness breeds success? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]

- 7 Explain the author's use of the word 'even' in line 32. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....[1]

- 8 In Paragraph 6, what type of gifts make a 'bigger difference'? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[3]

**9** How does the phrase ‘with no end in sight’ (line 42) reinforce the author’s overall argument in this passage?

**10** Using material from paragraphs 2–4 (lines 9–30) in Passage 2, summarise what the author has to say about kindness, its benefits and how it can be spread.

[illegible]





This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

[10]



**2019 SAJC Preliminary Examination  
Paper 2 Suggested Answer Scheme**

**PASSAGE 1**

1. What is implied about charity and fellowship when they are referred to as “cultural drapery” (line 6)? [2]

Lifted	Paraphrased / Inferred
Behaviour that seems altruistic is really self-interest in disguise. Charity and fellowship are the <b>cultural drapery</b> atop the iron logic of nature.	<p><b>A (drapery):</b> is merely for show/ a false front/ a mask / façade/ cover/ hide/ disguise [1]</p> <p><b>B (context):</b> for our <u>self-interest</u> / making use of others. [1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: to follow social convention/ hard nature</li> </ul>

2. What 'shift' is the author referring to in line 11? [2]

Lifted	Inferred
It seems there is been a shift among those who study this ground, yielding a more nuanced, and often gentler picture of our nature.	<p><b>Context (no marks awarded, BUT must be reflected):</b> Change from <u>the idea</u></p> <p><b>A (Before):</b> that we are <u>self-interested</u>/ self-serving [1]</p> <p>X brutal</p> <p><b>B (After):</b> to a finer understanding that we are really <u>kinder</u> than we think / nicer / good-natured/ sympathy/ empathy/ cooperation/ collaboration [1]</p> <p>X peaceful methods/ balanced/ alternative perspective</p> <p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do not accept literal paraphrases of the passage.</li> <li>- The context of kindness must be clear in their answers.</li> <li>- Subject of this question is the view of human nature</li> </ul>



3. In paragraph 2, explain the reasons why the author claims we are nice? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

Lifted	Paraphrased
In pursuing our self-interested goals, we often have an incentive to repay kindness with kindness, so others will do us <b>favours</b> when we are in <b>need</b> . We have an incentive to establish a <b>reputation</b> for niceness, so people will want to <b>work</b> with us. We have an incentive to work in teams, even against our short-term self-interest because cohesive groups <b>thrive</b> .	<p><b>A (do us favours when we are in need):</b> <u>help</u> us when we are <u>in trouble/ require it</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: help us when we <u>need</u> help (Lift)</li> </ul> <p><b>B (reputation):</b> to be recognised/ known as being nice/ make a name for ourselves/ create an image/ want to be seen as nice/ to portray ourselves/ want to show a helpful persona</p> <p><b>C (want to work with us):</b> so that they will <u>want/ desire to/ attract/ entice others/ appear attractive ... to collaborate/ cooperate/ team up with/ join us</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: interact</li> <li>- Note: 'Want' is an acceptable lift.</li> </ul> <p><b>D (thrive):</b> and help us succeed/ excel/ prosper/ flourish/ reach greater heights/ progress/ do well/ more productive/ results produced are better as a team/ highly effective results/ reap more benefits/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BOD: achieve goals</li> <li>- Not accepted: grow/ accomplish things easier/ survival/</li> <li>- <b>Note: As long as the answer shows some kind of progress/doing well (positive <u>outcome</u>), accept.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Mark allocation:</b>  <b>1 pt: 1 mark      2-3pts: 2 marks      All 4pts:3 marks</b></p>

4. Suggest how laughter helps to "build cooperation" (line 24)? [1]

Lifted	Inferred
It now seems as though laughter evolved millions of years ago, long before language, as a mechanism to <b>build cooperation</b> .	<p><b>A (Any logical reason):</b> Laughter serves the purpose of breaking barriers / relaxing people/ connects people on a common topic/ signals to others that they are enjoying their company/ seen as unity as people enjoy something together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: sign of empathy</li> </ul> <p><b>B (build cooperation):</b> and therefore bolsters/ boosts unity/ brings people together/ sense of connection/ work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: interact</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Do not accept literal paraphrases of lines 22—23.</i></p> <p><b>Both A and B for 1 mark.</b></p>

5. In Paragraph 4, what is the author's intention in referring to human beings as giraffes? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

Lifted	Inferred
Human beings are "the giraffes of altruism." Just as giraffes have long necks to help them <b>survive</b> , humans developed moral minds that help them and their groups <b>succeed</b> .	<p><b>A (purpose):</b> He uses the <b>analogy/ comparison/ draw a parallel/ similarity</b> to show/ better illustrate his point [1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: to show/ to highlight (with no reference to linguistic tool utilised)</li> </ul> <p><b>B1 (literal):</b> just like how giraffes evolved to have long necks to stay <u>alive</u>/ to live</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: thrive</li> <li>- BOD: to get by</li> </ul> <p><b>B2 (figurative):</b> we have evolved to have morals in order to <u>thrive</u>/ achieve their goals/ victorious/ progress/ achieve excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not accepted: survive</li> </ul> <p><b>B1+B2 for 1 mark.</b></p> <p>Note: Answer must be given based on the context of the passage. It should not be in the context of the Giraffes project.</p>

## PASSAGE 2

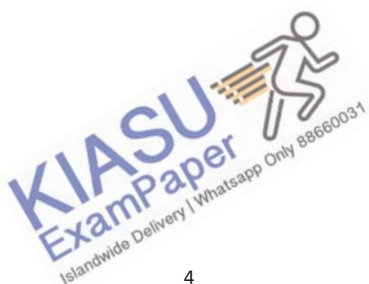
6. Why is it 'counterintuitive' (line 7) to say that happiness breeds success? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

Lifted	Inferred
Studies such as his show that when your brain is more positive you are more likely to be creative, intelligent and productive. These attributes can spin into what we perceive as 'quality of life' attributes - job success, wealth, healthy relationships, and better health.	<p><b>A (assumption):</b> People assume that achievements <u>will bring</u> joy / fulfilment</p> <p><b>B (possibility):</b> but may be that one's joy / fulfilment may actually be what <u>leads to</u> achievements. / but it may be that joy / fulfilment is an achievement in itself.</p>
This adage, that <b>happiness breeds success</b> , is <b>counterintuitive</b> to what Western society popularly perceives as the opposite, that success <b>lends itself</b> to happiness.	<p>Note.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Happiness' and 'success' are lifts.</li> <li>- For either part, do not accept negation of other part.</li> </ul> <p><b>2 or 0.</b></p>



7. Explain the author's use of the word "even" in line 32. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]

Lifted	Paraphrased
While it seems inconceivable that benevolence has a place in today's <b>cutthroat</b> business environment, even the most <b>successful</b> companies are recognizing its virtues. Billionaire and entrepreneur Mark Cuban was recently quoted saying "Nice is way undervalued right now. It's one of the most valuable assets out there," when asked about negotiating tips.	<p><b>Option 1 - Contradiction</b>  <b>A (Expectation):</b> It is expected...</p> <p>EITHER (Cutthroat)  businesses that are <u>ruthless/ very competitive</u> do not value kindness</p> <p>OR (most successful)  that <u>most profitable</u> companies do not value kindness</p> <p><b>B (Reality):</b> but they do recognise/ acknowledge/ <u>value</u> kindness.</p> <p><i>Note: Answers for A and B must show a clear contradiction.</i>  - E.g. As the author would not expect the highest achieving firms [A] to also acknowledge the value of niceness [B].</p>
	<p><b>Option 2 - Extent</b>  <b>C (Degree):</b> Kindness is <u>valued</u> to such a large <u>extent</u>  <b>D (Context):</b> that <u>most profitable</u> businesses/ in today's <u>ruthless</u> world recognise it.</p> <p><i>Note: Answers for C and D must show a clear extent.</i></p>



8. In Paragraph 6, what type of gifts make a 'bigger difference'? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

Lifted	Paraphrased
how about saying and doing something more <b>imaginative</b> and <b>creative</b> that will make a bigger difference to both you and them. And rather than giving your employees a logo-emblazoned corporate gift that lacks any <b>real value</b> to them, give them the experience of kindness. Give a positive experience that makes the recipient <b>happy</b> and <b>helps</b> the world.	<p>He suggests giving gifts that are...</p> <p><b>A (More imaginative):</b> <u>more</u> innovative/ original/ unique/ special</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not accepted: interesting</li> </ul> <p><b>B (Real value to them):</b> has personal meaning/ is thoughtful/ tailored to recipient's needs/ meaningful/ allows them to feel cared for/ touched</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not accepted: sincerity/ create lasting impact</li> </ul> <p><b>C (happy):</b> brings joy/ good cheer/ positive feeling/ makes people feel good</p> <p><b>D (Helps the world):</b> useful to/ contributes/ aids/ benefits the world/ everybody/ society</p> <p><b>Mark allocation:</b>  <b>1 pt: 1 mark    2-3pts: 2 marks    All 4pts:3 marks</b></p>

9. How does the phrase "with no end in sight" (line 42) reinforce the author's overall argument in this passage? [1]

Lifted	Inferred
Every act of kindness creates a ripple effect that spreads with no <b>end</b> in sight. Let us run with it!	<p>It reinforces the idea that there are <u>limitless/ infinite</u> benefits that come with being kind.</p> <p>Accepted: ongoing chain effect/ domino effect/ <u>ongoing</u>/ boundless/ ever-lasting/ interminable/ spread indefinitely/ keeps going/ goes a long way/ continuously encourage people to be kind/ perpetuates/ cannot be stopped</p> <p>BOD:</p> <p>Not accepted: long-lasting/ extensive/ ever-improving individual (wrong subject)/ infectious/ widespread</p> <p><b>X do not accept if answer is just about 'a lot' or 'bountiful' impacts.</b></p>

**Commented [1]:** For student's version of the answer scheme, delete all the blue stuff. Keep only the ORIGINAL ANSWER and the 'Not Accepted' phrases/words

## Summary

	Lifts / lines	Rephrased	Main Idea
1	Kindness is a <b>simple</b> concept	a concept that is clear / uncomplicated / plain / straightforward / easily understood	Simple
2	yet so <b>very impactful</b> .  Bob Kerry once said, "Unexpected kindness is the <b>most powerful</b> ,  The return on investment is off the charts! How can something so simple and so easy have such a <b>tremendous impact</b> on others and ourselves?	yet it is <u>extremely</u> / <u>incredibly</u> / <u>exceedingly</u> / <u>extraordinarily</u> / <u>exceptionally</u>  influential/ compelling/ effective/ strong effect/  <i>Any modifier that adds intensity needs to be present.</i>	Very Impactful
3	It can make the world a <b>better place</b>	It makes the world More pleasant/ agreeable/ delightful/ enjoyable/ nicer/ lovelier/ change the world positively/ improve the world/ happier	Make world a better place
4	by <b>ending</b> suffering at the hands of war, hunger, human rights violations, and injustice.	by resolving / halting / terminating  life's major problems / issues that threaten mankind's existence  <i>Note: Must get the main idea of the list of examples.</i>	End suffering
5	It has the power to <b>drastically improve</b> our own well-being	It can <u>Drastically</u> – radically / considerably / significantly / hugely  <u>Improve</u> – better / enhance / enrich / increase  <u>our well-being/ standard of living.</u> <i>(Note: must be about self)</i>	Power to improve our well-being
6	as well as that of our families, friends, acquaintances, and strangers.	(Summarise the idea) of those around us / of people whom we love and whom we do not know / of everyone  <i>Note: Must get the main idea of the list of examples. (Similar principle to point 4)</i>	And of those around us
7	The very act of expressing graciousness to one another can make us <b>empathetic</b> of other people's hardships.	... makes us understanding/ compassionate/ concern/ sympathetic/ considerate  X Aware/ cognisant	Makes us more empathetic of others' hardship
8	Within the workforce, kindness towards one another can <b>inspire employees</b>	(Context: workforce) <u>Inspire</u> – move/ encourage/ motivate/ enthuse/ stir the hearts of/ stimulate/ promote <u>employees</u>	Can inspire workers
9	to be <b>productive</b> and	become fruitful/ efficient/ useful	Become more productive
10	make businesses <b>profitable</b> .	<u>businesses</u> become <u>lucrative</u> / commercially viable / valuable / financially rewarding  BOD: successful firms	Businesses become more profitable
11	And within our communities, kindness contributes to <b>safe</b>	(Context: Communities) ... leads to more secure / benign / harmless / less dangerous <u>communities/ surroundings/ environment</u>	Safe schools and neighbourhoods the community
12	and <b>clean</b> schools and neighbourhoods	and spotless/ unsoiled/ <u>hygienic</u> / sanitary/ tidier/ neater / immaculate/ spick and span <b>X orderly</b>	Clean environment
13	<b>least costly</b>	<u>Very inexpensive/ affordable/ cheapest</u> / least luxurious/ lavish <i>Any modifier that adds intensity needs to be present.</i>	Least costly

14	and <b>most underrated</b> agent in human change."	And <u>extremely</u> undervalued/ unappreciated/ unrecognised/ misunderstood/ underestimated  X Do not accept 'largely' or 'often'.  <i>Not just any modifier that adds intensity needs to be present but one that captures 'most'.</i>	Underrated
15	And yet it is the <b>easiest</b> thing in the world to <b>execute</b> .  With very <b>little</b> time (even just two minutes a day) and very <b>minimal effort</b>	<u>Easiest</u> – simplest/ straightforward/ effortless/ most convenient/ painless/ unproblematic to  to <u>execute</u> – implement / effect / accomplish / achieve / carry out / fulfil / complete  <i>Any modifier that adds intensity needs to be present.</i>	Easiest
16	we can <b>transform</b> a human being's day, week, or even life.	we can change/ alter/ improve a person's life/ make people happier  <i>Any positive change to a person's life can be accepted too!</i>	Transformative
17	The kits <b>empower</b> an individual	To spread kindness, we can <u>enable</u> / encourage/ equip people  OR people use the kits/ we spread kindness through kits	Empower individuals to start
18	to <b>start</b> their own <b>chain reaction</b> of kindness.	<u>Start</u> - to initiate/ begin/ birth/ commence  <u>Chain reaction</u> - their own series of events/ a never ending cycle/ ripple effect/ knock-on effect of kindness/ domino-effect  Main idea: can be spread from an individual action and leads to more acts of kindness to more people	Chain reaction
19	Each Kit includes a long list of <b>fun</b> and	Through entertaining / engaging / exciting / enjoyable / amusing / pleasurable / joyful / exuberant/ interesting	Fun
20	<b>innovative</b> ways in which the recipient can create their own acts of kindness.  and doing something more <b>imaginative and creative</b> that will make a bigger difference to both you and them.	and inventive / original/ artistic/ resourceful/ ingenious ways  X Do not accept 'interesting'.	Imaginative
21	Kindness Kits are their way of <b>replacing consumerism</b>	Replace - substitute/ instead of  Consumerism - materialism/ buying gifts/ capitalism	Replace materialism
22	with the <b>truly honourable</b> experience	Truly – really/ genuinely/  Honourable – noble/ worthy/ respectable experience/ meaningful/ memorable	Truly honourable
23	of spreading <b>cheer</b> in people's lives.	Spreading joy/ happiness/ delight	
24	Additionally, <u>businesses and organisations</u> are using Kindness Kits for employee gifts, thank you's, and tokens of customer or employee appreciation, to name a few.	(Context: Businesses and organisations)  Within corporations as well/ too  Anything related to businesses/ corporations/ organisations should be awarded a mark. i.e. Including 'colleagues'.	Corporate buy-in

Points	Marks	Points	Marks
1-3	1	10-11	5
4-6	2	12-13	6
7-8	3	14	7

9	4	15 and above	8
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#### Application Question

Both authors offer interesting perspectives on the benefits of kindness.

How far do you agree or disagree with the views expressed in these two passages? Illustrate your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society.

**Stand: Agree, and applicable**

#### Introduction

Both David Brooks and Jesse Weinberg write about different aspects of kindness. While Brooks expounds that we possess a natural inclination to be kind, Weinberg writes about the positive impact of kindness on society. I personally think that kindness is a virtue that we should deliberately learn to acquire, like a habit. So, I do agree with both authors that kindness is an honourable quality, and its constructive and progressive nature ought to be multiplied in order for this world and Singapore to become a more pleasant place to live in.

#### Response for Passage One

In passage 1, Brooks argues that kindness is an innate quality of humans, going to the extent of suggesting that it is a quality linked to the survivability or achievements of individuals and their communities. He highlights that humans seemed to be born ready for cooperation, and that it is a key feature of societies that stand the test of time. While it is difficult to absolutely ascertain the veracity of the claims pertaining to human nature, it cannot be denied that, in Singapore's context, policies and measures put in place here do suggest that the government and society at large believe in the value of kindness in society. Aside from being a salad bowl of cultures, Singapore is also a highly densely populated country. Were there to be fractious relations among people in Singapore, the impact on the rest of the country would likely result in a greater impact than if similar incidents had occurred elsewhere. Social harmony, therefore, has been recognised as a bedrock to the nation's continued success. This is why, at the national level, there is the Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM) to spread the positive influence of kindness. Incorporating roadshows, advertisements on billboards, television and radio, the Kindness Movement is an advocacy programme aimed at cultivating kindness and graciousness in Singapore that has been set up since 1997. It tries to reach out to all members of the public, even to younglings through their YouTube series, Singa and the Kindness Cubbies. In the education system, the importance of kindness can be seen through various programmes that are implemented for students. My friends and I, for instance, participated in the Giraffes project, just a few weeks ago, to spread the message and encourage the public to "stick out their necks" to help others. On top of this, students are constantly exposed to various means to help society at large, for example through compulsory Values-In-Action projects where students embark on service learning projects in their communities. A further look even to pre-schools in Singapore tends to reveal similar instances as raised by the author in paragraph 3, where children show a tendency to cooperate with and help one another. This is likely a result of the strong communitarian spirit – kampong spirit (in Malay) – that is emphasised in pre-school education and strict virtue-based upbringing of children in Singapore. Be it to the society at large, students, or even pre-schoolers, it can be seen clearly that the value of kindness is appreciated to a very large extent. While it cannot be denied that there are instances when, in the fast-paced and highly competitive environment of Singapore, some Singaporeans rear ugly heads to situations – such as when a young couple were caught by citizen journalists at a food establishment in Toa Payoh, berating an apologetic elderly man for mistakenly taking their seats – these instances are nevertheless aberrations rather than the norm. All these suggest that even if the author's claim to humanity's innate kindness cannot be examined with rigour, the claim that kindness and cohesiveness of a society are keys to succeed is widely held in Singapore.

Summary of authors' views.

Stand – Agree with both authors.

Author's point and explanation

Ex & Ev

Apply to Singapore.

Characteristics of S'pore and their potential negative impact.

Examples.

Concession

Link back to question.

### Response for Passage Two

In passage 2, the author says being kind can lead people to greater success in many aspects of life. He focuses on what businesses can do to make their employees happier and more productive, and the company more profitable. One can choose to be cynical and think this is just corporate exploitation. After all, the company looks good doing so, but if the company's action is indeed to improve the work environment and enhance its employees' physical, mental and emotional health, we should support rather than question it. These reported benefits are supported by a Harvard Business School study that found happy workers perform their jobs better in a team. The study also found that supervisors can improve employee happiness if they are fair, collaborative and open. This said, Singaporean workers are well-known for being disengaged and organisations with such employees should learn from the movement so that they can have staff who are emotionally more invested in their work. True to our pragmatic and results-driven nature, these findings were eventually acted upon by employers across different industries in Singapore. Today, many local organisations both big and small, support community causes like the SKM. In the workplace, initiatives such as Kindness@Work have taken root too. They aim to create a happier and more gracious workplace, like in A\*STAR, schools and the ITE's, charities like the Children's Cancer Foundation, hospitals like Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, hotels, and the list goes on. With the help and support of the SKM, they launch talks, display and distribute resources like posters and cards, and organise in-house activities and workshops to encourage acts of kindness as part of their corporate culture. Many of these organisations are service-related in one way or another and encouraging kindness in the workplace simply translates to happier customers too, which makes everyone's job and experiences easier and more pleasant. Big banks like DBS, OCBC and Standard Chartered Banks not only reward their employees financially when they reach milestone service years, but also experientially by arranging in-house wellness, exercise, mindfulness and other enrichment activities. Even smaller companies like the environmentally-friendly packaging company, Greenpac Singapore, generously reward their employees with annual overseas trips, and encourage community service, e.g., tie-ups with Lions' Befrienders projects, even during company time. Employees of such 'woke' organisations report higher levels of willingness to report to work, to meet with their colleagues, lower levels of tension and conflicts that can be solved through a kind word here and there. They also report higher levels of satisfaction and lower stress levels when they have more fun at work. It seems, then, that regardless of the line or nature of work, organisations in Singapore are starting to pay more attention to the value of kindness and its benefits. This certainly harks back to the author's suggestion that 'even' companies in a cutthroat, competitive, and profit-driven environment would place emphasis on kindness, and certainly exemplifies that the wide-ranging powers of kindness are well appreciated in Singapore.

### Conclusion

While kindness could be a natural quality in us, we are still required to cultivate and hone it. Both authors provide convincing arguments in support of promoting kindness. This ought to be a mantra in Singapore, especially when it is stressful living in a competitive and multi-racial environment. When kindness eventually sinks its roots deeper in Singapore, we will not only be famously known to be a City in the Garden but also one that has a conducive environment for Singaporeans and visitors to truly enjoy our Asian hospitality.

R  
Ex  
Ev  
  
Example  
Apply to Singapore.  
  
Characteristics  
Examples  
  
  
Benefits derived.  
  
  
Trend to be kind.  
  
Link back to question

**Stand: Agree, but not applicable**

<p>Both authors rightly argue for the power of kindness and how it is valuable, even in today's competitive society. Singapore certainly recognizes the value of kindness, to such an extent that we even created <i>Singa The Courtesy Lion</i> in 1982 as a mascot to educate the public and courtesy and graciousness. However, the very fact that our country needs a mascot to teach us to be kind, a trait that Brooks argues is innate, is a tell-tale sign that both authors' points are not applicable to Singapore. The sad reality is that Singaporeans are not kind.</p>	<p>Overview of both articles</p> <p>Characteristics of Singapore</p> <p>Stand</p>
<p>In Passage 1, Brooks argues that in a competitive setting, individuals and groups develop a moral conscience that helps them and their groups succeed. Instead of talking about competition and cooperation as an either/or equation, Brooks talks about them as working hand in hand. There is definitely some truth to this. In a world that is always getting more connected, the barriers to helping others are fading away. Calls for help are made more public, with sites like giving.sg that makes expressing kindness easy as you can choose to donate, volunteer or fundraise for a variety of causes. Many behavioural studies have also shown that practicing acts of kindness has a positive effect on a person's happiness, relationship satisfaction, and even physical and mental health, enabling them to work better together. Yet, for this theory to work, <u>a deep-rooted culture of kindness is necessary in society</u>. However, that is unfortunately not the case in Singapore – we do not see competition and cooperation as bedfellows but as enemies. It is this narrow view of competition as a threat that renders us unable to cultivate this “moral mind” (line 27) that Brooks speaks of. <u>Associated with this competitive spirit is kiasuness, or the fear of losing</u>, which is a quintessential Singaporean trait. While being competitive suggests a strong desire to win or succeed, being <i>kiasu</i> involves comparing oneself with others, which adds unnecessary stress and uncertainty to do better. This hyper-competitive culture which encourages constant social comparisons to those around us makes it hard for Singaporeans to view kindness as a common courtesy. This has been my sad experience in school as well. I was struggling with Mathematics in primary school, and whenever I approached the top scorers in class to help me with my worksheets, they would say they were busy and ignored me. When I asked for tips to do well in the subject, they would say they did not study very hard and their marks were “tyco” – Singlish for lucky. This selfishness is prevalent among many students as the PSLE national examination taken at the end of primary school education used to rank students' performance in relation to the performance of their peers in the cohort. This fuelled the mindset that if we were kind and helped our friends improve, that might actually bring down our own grades! If you grew up with the mindset that being kind to your friends would disadvantage you, would you not prioritise self-interest? Perhaps the changes in the PSLE scoring from 2021, where pupils' scores will not be benchmarked against their peers but to a fixed achievement level might help shift our mindset to one that embraces kindness, but it is too early to tell. For now, kindness just is not in our DNA. Even the imposed acts of kindness that schools have students do for the community – Service Learning or Community Involvement Projects – are grudgingly completed in self-interest as it bolsters our testimonials. Hence, although Brooks has a lot of merit in arguing for a concept of ‘kind competition’ for greater benefits, his hopes will probably not work in the Singaporean context in the foreseeable future.</p>	<p>Author's point and explanation</p> <p>Concession – with reasons and examples</p> <p>Rebuttal/ your stand with reasoning (argument-centered evaluation)</p> <p>Characteristics of Singapore (context-centered evaluation)</p> <p>Personal example</p> <p>Extending personal example to wider society</p> <p>Awareness of current realities/ concession</p> <p>Brief second example</p> <p>Reiteration of stand (tied to author's point)</p>
<p>In Passage 2, Weinberg makes a case for extending kindness as a means to improving the well-being of both individuals and communities. In paragraph 5, he narrows in specifically on the role of kindness in workplaces, claiming that even the most profitable companies, which people would expect to be ruthless, have begun to acknowledge the merits of being kind. Unfortunately, these companies do not reside in Singapore and such a kind culture is barely</p>	<p>Author's point and explanation</p>



<p>evident in <u>Singapore's result-oriented work culture which prizes efficiency above all else</u>. In our Singaporean culture where success is tied to one's ability to be productive and efficient, showing graciousness to colleagues has taken the back-seat. After all, people are appraised based on their ability to successfully and competently complete their work, and not on the way they relate to others. In my personal experience, it is not surprising to see colleagues so preoccupied with work that simple acts of kindness, such as holding the office door open, are simply overlooked. Worse still, when we encounter colleagues extending acts of kindness to us, our <u>overly-cynical nature tends to question if these acts were done ultimately for self-interest</u> – to curry favour with bosses or get on the good side of colleagues. After all, if the arguments in both passages hold true, choosing to be kind would simply be a <u>pragmatic decision</u> as it would eventually engender success! Some naïve optimists might argue that efforts have been made to shape our work culture and influence organisations to be kind. They proclaim that it is only a matter of time before the seed of kindness takes root, with companies leading the way. For example, the Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM) has started taking the Kindness@Work programme to various organisations, inviting more leaders and companies to consider kindness seriously, in the same way that wellness and healthy lifestyle programmes have become de rigueur in human resource management practice. Recently in 2015, the SKM launched the 'Share It Forward' campaign in collaboration with local innovation company, 3M. Their idealistic goal was to inspire graciousness to build a positive and uplifting work culture. However, while there certainly are examples of such kindness-inducing efforts in place, they are clearly not effective. The 'Share It Forward' campaign was a three-day campaign that sought to reach a mere 5,000 office workers (out of 3,715,800 employed persons in Singapore), and failed to gain traction to be continued in subsequent years. The fact that SKM, our national Kindness Movement, is involved in initiating these efforts in companies reinforces the lack of awareness and consideration of the importance of kindness in our local work culture. After all, colleagues are people we work with professionally, and while we extend basic courtesy and respect to them, task-oriented Singaporeans are rarely incentivised to take a step further to be kind to them. Colleagues are not friends; they are competitors. Why would we want to give our rivals an "experience of kindness" (line 34)? Therefore, Weinberg's claim in Passage 2 that kindness exists in the workplace is not applicable to Singapore's productivity-driven workers who would rather mind their own business instead of choosing to be kind.</p>	<p>Characteristics of Singapore (context-centered evaluation)</p> <p>Personal example</p> <p>Awareness of current realities</p> <p>Balance (CA clearly signaled)</p> <p>Examples of current efforts</p> <p>Rebuttal (clearly signaled)</p> <p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of these measures</p> <p>Reiteration of stand (tied to author's point)</p>
<p>In conclusion, while both authors claim that 'nice guys finish first', they failed to consider Singapore's overwhelmingly self-interested society where not very many of us believe in expressing kindness. In fact, Singa quit in 2013, and in an open letter to the public, said that he was "too tired to continue facing an increasingly angry and disagreeable society". Need I say more?</p>	<p>Reiteration of stand in light of characteristics of Singapore</p> <p>Author's personal voice evident in the way she reiterated her stand</p>



## 1. Can societies be truly inclusive today?

### Analysis:

Valuing diversity recognizes differences between people and acknowledges that these differences are a valued asset. Multicultural education is an important component of valuing diversity. It respects diversity while teaching all children and youth to become effective and participating members of a democracy. Diversity is important because countries, workplaces and even schools increasingly consist of various cultural, racial and ethnic groups, gender etc. We can learn from one another, but first we must have a level of understanding about each other in order to facilitate collaboration and cooperation.

### Clarification of terms:

**Society** - Society is the term to describe human beings together (collective, the sum of their social networks and social interactions).

**Truly** - to the fullest degree; genuinely or properly. Not just for show – more than just tokenistic.

**Inclusive** - An inclusive society aims at empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of race, age, sex, gender, disability, ethnicity, etc. An inclusive society ensures that no one is left behind, socially, politically or economically.

**Today** – modern day context; today's societies cannot afford to be isolated – all sorts of people are coming in a globalised era.

### Yes, societies can be truly inclusive today.

1. **It is possible for societies to be truly inclusive because people are increasingly becoming more civilised in modern times and as such are less prejudiced in nature. People's mindsets have changed positively over the years – they realise that it is the morally right thing to do.** Over the years, people have become more civilised and humane towards the less fortunate as growing civility is one of the founding principles of most humanising modern states. It is the basis of a free society where human beings seek fairness and ensure that they are protected and not disadvantaged. Increasingly, members of society are given equal rights to basic liberties worldwide. These tenets are also enshrined in the UDHR. Furthermore, there are human rights watchdogs like the United Nations and NGOs which take affirmative action should discrimination surface. It is morally irresponsible of a society should it fail to ensure that prejudice is not eliminated. This is unacceptable in a civilised society where everyone has the right to be safe and treated equally. (Ref: Norbert Elias' *The Civilising Process*). More and more societies worldwide in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are becoming increasingly tolerant of diversity – many feel that it is simply the right thing to do.
2. **Societies can be truly inclusive because the education meted out today is more advanced and more inclusive in nature – it is a good enabler. With more access to advanced education, people are more educated today and they are tolerant of diversity.** Research has shown that with increasing education in the modern world, people become less inequitable and more tolerant. Education paves the way for understanding different races, sexual orientations, the disabled, the aged, gender inequity etc. Through education, people no longer believe that there are 'innate' qualities attached to people

based on skin colour, gender, age etc. Early theorists like Linnaeus and Blumenbach in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, wrongly held that there were biologically distinct characteristics that determined peoples' intellect and moral qualities without regard to their social and cultural traits. However, there is sufficient evidence that basic intelligence does not lend itself to one's skin colour anymore. Sociologist Shipman argued that this belief had been abused to justify wars being fought or to fulfil their own selfish discriminatory agendas. Over time, there has been a change in the mentality of people and we can expect the elimination of discrimination in various spheres. In Singapore for example, there are constant efforts by the State in bridging cultural differences for example through National Education.

3. **As long as irregularities are kept in check by the State (through legislation), and resources are distributed fairly, parity would be ensured and societies can be truly inclusive. Prejudice and discrimination will be kept in check.** The absence of close monitoring by the State would result in inequality, oppression and unhappiness which may result in retribution. In modern societies, there are proper and legal channels for grievances to be resolved. The international community too is committed as never before to ending exclusivity on all fronts. Many countries for eg today have strict anti-discrimination laws, with national human rights institutions to implement these laws and provide assistance to victims. Many governments have attempted to control prejudice through civil rights legislation, equal opportunity laws, institutionalised policies of affirmative action and strict legislation to protect abuses. For example, in America, Australia, England and Canada there are Equal Opportunities Policies to protect the rights and privileges of minorities in the social, economic and political spheres. In Singapore, we have the Sedition Act (Chap 290 of the Statutes of Singapore) to protect minorities from inflammatory racist comments. We also have many laws and acts which protect minorities here for example the *Racial Harmony Act*; *The Maintenance of the Religious Harmony Act* to ensure religious harmony; *The Presidential Council for Minority Rights* which ensures that no minorities are disadvantaged. In modern societies, constitutional Acts protect the rights of women and ensure they are not abused/treated unequally. For bigotry to be eliminated, these acts and legislations not 'only look good on paper' – rather they are seen to be practised to its core in many societies around the world. The United Nations too sets the precedence for global discrimination with its many human rights conventions. (For example, *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*; *the UN's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*; *International Criminal Court*; *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*; amongst others).
4. **True inclusiveness can be achieved because social institutions/Affirmative or Positive Action – are playing an increasing role in ensuring inclusivity and eliminating biasness.** Social institutions such as family, religious institutions and others are playing a more prominent role in disseminating tolerance and understanding. Affirmative or positive action are measures put in place for more favourable treatment to members of disadvantaged groups to speed up the pace of their recovery from long-standing, entrenched discrimination. Even in religion, internationally, many holy books denounce any form of biasness; for example the Holy Quran, The Bible and The Granth Sahib (for Sikhs) and the Bhagavad Gita (for Hindus). People's power can bring about social changes. Apartheid in South Africa, for example was eliminated by people's resistance led by Nelson Mandela. People no longer sit back and accept their fate – they protest when they see injustices in society and call for a radical change of mindset.

**No, societies cannot be truly inclusive today.**

1. **Societies cannot be truly inclusive today because prejudice manifests itself through historical development and colonialisation – a legacy passed down through generations. It is simply not going to go away.** Discrimination is still happening today. It has not gone away. The colonialists used to be interested in ruling and in propagating a colonial elite. The notion that the ruled were inferior was ingrained into the locals. The differentiation of peoples had colonialism to blame who believed that there were biological differences between different 'coloured' people. The terms became so entrenched, that some people still accept these out-dated concepts which are divisive in nature. Traces of imperialist cultural forms still exist in former colonies in many countries today – they did not just 'go away' in post-colonial times. We can witness it through language, ways of living, laws and so forth. The British colonial masters for example used to keep ethnic groups in Singapore separate and treated the locals as pariahs. This was also evident in colonial India where the Indians were classed as 'second-class citizens' and were looked down upon by the British. Following its 'divide-and-rule' ideology, Hindus and Muslims were distanced and this eventually led to the partition (India/Pakistan). This negative mindset is so ingrained in societies, that it is literally impossible to achieve true inclusiveness.
- 1a. **We cannot be truly inclusive as it is difficult to change people's mindsets. Despite many efforts to curb discrimination, it still prevails.** It is very difficult to change people's mindsets especially if discrimination is ingrained on them from a young age. For example, someone who is raised in a racist red-necked Aryan supremacy family, will ultimately hold racist beliefs. On another level, people still look upon the disabled as a burden to society. Many employers are not willing to hire them. Even people who lead alternative lifestyles (homosexuals) are not spared. In Third World countries, the poor for example are victims of health problems and do not have access to medical treatment. Discrimination persists on various fronts - people will always be denied opportunities for employment, education and health because of their ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, disability etc. When we look at ageism, in many countries including Japan and Singapore, companies refuse more or less openly to hire older workers. The reasons for this are culturally ingrained attitudes about age that younger people are more "dynamic" and create a positive image for the company. These kinds of mindsets are very difficult to change.
2. **It is human nature to discriminate. Jealousy, fear, ignorance are some of the reasons why discrimination exists in the world we live in today. It is for this reason that true inclusiveness can never be achieved.** Discriminatory treatment of ethnic minorities arises within a society when there is pride, ignorance and fear towards other cultures prevailing. By hating certain groups, people are able to enhance their sense of self-worth and importance. Women have always been subordinated because of innate biological differences which see them as a weaker sex. Furthermore, there will always be collateral damage if the pursuit of equality and fairness mutates into a personal vendetta. Just ask the thousands of Afghans, Iraqis or Libyans who had to sacrifice their homes and even lives because the West claims to seek justice for itself and the native populace no matter the price. On another level where fear and ignorance curtails the eradication of discrimination is when we look at Saudi Arabia – it forbids non-Muslims from practising their religion in public. Christians asking Muslims to convert to Christianity have been persecuted and arrested. Muslims who have converted to Christianity have been

executed as apostates. Thus it is 'in us' to hate some groups and we can never achieve true inclusiveness.

3. **Flaws or loopholes in legal systems to address prejudice exist around the world. Because of this, we can never achieve true inclusiveness.** Even in laws, people will always find a flaw somewhere – they will always find a reason to hate. There always exists the possibility of flaws or loopholes in the process of criminal investigation. Addressing cases of discrimination are also costly, literally. Although discrimination should not be reduced to financial costs, addressing it can be exorbitantly expensive because much has to be done to ensure its impartiality in courts. Further, for racial discrimination cases to go to court, the process itself may be financially draining on the State's budget. An important point to note here is that it is often too difficult to substantiate acts of discrimination. Corruption may also be rife in one country over another. Further, legislation is slow in coming when it comes to eradicating discrimination. It was not until 1967 that Chinese and Japanese Canadians were given the same rights as other races. If we look at Australia, despite equal opportunity policies, Aborigines and Asians are still being discriminated against today on various socio-economic fronts.
4. **We cannot be truly inclusive because prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping are still being increasingly propagated through the media today.** The media perpetuates demeaning images and stereotypes about assorted groups, such as ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, the disabled, and the elderly. According to Cunningham and Turner, the media has the ability to influence mindsets and promote prejudice. (Ref: *The Media in Australia*, 1993). Connell and Edgar (Cunningham and Turner, 1993) also posit that the media has the ability to perpetuate thinking through advocating discriminatory sentiments through repetition for example. There are no independent non-governmental organisations that monitor the hate that some people are posting on social media. In some countries like America and Australia, racial profiling is also widely evident in the media. Racial profiling occurs in America where the Blacks and the Hispanic community are singled out as trouble makers. An inclusive society would abolish restrictions on immigration – it is simply wrong for eg to discriminate against Hispanics in the United States. Donald Trump is not only against them but also the Muslims. Elsewhere in Australia and England the media portray ethnic minorities in a negative light. Aborigines in Australia for example, are often depicted in the media to be 'trouble-makers', 'drunkards' and a 'menace to society'. Even experts and politicians said over-representation of ethnic minorities was a result of decades of racial prejudice in the criminal justice system and it is a problem which will not go away easily. On another level, in Singapore, ethnic minorities complain vociferously about job discrimination when viewing job advertisements in the newspapers which stipulated – "Mandarin Speaking Only". What is also becoming a serious concern is that discriminatory remarks made by bloggers are becoming more prominent and easy to post. The recent saga of Preeti's video attacking the Chinese and Mediacorp artiste Dennis Chew dressing up as four characters, including a Malay woman and an Indian man are telling signs that racism still exists in Singapore. Even Minister Shanmugam has admitted it.
5. **We cannot be truly inclusive because it is difficult to eliminate prejudice especially when we have vastly differing cultures. Prejudice arises from an inability to recognise and cope with cultural differences and ideals.** Exploitation draws its strength from discrimination embedded in culture and religion in some cases. Arguments abound that it is religion for example that perpetuates discrimination in some instances



and thus makes it difficult to eliminate. For example, the caste system in India is embedded in the Hindu and Sikh religion - the Untouchables face discrimination on all fronts even to this day (despite it being outlawed by the Indian government). If we allow different cultures to pursue their own brands of justice, then certain people will continue to be subjected to overly-harsh punishments. There are many instances of cultural and ethnic conflicts arising out of discrimination : for example - ethnic genocide in Rwanda between the Hutus and Tutsis; Iraqi Kurds; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Darfur; persecution of Jews in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War etc. Muslims, today also widely face job discrimination in the West, particularly in the United States, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In a move that has already been met with a burst of civil defiance, France became the first country to ban Islamic face veils (burqahs) anywhere in public. On another level, if we examine traditional or religious societies like Afghanistan the situation for women is even worse. Enveloped by the shroud-like burqas that they are forced to wear or face beatings, the women of Afghanistan are today facing a crisis. Previously, most Afghan women were unfairly prohibited by the Taliban from working or going to school. Their movements were restricted. Such examples exist elsewhere in traditional, conservative societies like India and Pakistan where women are subordinated to a large extent – religion dictates that women roles be submissive to men.

6. **We can never achieve true inclusiveness as long as economic disparities exist and survival of the fittest/competition, say along racial lines, discrimination is inevitable.** Social studies have confirmed that discrimination especially rises when groups are in direct competition for jobs. This may help to explain why prejudice increases dramatically during times of economic stress. Sociologist Kenan Malik contends that discrimination can arise out of economic inequalities, especially when it falls on racial lines. (Ref: *The Meaning of Race, History and Culture in Western Society, 1996*). We have seen this happen to the economically successful Jews during WWII and the Chinese in Indonesia who faced severe persecution. Further, discrimination can arise if ethnic minorities living within a dominant race, are unable to cope with economic inequality. Increasingly, we see discrimination for example in employment and occupation where people are treated differently and less favourably because of characteristics that are not related to their merit or the requirements of the job. These include prejudice based on race, sexual orientation, gender, ex-prisoners, the aged, disability etc. Sex-based inequalities for example persist and women remain the largest group suffering from discrimination. The United Nations had previously concluded that women often experience a 'glass ceiling' and that there are no societies in which women enjoy the same opportunities as men. Further, in some countries, like Australia, Canada and Singapore, many are not happy with foreign talents/workers and view them as a threat to their economic survival. Additionally, with the increase in global migration comes a corresponding increase in discrimination against immigrants, migrant workers, refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons.

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## 2. 'Scientific development is always at the expense of morality.' Do you agree?

### Analysis

This question assumes that there is an absolute negative correlation between scientific advancement and morality – scientific development undermines ethical choices and priorities. This can be in the form of scientific decisions (the purpose of the study or invention, data finding

methods and accuracy in data recording and presentation) and the applications of the scientific invention (its use or misuse, its affordability, and the way in which scientific products or processes are 'marketed' or sold to the public).

Students are required to address the absolute nature of the question ('always') and consider if science largely violates ethics, or that it does not necessarily do so.

### **Clarification of key terms**

**Scientific development:** The systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge to meet specific objectives or requirements in society, be it altruistic or commercially driven. The scientific revolutions of the 21st century are emerging from entirely new sectors, based on micro-processors, tele-communications, bio-technology and nano-technology.

**Expense of morality:** Undermines ethical choices and priorities. (Note: Students should not be replacing 'morality' with specific religious beliefs)

### **Approaches:**

- Yes, scientific development largely comes at the expense of morality
- No, scientific development does not necessarily undermine morality

### **Yes, scientific development comes largely at the expense of morality**

#### **1. The pressure to make significant breakthroughs in scientific developments has prompted scientists to compromise their integrity and falsify their findings, dampening the credibility of the scientific field.**

- In 2014, Japanese stem-cell biologist **Haruko Obokata** published two significant studies, claiming success in turning ordinary body cells into embryonic stem cells, which was eventually uncovered to be a hoax. Disgraced Korean biotechnology researcher **Hwang Woo Suk** experienced a similar downfall in 2006 for fabricating his stem cell research findings. Such high-profile cases of scientific misconduct placed a dent on the scientific community and shows how the desire to create ground-breaking scientific practices erodes one's morals in the process.

The need for funding also pressures scientists to abide by the goals of private companies with great financing power. To secure continuous funding, scientists compromise on ethics, to the extent of publishing false information to boost sales for the companies. In extreme cases, scientific development takes place at the expense of morality when corporations enter the picture to suppress research, manipulate study designs, ghostwritten scientific articles and selectively published results that suit their interests.

- **Scientists working for tobacco companies** have repeatedly published studies, dismissing the links between harmful diseases and smoking to dissuade existing smokers from quitting the habit. Researchers in recent years have uncovered mounting evidence

of how tobacco companies funded epidemiological and biological research that was designed to support claims that second-hand smoke also posed little or no harm to people.

**2. As modern science becomes increasingly profit-driven, scientific development is inordinately focused on the interests of the rich or the powerful, sacrificing the needs of poor communities who need medical intervention the most.**

- Medical developments in the form of **genetic therapy, genetic screening and gene-driven personalised medicine** are accessible primarily to the rich. Similarly, medical science has been focused on expanding its targeted cancer therapies which only the developed world can afford, while diseases that affect the developing world receive scant attention.
- The new era of **genetic modification** via scientific developments such as CRISPR can potentially create a generation of designer babies and lead to the commodification of human life. As only wealthy individuals are able to afford such technology, this inevitably entrenches the existing income gap and lead into greater class divide/social stratification – extremely legitimate ethical concerns. Moreover, Chinese scientist He Jiankui's ground-breaking genetic modification of two twin girls via CRISPR technology also possibly points to a fame-hungry motivation that implies that scientific development is carried out at the expense of moral bearings.
- The notorious trend of **Big Pharma carrying out price hikes** to cover R&D costs and inflation shows how scientific development compromises morality. Recent news reports show that pharmaceutical companies raised the prices of more than 3,400 drugs in the first half of 2019, surpassing the number of drug hikes they imposed during the same period last year. About 40 of the drugs saw triple-digit increases, including a generic version of the antidepressant Prozac, which saw a price hike of 879%. Other more familiar examples of price hikes include Martin Shkreli's move to raise the price of the life-saving Daraprim from \$13.50 per pill to \$750 per pill in 2015 when it costs only \$1 to make, and Mylan's hiking of the allergy drug Epi-pen's price 17 times, up to \$600 in recent years when it cost \$90 a decade ago.
- The practice of "**evergreening**" in the pharmaceutical trade, when brand-name companies patent "new inventions" which are merely slight modifications of old drugs exemplifies how scientific research & development takes place at the expense of morality. Eg. Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis' efforts to patent a new version of its cancer drug Glivec, by claiming that the drug is more easily absorbed into the blood and therefore more effective in fighting leukaemia. The focus of such scientific development is not to uncover therapeutic advantages to improve people's health but come up with economic advantages to get more monopoly protection and boost bottomlines.

**3. The need for science to produce statistically conclusive results and engender effective solutions means that scientific development takes place at the expense of morality as humans or animals are used as subjects of clinical trials. This is especially so when the most scientifically rigorous trial design is very often not the most ethical.**

- Poor and vulnerable communities have been repeatedly exploited to serve the medical fetishes of big pharmaceutical companies and major research institutions. They have tested their new, unapproved drugs on unsuspecting victims from poorer, less educated regions before, where they are lured by money or food in exchange for their participation in the trials.
- In the mid-nineties, the world's largest research-based drug company, **Pfizer**, administered the experimental drug, **Trovan**, during a meningitis outbreak in Kano in northern Nigeria without prior ethical approval. Pfizer did not inform patients of the side effects on Trovan when tested on animals and used Nigerian children as guinea pigs to test the drug's efficacy. 11 children died and dozens were left disabled after receiving the drug.
- The drug **ZMapp** was used to treat several Ebola-infected patients in West Africa at the start of the Ebola outbreak in 2014, in spite of the fact that it was still early in the clinical trial phases and its efficacy and safety in human use was unverified.

**4. Science developments in the area of military defence can lead to potential misuse and serious ethical ramifications, especially in an era where the weaponisation of artificial intelligence is becoming prevalent, and the lines between military defence and indiscriminate killing are blurred.**

The seemingly unstoppable development in **autonomous weapons system (AWS)** including intercontinental ballistic weapons, UAVs and 'killer robots' raise fears of more violent conflicts that threaten the safety and security of the global population. This is especially so against the backdrop of developments in artificial intelligence or new algorithmic warfare battlefields which have no boundaries or borders, and may or may involve humans.

- The difficulty in navigating across the human ecosystem in terms of cyberspace, geospace, and space (CGS) presents complex scenarios that are ethically challenging.
- The fact that an intelligent machine or machine intelligence can select and engage human and non-human targets without any human involvement and intervention -- using only the interaction of its embedded sensors, computer programming, and algorithms -- shows how scientific development poses real and unprecedented threats to human lives.

**5. Scientific developments in the form of surveillance technology violate ethical codes, especially as governments and corporations alike ramp up efforts to track individuals' every move and store data for future use**

- Surveillance technology in China is notorious for tracking everyone in society under a social credit system - capturing the movements of ordinary Chinese on a daily basis and feeding such information into a facial recognition database that also similarly logs credit card data, travel records, body temperature, X-ray scanners, mobile phone GPS chips, car number-plate numbers and a profusion of other data sources. The fact that such Big



Data exists where technology is able to capture personal, microscopic information about individual lives and store it for purposes that are not yet conceived clearly implies how science has crossed ethical boundaries in its sheer violation of privacy and human rights.

**No, scientific development does not necessarily undermine morality**

**1. Scientific development continues to be driven by the altruistic goal of producing life-saving or life-enhancing solutions for individuals and communities which do not necessarily entail immoral decisions or outcomes.**

- The development of vaccines has removed the threat of deadly diseases including polio, smallpox, and MMR. The fact that some of these scientists chose not to patent their vaccines (polio) to make them available to the larger community that needs it shows that scientific development does not necessarily compromise ethical moorings.
- The development of technological aids for the disabled: the **DynaVox EyeMax system** which gives individuals with paralysis, cerebral palsy and stroke victims the ability to participate in spoken communication using only their eyes; the **Kapten PLUS Personal Navigation Device**, an affordable GPS accessory allowing blind people to travel independently; **Google's Driverless Car** - not only can this car serve as a means of independent, safe transportation for the visually impaired, but also for any number of individuals with physical and mental handicaps that prevent them from operating a motor vehicle; the **DEKA Robotic Arm** - a less-than-eight-pound prosthetic arm with such precision and control that it can peel a grape; cochlear implants which directly stimulates the auditory nerve, providing an entirely new means of auditory sensory input; the iBot Stair-Climbing Wheelchair - a self-balancing, stair-climbing wheelchair for the physically disabled.
- Developments in earthquake and tsunami prediction systems in the form of global positioning systems, magnetometers and seismometers continue to play a significant role in helping people avert natural disasters.
- Scientific strides into geoengineering and bioremediation can help to reduce global warming and clean up contaminated water, giving us hope for a more environmentally sustainable future.
- There has been a notable shift in the ethos of pharmaceutical companies, who now try to score big in terms of helping the poor. As they compete on **the Access to Medicine Index**, which scores their charitable efforts in redistributing medicines to the world's poor, many of the world's biggest 20 pharmaceutical companies now turn their focus to helping poor countries and fight neglected diseases. Nearly 20 million Africans are now on H.I.V. treatment — for less than \$100 a year. Top-quality drugs for malaria, tuberculosis, hepatitis C and some cancers are now sold at rock-bottom prices in poor countries. Several of them even cooperate with the Indian generics companies they once dismissed as “pirates” by sub-licensing patents so the generics makers can produce cheap drugs for Africa, Asia and Latin America. [Possible rebuttal: Such a move to distribute generics in poor countries can be as a way of securing future profits – ultimately a self-serving, ethically compromising manoeuvre]

- The rise of generic rivals on the pharmaceutical market to make life-saving drugs available for a larger group of users shows how scientific development does not take place at the expense of morality. Cipla, an Indian company, offered H.I.V. drugs to Doctors Without Borders for \$350 per patient per year in 2001. In 2017, years after Mylan's epic EpiPen price hikes, Teva Pharmaceuticals acquired FDA approval to market a direct generic competitor of the device.

**2. Governments and regulatory boards have stepped in to ensure that scientific development does not take place at the expense of morality by ensuring that human rights are not violated and people are given a fairer access to medically important innovations.**

- The **Food and Drug Administration**, headed by commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb, worked on expediting the introduction of generic drugs to save lives. By publishing a list of off-patent drugs for which no company has applied to produce a generic version, the FDA's aim was to attract competitors into the market and reduce the potential for life-threatening drug shortages. The introduction of generic drugs can potentially let patients pay only 20 percent of the cost of the brand name.
- The government of India has taken on a momentous stand to break the pharmaceutical monopoly on drugs, stopping mercenary companies from the practice of "evergreening" – making minor alterations to existing drugs in order to secure a new patent – thereby ensuring that life-saving drugs are made available to people who need it.
  - In 2013, **India's Supreme Court** rejected the appeal of Swiss giant drug manufacturer Novartis to patent its leukemia drug Glivec, which is used to treat Chronic Myeloid Leukemia, one of the most common blood cancers in eastern countries. The Court argued under Section 3(d) of the Indian Patent Act arguing that Glivec was only a modified version of an existing drug, Imatinib, and was therefore "not innovative", and thereby justifying its availability to the general public.
  - India also upheld a compulsory licence of Bayer's cancer drug Nexavar, effectively allowing generics firms to copy a patented drug, reportedly bringing the price down from more than \$5,500 (£3,540) per month to \$175 (£112).
- Although it is technically possible for human embryos to be cloned with varying degrees of success (eg. a group of scientists led by Shoukhrat Mitalipov who published in 2013 the first report of embryonic stem cells created using stem cell nuclear transfer), most countries today have outlawed it (about 70 countries as of 2015), with several prohibiting various controversial scientific practices such as cloning stem cells and growing human embryos for research purposes (eg. Canada). This moral stance taken by many countries show how scientific development may not necessarily take place at the expense of morality as governments desire for greater clarity on the various social, legal and biological implications that the technology poses on human lives before legalising it.

**3. It is factually wrong and overly cynical to claim that scientific development undermines morality as science is a morally neutral field – it is the application and use of science that determines whether it is ethical or unethical in nature.**

- Science uses knowledge of the natural world to inform or empower members of society, but what users do with that knowledge and power determines its ethical outcome. Albert Einstein once famously argued that “Science can only ascertain what is, but not what should be,” implying that while scientific development may give us raw power, it is up to us to determine the right ways to use that power and to proscribe the wrong ways.
- It is important to note that scientific developments do lead to certain ethical quagmires that various stakeholders in society need to consider, but that does not mean that scientific development uniformly compromises morality.

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**3. ‘Freedom of expression is a luxury we cannot afford.’ How far is this true in your society?**

**Analysis:** Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. It also underpins most other rights and allows them to flourish. The right to speak your mind freely on important issues in society, access information and hold the powers that be to account, plays a vital role in the healthy development process of any society. However we need to recognise that there is a price that needs to be paid for this freedom and is such a price merely a desired aim and not a necessity?

**Clarification of terms:**

**Freedom of expression** – the power or right to express one's opinions without censorship, restraint, or legal penalty. It may be through many mediums, such as through media, whether traditional or otherwise, or the Arts

**Luxury we cannot afford** – thus assuming that it has external costs, such as financially or as effects on the society that may be beyond its benefits

**Stand/Possible Points & Examples**

**Yes, in my society, freedom of expression is a luxury we cannot afford.**

1. **In a multi-racial and multi-religious society such as Singapore, there needs to be restraint in expressing our ideas so as not to affect the fragile social fabric.** In Singapore, the Prevention Against Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act or POFMA was deemed to be important to the government as important in upholding racial and religious peace. Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat was quoted as saying that “We can debate and have different opinions, but it must be based on fact. If we debate without having any facts, it can be unproductive or even destructive,” thus there is a need for restraint. This was clearly seen in the recent 2019 “Brownface” debacle, whereby local social media influencers, Preeti and her brother, Subhas Nair, was greatly censured by Minister of Law, K Shanmugam for what was seen by international media outlets, such as the BBC, as an attempt to “spark a conversation” about the portrayal of minorities in national media. Minister Shanmugam’s main criticism is that such portrayals can lead to a slippery slope which will make ethnic communities feel unsafe and thus, while it may ‘spark discussion’, the overall potential risk of ethnic chaos is not worth such discussions.

2. **In our country which operates on a one party system, there needs to be political stability, thus freedom of expression may rise to inefficiency as people overtly criticise the government.** According to founder Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore has limited resources, which includes the people. Thus having too much criticism of the government may take up valuable time and tax payers money and as a pragmatic nation, we cannot afford this. In the recent Hong Kong protests that started in June 2016 more than \$600 billion of stock market value has been erased since early July, and analysts are expressing concern that property values could slump. Gross domestic product expanded just 0.6% in the second quarter and the continued unrest could raise the possibility of a recession, according to Bloomberg Economics. This loss is due to the over hundred thousands of protestors that have flooded the Hong Kong streets due to the uproar with the recent extradition bill. If Singapore were to similarly face such protests, with Singaporeans similarly utilising their freedom of expression to voice unhappiness over the government, we too may suffer such huge economic repercussions, that as a small nation we cannot afford.
3. **Singapore is surrounded by potential influential nations which may use the discourse as leverage to sow discord.** It is not uncommon for policies and politics to highlight differences between racial and religious ties. One criticism of Malaysia by its own politician Chang Ko Youn is that "Malaysia has practised racial politics for 51 years and we know it is divisive as each party only talks on behalf of the racial group it represents. The country is facing economic problems now and it is important that the Government and political parties come up with a Malaysian agenda on how to unite the people and face these challenges." Similarly, in Singapore, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has mentioned that Singapore's racial harmony and multiculturalism is a result of government policies such as the GRC system, racial quota for public housing, and strong action against extremists: "There is nothing natural about where we are – multiracial, multi-religious, tolerant and progressive. We made it happen, and we have got to protect it, nurture it, preserve it, and never break it." Yet there have been attempts by the other countries to purposely comment on Singaporean issues to highlight the differences that are present. They may be exercising their freedom of expression but it may come at the repercussion discord amongst our people. Thus we may not afford this luxury.

**No, in my society, freedom of expression is a luxury we can afford.**

1. **Singaporeans are more educated as compared to the past and can make their own rational decisions.** Education plays a huge role in enabling one to make logical decisions on the forms of media and information that is presented to them. Singapore invests a large amount of its GDP on education. SingStats show that over 97% of its population is literate, with over 55% of its population having post-secondary education. Additionally, the number of its citizens pursuing university education increases every year, with on average about 19,000 graduates yearly. This allows for room for Singaporeans to explore other points of view in a rational manner and gain political maturity. Thus as Singaporeans grow to be more politically mature, they would demand such rights and see it as a necessary and not a luxury.
2. **Singapore needs creativity to be able to expand and improve itself.** Freedom of expression allows for creativity in individuals. The right to speak your mind freely

on important issues in society, access information and hold the powers that be to account, plays a vital role in the healthy development process of any society. Without it, the country will stagnate. Singapore acknowledges this by itself. The Minister of Culture, Community and Youth, realised that with the competing manpower needs of the economy, it is also the responsibility of the Government to ensure that arts education is competitive in quality and relevance with other disciplines as this also allows Singapore to be recognised on the international stage. However, Arts education is only one aspect of freedom of expression. With the improvement of freedom of speech, Singapore will be able to mature as a participative society that is less reliant on the Government to make decisions. Only then can change occur in society. Initially there may be an issue of conflicting ideas, but it is worth the price to pay as in the long run it allows Singaporeans to grow and generate new ideas and innovation. Thus we can afford this in the long run.

**3. In a society built on tolerance, discussions need to be held to breed full integration.**

A society that is afraid to discuss uncomfortable issues is actually more detrimental to the outcome of integration. Human rights activist Peter Tatchell states that going against people who have different views and challenging them is the best way to move forward. "Free speech does not mean giving bigots a free pass. It includes the right and moral imperative to challenge, oppose and protest bigoted views. Bad ideas are most effectively defeated by good ideas – backed up by ethics, reason – rather than by bans and censorship." This it may be imperative that due to the many differences in Singaporean society, that such discussions be allowed to be held even despite the cost of hurting each other initially. This is the reason why Speakers' Corner was opened on 1 September 2000 and attracted more than 20 speakers and an audience of several hundred individuals on the first day who want to exercise their freedom of expression. It was an important outlet to enable Singaporeans a platform for freedom of expression in an open space, rather than to not clarify ideas. Today, freedom of expression also manifests itself on the media in programs that discuss sensitive topics like race.

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**4. Should every society be left to define its own ethical standards?**

**Analysis**

While some argue that ethical boundaries are contingent on a particular society's history, culture and religious beliefs, others believe that there are some moral limits that cut across such differences. Who then has the right to define ethical standards? Should this decision be left to those in power within a particular society? Should there be some overarching moral standards that all societies respect?

**Clarification of terms**

Every society- all countries/governments

Ethical standards- moral limits as defined by the law, cultural and international norms, religion etc.

**Stand/Possible Points & Examples**

**No, we should not simply leave every society to define its own ethical standards.**

- 1. Some societies are governed by corrupt forces.** If corrupt leaders are allowed to run their societies as they see fit, it would lead to greater human suffering. One simply needs to think



of totalitarian regimes such as North Korea and the constant nuclear threats issued by Kim Jong Un to South Korea and the U.S. A further example would be ISIS which seized control of territories in Iraq and Syria. At its height, ISIS was committing war crimes and instituting barbaric laws that shocked the world and rightfully spurred humanitarian intervention. History is replete with examples of such egregious abuses from the Holocaust to the Cambodian genocide. Such rogue political entities ignore ethics altogether. They are only concerned about fulfilling their twisted political agendas and clinging to power at all costs. If they are simply allowed to do as they wish, it will only lead to greater human suffering.

2. **Basic human rights should be universal.** All societies should guarantee, to some basic level, the rights and freedoms of individuals. The UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines these rights and freedoms. It would difficult to argue that certain articles such as the freedom from slavery, torture, and equality before the law should not be extended to all human beings. Even though certain practices like female genital mutilation, child marriage and honour killings are regarded to be part of the culture of some societies, they simply cannot be tolerated. Human rights encompass fundamental ethical principles that preserve basic human dignity. They should apply to every society. No society should be allowed to simply cast off these ethical boundaries.
3. **We live in a world order that is sustained by a set of shared ethical norms.** Globalisation has meant that we are now tied to a global system maintained by international institutions underpinned by values like trust and cooperation. This setup has led to peace and progress for many societies, but it should be noted that this can only remain the case if there are rules that countries agree to abide by for this system to function properly. In recent times, the Millennium Development Goals—developed under the auspices of the United Nations and which thereby involve all UN member states—have led to great strides in improving livelihoods around the world. Other examples range from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations to the International Partnership for Disarmament Verification. These organisations have all come into existence only because there is a common ethical framework undergirding the international system.

**Yes, every society should be allowed to define its own ethical standards.**

1. **Societies differ vastly in terms of history, culture and religion.** Societies are incredibly diverse. There is simply no way that a set of ethical standards that apply to one country can possibly fit another. Take the gun laws in the U.S. and the reverence for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, which has proved immovable despite recurring mass shootings in the country. The right to bear arms is so fiercely guarded in the U.S. because of its historical legacy and the fact that it is enshrined in the constitution. Contrast this with New Zealand, where, following the Christchurch mosque shootings, PM Jacinda Ardern was able to push through a ban on semi-automatic weapons within six days! There are many complex factors at play affecting public sentiment over what is right and wrong in a particular society. Even in societies that seem to share some cultural similarities, people's view can be significantly different. While Taiwan has legalised gay marriage, Singapore, also an Asian society, still criminalises gay sex owing to public opinion that supports the retention of 377A. What is considered a right and an ethical priority in one society is simply not seen as something important in another.

- 2. In the real world, ethics exist in tension. Societies will inevitably have to settle for what they deem to be the best trade-off.** While some societies prize individual freedoms, others value security and solidarity. In Singapore, the government recently passed the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act to prevent the spread of fake news that could potentially threaten Singapore's security and reputation and ruin the goodwill between people of different racial and religious backgrounds. While this set of laws potentially threatens freedom of expression and creates a climate of fear where people are more wary of freely sharing their views, it does help to nullify the scourge of false news online. Other countries, such as the U.S., which consider freedom of speech to be sacrosanct might balk at Singapore's "draconian" measures to counter the threat of fake news, but this is a choice that Singapore has made. It has, as a sovereign nation, chosen to trade some individual freedoms for social stability. Every society will have to make this choice on its own.
- 3. If one society allows another to influence its ethical choices, it opens the door to undue foreign influence.** This could impede sovereignty and even take the form of cultural imperialism, resulting in the imposition of values. Singapore, which takes a utilitarian approach when it comes to laws against drug trafficking, has been regularly lambasted by organisations such as Amnesty International for instituting the death penalty for drug traffickers. However, Singapore has remained firm in its stance, arguing that its severe laws are a reflection of the heinous influence drug abuse could have on Singapore society, wrecking livelihoods and destroying families. To compound matters, Singapore's geographical location, well within proximity of Southeast Asia 'Golden Triangle' trafficking region, makes it especially vulnerable to the drug trade. In the face of pressure from western powers and international NGOs which view the issue through their own cultural lens, Singapore has maintained that it will not allow outsiders to interfere in legal and ethical choices that are rightfully its own. In a similar vein, the sovereign right of each individual society and government must be respected and they must be left to make their own ethical decisions on their own terms.

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**5. 'Champions of animal rights are nothing but hypocrites.' Discuss.**

**Analysis**

This question requires candidates to examine the actions and behaviours of animal rights supporters and argue if these actions and behaviours resonate with their opinions and beliefs on animal rights. Candidates should recognise that this is an extreme question with the absolute term, 'nothing'. Better candidates would point out that although people who campaign for animal rights more or less want the same thing: fair and humane treatment for animals, animal welfare standards can vary significantly from one part of the world to another and the definition of 'animal rights' can differ from one country to the next, or one culture to another. These considerations render difficulties as to whether champions of animal rights deserve to be branded as hypocrites or not.

**Clarification of Terms**

Champions of animal rights - supporters or advocaters for the rights of animals, ie they believe that animals are entitled to an existence and their most basic needs, such as the need to avoid suffering, etc.

Hypocrites - deceitful or insincere people who claim to have moral standards or beliefs whose actions and behaviours do not conform to their beliefs. In other words, such people do not practise what they preach.

### **Stand / Possible Points and Examples**

#### **Champions of animal rights are not hypocrites:**

##### **1. By making conscious personal choices, at an individual level, animal rights supporters do try to play their part in advocating for animal rights.**

Animal rights supporters share a genuine belief that they can make a difference through their actions. They demonstrate commitment in carrying out what they believe in and make lifestyle choices that reflect their beliefs. For instance, some reject the consumption of meat or products from animals and instead choose to embrace vegetarianism or veganism. Some opt not to wear leather or fur products and opt for brands of clothes that have been ethically sourced or vegan, or use cruelty-free make-up brands like Barefaced Beauty, Odylique Make-Up and The Body Shop. Some choose not to visit zoos or circuses because to them, using animals as a form of entertainment is exploitative in nature. Such supporters tend to regard animal welfare and suffering as areas of moral concerns and speak out against what they perceive as mistreatment towards animals. In fact, there are also many dedicated supporters of animal rights who risk imprisonment and choose deliberately to stand up for their beliefs and causes. For example, one of the founders of the group, 'Toronto Pig Save', Anita Kranjnc, was criminally charged in 2015 for offering water to thirsty pigs on their way to slaughter. She was eventually acquitted but her argument that the least humans could do for animals they kill is to acknowledge their suffering struck a chord with many other animal rights activists.

##### **2. Due to greater public awareness, businesses do heed the call in making genuine efforts to advocate for better treatment of animals.**

In recent years, there have been greater efforts by businesses from pharmaceutical and medical companies to grocers and restaurants to acknowledge the growing public awareness of the ethical treatment of animals. As businesses continue to heed the demand from an increasingly knowledgeable public about the treatment of animals, this has particular significant consequences for agribusinesses in terms of what animals are considered appropriate to cultivate and eat and how the animals are farmed. Cosmetic companies and clothing-related businesses are also increasingly subjected to consumer pressure worldwide to adopt ethical policies to animal testing and making real efforts to implement human treatments of animals or embrace cruelty-free maxim for their businesses. Arcadia Group (which owns Topshop), H&M Group, Inditex's apparel brands (including Zara), Marks & Spencer, and hundreds of other brands banned mohair after a Peta Asia investigation revealed rampant abuse in the industry. Workers dragged, roughly handled, threw around, mutilated, and even cut the throats of fully conscious goats in South Africa, the world's top mohair producer. Online retailer Asos banned not only mohair but also cashmere, feathers and silk, in line with its policy that "it is not acceptable for animals to suffer in the name of fashion or cosmetics". Practically speaking, if the well-being of animals are not taken into consideration now, eventually there will be nothing left for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. So these companies and businesses do recognise the importance of animal welfare and are willing to suffer personal cost in order to promote sustainability for the long haul.



### **Champions of animal rights are hypocrites:**

**1. In theory, animal rights supporters espouse the importance of saving animals but in reality, not all animal life is considered equal and these champions are actually selective about which animals and which causes they want to advocate for.**

In reality, some animals are more well-protected than others. Cuter animals tend to receive more attention from animal rights supporters. Animals that are kept as pets are also more valued than say rodents and pests. Also, in recent years, there have been attempts to confer almost human rights on chimpanzees because they share 99% of their DNA with humans. Champions of animal rights would fight for the chimpanzees' rights but rarely do they advocate for the rights of certain worms that share 75% of our DNA (does this makes them three-quarters human and entitled to humans fighting for their cause too? Also, the breeding and killing of animals for food or clothes or medicine has received much focus in the media. However, when it comes to issues like animal experimentation or hunting for sport, there are less supporters. Vegan animal rights advocate George Martin highlighted in a Facebook post about the stark differences in how humans view and treat different animals when it comes to fashion, religions or holiday traditions, and animal rights as well. "Stab a dog in the throat: Animal murderer. Stab a pig in the throat: Circle of life," Martin wrote. "Pull a parrot's feathers off: Sick individual. Pull a goose's feathers off: 'Wow, these pillows are so comfy.'" "Kill a cat for a religious festival and say grace over the corpse: Uncivilised barbarians. Kill a turkey for a religious festival and say grace over the corpse: Christmas." The post also includes contrasts such as the horrific idea of boiling a dog alive, "savage, uncivilised, grotesque," to boiling a lobster alive - "fine dining." Sadly, it is often sentiment and not reason, that fuels the enthusiasm of the animal rights supporters, affecting their perception of the statuses of different animals and in turn, influencing their disparate reactions towards them, especially when it comes to treatment of pets versus livestock.

**2. For some individuals and companies that claim to support animal rights, it is still for self-interest and not the well-being of animals that fuels their championing of animal rights.**

In the world we live in today, creating a positive image is of vital importance for some as it could mean more followers or more revenue if one is seen to be promoting worthwhile causes. The notion of 'virtue signaling', the action or practice of publicly expressing opinions or sentiments intended to demonstrate one's good character or the moral correctness of one's position on a particular issue is very evident today. For celebrities, for example, this could mean raising their own profile and amassing huge legions of fans as they create a positive impression of themselves when they support causes like animal rights. However, ultimately the sincerity of their actions can be questioned as they may not truly practise what they preach. For example, Yovana Mendoza Ayres, a vegan blogger who uses the name Rawvana, amassed a cult following online by promoting her raw vegan diet and shunning the intake of animal products. For the last six years, she built up her social media channels where she raved about her extreme diet. But she has been branded a fraud and a liar after it was revealed in March 2019 she had been secretly been eating fish and eggs. As for companies and businesses, ultimately the main goal is still profit-making and claiming to be cruelty-free towards animals does help to attract consumers who are inclined to be animal lovers. Some brands that claim to be 'cruelty-free' might not personally test the product on animals but they have a third party do so. The most notorious example of this are brands that sell cosmetics and body care products in

China, which is a gigantic market. China's laws require products to be tested on animals before they can be sold in its territory. To get around this, brands just outsource the animal testing. According to PETA's (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) website, brands like L'Oréal, Estee Lauder which doesn't test on animals in the United States, pay for deadly testing on animals in China. So while brands like Aveda or The Body Shop may be cruelty-free but their parent companies (Estee Lauder and L'Oréal respectively) are not.

**3. Although champions of animal rights profess to protect the rights of animals, due to man's attempts to cope with an ever-burgeoning population, the well-being of animals is inadvertently compromised.**

Man's survival is dependent on our ability to supply our needs from our environment. As we have developed in power and sophistication as well as in numbers, those needs have correspondingly developed and multiplied and this has had an impact on the animals that co-exist with us. Their habitats shrink, they are hunted and even farmed to meet our food and clothing demands. A major report produced by the World Wildlife Fund and involving 59 scientists from across the globe finds that the vast and growing consumption of food and resources by the global population has started an annihilation of wildlife, an emergency that threatens civilization. According to the findings, the biggest cause of wildlife losses is the destruction of natural habitats, much of it to create farmland. Three-quarters of all land on Earth is now significantly affected by human activities. Killing for food is the next biggest cause – 300 mammal species are being eaten into extinction – while the oceans are massively overfished, with more than half now being industrially fished. As much as champions of animal rights wish to protect the animals, sometimes, the fact is they themselves are very much a part of the phenomenon that they protest against. For instance, they burn fossil fuels and cut down forests that have eliminated environments needed to sustain wildlife. Or they live in large homes in rural areas and clear land where animals once inhabited in order to build buildings and other kinds of industrial development. According to studies conducted by the Center for Biological Diversity, animals in the United States like the Florida panther and the Loggerhead sea turtle, are rapidly losing their habitats as the human population expands. This has devastating effects on the animals which are critically threatened by the effects of human population.

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**6. 'Any change in society begins in school.' Comment.**

**Analysis:**

As formal institutions of education, schools are often deemed to be the official platform that educates and equips the young in order for them to answer the needs of the economy and to serve as agents of change in society. For this reason, governments have vested interest in developing schools (both public and private ones) to offer the best for students so that they could in turn contribute the best to society in the form of social, cultural, economic and political changes. This assumption, however, may not always be accurate as some significant changes in society (both positive and negative) may begin outside of school context – namely, at home, at the work place, at the community level or even in religious institutions.

**Clarifications of terms:**

“Change” – referring to social, cultural, economic and/ or political changes that may lead to either positive or negative outcomes that could be significantly felt across different strata in society.

### **Stand/Possible Points & Examples**

#### **Yes, any change in society begins in school**

1. **Throughout history, changes that revolutionize the society begin in schools.** This is because the educators are the trailblazers of such changes who use schools as their strategic platforms to imbue the young with their revolutionary ideas or ideologies. Social political revolutions in the literal sense like the Chinese Cultural Revolution, for example, saw the uprising of students who were indoctrinated by teachers and staff from the Red Guards divisions in schools and campuses across China in August 1966. This led to the student-led “red terror” movement where the students took the streets to witch hunt for the bourgeoisie and imperialists. Nobel prize winner, Malala Yousafzai, established several schools in Pakistan in her home town in the Swat valley using the Malala Fund that from her Nobel money. Although she does not teach the children in the schools she established, she is nonetheless regarded as an influential educator who actively promotes education for girls and champions women’s rights through these schools. By far, while her impact on Pakistan’s misogynistic culture has been limited, her global influence on teachers and schools in changing many societies’ views on girls’ education and women’s rights have been phenomenal. Hence, the hallmarks of changes in society can be readily attributed to the quintessential role that educators have been playing in schools in changing students and stakeholders’ worldviews.
2. **Long term changes in society do begin in schools when they are funded and sustained by funds from the government.** Very often, governments around the world see schools as fertile grounds for seeding socially positive ideas or behaviour amongst the young in order to develop a desirable society in the long run. Hence, governments will see to it that such changes do begin in schools by funding these changes. This is most clearly seen in Singapore where the government has been using schools to cascade their social and political messages through campaigns, talks from ministries or even to directly incorporate them into the curriculum. Campaigns like the Speak Mandarin Campaign or Singapore Kindness Movement have indeed been etched in the minds of young Singaporeans together with the top-down infusion of more serious social engineering efforts like the National Education curriculum. Regardless of whether these initiatives are effective or not in achieving their ends, palpable changes in the Singapore milieu are undeniable in the long run. These changes may be positive (ie. the campaigns worked) or negative (ie. Singaporeans become more sceptical about these initiatives). Changes in the way societies remember their past in the long run could also be carefully orchestrated by the government and implemented systematically through schools. For years after World War II, the Japanese government has been criticised widely for “revising” history by controlling the way history textbooks are written in documenting Japan’s involvement in World War II (eg. specifically the episodes on the comfort women and Japan’s invasion of Asia). This resulted in major changes in young Japanese’s historical paradigm and effectively on all public narratives and discourse on Japan’s involvement in the War.
3. **Changes do begin in schools when the structure of the school system and curriculum have long-lasting effects on students.** Schools are more than the physical premises; it is

an organisation that promote a certain set of values, systems of thinking and all that a society should stand for ideally. While most school children pay little to no attention to daily routines like morning assemblies, classroom activities and co-curriculum events, these 'rituals' are subtly ingrained in their minds to prepare them for the real world. Schools subscribe to a set of rules and regulations and order, to condition individuals to be operate within a society that similarly subscribe to a set of law and order. In other words, schools' structure of learning and system in itself have been used as the primary social engineering tool by most governments in the world to ensure social order and conformation of individuals in society.

### **No, any change in society does not begin in school**

1. **While we love to believe that all changes in society begin in school, the reality is that schools and educators are anachronistic and have been losing its traction in influencing its students.** The 21<sup>st</sup> Century VUCA world evolves at an exponential rate which schools and educators can hardly catch up. As such, while schools in the past can indeed make an indelible mark in society by making significant changes from technological breakthroughs to groundbreaking social movements, schools today are ironically learning from society on the changes that they should follow. Australian educator Greg Whitby argues in his book *Educating Gen Wi-Fi*, that our world is changing at an unprecedented rate, but schools have not kept up and so opportunities are missed to better equip our young for a world that will change even more by the time they are adults. In other words, schools are not equipping children to be ready for jobs in the future but are still focusing on equipping them to be 'ready' for the old economy. Seen in this light, schools can hardly make any real positive change in society since they are increasingly becoming irrelevant.
2. **Teachers who are expected to be the significant others to children may only be focused on preparing students for examinations and may not even have the passion to change lives for the better.** In a society obsessed with pursuing academic excellence, teachers may also be obsessed in ensuring that their students are exam ready. Good grades, in other words, are teachers' main Key-Performance-Indicators (KPIs) rather than the goal to shape students' character and worldviews. While the pursuit of academic excellence may lead to an ethos of excellence in a society's work culture, the real sustainable change that schools can achieve in any society's social fabric is actually in nurturing the character of its people. Alas, if schools and educators no longer focus on the latter, there will not be any progressive changes in society. The rock band Pink Floyd's 1979 hit song "*Another Brick on the Wall*" has often been cited as a classic song that describes how schools have become factories that produce faceless individuals to support capitalistic economies without making any positive changes to the society. Schools in highly competitive societies like South Korea, China and Singapore have often been criticized for their senseless pursuit of academic excellence and for not making real changes in improving their societies' overall wellness.
3. **Any changes in society begin in the real world, and not in schools.** This is because schools are still very much operating only in theoretical domains and both educators and students can hardly find the right opportunities and resources to actualize any real change for society. At best, schools can only seed some aspiring dreams and visions for students – for example, in introducing some entrepreneurial ideas or convictions to help the global community – but not allowing students to fully embark on actualizing these aspirations simply because schools still need to students to complete their modules, assignments and exams in order for them to graduate with proper qualifications. Even corporate giants like Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg could only make real changes in society by fully launching their respective companies after

they graduate from College (although the inception of their innovations began while they were still in school). In Hong Kong, while students generally go through the moral and national education curriculum in schools (until the curriculum was shelved in 2012) and some variations of this in different schools, the real change in the Hong Kong society was only achieved when students dislocate themselves from their school settings and protested on the streets against the Chinese government's extradition law in 2019. If the Hong Kong students had chosen to remain in school, they would have only debated over the extradition law as nothing but an intellectual exercise and ended all possible social changes when the classroom bell rings.

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## 7. How far do you agree that artistic expression is always political?

### Analysis

A strong relationship between the arts and politics, particularly between various forms of arts and power, occurs across historical epochs and cultures. As they respond to current events and politics, the arts is observed to take on political as well as social dimensions, becoming itself a focus of controversy and even a force of political as well as social change. However, some have also noted that not all instances of artistic expression are politically relevant and that thinking of the arts as inherently political is too simplistic.

### Clarification of terms

Artistic expression- any manifestation of the arts

Political- relating to the power relationships in society

### Stand/Possible Points & Examples

#### While artistic expression is not always political...

4. **Claiming that all artistic expression is political broadens the definition of politics to the point where the term becomes meaningless.** Such a definition muddies the waters of what "politics" is. Pretty soon we would have to say that everything we do is political. This would not be a useful definition of politics. The New Oxford American Dictionary defines "politics" as "the activities associated with the governance of a country or other area, especially the debate or conflict among individuals or parties having or hoping to achieve power." This definition puts some clear boundaries on what is necessarily political. Politics may influence many areas of life, but to say that every work of art is bound up in politics really stretches the definition of politics to the point where it becomes meaningless.
5. **It implies that all artistic works send a message, which is not always the case.** When someone claims that "all art is political," it implies that all art is sending political messages (whether you notice them or not). The subtle corollary is that some of the art you think you love actually has a political stance that you would not agree with if you realised what it was. It covertly undermines your trust in art you assumed was simply beautiful and suggests that it may actually be glorified propaganda. Of course, there are many things in life that are designed to send a clear message: marketing copy, blog entries, news, sermons, political speeches, and much of our everyday communication. It is tempting, then, to project that assumption onto art as well. Religious groups in particular have always been wary of the



“messages” that art sends. To be sure, some art does send a clear message, just as some art is clearly political. And some artistic genres and mediums lend themselves well to messages (hip-hop music, children’s books, documentaries, etc). But most forms of the arts ought to rise above the simple delivery of messages. The chief function of the arts is to awaken our awareness of and desire for that which is transcendent. The arts is not supposed to simply tell us to “build a wall” or “create a path to citizenship.” That is not its purpose. The arts deals with themes, with feeling, with beauty — things far deeper than politics. To see the arts as fundamentally a vehicle for political messages is to turn the grand function of the arts into something much shallower.

- 6. It implies that all of the arts is polarising, which is not necessarily true.** It is no secret that we live in a deeply polarised political climate. In the U.S., a Pew Research study last year found that across 10 measures that Pew Research Center has tracked on the same surveys since 1994 [government aid, racial discrimination, immigration, etc], the average partisan gap has increased from 15 percentage points to 36 points. Pew also found that partisan separation even extends to areas of life that are ostensibly not political — for example, most Republicans prefer to live in rural, spread out areas while most Democrats prefer to live in urban, tightly connected areas. So increasingly, we are not only mentally divided, we are physically divided. In this era of widespread polarisation, we are in desperate need of things that unite us. But when we say that artistic expression is always political, we imply that political divides will naturally run straight through all the seemingly innocuous movies, music, performances, and visual art we consume. This assumption leads to some faulty (and ultimately unhelpful) conclusions. Take a beloved, family-friendly movie as an example: Pixar’s 2001 film *Monsters, Inc.* If one is of the opinion that art is always political, one might see this as fundamentally a movie about immigration. It is about how we initially distrust people from other nations, but if we really got to know them, we would want them around. But this was not the artistic intent of the film according to Pixar co-founder Ed Catmull. The intent of the movie was to portray our problems an important part of our personal growth rather than as nuisances that need to be stamped out. This is a theme that is common to all of us as human being, but when it is interpreted politically, the message is hijacked. If all art is political, it will always be polarising. But art often connects us with our humanity, it can be unifying. For a moment we could set aside our politics to laugh and cry together.

**...it is often tied to politics.**

- 4. Of course, there is a measure of truth to the arts and politics being historically intertwined.** One cannot deny that some art is fundamentally political, both in its intentions and in the way people experience it. Take Max Ernst’s painting *Europe After the Rain*, for example, a bleak denouncement of Nazism and perhaps warfare in general. Bob Dylan’s hit song *The Times They Are A Changin’* and John Lennon’s *Give Peace a Chance* had similar political implications. Another case in point is Banksy’s series of murals in the Calais refugee camp, which make a strong statement about the treatment of refugees and Gil Scott Heron’s *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, featuring a politically-charged sentiment revived last year in Marvel’s *Black Panther*. In 2018, Kendrick Lamar’s *DNA* won him the Pulitzer Prize in music for capturing the complexity of modern African-American life. Clearly, the arts and politics are not entirely separate domains. Many manifestations of the arts have a political message, be it hidden or overt.

5. **Furthermore, politics itself inspires the arts.** Politics, being so intimately intertwined with the human condition, often gives rise to artistic expression that examines, critiques, and even lampoons political life. At the height of Donald Trump's bid to win the US Presidential Elections, a series of naked statues of him entitled 'The Emperor Has No Balls' were put up in various cities across the U.S. The statues, which sought to literally expose Trump as a politician who had no substance, were put up by an activist group called Indecision who were responding to the very real possibility that someone like Trump could actually become the next US President. Between 1995 and 2017, Chinese artist and dissident Ai Weiwei produced *Study of Perspective*, a photographic series in which viewers see Ai's left arm extended forward with the middle finger raised to significant institutions, landmarks and monuments from around the world. These pictures mimic tourist's photos and encourage people to question their adherence and acceptance towards governments, institutions and establishments. Such art works look to peel away the trappings of wealth and power to expose dubious politicians for who they really are- fallible creatures, just like the rest of us. The phenomenon of politics serving as fodder for artistic impulses is indeed prevalent.
6. **The arts gives the powerless a voice.** Artists from disenfranchised segments of the population have sought to use the arts to amplify their narratives that would otherwise go unheard. In 2019, an art exhibition opened in London which empowered refugee artists to tell their own stories about migration. The exhibit, titled *Sink Without Trace*, featured work by migrants who had made the dangerous journey to Europe. It offered an alternative perspective to the one offered mostly by the media and government institutions. Similarly, Mata Aho Collective's "Kaokao #1", a 2018 art installation at the National Museum of Singapore, shone the light on marginalised Māori women. Through much of New Zealand's recent history, Māori women have led protests, been the instigators of change and have been powerful leaders in their respective fields. Yet, in spite of all this undeniable strength, they are often invisible within the wider communities. The traditional tapestry work alludes to the role of marginalised Māori women in military resistance, spotlighting figures such as Te Puea Herangi, a Māori leader who fought against conscription of her minority community in the First World War. Beyond paying homage to and empowering the Māori people, the artwork also acknowledges women in general, whose voices and identities have been historically sidelined.

***If you are interested, read:***

*Is art for pleasure or politics?*

<https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/intelligence-squared-is-art-for-pleasure-or-politics/index.html>

*All good art is political*

<https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/406258-all-good-art-is-political>

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## **8. How important is it for young people in your society to retain a sense of tradition?**

### **Analysis**

Young people, including young Singaporeans, have often been criticised as being ignorant of traditional beliefs and practices and also, indifferent to maintaining a sense of tradition. This question requires candidates to consider the role and importance in having a sense of tradition and the degree to which young people ought to hold on to a sense of tradition.

### **Clarification of Terms**

important: crucial, essential, vital

retain: keep, maintain

tradition: a belief, custom or way of doing something (including a practice, a mindset, a ritual or a habit) that has existed for a long time among a particular group of people within a culture, race, religion, nation, family, etc.

## **Stand / Possible Points and Examples**

### **Yes, it is very important**

#### **1. Retaining a sense of tradition keeps young Singaporeans rooted to their past.**

Traditions play an essential role in reminding young Singaporeans of their past and the significance of many traditional practices and beliefs that have been cherished and passed down faithfully for many generations. These unique practices and beliefs that older Singaporeans still adhere to, serve to give the young generation a glimpse into the lives of their ancestors. Indeed, it only through understanding and undergoing what their ancestors have experienced, that young people in Singapore are able to understand and be aware of their unique personal histories. For example, the celebration of festivals like Pongol, Chinese New Year, Hari Raya Puasa or the Hungry Ghost Festival and their associated rituals and customs are still celebrated by the young and old in modern day Singapore. In Singapore's context where there is a plethora of different cultures and traditions, possessing a sense of tradition also serves as a binding force for our heterogeneous society. For instance, National Day is still proudly celebrated with concerts in schools and the singing of National Day songs. The annual Singapore Heritage Festival has seen more Singaporeans, particularly the young, taking the initiative and getting involved with conducting events. For example, in 2016, students from Dunman High School conducted a tour around the Dakota Crescent old estate and students from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts staged theatre performances to present their take on Singapore's multicultural roots. By maintaining a strong sense of tradition, young people in Singapore help to ensure the continuance of our rich culture and heritage that we proudly and uniquely call our very own.

#### **2. Shared traditions provide young Singaporeans with a sense of identity and belonging.**

Traditions are an important part of one's identity as they define who one is. Traditions also enable a collective identity to form and provides a sense of social cohesion and unity. This is especially important in today's world where there is a return to a sense of tribalism where people form groups with shared interests, lifestyles and habits and they find meaning and purpose in being members of such groups. In particular, traditions help to bond young Singaporeans and create collective memories unique to them. For example, school traditions like the singing of school songs and hymns, chanting of school cheers during 'A' Division competitions, participating in CCA camps or even the tradition of having primary five students attend the yearly National Day Parade previews help to instil a sense of pride in young Singaporeans. Traditions also help bond the younger generations with the older ones, encouraging togetherness or belonging to a family or social group. For instance, overseas holidays give some Singaporean families a reason to come together and deepen their relationships between the different generations. Many young people in Singapore, together with their other family members also try make dining together an intentional ritual, despite their busy lives.



**3. Traditions help to inculcate and reinforce values and beliefs that are important to a particular group of people. Young Singaporeans have the responsibility to know and pass down those same traditions to future generations.**

Having a sense of tradition often helps to provide a meaningful framework that guides the young on what is acceptable and what is unacceptable within a group of people or a society. Traditions are important because they provide young people with a compass to guide themselves in a world where moral standards are now often being compromised. Most traditions have moral and ethical messages embedded within them, and these serve as guidelines regarding how the young should think and behave. For instance, children pouring tea for the older family members during Chinese tea ceremonies or greeting older family members with the correct honorific terms before eating a meal teaches the young to show respect to their elders. Singapore has been largely governed and dominated by Confucian ideals which have kept much of society in order, with values of filial piety, respect for the elderly, importance of the family etc, which promote a happy family, the basic and most crucial construct of our society. Islamic values, for example, the importance of kneeling before and seeking forgiveness from one's elders are still very much practised by the younger Malay generation in modern Singapore. Young Singaporeans learn to take on the responsibility of caring for their parents and help to reinforce social rules that are important for the stability of Singapore's society. When these young people become adults, they in turn, are expected to take on the mantle of passing down these traditions to the future generations.

**No, it is not very important**

**1. Traditional beliefs and practices can end up being a financial and emotional burden to the younger generation in Singapore.**

Traditions can be unduly demanding and the expectations that older Singaporeans place on young people to be faithful in carrying out traditions can often lead to great frustration. For instance, the need to spend money to present a semblance of wealth can be financially burdensome for young adults who have just reached adulthood milestones, like starting their working lives. Another example is that of young couples throwing lavish wedding banquets in posh hotels just because their parents expect them to do so. In addition, there is the expectation that young Singaporeans visit relatives to pay their respects during festive occasions, even if they are not particularly close to the relatives. This has led a growing number of young Singaporeans who find it troublesome to spend their free time during such public holidays visiting practically strangers, as they are obliged to or forced by their parents to do so. It is also an Asian tradition that everyone ought to get married and start a family and it is during such family gatherings when young single adults would have to experience undue pressure to get married by well-meaning relatives who would constantly ask questions about whether they have a girlfriend/boyfriend, when they are getting married and whether they need any help meeting new people. Young Singaporeans could feel that it is ludicrous and annoying that relatives who do not know them well are infringing on their personal affairs and these could lead to potentially awkward and emotionally distressful situations.

**2. In today's modern world, retaining a sense of tradition can be impractical to young Singaporeans.**

In today's fast paced and demanding world, time is a premium and considered a precious commodity. Traditions can be viewed as over-elaborate, tedious and time consuming. This is because some traditions often require much time and effort to maintain and not many young

Singaporeans are willing to invest the time and energy to maintain traditions that often bear little direct relevance or significance to their lives. For example, traditional food is often prepared from scratch and traditional handicrafts are painstakingly handmade. It is little wonder too that few young Singaporeans are willing to be food hawkers and learn how to make traditional food. However in today's world of mass production and time-saving devices that could produce almost instantaneous things and require only minimum preparations, it could be considered not only a waste of time to follow traditions, but also quite arduous. Also, traditions can be complex and hard for young people to follow, making them onerous. Traditional Chinese weddings involve many complex rituals, including the exchange of the betrothal gifts, the *An Chuang* (setting up of the matrimonial bed) ritual, the hair combing ritual for the brides and the tea ceremony. The *An Chuang* ritual, in particular, would involve the preparation of a multitude of items like new bedsheets and pillow cases, tangerines, oranges, dried red dates, lotus seeds, pomegranate leaves and lily bulbs as well as the saying of specific auspicious words. Traditional Indian weddings that closely follow the various ceremonies involved could go up to three to four days, which included a traditional *mehendi* ceremony, the religious wedding ceremony at a temple and a dinner reception at a hotel. This is why many modern young couples would choose to simplify or do away with these practices, as practices would be time-consuming if they were to be strictly followed.

### 3. Maintaining a sense of tradition can hinder young people from progress.

Tradition tends to be about thinking about how people in the past lived and using that as a guideline to determine how one ought to live one's life today. Often keeping a custom or a ritual encourages one to stay the same and oppose change. However, change is necessary for progress and sometimes maintaining a sense of tradition tends to prevent this. So the danger is that if young Singaporeans keep trying to live in the past and hold on to a sense of tradition, they may distance themselves from the gradual changes and developments happening in society. Many young Singaporeans realise this and show a reluctance to take up jobs that involve old school trades like a kueh maker or Teochew opera singer, or running a mama (sundry) shop or a traditional bakery. Even, the parents of young Singaporeans also do not help much as they end up discouraging the young from pursuing such occupations. In a rapidly modernising and pragmatic society like Singapore, where there is a great pressure placed on the young to succeed and to attain a degree of sustainable income to support themselves, such traditions serve to hinder their progress and may cause them to be disadvantaged in the rat race. Therefore, it may not be important for young people to retain a sense of tradition.

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9. 'The real threat for humans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is indifference rather than ignorance.' Is this true?

#### Analysis:

As societies progress further in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in this increasingly globalised world, it is commonly believed that in order for human beings to continue to survive and to survive well, the acquisition of knowledge is quintessential. Hence, most nations would emphasise greatly in building and augmenting their knowledge-based economies (KBes) by ensuring that the workforce is well educated and equipped for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In other words, the fear of being left ignorant of new developments in this world is often deemed as the number one threat for

humanity. That said, there are those who believe that the greater and more imminent threat is actually indifference as there is nothing more detrimental than a collective lot of knowledgeable individuals who do not care about any social issues and causes, and who are totally insular.

**Clarification of terms:**

**Indifference** – apathy; an intentional attitude adopted by individuals who choose not to care about affairs, issues and causes that do not concern them.

**Ignorance** – general lack of knowledge, literacy or skills set.

**Stand/Possible Points & Examples**

**Yes, indifference is the real threat for humans in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century rather than ignorance.**

4. **It is not a lack of knowledge and competencies that hinder the resolution of world crises but a lack of collective will and concern by people and nations.** The 21<sup>st</sup> Century world is facing a spectrum of world crises ranging from climate change, escalated conflicts between nations, the contagion of epidemics and terrorism. While each of these issues are different in nature, if world leaders and nations can get their act together to collectively solve them decisively without politicising them or using them to achieve their own vested agendas, the world will have a higher chance in mitigating or even solving these crises for good. More often than not, countries tend to adopt a “not-in-my-backyard” mentality where they may not actually heed the seriousness of such world crises even though they may paying attention to reports on them in world summits like the G20 gatherings. The Paris Agreement in 2015 is renowned to be a major breakthrough under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) where 174 countries and the European Union signed the Agreement. However, a key criticism is that not all of these parties have fully adopted concrete actions and policies to actualise the financial flow, the new technology framework as well as the transparency framework that were spelt out in the Agreement. Countries like the United States of America, Ukraine, Saudi Arabia and Russia have been flagged out by the Climate Action Tracker, a project run by a group of three climate-research organizations, for insufficient policies and actions to fulfil the key initiatives underscored by the Agreement. While these countries are surely not ignorant of the gravity of their inactions, they seem to adopt a partially indifferent attitude when it comes to executing real policies that can reduce carbon emissions. It is precisely such indifference that would pose a real threat to humanity on the whole in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century world.
5. **In this 21<sup>st</sup> Century world, indifference will tear the social fabric of societies where highly competitive and self-serving individuals will stop at nothing to achieve personal goals at the expense of others.** As nations become progressively become more affluent around the world as compared to decades ago, the gini-coefficient of some societies have also been increasing. As such, individuals who are well educated and elites in their various fields of professions would be getting richer and may even start to turn a blind eye to the plight of those who are less fortunate. While these individuals are knowledgeable and far from being ignorant of all social ills that plague their societies, they tend to choose to be indifferent and would rather focus on indulging in their world of comfort. In the short run, this social behaviour may not seem to be consequential; but in the long run, the social fabric of such a polarised society may lead to a non-inclusive society with a myriad of social ills. Countries like South Africa, Namibia, Haiti and

Botswana that have very high gini-coefficient index according to the World Bank, are still seeing very affluent individuals being oblivious and apathetic to the sufferings of the poor in their respective countries. In the long run, this will pose a grave threat to these nations' overall prosperity and socio-economic stability. Given the speed at which economic and technological developments happen in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, such countries with weak stability as a result of an overwhelming sense of indifference amongst its rich will spell a definite of doom.

6. **Being indifferent is the real threat more than being ignorant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century simply because while the latter is a case where individuals “do not know” (which can be solved relatively easier via appropriate means of education and training), indifference is a choice of attitude that stems from deep seated prejudices and beliefs which cannot be changed so easily especially in our world today.** In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century world we live in now, where social media blurs the line between personal and public domains, one's personal biasness and prejudices over say another group of individuals could be propagated quickly around the world once it gains traction as a meme-aapt material. Once that happens, stereotypes are further entrenched in people's minds at unimaginable rate, leaving some even more indifferent than before simply because they would refuse to refresh their bias perspectives. There is a wave of nationalistic sentiments sweeping across the United Kingdom, the United States of America, India, China and to some extent Russia as well. Individuals who subscribe to nationalistic sentiments in these countries tend to want to stick on to their deep beliefs that any foreigners who are in their countries for work or for permanent residence are indiscriminately “bad” (using a Trump lexicon here) for their societies. While it is easy to criticise these ultra-right wing conservatives as ignorant folks who may not understand foreigners and their culture, it is more accurate to argue that it is a case of deliberate indifference created by an echo chamber brought about by social media and their communities. This is a real threat to not only these countries as they choose the insular path of nation building, but also to the rest of the world as in the long run because this directly goes against the idea of sharing expertise, innovations, technologies and ideas that can improve the world as a whole together. Instead of developing the global world, indifference is now fragmenting the world all over again.

#### **No, ignorance is the real threat to humans in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century rather than indifference**

4. **While it is easy to attribute indifference as the key threat to humans in our world today, some current world crises are indeed the direct outcome of poor decisions made by people who are blinded by sheer ignorance.** In this day and age where individual rights are championed and upheld by societies, politicians who need to secure popular votes tend to pander to the needs and wishes of voters as much as possible even if some of these wish lists are based on pseudo facts or even pure ignorance. The case of the contentious Brexit referendum in June 2016 is a classic example where some of the 51.9% voters who voted to leave the European Union (EU) did not even have full knowledge on what EU is (according to data from Google Trends, the searches for “what is the EU” and “what is Brexit” started climbing across Britain late into the night after the Referendum was held). Such was a case of sheer ignorance by the people of UK that invoked Article 50 of the Treaty on EU leading to the current political and economic mess. Ironically, it is also this very culture of ignorance that secured the political victories of the likes of Donald Trump as the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America where his philosophy of governance is founded mainly on the rhetoric of nationalism and fear of foreigners. Trump's policies to “make America great again” by withdrawing itself from

various international cooperation platforms may offer a quick fix to America's economy, but such tunnelled vision moves would invariably hurt America's standing in the global theatre in the long run. The Grand Old Party's (GOP) ignorant supporters of the Trump administration is a classic example of how ignorance can be a lethal potion for the nation and maybe even for the world.

5. **In this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world today, the rate at which technologies have been driving paradigm shifts in industries, medical fields and even social spheres will inevitably make ignorance as the key threat to human's survival.** If individuals do not keep up with these changes and insist on doing things the "same old way" in businesses, education and healthcare management, ignorance to the new and emerging ways of doing things will spell an imminent doom for them. We see this in the way US President Donald Trump had promised Americans to bring back coal miners' jobs and to remove regulations on coal as a central part of his Presidential campaign. So while the Trump administration wants to make it easier for energy companies to open new coal-fired power plants, the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the rest of the world are progressing in its research and development in harnessing clean and more efficient energy (eg. nuclear energy plants and photovoltaic systems) that will not only benefit the world economies but also mitigate the effects of climate change. Hence, ignorance – and perhaps coupled with a certain dose of denialism – to disruptive technologies will eventually render individuals and even an entire nation obsolete in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
6. **Although fake news is an ancient human phenomenon, the rate and scale of its spread has never been so severe than in this current world where social media has exponentially amplified the devastating effects of people's ignorance.** In recent years, many countries have suffered economically, socially and politically because of individuals' sheer ignorance and inability to discern authentic information from fabricated ones. While people who believe in fake news may well have good intentions to be concerned about social issues and causes (ie. they are not indifferent to social issues), their ignorance has facilitated detrimental outcomes. In India, fake news has led to episodes of mistrust and tension between its people and the government. On November 8, 2016, India established a 2,000-rupee currency bill on the same day as the Indian 500 and 1,000 rupee note demonetisation. Fake news went viral over Whatsapp that the note came equipped with spying technology that tracked bills 120 meters below the earth. In Indonesia, fake news was spread during the 2014 presidential election, where the eventual-winning candidate Joko Widodo became a target of a smear campaign by Prabowo Subianto's supporters. The fake news claimed that Widodo was the child of Indonesian Communist Party members, of Chinese descent, and a Christian. This led to some degree of ethnic and religious tension in Indonesia which was extremely dangerous to the country's already delicate social fabric.

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10. Is it true that your society has paid too high a price for its success?

**Analysis:**

This question assumes that Singapore has achieved great successes, but has sacrificed too much or incurred costs that are too high for the successes reaped. HA students will be able to tackle the 'too high' (degree) in the question and provide reasons for this (eg. via language – "inequality



is tearing our society apart”). Weaker students tend to merely list/describe the costs of our success without addressing if this cost is *excessive* or *damaging*.

**Clarification of terms:**

- *Success*: This refers to a whole range of a nation’s achievements, such as building a strong economy, a stable political system and a peaceful social landscape
- *Too high a price*: The costs of this success surpass the fruits of success enjoyed and are deemed as excessive/detrimental to the individual or society

**Approaches:**

- Yes, our society has paid too high a price for its success.
- No, our society has not paid too high a price for its success.

**Our society has paid too high a price for its success**

**1. Singapore has attained success in preserving peace and stability. However, this has come at an inordinately high price – an autocratic political culture which results in the suppression of political opponents as well as the loss of civic engagement.**

- Harsh civil and criminal defamation laws have silenced and bankrupted political dissent so much so that the government has incurred a bad reputation for ruling with an iron fist. Despite presenting itself as a modern liberal democracy, Singapore is ranked below Iraq and Zimbabwe in terms of press freedom.
- Political dissidents like Francis Seow and Tang Liang Hong have been sued for defamation for airing critical views against the PAP, forcing their swift exit from the political scene. The recent public vilification of Dr Thum Pin Tjin for criticising the government as the biggest purveyor of fake news in its depiction of Operation Coldstore further cemented the reputation of Singapore amongst its global counterparts as being excessively authoritarian/draconian.
- The introduction of a new anti-fake news bill in 2019 to counter online falsehoods further grants the government sweeping powers to block politically offensive views, sparking criticism from the international community and engendering a stifling political climate that undermines free speech.
- Such strict rules and regulations for participation in political matters have contributed to civic disengagement, especially among the young people. The lack of political participation inflicts a disproportionately high cost on Singapore’s future as there are limited platforms for Singaporeans to voice their opinions, participate in the running of the country and be groomed to become able leaders.

**2. The transformation of Singapore from a third world to first world nation in one generation attests to its economic success. However, this economic success has inflicted high costs in the form of increased inequality and a one-man-for-himself mindset that jeopardises social cohesion.**

- Singapore's successful economic policies has led it being ranked the most competitive economy in the world in 2019 by Institute of Management Development (IMD). However, its economic success has arguably driven the society apart in irreparable ways due to inequality as more people slip from the cracks. Statistics suggest that the income gap between Singapore's highest and lowest income earners grew by 54% from S\$8,236 in 2007 to S\$12,661 in 2017.
- Singapore's staggering economic success comes at the high price to its social landscape. As Singapore opens its doors to foreign talents and workers, locals and foreigners jostle for limited resources and employment opportunities in what has become a competitive, dog-eat-dog social climate. This poses real problems to nation building and social cohesion, and underlying resentment and social division are intractable issues that are difficult to mitigate.
- While Singapore's educational policies have successfully nurtured a large pool of talent, these policies have also bred unhealthy competition and elitism. Increasing studies have shown how Singapore society is cut across class divides, and schools are platforms where such deep social inequalities are experienced, and even engineered as students of a similar socio-economic status mingle together. A report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has listed Singapore as having the largest gap in students' sense of belonging at school, going by their socio-economic status (SES).

**3. Singapore's strait-laced leadership has ensured peace and stability for decades. However it has also inflicted high costs on its local arts scene. The absence of artistic freedom means that artists are deprived of an environment to nurture a rich and dynamic arts culture.**

- In order to preserve peace, the government takes legal measures against artists whose work is contentious and poses challenges to the established social order. Artists restrain themselves in creative expression for they fear that establishments would come down upon them should they transgress socially acceptable limits. This has limited our development into a global or regional arts hub, in spite of the investments or resources allocated for that purpose.
  - Over the years, there have been numerous bans imposed on artists like Josef Ng and art forms that challenge the existing social and religious order like Talaq, A Vision of Persistence. Such cases have prompted more artists to practise self-censorship and severely repressed their creativity. Even though authorities had hoped that investments in Esplanade would support our development into a global and regional arts hub like the Sydney Opera House, what we have engendered is a controlled and sterile arts scene, which produces real obstacles to establishing Singapore as a reputable regional arts hub.

**4. Pragmatic economic and social policies have led to the creation of a highly modern and urbanised city-state in Singapore, with bustling skyscrapers, private housing and tourist attractions. However, this rapid modernisation has incurred a high social cost of diluting heritage, traditions and culture, dampening our national pride/identity and closeness to society in the long run.**

- The decision to create land for building projects has resulted in the loss of historical sites that are essential to the country's history and heritage, such as the Old National Library Building, the Cathay Building and Rochor Centre. Cemeteries, such as Bukit Brown and Bidadari, which are tangible signposts of the past, as well as repository of one's memories and identity, have been exhumed. This is undeniably a high cost to pay as such economic priorities have dampened a rich, first-hand understanding of one's past and heritage.

### **Our society has not paid too high a price for its success**

#### **1. Singapore's legalistic style of governance is often said to result in an autocratic political culture. However, the price is justified because the absence of political opposition has yielded a stable political environment and allowed the government to implement sound policies effectively, something which other countries may not be able to achieve.**

- In an autocratic regime like Singapore, government decisions are accepted unquestioningly as the people fear that they would be prosecuted should they speak against the authorities. However, the absence of blatant opposition has enabled effective governance and policies to be implemented more efficiently than in countries where people are allowed to protest against policies.
  - In the US where people are given ample rights to voice their opposition to policies, reforms to policies involving healthcare, education and gun control are riddled with bureaucracy and resistance. In contrast, the Singapore government is swift in implementing reforms, from the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill to new Electronic Road Pricing system which will take effect in 2020. This shows that trading off freedom of speech and expression is a reasonable price as it gives way for swift, decisive and effective governance.
- In Singapore, opposition is repressed by PAP leaders in order to retain their dominance for an extended period. The price of single-party dominance is justifiable because there is relative economic and political stability as the continuity of political leadership allows long term plans and commitments to be made. There is also greater unity within the political party when the administration serves an extended term in the office.
  - Prior to Shinzo Abe's second term in office, Japan's rash of short-term prime ministers (the average term of Japan's past 62 prime ministers is just two years) was seen by experts as a major reason for its economic stagnation and decline in international influence.

#### **2. Singapore's strict justice system and stiff penalties have earned the nation a bad reputation as a draconian state. However, such a price is justified as it paves the way for unparalleled economic and social conditions that are conducive to business activities, foreign direct investments and a bustling tourism industry.**

- Due to Singapore's strict enforcement of law, it has been criticised harshly for possessing a "third-world mentality" and an uncompassionate attitude towards criminals. However, its



harsh practices have effectively kept crime rates low, allowing for different sectors of our economy, such as tourism to flourish.

- Businessmen flock to Singapore to establish their businesses because they are assured that the judicial system and governing bodies like Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) protect commercial interests and corruption-free business transactions. In contrast, insecurity plague businessmen when they consider investing in many African states such as Sudan where transactions and commercial exchanges do not undergo tight regulation.
- Businessmen are attracted to Singapore for trading and investments, as we have an established legal system that regulates business transactions and justifiably protects their interests as well as prevent corruption. These commercial opportunities have contributed to economic growth and increased the standards of living.
- As compared to various parts of Southeast Asia which are riddled with transnational organised crime, Singapore's strict laws make it one of the safest countries in the world. Low crime, as well absence of riots and demonstrations, makes it a choice tourist destination, and the hosting ground for the F1 event for the past near decade.

**3. Singapore's academic system has been criticised for engendering unnecessary competition amongst students, both local and foreign. Yet, this price is justified because the phenomenal success of its education system has allowed both the individual and society to benefit – bettering individual quality of life and allowing us to champion significant causes that benefit the community.**

- The competitive climate has produced hardworking and resourceful talents who are expected to achieve breakthroughs in biomedical and engineering sciences. Even though the local and foreign students are pitted against one another in the competition, the rivalry has produced Singapore students of outstanding calibre, which is important as labour is the most valuable asset in this resource-scarce city-state.
- Similarly this competitiveness has caused researchers to achieve commendable results which generate benefits for the global community. (i.e. It is more accurate to assert that the costs incurred are adequately compensated by scientific discoveries that benefit the global community.)
  - In 2012, scientists at A\*STAR's Singapore Immunology Network (SIgN) made great breakthroughs in identifying patients at risk of the mosquito-borne Chikungunya virus, facilitating a more targeted treatment and clinical care at the onset of the disease. In 2016, Singapore's Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN) announced that they have identified a new breakthrough macromolecule that could help prevent deadly virus infections with a unique triple-play mechanism that can also help prevent viral drug resistance.

***(Note: Students need to weigh the benefits and costs of Singapore's successes and show how the price exacted is justified because the benefits outweigh any real or perceived costs)***

## 11. Is greater regulation the answer to fake news?

### Analysis:

Fake news is not a new issue, but it poses greater challenges now. Fake news can be quite serious and even pose real dangers to society in the following ways: damage to reputation; causing public alarm; causing tension between racial and religious groups; and causing tension between public and government. Fake news that is intentionally and verifiably false designed to manipulate people's perceptions of reality—has been used to influence politics and promote advertising. It has also become a method to stir up and intensify social conflict. Regulation has been tossed as an idea from Singapore to US to try and control fake news with mixed reactions. Students must pay attention to the word “greater” regulations – ie more than the current regulations in place. They should also touch on how greater regulation can tackle fake news.

### Clarification of terms:

**Regulation** - a rule or directive made and maintained by an authority

**Greater** - of an extent, amount, or intensity considerably above average. Meaning more regulations are needed than the current ones.

**The answer** - a solution to a problem or dilemma

**fake news** - or hoax news, refers to false information or propaganda published under the guise of being authentic news. Fake news websites and channels push their fake news content in an attempt to mislead consumers of the content and spread misinformation via social networks and word-of-mouth. Fake news is made-up masterfully and manipulated to look like credible journalistic reports that are easily spread online to large audiences willing to believe the fictions and spread the word.

Yes, greater regulation is the answer to fake news.

1. **Greater regulation is the answer because of the ineffectiveness of current measures. People are still posting fake news without fear of reprisals.** There is a greater tendency today to post fake news amongst social media users. They create and post false information to cause fear, disruption and sow seeds of discord. Hate speech and offensive speeches and fake postings are increasing over social media and can really cause serious irreparable damage to harmony between races and religious groups. The balance between the races and religious groups is very fragile. There people have been found to have no moral values (do not care for right and wrong). In India, in 2018 at least 20 people have been lynched following false stories posted on WhatsApp about supposed kidnappers. In Singapore, a student circulated online a screenshot photograph, purportedly from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) website, announcing the death of Mr Lee. It sparked an outcry among Singaporeans. It also fooled international news outlets such as CNN and Chinese broadcaster CCTV into prematurely reporting about Mr Lee's passing. Amos Yee was found guilty of spreading malicious, misleading information about Christianity and Islam. He also criticized Lee Kuan Yew unjustifiably. In another eg Law and Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam locked horns with a Singaporean historian,

Thum Ping Tjin, in a public hearing on online falsehoods — over events that took place during the Communist era, with the Cabinet Minister criticising the Oxford research fellow for having “fallen completely” short of the standards of an objective historian. Shanmugam called for greater regulations to be imposed on fake news because people were increasingly posting inaccurate information. This is certainly not the last we will hear of malicious people like these in our societies. Posting anonymously, there will be no end to fake news being spread. That is why we need to tweak the current laws to combat fake news. Current regulations do not seem to stop people from posting damaging posts.

2. **We need greater regulation of fake news because of the increasing imminent threats – which are causing greater harm to individuals, societies and countries.** The 21st century has seen the weaponisation of information on an unprecedented scale. Powerful new technology makes the manipulation and fabrication of content simple, and social networks dramatically amplify falsehoods peddled by States, populist politicians, and dishonest corporate entities, as they are shared by uncritical publics. The platforms have become fertile ground for computational propaganda; ‘trolling’ and ‘troll armies’; ‘sock-puppet’ networks’ and ‘spoofers’. Then, there is the arrival of profiteering ‘troll farms’ around elections. The predominance of the internet and widespread use of social media means anyone can post threatening fake news. (Facebook - 2.1b; 1.5b WhatsApp; 1.3b Messenger; 1b Instagram; 500m tweets a day; 5b Youtube videos watched today). They can be nameless, can use any pseudonym and cannot even be easily traced and yet they can say what they want on the media. There is no accountability for the views and they can go to make offence or hate speech over the net. Some people can use the help of the Dark Net, or algorithms to multiply their posts/ fake news. Even worse, some have large followers on the internet and can influence opinion negatively as in the case of Kylie Jenner – who tweeted the ‘death’ of Snapchat causing its stocks to fall more than US\$ 1 Billion overnight. BOTs were also used to adversely affect the Malaysian Elections. They were made to work against Pakatan Harapan. The Russian government interfered in the 2016 U.S. presidential election with the goal of harming the campaign of Hillary Clinton, boosting the candidacy of Donald Trump, and increasing political discord in the United States. According to U.S. intelligence agencies, the operation was ordered directly by Russian President Vladimir Putin. A 2018 study at Oxford University found that Trump's supporters consumed the largest volume of junk news on Facebook and Tweeter. Terrorism is also on the rise with ISIS having more than 30,000 followers on its Tweeter account. Terrorists are especially likely to process information to support their own false radical ideological beliefs. There is thus a greater urgency to deal with all these threats. We need to send a strong signal to people to stop spreading fake news which very harmful. Hopefully, this would act as a greater deterrence. With the rise of cyber terrorism, cyber abuses, something serious needs to be done. The 2018 Global Terrorism Index found that far-right cyber terrorism is also increasing. There is also an increasing cyber banging trend over social media between rival gang members for eg in Chicago, New York and major cities around the world. Greater regulation is the answer because we can use it to fine or jail recalcitrant – like Singapore (POFMA). Even in China, anyone caught spreading malicious fake news would end up in jail (or worse still, you would secretly be ‘taken away’). In 2013, pro-EU Ukrainians were hoping for European integration, but any progress towards this would have meant a rejection of Russian influence – a “sensitive and painful” topic for the Kremlin. Tensions began to flare in eastern Ukraine as Russian sympathisers

rallied. Ukrainian authorities believed that Russian channels were painting a negative picture of Ukraine and Europe, creating divisions between the pro-Ukraine and pro-Kremlin camps. Russian channels successfully sowed discord in the country. Till today Ukraine has to fight the propaganda war against these channels.

3. **We need greater regulation because the media is increasingly becoming decentralised with the rise of citizen journalism. It becomes increasingly difficult to monitor and regulate malicious on-line citizen journalism.** News outlets are no longer the gatekeepers of current events due to the proliferation of independent reporters who can provide first-hand accounts of events unfolding on the ground, and some of these citizen journalists resort to underhanded means to gain traction. Stories are deliberately fabricated to gain more website visitors and increase advertising revenue for websites. Clickbait stories use sensationalist headlines to grab attention and drive click-throughs to the publisher website, normally at the expense of truth or accuracy. People, nor journalists are not afraid of getting caught especially when there is money involved. Journalism can turn itself into a vector for falsehoods to become believed by covering them uncritically. Repeated media coverage of conspiracies around Barack Obama's place of birth, for instance, may have played a role in spreading a belief that the former U.S. President was not actually born in Hawaii (The USA). Or that he is a Muslim. That is why we need greater regulations to stem the tide of fake news. We need more legislation to stop people from spreading malicious fake news. Legislation is an essential part of the solution to the spread of fake news by malevolent actors who set out to manipulate opinions and influence elections, according to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (ST 26 April 2019). To this end, Singapore's Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill will hold online platforms accountable and empower the Government to issue correction orders when false statements of fact are published, he added. In this context, it is a time for all media publishers to tack more closely to professional standards and ethics, to eschew the publishing of unchecked information, and to take a distance from information which may interest some of the public but which is not in the public interest.

No, greater regulation is not the answer to fake news.

1. **There is no need for greater regulations. Current regulations are working just fine.** Countries all over the world are currently dealing with fake news effectively. It would be a waste of unnecessary resources to implement greater regulations. To a larger degree, people are already afraid of posting fake news for fear of reprisals. Take Singapore for example. A Select Committee On Deliberate Falsehood (DOFs) was formed on 11 January 2018 to examine and report on the problem of deliberate online falsehoods and to recommend strategies to deal with them. More than six months after a Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods (DOFs) released its recommendations to the government, the Law Ministry tabled the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill (POFMA) in Parliament on 1 April 2018. Anybody found to flouting its regulations will be severely taken to task. This includes a fine or a jail term. The Bill proposed sanctions against three types of actors: anyone who communicate what they know to be a falsehood, via digital means, in the knowledge or belief that it will prejudice specified grounds of public interest; those who use bots for spreading falsehoods in Singapore; and those who provide services for the purpose of spreading a falsehood in

Singapore for reward. Others who have passed anti fake news laws which are seen to be working include: Russian President Vladimir Putin last month (march 2019) signed into law new fines for people found disseminating fake news or insulting authorities online. In Thailand, a tough cybersecurity law passed by the military government has been used against critics of the regime. Australia on April 4 2019 said it will fine social media and web hosting companies and imprison executives if violent content is not removed "expeditiously". Under the new law, companies could face fines of up to 10 per cent of their annual global turnover, while executives could be sentenced to up to three years jail if they do not remove any videos or photographs that show terrorism, murder, rape or other serious crimes without delay. European lawmakers voted in April 2019 on new online terror content removal rules under which technology firms like Facebook, Twitter or Google could face fines if they fail to eliminate terror propaganda from their sites quickly enough. Germany passed a law in January last year for social media companies to quickly remove illegal content such as hate speech, child pornography, terror-related items and false information from their sites. France passed two anti-fake news laws to rein in false information during election campaigns following allegations of Russian meddling in the 2017 US presidential elections. These are all tough measures adopted by countries to ensure that no one posts fake news or they will face severe punishment. Hence, as current regulations are seen to be working, there is no need for greater protocols.

- 1a. **Greater regulation is not needed in countries which control the media. The State exercises very strict control over all forms of media which does not allow people to randomly spread hateful, fake posts.** Censorship is the suppression of speech, public communication, or other information, on the basis that such material is considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, or "inconvenient". Censorship can be conducted by a government (or its appointed agencies), private institutions, and corporations. Countries like North Korea, India, Indonesia and others – muzzle the media so much that people are halted from posting anything treacherous to the safety of the State. In China, the IB has more powers. They can edit posting, remove posting and identify users whose opinion is not favoured by the government and have them targeted for action. These people also generate fake news in favour of the Chinese government. In Singapore, the PAP has a large IB made of members especially the young members who troll the internet looking to put down those who attack the PAP. Singapore on April 1 proposed a law to combat online fake news. Under the draft law, those who spread online falsehoods with a malicious intent to harm public interest could face jail terms of up to 10 years. Internet platforms including social media sites like Facebook or Twitter will also be required to act swiftly to limit the spread of falsehoods by displaying corrections alongside such posts, or removing them. Failure to comply could result in fines of up to S\$1 million. Individuals can also be directed to put up similar corrections, and could be fined up to S\$20,000 and jailed up to 12 months if they refuse to do so. With more pervasive use of data, IMDA continues to promote and regulate data protection in Singapore through the Personal Data Protection Commission. This ensures public confidence. On a related note, we do not need greater regulations today because the media is increasingly becoming more responsible in its reporting. Guided by ethical guidelines by media owners for journalists to follow, fake news is literally kept at bay. Anyone who runs foul of the guidelines will not only be taken by task by media owners, but also by members of the public.



2. **Greater regulation is not the answer to fake news because no democratic nation would want to/be able to stifle free speech. As it is, people are already unhappy with current regulations which restrict freedom of speech in a democracy.** The ICJ for eg sent a letter urging Singapore's government to refrain from passing into law the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill 2019 ('Online Falsehoods Bill') in its current form. The bill may, contrary to the object and purpose of its introduction, result in far-reaching limitations on the rights to freedom of expression, opinion and information. A real risk that it can be wielded in an arbitrary manner to curtail important discussion of matters of public interest in the public sphere, including content critical of the government. Critical dissent, free exchange and development of opinions, and free access to information are necessary to maintain an informed society and ensure transparency, accountability and informed debate on crucial matters of public interest.
3. **The solution to fake news is not greater regulation, but education. More developed critical literacy skills can tackle fake news. We must teach our young to navigate fake news.** According to researchers in Harvard, we evaluate stories not simply on plausibility, but on a complex mixture of past experience, knowledge of context, authority of the source and our own beliefs – skills that are not intuitive but are learned. Now, more than ever, teaching critical evaluation is important as it underpins the foundations of a functioning democratic society. In the post mortem on the US presidential election, a lot of attention has focused on fake news. Facebook for eg has been criticized for allowing false stories to circulate unchecked, corrupting civic debate and hampering informed decisions. Social media prevents people from getting a range of diverse and reliable information. Much of the debate has centred on blaming technology with little knowledge of how media works and liable to believe anything people are told. The ability to make informed decisions is not dependent solely on the information one is fed, but on evaluating it. What is important is digital cultural literacy: understanding not just how technology works, but how it works socially. This is something that educational institutions are ideally positioned to teach. Education around how communications media operate, and the implications for how people share, process and consume information can prepare students and others to become critically engaged citizens. By doing so, it would lead to the maintenance of an effective society.

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**12. To what extent should society be responsible for criminal behavior?**

**Analysis:** Crimes occur not just by choice, but by multiple factors and by the action or inaction of society. Crimes are not committed solely by any single race of people or class of people. People of all ethnicities, races and backgrounds have committed illegal acts throughout time. The significance of these behaviours and the ever-present criminals who perpetrate them, are felt by everyone in society, not just the perpetrators and victims.

**Clarification of terms:**

**Responsible** – having an obligation or ability to do something, or having control over or care for someone, as part of one's job or role or being the primary cause of something and so able to be blamed or credited for it.

**Society** – the community of people living in a particular country or region and having shared customs, laws, and organizations

**Criminal Behaviour** – refers to conduct of an offender that leads to and including the commission of an unlawful act.

### **Stand/Possible Points & Examples**

**Yes, To a large extent society should be responsible for criminal behaviour.**

7. **It should be responsible as it creates the environment that forces individuals to turn to a life of crime.** All behaviour is learnt according to the social cognitive theory, as children we have absorbed our society's standards of conduct, which serve as internalised moral restraints for the rest of our lives. This means that antisocial or criminal behaviour would lead to feelings of guilt, shame and lowered self-esteem. However, in certain societies, this behaviour is not explicitly taught and or encouraged, and instead, negative behaviours are propagated. This encourages crime. Furthermore, when societies don't solve issues such as poverty and unemployment, crime rates can soar as well. Crime offers a way in which impoverished people can obtain material goods that they cannot attain through legitimate means. Robbing, for example, is most commonly reported to take place in areas of extreme poverty in the Americas (Latin America and the Caribbean) at a rate of 21 percent, and robbery and assault are among the most commonly reported crimes in communities that are predominantly poor. For many impoverished people, the prize that crime yields may outweigh the risk of being caught, especially given that their opportunity cost is lower than that of a wealthier person. Thus, poverty could increase crime rates. Higher unemployment would certainly increase poverty and at the same time lead to more crime due to depression associated with being unemployed. Personal income per capita, which is inversely correlated with the poverty level, still may increase crime since greater wealth means greater benefits to thieves and robbers. A 2002 study by The World Bank found that crime rates and inequality are positively correlated, and an increase in income inequality has the effect of intensely increasing crime rates. That same study also found that increases in a country's GDP has the ability to lessen the incidence of crimes in that country, showing that poverty alleviation has a crime-reducing effect. It might even accentuate the difference between the upper and lower classes, thereby inducing more crime. This indicates an institutional failure of the society. Thus if there is a desire to solve crime, society needs to limit its own factors that cause it.
8. **It should be responsible for criminal behaviour as it has the most resources to tackle it.** Solving crime is a public good. No individual would have the resources to be able to solve its effects or cause on their own. Furthermore, a person who is irrational enough to resort to crime despite its deterrence requires additional support from the society to assist them in identifying their negative behaviour and rectify it. In the UK, in 2015 it costs the Ministry of Justice £3,217,740 a year to deal with the deterrence, as well as after effects of homicide alone and the UK National Audit Office estimated the social

and economic cost of any criminal reoffending to be between £9.5bn and £13bn a year. These are huge costs that the criminal himself is too irresponsible or unable to afford to bear. While some societies have charged the finances of bearing the judicial costs of the crime on the criminal, dealing with criminal behaviour has wider costs that only the tax payers pocket can afford.

9. **It should be responsible as if nothing is done, crime would affect society the most.** Criminal behaviour not only creates unrest in communities, but criminal activities are also felt in the pockets of tax payers in terms of new prisons and jails, programs for criminals and money for more police protection. It also affects society's behaviour, increasing fear in communities, such as parents also changing the way their children play outside due to fear of heavy criminal activities. In areas where crime is prevalent, residents may also notice direct effects in terms of depreciated housing, education levels and job availability in the surrounding economy and community. Therefore, criminal behaviour affects all areas of society. Yet, criminals are not responsible enough to care about the effects of their behaviour, and thus, if society wants a change, they must change it themselves. Such measures include neighbourhood watches that grew out of a movement in the USA during the late 1960s that promoted greater involvement of citizens in the prevention of crime. A study by the University of South Wales estimates that over a quarter of the UK population and over 40% of the US population live in areas covered by neighbourhood watch schemes. The main findings indicate that about half of the schemes evaluated showed that neighbourhood watch was effective in reducing crime. Thus when societies realise that they have the most to gain from solving the crime on their own, it will actually have an impact on reducing criminal behaviour.

#### **No, to a large extent society should not be responsible for criminal behaviour**

7. **Actions are a conscious decision that individuals make on their own. If they were to place the blame on society they would not take accountability for their own behaviour.** Individuals past the age of maturity should be accountable for their own decisions as they are mature enough. People can be morally responsible for what they do in the same sense of *deserving* to be praised for exemplary actions and blamed for bad ones—and even punished, if the action was bad enough. Some philosophers and legal theorists who believe that the primary goal of the criminal justice system ought to be crime prevention rather than the dealing out of justice, still argue that the offenders justice ought to serve as a restriction on what we are allowed to do in the name of crime prevention, thus no one must be given more punishment than she deserve. Whilst this is true, no system is perfect, and it is inevitable that this principle will *sometimes* be violated, but we ought to strive for a system that allows us to consistently approximate this ideal. This is especially true for unrepentant criminals on death row and those with psychopathy, which is not a socialised behaviour. Yet, if no one were morally responsible for anything, *all* punishments would be undeserved, and the criminal justice system difficult to ethically justify. Therefore, society should ensure that criminals understand that there are consequences to their behaviour and thus be made to ensure that they are accountable for it.
8. **Society has placed enough infrastructure to encourage morally upright behaviour.** The law and its punishments, together with resources and crime management is sufficient enough to reduce and prevent crime. Education has been touted as the biggest tool to reduce criminal behaviour. According to the OECD's latest report in 2015, Norway is one



of the countries which spends the largest share of its GDP on education, at 6.38 percent when also accounting for tertiary. At the other end of the scale of analysed countries, Russia spends only 3.09 percent. In general, Norway has seen a significant decline in crime the latest years. There was a 4.3 percent decrease from 2015-2016, and a decline of as much as 9.6 percent from 2014. In comparing murders between Norway and Russia alone, Russia had in 2014, 7609 murders, making it at a rate of 5% of 100,000 of its population, whereas Norway had 0.56 per 100,000 population, with a total of 24 murders. It has been argued that with such infrastructure in place, criminal behaviour should decrease as there becomes less of an incentive to behave in such a way. Yet, if even with such infrastructure, people still decide to resort to crime, then society should not be responsible for the decisions that they make. At some point, there is only so much society can do to assist.

9. **There are some factors beyond societal control.** Some criminal behaviour is due to external factors such as mental illness that is beyond the capacity of society to control. There may be assistance to limit the behaviour of such people but this does not mean that full prevention can occur. Research by the US National Library of medicine has shown that the prevalence of mental illness is substantially higher among individuals who have come in contact with the criminal justice system relative to the general population. Also, individuals with psychotic and externalizing behavioural disorders, particularly those who also abuse drugs and alcohol, tend to engage in higher levels of violence than individuals with other forms of mental illness. The evidence suggest that there may be no concrete link between mental illness and criminal behaviour; however, for those who succumb to criminal activities due to mental illness, there is little that society can do to prevent it and thus should not be responsible for their actions.





**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

Paper 1

**26 August 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class and GP tutor's name on all the work that you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue, correction fluid or correction tape.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **2** printed pages.

**[Turn over**

**2**

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 'Whether or not a country's heritage is preserved depends on its economic value.' How true is this of your society?
- 2 'Advertisements are nothing but lies.' Discuss.
- 3 To what extent is man's concern for the environment driven by self-preservation?
- 4 Has technology hindered rather than enhanced leisure in modern life?
- 5 Examine the claim that staying healthy has become an obsession today.
- 6 'The key responsibility of a government is to create wealth for the country.' What is your view?
- 7 Do you agree that we live in an increasingly unsafe world?
- 8 Is it fair to blame the rich for the plight of the poor?
- 9 How far should diversity be embraced in your society?
- 10 'Fame is cheap today.' Discuss.
- 11 Should we be optimistic that the future will be better for women?
- 12 Consider the view that images are more powerful than words.

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**26 August 2019**

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

**[Turn over**

*Tim Wu discusses the impact that convenience has in our lives.*

- 1 Convenience is the most underestimated and least understood force in the world today. As a driver of human decisions, it may not offer the illicit thrill of Freud's unconscious sexual desires or the mathematical elegance of the economist's incentives. Convenience is boring. But boring is not the same thing as trivial. In the developed nations of the 21st century, convenience – that is, more efficient and easier ways of doing personal tasks – has emerged as perhaps the most powerful force shaping our individual lives and our economies. Convenience seems to make our decisions for us, trumping what we like to imagine are our true preferences. Easy is better, easiest is best. 5
- 2 Convenience has the ability to make other options unthinkable. Once you have used a washing machine, laundering clothes by hand seems irrational, even if it might be cheaper. After you have experienced streaming television, waiting to see a show at a prescribed hour seems silly, even a little undignified. To resist convenience – not to own a cellphone, not to use Google – is often taken for eccentricity, if not fanaticism. 10
- 3 Our taste for convenience begets more convenience through a combination of the economies of scale and the power of habit. The simpler it is to use Amazon, the more powerful Amazon becomes, and thus the easier it becomes to use Amazon. Convenience and monopoly seem to be natural bedfellows. Given the growth of convenience – as an ideal, as a value, as a way of life – it is worth asking what our fixation with it is doing to us and to our country. I do not want to suggest that convenience is a force for evil. Making things easier is not wicked. On the contrary, it often opens up possibilities that once seemed too onerous to contemplate, and it typically makes life less arduous, especially for those most vulnerable to life's drudgeries. 15 20
- 4 However, we err in presuming convenience is always good, for it has a complex relationship with other ideals that we hold dear. Though understood and promoted as an instrument of liberation, convenience has a dark side. With its promise of smooth, effortless efficiency, it threatens to erase the sort of struggles and challenges that help give meaning to life. Created to free us, it can become a constraint on what we are willing to do, and thus in a subtle way it can enslave us. It would be perverse to embrace inconvenience as a general rule. But when we let convenience decide everything, we surrender too much. 25 30
- 5 Convenience, the great liberator of humankind from labour, was a utopian ideal. By saving time and eliminating drudgery, it would create the possibility of leisure. With leisure comes the possibility of devoting time to learning, hobbies or whatever else might really matter to us. Convenience would make available to the general population the kind of freedom for self-cultivation once available only to the aristocracy. In this way, convenience would also be the great leveller. 35
- 6 Often, the dream of convenience is premised on the nightmare of physical work. But is physical work always a nightmare? Do we really want to be emancipated from all of it? Perhaps our humanity is sometimes expressed in inconvenient actions and time-consuming pursuits. Perhaps this is why, with every advance of convenience, there have always been those who resist it. They resist out of stubbornness, yes (and because they have the luxury to do so), but also because they see a threat to their sense of who they are, to their feeling of control over things that matter to them. 40
- 7 By the late 1960s, the first convenience revolution had begun to sputter. The prospect of total convenience no longer seemed like society's greatest aspiration. Convenience meant conformity. The counterculture was about people's need to express themselves, to fulfil their individual potential, to live in harmony with nature rather than constantly seeking to overcome its nuisances. Playing the guitar was not convenient. Neither was growing one's own vegetables or fixing one's own motorcycle. But such things were seen 45

to have value nevertheless – or rather, as a result. People were looking for individuality again. 50

- 8 Perhaps it was inevitable, then, that the second wave of convenience technologies would co-opt this ideal. It would ‘conveniencise’ individuality. If the first convenience revolution promised to make life and work easier for you, the second promised to make it easier to be you. The new technologies were catalysts of selfhood, conferring efficiency on self-expression. So alluring is this vision that it has come to dominate our existence. Most of the powerful and important technologies created over the past few decades deliver convenience in the service of personalisation and individuality. Convenience is now one-click, one-stop shopping, the seamless experience of ‘plug and play’. The ideal is personal preference with no effort. As task after task becomes easier, the growing expectation of convenience exerts a pressure on everything else to be easy or get left behind. We are spoiled by immediacy and become annoyed by tasks that remain at the old level of effort and time. When you can skip the line and buy concert tickets on your phone, waiting in line to vote in an election is irritating. 55 60
- 9 The paradoxical truth is that today’s technologies of individualisation are technologies of mass individualisation. Customisation can be surprisingly homogenising. Everyone, or nearly everyone, is on Facebook: It is the most convenient way to keep track of friends and family, who in theory should represent what is unique about you and your life. Yet, Facebook seems to make us all the same. Its format and conventions strip us of all but the most superficial expressions of individuality, such as which particular photo of a beach or mountain range we select as our background image. I do not want to deny that making things easier can serve us in important ways, giving us many choices where we used to have only a few or none. But being a person is only partly about having and exercising choices. It is also about how we face up to situations that are thrust upon us, about overcoming worthy challenges and finishing difficult tasks – the struggles that help make us who we are. What happens to human experience when so many obstacles and impediments and requirements and preparations have been removed? 65 70 75
- 10 Today’s cult of convenience fails to acknowledge that difficulty is a constitutive feature of human experience. Convenience is all destination and no journey. Climbing a mountain is different from taking the tram to the top, even if you end up at the same place. We are becoming people who care mainly or only about outcomes. We are at risk of making most of our life experiences a series of trolley rides. An unwelcome consequence of living in a world where everything is ‘easy’ is that the only skill that matters is the ability to multi-task. At the extreme, we do not actually do anything; we only arrange what will be done, which is a flimsy basis for a life. We need to consciously embrace the inconvenient. Today, individuality has come to reside in making at least some inconvenient choices. Struggle is not always a problem. Sometimes, struggle is a solution. It can be the solution to the question of who you are. 80 85
- 11 So let us reflect on the tyranny of convenience, try more often to resist its stupefying power, and see what happens. We must never forget the joy of doing something slow and something difficult, the satisfaction of not doing what is easiest. The constellation of inconvenient choices may be all that stands between us and a life of total, efficient conformity. 90

TEMASEK JUNIOR COLLEGE  
PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019

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CANDIDATE'S NAME

CLASS

GP TUTOR'S NAME

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**26 August 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.  
Additional Materials: 1 Insert

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name, class and GP tutor's name on all the work that you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue, correction fluid or correction tape.

Answer **all** questions.  
The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.  
Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

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This document consists of **6** printed pages.



Read the passage in the insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

- 1 Explain the author's use of the word 'trumping' in line 7.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 2 What does the author mean by 'to resist convenience ... is often taken for eccentricity, if not fanaticism' (lines 12–13)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 3 What does the phrase 'natural bedfellows' (line 17) suggest about convenience and monopoly?

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 4 Why does the author claim that it is not 'wicked' (line 20) to make things easier? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....

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..... [3]

- 5 In what way can technology 'conveniencise individuality' (line 53)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

..... [1]

- 6 Explain the paradox in lines 65 to 66.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 7 Why does the author compare convenience to a 'cult' (line 78)?

.....

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..... [2]

- 8 Explain what the author means by 'convenience is all destination and no journey' (line 79).

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..... [2]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[10]



**2019 JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION  
GENERAL PAPER  
Paper 1 Suggested Outlines**

**Q1. 'Whether or not a country's heritage is preserved depends on its economic value.' How true is this of your society?**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

**DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK**

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

**Strengths**

- 
- 

**Weaknesses**

- 
- 

**A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS**

**A country's heritage**

- Features belonging to the culture or the various cultures of a particular country that originated in the past and are still of some significance
- These could be tangible, intangible, man-made or natural, and could include traditions, practices, languages, skills, physical spaces, buildings, monuments, etc.

**preserved**

- To keep something as it is; to prevent its loss or destruction

**economic value**

- The ability of an entity to generate income
- Could be from the perspective of the government, firms or individuals

**whether or not... depends on...**

- Solely based on the stipulated criterion, which in this case is economic value
- Invites challenge due to the rather absolute, all-or-nothing nature of the claim

**How true is this of your society?**

- Requires the examination of the degree to which the claim is true in one's society, with successful qualification employed to avoid contradiction
- response must be well-contextualised in one's society, anchored on various characteristics of its people, history, culture, lifestyles, government

## B. SUGGESTED APPROACH

*\*\* for the purposes of this essay, your society = Singapore*

### Introduction

- Looking at the changes wrought on Singapore's landscape in recent years, from the closure of the Bukit Brown cemetery to the shuttering of traditional hawker stalls in favour of those dishing out trendy fusion cuisine, it is clear that many elements and manifestations of my society's heritage have made way for the new. A cursory glance would seemingly reveal that many of these changes were and continue to be driven by the economic imperative, especially given Singaporeans' pragmatic mind-sets and the nation's physical constraints. While this is often true, to simply assert that the continued existence of Singapore's heritage hinges purely on its economic value is too limiting a view.

### Possible stand

- Ultimately, both the government and Singaporeans increasingly recognise that the country's heritage can be of great value in many less tangible ways and so continue to preserve it for these reasons as well, regardless of its economic value.

### Arguments in support of the stand

**(POB) It can be conceded that economic considerations do sometimes take precedence when evaluating the merits of preserving heritage in Singapore, especially given its limited land area which necessarily dictates the productive use of space.**

- Physical heritage in the form of buildings or even natural environments has often had to make way for more economically viable developments in a bid to maximise productivity and economic growth. Even if a particular aspect of heritage is able to generate some income as a minor attraction, whether to locals or tourists, this often pales in comparison to gains in efficiency and productivity from the broader perspective of the economy, where that land to be put to more productive use. This has, over the years, resulted in the loss of space-consuming heritage buildings and areas, despite outcries from some quarters of the society.
- The closure of the Bukit Brown Cemetery, Bidadari Cemetery and the practice of grave exhumations as well as the general eradication of the practice of land burial, so that the land that cemeteries occupy can be freed up for more economically productive uses, is a case in point. Singaporeans today may also not realise that the iconic Orchard Road shopping belt is built on former Teochew grave sites. In general, the cemeteries do not appear to have much economic value as they are not exactly tourist attractions, and, further to that, take up much valuable space.
- The construction of the Cross Island Line stirred controversy when the Land Transport Authority revealed, seemingly in defence of the proposed route cutting through the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, one of Singapore's prime



examples of natural heritage, that it would cost an additional S\$2 billion to reroute the line around the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. While a final decision on route alignment has yet to be made, this reflects the view that it is less sensible, from an economic standpoint, to skirt the nature reserve, especially since the nature reserve does not exactly generate income.

- **Thus, it is undeniable that Singapore's land constraints sometimes necessitate the consideration of economic value above all when deciding whether or not to preserve a piece of heritage.**

**(POB) Moreover, the pragmatic mind-set of many in my society, from the government to individual Singaporeans, frequently results in the worth of heritage preservation being evaluated on monetary terms.**

- Aside from practical considerations of land use and space, the pragmatic nature of Singaporeans in general also dictates the assignation of value to aspects of heritage. It is often the case that, when they do not stand to gain tangibly from something, Singaporeans are quick to discard it in favour of something else of a more lucrative nature. This mind-set, unfortunately, has also been applied to the preservation of Singapore's heritage. The prioritising of economic value is seen in how, land-consuming or not, when heritage sites are deemed to be of financial worth, particularly as tourist draws, the government appears to be all too happy to bend over backwards to accommodate the continued existence of the site in a bid to attract the tourist dollar.
- The Singapore Botanic Gardens is now protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site after a successful campaign by the government to have it recognised accordingly. While traditionally a popular spot with locals, the international recognition brought about by its Heritage Site status has attracted hordes of tourists looking to frolic amidst exotic palms and snap selfies with the Vanda Miss Joaquim. This has boosted Singapore's image as a 'City in a Garden' and cemented its place as one of the foremost tourist destinations in the region, contributing to the lucrativeness of Singapore's tourism industry. Consequently, the Gardens' preservation is almost certainly guaranteed despite it occupying a large swathe of prime land.
- Various heritage buildings including the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus Middle Education School (CHIJMES), Fullerton Building and the Capitol Building have, over the years, been repurposed to become more lucrative hotels and lifestyle and retail establishments.
- Even the more intangible aspects of my society's heritage have come under stern examination for their economic value, and some have, sadly, failed to prove their economic worth in the eyes of the ever-pragmatic government. The Speak Mandarin Campaign, implemented in Singapore's developmental years, aimed to discourage the use of other Chinese dialects amongst young Singaporeans in favour of Mandarin, which was deemed to be of greater economic value. As a result, dialect use today is practically non-existent amongst the younger generations of Singaporeans.
- Financial considerations also often reign supreme from the perspective of the average Singaporean when it comes to the continued practice of certain traditions and cultures. A key example is the seemingly inevitable fading of the Singapore hawker culture. Few younger Singaporeans are willing to take over hawker business from retiring hawkers, or start their own hawker business, citing high financial costs including surging stall rental rates and worker wages. With the

closing of each traditional hawker stall, traditional culinary skills and recipes, amongst other examples of valuable cultural heritage, are lost.

- In contrast, there are artisans and craftsmen who have found a lucrative market for their products and so continue to create them. For example, Raymond Wong of Rumah Kim Choo, one of the last sarong kebaya makers in the country, continues to do a roaring trade meticulously hand-sewing pricey sarong kebaya for both locals and tourists.
- **It is clear that the economic viability of preserving heritage is often of great importance to pragmatic Singaporeans in determining whether or not a piece of heritage is to remain.**

**(POA) However, contrary to appearances, economic value is not necessarily the only factor deciding the fate of my society's heritage. The government has increasingly preserved key aspects of heritage in recognition of the intangible benefits they provide in service of nation building.**

- Being part of a common experience for most Singaporeans, shared aspects of my society's heritage have the power to unite Singaporeans across traditional divides like race, religion and age. Shared practices and physical spaces, in particular those frequented by successive generations of Singaporeans, provide a crucial bond between Singaporeans and a sense of rootedness, which is seen to be especially important in today's globalised world. Singaporeans are increasingly questioning what it means to be Singaporean, and the answers to such questions could lie in the intangible value contained within our heritage, which could help to define Singapore beyond its geography. While such heritage could have economic value, this is increasingly seen as equally important or even secondary to its role in building personal, community and national identities.
- In fact, even when such heritage has economic value, such as Singapore's hawker culture, Singaporeans may still choose not to retain them for non-monetary reasons, consequently necessitating government intervention to preserve them.
- Under Our SG Heritage Plan, the first master plan for Singapore's heritage and museum sector which outlines the broad strategies and initiatives for the sector over the next five years (2018 to 2022) and beyond, the government has outlined strategies to safeguard and promote both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, recognising that such heritage serves as a marker of how we have developed as a nation and people over the years.
- An online repository of intangible cultural heritage at Roots.sg reflects the government's attempt to document and protect important cultural heritage as a way for Singaporeans to learn more about them and actively engage with them. Many of these examples of heritage, such as Malay poetic forms like *pantun* and *syair* traditionally used to convey key life lessons, are valued less for their economic value than their place in Singaporean Malay culture.
- The government has also shown itself willing to spend significant sums protecting natural heritage even if there is no clear financial gain, as seen in the construction of the Eco-Link@BKE to enable wildlife to cross safely from one side of the rainforest to the other.
- Various museums, while also serving as ticketed attractions, arguably play a more important role in crystallising Singapore's history and identity over the years, explaining the importance placed on them by the government and community. In addition, iconic aspects of our heritage such as the dragon playground have been and continue to be cherished and even immortalised in local film and art, such as

'Vicky' by filmmaker Royston Tan, filmed at the Toa Payoh dragon playground and examining the concepts of nostalgia and identity.

- Cultural enclaves, while undeniably tourist attractions, continue to serve as the beating heart of the many cultural groups and diasporas that make up the Singapore society and are, accordingly, conserved as historic districts by the Urban Redevelopment Authority. The valuable links they provide to the past continue to be deeply cherished, as seen in the spirited reaction from locals and heritage experts when calls to 'organise' Little India were recently floated, with many fearing that sprucing the area up would dilute its essence.
- **Ultimately, it is increasingly the case that, when their nation-building value is recognised, elements of my society's heritage are preserved.**

**(POA) Many Singaporeans, too, hold particular aspects of the nation's heritage dear to their hearts and continue to enjoy and practise them regularly, regardless of their economic value, ensuring that these valuable aspects of cultural heritage live on.**

- Many elements of heritage, while not blatantly income-generating, continue to have direct relevance to the everyday lives of Singaporeans and are in no danger of dying out. Such practices and spaces continue to live and breathe and serve their intended purposes and, while they may sometimes be modified to fit with the times, continue to be of significance to Singaporeans, perhaps representing key aspects of a culture they are proud to identify with. In a reflection of Singapore's multicultural nature, Singaporeans of different ethnicities and faiths all have their unique cultural and religious practices that are very much a part of their identity. For these Singaporeans, the value of their heritage is intrinsic rather than extrinsic, and has little, if any relation to financial worth.
- The local calendar is littered with various festivals and celebrations that continue to feature prominently in the lives of Singaporeans, who practise various traditions associated with each. Traditional wedding ceremonies and practices, including Malay weddings with their customary 'bunga manggar', still occur practically on a daily basis. The pious continue to stream through the doorways of places of worship including the iconic Saint Andrew's Cathedral and the Sri Mariamman Temple, Singapore's oldest Hindu temple. Some of Singapore's oldest schools, including Raffles Institution and Gan Eng Seng School, with their storied pasts, continue to nurture generation after generation of young Singaporeans.
- In fact, some Singaporeans continue to uphold traditions even if they do not seem to make any financial sense whatsoever, a testament to the enduring, intangible value of these traditions that transcends the world of dollars and cents. Many who choose to practice these traditions do so as a labour of love, since they are frequently time-consuming, laborious, and costly to maintain. For these Singaporeans, these traditions are irreplaceable receptacles of precious cultural knowledge that need to be passed on to maintain the integrity of the culture.
- One such example is successful MediaCorp actor Nick Shen quitting his acting career to focus on performing Chinese Opera and promoting this dying art to a younger generation of Singaporeans.
- **Indeed, regardless of its monetary value, much of Singapore's heritage, in all its multicultural glory, continues to be of relevance and worth to each successive generation of Singaporeans.**

**Conclusion**

- Ultimately, while it is true that the worth of parts of Singapore's rich heritage is sometimes reduced, and not unreasonably, to their economic value, it is encouraging to note that Singaporeans are increasingly recognising the immense value, far beyond dollars and cents, of the country's heritage and taking concrete steps to ensure that it is preserved. With such a wealth of culture and diversity all around us, we can only stand to gain from this.

**Report prepared by: Mr Samuel Liu**

**Marked by:**

**Q2. 'Advertisements are nothing but lies.' Discuss.**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

**DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK**

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

**Strengths**

- 
- 

**Weaknesses**

- 
- 

**A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS****advertisements**

- notices or announcements in a public medium promoting a product, service, or event or publicising a job vacancy or a campaign
- could be in print or multi-media format
- on various platforms such as newspapers, radio, television, magazines, the internet, social media, billboards, posters, etc

**lies**

- falsehood, fabrication of information
- deception of consumers

- withholding of information and thus not presenting the entire truth and leaving consumers to form inaccurate impressions or make choices that are not fully informed

**nothing but**

- only, solely, purely, just
- this is an absolute phrase which should be challenged

**discuss**

- essays should challenge the absolute phrase 'nothing but', evaluate the keyword 'lies' and consider why advertisements are not just lies even though cases of advertisements portraying false information have been exposed

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- Advertising today is a multi-billion dollar industry. From transportation hubs and transport itself to newspapers and magazines to television and the internet, it is almost impossible not to encounter advertisements in daily life today.
- They come in all forms, from print to multimedia, and are utilised by a wide range of people, businesses and organisations to serve a variety of purposes.

**Possible stand**

- It is not uncommon to realise that reality bears little resemblance to what is being advertised due to unscrupulous businesses trying to fleece consumers or cut corners. Furthermore, advertisements often do not portray the truth in its entirety, adding to the perception that they are just lies.
- However, while there are advertisements which contain lies, it is too harsh to claim that all advertisements are nothing but lies since there are those which do help consumers make informed judgement and regulations which help to reduce cases of falsehood in advertisements.

**Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POB) Unscrupulous businesses seeking to maximise profit by advertising their products and services as being better than they really are have certainly been guilty of lying through their advertisements.**

- Advertisements by such businesses are deliberately ambiguous, withhold critical information or even present false information about their products to create a more favourable impression of what they are marketing.
- These advertisements lure consumers into thinking that they are buying something that is better than it really is, only for them to realise that certain features of the product or service do not exist or are of inferior quality.
- In 2016, Volkswagen was charged for falsely advertising its vehicles as 'clean diesel vehicles' when it found that to have used illegal emission devices to pass clean emissions tests in the US.



- In 2014, beverage company Red Bull was sued by consumers for falsely claiming that the caffeinated drink could improve a consumer's concentration and reaction speed and had to pay up to US\$13 million in compensation.
- In some cases, the advertisements are such outright lies that they not only do less than promised, but sell something that does not exist or present a situation that is totally at odds with reality.
- In 2018, Phillip Morris, which makes Marlboro cigarettes, was ordered to remove advertisements which marketed its tobacco heaters as a healthier alternative to cigarettes. It was also accused of 'staggering hypocrisy' over its 'Hold My Light' advertising campaign which appeared to urge smokers to give up cigarettes and go smoke-free, but in actual fact, was subtly promoting alternative tobacco products which it sells.
- **These advertisements which deliberately present a falsely positive image of their products and services are certainly just lies.**

**(POB) Businesses not honouring promises made in advertisements have also contributed to the list of advertisements guilty of lying to consumers.**

- At times, businesses deliberately advertise an extremely attractive offer, only for consumers to realise that such an offer does not exist.
- This is often done in a bid to attract more people to their stores and for them to buy other (more expensive) items when they realise that what is being offered either does not exist or to go ahead to buy the advertised item at a higher price than what was advertised, since they have already made their way to the store.
- In 2014, Wal-Mart was fined more than US\$66,000 for not honouring the price of Coca-Cola in its nationwide advertisements. Customers in its New York stores were charged US\$3.50, instead of US\$3 as advertised, and Wal-Mart staff allegedly lied that the price increase was due to a (non-existent) sugar tax in New York.
- In 2019, in conjunction with Singapore's 54th National Day, Huawei advertised the sale of its Y6 Pro 2019 mobile phone for Singaporeans and permanent residents aged 50 and above. However, the phone was supposedly sold out before the vast majority of interested customers could buy one, leading Singaporeans and the Consumers Association of Singapore (Case) to slam Huawei for false advertising.
- **Such advertisements, which businesses put up without the intention of honouring what is advertised, are clearly nothing but lies.**

**(POB) While advertisements do not always contain outright lies, they often raise consumers' expectations, only for consumers to realise that whatever they desire cannot be fully attained through buying what is advertised.**

- Advertising strategies tend to feed on consumers' desires and fears to make them want to buy what is being advertised so that these desires can be fulfilled and fears assuaged.
- Furthermore, most of the time, advertisements are all about styling and image to present the product or service in the best light possible, with the use of glamorous models, lighting and even some airbrushing. Sadly, the lustre of the advertised product cannot be fully replicated in real life.
- As such, consumers often find that what they seek from the use of the product or service cannot really be found, be it happiness, youth or a coveted lifestyle.

- The beauty industry is one whose advertisements are often guilty of playing on consumers' fears of ageing and desire to look beautiful.
- From collagen supplements such as Meiji Amino Collagen which promises its users 'a more beautiful you' to skincare brands such as Sulwhasoo which declares that 'holistic beauty' can be achieved through its products, such advertisements cater to the desire of many women to defy the ageing process, which in reality, can only be delayed that much.
- **Hence, even when advertisements are not presenting consumers with blatant lies, they are often still guilty of creating expectations about their products and services that cannot be completely fulfilled in reality.**

**(POA) However, even though advertisers have been often caught lying, it would not be fair to label all advertisements as nothing but lies since many of them do provide factual information that help consumers make informed choices.**

- Advertisements alert consumers to the availability of new products, changes in the prices of goods and services and the different brands available for a particular product, so that they can choose those which best meet their needs and budget.
- Advertisements that list the features of a product without embellishment also cannot be accused of being nothing but lies.
- Such advertisements include mundane ones such as supermarket advertisements, and advertisements for job vacancies.
- Furthermore, there are advertisements where retailers declare that their products are of the lowest price and promise to match the price if consumers find a competitor selling the same product at a lower price. Such businesses that are willing to be corrected if found to be wrong and to honour a promise made are certainly not lying in their advertisements.
- **The visual impact of many of such advertisements may be nothing to shout about but they are certainly not lying.**

**(POA) Furthermore, public service advertisements serve to educate people about or alert them to critical issues and certainly cannot be labelled as lies.**

- Given the wide reach that advertisements have, they are one of the most efficient ways for government bodies and non-governmental organisations to reach out to people.
- Advertisements by government bodies often bring people's attention to issues that affect their well-being and educate them about ways to manage these issues.
- Australia's Metro Trains advertisement 'Dumb Ways to Die' which advocated safe behaviour on trains and at train stations, resulted in a 21% reduction in accidents and deaths on its network.
- Many non-profit organisations also reach out the masses through advertisements to raise awareness of their causes and encourage more people to join in the effort to alleviate global and social issues.
- Such advertisements which open the eyes of people to real world issues, such as cybercrime, gambling addiction and the extinction of species, are definitely fully immersed in reality and cannot be said to be nothing but lies.
- Examples include UNICEF's Tap Project advertisement which encourages restaurant diners in the US to pay US\$1 for water that they usually receive free of charge, which would go towards providing clean water for children in less developed nations.

- **Given the good causes that public service advertisements advocate, it would be unfair to label such advertisements as nothing but lies.**

**(POA) The enforcement of regulations has helped to reduce frequency of advertisements being lies and to take advertisers who lie to task.**

- Several countries have clear regulations about claims that can be made in advertisements and have strict penalties for organisations that flout these regulations. Consumer watchdogs have also been on the lookout for advertisements which contain lies, keeping advertisers within the boundaries of truth and punishing those who cross the boundaries.
- Such measures have helped to deter businesses from making false claims and to think twice about what they put in their advertisements, and have made an example out of those that have been caught lying in their advertisements.
- In 2014, Loreal USA taken to task by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) for falsely claiming that its products clinically proven to boost genes and give visibly younger skin in just seven days. It was spared a fine but was banned from making claims about anti-aging without competent and reliable scientific evidence substantiating such claims and each future violation of this ban will cost the company up to US\$16,000.
- In 2018, Heinz was ordered to pay more than \$2 million in penalties after the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission successfully took action against it for falsely claiming that its Kids Shredz products were beneficial for children when they comprised two-thirds sugar.
- **More stringent regulations have definitely played a key role in reducing the frequency of advertisements being nothing but lies.**

**(POA) Pressure exerted by more discerning consumers has also played a part in reducing the likelihood of advertisements being nothing but lies.**

- While most consumers do not expect advertisements to contain just the truth and do accept some degree of exaggeration, they are less tolerant of outright deception. With better education and access to information, many consumers today are less likely to fall prey to false advertising and more ready to raise the alarm and take action against false advertising.
- Furthermore, with so many choices available to consumers who want value for their money, they would not hesitate to avoid businesses caught lying in their advertisements.
- Such pressure exerted by perceptive consumers who have a rightfully low tolerance level for deceptive advertising has made many businesses more careful about the accuracy of information in their advertisements, since one misstep can lead to expensive lawsuits, harsh penalties and even drive a business out of the industry.
- In 2011, consumers filed a lawsuit against New Balance for falsely claiming in its advertisements that that its shoes helped wearers to burn 8% more calories than other sneakers. Similarly in 2016, Lumos Lab was fined US\$2 million after consumers demanded scientific proof that its brain training app, Luminosity, could prevent memory loss and reduce the chances of developing dementia and Alzheimer's.
- Technology has also aided consumers in putting pressure on businesses to portray the truth in their advertisements. Unfavourable customer reviews which reveal



products and services that do not live up to the claims in advertisements can spread far and wide on social media, causing much damage to a business.

- **The willingness of consumers to take action against and not stand for being lied to has caused many businesses to be more careful about being as truthful as possible in their advertisements.**

### Conclusion

- Advertisements do not always contain the truth as many cases of false advertising have shown. Furthermore, they often fall short of consumers' expectations as the dreams that they sell are not aligned with the reality of life.
- However, it would be unfair to label all advertisements as nothing but lies since many of them do serve the purpose of providing factual information that help consumers make better choices. Strict legislation also helps to keep advertisers in check, reducing the likelihood of advertisements being nothing but lies.

**Report prepared by: Ms Faye Tan**

**Marked by:**

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**Q3. To what extent is man's concern for the environment driven by self-preservation?**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX.X%)

No. failed: X (X.X%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

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### Weaknesses

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- 



## A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS

**To what extent**

- requires an assessment of the circumstances and parameters in which man's concern is driven by self-preservation
- premise is that there is self-preservation and it is not advisable to deny that it is so

**man's concern**

- to be taken as mankind in general or as a global community
- concern can be defined as a matter that engages a person's attention, interest, or care, or that affects a person's welfare which can translate into taking necessary actions

**the environment**

- should include both man-made and natural – from city-living to nature and the planet as a whole

**driven by self-preservation**

- motivation arising from protecting oneself from harm or destruction
- negative connotation that it is a selfish motive and not noble or altruistic

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- Addressing environmental issues will require that people do things differently. Appeals to forgo self-interest are often made and individuals are encouraged to engage in behaviours with a more collective benefit, both for future generations and for the environment. This is one of the most commonly used strategies in environmental messaging, and in fact, 'conservation' is often widely associated with abstaining from a desired action for the sake of the environment.
- While there has been some success in developing environment conservation programmes that stem from more altruistic or noble concerns, the outcomes are modest at most and there is a lot more that needs to be done.
- However, more often than not, self-preservation is the driving force for environmental conservation, as seen from efforts to develop programmes and messages that appeal to the personal benefits of environmental protection, such as ensuring continued access to resources or minimising harm and dangers to self. This approach offers considerable promise in promoting widespread change.

**Possible stand**

- Indeed, man's concern for the environment is largely driven by self-preservation. Still, it must be noted that altruism and ethical concern for the environment do sometimes override the primal drive to survive, and even come at its expense.

**Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POA) Man's concern for the environment is clearly driven largely by self-preservation since man is inherently selfish and self-preservation is a primal instinct.**

- It may seem counter-intuitive to suggest that self-preservation can drive environmental conservation efforts as putting the self before the environment is what caused us to be in the mess we are in today. However, environmental devastation clearly has detrimental impact on the well-being of mankind.
- When pollution, be it air or water, strikes close to home and the threats are obvious and directly felt, people are more likely to sit up and take notice, if not action, to express their concerns. The self-preservation instinct kicks in when people's well-being is threatened.
- The South East Asia haze problem garners immediate reactions from affected countries like Malaysia and Indonesia to offer help in the fire-fighting efforts to unilateral actions to punish the paper pulp and palm oil companies responsible. The concerns of the Malaysian and Singaporean governments are translated into swift actions as they are driven more by ensuring the physical well-being of their electorate than simple concerns for the environment. But the end result of curbing the environmentally harmful practices is still very much welcoming news for environmentalists.
- In another example, the Erin Brokovich story which became an Oscar-winning movie starring Julia Roberts. The story started in Hinkley, on the edge of California's Mojave Desert, which is still best known as the "Erin Brockovich town." In 1996 a group of residents famously won a massive direct-action arbitration against Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) with the help of Brockovich, a savvy single mom and Los Angeles legal clerk. The utility company was found liable for dumping hexavalent chromium, a carcinogen used to suppress rust formation at the Hinkley gas compressor station, into an unlined pond in the '50s and '60s. The chemical seeped into the town's groundwater. PG&E hid the crisis and misled the community on the effects of that specific type of chromium and its possible connection to health problems in the town. At the time it was settled, the Hinkley case was the largest payout ever awarded for a direct action lawsuit. Environmental advocates lauded the decision.
- **Thus, in such cases, it is not surprising that self-preservation can successfully drive environmental conservation efforts even though the starting point in both examples are not necessarily concerns for mother nature.**

**(POA) Moreover, man's concern for the environment is often driven by self-preservation especially since the green efforts of corporations are primarily concerned with their bottom line and accountability to their share-holders.**

- When businesses can be convinced that there are business opportunities and profits to be made from being pro-environment in their products or new emerging sectors that appeal to consumers who are demanding green products, thus ensuring their continued survival and more importantly prosperity, the changes and impact on the environment are more likely to be longer lasting.
- Seventh Generation, takes its name from an Iroquois law that says, "in our every deliberation we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations." Since it was founded in 1988 the company has been making good on that pledge, selling a line of products that includes biodegradable, vegetable-based cleaning products, chlorine-free tampons and paper towels and natural lotion baby wipes. Being pro-environment has actually been a win-win approach as it has not only landed Seventh Generation, which banks more than \$200 million in sales, at the top of a list of 84 companies considered "best for the environment"

by B Lab, a seven-year-old non-profit that invented the concept of a “Benefit Corporation,” a company that turns a profit while benefiting its workers, its community and the Earth.

- Concern for the environment is clearly not only profitable but good for the company’s image which will certainly go a long way towards ensuring its continued existence.
- IKEA has invested in sustainability throughout its entire business operations. It starts with their supply chain, where the Swedish furniture-maker has sourced close to 50 per cent of its wood from sustainable foresters and 100 per cent of its cotton from farms that meet the Better Cotton standards, which mandate reduced user of water, energy and chemical fertilisers and pesticides.
- **This clearly shows that being pro-environment can ensure self-preservation as it can be good for the bottom line as well as being lauded and supported by their more informed and environmentally conscious customers.**

**(POA) In fact, there is an increasing realisation that the survival of humans depends very much on the health of the larger ecosystem, hence spurring man’s concern for the environment.**

- Past excesses of man’s consumption and exploitation of the environment can be partially attributed to ignorance. But compelling scientific evidence has raised our awareness that this delicately balanced system has been seriously threatened, which has resulted in global warming and climate change which in turn is threatening the very survival of humans.
- It has become increasingly clear that the effects of global warming, which has been exacerbated by human actions, are far-reaching and potentially deadly if left unchecked. Steadily escalating temperatures have led to rising sea levels which threaten coastal communities and even entire island nations such as the Maldives and Tuvalu, a Polynesian island country. Warmer temperatures are also now known to facilitate the spread of infectious diseases and lead to increased occurrences of wildfires, droughts and floods, all of which contribute to premature mortality. Clearly, it has become a necessity due to self-preservation for us to be concerned about the state of the environment and act on this concern, if we want to survive as a species.
- In a report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), experts warned that the planet would reach the crucial threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by as early as 2030, precipitating the risk of extreme drought, wildfires, floods and food shortages for hundreds of millions of people. The report stated in no uncertain terms that governments around the world had to take “rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society” to avoid this onslaught of dire consequences.
- The Paris Agreement, signed in 2016 by 195 members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), aims to decrease global warming and counter its effects. The large number of signatories suggests that governments around the world, realising the direness and scale of the situation, are finally taking steps to avert disaster for their nations and, by extension, the human race.
- **It is increasingly apparent that the earth is teetering on the edge of disaster due to human-induced climate change. This realisation has catalysed global concern for the environment and actions to ensure that the earth continues to be habitable.**

**(POB) However, that is not to say that all of man's concern for the environment is driven by self-preservation, since such concern can be driven by personal convictions of an altruistic nature, which may even come at great personal cost.**

- Many environmental activists have made and continue to make great personal sacrifices in their quest to protect the environment and convince the wider population of the necessity of their conviction. In service of their convictions, these activists have had to fork out huge sums of financial capital to fund their campaigns in the face of a lack of support from governing bodies and the general population, sometimes at the expense of their own material wellbeing. Most tragically, for some, their concern for the environment costs them not only an arm and a leg but their lives when they cross the paths of organisations with conflicting agendas. The fact that these environmental warriors are willing to put the wellbeing of the Earth above their own suggests that self-preservation can hardly be driving force behind their efforts.
- In recent years, the deaths of environmental activists, members of indigenous communities, and journalists who report on environmental issues and expose cover-ups by governments and firms have been in the spotlight. It has been reported that more than 1000 environmental activists have been killed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century alone. Berta Caceres, who protested against the construction of the Agua Zarca Dam in Honduras, was assassinated in 2016 at home by armed intruders, after years of threats to her life being levelled at her. In fact, according to Global Witness, 12 environmental activists were killed in Honduras in 2014 alone.
- According to the National Geographic, 2017 was the deadliest year for land defenders, with 207 killings. Some of these were at the hands of gangs doing the bidding of firms and even, allegedly, governments.
- **Indeed, there have been and continue to be many selfless individuals who have sacrificed much in their determination to save the earth. In these cases, it is patently not self-preservation that drives their concern for the environment.**

**(POB) In addition, there is the increasing recognition of the fact that humans share the earth with a wealth of other organisms, and that humans are simply one of the many species on Earth contributing to its rich diversity. For those of this persuasion, concern for the environment stems less from self-preservation than the belief that man is to live responsibly and in harmony with the earth.**

- As the damage wrought on earth by man becomes ever more apparent and undeniable, more people have been persuaded to re-evaluate what man's purpose on earth is, and the manner of man's treatment of the earth. Encouragingly, it has dawned on more people that the earth is not for us to plunder, and that, while man may be superior in many aspects to other life forms on earth, it is not to say that there is no value in other organisms, or that they should exist or cease to exist in service of man.
- This increasing respect for all life and the environment has driven some to care for the earth and protect the environment for its own sake, rather than that of man.
- These sentiments are seen in the Green Stewardship movement, developed in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal No. 13; Climate Action. One of the movement's key aims is develop young children into altruistic and responsible beings who will care deeply for the environment, less for their own sake but more because of the innate value of the earth.



- Similar sentiments are also echoed in many mainstream religions which support the concept of stewardship to varying degrees. Those of such a conviction often believe that one of the purposes of man is to care for God's creation, and environmentalism is therefore a logical consequence of such a belief.
- Conventions to protect endangered species, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), exist to ensure that trade in organisms does not threaten their survival, and this is regardless of whether or not their survival directly benefits man.
- **Clearly, there are many who cherish nature for its intrinsic value, rather than whether or not it is of use to man. Indeed, not all who express concern for the environment do so out of self-preservation.**

### Conclusion

- While there are certainly those whose concern for the environment stems from a more altruistic place, it is undeniable that much of man's concern for the earth is driven by matters pertaining to our well-being and even the desire to ensure the continued survival of humans on earth. Still, what ultimately matters is that this concern for the earth is expressed and acted on, regardless of whether or not it is self-serving.

**Report prepared by: Mr Peck Chee Siong and Mr Samuel Liu**  
**Marked by:**

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### Q4. Has technology hindered rather than enhanced leisure in modern life?

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

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### Weaknesses

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## A. QUESTION ANALYSIS

### technology

- the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes, especially in industry
- in particular, technology that supports social media platforms that people use in their leisure as well as technology that supports leisure activities like Virtual Reality-related gadgets

### hindered

- made it difficult for someone to have or to enjoy leisure

### rather than

- having one and not the other, instead of
- this should be challenged because it is possible to have a combination of both

### enhanced

- intensified, increased, or further improved the quality, value, or extent of leisure
- includes physical, social, emotional and psychological benefits

### leisure

- use of free time for enjoyment

### modern life

- a life that is connected by the worldwide web
- where people can pick up new leisure activities and enjoy them alone or together with others from all corners of the earth, even when they are not physically in the same location
- where the activities can also be virtual ones capable of shutting out real-life engagement

## B. SUGGESTED APPROACH

### Introduction

- In the modern world where 55% of 7.7 billion people have access to the internet and 3.2 billion people are active web users, the leisure industry has never been more exciting.
- Leisure activity providers and enthusiasts have capitalised on technology to enhance their leisure. People are getting together to test out new technologies that help enhance their leisure experience, ranging from virtual-reality googles that transport them to fantastical landscapes to battle dragons, to the apple watch that allows them to monitor their health and track their heart rate as they exercise.
- Even so, in modern life, there is also no denying that technology can sometimes hinder our leisure by making it possible for work to encroach on our leisure and for us to turn leisure into something we become obsessive about.

### Possible Stand

- Although technology has somewhat hindered our leisure, given the endless variety of leisure activities available today and the variety of exciting ways leisure can be enjoyed through technology, it is not true to say that technology has hindered rather than enhanced leisure in modern life. The way technology has revolutionised leisure has certainly enhanced leisure much more than hindered it today.

### Arguments in support of the stand

**(POB) We cannot deny the hard truth that technology has sometimes hindered leisure in modern life because the ubiquitous use of technology has allowed work to encroach into our leisure time.**

- Technology has allowed us to work beyond the confines of the workplace and the ability to take work everywhere we go also means that technically, work never ends.
- Today, although many countries have imposed statutory limits on the work week, around 22% of workers worldwide are working more than the recommended 48 hours.
- This does not include the work they do when they leave the workplace and, while employers are demanding that their workers work from home to meet deadlines, employees too are partly responsible for working beyond the workplace as the competitive environment makes it difficult for them to refuse more work. This of course has been made possible by technologies such as email and teleconferencing facilities. Today, the term 'workation' captures exactly this.
- In 2018, roughly 56 per cent of workers surveyed said they touch base with work when they were supposed to be taking a vacation break, up from 41 per cent of workers in 2016.
- **Undeniably, technology has somewhat hindered leisure in modern life as the amount of time left for leisure has shrunk considerably as technology facilitates work beyond the workplace, eating up our leisure time.**

**(POB) Additionally, in modern life, technology has allowed for the quantification of leisure and our preoccupation with its quantification has at times hindered its enjoyment.**

- The invention of gadgets related to tracking our leisure activities has locked people in a constant state of calibrating, counting and competing, losing sight of the very purpose of the leisure activity itself, which is to have fun.
- The Fitbit Charge HR and the Xiaomi MiBand help fitness enthusiasts to set and track their fitness goals, patterns of heart rate, distance covered and even calories burnt. These tracking devices are meant to give enthusiasts control of their leisure activity, but these gadgets have instead distracted people away from the leisure activity and preoccupy themselves instead with concerns over who ran a greater distance today, who the 'winner' of the week's challenge is or who the champion of the month is. To make matters worse, some may become overly critical of themselves when they do not meet their own targets while others become overly obsessed with achieving the higher and higher targets they set for themselves.
- **It is in these situations of modern life that technology has, because of our preoccupation with quantifying instead of enhancing our enjoyment, hindered our leisure.**



**(POB) In modern life, technology has also sometimes hindered us from truly reaping some of the benefits of leisure, particularly those involving sports activities.**

- Proponents of sports as a good leisure activity point out the benefits that sporting leisure activities have on our physical, social, emotional and psychological well-being. Those who play sports have a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke or of developing high blood pressure, often linked to being overweight. In addition, the physical interaction with others helps build good healthy socialisation skills that enhance overall happiness.
- However, with technology, we can technically play these games without even leaving our living room, and we can choose to play all by ourselves pitting our 'skills' against a computer programme instead.
- The benefits of sweating it out through real physical activity and drawing up winning strategies with real people are lost. In fact, technology has allowed us to isolate ourselves from real human interaction even as we are engaged in a 'group' leisure activity.
- FIFA World Cup, Basketball Stars 2019 and Baseball are team sports played in physical venues but technology has allowed for such games to be played alone without having to go out in the sun or breaking a sweat as people play these games on their PlayStation, Xbox and mobile devices. The armchair sportsman has been accused of building up only his finger dexterity instead.
- **Online games such as these further show that technology has at times hindered our leisure by depriving us of the benefits of real face-to-face physical play with real people.**

**(POA) On the other hand, there is much to celebrate about the way technology has greatly enhanced leisure in modern life much more than hindered it because technology has brought people together to share their love for leisure, learn from each other and improve on their leisure.**

- Today, leisure groups are aplenty on the internet with experts and novices enjoying their leisure together, sharing and encouraging their members to improve in their chosen activity.
- Gardening enthusiasts can get specialised advice on floriculture, organic farming or even ways to get a bountiful harvest from gardening clubs, commercial farmers or famous YouTube plant doctors like Hilton Carter.
- Sports enthusiasts only need to surf the internet to get free coaching advice or check out the latest performance-enhancing equipment or inexpensive gadgets that improve safety. For example, there is a variety of YouTube series that give coaching tips on how to improve basketball skills such as Michael Jordan's Basketball Lesson, 10- Minute Point Guard Workout and The 7 Best Defense Drills for Basketball.
- Deep fishing enthusiasts can witness the exploits of professional competitive fishermen without even getting near the water. Such competitions include Florida Deep Sea Fishing Tournament, Offshore Kayak Fishing World Championship and the NZ Fishing Tournament.
- **It is clear that technology has enhanced more than hindered leisure in modern life by bringing leisure enthusiasts together to share, learn and celebrate their love for their chosen activity.**

**(POA) Over the years, those in the leisure industry have invested in research and development that has helped to enhance more than hinder our leisure through advancements in technology.**

- While this is certainly profit-oriented, it has enhanced leisure in many ways for those who can afford it. The quality of leisure activities has improved tremendously and made it ever more immersive and exciting. Carrying out our favourite leisure activities has also become more convenient with portable devices.
- SmartTVs capable of displaying pictures far beyond what they had displayed in the past. A standard definition TV displays 720 horizontal pixels but today, it is more common for TVs to have 4,000 horizontal pixels that show a picture with nearly 6 times more definition than standard definition TVs. This makes for a much better viewing experience making our favourite shows and movies that much more enjoyable.
- With our mobile devices, we can watch, or stream the television shows we want, when we want, and how we want. Streaming services like Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime Video all offer access to various cable shows, as well as original content for a low monthly fee. Leisure entertainment right in the heart of our living room has never been more satisfying.
- Sites such as iTunes and YouTube have changed the way music and video are accessed, listened to and used. Platforms like Spotify and Apple Music have made it possible to access millions of artists all at a monthly fee. For music lovers, spending their leisure in such a manner and having thousands of songs to choose from can be mind-blowing.
- Die-hard fans of role-play games use VR goggles to immerse themselves in a multi-sensorial experience, while Dr Dre's noise-cancelling earphones and Secretlab gaming chairs will complete the experience.
- E-reader devices like the Kindle or Nook can hold thousands of books without taking up space in our home. Its transportability also means that we literally can carry thousands of books to anywhere in the world.
- **This only goes to show that the modern leisure experience is more enhanced than hindered, thanks to the technology we have today.**

**(POA) In addition, technology has also enhanced leisure much more than hindered it in the modern world by allowing us to customise our leisure to our individual liking.**

- We are very blessed in the sense that not only do we have a wide range of leisure activities to choose from, we can also enjoy them in the way that we prefer. With technology we can pick and choose what we like without having to be restricted by one-size-fits-all leisure options. Many of the leisure activities that we enjoy today can be catered to our tastes, schedules and even location.
- Streamed television has allowed us to watch television programmes and movies which are grouped by genre, so it can be customised to each leisure-seeking individual. Technology has also allowed us to watch our favourite shows at our preferred times because of its pre-recording capability.
- For those who shun package tours and one-size-fits-all holidays, technology can aid in most stages of the travel process as the travel sector becomes increasingly accessible to those working outside the sector. The internet can be used for airline tickets, last minute bookings, bargains, insurance and hotel accommodation, and to find information about our holiday destinations. GPS maps can be used to

navigate around cities while ticket confirmations and reminders can be sent to cellphones and computers. All these allow for the holidaymaker to customise the itinerary of his trip and enjoy it more.

- When it comes to online gaming, enthusiasts can choose to play alone or with friends – those in his neighbourhood or those in faraway countries. It is during such play that gamers get the satisfaction of choosing their team members from all over the world.
- Technology has also allowed us to enjoy what little leisure time that we may have by providing us with the ability to ‘pause’ our leisure activity midway and come back later to finish it.
- **Technology has indeed given us more choices in the way we want to enjoy leisure at our preferred time and with our preferred group of friends. In fact, we may even choose to enjoy our leisure completely alone, enhancing more than hindering the way we enjoy our leisure time.**

### Conclusion

- While there is no denying that leisure time has shrunk because of technology that facilitates work beyond working hours, it cannot be said that technology has hindered rather than enhanced leisure in modern life.
- In fact, technology has enhanced leisure today much more than hindered it, and this can be seen in the wider range of choices of leisure activities and the greater choices we have over how we want to enjoy our leisure.
- With technology and a greater awareness of the importance of leisure for healthy living, it can only be expected that people will demand more leisure time, more variety and greater independence in the way they spend this time.

**Report prepared by: Mrs Salama Noordin**

**Marked by:**

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**Q5. Examine the claim that staying healthy has become an obsession today.**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

- 
- 

### **Weaknesses**

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- 

## **A. QUESTION ANALYSIS**

### **examine the claim**

- evaluate the truth of the claim

### **staying healthy**

- keeping well
- involving physical, mental, social-emotional well-being

### **has become an obsession**

- indicates a fixation on
- to be consumed and/or preoccupied with
- an addiction with detrimental consequences
- invites candidate to challenge the claim

### **today**

- modern world where many people have easy access to information on health and health-related issues, as well as the means and resources to stay healthy
- where social media has allowed people, professionals and laymen to spread information about health, legitimate as well as fake ones

## **B. SUGGESTED APPROACH**

### **Introduction**

- Today, there is greater awareness among people of the need to stay healthy as governments and organisations cajole and encourage everyone to look after their health.
- With the mass media jumping on the bandwagon to inform people about and discuss all sorts of diseases and ailments that plague the modern man today, it is little wonder that there is growing concern about staying healthy and staving off or delaying the onset of diseases.

### **Possible Stand**

- While there are some people today who are obsessed with staying healthy, the majority are not. In fact, when people are concerned about staying healthy, their concern is often welcomed, well-placed and justified.

### **Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POB) Admittedly, there is a number of people becoming obsessed with staying healthy today because of the scare-mongering culture that exists out there.**

- The internet is inundated with endless information regarding all kinds of ailments and people can sometimes be driven to irrational fear by horror stories of killer diseases that have devastating consequences, real or imagined.
- Such information also comes in the form of an array of advice on how to lead a healthier and longer life through various dieting regimes and all sorts of natural or homemade remedies, and they can come from trained professionals or are being dished out by overzealous netizens.
- What is worrying is that there are many individuals who jump at them without cross-checking the information for their veracity and sadly today, many people have made it their religion to stay healthy such that they end up becoming obsessed. The situation is made worse when some of these individuals are poorly informed and quickly pick up on the latest fads without investigating their efficacy and side-effects.
- These fads include the many diet plans that promise healthier and longer life. There are diet plans for men, for women, for teenagers, to lose weight, to gain weight and for just about everything else. Some of these plans are punishing and downright dangerous such as the Five-Bite Diet where dieters only eat 10 bites of food a day, the Cabbage Soup Diet where dieters can have as much of the soup but only the soup, and the Cotton ball Diet where the dieters only eat 5 cotton balls dipped with orange juice. These regimes were supposed to help people lose weight and stay healthy but any sensible person except those who are obsessed with staying healthy can see the absurdity of the diet plans which can lead to eating disorders. Anorexia nervosa is the third most common chronic illness among adolescents and 10 million American women suffer from eating disorders.
- **While these obsessions may have started from a genuine desire to stay healthy, the massive information on health scares available today has sent people to extremes and contributes to their obsession with staying healthy.**

**(POB) In addition, information made available are sometimes at odds with each other, confusing the health-conscious individuals and drives them to behave in a ridiculously obsessive manner.**

- Often, it is through no fault of theirs that people become obsessed and it is only sensible that the layman relies on experts to lead the way and provide sound advice on staying healthy.
- Experts only become experts because they have gone through specialised education and training and have worked in their fields that they can be considered credible. The trouble is that experts may not only provide differing views on staying healthy, their views can sometimes be in direct contradiction to each other, leaving the rest of us scrambling to cut out, reduce, increase or add food items and health products to our diets, causing us to be health-crazed.
- For the longest time, the public has been confused over the consumption of sugar. Some experts claim that some types of sugar are better than others or that artificial sweeteners are better than sugar or that sugar is the root of all our health problems. These have been proven to be myths and yet many continue to live their lives according to these beliefs. In fact, an American Journal of Clinical Nutrition study that followed more than 350,000 adults for over a decade found that added sugar consumption was not linked to an increased risk for death.



- **With such conflicting messages coming from the experts, it is understandable that people are confused and driven to obsession in wanting to stay healthy.**

**(POB) Moreover, the stress that governments place on society's need to stay healthy has driven some people to obsession.**

- Of course governments are cognizant of the importance of a healthy population as a driver of economic growth and thus encourage citizens to stay healthy. A healthy population is productive while one that is not will put a strain on government expenditure. In the face of rising healthcare cost, it is only expected that governments take preventive measures. Yet some people can take the government's move too far.
- Cancer, the number one leading cause of death kills 7.6 million people worldwide and its treatment costs Americans US\$4 billion a year. Governments all the over the world are actively educating their citizens on cancer prevention. While there are the usual mainstream treatments of cancer, we are also seeing the rise in alternative treatments such as the alkaline diet, one of the most popular anti-cancer diets. Proponents of the diet believe that an acid diet encourages cancer formation, and that an alkaline diet is therefore the solution. Artificial sweeteners too have a long history of being the target of dubious claims. A now infamous e-mail hoax falsely claimed they were neurotoxic poison, despite being debunked by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and some obsessed with the diet still continue to practise it.
- In Singapore, in his 2017 National Day Rally speech, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong highlighted that we had the second highest diabetes rate in the world which drove most, if not all government departments to only serve healthier choices of food like brown rice at all department events. Some regard the demonising of 'white rice' to be somewhat excessive and downright paranoid.
- **It can thus be seen that governments' attempts to encourage their citizens to stay healthy may have the unintended consequence of driving some citizens to obsession.**

**(POA) However, generally, the extensive information out there has served to educate many people about the importance of staying healthy through sensible action that is not harmful.**

- Being better educated about health issues, more people are better equipped to lead healthy lifestyles. Today, many people are more aware of measures that they can take, such as making changes to their diet, exercising more regularly, seeking medical attention early and even taking care of their mental health.
- Governments all over the world are also trying to educate their citizens to take greater responsibility for their health as diseases cross borders with the fluid movement of people all over the world today.
- Online platforms have also allowed for health-related information to be shared and viral-ed and this has made the layman more aware of health threats and ways to combat them.
- At the same time, society is also educated to verify the information they come across so that they will not be victims of fake news, and a healthy amount of scepticism is indeed needed in the face of fake new spread through the likes of Twitter.

- Websites like FactCheck.org, PoliFact and Snopes.com allow for individuals to verify information including those pertaining to staying healthy so that they will not be plunged into irrational behaviour.
- **The vast amount of health-related information that people have access to has indeed contributed to better health for many and cannot be thus perceived as an obsession for most people.**

**(POA) In the face of longer life expectancy, people are more concerned about staying in good health so that they do not spend a considerable portion of their lives battling diseases, and this is a good development indeed and cannot be considered an obsession.**

- Today, in first world countries, the average lifespan for men is 76 years and for women, 82, an increase of two years from a decade ago. Living longer means that people will be more susceptible to all kinds of age-related diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia. The total number of people with Alzheimer's disease in 2050 is projected to be 13.8 million, an increase from 4.7 million in 2010 while the number of people with dementia is believed to be close to 50 million people in 2017. This number will almost double every 20 years, reaching 75 million in 2030 and 131.5 million in 2050.
- With such a reality looming ahead, it is not obsessive that scientists are looking for ways to delay the onset of age-related diseases, and people are eagerly following such advice.
- With the prospect of living longer, people in Singapore are more cognizant of the need to take active steps to age better and more healthily. This gives rise to an increase in businesses selling healthy foods, supplements as well as gym memberships and exercise classes. Restaurants that sell wholesome, organic or vegetarian food are the rage in Singapore with The Botanic, Workspace Expressso and The Living Café leading the pack. The supplement industry is a whopping US\$37 billion a year with GNC earning US\$550 million in 2018. NuTrex, HealthForce and SourceNaturals are leaders in selling superfood spirulina.
- In tiny Singapore, there are close to 250 registered gyms catering to newly-minted enthusiasts all the way to the serious powerlifters.
- **When people are serious about staying healthy in the hope of having better quality life as they grow older and live longer, we should not dismiss them as being obsessed because their commitment to their health is well-placed and justified.**

**(POA) Lastly, the pursuit of staying in good health is far from an obsession because most people do so in moderation and their action is thus justified.**

- The general public recognises the need to stay healthy. Years of being told about the importance of eating well, exercising and sleeping well have not eluded anyone.
- Parents, teachers and employers are often involved in helping society stay healthy. Most parents want and support their children to eat healthy, schools run sports-related activities and employers adhere to policies promoting a healthy lifestyle such as the five-day work week to ensure that employees get enough rest.
- We also do not hear of swathes of people doing themselves great harm because they are obsessed with staying healthy. The very small minority of people who are obsessed seem to fire our imagination because such bad news are often given extra coverage by the media.

- Thus, it is very apparent that when society is concerned with staying healthy, it does so in a generally sensible manner, far from being obsessed.

### Conclusion

- While there are admittedly some people who are obsessed with staying healthy today, most in society are not. Their concern for staying healthy is perfectly reasonable given the rising healthcare cost. This concern is highly welcomed, well-placed and justified and with more people living longer, we can expect society to be even more interested in staying healthy.

**Report prepared by: Mrs Salama Noordin**

**Marked by:**

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**Q6. 'The key responsibility of a government is to create wealth for the country.' What is your view?**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX.X%)

No. failed: X (X.X%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

- 
- 

### Weaknesses

- 
- 

### A. QUESTION ANALYSIS

#### the key responsibility

- the main / chief / principal / most important obligation or duty

#### government

- the people / political party in power through democratic election
- in communist countries or a monarchy, this would be the ruling elite



**to create wealth**

- to improve the economy through job creation translating into better salaries
- to attract foreign investments and ensure businesses thrive
- to earn foreign exchange through export
- to invest sovereign wealth funds to gain revenue

**for the country**

- for the citizens living in the country and the benefit of the country

**What is your view?**

- consider whether the creation of wealth is the most important role of a government

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- During elections, citizens elect a government which they believe would make their lives better with policies that will benefit them and the country. Citizens expect the government to do its duty to improve their lives and protect the country in diverse and multifarious ways.
- A government, on its part, has the moral responsibility to defend the country and ensure that its citizens have access to essential services, opportunities for development and a better life on the whole.

**Possible Stand**

- While the government may have many responsibilities to a country and its citizens, its key responsibility should be to create wealth for the country as wealth is the most important prerequisite which enables all other duties and obligations of the government to be fulfilled. However, the creation of wealth, as important as it is, should not be carried out to the detriment of other areas of development such as having a more inclusive society.

**Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POA) Many believe that the key responsibility of the government is still, first and foremost, to create wealth for the country because wealth is the principal means by which all other needs of the country and its people can be fulfilled.**

- The creation of wealth is paramount to a government because it is the essential prerequisite which enables all other important agendas to be realised. Wealth which is generated is used to fund important activities which protect the country, drive the economy and cater to the needs of its citizens. Without the creation of wealth, all essential services, and economic and social activities would not be possible.
- Without the consistent and successful creation of wealth through taxes and investments, the Singapore government would not be able to fund the budgets of all the 16 ministries it oversees. Singapore sovereign funds, namely Temasek Holdings and the Government Investment Corporation (GIC) of Singapore create

wealth from making investments abroad. Government-owned companies such as CapitaLand, MediaCorp, Singapore Airlines and ST Engineering also generate much wealth for the Singapore government to fund defence, education and health. The key responsibility of a government is indeed to create wealth to meet the needs and aspirations of its citizens.

- When a government fails in its most important duty to create wealth for the country, it will plunge the country into dire straits. The Venezuelan government, under President Nicolas Maduro, is unable to generate income for the country even though the country sits on one of the world's largest oil reserves. The country is heavily in debt with an inflation rate of over 400 percent.
- It is only with the generation of wealth that a government can fund and maintain important ministries like defence, education and health services, as well as run other social and cultural programmes; transport, communication and information services; and environment and water resources which are so crucial for the well-being of a country and its citizens.
- **Thus, without the creation of wealth needed to run and sustain vital programmes and services in the country, no government can be considered to have fulfilled its key responsibility as an elected government.**

**(POA) Wealth creation for the country is also the key responsibility of a government because a government is inextricably bound by social contract and moral obligation to ensure the livelihoods of its citizens, of those it is constitutionally bound to protect.**

- A social contract is an implicit agreement between members of a society to cooperate with the government in exchange for social benefits. In this relationship, the most important duty and obligation by the government is to provide for the livelihoods of its citizens through the creation of wealth. Wealth creation is thus the means by which the government can fulfil its financial obligations to its citizens.
- Creating wealth for the country is the principal responsibility of any government because citizens do expect their government to pursue this goal which is implicitly understood as an election promise given by the government to the people. Citizens want to see the economy thriving, boosting employment and salaries for the people. They expect to have more purchasing power to buy the goods and services that they need and desire. Citizens also expect economic progress to translate to a better standard of living and quality of life, as experienced in better healthcare, education and transport. Indeed, wealth creation is a very important enabler of self-fulfilment and actualisation for citizens.
- Citizens do expect the government whom they have elected to fulfil its key responsibility in managing the economy prudently to ensure their livelihoods through the creation of jobs. When Donald Trump was elected US President, Americans expect his administration to fulfil their election promises to 'Make American Great Again' by creating wealth and jobs for Americans and improving their livelihoods. In the first two years of Trump's presidency, the White House reported that 4.7 million jobs were created, a 3.1 per cent increase over Obama at the end of his second term.
- The Trump administration achieved this by working resolutely to end the outsourcing of 34 per cent of well-paying manufacturing jobs to Japan, China and Mexico in the last decade. As a result of astute government policy, manufacturing jobs grew at the fastest rate in more than three decades, as the government ensured that lucrative jobs and wealth were created for Americans and did not flow

abroad to foreigners. As a result of determined government action, the livelihoods of minority workers also improved, as seen from the lowest unemployment rate ever recorded among African-American and Hispanic-American workers in the US. The welfare of the poor also improved, with almost 3.9 million Americans lifted off food stamps since the election. In general, the standard of living of Americans improved, with the median household income in America hitting the highest level ever recorded.

- To further secure the livelihoods of Americans, the US government has committed funds to vocational training and collaborated with employers to train 4 million Americans through expanding apprenticeship programmes, reforming job training programmes, and bringing businesses and educators together to ensure high-quality classroom instruction and on-the-job training.
- With the mandate to govern, the American government is also expected by citizens to fulfil its moral obligations to support poorer Americans by providing public assistance to those who are unable to work due to old age, illness, disability or family circumstances. The US government is providing more affordable healthcare options for Americans through various health plans. With government support, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved more affordable generic drugs for Americans, and the Medicare programme has been launched to stop hospitals from overcharging low-income seniors on their drugs, saving seniors hundreds of millions of dollars.
- **Indeed, the social contract between an elected government and its citizens makes the government principally morally obliged to help citizens by generating wealth to secure their livelihoods.**

**(POA) Inadvertently, whether the key responsibility of a government is to create wealth for the country really depends on the stage of development that the country is at.**

- For developed countries, while wealth creation is a key responsibility, other responsibilities are deemed to be equally important too. Such responsibilities include providing citizens with means to achieve self-actualisation and improving further their quality of life.
- Developed countries, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland have become icons of fair societies, with both high economic productivity and an unequalled quality of life. Citizens enjoy good quality education and healthcare with great emphasis on equality, personal rights, freedom of choice and general tolerance. Wealth creation is no longer sufficient to make their citizens happy because a good standard of living has already been achieved. What their citizens now see as the key responsibility of their government is to ensure they enjoy self-actualisation and a high quality of life.
- For less developed countries however, creating wealth remains the key responsibility of the government and perhaps that is why countries that supply migrant labour would turn a blind eye to unfair treatment of their citizens who work overseas despite knowing that their citizens are being exploited.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) estimated that there are 146,000 female migrant domestic workers from Indonesia, Philippines and India in the United Arab Emirates whose work visas are sponsored by their employers. In an interview with 99 female domestic workers, HRW listed abuses claimed by their interviewees. Most had their passports confiscated by their employers and in many cases, wages were not fully paid, overtime of up to 21 hours per day was required, or food, living

conditions or medical treatment were insufficient. Seeking justice for citizens working overseas who have been exploited may not be top priority for governments in developing countries because growing wealth is.

- **There is no doubt that wealth creation is the key responsibility to be borne by the government of all countries, and is especially pertinent for developing countries, but in developed countries, providing opportunities to citizens for self-actualisation, equality, personal rights, freedom of choice and general tolerance are regarded as equally important responsibilities of the government.**

**(POB) However, while the creation of wealth for the country is the key responsibility of a government, care must be taken to minimise the inequality that could result.**

- Many people believe that the key responsibility of the government is to create conditions where the country's wealth is shared more equitably. It is important that the government should also look into where the wealth is flowing to and how it is distributed so that it does not go only into the pockets of a few, requiring the government to intervene in order to distribute the wealth more fairly.
- Some have criticised wealthy Singapore for having one of highest Gini coefficients in the world which indicates a widening inequality between the rich and the poor. Although it seems that socio-economic inequality is increasing in Singapore, the reality is much more nuanced. MP Mohamad Maliki Osman explained to Singaporeans that, at first glance, the Gini coefficient shows that income inequality seems to be widening where rich Singaporeans seem to enjoy more significant income increases in absolute dollar terms than the poor.
- However, he explained that low-income earners actually experience faster income growth in percentage terms because of increases in their basic salary and government transfers that have helped to mitigate income inequality. Clearly, the government of Singapore has sought to create wealth and distribute it equitably to all Singaporeans without neglecting the financial needs of poorer Singaporeans.
- **Admittedly, a government is expected to not only create wealth for a country, but also to see to it that the wealth is distributed in a just and fair manner.**

**(POB) Additionally, while it is the key responsibility of a government, the creation of wealth should not be carried out at the expense of important values that make us human.**

- Citizens do call their government out for creating wealth by unfairly and inhumanely exploiting workers. In such situations, they clamour for justice for the workers who play a critical role in creating wealth for the country.
- The fire in Rana Plaza in Bangladesh that killed more than 1100 garment factory workers and injured 2500 others in 2013 highlighted to the world that international brands including Benetton (Italy), Mango (Spain), and Cato Fashions (USA) were exploiting cheap labour in Dhaka by failing to provide a safe work environment for workers. Governments which support rich companies such as these in developing countries in the name of creating wealth are guilty of running roughshod over the human values of compassion and respect for human lives.
- Citizens too are often up in arms when governments are seen as prioritising the growing of wealth and disregarding the damage caused to the environment, its flora and fauna and human health. While they recognise that the key responsibility of a government is to grow the wealth of the country, they also expect governments

to do so in an environmentally-sound, humane and self-sustaining manner. To them, it is insufficient and irresponsible for such governments to only grow the wealth of the country without putting in place measures that will safeguard the environment and human safety.

- Tropical forests in Sumatra and Borneo are cut down for timber and to make way for palm oil plantations, shrinking the orangutan population by more than 50 percent. Baby orangutans are left orphaned and are sometimes caught in the fires set by plantation owners. The callous treatment of endangered animals in the name of wealth creation is intolerated by citizens all over the world.
- According to the National Bureau of Statistics, industrial pollution was linked to 22% of deaths in China every year and has made cancer China's leading cause of death. Chinese environmental experts estimate that annual premature deaths attributable to outdoor air pollution is 1.1 million. Death due to air pollution can be very painful and dehumanising especially when they strike pregnant women, children and the elderly. While Chinese citizens have benefitted from job creation, they still want their government to grow wealth in a responsible manner showing respect for humanity.
- **Thus, it is clear that while the creation of wealth is a key responsibility of the government, it should not be done at the expense of important values that make us human.**

### Conclusion

- It is indisputable that the duties and obligations of a government are manifold and diverse. Although the government should rightly fulfil important duties to enhance the well-being of its citizens, chief among these obligations is the duty to create wealth for the country since wealth enables all other important responsibilities of the government to be realised. While the creation of wealth is indubitably the key responsibility of the government, wealth should also be generated as fairly and as humanely as possible so that all groups of people can benefit from it.

**Report prepared by: Mrs Evangeline Ho and Mrs Salama Noordin**

**Marked by:**

### Q7. Do you agree that we live in an increasingly unsafe world?

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX.X%)

No. failed: X (X.X%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	



5	1 – 6	
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**Strengths**

- 
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**Weaknesses**

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**A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS****Do you agree**

- personal response question
- clear strong stand required
- need for cautious optimism and not present a doom-and-gloom future scenario

**we**

- inclusive 'we' to include people from all parts of the world
- different profiles – age, income, beliefs – would face different types of dangers

**increasingly**

- trend which is on the rise
- need to show how the dangers are more of the same or new and/or different in nature

**unsafe world**

- dangers or threats from conventional sources – war and strife, sabre-rattling by ambitious/unstable countries
- new/emerging threats – diseases, cyber-crimes, cyber-bullying, cyber-terrorism, terror attacks, lone wolf/copyleft attacks, threats to privacy from governments and/or corporations
- unprecedented global threats – climates change which cause extreme weather, rising sea levels and threats to food supplies etc.
- traits and characteristics of the modern world – mobility, interconnected, technology-driven

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- A quick check of news headlines would suggest that the world we reside in has become increasingly unsafe. The reasons are as different as the sources and people from all walks of life are not spared. Some feel alienated because of the political climate which feeds on fanning hatred and animosity based on race or religion. There are others who feel an overabundance of hate or fear from terrorist acts. There are also people who feel unsafe because of the pending legal decisions regarding their sexuality or gender.

- On a more macro level, global ‘hot spots’ where nuclear-capable adversaries face off against each other and political strongman who engage in sabre-rattling are just adding fuel to the sense of insecurity.
- Besides these conventional threats, there are also new unprecedented global threats like global warming which causes extreme weather, rising sea levels and threats to food supplies that are in part exacerbated by the mobility, interconnectedness and technology-driven modern world.

### Possible stand

- While I do agree that the world has indeed become increasingly unsafe, I would also like to believe that the future is not all doom-and-gloom and that we can still afford to be cautiously optimistic about the state of the world.

### Arguments in support of the stand

**(POB) Admittedly, the world does appear to be increasingly unsafe as the conventional threats still persist and have even gotten more deadly.**

- Political conflicts due to ideology or territorial claims are all the more deadly due to nuclear-armed adversaries facing off against each other in the numerous ‘hot spots’ around the world.
- For example
  - India vs. Pakistan are nuclear-capable countries which have had a series of border ‘incidents’ where shots have been exchanged with casualties, leading to fears of possible escalation of conflicts.
  - Israel, which is widely believed to be also nuclear-capable, is besieged by countries which it has gone to war with over the decades since independence. The Middle East is very much a hot-spot that easily flare up uncontrollably.
  - North Korea’s new unpredictable young leader has ordered various testing of nuclear weapons and missile systems in defiance of international concerns and sanctions.
- Terrorism, which is already a very serious threat to people’s sense of safety as epitomised by the deadly 911 attack which brought down the WTC in NY, has taken on even more sinister overtures due to ‘lone-wolf’ attacks which are much harder to track and prevent. Even ubiquitous vans or lorries have become weapons of terror used to plough through crowds with these mass-murderers behind the wheel coming from other countries. Like an old dog that has learnt new tricks, ISIS has taken to the internet successfully to raise funds and even recruit fighters from all over the world.
- The rise of right-wing populism as signalled by Trump and other victories in EU countries like the League’s triumph in Italy has only added to the sense of an increasingly unsafe world.
- For example
  - Trumps’ crack down on illegal immigrants – children separated from parents and incarcerating those arrested in what has been described as ‘inhumane conditions’ by other elected American politicians.
  - In Italy, people have been arrested for trying to help desperate refugees.
- **Thus, the existence and aggravation of conventional threats have certainly contributed significantly to the view that our world is increasingly unsafe.**

**(POB) Moreover, the emergence of new threats also serves to reinforce the perception that we are living in an increasingly unsafe world.**

- The modern world has benefitted from technology but this double-edged sword has also caused new threats that undermine our sense of security.
- From online scams that target the more vulnerable elderly to hackers from the Deep Web who target both governments and businesses to go after sensitive data, consumers young and old alike are all vulnerable to such cybercrimes. This sense of vulnerability is further aggravated by a sense of helplessness and frustration that precautions and police actions are largely ineffective against such criminal technowizards.
- For example
  - In Singapore, the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) said on Feb 28 2014 that the hackers had stolen NRIC numbers, telephone numbers and birth dates of 854 personnel, through a breach of its I-Net system which provides Internet access on thousands of dedicated terminals to national servicemen and other staff working in Mindef's offices and Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) premises.
  - In Singapore's worst cyber attack in July 2018, hackers have stolen the personal particulars of 1.5 million patients. Of these, 160,000 people, including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and a few ministers, had their outpatient prescriptions stolen as well. The hackers infiltrated the computers of SingHealth, Singapore's largest group of healthcare institutions with four hospitals, five national speciality centres and eight polyclinics. Investigations revealed that a group, dubbed Whitefly, probably comprised of "five to 20-odd people", is "extremely well resourced" and, as such, is likely to be a "state-sponsored espionage group", was behind the attack.
  - In September 2016, the once dominant Internet giant, Yahoo, announced it had been the victim of the biggest data breach in history, likely by "a state-sponsored actor," in 2014. The attack compromised the real names, email addresses, dates of birth and telephone numbers of 500 million users. A few months later, in December, it disclosed that a breach in 2013, by a different group of hackers had compromised 1 billion accounts. In October of 2017, Yahoo revised that estimate, saying that, in fact, all 3 billion user accounts had been compromised.
  - These examples show that government agencies and even big IT giants which would be rightly expected to have the means and resources to safeguard themselves are still vulnerable in this increasingly unsafe world.
- Besides cybercriminals, large internet companies have also further added to the sense of uncertainty and fear that they have also been spying on and trying to manipulate their customers or have been negligent in their handling of customers' data.
- For example
  - Alongside social media giant Facebook, Cambridge Analytica is in the midst of an ongoing dispute over the alleged harvesting and use of personal data. Both companies deny any wrongdoing. The saga is significant because of the way the harvested data might have been used. It was allegedly utilized to direct messages for political campaigns supported by Cambridge Analytica, most notably Trump's election victory and the Brexit vote.
  - On January 2019, Grant Thompson, a 14-year-old in Arizona, made an unexpected discovery: Using FaceTime, Apple's video chatting software, he could eavesdrop on his friend's phone before his friend had even answered the



call. His mother, Michele Thompson, sent a video of the hack to Apple the next day, warning the company of a “major security flaw” that exposed millions of iPhone users to eavesdropping. The company was nonchalant and Apple’s product security team encouraged Ms. Thompson, a lawyer, to set up a developer account to send a formal bug report.

- In addition, there have also been many reported cases of cyberbullying and sexual grooming for which the young are particularly vulnerable. Such new threats have caused many sleepless nights for parents who already worry about drugs and gangs on top of shooting and knifing incidents in some countries.
- Furthermore, new unprecedented global threats like global warming which causes extreme weather, rising sea levels and threats to food supplies is another major source of concern where increasingly alarming reports of melting polar ice and seemingly lack of concerted efforts have all contributed to an increasing sense of uncertainty.
- **Hence the emergence of new threats has certainly aggravated concerns that we are living in an increasingly unsafe world where no one from young to old seems to be safe.**

**(POA) However, I believe that we should not be too quick to jump to the conclusion that the world is becoming increasingly unsafe where our lives would become what Hobbes described as 'nasty, brutish and short'. In fact, countries have come together in international and regional blocs working to mitigate some of these threats and dangers that plague us.**

- **Globalisation has resulted in a world which is very much interconnected and more importantly, interdependent so that conflicts, if allowed to flare up or get out of hand, will not just affect the parties concerned in a particular locale, but will have spill-over or contagion effect on other countries.**
- Despite harsh exchange of words and sometimes bullets and artillery shells, India and Pakistan have not raised the nuclear option and are open to efforts from the US to cool thing down when there have been flare-ups.
- China and the US have also done their part to rein in North Korea when its sabre-rattling gets too vocal or tries to expand its nuclear capability.
- In addition, ambitious dictators like Saddam Hussein who invaded Kuwait have also been dealt with as his actions could destabilise oil prices or given him unacceptable influence over oil supplies if he could control the oil wells in both Iraq and Kuwait.
- There have also been other victories which have given us hope threats to the world will be effectively nipped like dismantling of ISIS or even the killing of terrorist leaders like Osama bin Laden.
- **Thus, with the cost of conflicts being too much to stomach, there is still hope yet that the world will not be spinning out of control in the foreseeable future as countries will do their part to manage and mediate simply due to vested self-interests.**

**(POA) Furthermore, the very same technology that engendered new threats has also empowered people to do something towards countering such threats and not be just helpless victims waiting for dangers to strike.**

- **The internet and social media in particular allow their users to raise awareness and even mobilise support to deal with threats which make our world unsafe.**
- Activists, young and old, have taken on worthy causes with the help of technology to make a difference in making the world a safer place by starting with their community and with some even going on to capture the imagination and inspire others on the other side of the world.
- For example
  - In the aftermath of horrific school shootings, one mother, Shannon Watts, decided to do something and started the Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense on social media in the US. She soon had thousands of followers and women from across the country began reaching out to her about starting local chapters.
  - Greta Thunberg – inspired other students in US and Europe to stage school walkouts to drive home the message to the powers-to-be on the urgency of climate change.
- **As such, with the advent of technology, people are not that helpless and vulnerable and have done much to make the world a safer place.**

**(POA) Finally, we must also remind ourselves that amidst all the seeming doom-and-gloom of a world becoming increasingly unsafe, our current existence can also be described as the pinnacle of development.**

- **There is room for cautious optimism as the unflagging human spirit have survived man-made threats like the two deadly World Wars and countless minor conflicts as well as overcome, or at least tame the worst of what Nature can inflict from Black Death to the smallpox and even Ebola.**
- In times of need, history have shown us that the human race can come to its senses and rally together to overcome threats and challenges. The Montreal Protocol is a ready, but admittedly rare example of how decisive and swiftly we can act together as a global community to close the hole in the ozone layer which threatened to cause cancer and other ills.
- In more recent times, countries like Costa Rica and New Zealand have voluntarily announced plans to be carbon-neutral or even carbon-negative without the need for coercive or punitive treaties. Individuals like the Italian captain who braved certain jail and or fine to help desperate refugees to ensure their survival out on the dangerous high seas are also sure signs that the human spirit can still prevail.
- **Hence, there is still evidence if we know where to look that the human spirit to overcome and conquer is very much alive and the world is not increasingly unsafe.**

## Conclusion

- In conclusion, while it is indeed true that the world has indeed become increasingly dangerous due to the exacerbation of conventional threats combined with the emergence of new ones, this is not to say that the world is spiralling into a future where life will be 'nasty, brutish and short'.

**Report prepared by: Mr Peck Chee Siong**

**Marked by:**

**Q8. Is it fair to blame the rich for the plight of the poor?**

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

**DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK**

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

**Strengths**

- 
- 

**Weaknesses**

- 
- 

**A. QUESTION ANALYSIS****Is it fair**

- is it just / reasonable / right

**to blame**

- to impute responsibility / guilt / fault / culpability / liability

**the rich**

- the wealthy / capitalists / rich companies / developed countries

**for the plight**

- the sufferings / penury / deprivation / destitution / lack of opportunity

**of the poor**

- the disadvantaged / underprivileged / the indigent / needy residing both in poor and rich countries

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- Oxfam, an organisation dedicated to fighting poverty, claims that the eight richest people in the world have wealth equal to the poorest half of the world's population.

The rich have often been blamed for the plight of the poor presumably because they are thought of as perpetrators of policies which mire the poor in destitution. Others lay the blame squarely on the shoulders of the poor themselves, citing their moral failings and the lack of responsibility and a strong work ethic.

### **Possible Stand**

- The problem of poverty is indeed a complex one and the reasons for it are multifactorial. Where the rich are indisputably culpable and guilty for exploiting the poor and failing in their moral duty to help them, they should shoulder part of the blame for the plight of the poor.
- However, it would not be fair to blame the rich entirely where poverty is not directly caused by the actions of the rich but by natural disasters, incompetent governments and the moral failings of the poor themselves.
- Thus, while the rich should rightly bear some of the blame, it is not fair to completely assign blame to the rich for the suffering endured by the poor.

### **Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POB) The rich, such as wealthy corporations, cannot escape but accept some culpability for the plight of the poor when they are directly responsible for exploiting the poor and callously neglecting their welfare for the sake of profit.**

- Rich companies should bear some of the blame for causing poor workers to suffer by exploiting them for profit without any concern for their health. According to KnowTheChain's report, an estimated 60 million to 75 million are exploited by rich companies for profit. Working in poor conditions, these workers are lowly paid or sometimes not paid at all. In 2015, 30,000 poor workers in China went on strike to take action against Yue Yuen, the world's largest sports shoemaker for Nike and Adidas located in the industrial hub of Dongguan. According to BBC, the company had not paid sufficient workplace insurance coverage and workers could not get compensation when they got injured. Workers also suffered serious health problems working in other factories in Guangdong which produced half the world's blue jeans. Sandblasting is used to distress jeans and the dust this produces causes deadly lung diseases in workers sanding for 15 hours a day.
- The rich should also bear part of the blame when they price essential products out of reach of the poor in order to make a big profit. Wealthy German and British-Swedish pharmaceutical companies Bayer and AstraZeneca respectively developed expensive drugs for the rich world such as cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure drugs, instead of drugs for the poor such as tropical diseases like malaria and tuberculosis, since the rich are able to pay for them. For their neglectful and callous attitude towards the poor, rich pharmaceutical companies should bear some blame for the putting the health of the poor at risk.
- The rich cannot escape liability totally when they use foreign aid to enrich themselves by exploiting the poor countries they purport to help. Rich countries like to claim that they help poor countries by generously donating to them through foreign aid. However, such aid seldom comes without strings attached. Half of all international development aid is 'tied', meaning that recipient countries must use it to buy goods and services from the rich donor nation. Instead of altruistically helping the poor, rich nations have their own agendas which make use of the poor to enrich themselves.

- Additionally, rich countries are partly guilty for causing poor countries to suffer when they use foreign aid to defraud them. A high proportion of foreign aid is in the form of loans, which cripple developing countries through the accumulation of debt. Many rich nations receive more in interest payments from recipient countries than they give in aid. According to the Guardian, for every \$1 of aid that developing countries receive, they lose \$24 in net outflows in interest paid on loans and the money rich foreign companies make on their investments to repatriate back home. For example, British oil company BP makes huge profits from Nigeria's oil reserves, and British and American companies extract untold riches from South Africa's gold mines to send back to the UK and USA, without benefitting the poor countries which they exploit.
- **Clearly, the wealthy must accept part of the blame for the plight of the poor when they run roughshod over their welfare and exploit them to maximise profit.**

**(POB) It is also fair for rich countries and organisations to shoulder some blame for the sufferings of the poor because many of them have not done enough to help poor countries despite their wealth.**

- The half-hearted commitment and unwillingness of rich countries to help the poor makes them partly culpable for the plight of the poor. According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, most of the world's richest countries fail to fulfil UN goals to reduce poverty and inequality. Leaders of the 2005 Gleneagles G8 summit (comprising USA, Canada, Germany, UK, Italy, France, Japan and Russia) made the commitment to double aid to the poorest countries by turning 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) into overseas aid but these promises never materialised. These rich countries contributed only between 0.55% to 0.17% of their GNI to reduce poverty. At the 2012 Camp David G8 Summit, leaders of the 8 richest nations in the world failed to renew funding and policy commitments to help address food security in developing countries. They also refused to continue efforts to invest in agricultural programmes in developing countries. Clearly, rich countries have not done enough to help the poor and should accept some liability for their plight.
- In addition, rich nations are to be partly blamed for defaulting on their obligations to contribute to the United Nations which utilises the funds to help poor countries. Defaulting on UN contributions by rich member countries has a deleterious impact on the ability of the UN to help poorer countries. The richest country in the world, the United States, is the largest defaulter among all members, owing about US\$1.16 billion in membership dues to the UN, and it has remained behind in its payments since 1986.
- Rich countries should also bear some of the blame for stinting on their efforts to help poor countries cope with climate change which the rich are primarily responsible for causing. Oxfam released a study in 2015 which found that the richest 10 per cent of people produced half of the planet's fossil fuel emissions, while the poorest 50 per cent contributed only 10 per cent.
- According to Oxfam, wealthy nations are doing "nowhere near enough" to help the world's poorest people survive the effects of climate change. The Green Climate Fund was designed to put together US\$100 billion to help developing countries prepare for climate disasters and develop low-fossil-fuel economies. The Obama administration delivered US\$1 billion of a US\$3 billion pledge to the programme



but President Trump announced that the US would no longer pay into the Green Climate Fund after he took office.

- **Clearly, the apathy and half-hearted efforts of the rich in helping the poor are testimony to the moral failure of the rich to help the poor for which they must bear some responsibility.**

**(POB) The conspicuous consumption and wasteful lifestyle of the rich are also mainly to blame for causing environmental degradation which has a harmful impact on the poor.**

- The extravagant and lavish lifestyle of the rich marked by conspicuous consumption is primarily to blame for causing environmental degradation and climate change which adversely affect the poor. The wealthy who embrace wasteful and extravagant lifestyles impose a great burden on the environment because they acquire so many possessions which they use in profligate ways. Many live luxurious lifestyles and take exotic vacations on private jets and super-yachts. They have homes around the world and wear designer clothes and jewellery, all of which leave behind an enormous carbon footprint.
- America's richest 1 per cent emits fifteen times more greenhouse gases per person than the average American and fifty times more than the average person worldwide. The rich should shoulder a larger part of the blame for the plight of the poor since they are responsible for the majority of carbon emissions which affect the poor.
- The poor are worse off because environmental destruction impact the poor more severely as they suffer the most from extreme weather, rising sea levels, and pollution, being without the resources to prevent nor recover from climate damage. Climate change has caused a larger decline in national output in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa than in North America or the European Union.
- **As can be seen, the rich must certainly bear some blame for the plight of the poor since their profligate lifestyles have caused environmental destruction which causes the poor to suffer disproportionately.**

**(POA) However, while the rich must bear part of the blame for the plight of the poor, the rich cannot be completely blamed when unpredictable natural disasters are the cause of the destitution and suffering of the poor.**

- Although it is true that the activities of the rich may have been to some extent responsible for environmental destruction which affect the poor, much of these disasters are natural catastrophes which are a part of unpredictable or cyclical weather patterns not directly related to the activities of the rich.
- El Niño and La Niña events are natural occurrences in the global climate system resulting from variations in ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific. According to the UN, these events are not caused by climate change but are a natural reoccurring phenomenon which humans have no direct ability to influence in terms of their onset, intensity or duration. Developing countries that depend on their own agriculture and fishing, particularly those bordering the Pacific Ocean, are usually most badly affected by El Niño and La Niña.
- According to the World Bank, natural disasters like floods, earthquakes and tsunamis push 26 million people into poverty each year. In the Philippines, natural disasters have had a high impact on its agriculture sector, damaging over 6 million hectares of crops between 2006 and 2013. During this period, 78 natural disasters caused damage and losses in the agriculture sector estimated to be about US\$3.8 billion. The impact of tropical storm Agatha that swept through Guatemala in 2010

led to an increase in poverty by 14%. Climate shocks affect poor and marginalised people very severely who own almost nothing and have very low incomes. As their livelihoods are closer to subsistence levels, the poor cannot rely on savings to tide over the disaster. Their health and safety are also at greater risk, and they may never completely recover and reconstruct their lives from the impact of natural disasters.

- **As the plight of the poor resulting from natural disasters cannot be directly attributed to the actions of the rich, it is not fair to impute blame on the rich for their suffering.**

**(POA) The rich should also not be imputed blame for the misfortune of the poor due to the failure of incompetent governments which fail to look after the welfare of the poor.**

- According to the World Bank, governance is 'the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development'. Africa has a large quantity of natural resources including oil, diamonds, gold, cobalt, uranium, copper, bauxite but bad governance in many African nations has tainted these opportunities and potentials for these countries.
- Being the leading area for diamonds, cobalt, uranium, and many other rare minerals, the continent is still wallowing in poverty and the plague of underdevelopment due to poor governance. Nigeria, with all her oil deposits, has not inched up significantly in its developmental goals and objectives. Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the richest countries in diamonds, gold, timber cobalt, but yet, it has little to show for them. The gold mines of Ghana and the oil fields of Sudan and Angola have not made a significant impact in improving the living standards of its people either, due to mismanagement of their inept governments. Despite the abundant resources, poor governance has had a deleterious effect on the welfare of the poor in Africa.
- In addition, governmental and bureaucratic corruption has caused more than US\$2.6 trillion to be lost annually around the world, undermining efforts to end poverty and achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal to eradicate poverty. Corruption robs societies of schools, hospitals, and other vital services, drives away foreign investment, and strips nations of their natural resources, causing the poor and vulnerable to suffer disproportionately. Some of the most corrupt countries in the world, including Iraq, Nigeria and Venezuela, have high levels of extreme poverty.
- The poor also suffer violence when anger and frustrations with incompetent governments and corruption grow over time and backlashes erupt which often lead to civil war, clashes between clans, and coup d'états. Amid these events, such poor countries are plunged into economic and political crises from which the poor may never recover.
- **It can thus be seen that one of the main reasons why many poor countries continue to suffer is because of inept governments and not because of the rich who should not be blamed for the plight of the poor.**

**(POA) Another reason why the rich should not bear complete responsibility for the plight of the poor is because poverty is often caused by structural reasons such as racism and gender-based discrimination which cause disparities in employment and income for marginalised groups.**

- The poor are oftentimes stereotyped by society as having a 'culture of poverty' in which they lack good work ethic, parenting skills and a proper appreciation for education. However, Oxfam revealed in a survey of low-wage workers in 2013 that America's working poor have a strong work ethic, put in long hours, and believe that hard work can pay off. However, these people are marginalised by society and are employed in jobs that trap them in a cycle of economic immobility, working hard while still unable to get ahead. Often, the poor suffer from social-economic discrimination not directly caused by the actions of the rich.
- Similarly, gender-based discrimination contributes to poverty among women in the world but this cannot be attributed to the rich. Gender-based discrimination often results in a significant wage gap between men and women doing the same work. Women are also much more likely than men to work in low-paying jobs. As shown by the US Census in 2015, poverty afflicts 15.8% of the population but the national poverty rate for women is more than 20% in the US. Among households headed by women only, it is more than 30%.
- Racism, which is responsible for poverty in many countries in the world, also cannot be directly blamed on the rich. Often, people all over the world are treated unfairly and receive less help due to the colour of their skin. In the US, 25.8% of persons of African descent were living in poverty in 2009, whereas only 9.4% of non-Hispanic whites were living in poverty. In a similar trend, in Brazil, 47% of people of African descent were living below the poverty line in 2006, as opposed to 22% of those classified as white. In El Salvador, an estimated 40% of indigenous children under five are malnourished, compared to the national average of 23%.
- According to a UN report, a history of racial discrimination has left a large number of racial and ethnic groups in various parts of the world trapped in conditions of chronic deprivation with limited choices and vulnerable to multiple violations of their rights. Other groups of people who are discriminated against, such as minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees, are disproportionately affected by poverty in all regions of the world.
- **Thus, poverty resulting from discrimination is mostly due to the structural problems of race, gender and socio-economic discrimination rather than the direct actions of the rich against the poor. In the light of this, it is not entirely fair to impute responsibility to the rich for the plight suffered by the poor.**

**(POA) Although poverty may be caused by social and structural reasons, some poor people do have themselves, rather than the rich, to blame for their plight because of their own moral failings.**

- Indeed, there are people who are poor because of their own moral failings and poor character, and these people should bear the blame for their own penury.
- Some people are poor because they make bad choices such as getting into a life of crime. In America, recidivism is rather prevalent where 68 per cent of released prisoners were arrested within 3 years, 79 per cent within 6 years, and 83 per cent within 9 years. The inability to leave a life of crime certainly contributes to a life of poverty, and these people only have themselves to blame for being destitute.
- Others who should bear responsibility for their own poverty are those who are addicted to bad habits such as gambling and drugs. Florida Family Policy Council found that very low-income households gambled the most despite the fact that they cannot afford to lose any of their hard-earned money, perpetuating the cycle of poverty. The US National Bureau for Economic Research found a causative relationship between substance abuse such as marijuana and cocaine addiction



and poverty. For their own moral failings with crime, gambling and drugs, people should bear the blame for their own resultant poverty.

- Yet others who are poor have made unwise decisions such as having children before finishing school or finding work. Many young or single mothers find it very difficult to find work while looking after small children. The high cost of childcare is also a major barrier to employment. In the United States, Ireland, United Kingdom and New Zealand, childcare costs for a lone parent can account for between one-third and a half of net income. It is unsurprising then that many young and single mothers fall into poverty, and unfortunately, it is a decision they have unwisely made for which they should take full responsibility.
- Another group of people who should be blamed for their own poverty are young people who have unrealistic expectations and feel an underserved sense of entitlement about getting a well-paying job immediately after leaving school. Such people would rather remain unemployed and poor and depend on social welfare than finding a job. Some young adults think that they are entitled to take a long hiatus every so often after a short stint at work. Such people see work as unnecessarily burdensome and have very little sense of moral responsibility to provide for themselves. These people have no one but themselves to blame when they fall into poverty.
- **Clearly, where unwise personal choices and moral failings of the poor are responsible for the plight they suffer, the rich cannot rightly be blamed for their predicament.**

### Conclusion

- The causes of poverty are multifarious and diverse. The rich have, without a doubt, caused the poor to suffer much due to their actions. It is only fair to hold the rich partly responsible for the plight of the poor when the rich are directly culpable for causing and exacerbating their suffering through exploitation and callous indifference.
- However, it would not be fair to hold the rich entirely responsible for the dire straits the poor find themselves when there are other reasons which cause their suffering. The rich cannot be held entirely liable when the poor suffer due to natural catastrophes, incompetent governments and bad personal choices.
- Therefore, while the rich should certainly shoulder some of the blame, it would not be fair to assign blame completely to the rich for the hardship suffered by the poor.

**Report prepared by: Mrs Evangeline Ho**

**Marked by:**

### Q9. How far should diversity be embraced in your society?

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX.X%)

No. failed: X (X.X%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark	Descriptors
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	<b>range</b>	
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

**Strengths**

- 
- 

**Weaknesses**

- 
- 

**A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS****How far should**

- requires an assessment of the circumstances and parameters in which diversity should be embraced

**diversity**

- the condition of having or being composed of differing elements, especially the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group, organisation or society

**embraced**

- to take in or include, gladly and readily, as an element of a more inclusive whole
- different levels of acceptance/inclusion for different groups of people – migrant workers, foreign students, permanent resident, new citizens and existing citizens of different race
- different environment – school, workplace, public spaces

**your society**

- relevant characteristics of Singapore such as historical colonial backdrop as immigrant society, past brushes with racial intolerance, changing demographics, declining birth rate to be considered as appropriate

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH**

**\*\* for the purposes of this essay, your society = Singapore**

**Introduction**

- In his speech at the International Conference on Cohesive Societies attended by about 1,000 delegates from nearly 40 countries, Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat touched on how Singapore has sought to build cohesion over the years in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society.
- He told the audience that “like most other countries, our demography is evolving. Life experiences and needs are also more varied. So, Singapore is more diverse

today than before. Our increasing diversity means that our common spaces will be harder to maintain, and must be deliberately nurtured and expanded.”

- As such, there is no denying the greater diversity in my society, Singapore. However, to embrace, which is generally taken to mean to take in or include, gladly and readily, as an element of a more inclusive whole may be quite dependent on the different profiles of residents and non-residents who are adding to the diversity.

### **Possible stand**

- Seen in this light, diversity should be embraced so long as it is in line with the needs and values of Singapore and that it does not undermine the cohesion and stability of the society.

### **Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POB) Historically, as an immigrant society under British rule till our independence in 1965, we are no stranger to having a diversity of people in the country and it is only logical and natural that we should embrace diversity.**

- The Singapore that we know today has its roots in immigration. Most Singaporeans today are the descendants of immigrants from China and India in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Furthermore, the many policies and regulations in Singapore that serve to safeguard our peaceful and harmonious multi-cultural diversity are an indication of our commitment to embrace this diversity.
- As such, it does make logical sense for Singapore to embrace diversity since it is the very foundation of the country and one of our defining characteristics. The many policies that Singapore has deliberately put in place to ensure that our diverse society can interact and understand each other are testimony to our obligation to embrace diversity. There exist different policies that ensure public housing estates have a balanced mix of ethnic groups, the introduction of common spaces such as hawker centres and community centres, the importance of shared experiences such as National Service, as well as the effort to conserve cultural and religious landmarks to allow for Singaporeans to interact with other races and develop better understanding with the aim of embracing diversity. Even school children have a chance to mix with people from different races and backgrounds as admission to schools are based on the principle of meritocracy.
- In addition, there are also strict laws such as The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act and the Sedition Act that decree harsh punishments for those who seek to insult the religions of others or stir up racial sentiments which undermine the acceptance of diversity.
- There is also the Presidential Council for Minority Rights which ensures that the rights of minority are not compromised or threatened.
- These deliberate policies and strict laws have helped us to successfully build a society in which diversity has become accepted.
- **Thus, seen from a historical perspective, my society Singapore should embrace the diversity which it was and is built upon.**

**(POB) Singapore should embrace the diversity of non-residents due to economic and demographic needs.**

- The government has made it clear that we need to embrace such diversity which brings in much needed foreign talent as well as being a short-term measure to

bolster our population numbers which is ageing rapidly due to falling Total Fertility Rate (TRF). Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Josephine Teo revealed in March 2018 that Singapore's TFR dropped to 1.14 in 2018, making it the lowest recorded in 7 years. This is despite various measures like the Baby Bonus Scheme and extended paternity and maternity leave.

- The resident (citizens and PRs) birth rate in Singapore has been declining over the past 20 years. Without migration, Singapore's labour force will start shrinking as fewer residents enter the labour force in each subsequent cohort. There will be fewer workers to support the economy and businesses may find it difficult to get the manpower they need. These businesses may relocate elsewhere, bringing along the jobs with them.
- In 2018, the non-resident population (excluding citizens and PRs) made up 28.9 per cent or 1.63 million of the total population of Singapore of 5.64 million. With a resident (citizens and PRs) labour force participation rate of 67.7 per cent in 2018, foreign talent and foreign workers (including domestic and construction workers) made up a significant 32.4 per cent of the total work force in Singapore, according to Singstat.
- While we do want Singaporeans to have the skills to take up key jobs, we need to have the flexibility to fill in the gaps in the interim when we have to depend on foreign workers. Skilled foreign workers add to the vibrancy of the economy by bringing new skills and expertise, spurring more growth and growing the economic pie for all in Singapore. To thrive economically, it is imperative that Singapore should embrace the diversity that non-residents bring to the country.
- **Hence, our urgent economic and demographic needs make it necessary for Singapore to embrace diversity in the form of non-residents.**

**(POA) However, even as we embrace diversity due to the influx of foreigners needed to boost population numbers and for economic development, the government should take a cautious approach so as not to disregard the needs and sentiments of Singapore citizens who feel that they have been side-lined.**

- This spike in 'foreigners' has instead led to a backlash as locals felt threatened and send a resounding message to the ruling People's Action Party that this increase in foreigners was not welcomed, let alone embraced.
- The unprecedented losses at the 2011 General Elections caused the incumbent government to scale back such migration policies and introduced measures such as reducing subsidies for Permanent Residents in areas like education and healthcare.
- **As such, our government should tread carefully as diversity caused by a sudden spike in 'foreigners' would be hard for Singaporeans to embrace.**

**(POB) As Singapore strives to develop itself as a world class society, inclusivity is an important trait that we should cultivate and as such, a fair amount of diversity should be embraced.**

- Being a world class society is not just about being technologically advanced or having good infrastructure. It also includes being accepting of people's life choices that do not fit the traditional or mainstream mould. With Singaporeans being more exposed to external influences and varied options, it would be unreasonable to expect all to limit themselves to and only seek fulfilment in conventional choices.
- Diversity which includes the less controversial personal choices of Singaporeans who either choose not to get married or not have children even if they are married,

should be embraced as such diversity are manifestations of individuals exercising their choice. The government and their respective parents have fretted and wrung their hands and can only 'encourage' with various incentive schemes, such as priority in getting flats to housing subsidy, while parents may be resigned and learnt to accept their children's decisions. Similarly, the government has also allowed for home-schooling for parents who believe that they can provide a more meaningful education than that provided by mainstream schools.

- **The open-mindedness towards people taking up a range of options in life is something that Singapore should embrace in its quest to be a world class society.**

**(POA) However, even as we strive to be more inclusive in Singapore by embracing diversity, there are some limits, especially when diversity clashes with long-held values and principles.**

- On a more controversial note, diversity arising from alternative lifestyles has elicited a more mixed and heated debate on whether these forms of diversity should be embraced. We would still need to be mindful about the comfort level of different sectors of society who might not be so ready to embrace such diversity. We should proceed with caution by being mindful of their sensitivities and not push matters too far and too quickly, so that the values and principles that significant sectors of society hold dear can still be upheld.
- There has been much public debate over the LGBT issues. Although very much a minority community, this issue has been thrust into the limelight with legal proceedings to repeal Section 377A and campaigns by the PinkDot movement to raise awareness of discrimination and even invite debate on same-sex marriage. Reactions from the public ranged from denouncement by some religious groups to show of support that urge fellow Singaporeans to show inclusivity and embrace diversity in alternative lifestyles.
- The official line taken on this issue is evidenced by a comment made by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong that Section 377A would remain "for some time", but that it has not prevented LGBTQ people from living here or prevented Pink Dot from taking place. Prime Minister Lee has also publicly stated that he does not think Singapore is ready for same-sex marriage because the society is still conservative although it is changing gradually.
- **Thus, it is very apparent that while Singapore does not fully embrace diversity of alternative lifestyles, neither do we reject them outright. While we should strive to be more inclusive, we should not be too quick to embrace diversity that may cause too much discomfort when it threatens to dilute our core values.**

**(POA) Furthermore, diversity can also be hijacked by parties with their own agenda to cause division and disrupt the social harmony which we have worked hard to achieve. Clearly, such diversity should not be tolerated, let alone embraced.**

- Instead, Singapore needs to take active steps to prevent or guard against such 'diversity', advocated in the name of religious freedom or diversity of interpretations.
- In fact, Singapore should not embrace such divisive views in the guise of diversity.
- Nine publications by radical Singaporean preacher Rasul Dahri have been marked as prohibited publications under the Undesirable Publications Act, the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) announced in Jun 2017. The publications



contain “extremist religious views” which include denigrating remarks on other religious groups, said MCI. It added that in some of his publications, Rasul Dahri rejects the idea of a secular state and calls on Muslims to establish an Islamic state.

- In Oct 2017, two foreign Islamic preachers, whose hard-line teachings run counter to Singapore's multi-cultural and multi-religious values, were barred from entering the country. One of them, Zimbabwean Ismail Menk, has asserted it is blasphemous for Muslims to greet believers of other faiths during festivals such as Christmas or Deepavali. The other, Malaysian Haslin Baharim, has advocated that in multi-cultural and multi-religious societies, non-Muslims should be made subservient to Muslims.
- An American preacher, Lou Engle, who spoke out against Islam in a sermon at a Singapore Christian church in March 2018, has been banned by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) from preaching here again in future. MHA added that the police has issued a stern warning to the Singapore pastors who had been involved in applying for Engle's Miscellaneous Work Pass under the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act.
- **As such, there is no question of embracing disruptive and divisive ‘diversity’ as such diversity can undo the social harmony and cohesion that have taken us generations to build.**

### Conclusion

- In conclusion, my society has historically been a diverse one where diversity of race has been generally embraced. However, recent developments have shown that diversity should be embraced so long as it is in line with the needs and values of the society and that it does not undermine the cohesion and stability of the society.

**Report prepared by: Mr Peck Chee Siong**

**Marked by:**

### Q10. ‘Fame is cheap today.’ Discuss.

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

-

- 

### Weaknesses

- 
- 

## A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS

### fame

- state of being well-known, usually due to one's achievements and status
- can be acquired incidentally or by intent

### cheap

- taken literally, it would mean that fame requires few financial resources to achieve
- a less literal implication would be that fame is of little worth because it can be easily achieved, achieved in a discreditable way and/or achieved on the basis of actions that are not regarded by some as deserving of fame
- fame can also be fleeting today, adding to the perception that it is worth very little
- essays must consider what the flip side of 'cheap' is → expensive, requiring vast resources, having serious consequences

### today

- essays should consider how circumstances today affect the way fame can be achieved and how it is regarded, especially with the proliferation of online media

### discuss

- essays should evaluate the keyword 'cheap' and consider why fame today is not always as cheap as it appears to be

## B. SUGGESTED APPROACH

### Introduction

- With the proliferation of various media platforms, reality shows and talent competitions, it seems as though fame today is no longer reserved for the rarefied few. Online media platforms are particularly rife with bloggers, Youtubers and Instagrammers who are well-known for virtually anything ranging from their fashion sense, self-created songs, their pets and even silly antics.

### Possible stand

- Given this situation, it is no surprise that fame is regarded as cheap today, requiring very little real talent, few resources other than a social media account, and even less taste.
- However, while it cannot be denied that fame has been cheapened to some degree today, it would be inaccurate to claim that it is entirely cheap. The price that people have had to pay for their fame, the tremendous effort put into attaining that fame and the admirable talent that captured the attention of the masses are all testimony to the fact that fame is not as cheap as it appears to be today.

### Arguments in support of the stand

**(POB) Admittedly, there is some truth to the claim that fame is cheap today since few resources are seemingly needed to achieve fame.**

- With so many online media platforms available today, all it takes is a social media account and access to a digital device for many people to post content that could potentially make them famous. The rapid process of online content being 'shared' and 'liked' then leads to fame that transcends geographical boundaries within a short span of time,
- It also appears that at times, people become famous with very little effort put into honing a talent when they become well-known for an apparently ordinary action, a feature that they naturally possess or a position that they have acquired by fortune of birth.
- Baby Chanco, became Insta-famous in 2018 when her mother posted photos of the Japanese baby with her glorious mane of hair, and has an advertising contract with Pantene.
- Socialites and It Girls such as Paris Hilton and Hayley Bloomingdale who are famous for the wealth and social position that they have attained by virtue of nothing but being born into an affluent family, make fame seem so easy to achieve and so less worthy. In fact, these people have been labelled as being famous for being famous.
- Reality TV shows, such as Keeping Up With The Kardashians and The Real Housewives, and their stars are well-known for no real talent other than leading their lives.
- American internet celebrity Logan Paul was ranked the 10th most influential figure on Vine in 2015, with his six-second videos about nothing in particular – waking up, greeting his parrot and dog – and had 19 million subscribers by 2017.
- **Thus, with such cases of fame being achieved so easily and for seemingly no particular talent, it is no wonder that fame is somewhat cheap today.**

**(POB) Moreover, cases of people becoming famous for inane antics and offensive acts seem to be a dime a dozen today, lending credence to the claim that fame is cheap today.**

- Online media platforms particularly are awash with people attaining fame for their silly actions or ridiculous stunts, garnering a loyal following and even making a livelihood out of it. Some of these even borders on the crude and crass, but do not appear to deter the legions of followers that these online celebrities have acquired.
- The line between fame and infamy seem to have been somewhat blurred today, with many becoming well-known for outrageous, rude and insensitive content. While they have their share of critics who denounce their actions, this often seem to have only a temporarily negative effect on their fame as they bounce back onto the scene soon after, completely unapologetic and ready to give their fans more of what they have become famous for.
- This has made others incredulous that these people have become famous for doing nothing deemed really worthy or tasteful. It would also appear that standards have dropped in terms of many people's perception of what is worthy of fame, given the large following that such famous people have, despite what the critics may say.



- Examples include Japanese YouTuber Bakushokuo Wattan who recently posted a video of himself eating an entire popsicle in one single bite, and a Chinese live-streaming host who attempted to eat a live octopus only to have to pry it from her face when it latched onto her eyelid, nose and mouth.
- Jake Paul, one of the biggest stars of the YouTube generation, puts up videos of various antics and earns profits of more than US\$11 million annually. In 2017, Jake Paul made headlines for being a public nuisance, drawing the ire of his neighbours for the ridiculous stunts he pulls at their expense. "There's nothing we can do, though," he said in response. "The Jake Paulers are the strongest army out there."
- In 2018, internet celebrity Logan Paul uploaded a video of his team exploring the 'suicide forest' in Aokigahara, Japan, known to be popular with people seeking to end their lives. The video, contained footage of the team finding a dead body and Logan laughing and joking about it. While there were several criticisms that it was in poor taste and lacked sensitivity regarding such a tragic issue, the video gained 6.3 million views within the first 24 hours and Logan Paul still enjoys his online celebrity status.
- In 2015, social media celebrity Nicole Arbour became the subject of controversy when she posted a viral video titled 'Dear Fat People' on her YouTube channel. Criticised by many for endorsing body shaming, the video was temporarily unavailable on YouTube but was later restored. Arbour's career as a social media star continued unabated, and in 2018, her comedy videos received 70 million views.
- **With numerous people being famous for the most ridiculous and distasteful things, fame does appear to be somewhat cheap today.**

**(POB) Fame is also regarded as cheap today, given its fleeting nature.**

- With new celebrities emerging every other day, fame that is attained often only lasts until the next new sensation catches everyone's attention.
- There is no lack of platforms for people attempting to have their shot at fame today, and there seems to be a conveyor belt of people who have attained their few weeks or months of fame, only to be replaced by the next one who has caught the attention of the public.
- With an endless parade of people seeking fame, it is all too common for the public to have a short attention span and turn its attention easily to the next new social media sensation, reality TV star or winner of a talent competition, relegating their predecessors to the backseat.
- Who honestly remembers the many past winners of competitions such as American Idol, Project Runway and Masterchef, each of which already has more than ten seasons and is still going strong?
- **Fame in such cases does not seem to be worth much since it has little lasting power.**

**(POA) However, fame is not always as cheap as it appears to be because many a time, much blood, sweat and tears go into achieving and sustaining that fame, or even just getting a shot at fame.**

- It would not be fair to ignore the years of hard work and gruelling training that many famous personalities have undergone to hone their skills and talent or to make a breakthrough that is worthy of fame.
- Inventors, researchers and scientists such as computer scientist Timothy Berners-Lee who pioneered the world wide web, Tu Youyou who won a Nobel Prize in 2015

for her work in creating an anti-malaria drug that saved millions of lives in Asia and Africa and Shinya Yamanaka who received the Nobel Prize in 2012 for his co-discovery that existing cells of the body can be converted to stem cells, are among the many who toiled for years before their discoveries or inventions made them famous .

- Others endured the despair of yet another failed attempt and the pain of being rejected or publicly humiliated in their quest for fame before finding fame. Just think of the insults from judges that participants in talent competitions have to endure, often on national television, for the chance to make it big or the rejections faced by authors before their works became famous.
- After fame has been achieved, the hard work does not end there as people expect these famous personalities to live up to their fame and so the pressure to maintain standards is there.
- Even if one may not think much of their talent and think that many of these celebrities are well-known for nothing really very much, it actually takes tremendous effort to maintain the very image that makes them so famous.
- K-pop idols undergo years of training before they even get a chance to debut and some are passed over until they finally get their chance, while others have to repeatedly debut when their groups are disbanded. These include G-Dragon from Big Bang who trained for 11 years and HyunA who has debuted five times in 12 years.
- **As such, the tremendous effort and hard work put into honing their craft, whatever it may be, belies the notion that fame is cheap.**

**(POA) Moreover, while there may be a multitude of people out there who are famous for no particular talent, several others have attained or used their fame for truly worthy reasons.**

- We must not forget that many famous people have attained their fame due to their admirable talent and skills, be in the entertainment industry, scientific research or sport. Lauded for their exceptional talent in their chosen field, their fame is well-deserved and clearly not attained due to cheap reasons.
- Such people include retired swimming star Michael Phelps, critically acclaimed actress Meryl Streep and chimpanzee expert Jane Goodall, whose achievements in their respective fields merit the fame they have.
- Also, many well-known individuals have used their fame to champion worthy causes and to make the world a better place by lending their name to campaigns, donating money and speaking up about their experiences so that others can join in.
- As a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Goodwill Ambassador, actress Angelina Jolie has gone on more than 40 field missions to help refugees in countries such as Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Sudan. She is also an advocate for the protection of child immigrants and children's education in developing nations and has donated much money to these causes.
- Actor Daniel Craig has been involved in various non-profit organisations to champion causes such as education for low-income students and gender inequality and in 2015, was appointed the first UN global advocate for the elimination of mines and explosive hazards.
- Malala Yousafzai, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, is well known for her work in advocating the right to education for girls. The fame that she

achieved for her efforts to improve the lot of girls in less developed countries has certainly come at no small cost, with the many death threats that she received and an attempt on her life that seriously injured her in 2012.

- **As such, fame cannot be said to be cheap when individuals attain or use their fame for worthy reasons.**

**(POA) Furthermore, acquiring and maintaining fame can be costly in financial terms and is not cheap at all for many.**

- In addition to the physical and psychological effort put into honing their craft, famous people often require large amounts of money to fund the process, which includes training in the case of athletes and pop idols and facilities and resources to conduct research in the case of scientists.
- The financial costs may come from a variety of sources such as government funding, sponsorship by businesses and in cases where financial help comes from one's family, it can involve much sacrifice in material terms.
- The parents of Singaporean swimming champion, Joseph Schooling, who shot to fame with his Olympic gold medal in 2016, invested nearly US\$1 to support him in his training in the US, which strained the family's financial resources significantly.
- Even socialites need to put effort and money into maintaining the extravagant lifestyle for which they are well-known. According to The New York Times, socialites spend between US\$98,000 and US\$455,000 per year on maintaining their positions as successful socialites.
- Local socialite Jamie Chua who is also a successful Instagrammer, packs fairy lights and flowers to style her photographs when travelling and has amassed a collection of Leica cameras as well as video cameras that she uses to produce content.
- **Hence, the huge financial cost of fame makes it not so cheap today.**

**(POA) Finally, the detrimental effects of fame on those who have acquired it definitely makes it costly rather than cheap.**

- Not all who have attained fame can cope with the pressure that comes with it, especially since it takes continued hard work to remain worthy of that fame in the eyes of others.
- Swedish chef Magnus Nilsson who has announced that he will be closing his two-star Michelin restaurant at the end of 2019, is the latest in a string of award winning chefs who have decided that they are unable to or do not want to deal with the pressure of churning out ever more inventive and delicious dishes to maintain their Michelin stars.
- Several others are unable to manage the glamour and wealth that come with fame, letting it go into their heads, leading a life of excess and even getting into trouble with the law.
- The process of acquiring fame can also be hazardous and literally deadly, especially when it involves staging outrageous stunts where one misstep can lead to death.
- In 2017, Monalisa Perez and boyfriend Pedro Ruiz attempted to build their YouTube following with a stunt that turned tragic. Perez shot at a thick book that Ruiz held in front of his chest, both believing that it would be sufficient to protect Ruiz. However, Ruiz died from the gunshot.

- Indian magician, Chanchal Lahiri, died in 2019 after failing to free himself in an underwater stunt where his legs and arms were bound with ropes and chains.
- **As such, fame is definitely not cheap for those who have suffered the detrimental effects on their physical and mental well-being.**

### Conclusion

- The rather easy and frivolous manner in which fame is often pursued and attained today makes the claim that fame is cheap today not entirely untrue.
- However, it would be too sweeping to label all of today's efforts at attaining fame as cheap because there is certainly nothing cheap about how many famous personalities have got to where they are today. Their hard work and the huge cost that they have paid – financial, physical and emotional – show that fame is not as cheap as it often appears to be.

**Report prepared by: Ms Faye Tan**

**Marked by:**

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### Q11. Should we be optimistic that the future will be better for women?

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

- 
- 

### Weaknesses

- 
- 



### A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS

#### Should we be

- requires an evaluation whether we have good reason to be optimistic that women will enjoy a better future

**optimistic**

- to be hopeful / positive / confident / expectant

**that the future will be better**

- refers to how women will enjoy more equal political, social and economic treatment and opportunities
- requires an evaluation of whether women, in general, will indeed enjoy a better future

**for women**

- refers to women from all age, socio-economic and racial groups

**B. SUGGESTED APPROACH****Introduction**

- We have come a long way from the days in which women were treated as chattel which could be bought or sold, having no legal status nor freedom of movement. Today, we want to believe that we have left the pernicious ways with which we demean and suppress women. We now celebrate the achievements women have made in the world and congratulate ourselves for contributing to their progress.
- Yet, when we look around us, we see still evidence of entrenched gender inequality, gross violations of women's rights, and gendered norms which continue to work against women.

**Possible stand**

- Although much has been done to improve the welfare of women the world over, there is still room for improvement. In the light of current reality, we should only be cautiously optimistic that the future will be better for women.

**Arguments in support of the stand**

**(POB) International organisations, under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), have led the way in empowering and protecting the rights of women, giving us reasons to be optimistic that the future will be better for women.**

- A global champion for women and girls, UN Women has acted decisively to accelerate progress on meeting the needs of women worldwide by spearheading many initiatives to end poverty among women. UN women has initiated many programmes to provide training, loans and practical skills to empower poor women economically. UN Women has also worked actively with governments to improve women's access to basic services, property ownership, inheritance, natural resources, new technology and financial services.
- In Ethiopia, UN Women led the way to support the local Ethiopian government to accelerate rural women's economic empowerment. The Rural Women Economic Empowerment programme was launched in 2014 in Ethiopia, and aims to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. UN Women has also taken definitive steps to launch and implement the programme in other poor countries such as like Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.



- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has also spearheaded programmes to increase awareness and galvanise new resources for the education of girls and women. In 2011, UNESCO launched the Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education, known as 'Better Life, Better Future', guided by the belief that educating girls and women can break the cycle of poverty and foster greater social justice. UNESCO provided a solid platform for governments, bilateral and multilateral organisations, the private sector, foundations, media, civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to make a concrete difference in girls' and women's lives.
- UN Women is also ramping up efforts to end violence against women and girls in areas where women are most vulnerable. The Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a programme initiated by UN Women and implemented in partnership with national and civil society organisations. The aim of the joint programme is to create and sustain a political, legal and social environment able to empower families and communities to abandon FGM and other forms of violence against female children and women in countries such as Egypt and Somalia.
- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has also led the way to enact a treaty in 2019 designed to establish global standards on workplace violence and harassment, especially against women. The adoption of the 'milestone' treaty by the ILO, sparked by the #MeToo movement, provides legal protection for millions of women around the world, from domestic workers to CEOs, against sexual harassment and violence in their places of work. The treaty, which is the first of its kind, will be binding on governments that ratify it, and will require states to develop national laws prohibiting workplace violence and provide protection measures and victim services to combat potential retaliation.
- **Indeed, the initiatives spearheaded by international organisations in the protection and empowerment of women have made us hopeful about the future of women.**

**(POB) Favourable changes in attitude towards women which acknowledge and encourage female leadership and participation in the political and economic milieu also bode well for a better future for women.**

- In the last few decades, there has been a favourable shift in the attitudes towards women in support of gender equality. People have moved away from believing in the notion that women should stay inside the house to look after the children, to being able to express their opinions freely, to have an education, to head a company and to be the brightest minds in the world. The journey of women from the past to the present hold promise of reaching further heights of success for women in the future.
- Since the days of the women's liberation movement, a collective struggle for equality from oppression and male supremacy during the late 1960s and 1970s, women have made commendable progress in the political and economic milieu, showing themselves to be worthy of the higher regard they now enjoy.
- Women now are on track to having equivalent rights as males. Changes in the law in the USA have obtained for women the right to vote, to receive an education, to divorce, to legal and safe abortions and to practise contraception.
- Society's idea of what represents a legitimate and appropriate career for women has also moved away from sexist ideals. Women are now more welcome to the global stage as world leaders today. They exert tremendous economic and political clout, and they are influential in shaping and improving the lives of women the world

over. Of these many female leaders, a few stand out: Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany since 2005; Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand since 2017; Katrín Jakobsdóttir, Prime Minister of Iceland since 2017, and Tsai Ing-wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) since 2016.

- The 90's have come to be viewed as the decade of enterprise, a time when outdated gender ideals and bureaucracy have increasingly made way for individual liberty and wealth creation. Women are making great strides as entrepreneurs and captains of industry in a world dominated by men. Christine Lagarde is the first woman to helm the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since 2011. She will soon leave the IMF in September 2019 to become Head of the European Central Bank (ECB). Women CEOs have also featured prominently in the latest 2019 Fortune 500 list, marking a new record for the total number of female CEOs, an increase from 4.8% in 2018 to 6.6% this year.
- **Indeed, favourable changes in attitude towards women as consummate leaders and worthy members of society augur well for the future of women.**

**(POB) In addition, technology has levelled the playing field in terms of physical constraints, job opportunities and education, all of which paint a more hopeful future for women.**

- Giving women access to education and technology to close the gender gap has helped women to have greater access to educational and job opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and IT (information technology).
- In developed countries, Women in Technology International (WITI), a global network of more than two million tech-savvy women, has helped to connect and advocate for women in computing and technology careers.
- Digital platforms like Innovation Women aim to solve the problem of under-representation of women in the technological arena. The online agency acts as a bureau for entrepreneurial, technical, and innovative female leaders. Their platform helps connect businesses to women who are entrepreneurs, researchers, and other trail-blazers.
- In less developed countries, creative technology-based solutions to key gender equality issues like violence, health, and economic and political empowerment are now increasingly available to women especially in remote and marginalised areas.
- A recent Hackathon, co-organized by UN Women and Innovation Norway, brought together tech innovators to derive solutions for challenges faced by refugees or displaced individuals. One example is VIPI Cash, an application that uses blockchain to allow secure money transfer among female entrepreneurs to give them access to and control over their own money, independent of the male members of their families.
- **It can be seen that technology has enabled women to gain valuable skills they can apply to accelerate their careers and gain control over their lives, independent of men. This has made the future of women a more optimistic one.**

**(POA) While it cannot be disputed that improvements made to the lives of women today bode well for a better future for women, we should not be entirely optimistic that the future will definitely be better for women because of intractable social and cultural practices which discriminate against women and perpetuate crimes and violence against them.**

- Although there has been a gradual change in attitudes favourable to women in the last few decades, women still face challenges resulting from the patriarchal attitudes of society in both developed and developing countries. It is difficult to change these attitudes which have been deeply entrenched, especially in the male-dominated arenas of politics and business. Regardless of a woman's experience, education or abilities, the patriarchal nature of society fosters the perception that women are less qualified and competent than men.
- Gendered norms and discriminatory attitudes towards women also contribute to the unfair treatment of women. Despite moves to encourage shared responsibility between males and females within households, domestic work, including providing care to children and elderly, and household chores, is still considered a female responsibility. This work, which remains largely invisible and unpaid, has a direct effect on female labour force participation, and the type and quality of work women can undertake.
- Women are often discriminated against because of their motherhood or pregnancy status. A 2016 survey found that 66 per cent of women in Singapore report experiencing unfair treatment in terms of career progression opportunities, remuneration, performance appraisal, and recruitment because of their gender. Women are often passed over for promotion because of stereotypes that dictate what women can achieve.
- The future of women at the workplace does not seem very rosy when there is a lack of concrete steps taken by private sector companies to ensure more equitable hiring and retention policies which make the workplace less inclusive for women.
- Many women with young children find it hard to find employment as employers do not want workers whose attention is divided between caregiving responsibilities and work. Many women end up paying the 'motherhood penalty' as seen in the gender wage gap, the lack of opportunities and the poor treatment suffered at the hands of employers.
- In less developed and deeply conservative and religious cultures today, more than 700 million women are married before they turned 18, according to UNICEF. More than a third of them – about 250 million – were married before the age of 15. Girls trapped in child marriage tend to be poor, under-educated, and living in rural areas where birth and death rates are high and where conflict is common. Fear of premarital pregnancy, rape, hunger, and homelessness are all drivers of child marriage, according to a 2013 World Vision report. Other drivers include harmful traditional practices and the lack of alternative opportunities for girls, in particular, the lack of opportunity to go to school.
- Women and girls in many cultures also suffer from the humiliating and dangerous practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) steeped in culture and religion. At least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone FGM which is recognised internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women.
- Even in a developed country like the USA, women face moral pressures which threaten to remove a woman's current constitutional right to end a pregnancy. The Governor of Alabama signed a bill in May 2019 what is now the strictest abortion law in the US, making nearly all abortions in the state illegal when it goes into effect. The debate on the legality of abortion in the US reached critical mass following the 2016 election of President Donald Trump. Some fear that many other American



states may follow Alabama's lead, denying the reproductive rights of women when they enact laws against abortion.

- **Thus, with a dearth of legal deterrence and the absence of strong condemnation from the international community against social discrimination and culturally endorsed violations against the rights of women, we should not be entirely optimistic that the future for women will be a better one in the near future.**

**(POA) The lack of political will and resolve by a number of governments to reduce the inequalities which plague women has also made it difficult for women to be totally optimistic about their future.**

- According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the main barrier to tackling inequalities which beset women is lack of political will. Despite the resolve by the UN to 'achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' as inscribed in Goal 5 of the 2016 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the lack of political will among individual governments to honour the UN goal has made it difficult for women to achieve gender equality.
- The lack of political will to establish laws and policies which protect the rights and welfare of women and girls is often to blame for gender inequality. In many parts of the world, governments have failed to provide women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and protection from sexual harassment and violence. Enacting and enforcing laws to protect women against domestic violence and sexual harassment at work or in the home, remains an area where much work is needed. Of the 189 countries examined by the UN, 45 do not have laws protecting women from domestic violence and 59 do not have laws against sexual harassment in employment.
- In India, the constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, but the position of women remains unequal, according to a United Nations report. The Indian government has not done enough to enforce laws which protect women who have long been subjected to entrenched cultural biases that perpetuate the valuing of sons over daughters. Women are often seen as an economic burden to families who fear high dowries and wedding costs. The Indian government has also not assiduously enforced laws to bring a halt to sex-selective abortions which have occurred at a staggering rate in India despite a 1996 ban on screening for such purposes.
- In many countries, key legislation by governments mandating equal gender pay is still not in place. Such governments fail to exercise responsible leadership to ensure that women are treated fairly, and neglect to make tough and unpopular political decisions to improve the welfare of women where equal pay is concerned. Countries with the most significant gender pay gaps include Korea, Estonia, Japan, Latvia, and Chile.
- Governments have also failed to provide adequate access to education and IT training for women. The lack of political will has resulted in governments neglecting the right of women to receive basic education. In Niger, 78% of the poorest females have not attended school. Only an estimated 31% of Nigerien girls go to primary school, and a less than 8% attend secondary school. Widespread poverty in Nigerian households is a hurdle in sending girls to school and boys are often given priority. As can be seen, the Nigerian government has done very little for Nigerian women to empower them through education.

- **Unless more governments resolve to do more to protect women's rights and help women to level up in society, the future of women would not look very optimistic.**

**(POA) The progress made in addressing women's issues has not been as fast as it should be in reducing the magnitude of issues faced by the vast majority of women, making it difficult to be entirely optimistic about the future of women.**

- Discriminatory behaviour against women resulting from sexist attitudes and chauvinism are often so entrenched in society that gender reforms have become pitifully slow.
- In the male-dominated world of business, women still do not do as well as men economically, particularly in the persistent gender wage gap which affect women in both developed and developing countries. In America, when Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 10 years ago to close the gender wage gap, women made just 77 cents of every dollar men earned. Ten years on in 2019, the situation has not improved very much, and according to data from the US Census Bureau, the median full-time female worker makes just 80.7 cents for every dollar her male counterpart makes.
- In Singapore, women earn a staggering S\$640,000 less than their male counterparts over a 40-year career, according to AWARE. Figures from the Ministry of Manpower showed that efforts have been rather slow in narrowing the gender wage gap persistent across age groups, occupational categories and hierarchical positions.
- Women in less developed countries also suffer from the very slow progress made to gender equality at work. An International Labour Organisation (ILO) study of 83 countries found that women in these countries earn 10%-30% less than men. In sub-Saharan Africa and east Asia and the Pacific, young women aged 15–24 who are working earn only 82% and 84% respectively of the amount young men earn in an hour. According to the ILO, if present trends continue, it will be another 75 years before the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is achieved.
- According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report, it will take another 108 years to reach gender parity, at the current rate of progress. Across the 106 countries covered in the report, the biggest gaps to close are in the economic and political empowerment dimensions, which will take 202 and 107 years to close, respectively.
- Besides entrenched discriminatory attitudes against women, the huge scale of problems which affect a great number of women globally also contribute to the slow rate of progress made to alleviate women's problems.
- In India and China, the two most populous nations in the world, there is significant data that shows a survival disadvantage for girls under five years of age. In China, girls have a seven percent higher infant mortality rate than boys, and in India, a study conducted in the first decade of the 2000s found that the risk of death between the ages of one and five was 75 percent higher for girls than for boys.
- Less than 40 per cent of countries offer girls and boys equal access to education. There are approximately 774 million illiterate adults in the world and two-thirds of them are women. There are approximately 123 million illiterate youths and 61 percent of them are girls. Women's share in the illiterate population has not budged in 20 years.

- Increases in female labour force participation result in faster economic growth, but women continue to participate in labour markets on an unequal basis with men. In 2013, the male employment-to-population ratio was 72.2 per cent compared to 47.1 per cent for women, and women continue to earn only 60–75 per cent of men's wages globally.
- Adult women and girls account for 71 per cent of all human trafficking victims globally. Girls alone represent nearly three out of every four children trafficked. Women and girls are clearly the disproportionate victims of human trafficking with 75 percent trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
- Indeed, the sheer magnitude of problems affecting a large number of women globally have contributed to the slow progress made to mitigating women's issues, making us only cautiously optimistic about the future of women at best.**

### Conclusion

- While women have made bold strides in forging a bright future for themselves economically, politically and technologically, their efforts are oftentimes stymied by the painfully slow progress of gender equality reforms, deeply entrenched cultural practices, and the lack of political will which devalue the worth of women and their contribution to society. More should be done to overcome the hindrances to improving women's welfare and their standing in society. Until then, we should only be cautiously optimistic that the future will be better for women.

**Report prepared by: Mrs Evangeline Ho**

**Marked by:**

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### Q12. Consider the view that images are more powerful than words.

No. of scripts: XX

Range of marks: XX – XX

No. passed: XX (XX%)

No. failed: XX (XX%)

### DESCRIPTORS FOR CONTENT MARK

Band	Mark range	Descriptors
1	26 – 30	
2	19 – 25	
3	13 – 18	
4	7 – 12	
5	1 – 6	

### Strengths

- 
- 

### Weaknesses

- 
- 

## A. QUESTION ANALYSIS AND REQUIREMENTS

### Consider the view

- Examine the veracity of the claim

### images

- A visual or pictorial, rather than language-based representation of something
- Could take many different forms and be still or moving

### powerful

- Effective at doing something/ efficient in achieving a goal/ impactful/ deeply felt

### more... than...

- Requires comparative evaluation between images and words

### words

- Text, whether written or spoken
- their meanings must be learnt or taught

## B. SUGGESTED APPROACH

### Introduction

- As the well-worn saying goes, 'A picture paints a thousand words'. This saying, as clichéd as it is, contains more than a few brushstrokes of truth. As it was during the time of the earliest human settlements, when hunter-gatherers gazed at burnt wood scratchings in twilit caves, and today, where we are bombarded everywhere we turn by billboard advertisements and flickering screens, the power of images remains undimmed. Of course, the power of language and words, too, is felt and relied on in almost all aspects of our lives, and while words do and will continue to have their merits, the sheer immediacy of impact of images cannot be denied.

### Possible stand

- Indeed, it is true that images, on the whole, are more powerful than words.

### Arguments in support of the stand

**(POB) Admittedly, images may sometimes pale in comparison to words when precision and unambiguity are of essence, considering the ability of words to convey information with clarity.**

- Each word of a language has its defined meaning or meanings, and, in the context of a sentence or even on its own, can be understood with relatively little distortion of meaning by those who understand that particular language. Even words in a

unfamiliar language can be translated into a language better understood by a reader or listener, such that their original meanings are conveyed.

- In contrast, an image, without any accompanying text to clarify its meaning or intended interpretation, is open to multiple interpretations which could change depending on the viewer of the image. Thus, when it comes to sheer precision and clarity of information conveyance, words are still often of more use than images.
- Textbooks and research papers still use the medium of words to transmit information, with the precise use of words and technical language playing a crucial part in detailing and recording key theories and discoveries which can then be studied by readers all around the world. Even when images and diagrams are used, they are clearly captioned and explained. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* is still referenced for its seminal theories on evolution. Simply relying on illustrations of the gradual changes in the appearance of the Galapagos finches' beaks without any explanation of how they reflected the process of evolution would have led to, at best, confusion.
- Items such as contracts, rulebooks, legal documents and even the constitutions of organisations and states are all reliant on the precise wording of information to ensure clarity in the spelling out of terms and conditions and rules and principles. In such cases, where the actions of individuals, firms and even the state depend on these precisely spelt out concepts, words reign supreme.
- **Clearly, there are situations in which the precision and accuracy that come with using words, rather than images, are of paramount importance.**

**(POB) Additionally, it cannot be denied that the ability to wield words effectively, more so than images, is often seen as an indicator of a civilised state of being. This lends words, rather than images, great weight in the eyes of many.**

- All across the world, nations seek to build their human capital through investing in education. An improved literacy rate is seen as something to be proud of and an indicator that the country's population is of a certain standard. It is people's ability to read and communicate with words, rather than artistic ability or ability to create and understand images, that is bandied about as an indicator of successful educational policies and, by association, national development. After all, the rise of civilisation is inextricably linked to the development of language.
- This mind-set is seen in how countries are ranked according to literacy rates, with highly developed countries like Luxembourg and Norway enjoying literacy rates of practically 100 per cent, while that of many of the poorer, developing African nations languish in the 20s and 30s.
- Further evidence that words are inextricably tied to the perception of the strength and prestige of a culture or nation is seen in how great works of literature by revered authors are often viewed as a mark of high civilisation. Some of such literary works include *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift, Shakespeare's plays and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, all of which continue to be cherished today as fine examples of literature and triumphs of the human mind.
- Interestingly, the close association that words enjoy with civilisation could well be due to the more intangible nature of words, being knowledge-based, compared to images, which could take various forms ranging from sketches, paintings or sculpture, for instance. Especially before the advent of modern technology rendering mass reproduction possible, words, especially the spoken word, were invaluable in transmitting valuable cultural knowledge through the generations.



Images, on the other hand, were less effective for such purposes given that they could have been difficult to transmit and could well be destroyed, given their physical nature.

- Muslims believe that the Qur'an has been preserved, starting from the time of its revelation to the Prophet Muhammad, through the oral tradition, where the text was memorised and transmitted verbally from generation to generation.
- **It does seem to be the case that words are more powerful than images especially considering the key role they play in the development of human civilisation and culture.**

**(POA) However, the ability of images to engage with the viewer on a visceral level cannot be ignored, making them often more powerful than words which dwell on a rather more cerebral plane.**

- Words require conscious logical processing to make sense of and require interpretation of meaning, which can sometimes be mentally taxing. Images, on the other hand, automatically grab the viewer's attention and simply cannot be ignored. As opposed to abstract strokes which do not represent reality directly, which is what words are, the building blocks of images are colour and form, which have been found to stimulate the human brain on a more subconscious level, involving pattern recognition and association. This could explain why images, more than words, often leave indelible impressions on people and stir up buried emotions.
- Research in psychology has found evidence of the 'Picture Superiority Effect' which is when people remember images better than words. Researchers at the University of California San Diego have found that people responded more to images than words, and that images, rather than words, were more likely to influence subsequent behaviour due to their more visceral impact.
- This could also explain why iconic photographs like that of the lone student, nicknamed the 'Tank Man', confronting a row of tanks in the middle of Tiananmen Square, continue to carry emotional weight years after the original photograph was taken. The Chinese government's continued censorship of this photograph, as well as other images related to the Tiananmen Square Massacre, suggest that these photos are still very much perceived as incendiary.
- The Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph of the 'Napalm Girl' taken during the Vietnam War continues to be a haunting depiction of the horrors of war, perhaps more eloquently gut-wrenching than any write-up or article could ever be. Such iconic photographs continue to be very closely and strongly associated with key moments in history, perhaps even more so than dry facts and details.
- The visceral effect of images was most tragically seen when journalists working at Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris were shot dead by Muslim extremists for their satirical depictions of the Prophet Muhammad, perhaps showing that images can be so powerful that they induce irrational, emotionally-charged responses.
- The power of images has been harnessed by film-makers who create immersive films. Many of the most popular films are based on obscure novels or short stories practically unknown to the masses. The fact that the film adaptations of these texts are vastly more popular is a testament to the more fundamentally impactful nature of images as opposed to words. Some examples include beloved Japanese animated film Howl's Moving Castle, which is based on an obscure 1936 novel by Diana Wynne Jones, and Brokeback Mountain, which is based on a relatively unknown short story by Annie Proulx.

- The superior emotional power of images compared to words can also be seen in the enduring popularity of film characters like Mr Bean, who does not say a word, and silent movies like those of Charlie Chaplin, where images alone prove more than sufficient to engage viewers.
- **Indeed, the sheer emotional impact that images have over words suggests that images are often more powerful than words.**

**(POA) Furthermore, images are often more accessible than words as images are often able to directly convey information to the viewer due to their ability to transcend the language barrier, as opposed to words.**

- Words may or may not be understood depending on their context. Given that language varies across regions and cultures, people of a particular culture may not be able to understand those from another culture, leading to potential miscommunication. In contrast, images and symbols, especially those of a universal nature, require no tedious translation or interpretation for them to be understood and for them to carry out their function.
- Toilet signs, gender symbols, the pride flag, first aid sign, the clock, and various symbols and crests of a universal nature are examples of prominent symbols which people all over the world need to and do know, be it for personal safety or to function in society effectively.
- Businesses have recognised this language-transcending capability of images and leveraged it to create globally recognised brands. Some examples include the ubiquitous Starbucks insignia and the familiar double golden arches of McDonald's which welcome hungry people from all walks of life, all over the earth, to feast on their burgers.
- Naturalistic cave paintings even now convey information about early humans and their lives, enabling us to learn about our past despite not sharing a language connection.
- **From these examples above, it is clear that images, due to their non-language-based nature, are often better able to reach people compared to words, which can be trapped behind a language barrier.**

**(POA) In addition, images, due to their ability to capture a wealth of information all at once, also tend to be more efficient than words in conveying ideas and concepts.**

- In addition to transcending the language barrier, images also tend to be more all-encompassing, conveying more with less, as compared to words.
- A single image, such as a picture containing multiple elements and portraying multiple simultaneous activities, can capture a wealth of information which would otherwise require many words to fully convey, since words would be required to describe in detail what is already depicted in the image.
- Topographic maps capture a wealth of information such as hill contour lines, the position and direction of flow of rivers, the changing nature of the landscape and man-made features in a single detailed image, which is much more efficient than relying on text descriptions which could be difficult to visualise.
- Cartoonists have also tapped on this aspect of images to sketch creative and pithy cartoons of a satirical nature to comment on complex political issues. Cartoonist Steve Bell is known for his unflattering depictions of US President Donald Trump, such as drawing his head as a toilet bowl and re-naming him 'Tronald Dump', which

provided an eloquent indictment of Trump's policies and approach to politics and governance.

- Because of the ability of images to capture much detail efficiently, images are often relied on to provide pictorial evidence of something that has taken place, be it at a crime scene or when documenting a key event.
- One such prominent example would be the series of iconic photographs taken by the Apollo 11 crew documenting man's first moon landing. Paragraphs of words would unlikely be as effective as these photographs at describing the lunar landscape and the exploits of the astronauts given that no one had set foot on the moon before. Anyone would have been hard-pressed to imagine what it had been like without photographic documentation.
- **It is therefore quite true to say that images are more powerful than words given their superior efficiency in conveying large amounts of information.**

### Conclusion

- Ultimately, while I do acknowledge that words are significant and have their role in society, I feel that images, with their ability to stir the heart and stimulate the mind, are generally more powerful than words. Perhaps ideally, images and words should go hand-in-hand so that their distinct characteristics can complement each other effectively. Instead of a relying on a picture to paint a thousand words, it may be best to have a thousand words alongside a picture.

***Report prepared by: Mr Samuel Liu***

***Marked by:***

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**2019 JC2 GP PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**  
**Paper 2 Suggested Answers**

**1. Explain the author's use of the word 'trumping' in line 7. [2]**

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience seems to make our <b>decisions</b> for us (l. 7)</li> <li><b>trumping</b> what we like to imagine are our <b>true preferences</b> (l. 7–8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The author used the word 'trumping' to point out that convenience appears to be making our choices for us [1]</li> <li>surpassing/ beating/ outweighing what (we think) we would otherwise go for. [1]</li> </ul>

**2. What does the author mean by 'to resist convenience ... is often taken for eccentricity, if not fanaticism' (lines 12–13)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]**

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To <b>resist</b> convenience ... is often taken for <b>eccentricity</b>, if not <b>fanaticism</b> (l.12–13)</li> </ul>	<p>(A) A person who rejects/ avoids/ refuses/ fights against/ stops himself from making convenient/ efficient choices [1]</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(B) would be regarded as odd/ peculiar/ strange/ weird, [1] OR</p> <p>(C) even radical/ extreme/ excessively zealous. [1]</p> <p><i>Note:</i>          (A) must be provided for any marks to be awarded.</p>

**3. What does the phrase 'natural bedfellows' (line 17) suggest about convenience and monopoly? [2]**

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience and monopoly seem to be natural bedfellows (l.17–18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because of their traits, it is inevitable/ logical/ expected [1]</li> <li>that convenience and monopoly share a close relationship/ are closely linked. [1]</li> </ul>

**4. Why does the author claim that it is not 'wicked' (line 20) to make things easier? Use your own words as far as possible. [3]**

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It often <b>opens up possibilities</b> (l. 20)</li> <li>that once seemed too <b>onerous</b> to contemplate (l. 20–21)</li> <li>typically makes life less <b>arduous</b> (l.21)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience allows for opportunities/ options [1]</li> <li>which are less difficult/ tiresome/ challenging [1]</li> </ul>

- especially for those most **vulnerable** to life's **drudgeries** (l. 21–22)

- particularly for the weakest/ poorest/ most disadvantaged in society. [1]

5. In what way can technology 'conveniencise individuality' (line 53)? Use your own words as far as possible. [1]

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...make it <b>easier to be you</b> (l. 54–55) /</li> <li>• conferring <b>efficiency on self-expression</b> (l. 55–56)</li> <li>• <b>catalysts of selfhood</b> (l. 55)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology makes it simpler for us to articulate/ vocalise/ voice our thoughts and feelings. [1] OR</li> <li>• Technology can act as a stimulant / motivator for us to assert our personalities. [1]</li> </ul> <p>Either point = 1 mark</p>

6. Explain the paradox in lines 65 to 66. [2]

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paradoxical truth is that today's technologies of <b>individualisation</b> are technologies of <b>mass individualisation</b> (l. 65–66)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology today offers/ allows for distinctiveness/ personalisation/ customisation according to one's preferences. [1]</li> <li>• However, paradoxically, because everyone is doing it, it makes one less distinctive/ personal/ unique/ the same as everyone else. [1]</li> </ul>

7. Why does the author compare convenience to a 'cult' (line 78)? [2]

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Today's cult of convenience <b>fails to acknowledge...</b> (l. 78)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like a cult that attracts the blind devotion of worshippers/ followers, [1]</li> <li>• convenience today has also become something we do not question. [1]</li> </ul> <p>Note: Literal meaning must be present for any marks to be awarded.</p>

8. Explain what the author means by 'convenience is all destination and no journey' (line 79). [2]

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• convenience is <b>all destination</b> and <b>no journey</b> (l. 79)</li> <li>• we are becoming people who care mainly or only about <b>outcomes</b> (l. 80–81)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The author is suggesting that convenience makes us focus primarily/ solely on the end result [1]</li> <li>• instead of the process/ method of getting the result. [1]</li> </ul>

9. Suggest one way the final paragraph is an effective conclusion to the author's argument. [1]

From the passage	Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>So let us reflect on the tyranny of convenience, try more often to resist its stupefying power, and see what happens (l. 89–90)</li> <li>We must never forget the joy of doing something slow and something difficult, the satisfaction of not doing what is easiest (l. 90–91)</li> <li>The constellation of inconvenient choices may be all that stands between us and a life of total, efficient conformity (l. 91–92)</li> </ul>	<p>It is effective because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it makes us consider the negative effects that convenience has. [1]</li> <li>it serves as a reminder to not be obsessed with convenience. [1]</li> <li>it reminds us that inconvenient choices can bring us pleasure. [1]</li> <li>it reminds us not to always take the easy way out/ always make convenient choices. [1]</li> <li>it serves as a warning that convenience would cause one to be unable to think or feel properly. [1]</li> <li>it serves to warn us about the consequences of allowing convenience to take over our lives.</li> </ul> <p>Any point = 1 mark</p>

10. Using material from paragraphs 4–7 (lines 23–51) only, summarise the problems and benefits that convenience brings.

Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible. [8]

One problem which convenience brings is...

From the passage		Suggested Paraphrase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for it has a <b>complex</b> relationship with other <b>ideals</b> we hold dear (l. 23–24)</li> </ul>	<b>A1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>its complicated/ difficult/ multi-faceted links with other values/ principles (we value).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though understood and promoted as an instrument of <b>liberation</b>... (l. 24–25)</li> <li>Created to <b>free</b> us... (l. 27)</li> </ul>	<b>A2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though we regard convenience as a benefit that lets us do what we want / that brings about emancipation,</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>convenience has a <b>dark</b> side (l. 25)</li> </ul>	<b>A3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it is not as beneficial as we think // it is sinister/ ominous/ disturbing/ negative / troubling/ unpleasant.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With its <b>promise</b> of smooth, effortless <b>efficiency</b>... (l. 25–26)</li> </ul>	<b>A4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even as convenience assures us of/ guarantees us productivity/ proffers to be fuss-free and easy,</li> </ul> <p>Note: A4 is different from B3. Focus here is on the promise</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it <b>threatens</b> to <b>erase</b> the sort of <b>struggles and challenges</b> (l. 26)</li> </ul>	<b>A5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it risks taking away/ eliminating/ removing the conflicts/ dilemmas/ obstacles/ difficulties/ impediments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... that help give <b>meaning</b> to life (l. 26–27)</li> </ul>	<b>A6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that define/ lend credence to/ are purposeful/ essential for humankind // that make life worthwhile.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... it can become a <b>constraint</b> (l. 27)</li> </ul>	<b>A7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It represses/ restrains/ limits/ restricts/ controls us</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... on what we are <b>willing</b> to do...(l. 27–28)</li> </ul>	<b>A8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>from doing what we like // are eager/ happy to do and</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it can <b>enslave</b> us. (l. 28)</li> </ul>	<b>A9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>oppresses/ imprisons/ traps/ incapacitates us // forces us to be completely under its influence.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when we let convenience <b>decide everything</b>, we <b>surrender</b> too much (l. 29–30)</li> </ul>	<b>A10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In allowing convenience to rule over/ dominate us/ prevail, we give up all our personal freedom // relinquish our rights.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience, the great <b>liberator</b> of humankind from <b>labour</b> (l. 31)</li> </ul>	<b>B1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience frees people from toil/ hard/ backbreaking/ manual work</li> </ul> <p>Note: B1 is different from B4. Focus here is on backbreaking work.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... was a <b>utopian</b> ideal. (l. 31)</li> </ul>	<b>B2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and was once seen as the standard of perfection/ a desired state.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... <b>saving time</b> (l. 32)</li> </ul>	<b>B3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By making work efficient/ quick // allowing tasks to be finished quickly,</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and <b>eliminating drudgery</b>, (l. 32)</li> </ul>	<b>B4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and getting rid of monotonous/ boring labour,</li> </ul> <p>Note: Accept 'takes away labour/ labour-saving' Do not accept 'by being more interesting' Ans must show the extremity ('eliminating')</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it would create the possibility of <b>leisure</b> (l. 32)</li> </ul>	<b>B5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>convenience was supposed to bring about free time/ opportunities for relaxation/ recreation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With leisure comes the possibility of <b>devoting</b> time to learning, hobbies or whatever else might really matter to us (l. 32–34)</li> </ul>	<b>B6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People can immerse themselves in/ dedicate themselves to acquiring skills / pursuing/ developing their interests/ other important/ significant activities,</li> </ul> <p>Note: 'devotion' must be shown in the answer i.e. giving of their time or of themselves 'We can develop our interests' = 0m</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience would make available to the <b>general population</b> the kind of <b>freedom for self-cultivation</b> (l. 34–35)</li> </ul>	<b>B7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allowing the masses to acquire knowledge/ develop their inner being/ educate themselves</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>once available only to the aristocracy</b> (l. 35)</li> </ul>	<b>B8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>which was previously/ formerly exclusive to the elite/ nobles/ upper</li> </ul>

		class,
• Convenience would also be the great <b>leveller</b> (l. 36)	<b>B9</b>	• as well as ensuring social mobility/ putting everyone on par with one another/ making everybody equal.
• ... they see a <b>threat</b> to their <b>sense of who they are</b> , (l. 42–43)	<b>C1</b>	• Some regard/ recognise convenience as a danger/ menace to self-identity/ what makes us human and
• to their feeling of <b>control</b> over things that <b>matter to them</b> (l. 43)	<b>C2</b>	• their autonomy over significant/ important events in their lives. // and something that makes them feel insecure about important issues.
• Convenience meant <b>conformity</b> (l. 45–46)	<b>D1</b>	• Convenience makes people compliant/ conventional/ behave like others/ not unique/ the same.
• The counterculture was about people's need to <b>express themselves</b> (l. 46)	<b>D2</b>	• It prevents people from achieving/ attaining freedom of thought/ speech
• to fulfil their <b>individual potential</b> (l. 47)	<b>D3</b>	• and from being the best version of themselves.
• to live in <b>harmony</b> with nature (l. 47)	<b>D4</b>	• (inferred) Instead of seeking balance/ being at peace with the surroundings/ environment,
• rather than constantly seeking to <b>overcome its nuisances</b> (l. 47–48)	<b>D5</b>	• (inferred) convenience led to people regularly focusing on getting rid of/ battling the annoyances in nature.

Total = 26 points

### Mark scheme

1 point	1 mark	5–6 points	4 marks	11–12 points	7 marks
2 points	2 marks	7–8 points	5 marks	≥ 13 points	8 marks
3–4 points	3 marks	9–10 points	6 marks		

11. In this article, Tim Wu makes a number of observations about the value and problems of convenience in our lives today. How far would you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to your own experiences and that of your society? [10]

### QUESTION ANALYSIS

#### Value ... of convenience in our lives today

- Wu's observations about the benefits and uses brought about by convenience or how convenience has helped people in modern society should be discussed.

#### problems of convenience in our lives today

- Wu's observations about the negative impact/ challenges/ threats/ harm that convenience brings to modern society should be discussed.

#### How far would you agree with his observations

- how far** → do not merely agree or disagree → the degree of agreement/ disagreement should be clearly stated, using appropriate qualifiers.



- **his observations** → be clear about which observation you are referring to at the start of the body paragraph.
- Given that Wu discusses both the value and problems of convenience, your overall stand should be one that reflects whether convenience is more valuable or problematic.

### **relating your arguments to your own experiences and that of your society**

- You must identify your society right at the start of the answer.
- If you do mention aspects of your own experience, it must be in relation to the experience of Singaporeans. Avoid telling the examiner your life story or that of your family and friends.
- The answer must be contextualised in your society, right from the start.
- All aspects of the AQ answer must relate to your society → do not waste time/ space discussing issues to do with convenience in general.
- Do not refer vaguely to 'people' → instead of 'people', use 'Singaporeans', 'Malaysians', 'Chinese' (or other relevant nationalities) throughout the answer.
- Do not merely describe what is happening in your society. Consider and evaluate the following, where relevant to the AQ.
  - **Provide clear reasons** and evaluation to support how relevant the author's observations are to your society.
  - Consider whether and why different groups in your society might react differently → the elderly, young people, working adults, people with different income levels, etc
  - Has the situation changed/ intensified/ abated in recent times, and why?
  - How do the circumstances faced by people in your society affect the relevance of the author's observations to your society?
  - How do the mindsets of people in your society contribute to the relevance of the author's observations to your society?

### **USING THE SUGGESTED APPROACH WISELY**

- You will notice that the suggested approach below provides many examples and different angles of evaluation/ argument.
- In the examination, you are not expected to write an AQ response at such length. You are reasonably expected to provide some perceptive evaluation/ argument and at least one well-evaluated example per body paragraph.
- However, you should still carefully examine the various angles of evaluation/ argument presented below to see how the author's observations can be evaluated in the context of Singapore.
- The numerous examples are there to show you that examples are in abundance and not so difficult to cite. You should also familiarise yourself with these examples, because they can be used in a different context, by looking at them from a different angle.

### **SUGGESTED APPROACH**

- R:** The extent to which you agree with Wu regarding the impact of convenience in modern society.
- OB1–6:** Observations made by Wu that show the value or problems that convenience brings about (with relevant quotes from the passage). State your chosen observation clearly with paragraph/ line reference at the start of each body paragraph.
- EX, EV:** Explaining, developing and evaluating your arguments with reference to yourself and your own society, making the link clear to OB and R.
- EG:** Supporting ideas with relevant examples from your society, and making the link from the examples to OB, EX, EV and R.

**\*\* for the suggested answer below, 'your society' = Singapore**

## INTRODUCTION

- My society Singapore, a modern metropolis, has been lauded for being efficient, interconnected, quick, hassle-free, and in a nutshell, convenient. Convenience and its multiple benefits have brought much value to Singaporeans. In a fast-paced city like Singapore, the culture of instant gratification is one which residents have grown used to and have come to expect.
- However, when convenient living becomes the norm, any disruption to the seamless order of life causes fellow Singaporeans to baulk and this inconvenience is seen as an annoyance, a disturbance and something to complain about. As such, while convenience has brought about a number of benefits to Singaporeans, Wu's observations about the problems of convenience strike a chord with me and I strongly agree with a number of his arguments about the problems of convenience.

## OBSERVATION 1

**Wu observes that convenience can be beneficial because "it often opens up possibilities that once seemed too onerous to contemplate" (lines 21–22). He suggests that options that would have been difficult to consider in the past may now be possible.**

- **While I acknowledge that such a benefit may be somewhat apparent in the Singapore context, these new options may not always deliver on the promises as expected for some segments of the populace, because either social constraints remain or some habitual practices are difficult to overcome.**
- It is true that convenience can apparently provide a multitude of benefits that seemed hitherto almost impossible in our daily life. It has conferred benefit in the social sphere that would have been undreamt of in the past because it has brought about and provided a modern life of ease. This state of convenience has especially been due to the significant impact of technology. By leveraging on this new factor, many changes have been effected and improved our quality of life.
- This benefit is most clearly seen in the realm of travel. Destinations that Singaporeans of the past desired to visit were limited, possibly by distance or unfamiliarity. However, technological advancements in the form of automobiles or maritime and air transport meant that greater convenience had been brought about. It spelt a new age of convenience so that globe-trotting can be easily facilitated. For the Singaporean traveller, bitten by the wanderlust, no place on earth would be out of bounds. Such has been the unparalleled reach of technology that even the challenge of overseas travel to difficult places with unfamiliar terrain and climate can be overcome by the convenience of computer simulations, a virtual assistance hitherto unavailable. As an acknowledged air and sea hub, the little Red Dot is conveniently located as a global centre and networked with the world.
- For a particular segment of the Singaporean population such as the elderly and the disabled, convenience is most welcome. Where perambulation and venturing out of their homes would have been a challenge, the provision of physical infrastructure is a boon to them. Retrofitting stations in 2010 so that lifts were provided meant that commuters in wheel-chairs could now travel on the MRT, a feature that was not present when the system was launched. Mobility aids such as tactile paving to help the visually-impaired and wider fare gates to facilitate movement of the disabled are examples of possibilities that have materialised, when they were not on the original masterplan.
- **For the modern Singaporean in the highly-connected world today, what would have been onerous to contemplate in the past have indeed become distinct possibilities brought about by convenience, to make life a breeze.**

- **However, it is not all positive though. Where convenience has made these options possible today, limitations beyond what convenience creates have not necessarily made all new possibilities less “onerous to contemplate”.**
- Even though the elderly and disabled in Singapore might have gained more independence and are able to consider going out on their own with the general easing of difficulties they might face, the countless complaints that we hear about younger, fitter, and more abled bodies hogging reserved seats on the MRT or blatantly using the lifts are indications that going out for them might still be as “onerous”, if not even more so.
- Furthermore, old habits die hard and for these segments of society who might have already be accustomed to not venturing out on their own, the ease afforded by such changes in the physical landscape is unlikely to change their lifestyles drastically.
- The convenience that allowed for Singaporeans to travel more easily may also be a boon as while children look forward to such overseas expeditions, it could also translate into an onerous bane for the adults. Parents have to bear the burden of planning these trips, in some cases, the regular affluent expectations of four yearly holidays that coincide with the school vacations, just to keep up with a certain Singaporean lifestyle. Google Travel Dashboard reported that Singaporeans made close to 9.5 million overseas trips in 2016, placing Singaporeans among the ranks of the most well-travelled in the world. But it may come at the cost of families being stressed by the rigours of holiday planning and considerable financial outlay.
- **At the end of it all, it would seem that for many Singaporeans, convenience begets inconvenience, and benefits also come at a social, economic and financial cost.**

## OBSERVATION 2

Wu observes that one of the benefits brought about by convenience is how it “makes life less arduous, especially for those most vulnerable to life’s drudgeries” (lines 21–22).

- **While this might be true for some Singaporeans who have their special needs addressed by other parties in society, I tend to disagree with Wu’s observation. He fails to recognise that convenience, as we enjoy it today, is one that requires a certain level of know-how and even affluence. It is not freely available and neither is it accessible to those who are not technologically-savvy.**
- The “most vulnerable” in Singapore tend to be a group largely unseen by most of society. This group includes the disabled and the poor, especially the elderly poor who live alone. These people tend to be the ones who struggle the most with the challenges of eking out a living in a country that has been consistently ranked one of the world’s most expensive cities to live in over the past few years. For most of them, the convenience enjoyed by other Singaporeans is one that is beyond their reach and does nothing to make their lives “less arduous”.
- Today, Singapore has already taken its first steps in transforming itself into a Smart Nation, revolutionising the way we live and work. One of the biggest changes it has made towards that goal is the embracing of a digital economy. In 2017, the national real-time payment platform, PayNow, was introduced. While more than 1 million Singaporeans have used the platform and more than S\$900million have been transferred via PayNow since then, there has been consistent criticism that the conveniences of a digital economy tend to be exclusive rather than inclusive. This is especially so for the poorest in Singapore, as well as some of the elderly who may not have access to bank accounts.
- Other than financial constraints that prevent our “most vulnerable” from enjoying the “less arduous” life that convenience brings about, there is also the problem of accessibility that afflicts most of the poor and elderly in Singapore.
- When it was announced early in 2018 that cash payments will be phased out at passenger service centres in MRT stations, the elderly were the most concerned as most were unfamiliar with the ticketing machines. This meant many of them could no longer



go to the MRT or bus stations to top up their EZlink cards which Singaporeans use for travel on public transport. Instead, many then turned to topping up their cards at convenience stores such as Cheers. At these stores, the elderly are able to use cash to pay for their top-ups but there is an additional fifty cents incurred as a transaction fee. This doubly disadvantages the elderly, limiting accessibility and making them pay more than others for the same purchase. Far from making life “less arduous”, such convenience makes life more laborious for this group of Singaporeans.

- **Of course, there are some amongst the most vulnerable who get to enjoy the benefits of convenience when others in society assist in ensuring that convenience becomes accessible to them.**
- In Singapore, the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD) approached local design and technology start up, (these)abilities, to help the disabled use computer keyboards with greater ease. The disabled require a device known as a keyguard that needs to be placed over a computer keyboard. This makes the keys recessed so that people with upper-limb mobility issues can use the keyboard. Many of those who need it do not actually own one due to cost issues as most keyboards have to be shipped from overseas. Another problem is finding a keyguard to fit one’s keyboard. After being approached by SPD, the team at (these)abilities stepped in with their innovation of a locally manufactured keyboard that is not only cheaper but also customisable to fit different keyboards. **When such assistance is provided, convenience and the benefits that accompany it are then made available to some of the most vulnerable in Singapore.**
- **However, the fact that this is dependent on the assistance and charity of others makes it such that the most vulnerable in Singapore are unable to enjoy these benefits on their own. This leads me to disagreeing with Wu’s argument that convenience makes life less difficult especially for those who are most open to the challenges of life.**

### OBSERVATION 3

In paragraph 4, Wu claims that convenience “threatens to erase the sort of struggles and challenges that help give meaning to life” (lines 26–27). There is much truth in this claim and I am inclined to agree with Wu’s observation here.

- While conveniences are meant to make our lives easier, a life lived without ever having to contend with a problem is one that is unstimulating and does not lead one to striving to better oneself.
- This sentiment is echoed by increasingly more Singaporeans as we see a shift in their mindsets to recognise that some form of struggle in one’s life is meaningful.
- In the Land Transport Master Plan 2040, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) in Singapore identified congested, noisy and smoke-filled roads as a problem that needed to be resolved. The Urban Redevelopment Authority then came up with Car-free Singapore SG, a yearly event that takes Singaporeans one step closer to realising the dream of seeing our roads unclogged by traffic. Currently into its fourth year, Car-free Singapore SG now has more weekend editions that it did in previous years, showing Singaporeans’ enthusiasm in leaving their cars at home to use public transport instead. While this is definitely more inconvenient, our willingness to embrace a more ‘difficult’ choice of commute signals our intent to become more responsible citizens, contributing to a shared vision as well as a cleaner environment.
- Our commitment to improving our environment – albeit at our own inconvenience – is not limited to the choices we make when it comes to public transport. It can also be seen in how a rising number of Singaporeans are eschewing the convenience of single-use plastics. Of the 260 respondents surveyed by United Nations, 84 per cent said they were ready to ditch plastic straws and forego straws altogether when consuming their drinks. This willingness to ditch convenience for a greater good has gained traction in Singapore

over the past few years and this has even led to the opening of UnPackt, Singapore's first zero-waste grocery store, where shoppers have to bring their own jars or bags when they shop. Such evidence points to the growing phenomenon of Singaporeans looking beyond their own comfort or ease and instead focusing on developing a stronger sense civic consciousness and social responsibility that "(give) meaning" to the hectic lives we lead.

- **Yet, this sentiment is not shared across the island.** It is sobering to recognise that shoppers in Singapore take 820 million plastic bags from supermarkets every year. In a study conducted by the Singapore Environment Council, only 15 per cent bring their own bags to the supermarket. **Clearly, in some areas of life here in Singapore, convenience wins out over all else – including the ability to be a more responsible citizen.**
- Thankfully, the situation is changing and across different aspects of society, Singaporeans are increasingly showing their willingness to opt for the inconvenient for the greater good of society and for the good of their own character. **As such, I agree with Wu that focusing too much on convenience can get in the way of our striving to be better people and bettering ourselves as a society.**

#### OBSERVATION 4

**Wu observes that convenience is problematic when instead of freeing us, it "become(s) a constraint on what we are willing to do, and thus in a subtle way it can enslave us" (lines 27–28). I largely agree with his observation in the context of my society, Singapore, especially given how Singaporeans, by and large, pride ourselves on being methodical and efficient, and are rather uncomfortable with putting in unnecessary work when there are more time-saving options.**

- In fast-paced and stressful Singapore, many Singaporeans find learning from others a more efficient way to gather information and knowledge than to try everything out on their own through time-consuming, and often, costly trial and error. This has led to many Singaporeans being more reliant on others' experiences as a more effective way to find out more about things that are unfamiliar or new, instead of wanting to experience them on their own.
- This process is made possible with the frequent use of the Internet among Singaporeans who see it as a productive tool to find out more about new things. Given many working Singaporeans' busy schedules which limit the amount of time they have to personally try different options to find the best ones and with a high Internet penetration rate of 82%, it is not surprising that the conveniences afforded by social networking sites have led them to be passionate about referring to social networking sites to get advice or recommendations from others, and refusing to try things out themselves.
- Instead of being willing to go through the experience of trying new and/or unfamiliar things on their own (and risking the possibility of failure/getting a bad product or service), many Singaporeans find it more convenient and efficient to visit online sites or forums to read reviews to ensure that the goods or services that they are interested in have been positively reviewed by others, or to get suggestions from others. This can be seen in the increasing number and popularity of various Singapore-based forums, blogs and websites dedicated to specific interests that have enabled Singaporeans to not only read about but also participate and contribute to discussions on various topics very easily.
- Examples include local online websites and forums such as Kiasuparents.com and Singapore Motherhood bring together Singaporean parents and their common concerns about parenting and the education system, providing platforms for them to voice concerns and exchange tips and information.
- Another prominent example is the high take-up rate for tour packages offered by tour agencies. Many older Singaporeans are quite happy to pay more for tour packages with charming hotels, delicious meals and comfortable transportation since they guarantee

hassle-free journeys, and feel that the time and energy needed to do research on flight tickets, hotel reservations and travel itineraries are not worth it when they can pay someone to do the tiresome tasks for them.

- **Moreover, while it may be more convenient and efficient to learn from others via the Internet, it becomes a problem when Singaporeans find themselves so dependent on such information and are unable to make their own decisions or do follow recommendations/suggestions that might not always be suitable or beneficial for themselves.** Furthermore, what is on the Internet may be manipulated by companies or digital algorithms and people might be misled into believing that the products are genuinely well-liked by the reviewers.
- **However, to look at convenience afforded by technology and the Internet only as a trouble-maker is unfair.** Used discriminately, technology that make work more convenient in Singapore such as enabling remote working, tele-conferencing and instant email access help Singaporean workers ensure greater work-life balance, and does not 'enslave us' (line 28).
- With a well-connected network, the IT-savvy worker now enjoys occupational mobility and need not be tied to the physical office but can work anywhere so long as he is connected to the Internet. It is now easier for female entrepreneurs and mothers to leverage on the Small Office-Home Office (SOHO) concept, to work from home and at the same time fulfil their maternal responsibilities.
- Yet, in a recent study by risk advisory company Willis Towers Watson, 60 per cent of employees surveyed in Singapore admitted to having above average or high levels of stress. This finding is corroborated by the 2019 Cigna 360 Well-Being Survey which found a whopping 92 per cent of working Singaporeans report feeling stressed, higher than the global average of 84 per cent.
- **Thus it can be seen that the benefits offered by convenience have led to us being reluctant to do many of the things that we used to do and sometimes, can even make us less empowered.**

#### OBSERVATION 5

In paragraph 7, Wu also argues that “convenience meant conformity” (lines 45–46), believing that we have all become a homogeneous mass intent only on making our lives easier.

- **I am inclined to agree with this. This is especially so when one considers how the different aspects of our society all appear to be feeding this idea of unthinking conformity.** From the cookie-cutter model employed in our schools to the general docility of our citizens, Singaporeans are not really known for being trailblazers, much less rebelling against the system.
- Singaporeans have long been criticised for their herd mentality and this is most evident in the choices we make in life to make things easier for ourselves. We go one step beyond Wu's arguments – in addition to using technology to make our lives more convenient, we are also experts at shunting off what we consider a chore by paying others to do it for us. But how do we decide who to choose? We simply go along with what others have chosen. From choosing a particular tuition centre based on testimonials or word of mouth, to joining a group buy for some random product just because so many other people are buying it, many Singaporeans do not care to think differently or bother with looking for something that meets their specific needs. This mentality has been key to the rise of influencers and bloggers and the accompanying rise in income for this group of people has become substantial enough for the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (Iras) to start taxing them.
- **However, it must be mentioned that Wu's argument can be problematic in itself.** In arguing that “convenience meant conformity”, he seemed to believe that this “conformity” lies in how we are “constantly seeking to overcome (life's) nuisances” (lines 47–48). But

the word “conformity” brings with it negative connotations and implies that we are unthinking robots just because we all want to make our lives easier when it is actually the dominant sentiment that prevails, not just in my society, but across most of the world. It is what drives innovation, change and progress in the first place.

- **Furthermore, even as we like to follow the majority when it comes to the things we purchase or services we use, there is an increasing number of Singaporeans who are not necessarily bleating sheep when it comes to beating out their own path in life.**
- Superlife is a Singaporean company selling natural and organic superfoods online. This convenience that local shoppers enjoy does not necessarily translate into a conformity for Keat Chan, the founder of Superlife. He owns two farms that supply to Superlife and these two farms are located in Peru which is more than 24 hours away by air. Not only did he have to move to Peru, he also had to learn to speak Spanish in order to communicate with the workers on his farms. For Chan, his mantra ‘nothing ventured nothing gained’ continues to inspire him every day.
- Beyond intrepid Singaporeans such as Chan, the local government has also committed S\$19 billion to the Research, Innovation and Enterprise 2020 Plan. Far from making things easy, this plan is aimed at encouraging more Singaporeans and Singapore firms to take the leap into the world of technological innovation and long-term investment decisions.
- **Despite these examples, it should be noted that Singaporeans who willingly embrace such a departure from an easy and convenient life are few and far between. Perhaps this can be attributed to the ‘kiasi’ (afraid to die) mentality we have in Singapore, where we would rather stick to the tried-and-tested instead of charting new territories on our own. As such, I agree with Wu’s observation that “convenience (means) conformity”.**

## OBSERVATION 6

**Wu’s observation that “we are spoiled by immediacy and become annoyed by tasks that remain at the old level of effort and time” (lines 62–63), resonates strongly with me and I, therefore, largely agree with this observation as it is rather evident among many in my society, Singapore, a country known to have a complaint culture.**

- In a fast-paced city like Singapore, the culture of instant gratification which underpins convenience is one which Singaporeans have grown used to and have come to expect. Singapore’s move towards becoming a Smart Nation and the exposure to information technology in schools makes the country highly connected and with this comes speed and by proxy, ease. It is no wonder then that Singaporeans expect both efficiency and convenience and when there is a hiccup along the way, perceived or otherwise, Singaporeans complain, a lot. This has been exemplified in many ways in the daily lives of Singaporeans.
- For example, Singaporean keyboard warriors fervently took issue with energy utilities provider SP Group when the country experienced its worst power outages in years disrupting the daily conveniences of Singaporeans. The worst blackout in 14 years affected 147, 000 households and businesses, hitting a total of 19 areas across the island state and lasted up to five hours for some estates in the wee hours of the morning. While some Singaporeans took the power outage in their strides, with some reportedly choosing to teach their children about energy conservation as well as how such blackouts are common incidences in other countries, specifically the less affluent ones, others took issue with the inconvenience caused. Complaints ranged from having to physically fan themselves due to the ensuing heat to the food going bad in the refrigerators. Many Singaporeans vented their frustrations on social media platforms, clearly reflecting Wu’s observation.



- In another example, according to a 2018 McKinsey report, the country has among the best public transport system in the world citing the country's excellence in availability, affordability, efficiency, convenience and sustainability that the country's public transport. However, the litany of complaints Singaporeans have about public transport, seen especially on the social media front, seems to cast doubt over the report. Typical bugbears include the lack of personal space, the rising cost of public transport, waiting time for buses and MRT breakdowns despite the efficiency and convenience that the country has been lauded for. Additionally, drivers in Singapore typically see refuelling as a chore. In a consumer analysis report by energy company Chevron, it was revealed that having to wait for a pump, long payment queues, and the complexity related to loyalty and payment systems ranked as the top inconvenience grouses by drivers at service stations. This annoyance expressed in a country that does not see long queues at its service stations reflects the expectations for supreme efficiency that comes along with a life of modern conveniences.
- **However, there are times when Singaporeans are not upset by actions that are deemed by others as a waste of time.** In a time-scarce nation such as Singapore, with long working hours, it is not uncommon to see long queues forming, an oddity when juxtaposed with the fast-paced environment common in so many workplaces in the nation. Singaporeans are known to spend time queuing and they do not complain about this. They queue for almost anything that is considered worth queuing for, from food to freebies to getting the latest gadget. Needless to say, the 'kiasu' (fear of losing out) mentality that most Singaporeans are guilty of only intensifies this imperative to queue, as they fear that they may miss out on an opportunity and jump onto the bandwagon to join in and get a good bargain, if not a famed dish.
- Moreover, the Singapore government is encouraging a gracious society, moving away from the complaint and blame culture where people do not bear responsibility for their actions. In fact, one of the five areas of the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint, the government's efforts to create a sustainable Singapore, is to have an 'Active and Gracious Community'. The Singapore Kindness Movement is another initiative that encourages "Considerate social behaviour supported by a strong economy and good government will make Singapore the best home for its people". These initiatives help to counter the negative impacts of convenience which comes with modern living.
- **Hence, even as I strongly agree with Wu's observation that Singaporeans are spoiled by immediacy and become annoyed by tasks that remain at the old level of effort and time, there are cases where Singaporeans indicate otherwise.**







# TAMPINES MERIDIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE

## JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

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**H1 GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

Paper 1

**Monday 16 September 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional materials

Answer booklet

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### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your **full name, Civics Group** and **GP tutor's name** on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

Write the **question number** on all the work you hand in.

You do **not** need to submit this Question Paper with your Answer Script.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of 2 printed pages



## PAPER 1

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. Consumerism is as much a good thing as a bad thing. Discuss.
2. 'Winning at all costs ruins the spirit of sports.' What is your view?
3. Should citizen welfare, rather than global issues, be the main concern of governments?
4. Evaluate the claim that the regulation of technology is a desirable, but unrealistic, goal.
5. To what extent does formal education guarantee success today?
6. 'Art that does not reflect society holds little value.' Discuss.
7. Should free trade still be encouraged in today's world?
8. Consider the view that the study of history is important in establishing a national identity in your society.
9. Assess the view that poverty is the result of poor governance.
10. Many developed countries are paying increasing attention to the needs of women. How far is this true in your society?
11. How far do you agree that social media empower people to make a change?
12. To what extent is it possible to ensure food and water security in your society?







# TAMPINES MERIDIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE

## JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

CANDIDATE  
NAME

CIVICS GROUP

### H1 GENERAL PAPER

8807/02

Paper 2

Monday 16 September 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

Additional material

1 Insert

### READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and Civics Group in the spaces at the top of the page.  
Write in dark blue or black ink on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.

Note that **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, submit your Question Paper. You do not need to submit the Insert. The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiners' Use (Language)	
Marker 1	/15
Marker 2	/15
Marker 3	/15
Marker 4	/15
Marker 5	/15
Marker 6	/15

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/50</b>

This document consists of **6** printed pages and **1** Insert



Read the passage in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

For  
Examiner's  
Use

Note: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words and phrases from the passage.

- 1 Why do you think the author switches to “us” in line 4?

.....  
.....[1]

- 2 Why has the author written “liveable” in inverted commas in line 9?

.....  
.....[1]

- 3 In paragraph 2, how have cities “traditionally responded to growth” (line 10) and what is the problem associated with that? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]

- 4 What is the author implying about cars by describing them as “cigarettes” of the future (lines 17 – 18)?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]

- 5 In paragraph 3, why did cities have an “allegiance” to the automobile (line 19)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]



Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[8]

.....[1]

.....[2]

- 9 Why has the author placed brackets around the comment in line 68?

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

For  
Examiner's  
Use

- 10 Using your own words as far as possible, explain the author's use of "even as" in line 75.

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 11 Explain why "streets, squares, parks, memorials, theatres and museums" are important to a city. (lines 78 – 79) Use your own words as far as possible.

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]



- 12 In this article, Jaime Lerner writes about “what lies behind successful, liveable cities” (line 70). How applicable do you find his observations to yourself and your own society?

For  
Examiner's  
Use



For  
Examiner's  
Use

[10]





This Insert consists of 2 printed pages.

**Jaime Lerner writes about how to build liveable cities.**

- 1 Cities are experiencing an accelerating pace of urbanisation and growing in complexity. The UN estimates that 55% of the global population lives in urban areas – a figure that is projected to rise to 68% by 2050. With a few exceptions, cities are expected to become bigger and more numerous. What does the future hold for them — and all of us — in this scenario? Many are competing to be the most liveable for their people, and to do so in a sustainable manner. All face major challenges, including competing uses for land space and rising pollution. Successful ones are finding the value of close interaction and effective collaboration among the public, private and people sectors. All over, urban planners, governments and developers are increasingly interested in making cities “liveable”. 5
- 2 Cities have traditionally responded to growth by expanding the availability of land for buildings and the transport network, particularly roads, giving less attention to their citizens. More often than not, cities are designed around transport, and personal vehicles in the form of cars are prioritised. As the list of megacities grows and as more and more people move into cities from rural areas, every city should prioritise four issues that have great impact on the quality of urban life and will sustain our world in the long term: mobility, design, sociodiversity and engagement. 15
- 3 Cars have been in production for a little more than a century, but the space they have seized and the amount of infrastructural investment they demand is extremely high. Cars are the cigarettes of the future. They occupy more space than any human. Vast areas of land are immobilised for parking purposes. In fact, a growing number of cities are rethinking their allegiance to the automobile because of pollution, climate change and land use concerns. While there is a need for cities to look into urban mobility, the priority should still be to provide comfortable, safe, affordable and easy-to-use public transportation to reduce people’s dependence on cars. Every mode of transportation has to operate optimally and be integrated into a transit network. As such, armed with new ideas and technologies such as artificial intelligence, many cities are reshaping transportation systems to favour walking, cycling and public transit over private cars. Shared mobility, vehicle sharing, call them what you will: the potential for transport sharing is certainly there. 20 25
- 4 Another issue that impacts the quality of urban life is urban design. When addressing sustainability problems, it is a city’s layout that can make the biggest difference to the effort to create a more sustainable urban environment. The layout is the city’s structure of organisation and growth. A healthy city is an integrated structure of life, work and movement. It requires planning that respects the land and the area’s ecosystem: the topography, bodies of water and vegetation. As the urban economy shifts towards service, retail and knowledge-based industries, more jobs are now closer to people’s homes, and with the help of new technologies, many people can work from anywhere at any time. The shorter the commute between home and our place of employment, the more time and energy we save. On the other hand, fragmenting cities into areas with specialised functions such as suburbs, central business districts and downtown areas condemns these spaces and their infrastructure to be idle during long periods of the day or night. A more compact city that supports a diversity of activities leaves more land for conservation, and a mixture of other uses. 30 35 40





- 5 The conversation on liveability has also brought up the issue of diversity. It is important to remember that cities have long been seen as “melting pots” that absorb new dwellers. Many cities were built according to this recipe, and we should not forget the lessons of our past. But now, cities are fearful of the waves of people who challenge the status quo. The world is facing problems of identity posed by increasing sociodiversity and the need for coexistence is more crucial now than ever before. 45
- 6 To deal with issues of increasing sociodiversity, a sense of shared identity has to be fostered. The feeling of recognition and of belonging to a specific place will improve the quality of life. A city must provide reference points to which people can relate and connect — rivers, parks, public buildings. Such spaces tell stories and protect memories, much like a diary or a family portrait. At the same time that a city’s identity is preserved, sociodiversity must be fostered. A city cannot condone ghettos, be they intended solely for the rich or the poor, or for people from specific ethnic backgrounds or certain age groups. Walls and fences are illusory protective barriers. Safety and security are a function of the respect and civility that derive from integration and coexistence. 50
- 7 Citizens are at the heart of cities. Cities should be planned for people, not places. That was the only way it was, in cities of the past. Addressing the challenge of putting people back into the centre of city management requires some going back to basics, back to building liveable cities by starting, naturally, with where people are at, and where they want to be. Engaged citizens also make for successful cities in many other aspects. Co-creation is the only way forward, as no government is in a position to manage cities alone. There is no other option, given the complexity of today’s cities and the growing desire and demand everywhere for greater consultation and representation. The city of Montreal, for example, engaged its citizens through surveys and a dedicated phone line to inform them of its smart city goals and gather more ideas. The dedicated phone line led to more than a million data points which revealed the wishes and problems of its citizens. They predominantly addressed issues pertaining to roads, parks, garbage pickups and streetlights. Indeed, a more informed citizenry means a desire for greater consultation and involvement. Making people in cities “visible” will be the challenge to achieving greater liveability and engagement will continue to play a critical role (if not more) in establishing a consensus between the government and its people. 60 65
- 8 So what lies behind successful, liveable cities? History suggests that cities that have successfully overcome periods of decline have had a key tool in common – a framework for development. The problems we are experiencing should fuel efforts to start building better, more liveable cities. A more cohesive and sustainable society arises from city authorities working with the people and with the private sector to implement shared solutions to common challenges. With that, there can be assurance that even as the world of the future will be more congested, complicated and challenging, it would also become more resourceful, responsive and resilient. But above all, a city is a place, as the writer Richard Sennett puts it, “where strangers meet; where new ideas are formed in a public space. A common ground.” Streets, squares, parks, memorials, theatres and museums – these are a city’s “living rooms”. We must therefore shape its future. 70 75





## JC2 Preliminary Examination 2019 Essay Outlines

### Grading & Marking Schemes

H1 Grading	Start Mark ( /50)	Start Mark ( /100)
A	35	70
B	30	60
C	27.5	55
D	25	50
E	22.5	45
S (sub-pass)	20	40
U (ungraded)	0	0

**P1 Language (20 marks)** Based on Cambridge Paper 1 Marking Rubrics 2011 Version

Marks	Descriptors
<b>Band 1</b> <b>17 – 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <b>linguistic ability</b> with very few errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Varied sentence structures and wide-ranging vocabulary. Use of felicitous expression is apparent and/or the choice of vocabulary is sophisticated and consistently appropriate to the task.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisation of ideas</b> is extremely well handled with a lucid introduction and conclusion; paragraphing is coherent, making use of a range of linking devices. The answer concludes effectively, framed in precise and convincing language.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer demonstrates a confident 'personal voice' with assured control and range of expression throughout. Some errors may occur, but these are few and do not impede meaning in any way. Ideas are communicated with confidence and conviction.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 2</b> <b>13 – 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Good to very good <b>linguistic ability</b> with some evidence of variety of sentence structure and vocabulary. Felicitous expression may be apparent, but to a limited degree. Meaning will be clear throughout, although there may be minor errors of different types.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisation of ideas</b> is good to very good, with an effective introduction and conclusion, effective paragraphing and some variety of linking devices. Structure is clear throughout, if lacking the subtlety and effectiveness of Band 1.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer is well-controlled and expressed with some evidence of breadth of sentence structure and vocabulary. The degree of technical accuracy will determine the mark within the Band, but errors will be relatively minor and the quality of vocabulary will also indicate the placing of the script within the parameters of the Band. There is a cogent overall structure. Response is secure throughout and more than generally competent (Band 3), but lacking the quality and assurance of Band 1.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 3</b> <b>9 – 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Linguistic ability</b> is generally sound. Use of language may be 'safe' or more ambitious, but flawed. Errors of various types may be frequent, but meaning is not impeded. Vocabulary and sentence structure are adequate for the task, if rather simple and repetitive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisation of ideas</b> is reasonably clear throughout, but the introduction and conclusion may be short or labored. Paragraph and linking devices may be basic or repetitive, but are evident.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer is characterised by a general level of competence. There may be some ambition, but errors detract from the overall clarity of expression. Answers awarded low Band 3 will lack consistent clarity as a result of frequent errors and unsure or laboured expression. Ideas can still be discerned without the examiner having to construe the meaning.</li> </ul>
<b>Band 4</b> <b>5 – 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Linguistic ability</b> is generally insecure, with constant errors of various types; meaning breaks down to varying degrees, thus determining the placement in the Band. Punctuation and sentence demarcation are inconsistent; basic grammatical errors, such as tense, number and subject/verb agreements are apparent. Vocabulary is simplistic or incorrectly used.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisation of ideas</b> is weak. Introductory and/or concluding paragraphs are muddled and lacking in precision and focus. Paragraph linking is very basic or haphazard in much of the script.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer is characterised by general faults of expression, including spelling or grammar or punctuation. Not all of these may be present, but the meaning is not securely communicated. The degree to which this occurs</li> </ul>

	will determine the mark awarded within the Band. Some re-reading may be required by the examiner, but ideas can then be deduced.
<b>and 5</b> <b>1 – 4</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Linguistic ability</b> is very weak with few sentences showing control or accuracy, to the extent that meaning is barely conveyed. Basic errors occur constantly and consist of weak spelling, punctuation and grammar. Vocabulary is very limited or insecure. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisation of ideas</b> struggles for clarity with paragraphs lacking clarity, focus or coherence. Any introduction and conclusion will be very basic. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer is characterised by heaving incidence of errors, resulting in severe breakdown of meaning. The examiner may need to re-read the answer (perhaps more than once) in order to understand any essential line of thought, but no ideas may be deduced.
<b>0</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nothing in the answer meets any of the criteria.

### P1 Content (30 marks)

**NB** In determining the mark for Content, we need to account for irrelevance. The occasional answer will be completely irrelevant and must not be given a total mark of more than 22, however well expressed and presented.

<b>Marks</b>	<b>Descriptors</b>
<b>Band 1</b> <b>26 – 30</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> An original and insightful <b>response</b> with perceptive ideas and a balanced discussion which reflects thorough evaluation of the issues contained within the question. <input type="checkbox"/> Fully appropriate and wide-ranging <b>use of illustration</b> which is clearly linked to the point/idea being expounded. Examples are likely to be original, possibly making use of contemporary or recent developments. <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <b>relevant</b> , addressing the requirements of the question throughout. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer is fully engaging, showing personal insight and possibly originality of thought and argument. Illustration is apt throughout and used to illustrate and enhance both individual points and the overall quality of the argument.
<b>Band 2</b> <b>19 – 25</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful <b>response</b> which is consistently argued, showing a balanced discussion which reflects a depth of evaluation and awareness of the issues raised by the question. <input type="checkbox"/> Apt <b>use of illustration</b> which may lack originality, but clearly supports the argument, with most points being effectively linked to the ideas being conveyed. <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <b>relevant</b> , addressing the requirements of the question throughout. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer shows sustained clarity of relevant and detailed discussion, to varying degrees, with appropriate illustration being used to support the ideas being put forward. If examples are still quite wide-ranging and/or detailed, even if not original, award high Band 2.
<b>Band 3</b> <b>13 – 18</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> An adequate <b>response</b> which shows an awareness of the issues being raised, albeit in a relatively restricted manner. Balance is evident, although it may be awkwardly handled. <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <b>use of illustration</b> , possibly relying on standard material with some reference to the points being made. Factually accurate examples for the most part. <input type="checkbox"/> Largely <b>relevant</b> , sufficiently addressing the demands of the question. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer demonstrates varying degrees of competence, for high Band 3 achieving a consistent relevance and use of illustration. If there is a focus on the question, but illustration and explanation are not well developed, award low Band 3.
<b>Band 4</b> <b>7 – 12</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A limited <b>response</b> with some awareness of the issues contained in the question, possibly lacking a coherent argument in addressing these issues. Ideas may be fragmentary or vague. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Use of illustration</b> is very limited with little or no development in relation to the points being made. Knowledge is quite restricted or standard references may be used with little evidence of understanding. <input type="checkbox"/> Some evidence of <b>relevance</b> which addresses a limited range of points raised by the question. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer lacks sustained or detailed clarity of argument and relevance to the question. Illustration is basic and lacking development. If an argument or some developed illustration is attempted, but cogency is uneven, award mid to high Band 4. If a coherent argument or developed illustration is absent, award low Band 4.
<b>Band 5</b> <b>1 – 6</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A very weak <b>response</b> which largely fails to address the demands of the question. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no clear <b>use of illustration</b> . Examples may be obscure or non-existent. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevance</b> is barely apparent. Ideas are totally lacking in coherence. <input type="checkbox"/> Overall, the answer struggles to achieve any coherent discussion; illustration is totally lacking or fails to achieve any clarity in constructing any cogent line of discussion.
<b>0</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nothing in the answer meets any of the criteria.

## 2019 JC2 Preliminary Examination P1 Essay Outlines

### **Q1: Consumerism is as much a good thing as a bad thing.**

#### **Concept Clarification & PoC**

- **Consumerism:** the theory that an increasing consumption of goods is economically desirable and that a country that consumes goods and services in large quantities will be better off economically. It is a preoccupation with and an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods and promotes the buying of the latest and newest products.
- **a good thing:** positive impacts of consumerism
- **a bad thing:** negative impacts of consumerism
- **as much as:** implies a need for comparison to be made between the positive and negative impacts of consumerism.

#### **Suggested Approach & Stand**

Students can choose either stands. Consumerism is more of a bad thing than a good thing OR vice versa  
**Likely Pitfalls**

- Failure to adopt a clear stand between 'a good thing' or 'a bad thing'.
- Failure to adopt a comparative writing structure in the essay

#### **Possible Points**

<b>Good thing</b>		<b>Bad thing</b>
Consumerism is a major driving force of the economy and an important source of revenue for businesses and producers of goods  Eg: Consumerism creates a boom in the consumer goods and services industries as when a greater proportion of citizens buy goods and services in excess of their needs, they consume more, they spend more, and that can create a cycle of demand leading to greater production and to greater employment, which leads to even more consumption. In 2017, Singapore registered a 2-4.1 % increase in sales during the Great Singapore sale period.	<b>Economic growth Vs Debts</b>	It could be harmful to consumers who spend beyond their means, leading to huge debts which they have to pay off.  Eg: 55% of U.S. adults who have credit cards report also having debt, according to a new survey of approximately 2,200 U.S. adults that CNBC Make It performed in conjunction with Morning Consult. Carrying a balance on a credit card can become a significant expense itself, especially since the average credit card interest rate is high as it currently sits at 17.73%, according to CreditCards.com. As a result, the interest accrued on monthly balances can quickly add up.
Green consumerism is on the rise as consumers demand for less environmentally harmful products. Such a consumer demand forces corporations to produce more eco-friendly products in order to retain their customers.  Eg: McDonald's (along with many other corporations) is trialing the use of paper straws, while other companies have	<b>Environmental impacts</b>	Consumerism takes place at the expense of the environment as the production of goods to satisfy consumer demand often involves the exploitation of the environment. Consumerism also entails a culture of excess and thereby waste, as it tends to promote an unnecessary and chronic purchase of the latest and newest products.

<p>eliminated them altogether. H&amp;M and ASOS have recently introduced sustainable sourcing programs, and U.K. supermarket chain Iceland has stopped using palm oil in branded products. These developments point to a promising future for the growth of eco-friendly products.</p>		<p>Eg: Major fashion brands such as H&amp;M, Inditex (the owner of Zara), Marks &amp; Spencer and Tesco have been linked to viscose produced in polluting factories in China, India and Indonesia, according to a new report by the Changing Markets Foundation. These manufacturing sites engage in severely environmentally damaging acts which include water pollution from untreated contaminated waste, and air pollution.</p>
<p>Consumerism benefits the consumers by providing them with a wide variety of choices bearing in mind that autonomy and freedom of choice are critical to our well-being</p> <p>Eg: A search on Amazon to purchase a smart phone under the "Cell Phones &amp; Accessories" category alone contains over 82 million products. The ability to choose from a wide range of options is psychologically gratifying to individuals by providing them with the illusion of a sense of being in control and having a sense of autonomy manifested through their decision-making.</p>	<p><b>Freedom to choose</b></p>	<p>Consumerism could however, also lead to an excessive amount of choices which could be psychologically harmful instead, as too much choice causes the feeling of less happiness, less satisfaction and can even lead to paralysis. (Paradox of choice)</p> <p>Eg: When there is an excessive amount of choices, 'choice overload' could occur. Choice overload can leave one dissatisfied with the choice one makes, what is often described as "buyer's remorse." It can even lead to behavioral paralysis, which is a situation where people are faced with so many choices that they cannot decide among them and ends up making no choice at all.</p>
<p>Consumerism provides a sense of autonomy for the buyers and dignity for employees.</p> <p>Eg: Employment opportunities generated by consumerism provides individuals with the ability to earn a living and live in a dignified manner. According to the Straits Times, consumer demand which drives sales increases production which in turn results in job creation. This could increase the standard of living of various individuals.</p>	<p><b>Dignity of work Vs Dignity of labour</b></p>	<p>The sense of autonomy and dignity provided by consumerism takes place at the expense of the rights and dignity of some individuals as a result of the exploitation of labour.</p> <p>Eg: Labour exploitation was the most common type of modern slavery cited. Nike contract factory workers in Hanoi, Vietnam, suffered wage theft and verbal abuse, and laboured for hours in temperatures well over the legal limit of 90 degrees, to the point that they would collapse at their sewing machines. Nike is also accused of cutting jobs at the Hanoi factory and pulling production from a factory in Honduras with a strong union presence, resulting in hundreds of workers losing vital jobs.</p>



## Qn 2: 'Winning at all costs ruins the spirit of sports.' What is your view?

### Concept Clarification & PoC

- Winning at all costs: Doing whatever it takes to win, regardless of the price to be paid or effort needed
- Ruins the spirit of sports: Tarnishes the attempt to win in a good, fair manner with exemplary sporting traits such as excellence, discipline, teamwork, dedication and courage; Or that it spoils one's love or passion for the sport

### Suggested Approach & Stand

- Either side may be taken, depending on whether the candidate is optimistic or pessimistic. It may be more tenable to say that winning at all costs does ruin the spirit of sports.
- Examine recent developments in sport which affect the ability to uphold the spirit of sports

### Likely Pitfalls

- Students may not be clear about what actually comprise the 'spirit of sports'

### Possible points

#### Winning at all costs does ruin the spirit of sport

- Too profit-motivated:** Many professional athletes are arguably in it for the fame and exorbitant salaries today. (E.g. Soccer stars in big money moves are often lured by bigger paychecks). Today's strong financial incentives are also a way for athletes to pull themselves out of poverty. (E.g. Children in the rural parts of China training as professional athletes in hopes of making it big).
- Greater politicisation:** On the international level, countries see sports as a platform to demonstrate their own talents or flex their political muscle. As such, they may scout and develop athletes regardless of whether these people actually like the sport or not or whether they even desire to uphold its values. (E.g. Sports schools in China, Russia, Cuba).
- Increased pragmatism:** More like any career, it may be too idealistic to think that a passion for one's job is all that is necessary. Sometimes it is more pragmatic to go with one's aptitude. (E.g. Most renowned Kenyan marathoners are of the Kalenjin tribe, who are genetically predisposed to excel at endurance running.)
- Today's cut-throat nature of competitive sports** leaves little room for failure. In fact, when there is so much at stake, due to losses followed closely by losses in sponsorships and contract renewals, winning at all costs thus becomes the new norm in sports. (E.g. Lance Armstrong doping case)
- Recent phenomenon of sports becoming a job:** Factually speaking, there are athletes who, while widely deemed to be wildly successful in their respective sports, have publicly admitted to not caring much for the sport. (E.g. Tennis legend Andre Agassi, baseball icon Joe Dimaggio, footballer Bobby Zamora). They simply view it as a job. Tennis champ Andre Agassi wrote in his autobiography that "I play tennis for a living though I hate tennis, hate it with a dark and secret passion, always have."

#### No, it does not

- Due to the gruelling nature of training, professional athletes do need to have a greater vision for the sport in order **to sustain their pursuit of excellence**, especially in the face of setbacks or failure to meet expectations. Some of sports' biggest stars have one thing in common: they live and breathe their sports due to a love for the sport and a spirit for the game.
- To prevent jadedness.** At the pinnacle of sporting achievement, many athletes actually experience feelings of emptiness. (E.g. Swimming greats Ian Thorpe and Michael Phelps have spoken out about their struggles with depression after achieving their Olympic feats). Thus, having a sense of spirit for the game is arguably important for even successful athletes **to get back to the grind and improve themselves**. (E.g. Traits of discipline, dedication, courage etc.)
- Increased media coverage = increased pressure to behave like role models:** Humankind has long placed sports on a pedestal – our spirits are elevated not only when we see people transcend what was once thought to be outside the realm of human capabilities, but when we are moved by the sheer force of passion we see in our sporting heroes. If professional athletes were to lose that spirit for sports, is it even **still worth watching?** (Athletes with poor sportsmanship are not inspiring to viewers)

### Qn 3: Should citizen welfare, rather than global issues, be the main concern of governments?

#### Concept Clarification & PoC

- **Citizen welfare:** Welfare is a type of government support for the citizens of that society. Welfare may be provided to people of any income level and is usually intended to ensure that people can meet their basic human needs such as food and shelter. Welfare attempts to provide a minimal level of well-being, usually either a free or a subsidised supply of certain goods and social services, such as healthcare, education and vocational training.
- **Global issues:** Global issues adversely affect the global community and environment, such as environmental issues, political crisis, social issues and economic crisis. Global issues range in severity from minor issues that affect everyone to global catastrophic risks that threaten the existence of the entire human race or its society.
- **Main:** Primary or the chief purpose.

#### Suggested Approach and Stand:

- The question requires students to compare the importance of both citizen welfare and global issues to governments. The students may either state why one over the other should be main concern or may argue why both are equally important for the govt.
- Possible stands: Citizen welfare > Global issues; Global issues < Citizen welfare; it is also possible to argue for the complementary relationship between 'citizen welfare' and 'global issues'.

#### Likely Pitfalls

- Disagreeing with both factors and raising other main concerns of governments.

#### Possible points:

Citizen welfare	>	Global issues
Should be more concerned about citizens' welfare as it is necessary to ensure survival and a sufficient standard of living, which should be the priority for any government. This ensures that the same party continues in power without any protest and disruption. Eg: Singapore is a prime example of how prioritising citizen's welfare and focusing on 'bread and butter' issues has kept the PAP in power.	<b>Political stability</b>	<b>In contrast</b> , focusing on global issues and compromising on citizens' welfare will result in unhappiness among the citizens and may lead to political instability. Eg: Germany faced a potential influx of some 1.5 million migrants in 2015. However, many citizens felt that the policy had gone too far and too fast. The "welcome culture" that saw thousands of Germans greet refugees from Syria and Afghanistan in September had evaporated. A poll published by the Emnid Institute showed that 49 per cent of Germans think Ms Merkel's refugee policy is wrong; 39 per cent approve. At the start of the crisis, the figures were the other way around.
It is especially pressing to care more about citizens' welfare because it would affect them directly. Eg: In January 2013, the Singapore Government released the Population White Paper. Not only did the White Paper elicit the normal grumblings but also sparked online protests and real-world ones at Hong Lim Park where one rallying cry was "Singapore for Singaporeans". According to some political observers, this accounted for some voters to vote against the ruling party in the 2015 General Elections.	<b>Direct vs Indirect effects</b>	<b>On the other hand</b> , the global issues may or may not affect the countries directly, which suggests that citizen welfare takes priority. Eg: Governments being concerned about global poverty could have little bearing for many governments' political legitimacy.



Citizen welfare is within the reach of a government. Resources allocated can, in many cases seek to resolve or tackle the problem.	<b>Ability</b>	Not all countries have the resources to focus on global issues as it might be too big an issue for countries to tackle. Eg: Poor and developing countries may not be willing to invest money in combating terrorism as it requires huge amounts of money and manpower which is beyond the ability of many countries.
<b>Global issues</b>	<b>&gt;</b>	<b>Citizen welfare</b>
Given that most societies today are connected and mutually dependent, it is important to have an eye on the global issues to be more effective in addressing citizens' welfare.	<b>Effectiveness of solutions</b>	<p>Focusing on national problems that affect citizens' welfare may not even solve the problem as the root causes of the problem in most cases could be global issues.</p> <p>Eg: Financial crises could arise among citizens due to insufficient concern given to the international global situation; international migration patterns and issues that affect local demographics too. Eg. Following the collapse of Lehman Brothers, about 10,000 retail investors in Singapore lost all or a large part of their investments totalling over S\$500 million in structured investment products linked to the American investment bank.</p>
All countries are expected to do their part to help/solve global issues as a humanitarian measure. Eg: The objective of summits like the ASEAN Summit is to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through <b>joint endeavours</b> in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community. <b>Failing to solve/help global issues and focusing only on citizens' welfare might be counterproductive</b> and in turn the citizens' welfare might be compromised.	<b>Humanitarian + Prevents isolation</b>	If the focus is only on citizens' welfare, the country may become alienated from other countries. There may be no helping hand when such countries need help. Eg: Isolation from global issues is – more often than not – a mistake, an unenviable condition resulting from failed policies. Cuba's emergence from decades of forced isolation is a victory for the island, while North Korea's pariah status has led it to the brink of collapse.

**Insightful point:**

- It is important for governments to care for both, not necessarily one over the other but to keep both in mind as we examine the differing contexts in relation to citizens' welfare and global causes.

#### Qn 4: Evaluate the claim that the regulation of technology is a desirable, but unrealistic, goal.

##### Concept Clarification and PoC

- **Regulation** : Restrictions / guidelines placed on processes or the usage of things usually by the government or an organisation of authority
- **Technology** : Products, machinery, equipment and services developed from the application of scientific knowledge
- **Desirable** : Bring about benefits
- **Unrealistic** : Impractical, not achievable

##### Suggested Approach & Stand

There are two point of contention here with each permutation yielding viable stands.

**Desirable / Realistic:** This is a standpoint taken often by governments that have the means or resources to regulate.

**Undesirable / Realistic:** This is a standpoint taken often by the apologists of tech-based entities and the individuals critical of the industry.

**Desirable / Unrealistic:** This is a standpoint taken often by governments that do not have the means or resources to regulate.

**Undesirable / Unrealistic:** This is a standpoint taken often by tech-based entities and the individuals representing them.

##### Likely Pitfalls

- Failure to adopt a consistent stand throughout the essay.
- Failure to consider both PoCs sufficiently / Overly focused on one.
- A generic response considering the benefits and detriments of technology.

##### Possible Points

##### The regulation of technology is desirable

**a. The profit driven nature of companies dealing with technology:** Undeniably technology often yields great benefits and hence companies are known to consider unethical methods to maximising profits. These could include under declaring the harmful medical consequences arising from the use of the technology [Smart Phones: Addiction, Blue Light (Eyesight), Radiation (Diseases)]. Other less devious but problematic behaviour include the use of planned obsolescence in technology to compel customers to replace and purchase new items (Printers, computers, most internally-powered devices like headphones). This results in problems like the depletion of rare-earths and waste. Left on their own, most corporations will use some of these questionable methods to maximise profits.

**b. Environmental damage:** Numerous prominent car makers in the world under-declare or even falsify carbon emissions to downplay the environmental damage the technology brings to the world (Volkswagen). More insidiously, companies often misrepresent emerging alternatives (electric cars) that are less harmful in order to preserve their market dominance.

**c. Personal information misuse:** Social media platforms are also consciously aware of how “likes” and other user interactions on their technological platforms make their brand more addictive and have leveraged this knowledge to do business by selling client information to dubious entities that abuse this engagement for more nefarious purposes like political manipulation and targeted advertising that prey on specific issues identified by the algorithm regarding the users (Cambridge Analytica, Google Ads, Facebook Ads).

### **The regulation of technology is undesirable**

**d. Stifles innovation and growth:** Emerging technologies, particularly disruptive ones threaten the way certain industries are run. Governments and incumbent technology companies are intertwined in their dealings and will set in place regulation to prevent the emergence and dominance of these new technologies. [Ride sharing (Uber, Grab) , home sharing (AirBnB), bike sharing (o-bike), electric cars (Tesla), e-commerce]. Very often, the excuse of reducing the social consequences of such technologies will often be the given reason for regulation but very often this prevents innovation and change to preserve the incumbent technology or the old way of doing business.

### **The regulation of technology is realistic**

**e. Government controls infrastructure and have legislative powers to regulate:** While some technologies can be very complicated and diverse to regulate, laws and infrastructural controls can compel most of these companies to fall in line (Ride Sharing around the world). The implementation of large fines, monitoring and whistleblowing have helped to keep many technological companies in check (Fake News laws governing social media platforms in Singapore). Often, an outright ban can be applied when there isn't enough means or cooperation from the technology company (PMDs are banned in Australia).

**f. Self-monitoring mechanisms and self-regulation:** A more socially conscious consumer market results in consumers making purchasing choices beyond functionality and price, taking into consideration issues like sustainability and ethical practices. (Hybrid, electric cars). As such, companies in the pursuit of profit and market share have to ironically consider costly initiatives of sustainability and ethics to stay competitive and relevant. Thus, external regulation by governments will often be received and accepted by companies to stay relevant and continue to capture markets they are involved in.

### **The regulation of technology is unrealistic**

**g. Ubiquitous technologies:** Most governments have allowed nascent technological industries like streaming services and e-commerce services to become established and dominant. While there may be a desire to regulate, large swathes of consumers will make it difficult for a regulatory body or a government to overly regulate without a public outcry. Very often, the regulation will result in inconvenience to customers of the company and will lead to raised costs, both of which will be met with fierce resistance and come at a political cost particularly to governments (PMDs).

**h. Impossible to monitor or implement regulation:** Some industries are very guarded or restrictive due to the cutting-edge patented processes and methods behind them. As such, regulators find it difficult apply regulation to such companies without considerable resistance from them (Apple, Samsung, Facebook). Very often, these companies are willing to go through extended legal proceedings to stonewall or stall these regulation and legislation (Often true in USA with Google a target by the US Government). Many industries provide measurements or statistics to regulatory body as governments and NGOs lack the technological means or trained manpower to monitor (Nuclear production, Motoring Industry).

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### Qn 5: To what extent does formal education guarantee success today?

#### Concept Clarification & PoC

- **Formal education:** education that is largely conducted by an institution that also carries out assessment and issues certificates stating one's level of achievement. One could also receive formal education at home but take exams and receive certificates recognised by employers.
- **Guarantee:** assure, definitely result in
- **Success:** employment, material wealth. Subjective concept- for some, job satisfaction and recognition of one's work by others is considered an achievement. For others, success is represented ultimately in one's material standard of living. One's idea of success may also be dependent on how one is better than someone else.
- **Today:** VUCA world, globalisation with a focus on a knowledge-based economy, out-sourcing, movement of labour

#### Suggested Approach

- Students should consider the extent to which formal education increases one's chances of success and conditions which limit the influence of formal education
- Most arguments should deal with the normative and contextual reading of the word 'success' as referring to material wealth, job satisfaction, achievement in their jobs. (Should not be about spiritual and emotional success. Student should understand the word in context )

#### Likely Pitfalls

- Essay digresses to consider other ways to achieve success

#### Possible Points

##### Formal education increases one's chances for success because:

- a) **The knowledge-based economies of the world today** requires the services of skilled personnel to sustain. Such economies are described as economies where knowledge is the key asset and where knowledge becomes a more important determinant of the rate and level of growth than capital injection and volume of fixed assets. Sectors nurtured by such economies include aeronautics, communications technology, biotechnology, environmental technology, banking and finance services etc.
- b) Formal education is still the platform for one to gain literacy and employment. The level of education is a key factor affecting the level of informality of one's work. Globally, when the level of education increases, the level of informality in employment decreases, the report says. An International Labour Organisation (ILO) report notes that while not all informal workers are poor, poverty is both a cause and a consequence of informality. The report shows that the poor face higher rates of informal employment and that poverty rates are higher among workers in informal employment.
- c) The world today pegs remuneration to one's academic qualification when one first enters the job market. One's academic qualification unlocks the doors to professions, some of which are financially more rewarding than others. Courses producing the top earners in the UK are business, computing and law.
- d) Formal education can develop one's critical thinking faculties, which helps one make better decisions at work and be even more successful. With education, farmers can adopt more productive farming methods and women on microfinancing schemes can make more thoughtful decisions that lead to better financial outcomes.

**Formal education does not increase one's chances for success because:**

- e) There is no guarantee to be provided in today's VUCA world with the disruption posed by emerging technologies and economic restructuring. According to recent estimates by the International Commission for Financing Global Education Opportunities in a report written for UNESCO, up to 2 billion of today's jobs are at risk of being replaced by automation by 2030. (Rebuttal: Yet the key to maintaining employability lies in re-training.)
- f) Many societies are today are plagued with economic crises making jobs all but difficult to come by. These crises could be due to economic mismanagement or factors of economic contagion that are totally out of the control of the countries involved. In Venezuela, corruption, failed economic policies and the collapse of oil prices led to catastrophic nationwide blackouts, hyperinflation, food shortages, and disease. In Greece, on the back of fears that Greece will default on its debt repayment, an adverse credit rating as well as austerity measures, spooked investors deserted Greece and as of May 2017, the youth unemployment rate in Greece reached a staggering 46 percent while mean unemployment rate was at 18.6% compared to the European average of 6.4%.
- g) Formal education alone will not grant one success. One needs other qualities such as creativity and resilience in order to be successful. Jack Ma, China's 2nd richest person, was rejected from dozens of jobs, including one at KFC, before finding success with his third internet company, Alibaba. J. K. Rowling at one stage of her life, lost her job, fell into depression, was on welfare and was sustained by her passion for writing. Her first book Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone got rejected by 12 publishers.



**Question 6: 'Arts that do not reflect society are of little value.' Discuss.**

**Concept Clarification & PoC**

- Arts/The arts: Could include different genres/branches like painting, music, literature, dance, theatre.
- Reflect society: to show aspects/characteristics of society.
- Note: There is an assumption that some forms or works of art/the arts do not reflect society.

**Suggested Approach & Stand**

- It would be easier to disagree with the proposition and argue that there is value. Better scripts would also consider why some people would place little value on the arts that do not reflect society.

**Likely Pitfalls**

- Scripts argue whether or not the arts reflect society or whether the arts should or should not reflect society.

**Possible points**

**Little value**

- a. Any work that does not clearly reflect society is simply **self-indulgent on the part of the artist**. This is especially for works which are abstract or which are extremely difficult to interpret by ordinary people. Thus, there is little value for the rest of society apart from allowing the artist to express himself or herself. For eg., British artist Tracy Emin's works have often been criticised as being overly self-reflective and narcissistic, some of which include her deep desires and containing vulgar themes.
- b. Even **from the artistic viewpoint**, there is little value. For some of these works, there is a tendency to go against the norms and conventions of their crafts. In the name of creativity or freedom of expression, many end up being vague and subjective works, and the artists are criticised as having **shoddy skills and being unmethodical or ill disciplined**. For eg., many art critics are of the opinion that abstract art is merely an excuse or a façade to mask an artist's lack of artistry. Some of Jackson Pollock's works for instance involve the use of nothing but splattered paint.
- c. To many people, some of these works are **too abstract and random to convey anything meaningful or relevant to their lives**, so many dismiss them as useless and of little value. For eg., in the famous play 'Waiting for Godot' by Samuel Beckett, the characters Vladimir and Estragon wait for a character named Godot who never appears, and this work has been criticised as leaving some audiences 'baffled, bored, and irritated' since hardly anything meaningful happens in the entire play.

**Great value OR there is some value**

- d. **Source of beauty in the aesthetic sense:** There is beauty in the individual elements of art like color, shape, line, texture, space, value, etc. Similarly, other forms of the arts contain their respective individual elements that put together in different, almost infinite combinations, create a sound composition of a work of art. For eg. Many critics have lauded the use of colours and textures by abstract artists such as Picasso's cubist works.
- e. There are people who consume such works as a **source of leisure**. Despite how some works not seeming to reflect societal issues, many flock to such works purely out of leisure/relaxation and to enjoy the performances. Some works of modern dance for instance attract audiences globally despite not being linked to what happens in society.
- f. From an individual perspective, some works **give one the freedom to explore the piece, and to interpret or assign one's personal meaning** to the piece. This intensely personal process enriches a viewer's experience of an artwork. For eg. American artist Marcel Duchamp often criticised traditional paintings as superficial eye candy and instead felt that art needed to please and befuddle the mind. His 1917 sculpture 'Fountain', an overturned porcelain urinal, was seen to be scandalous, but his point was that art is subjective.

- g. Such works may not be a reflection of what goes on in society, but for an individual, producing such works can have **health and therapeutic qualities**. This is often the case for victims or those with mental issues. Art therapy goes a long way in helping them deal with their respective issues.
- h. For the creator, there is tremendous value in the **artistic process of creating**, unhampered by the need to reflect elements of society. Such creative freedom is crucial to people in the creative industries, allowing them to explore and create new techniques and push the boundaries, giving more free reign to their imaginative selves. For eg., American composer John Cage was an experimenter, who in his 60-year career, composed nearly 300 pieces, many of which were misunderstood. His creations included conventional piano and orchestra to music made using everyday items like bathtubs.
- i. For artists, despite creating works that bear no resemblance to society, there are audiences who appreciate or enjoy their works, so these works are a **source of revenue** and help the industry flourish economically.





## Question 7: Should free trade still be encouraged in today's world?

### Concept Clarification & PoC

**“free trade”:** Generally refers to the process and effects of agreements that allow countries to import and export goods with little/no tariff barriers.

**“today's world”:** Different characteristics of the world.

**“still be encouraged”:** There are changes in today's world that undermine the assumed advantages of free trade.

### Suggested Approach & Stand

- Both sides are tenable.

### Likely Pitfalls

- Insufficient content knowledge and/or points not linked to context of 'today's world'.

### Some Possible Points

#### **Free trade SHOULD STILL be encouraged in today's world:**

**a. In an increasingly competitive world, free trade is needed to promote innovation.** Free trade agreements open doors for domestic companies to compete globally. Such increased competition ensures that countries innovate in order to gain an edge over other countries – in areas of design, marketing, distribution and price. Eg. 2017 Findings by Professor Elizabeth Thurbon (UNSW) on China's and America's innovation prowess in the technology sector due to free trade.

**b. In an increasingly affluent world, free trade caters to the increased desire for consumer choice.** The general rise in wealth worldwide has led to a corresponding rise in consumer desire to be able to choose from a variety of goods. The easy exchange of goods and services via free trade grants access to such choice availability. Eg. Findings on human decision-making according to Dr Eric Bonabeau, a regular contributor to the Harvard Business Review and the MIT Sloan Management Review.

**c. In an increasingly fragmented world, free trade provides additional incentive for governments to promote global peace.** The presence of international institutions and rules to govern global trade reduce unfair trade treaties that are a key cause of conflicts. This is especially important for managing an increasingly conflict-ridden world. Eg. 2019 Findings of the US Center for Strategic and International Studies.

#### **Free trade SHOULD NOT be encouraged in today's world**

**d. Unbridled free trade increases income inequality in poor countries, a key concern of governments in the developing world.** This happens when rich countries shift parts of the production process to poor countries, hire only skilled workers and pay them high wages. This boosts the wages of skilled workers and disadvantages unskilled workers who tend not to have such job opportunities, a concern echoed by many politicians in the developing world. Eg. Economist Xavier Sala-i-Martin of Columbia University who pointed out that inequality has risen in nearly every country worldwide, especially in developing countries like Vietnam.

**e. Free trade often erodes a country's sovereignty, a concern of all governments past to present.** Free trade agreements often contain safeguard mechanisms in the form of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) which allow foreign companies to sue national governments in an international panel. Such mechanisms infringe on a nation's sovereignty as foreign companies are able to influence national



laws through international treaties. Eg. Terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the legal feuds between USA and Mexico, USA and Canada.

**f. Free trade exacerbates environmental degradation, a key global concern.** Environmental conservation is high on the agenda of many people today. Free trade necessarily involves energy use for transportation, with the resulting air pollution and other environmental impacts. Specific kinds of trade, such as trade in toxic wastes or endangered species also have obvious environmental impacts. Eg. 2018 Findings of WTO. See also findings by Harvard Professor Jeffrey Frankel who shared on how the international trade in shrimp was harming sea turtles by ensnaring them in nets.



**Qn 8: Consider the view that the study of history is important in establishing national identity in your society.**

**Concept Clarification & PoC**

**Study of history:** The study of past events considered together, especially events of a particular period, country, or subject.

**National identity:** A person's identity or sense of belonging to one state or to one nation. It is the sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, as represented by distinctive traditions, culture, language and politics.

**Suggested Approach & Stand**

- While the study of history might not be entirely instrumental in establishing the Singaporean identity because of its redundancy in the face of a dynamic landscape, it is still nonetheless critical on the whole as it provides us greater insight into our cultural diversity and helps us learn from our mistakes and work toward a unified identity.
- Despite there being some capacity for the study of history to be important in the establishing of national identity, it is not an essential tool in cementing it in Singapore as the past is of little relevance to the evolving nature of our people today.

**Likely Pitfalls**

- Students, in their attempt to disagree with the statement, might hijack the question and go on to talk about other factors (i.e. leadership) that might be more important in establishing national identity other than history.
- Students do not nuance the arguments and adopt a binary approach to answering the question –  
SVs: The study of history is important in establishing national identity because...  
OVs: The study of history is *not* important in establishing national identity because...

**The study of history is important in establishing national identity in Singapore because...**

- a. The study of history can provide us with insight into our cultures of origin as well as cultures with which we might be less familiar, thereby increasing cross-cultural awareness and understanding. With multiracialism being a key rhetoric in the building of the Singaporean identity, it is necessary that we possess intimate knowledge of the different people of our land, in order to foster closer bonds and genuine ties that help create a more robust and authentic identity we can all relate to.  
[E.g. Part of the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy: Provide learning experiences for students to actively interact and bond with others, through which they learn to embrace diversity and collaborate with people from different backgrounds.]
- b. The study of history brings to light common struggles we faced as a people in the past, essential in serving to unite Singaporeans to face new challenges together as we head into the future. Moving ahead, it is vital we learn from our mistakes and not repeat them, in order to progress from strength to strength, something we pride ourselves in as a nation. [E.g. Japanese Occupation in Singapore, Struggle for stable governance in post-war Singapore, Race riots in 1964 etc.]
- c. Particularly for Singapore, the study of history meaningfully reminds us of how, as a nation, we have always looked to carving a new path for ourselves, guided by a spirit of innovation and the will to thrive. These elements are critical to our sense of identity as a sovereign people. We have always taken pride in thinking out of the box and taking the road less travelled, establishing niche areas of growth and not being limited by our immediate constraints like geopolitics in the region or even our physical size. [E.g. 1) Separation from Malaysia, setting up our own defence forces, launch of a massive industrialization programme, modification of education policies & offering financial incentives to industrial enterprises all within the 1960s-1970s. 2) Singapore's current transformation toward a digital economy. 3) 2019: Singapore tops list of leading maritime capitals for fourth time. 4) 2017: Singapore is a regional hub for oil and gas, as well as a world leader in sustainable water solutions and projects such as NEWater and the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System. 5) 2017: Singapore was ranked as the world's second most open economy by the Heritage

Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom, as well as the world's second most pro-business regime by the World Bank's Doing Business report.

**The study of history might not be essential to the establishing of national identity in Singapore because...**

- d. The study of history might be of little relevance in establishing national identity in Singapore simply because of the fact that we look so different today as compared to the past. Our population demographics spanning age, ethnicity and nationality contrasts greatly to what we were made up of as a people as recently as 10 years ago. Therefore the intricacies of establishing national identity for our people today requires a more dynamic approach instead of merely looking to the past. [E.g. Singapore became an aged society in 2017, with more than 14% of our population above the age of 65. This will go up to 25% by the year 2030, presenting enormous challenges to maintaining a vibrant economy. We have also experienced a rapid increase in population - In the last two decades, total Singapore population increased from around 3 million in 1990 to 5.3 million in 2012. By 2030 we will have a projected population of 6.9 million, comprising locals and mainly people from 'indigenous sources' targeted by the government – meaning China and India.]
- e. The study of history in cementing national identity might not be crucial because national identity is a complex interplay of various factors. The establishment of national identity is rooted in our music, sport and traditions, just as much as it is formed through the process of socialization into our system of beliefs, values and expectations as a country. Therefore, the role played by history is building national identity, though present, is not entirely significant.



### Qn 9: Assess the view that poverty is the result of poor governance.

#### Concept clarification and POC

- 'Poverty': Absolute poverty: not being able to satisfy minimum requirements for food, clothing or shelter. The global absolute minimum, of \$1.90 a day (as of October 2015) is accepted internationally as an absolute poverty line. Relative poverty: defined in relation to the social norms and standard of living in a particular society. It can therefore include the individual's ability to take part in activities that society values even if they are not necessary for survival. Relative poverty can also refer to the nature of the overall distribution of resources.
- 'The result of': is the product of; causation has to be proven.
- 'Poor governance': corruption, mismanagement of resources such as water, food, education, healthcare.

#### Suggested Approach

- Students should know that the causes of poverty are deep-seated and multi-faceted and as such it will be difficult to take the stand that poverty is the result of poor governance alone.
- 'Is the result of'- absolute question. Students have to relate other factors they might choose to bring up to the concept of poor governance.

#### Likely Pitfalls

- Students might list causes of poverty without necessarily linking it back to poor governance.
- Students might merely describe the effects of poor governance without providing reasons for why poor governance leads to poverty.

#### Possible points

Poverty **is** the result of poor governance

- a. A **corrupt government** has a devastating effect on a country. Corruption diverts resources from the poor to the rich, leads to a culture of bribes, and distorts public expenditures, deterring foreign investors and hampering economic growth. E.g., in Ghana, government officials siphoned off 80% of money allocated for healthcare. 70% of the money allocated for drugs and supplies by the Ugandan government in 2000 was lost to "leakage". In Zimbabwe, corruption has become an accepted and almost expected way of doing business especially in the public sector. The National Oil Company of Zimbabwe's resources were used to enrich ministers and public official. Fuel products that include diesel, petrol and lubricants that were meant to benefit farmers and deserving public were also diverted to the black market.
- b. **Mismanagement of resources** by the government has resulted in poverty. Most poor countries in the world remain poor in spite of possessing substantial amount of human and material resources and this is because the governments are unable to adequately manage major projects or keep proper accounts of finances. E.g., in Senegal, half-completed buildings fill entire suburbs. A study by the World Bank in 2017 found that Zambia paid \$360,000 per kilometre of road — which is more than twice the African average. In Pakistan where there is extensive agriculture land for cultivation of exportable crops, the country is unable to reap the benefits of this valuable resource due to the government's inability to invest the money earned into education. Instead money is channelled into both religious and secular conflicts plaguing the country. As of 2015, Pakistan spends only 2.6% of its total GDP on education.
- c. **Discriminatory practices/policies** contribute to poverty in a country. When national resources are not equitable in serving all sectors of society, it results in inequalities which results in poverty amongst the marginalised group. E.g. Labor laws in Nigeria are largely ineffective. The country's minimum wage is extremely low and there is a significant gender wage gap. Nigeria was ranked as one of the worst in Oxfam DFI's Global Gender Gap Report. The average female Nigerian worker makes \$3,000 less annually than her male counterpart. More than two thirds of extremely poor people in low income countries and lower-middle income countries live in households where the head of household is from an ethnic minority group. In developed countries like Japan, poor

communities of Korean descent, and the Roma in Portugal face discrimination in gaining access to clean water.

#### **Poverty is not the result of poor governance**

- d. Whilst it is true that most developed/high-income countries have good governance, while most developing/poor countries do not, it is wrong to conclude that this observed correlation between poor governance and poverty means that poverty is due to poor governance. Historically, high-income countries improved their governance and strengthened their institutions as they developed since institution building needs money. **Poor governance in poor countries reflect, rather than cause their poverty.** E.g., Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia and Vietnam have all been growing rapidly despite their poor governance indicators.
- e. Poor countries develop a **dependency syndrome** when they rely largely on foreign aid. When countries rely too much on aid, they lose self-initiative to pull themselves out of poverty. **This could happen even with a government's good intention of accepting aid in order to help/manage a country's dire situation.** It is incredibly difficult to find that delicate balance between helping a country and helping a country help itself. E.g., South Sudan- received slightly under \$1 billion in foreign aid and none of that money went directly to the government. It funded everything from security training to food, drugs, textbooks and a host of other services. Outside groups provide around four-fifths of all health care. However, it is precisely because of this that South Sudan is now largely dependent on foreign assistance. Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Hussein Mar Nyot noted that the Sudanese people were losing their skills and are no longer able to cultivate the land due to the reliance on foreign aid.
- f. Poverty is caused by a **complexity of underlying factors and these factors are so intertwined that it is difficult to pinpoint which is the root cause.** E.g. Despite the vast resources in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is the poorest country in the world where 80% of its approximately 77 million people live in extreme poverty. The country is plagued with multiple health threats such as Malaria and Cholera and it is in a constant state of political conflict. Civil war has destroyed infrastructure that communities rely on for sanitation, food and water. War-torn communities are reliant on the international community for assistance and there is a dismal lack of education opportunities. Furthermore, the government pockets money from the mining industry and for this reason, there has been numerous military coups and ceaseless internal conflict while those at the top fight for the bigger share of wealth.



**Qn 10: Many developed countries are paying increasing attention to the needs of women. How far is this true in your society?**

**Concept Clarification & PoC**

- 'developed countries': countries with a developed economy and advanced technological infrastructure, relative to other industrialised countries
- 'paying increasing attention to the needs of women': acknowledging the rights of women and providing opportunities and assistance in accordance with their rights and gender equality, rather than a tokenistic acknowledgement. There is an underlying implication that the needs of women tend to be overlooked, and hence require additional attention to ensure greater parity.

**Suggested Approach & Stand**

- Students should acknowledge that the state is responsible for meeting the needs of women in society and should go beyond meeting the needs of the general populace.
- Good answers should also recognise that the needs of women should not be met just by the government alone, but also by society as well as institutions within Singapore.

**Likely Pitfalls**

- Example driven approach: mere description/ listing of what is being done to meet the needs of women in Singapore, without any evaluation of whether this is in line with the expectations of a developed country and what it is morally obliged to provide.
- Focusing only on what the government is doing to meet the needs of women without giving sufficient consideration to the role of society and other institutions.

**Possible points**

<b><i>Yes, like many developed countries, Singapore is paying increasing attention to the needs of women.</i></b>	<b><i>Unlike other developed countries, the needs of women in Singapore are still overlooked/ attention paid to these needs are superficial or limited in nature.</i></b>
<b>Developed nations such as Singapore recognise gender equality as a value and desired goal in its own right.</b> Government policy and family and social values increasingly favour gender equality, given its economic rationality and the belief that it is "the right thing to do" to value both males and females equally, whether in the market or in the home.	<b>Unlike other developed nations in which economic growth and cultural change has taken place over a longer period of time, Singapore's rapid economic growth has outpaced social and cultural change. Hence, the needs and rights of women are often overlooked, in favour of economic rationality.</b> As such, women are unfairly expected to be both committed caregivers and good workers. In Singapore, women are penalised for societal values and behaviours that assign them to disproportionate responsibility for family caregiving.
<b>There is greater recognition of the need for female representation in politics. This allows for greater consideration of women's needs and rights.</b> Like many other developed nations, female lawmakers are typically under-represented in the male-dominated political office. However, just like many developed nations, the Singapore government is committed in increasing female representation so as to allow for greater consideration of women's needs and	<b>Attempts at achieving gender equality in terms of female representation in the boardroom are superficial or tokenistic in nature, without proper understanding of the needs of women.</b> The Singapore Government has established the Diversity Action Committee to increase



<p>rights. The Singapore government has been increasing female representation in the political office gradually, from 16% in 2005 to 23% in 2018.</p> <p>E.g. The ruling People's Action Party (PAP) has a Women's Wing, in which female political leaders have championed for rights of women in the workplace and for single mothers, among many other issues. Among many others, Ms. Indranee Rajah, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, has called for a change in the HDB policy of not allowing unwed mothers to rent a HDB flat. Ms. Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Communications and Information, and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth has called for expanding the range of flexible work options for women, especially those with caregiver responsibilities.</p>	<p>women directors on listed company boards in Singapore. The Government has urged companies to get more women on boards to meet the committee's target of 20 per cent female representation on the boards of listed companies here by 2020. However, there is no impetus for companies to do this and doing this out of tokenistic acknowledgement would be unhelpful in establishing equality and female empowerment.</p> <p>E.g. The representation of women in the highest level of politics and in the boardroom pales in comparison to that of other countries (e.g. USA has 20.2% of females in the boardroom, Denmark has over 30% versus Singapore's 10%)</p>
<p><b>Like many developed nations with a core of highly educated women, there has been increased activism.</b> There is a proliferation of women's organisations/ ground-up initiatives which champion the rights and needs of women. Fronted by women, such organisations have been increasingly vocal in engaging the government, as well as active in making real changes on the ground level.</p> <p>E.g. AWARE (Association of Women for Action and Research) has campaigned for single mothers to be entitled to the full 16 weeks of paid maternity leave and for childcare subsidies.</p> <p>E.g. The Codette Project is a ground-up initiative that aims to get more minority women in Singapore into technology by building an ecosystem of support, skills training and access. The project aims to have a sustainable economic impact through providing minority women with awareness and access to the tech industry.</p>	<p><b>Mind-sets of employers have not changed and are not inclusive.</b> The belief that women bear the bulk of family caregiving duties results in discriminatory treatment in hiring, promotion, training and salaries. Such push factors are partly the reason for Singapore's low female labour participation rates.</p> <p>E.g. The gender pay gap in 2018 was also the largest in a decade. The median wage for women working full-time was only 87.5% of that for men.</p> <p>E.g. Singapore's female labour force participation rate of 58.6 per cent in 2014 was lower than in most other developed nations who, in contrast, are commonly known for their fair hiring policies and gender equality, such as Denmark (75 per cent), Norway (75.9 per cent), Sweden (79.3 per cent), Switzerland (79 per cent).</p>
<p><b>Like many developed nations, women are well educated and regarded as talent to be retained. Hence, companies pay greater attention to the needs of women so as to ensure that they retain their talent.</b></p> <p>E.g. Apart from the mandatory childcare and maternity leave, more firms are offering time-off and flexible work arrangements to meet the needs of working mothers. In 2018, 1500 companies received funding from the Work-Life Grant</p>	

and used it to strengthen their virtual infrastructure so as to allow employees to work from home. This was especially important for working mothers and was an initiative to encourage their continued participation in the workforce. Although this is still far from ideal as compared to other developed nations who have more work-friendly policies at their workplaces, it is still a step in the right direction.	
<p><b>The increase in infrastructure such as childcare centres are a response to the needs of modern working women in Singapore.</b> Women often have to juggle between family commitments and career, and very often give up one for the other. With an increase in infrastructure such as childcare centres, women are empowered to pursue their career aspirations.</p> <p>E.g. The number of childcare centres have doubled in the past decade, and will continue to grow to meet the needs of working mothers.</p>	





### Qn 11. How far do you agree that social media empower people to make a change?

#### Concept Clarification & PoC

- Social Media: Social platforms which offer immediate feedback in the form of 'likes' or commentary in response to user-generated content. It enables one to connect a person with a large number of people worldwide instantaneously through followers/friends or #hashtags. It is often subjected to short-lived trends and sometimes mob justice takes place.
- Empower: Gives power and authority – through information/knowledge, massive support, international acknowledgement, or even being able to be heard.
- Make a change: To ignite a (positive) change. Examine the whole spectrum of shifts in ideology or actions taken, and not just the major changes in society. Eg. Gender, politics, race, environment, poverty, etc.

#### Suggested Approach

Students should look at the functions of social media to examine how it arms individuals/groups with information, and ammunition in terms of support. They should also discuss the characteristics which trivialise or worsens issues.

#### Likely Pitfalls

- Students might focus too much on the different types of change that social media can empower/trigger, resulting in example-driven arguments.
- Many might also neglect 'empower people' and instead talk about generic functions of social media without clear relevance to empowerment. On the other hand, some may erroneously focus on how social media empower people, without discussing the change which should follow the empowerment.

#### Possible Points

##### Social media empower people to make a change because:

- Social media provide platforms for voices to be heard, raising awareness about issues which is the first step to change.** E.g. Shrey Bhargava caused a stir in Singapore in 2017 when he called out the showbiz scene in Singapore for being racist in their casting. His Facebook post was shared more than 7000 times and "casual racism" became buzzwords in the nation shortly after, sparking off numerous conversations regarding the issue.
- Social media connect like-minded individuals, amassing power to further amplify their influence with their point of view.** E.g. #BlackLivesMatter hashtag was created in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman – a policeman who shot to death Trayvon Martin, a 17-years-old black teen. It was used approximatively 30 million times on Twitter with 17,002 mentions per day on average. The hashtag is no longer just used by the black people, but also the people who stand by them and against the tyranny of the police force. Despite being a minority race, the hashtag has transcended the physical numbers of the population and is supported by people around the globe.
- Social media empower the people through exposure to the lifestyles of individuals outside of their own society, empowering them with the knowledge that the status quo need not be upheld.** E.g. The Zero Waste Movement has been steadily converting supporters of this alternative lifestyle, in a world of plastic containers and wrappers. Bea Johnson, @zerowastehome, has 234k followers on Instagram. On the account, she encourages her followers to adopt her unconventional way of life by providing tips to help them. Even in societies which are not particularly environmentally conscious, like in SG, we see Instagram accounts like @thesourcesg promoting this lifestyle, and subsequently even a physical store was opened in Cluny Court.
- It has the ability to transmit messages instantaneously through a platform which connects many individuals facilitates efforts to incite change, often allowing it to even**

**take place.** E.g. Hong Kong's youngsters are using a cloud-based message app, Telegram, to form groups and exchange real time updates and details of protests. Some groups had tens of thousands of members, according to South China Morning Post. On 4<sup>th</sup> August 2019, the protestors were able to effectively organise "flash mob" rallies in various parts of Hong Kong to evade and confuse the authorities, by making use of the app to disseminate information.

**Social media do not empower people to make a change because:**

- e. **Serious messages calling for change are often adopted by generators of trivial content, causing people to either dismiss them without thought.** E.g. Today's social media is being bombarded by personal accounts detailing one's often mundane life, countless social influencers and the wannabes and minor and major brand names promoting their products. In 2014, the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge generated quite a buzz on social media, where participants had to film themselves pouring a bucket of ice over their heads and nominating others to do the same. Sadly, the meaningful message behind the Challenge was lost in the mix, with celebrities and common folks doing it for fun and fame. The virality went on for only 2 months before it was lost amongst other more trivial challenges.
- f. **The ease of providing toxic commentary following one's opinions diminishes the resolve of many as the overt disagreement can be disconcerting.** E.g. The #MeToo movement in 2017, despite its success, saw many individuals who mustered the courage to share their stories of sexual assault, only to be met with unpleasant remarks. While already expected, these are comments which, through the function of most social media platforms, would pop up as a notification and are almost impossible to avoid.
- g. **People are often only willing to hide behind the façade of anonymity when on social media, but cower in fear of actual changes or are unwilling to actually contribute to change in real life.** E.g. While there was a large number of young voters in the UK expressed their intention to stay in the EU prior to the 2016 referendum, this sentiment was not reflected in their voting behaviour. Only 64% of 18-24 year olds showed up to vote. Contrary to the strong sentiments portrayed on social media through hashtags like #NotInMyName, when the time came for actions to be taken, many did not step up.



## Qn 12: To what extent is it possible to ensure food and water security in your society?

### Concept Clarification & PoC

- Food security: All people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. (UN Committee on World Food Security)
- Water security: The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability. (UN-Water)
- Your society: Due to limited land space and arable land, Singapore is forced to import most of the food consumed in the country. In Singapore, where land is at a premium, the use of land to conserve water has to be integrated with the use of land for socio economic growth.

### Suggested Approach

- It is highly possible for Singapore to achieve food and water security.
- It is difficult for Singapore to achieve food and water security.

### Likely Pitfalls

- Example-driven instead of argument-driven paragraphs.

### Possible Points

Possible	Not Possible
<p><b>1. Food source diversification and local production of strategic food items in Singapore will help to mitigate vulnerabilities and provide a crucial buffer in times of supply disruptions.</b></p> <p>Eg. After the 2008 Global Food Crisis, the government reviewed Singapore's food vulnerabilities. The AVA identified three food items that Singapore could not easily diversify import sources of, and set local production targets for each. These were: leafy vegetables, food fish, and hen shell eggs, all of which have short shelf lives and therefore are more vulnerable to supply disruptions.</p> <p>Eg. The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) has set the target of producing 30% of Singapore's nutritional needs by 2030. In 2017, local farmers travelled abroad to learn about best practices and new technology from high-tech vegetable farms in China and an aquaculture technology exhibition in Norway.</p> <p>Eg. Innovative companies have looked vertical planting/growing infrastructure, smart irrigation, fertiliser solutions, light emitting diodes, and seeds that boost both nutrition content and yield.</p> <p>Eg. To maximise land use for the growing of food, Singapore is looking to explore underused and</p>	<p><b>1. If Singapore continues to rely on global food supplies to meet the diverse needs of its people, it will remain susceptible to global volatility and be at the mercy of external forces in the exporting countries.</b></p> <p>Eg. Food disruptions could wreak havoc with food prices, like how eggs tripled in price following the 2004 avian flu outbreak. The supply of fresh hen eggs was disrupted, following the emergence of the Avian Influenza H5N1 virus on a poultry farm in Kelantan, Malaysia. A ban was imposed on all poultry products from Malaysia by the AVA, on 18 August 2004. At that point, Malaysia supplied two-thirds of the eggs and half of the poultry consumed in Singapore.</p> <p>Eg. In 2014, prices of eggs rose when Malaysian farms were suspended from exporting eggs to Singapore after their eggs had been found to contain Salmonella Enteritidis — a bacterium that causes food poisoning.</p> <p>Eg. In Dec 2018, Malaysia expressed a desire to limit their exports of eggs and seafood to Singapore. Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Malaysia's domestic trade and consumer affairs minister, said Malaysia was looking at limiting or stopping exports of eggs in order to ensure a sufficient supply for its domestic market. Singapore imports approximately 73% of its eggs from Malaysia.</p>

<p>alternative spaces, like rooftops or vacant buildings, for farming.</p>	
<p><b>2. In this era of greater globalised trade and technology, Singapore has one of the highest food safety and security standards in the world, with low incidences of food-borne diseases or contamination cases.</b></p> <p>Eg. Countries that wish to export livestock, meat, and eggs to Singapore must first be accredited by the AVA. Meat, meat products and fresh chicken eggs as well as fresh or frozen oysters cannot be brought into Singapore from Malaysia by individual travellers.</p> <p>Eg. Shipments are randomly tested at port and on shelves to monitor food safety standards. Samples are tested at AVA's Veterinary Public Health Laboratory (VPHL), which offers state-of-the-art food safety hazards and risks testing facilities.</p>	<p><b>2. Because only a small amount of food is produced locally due to land constraints, Singapore depends heavily on imports which increases the risk of contaminated food.</b></p> <p>Eg. According to the Singapore Food Agency, Singapore currently produces less than 10 per cent of its nutritional needs locally.</p> <p>Eg. In Oct 2018, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) issued a recall for iceberg lettuce sold at NTUC FairPrice and Sheng Siong supermarkets. The recall came after the iceberg lettuce from a Malaysian farm were found to contain high levels of fipronil, a "wide-spectrum pesticide".</p>
<p><b>3. As Singapore continues to develop into a towering metropolis, advanced, innovative methods of water purification to enhance water security have created confidence.</b></p> <p>Eg. Rainwater that falls on 65% of Singapore's land area is channelled to one of 17 reservoirs. and this catchment area will be increased to 90 percent in the long run. The Active, Beautiful and Clean Waters programme, launched in 2006, also helps to slow the runoff and improve the water's quality through the use of water features such as bioretention ponds, bioswales and floating wetlands.</p> <p>Eg. PUB will complete Singapore's fifth NEWater plant and build her third and fourth desalination plants in Tuas and Marina East. PUB is also exploring building a fifth desalination plant on Jurong Island. By 2030, the total capacity of NEWater and desalination will be approximately twice what Singapore has today, meeting about 80% of Singapore's water demand.</p>	<p><b>3. Singapore still faces challenges in ensuring reliable access to sufficient water because weather extremes and climate change put the country's key water sources at risk.</b></p> <p>Eg. In 1997, the occurrence of one of the strongest El Nino events led to the lowest annual rainfall in Singapore (1118.9 mm) since rainfall records started in 1869.</p> <p>Eg. Linggiu reservoir in Johor provides Singapore with a sizable 250 million gallons of its water supply. In 2015, water reserves in Linggiu Reservoir plunged from a healthy 80% to about 30% in mid-2016 due to prolonged dry weather.</p>
<p><b>4. Both the government and community groups in Singapore are doing their part in tackling the problem of food waste that threatens food security and environmental sustainability.</b></p> <p>Eg. Some initiatives include Food Unfiltered's outreach programmes and videos, Zero Waste SG's 'Save Food Cut Waste' campaign which brought together culinary schools, a local supermarket and the NEA to re-create traditional recipes using leftovers, and the 'Feeding the 5000' campaign where approximately 1,500 kilos of 'ugly'</p>	<p><b>4. Majority of Singaporeans continue to see water security as a distant issue far removed from their lives and are not concerned about the need to reduce their water usage.</b></p> <p>Eg. The initial sharp public reactions to the announcement at Budget 2017 that water prices would be raised were telling, especially because it did not seem to reflect a deeper understanding of water's scarcity, nor the true cost of water production. A CNA street poll of 100 respondents in March 2017 after the hikes were announced</p>

vegetables were collected and used to cook meals for 5,000 people.	showed 75% were not even aware of how much they spent on water each month.
<p><b>5. In Singapore, there exist various food support initiatives to help address several food insecurity challenges such as social isolation, stigma and inadequate food.</b></p> <p>Eg. A secular, non-affiliated charity, Willing Hearts, is wholly run by volunteers, apart from a handful of staff. It operates a soup kitchen that prepares, cooks and distributes about 5,000 daily meals to over 40 locations island wide, 365 days a year. Beneficiaries include the elderly, the disabled, low income families, children from single parent families or otherwise poverty stricken families, and migrant workers in Singapore.</p> <p>Eg. Under a grassroots initiative named My Kind Of Fridge, two full-sized refrigerators and one freezer stand at the void deck of Block 441 Tampines Street 43 for the public to donate fresh food, be it vegetables, fish, meat, eggs or fruits, for needy residents of Blocks 441 and 442. Community fridges have also been set up in Yishun and Queenstown.</p>	<p><b>5. There are still people who struggle to get access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food in expensive Singapore.</b></p> <p>Eg. One key facet contributing to food insecurity is rising food costs—consequently leading to tighter household budgets. While expenses such as housing, fuel and debt are largely inflexible, food tends to be considered a flexible item when it comes to spending, and it is often the first place compromises are made.</p> <p>Eg. The elderly and disabled who are suffering from chronic health conditions are highly vulnerable to food insecurity on account of their decreased mobility, poor health and lack of accessibility to transportation.</p>





## Application Question

In this article, Jaime Lerner writes about “what lies behind successful, liveable cities” (line 70). How applicable do you find his observations to yourself and your own society?

From the Passage	Applicable / Relevant to my society	Not Applicable / Not Relevant to my society
<p>While there is a need for cities to look into urban mobility, the priority should be to provide comfortable, safe, affordable and easy-to-use public transportation and reduce people's dependence on personal vehicles. (L 20 – 22)</p>	<p><b>Paragraph 3</b></p> <p>There has definitely been a drive to reduce Singaporeans' dependence on cars. Singaporeans value convenience. With rising affluence and ownership of a car being a symbol of social status, there is still a high demand for car ownership. Before the rapid development of the current more integrated public transport system, there may have been a lack of availability and accessibility to MRT stations and bus stops. These reasons too, contribute to Singaporeans' dependence on cars. However, the Singapore government pledged in 2017 to reduce the annual allowable car growth to zero from February 2018. The Singapore Land Transport Authority (LTA) unveiled the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint in 2015. This 5-year plan hopes for the Republic to reduce its reliance on cars and move towards public transport, cycling, walking and car-sharing services, by expanding the rail transport network, infrastructure to promote safe cycling, and piloting an electric car-sharing scheme to allow residents convenient access to such vehicles without needing to own one.</p> <p>There are currently 5 MRT lines and LRT lines in 3 estates. By 2030, the Singapore government hopes to build 3 new lines (Thomson-East Coast Line, Jurong Regional Line and the Cross Island Line) and extend 3 existing lines (Downtown Line 3 extension, North East Line extension and Circle Line 6 extension).</p>	<p>Singaporeans still remain undeterred despite the measures implemented to limit car ownership. Owning a car has been among the so-called “5Cs” that Singaporeans aspire to. They scrimp and save and forgo other luxuries to be able to afford a car, and thus pander to their belief that it is a status symbol. Despite the exorbitant prices of cars in Singapore, car ownership still stands at a high of 956,430 vehicles on the road as of Dec 31 2016. This was about 0.1 per cent lower than in 2015, and 1.8 per cent lower than the peak in 2013. Some may say this is a drop in numbers, but this trend is actually underscored by a spike in rental car numbers. Furthermore, Dyson recently announced that it was going to launch a multi-billion dollar electric car project in Singapore, with the aims of starting production in 2020 and rolling out the new electric cars as early as 2021. Although electric cars and CNG cars are greener, the adoption of these forms of personal vehicles still shows that there is a preference for personal vehicles amongst Singaporeans.</p>

<p>Every mode of transport has to operate optimally and be integrated into a transit network. (L 22-23)</p>	<p>Car ownership is still made more difficult to achieve with interested buyers being able to only loan up to 60% or 70% of the cost of the car.</p> <p>With a hot climate and packed schedules of many Singaporeans, public transport should ideally be optimally integrated, allowing for a seamless transfer from one mode to another. Singapore has attempted to achieve this optimum by incentivising commuters to transfer from buses to trains by offering rebates and discounts off fares. There is also the ease of transference from one MRT line to another. Most MRT stations also boost bus stops and taxi stands to allow commuters to transfer from one mode to the next.</p> <p>There have always been parking spaces for bicycles. However, with the increase in use of bike-sharing, the Singapore government has even created designated bike parking spaces to facilitate this ease of moving from one form of transport to the next.</p>	<p>Despite the increasing integration of different modes of transport in Singapore, there are still a myriad of different issues to be solved before full integration can be achieved. Public transport such as trains and buses are often over crowded, especially at peak hour. There are more frequent train break downs. During peak hour, it is often hard to hail a taxi off the street and the availability of alternative ride hailing services also see a lack of supply to meet the demand for transport. Singapore may still have a long way to go in building more seamless and user-friendly public transport system.</p>
<p>A growing number of cities are rethinking their allegiance to the automobile because of pollution, climate change and land use concerns...armed with new ideas and technologies such as artificial intelligence, many cities are reshaping their transportation systems to favour walking, cycling and public transit over private cars. Shared mobility, vehicle-sharing... the potential for transport sharing is certainly there. (L 23- 27)</p>	<p>Singapore has long recognised the detrimental effects of cars on the environment. Coupled with our small land size and growing population, the need to maximise and use land optimally has always been of concern.</p> <p>On 1 May 1990, the then transportation unit of Singapore's Public Works Department (PWD) instituted a quota limit to vehicles called the COE when rising affluence in the city-state catapulted land transport network usage and the previous measure to curb vehicle ownership by simply increasing road taxes was ineffective in controlling vehicle population growth. The premise was that the small city-state had limited land resources and with demand for vehicle ownership spiralling out of control, would result in traffic conditions exceeding</p>	



	<p>the criterion of a healthy road network that is sustainable by developments in land transport infrastructure resulting in gridlock. Along with a controversial congestion tax called Electronic Road Pricing (ERP), the COE system is one of the key pillars in Singapore's traffic management strategies that aims to provide a sustainable urban quality of life.</p> <p>To promote more alternatives, the Singapore government has promoted substituting car usage with public transport, bicycles, personal mobility devices and even walking. Singapore now boasts The Park Connector Network (PCN), a network of walking/running/cycling paths that connects the various parks and other green spaces in Singapore. There is an increased availability of bike sharing such as SGBike, Mobike... as well as a breakaway from traditional taxi companies, in favour of ride hailing alternatives such as Gojek and Grab.</p> <p>There has also been an incorporation of technology to encourage more Singaporeans to adopt and choose alternatives to cars. There are applications that feed real time updates on bus and train service arrivals to commuters. The Singapore government is also looking at using drones and AI to predict when trains and tracks will need repairs. This adoption of disruptive technologies will allow for more predictive maintenance of tracks, rails and trains.</p> <p>Driverless vehicles in Singapore will be connected to a new S\$556 million satellite-based traffic management system where every vehicle would be able to transmit location data back to HQ. Bus schedules could become more dynamic as buses</p>
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	can be deployed autonomously to meet spikes in demand.	
<b>Paragraph 4</b>		
A healthy city is an integrated structure of life, work and movement (line 31). The shorter the commute between home and work, the more time and energy we save (L 35 – 36).	Singapore is a small country, so work location may not be an immediate concern. Besides, our integrated public transport system makes it convenient to get to any point in Singapore. Integrated Transport Hubs (ITHs) are fully air-conditioned bus interchanges seamlessly linked to MRT stations and adjoining commercial developments such as shopping malls. With this integration, commuters can easily run errands and shop conveniently and comfortably, before transferring to their connecting buses or trains.	Despite Singapore's small size, commuting from one end of the island to another on public transport can take a very long time, especially if one does not live close to an MRT station or the workplace is inaccessible. If a person lives in Choa Chu Kang or Punggol and is not within walking distance of an MRT station, he needs to rely on a feeder bus service, and it can easily take 1.5 to 2 hours to get to work, which means 3 to 4 hours of commuting daily. In addition, there have been complaints about congestion and overcrowded trains and buses during peak hours, train breakdowns, and long waiting time for buses during off-peak hours.
...fragmenting cities into areas with specialised functions such as suburbs, central business districts and downtown areas condemns these spaces and their infrastructure to be idle during long periods of the day or night. A more compact city that supports a diversity of activities leaves more land for conservation, and a mixture of other uses (L 36 – 40).	The URA does have in its Draft Master Plan 2019, the plan of injecting more homes into the CBD. The older parts of the CBD contain mostly offices and are deserted at night and on weekends. The plan also includes the introduction of more homes and residential units into the Downtown, Marina South, and Rochor planning areas. One goal of the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Draft land use Master Plan is to make these areas more vibrant by encouraging larger mixed-use projects with more sizeable retail and residential components. In land-scarce Singapore, we cannot afford to have entire precincts dedicated to a single usage defined by official working hours. Because it may not be possible to move more jobs out of the central area, the government is instead trying to bring people to	Behind the many benefits of mixed developments, there are disadvantages too. There are drawbacks such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcrowding and high-density living</li> <li>• Industrial noise from shops, pubs and restaurants</li> <li>• Privacy issues with people loitering around the residential areas</li> <li>• More expensive than regular homes</li> <li>• Possibility of parking shortage</li> </ul>

	<p>stay in the central area by building more homes. Moreover, moving jobs closer to home and even homes closer to work can alleviate the stress on the public transport network. In land scarce Singapore where more than 10% of land is set aside for roads, this can reduce the need to build road capacity. The land freed up can be put to more valuable use.</p>	
<p>The world is facing problems of identity posed by increasing sociodiversity and the <b>need for coexistence is more crucial now than ever before (L 44 – 46).</b></p>	<p><b>Paragraph 5</b></p> <p>The government has sought to address many of the core issues relating to migration and the influx of foreigners. In the past five years, measures have been introduced to cool down the property market, build more public housing, and expand public transport capacity to cope with a growing city. Foreign manpower policies have also been tightened to manage the growth of foreigners in the workforce. Responding to feedback from the public as well as the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), the Ministry of Manpower introduced the Fair Consideration Framework in 2013, requiring all businesses operating in Singapore to adopt open, fair, merit-based and non-discriminatory hiring practices.</p>	<p>In 1997, as part of Singapore's efforts to transform our economy to build the best home for Singaporeans and to make Singapore a cosmopolitan city, then Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong explained the need to try to "attract the best talents from around the world" to Singapore. He urged Singaporeans to welcome the infusion of knowledge that skilled foreign manpower would bring to make Singapore a "Talent Capital". Underlining the point in 2002, he argued that Singapore has to "send a clear signal to all those who can raise our standards whether in sports, music, dance, the theatre, literature, the economy or politics, that they are welcome".</p> <p>Foreigners and Permanent Residents make up 40% of Singapore's population today. Given our low resident fertility rates, they are needed to augment the workforce and help keep our economy vibrant and our society sustainable. However, the significant inflow of foreigners in the past decade has led to the perception that their arrival has crowded out Singaporean citizens in terms of jobs, housing, transport, schools, and other resources. Despite reassurances that the interests of</p>

		Singaporeans will always take priority, this has led to resentment, often amplified through social media. Such negative attitudes towards foreigners threaten to divide society.
<b>Paragraph 6</b>		
<p>To deal with issues of increasing sociodiversity, a sense of shared identity has to be fostered. The feeling of recognition and of belonging to a specific place will improve the quality of life. A city must provide reference points to which people can relate and connect — rivers, parks, public buildings. Such spaces tell stories and protect memories, much like a diary or a family portrait (L 47 – 50).</p> <p><b>Also from Paragraph 4</b></p> <p>It requires planning that respects the land and the area's ecosystem: the topography, bodies of water and vegetation (L 31 – 33).</p>	<p>The nature of expansion works in a densely built-up city like Singapore is disrupting the urban landscape and challenging the fate of existing buildings and places. These include architectural and heritage landmarks, as well as ordinary buildings or landscapes that have become a familiar part of our collective consciousness. In a small country like Singapore, these landmarks are significant as physical anchors that contribute towards our sense of national identity. The rapid pace at which these familiar landscapes are erased and transformed can evoke a sense of displacement and loss.</p> <p>This brings us to the question: Are development and conservation mutually exclusive? Do we really need to choose between one and the other? How do we choose what to conserve? And how do we go about making that choice? There are individuals and groups who have engaged the authorities publicly on these issues and they have largely shown a willingness to understand the development needs and constraints at hand, and to jointly explore a range of possible solutions. On one side, the authorities have come a long way since the case of the old National Library building, which was demolished to make way for the Fort Canning Tunnel in 2005. Still, the loss of the old National Library is an old wound that has not been forgotten. Up to today, many question whether the</p>	<p>On the other hand, the desire for continued growth and the prosperity that it brings persists in our national psyche, fuelling the continued search for a more sustainable, high-performance built environment in the face of limited land resources. In a city where undeveloped and available land is fast disappearing, the redevelopment of existing plots of lands is becoming the only alternative.</p>

	<p>tunnel was worth it after all. Recent development controversies involving the Ellison Building and the Central Catchment Nature Reserve show that the pragmatic, engineering-based approach still rules supreme, even if there are now some concessions for intangible factors such as heritage and nature. Time, cost and expedience continue to be the most important factors that guide the decisions that are made, in contrast to a values-based approach, where solutions are engineered to work around the assets that we value.</p> <p>In the case of the Ellison Building, a conserved building that currently stands in the path of the proposed North-South Corridor, the authorities had initially announced that part of the building would have to be demolished and later reconstructed, citing space constraints posed by other underground structures in the immediate vicinity. Heritage groups opposed the decision on the grounds that by international heritage standards, reconstruction would only be considered "for heritage destroyed by war", and that in this case, reconstruction would amount to a "falsification of historical artefacts".</p> <p>The matter has not concluded, but subsequent discussions between the authorities and the heritage groups have reportedly yielded possible technical solutions that would allow the tunnel to be constructed without demolishing the building. This would involve providing temporary support to the structure and strengthening the foundation while the tunnel is being built.</p> <p>With the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, the debate was whether the proposed Cross Island Line should pass directly under the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, or take a longer route</p>
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	<p>and skirt around the reserve. Nature groups object to the direct route, citing the negative impact on existing flora and fauna.</p> <p>The authorities say that the longer route will prolong the train journey by about five minutes, may require land acquisition and cost an additional S\$2 billion. As with the Ellison Building, the final decision on the tunnel alignment has been deferred until environmental and engineering studies are concluded. The fact that the authorities are willing to put their plans on hold while working out more holistic solutions with nature and heritage groups is a heartening one.</p>	
<p>A city cannot condone ghettos, be they intended solely for the rich or the poor, or for people from specific ethnic backgrounds or certain age groups (L 51 – 53).</p>	<p>Beginning in the 1970s, national programmes were designed to ensure a balanced representation of Singapore's diverse ethnic makeup, and in particular the four major ethnic groups (Chinese, Malay, Indian and Others). The more prominent policies among these include the Housing and Development Board (HDB)'s Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP), the ethnic Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and the Group Representation Constituency (GRC) system.</p> <p>For example, HDB's EIP, introduced in 1989, spells out the proportion of each major ethnic group who may own units in an apartment block or neighbourhood. These stipulations ensure that most families in Singapore (80% of whom reside in HDB's public housing estates), will live alongside others of different religion and ethnicities, sharing common amenities such as playgrounds, shops and bus stops – the diametric opposite of the colonial era norm of ethnic segregation. This discourages the formation of ethnic enclaves, making the daily social experience of Singaporean</p>	<p>Class divisions are now far more pronounced in Singapore than societal splits based on race or religion. According to a recent Institute of Policy Studies' (IPS) survey, if you come from an elite school, it is likely most of your friends, even in adulthood, come from one of those schools too. If you live in a private estate, you are not likely to have friends who live in the heartlands.</p> <p>While the findings of the Study On Social Capital In Singapore may have come as no surprise to many Singaporeans (after all, it is instinctive to make friends with the people you are most exposed to or have the most similarities with), the issue goes beyond that. Inequality has a geographic dimension – even for a small and densely populated place like Singapore. It has been reported that the distribution of economic and social outcomes are skewed in favour of certain neighbourhoods. According to the 2015 Singapore General Household Survey, more than four in ten households (44.4 per cent) in</p>

	<p>life more inclusive and diverse. Such policies seek to create common spaces where people of different backgrounds will, in the course of their daily lives, come to meet, mingle and build bonds naturally. After all, culture is formed not through piecemeal incidents, but through regular encounters and interactions. Over time, strong relationships and shared memories nurture tolerance, trust, understanding and acceptance.</p>	<p>Bukit Timah earn at least S\$20,000 a month, the highest income bracket in the statistical classification. This proportion is eight times as many compared to households in Woodlands (5.4 per cent) or Yishun (also 5.4 per cent). In addition, one in five households in Bukit Merah live in a rented flat, while this figure is less than one in 25 in Sengkang or Sembawang. Neighbourhoods also differ in terms of important non-economic indicators, such as the number of vulnerable households. Yishun has two times the proportion of people (4.8 per cent) who are divorced or separated compared to residents in Bukit Panjang (2.42 per cent). Worryingly, in recent times, there has been a distinct clustering of brand name schools. These include the Rafflesian schools in Bishan, the Anglo-Chinese Schools in Dover Road, and schools of the Hwa Chong family in Bukit Timah. It is no coincidence that resale prices of houses near elite educational schools are higher than the average. Qualified and deserving students living in less well-off estates may have to travel a longer distance to these schools, and may therefore miss out on the opportunity to attend better institutions.</p>
<p>Cities should be planned for people, not places (line 55)</p> <p>Engaged citizens also make for successful cities in many other aspects. Co-creation is the only way forward, as no government is in a position to manage cities alone. There is no other option, given the</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Paragraph 7</b></p> <p>As Singapore progresses and her people develop, there has been an increasing desire for more participation and consultative government. Heng Swee Keat, Singapore's Finance Minister, who is poised to become Singapore's prime minister-designate is expected bring an open and consultative leadership style to the table. He chaired the year-long national movement to engage citizens, called Our Singapore Conversation, in</p>	
	<p>In the first two decades of independence, the Singapore government's engagement with its citizens largely consisted of disseminating information on development and policies. In this initial phase, leadership from the government was strong, decisions about how to develop the nation were made and implemented swiftly, and social change was primarily driven through a top-down approach.</p>	



<p>complexity of today's cities and the growing desire and demand everywhere for greater consultation and representation. (L 58 – 62)</p>	<p>2013. He also led the SG50 Steering Committee to mark the country's golden jubilee in 2015 and announced that the PAP's fourth-generation (4G) leaders and MPs will launch a series of discussions with different groups of Singaporeans to seek their views and perspectives. In addition, he led the Committee on the Future Economy (CFE), which was tasked with generating new ideas for Singapore's growth.</p> <p>Presently, in "co-creation" to build a more sustainable and "liveable" city, there are already platforms for public consultation such as Public Consultation on Developing Singapore's Long-Term Low Emissions Strategy by the National Climate Change Secretariat (NCSS), Consultation Paper on changes to Regulations for the P2P Transport Sector by the Land Transport Authority, as well as Public Consultation on Zero Waste Masterplan by the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.</p> <p>Indeed, this desire from the public to play a more active role in the development of the nation has translated into new avenues for groups and individuals to provide their ideas and input. This includes a range of platforms that have been set up by different ministries in Singapore since the early 2000s, both to generate ideas and feedback, as well as to stimulate more public dialogue. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REACH Singapore: a consultation platform that collects input from Singaporeans on policy and programmatic issues raised by government agencies, and allows civil</li> </ul>	<p>Formal engagement channels were primarily one-way (communicative), as the government initiated large-scale social campaigns to inform and seek the cooperation of residents to help meet various national agendas. These messages were circulated through Community Centres, using banners, leaflets, flyers and other materials, as well as popular media channels such as the radio and television. As such, the Singapore government has long been criticised as being top-down and draconian.</p> <p>While there have been attempts by the Singapore government to engage its citizens in participatory dialogue, one challenge remains in that there is often no clear understanding of how such voices will be given weight or factored into decision-making processes. For instance, input collected Our Singapore Conversation was published into an online report, but little is known about the changes in planning and policies that have come from such input. Similarly, while the Rail Corridor Consultation Group (RCCG) came up with nine planning and design goals that were used to drive the development of the Rail Corridor moving forward, the extent to which participation informed the selected goals is unclear. Creating more transparency in these processes could strengthen the government's efforts to involve its citizens.</p> <p>Opening up decision-making processes to public deliberation also often comes at the cost of efficient and centralised problem-solving that has underpinned the nation's transformation</p>
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	<p>servants to publicly respond to feedback. REACH also publishes materials on national issues, such as the Singapore Budget and National Day Rally Speeches, in an attempt to be a one-stop information portal for citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eCitizen Ideas!: an idea-generation platform for residents. Government agencies pose questions or challenges to the public, and invite residents to respond with their ideas and solutions; ideas are often voted on by the public, and some agencies will provide support to the best ideas for implementation. The platform thus allows for a two-way exchange between government bodies and the public.</li> <li>• Our Singapore Fund: provides funding to self-initiated projects. Through this program, the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth has engaged the community to develop and implement more than 50 projects, many of which lie in the areas of community building and inter-generational bonding.</li> <li>• The Rail Corridor Consultation Group (RCCG): In 2011, the RCCG was formed by the Urban Redevelopment to engage with a range of stakeholders –residents, academics, historians, conservationists and large developers –to collect input and ideas for the redevelopment of the railway corridor. The RCCG adopted a variety of online and offline engagement techniques, including community walks, visioning workshops, design charrettes, idea competitions and public exhibitions.</li> </ul>	<p>over the past half century. Singaporeans have voiced that they hope the government will consult the people more before formulating policies. However, in areas of economics and finance, they expect the government to know best.</p> <p>This lack of consultation can also be observed through how online petition has gained traction in Singapore in the past few years from issues ranging from animal rights to banning heavy metal concerts on websites such as Change.org, GoPetition and iPetitions.</p> <p>Here in Singapore, there is the perception that the authorities do not want to be seen as being dictated by pressure from petitions in crafting or changing policies, political observers said. The Office of the Clerk of Parliament said parliamentary rules dictate that it only considers petitions with signatures that are dated and handwritten to ensure that they are not duplicated. These have to be accompanied by the signatory's name and address. Also, the original copy of the petition printed on paper has to be submitted.</p> <p>Petitions must also be "respectful in language" and "specific as to the nature of the relief sought", the spokesman said. While it does not consider online petitions, MPs can raise them by filing a parliamentary question or proposing a motion for debate in the House, he noted.</p> <p>These excessive procedural requirements are off putting and almost indicative to Singaporeans that we are not yet ready or</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Singapore Conversation: August 2012 saw the launch of Our Singapore Conversation, an engagement exercise that reached 47,000 Singaporeans via 660 nationwide in-person and virtual dialogues. Various focus group discussions were also organised by different government agencies with youth, young working adults, the older population, and other population segments. This was the largest engagement exercise that has been done to date, generating important insights into the values and aspirations that Singaporeans hold.</li> </ul>	close to achieving an ideal state of consultative government.
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**Tampines Meridian Junior College**  
**2019 JC2 Preliminary Examination**

1. Why do you think the author switches to “us” in line 4? [1]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
What does the future hold for <b>them</b> — and all of <b>us</b> — in this <b>scenario</b> ? (line 4)	<p>a) <b>Function:</b> To drive home/emphasise the point that // To include/engage the reader</p> <p>b) <b>Context:</b> what happens to cities will have an impact on people’s lives/ will affect the lives of the city’s dwellers</p> <p>*Need for both parts a) and b) to secure 1 mark</p>

2. Why has the author written “liveable” in inverted commas in line 9? [1]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
All over, urban planners, governments and developers are increasingly interested in making cities “ <b>liveable</b> ” (lines 8 – 9).	<p><b>Function:</b> “Liveable” is a technical term / it is an issue being discussed in the passage</p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Function:</b> The quotation mark serves its literal purpose of quoting a catchphrase that is increasingly used</p> <p><b>Context:</b> And it refers to ways in which living conditions can be improved in cities</p> <p>//</p> <p><b>Function:</b> Liveable cities may not be viable/attainable/achievable</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Because of the existing problems that plague cities</p> <p>*Need for function and context to get 1 mark</p>

3. In paragraph 2, how have cities “traditionally responded to growth” (line 10) and what is the problem associated with that? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
expanding the availability of land for buildings and the transport network (lines 10 – 11)	Cities have increased the accessibility of land for the construction of offices, shops, homes and transport infrastructure. (1)
giving less attention to their citizens (line 11)	There is a reduced focus on the needs of citizens. (1)
personal vehicles in the form of cars are prioritised (lines 12 – 13)	OR Whilst cars are deemed more important (1)

4. What is the author implying about cars by describing them as “cigarettes” of the future (lines 17 – 18)? [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
Cars have been in production for a little more than a century, but the space they have seized and the amount of infrastructural investment they demand is extremely high. Cars are the <b>cigarettes</b> of the future (lines 16 - 18).	Just as cigarette smoke pollutes the environment (1), exhaust from cars also pollute the environment (1)  OR Private cars are also a societal nuisance/social ill (1) on par with smoking in public (1)  OR Just as designated spaces have to be created for smokers to smoke to prevent non-smokers from being exposed to second hand smoke (1), land needs to be set aside for the construction of car park spaces. (1)  *Accept any possible answers that make logical links/draws similarities between smoking/cigarettes and cars.

5. In paragraph 3, why did cities have an “allegiance” to the automobile (line 19)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
A growing number of cities are rethinking their allegiance to the automobile (line 19)	Many cities were committed/loyal to cars because

While there is a need for cities to look into urban mobility, the priority should be to provide <b>comfortable, safe, affordable and easy-to-use</b> public transportation	(Inferred) They offered a pleasant and enjoyable commute, protected one from harm/danger, was an affordable option/inexpensive and was convenient to use/a simple/uncomplicated form of transportation.
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6. Using material from paragraphs 4 – 6 only (lines 28 – 54), summarise what the author has to say about why liveable cities should consider issues of urban design and diversity.

Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [8]

Liveable cities should consider issues of urban design because...

From the Passage	In Your Own Words
<b>Paragraph 4</b>	
1. ...it is a city's layout that can make the <b>biggest difference</b> to the effort to create a more sustainable urban environment (lines 29 – 30).	1. a city's arrangement/plan has the most significant/consequential/important/critical impact on attempts to build liveable cities.
2. The <b>layout</b> is the city's <b>structure of organisation</b> and <b>growth</b> (lines 30 – 31).	2. Urban design determines the city's configuration/composition/make-up/framework/system and development/progress/improvement/advancement.
3. A healthy city is an <b>integrated structure of life, work and movement</b> (line 31).	3. Good design provides a consolidated/unified/coordinated/coherent link/connection of a person's daily activities and
4. It requires planning that <b>respects the land and the area's ecosystem</b> : the topography, bodies of water and vegetation (lines 31 – 33).	4. preserves/appreciate/cherish/value/venerate the natural world/natural surroundings/natural habitats
5. The <b>shorter</b> the <b>commute</b> between home and our place of employment, the more time and <b>energy we save</b> (lines 35 – 36).	5. When people live near their workplace, it reduces travel time and conserves resources.
6. On the other hand, <b>fragmenting</b> cities into <b>areas with specialised functions</b> such as suburbs, central business districts and downtown areas <b>condemns</b> these spaces and their infrastructure to be <b>idle during long periods of the day or night</b> (lines 36 – 38).	6. Separating/Breaking up cities into districts means parts are underutilised certain times of the day.



7. A more <b>compact</b> city that <b>supports a diversity of activities</b> leaves <b>more land for conservation, and a mixture of other uses</b> (lines 39 – 40).	7. A more densely-packed/compressed city that promotes a variety of uses allows for better utilisation of land.
<b>Paragraph 5</b>	
8. ...cities have <b>long been seen</b> as “ <b>melting pots</b> ” (line 42)	8. Cities have historically been places where different people live together
9. <b>that absorb new dwellers</b> (line 42).	9. and where immigrants are assimilated.
10. But now, cities are <b>fearful</b> of the <b>waves of people who challenge the status quo</b> (lines 43 – 44).	10. But now, cities are frightened by/anxious about the surge/sudden increase in the number/huge number of people who question/dispute/contest the norm/existing way of life/state of affairs.
11. The world is facing <b>problems of identity posed by increasing sociodiversity</b> (line 44 – 45)	11. Cities now face the issue of losing their distinctiveness/uniqueness/individuality because of growing heterogeneity.
12. and the <b>need for coexistence</b> is <b>more crucial now than ever before</b> (lines 45 – 46)	12. The need to ensure that different groups of people live peacefully together/harmoniously is even more critical/important now.
<b>Paragraph 6</b>	
13. ...a sense of <b>shared identity</b> , (line 47)	13. When people have a collective sense of who they are
14. The <b>feeling of recognition and of belonging to a specific place</b> will improve the quality of life (line 48).	14. and they are acknowledged/accepted in the community, they lead better lives.
15. A city must provide <b>reference points</b> to which <b>people can relate and connect</b> — rivers, parks, public buildings (lines 48 – 50).	15. Cities must give people places they can identify with/have rapport with/respond to because
16. Such spaces tell <b>stories</b> and <b>protect memories</b> , much like a diary or a family portrait (line 50).	16. these places chart/document the life history of a person and provide fond recollections from the past.
17. <b>At the same time that a city's identity is preserved, sociodiversity must be fostered</b> (line 51).	17. While the uniqueness of cities should be retained, they should also promote inclusiveness/appreciate differences.
18. <b>A city cannot condone ghettos, be they intended solely for the rich or the poor, or for people from specific ethnic backgrounds or certain age groups.</b> Walls and fences are illusory protective barriers (lines 51 – 53).	18. A city should not tolerate the segregation of different groups to different parts of the city.



19. <b>Safety and security</b> are a <b>function of the respect and civility</b> that derive from integration and coexistence (lines 53 – 54).	19. There is a need to give due regard to the feelings of others and safeguard their rights to ensure their well-being and freedom from danger.
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<b>Points</b>	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15
<b>Marks</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

### Sample Summary

Liveable cities should consider issues of urban design because (1) it significantly impacts (2) their system and progress. (3) It connects people's daily activities, and (4) preserves the natural surroundings. (5) When people live near their workplace, travel time and resources are reduced. (6) Separating cities into districts underutilises some parts certain times of the day. (7) Compressed cities promoting a variety of uses better utilises land. (8) Cities are historically where different groups live together and (9) immigrants are assimilated. (10) Today, cities worry about increasing numbers of people who question the norm (12) and losing their distinctiveness because of growing heterogeneity. (12) Ensuring different groups live harmoniously is more critical now. (15) Cities must provide places people can identify with. (13) When people have a collective sense of who they are, (14) and are accepted in the community, they lead better lives.

15 points (120 words)

7. Explain the author's use of the word "naturally" in line 58. [1]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
Cities should be planned for people, not places. <b>That was the only way it was, in cities of the past</b> Addressing the challenge of putting people back into the centre of city management requires some going back to basics, back to building liveable cities by starting, <b>naturally</b> , with where people are at, and where they want to be (lines 55 – 58).	<p><b>Meaning of "naturally":</b> It is to be expected that to build cities we should begin by looking at people's current situation and their hope for the future.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> because historically, cities have always centred around people's needs/people and their needs have always inherently been at the core of cities</p> <p>*Meaning and context needed for 1 mark</p>

8. In paragraph 7, how does the author support his assertion that "engaged citizens also make for successful cities" (line 58 – 59)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
Co-creation is the only way forward, as no government is in a position to manage cities alone. There is no other option, given the	Possible 1 mark: By explaining that no government can handle cities alone, because

complexity of today's cities and the growing desire and demand everywhere for greater consultation and representation (lines 59 – 62)	of the interconnectedness/composite nature of today's cities (1).
The city of Montreal, for example, engaged its citizens through surveys and a dedicated phone line to <b>inform them of its smart city goals and gather more ideas</b> . The dedicated phone line <b>led to more than a million data points which revealed the wishes and problems of its citizens</b> . They predominantly addressed issues pertaining to roads, parks, garbage pickups and streetlights. Indeed, a more informed citizenry means a <b>desire for greater consultation and involvement</b> . (lines 62 – 67)	<p>a) Also through the example of Montreal which shows engaged citizens</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are more aware of future plans for development (1)</li> <li>2. Are able to contribute more ideas which have a direct impact/benefit to their lives (1)</li> <li>3. Are able to fulfil their need to have their views sought and to participate in the decision-making process (1)</li> </ol> <p>*Need to mention Montreal as an example (a) + 2 ways citizens are engaged (1. 2. or 3.)</p>

9. Why has the author placed brackets around the comment in line 68? [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
Making people in cities “visible” will be the challenge to achieving greater liveability and engagement will continue to play a critical role (if not more) in establishing a consensus between the government and its people (lines 67 – 69).	<p><b>Function:</b> To provide additional information [1]</p> <p><b>Context:</b> The information in the brackets is conveying the author's opinion on the role of engagement. The author thinks that citizens will play a more significant role in the future. [1]</p>

10. **Using your own words as far as possible**, explain the author's use of “even as” in line 75. [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
With that, there can be assurance that even as the world of the future will be more congested, complicated and challenging, it would also become more resourceful, responsive and resilient. (lines 74 – 76)	<p><b>Meaning of phrase:</b> “even as” suggests that at the same time that/at the very time that/at the moment that/during the time that (1)</p> <p><b>Meaning in context:</b> the future will be more <b>crowded, complex and demanding</b>, it would also become more <b>ingenious/inventive, reactive</b> and will <b>adapt well in the face of adversity</b>. (1)</p>

11. Explain why “streets, squares, parks, memorials, theatres and museums” are important to a city. [2]

From the Passage	Answer in your own words
But above all, a city is a place, as the writer Richard Sennett puts it, “ <b>where strangers meet</b> ; where <b>new ideas are formed</b> in a public space. <b>A common ground</b> .” Streets, squares, parks, memorials, theaters and museums – these are a city’s “living rooms”. We must therefore shape its future (lines 76 – 79).	<p>It allows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) individuals who do not know each other/are unfamiliar with each other to congregate/interact/connect</li> <li>b) fresh plans/projects/designs to be born/birtherd</li> <li>c) establish a shared/mutual understanding/platform</li> </ul> <p>1-2 points – 1 mark 3 points – 2 marks</p>







**VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019  
HIGHER 1**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

**Paper 1**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your C.T. group, index number and name on all the work you hand in.  
Write your question number in the left-hand margin of your foolscap paper.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **2** printed pages

[Turn over

Answer **one** question from this Paper.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 'Democracy has lost its appeal in modern society.' How far do you agree?
- 2 'A world without borders results in more problems than solutions.' What is your view?
- 3 'Technology has revolutionised sport, but not necessarily for the better.' Discuss.
- 4 'Given the problems countries face today, resources should not be wasted on space exploration.' Comment.
- 5 How far should protecting the environment be a priority in your society?
- 6 'The arts are a distraction from the problems we face today.' To what extent is this a fair viewpoint?
- 7 Consider the view that an ageing population is the most devastating crisis that society is facing today.
- 8 Has technology made modern society a more dangerous place?
- 9 Does thrift have any relevance in our consumerist society?
- 10 To what extent do you agree that ancient myths and legends have little value in today's world?
- 11 With the proliferation of the Internet, is privacy more desirable today?
- 12 'There is no room for creativity in a society that prizes efficiency.' Discuss this with reference to your society.

**Passage 1: Don Morgenson writes about why the modern world is having an identity crisis.**

- 1 These are tough and confusing times we are living in. People of the 21st century are hurled into these difficult times with few precedents. If only we had a more concrete sense of self, we might be suffering less. Instead, we become obsessed with a quick or even instant sense of identity. We have become addicted to becoming someone, but we want that identity effortlessly and impatiently. We want it now. Our toiletries, our automobiles, our swimming pools and even that latest Botox injection. 5
- 2 In our search for identity, many of us have worn out our lives trying to become somebody. Some of us have twisted ourselves into knots, trying to be that somebody others might want us to be. The more fortunate among us have worked hard at finding out who we are. The question of who we are can haunt us for some time; and there are some among us who find no answer at all. In the American play "Death of a Salesman", the protagonist, Willy Loman, is a salesman who is obsessed with the American Dream, and thinks that as long as he worships the gods of financial and social success, all would be right with the world. When he was eventually lowered into his grave, however, one of his sons remarked, "Poor Willy ... he never knew who he was." His obsession with sales success had ultimately prevented him from knowing who he really was. 10
- 3 We embrace any sort of recognition that promises to give us a unique sense of being, however frail or fragile. We often hear a variety of claims to some minor distinction: having the worst appendix the surgeon had seen in 40 years of medical practice, holding the Boy Scout record for making fire by friction, having the most Friends on Facebook. Each of us needs to feel there is, somewhere in this vast and overwhelming universe, some superlative that just might describe us. And why shouldn't we want a sense of unique significance? Each of us is unique — we happen only once and we have a right to cherish this special nature. 15 20
- 4 Many years ago, in the high school I attended, it was the custom to have schoolwide who's-who contests where we selected the brightest guy and brightest girl, the friendliest, the wittiest, the smartest, etc. There were certainly a sufficient number of awards to give each of us some claim to glory — a title of some sort which might secure our place in the hallowed halls of our alma mater. I used to fret through these contests searching for something for which someone might nominate me. But nothing ever came my way; nothing contrived or even synthetic. I would have settled for that, and I would have been completely in tune with our radically synthetic society. 25
- 5 We eat meatless burgers. Our work desks look more like elaborate coffee tables. We have silicone implants, false eyelashes and suntans from either a pill or a bottle. And we have our bronze sticks to help us retain a tan through the white ravages of winter. Our sons and daughters have developed pleasant relationships that are created not by refining interpersonal skills but by using a certain toothpaste or by chewing a gum promising instant and irresistible attraction to others. We buy certain toiletries simply to exert an erotic power over all others. 30
- 6 Clearly, each of us must define for ourselves (with some help from family and friends) what kind of somebody we want to become; that is our true vocation. We too often look to the outside world to form an idea about our worth and our identity. We study the images in other people's eyes, and for the sake of such images, clothe ourselves in fashionable rubbish, the in-brand of the day, status symbols, and other dimensions of eggshell fragility. Then we wonder why a total stranger is reflected in the mirror. We have tried to invent ourselves from the outside in. We have wanted so desperately to be somebody that we have ended up being nobody where it really counts. And how incomparably sad to glance back, albeit late in our brief walk across eternity and say: "But none of that was me." 35 40



**Passage 2: Giuliana Mazzoni writes about how the ‘real you’ is a myth.**

- 1 We all want other people to “get us” and appreciate us for who we really are. In striving to achieve such relationships, we typically assume that there is a “real me”. But how do we actually know who we are? It may seem simple: we are a product of our life experiences, which can be easily accessed through our memories of the past. Indeed, substantial research has shown that memories are central in shaping a person’s identity. People with profound forms of amnesia typically also lose their identity – as described by neurologist Oliver Sacks in his case study of 49-year-old Jimmy G, who struggled to find meaning as he could not remember anything that happened after his late adolescence. 5
- 2 But it turns out that our identity is often not a complete or truthful representation of who we are anyway, even if we have an intact memory. Research shows that we do not actually access and use all available memories when creating personal narratives to define who we are. It is becoming increasingly clear that, at any given moment, we unconsciously tend to pick and choose what to remember. Concepts that are rather vivid and rich in detail and emotion – episodes we can re-experience – are more likely to be marked as memories. These then undergo a “plausibility test” to tell whether the events fit within our general personal history. For example, if we remember flying unaided in vivid detail, we know straight away that it cannot be real as logic would tell us that such a superhuman feat could not have been possible. 15
- 3 What is selected as a personal memory also needs to fit the current idea that we have of ourselves. We might only remember the bits that we find more reflective of the characteristics we associate with ourselves. Let us suppose you have always thought of yourself as a very kind person, and your identity was built around memories of you performing kind deeds. After a very distressing experience, however, you develop a strong aggressive trait that now better suits how you see yourself. Not only does your behaviour change, but your personal narrative and identity have too. If you were asked to describe yourself, you might include past events previously omitted from your narrative of you as a kind person, for example, instances in which you acted aggressively. 20
- 4 And this is only half of the story. The other half has to do with the truthfulness of the memories that are chosen to become part of our personal narratives. Our memories can be highly inaccurate or outright false: we often either forget details or make up memories of events that never happened, essentially creating for ourselves an identity which may not even be based on what we have actually experienced. Remembering is not like playing a video from the past in your mind. It is a highly reconstructive process that depends on several things: our knowledge of a topic or event, the image we have of ourselves, our physiological and emotional needs, and even the aspirations that we have. Indeed, brain imaging studies have shown that many parts of the brain are involved in creating personal memories. A crucial area is the frontal lobes, which are in charge of integrating all the information received about an event into a single memory that needs to make sense to us. Otherwise, the memory is either discarded or it undergoes changes, with information added or deleted. 30 35
- 5 Memories are therefore very malleable, and can be distorted and changed easily. Crucially, there are upsides to our malleable memory. Choosing memories is actually the norm, guided by self-enhancing biases that lead us to rewrite our history so that it resembles what we feel and believe now. Inaccurate memories and narratives are in fact necessary, resulting from the need to maintain a positive, up-to-date sense of self. 40
- 6 My own personal narrative is that I am a person who has always loved science, who has lived in many countries, met many people ... And my consequent identity is a scientist, a professor of Psychology, or a wanderer as befits the situation. But I might have made up those memories and narratives, at least in part. My current enjoyment for my job and frequent travels might taint my memories. Ultimately, there may have been times when I did not love science and wanted to settle down permanently. But clearly it does not matter, does it? What matters is that I am happy and I know who I am. 45

Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Civics Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paper 2 (50 marks)

Read the passage in the insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow. Note that up to 15 marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

Note: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passages for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

### From Passage 1

- 1 In Paragraph 1, why does the author say that these are 'tough and confusing times we are living in' (line 1)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 2 What does the author suggest about the way we form our identity by referring to 'our toiletries, our automobiles, our swimming pools and even that latest Botox injection' (line 5)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[1]

- 3 In paragraph 2, what contrast does the author make in lines 6-8 about our search for identity? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 4 Explain what the author means by 'frail or fragile' (lines 15-16).

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[1]

- 5 What is the author's intention in asking the question 'and why shouldn't we want a sense of unique significance' (lines 19-20) and what justification does he offer? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[3]

- 6 What does the author mean by 'I would have been completely in tune with our radically synthetic society' (line 28) and how do the examples in paragraph 5 support his view? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 7 In paragraph 6, explain what the author means by 'our true vocation' (line 36). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[1]

- 8 What is the author implying about our search for identity in lines 36-37? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 9 Explain the author's concern when he says 'we have wanted so desperately to be somebody that we have ended up being nobody where it really counts' (lines 40-41). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

**From Passage 2**

- 10 From paragraph 6, what does the author intend you to understand by the ellipsis (...) in line 42?

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[1]

- Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[illegible]

- How far do you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed in these two passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experiences and that of your society.

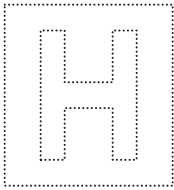
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[illegible]

## End of Paper







YISHUN INNOVA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC 2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019  
in preparation for General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
**Higher 1**

CANDIDATE  
NAME

CG

INDEX NO.

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

Paper 1

**28 August 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name and class on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **one** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

Question No.	
<b>For Examiner's Use</b>	
<b>Content</b>	<b>/30</b>
<b>Language</b>	<b>/20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>/50</b>

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This document consists of **2** printed pages.

**[Turn over**

## 2

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Are museums a waste of money?
- 2 'Politicians have no right to privacy.' Discuss.
- 3 How far is sustainable living a realistic goal in your society?
- 4 Should the concerns of minority groups influence policies in a country?
- 5 'Happiness is merely an illusion in the modern world.' Do you agree?
- 6 Evaluate the claim that it is dangerous to disregard history.
- 7 'In an age of technology, it is easier than ever before to commit crime.' Do you agree?
- 8 Assess the view that peaceful protest is more effective than violence in bringing about change.
- 9 Does censorship still have a place in this digital age?
- 10 'To ensure peace, it is vital to prepare for war.' What is your view?
- 11 Discuss the view that science and technology is key to your society's success.
- 12 To what extent is youth activism necessary for a better tomorrow?



YISHUN INNOVA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC 2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION  
**Higher 1**

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INDEX NO.

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**28 August 2019**

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

## SMART CITIES

**Passage 1.** *Paul S. Weisz writes about the benefits of smart cities.*

- 1 The urban population explosion, which is the result of more people moving into cities, has caused a similar explosion of fears amongst people who are concerned that the outcome will be overcrowded, unliveable cities that are eco-disasters. Smart cities are heralded as the key to tackling the enormous pressure urbanisation places on shrinking resources. The potential of smart cities was ignited by the Internet of Things (IoT), which enables various objects to communicate through the internet, nurturing a network of smart interactions. Much like how neurons in human brains interact to generate creative output, this IoT network is the foundation for technological innovations that have dramatic effects on people's lives. 5
- 2 Smart cities today track the location, speed and number of people on public transport to alleviate crowding and wait-times; they monitor air and water quality round-the-clock; they make access to government services seamless for tech-savvy citizens and streamline payment systems. Gathering data from different sources, they offer citizens notifications about their personal energy usage, community events near them, and tips for healthier lifestyles. Residents of smart cities thus enjoy safer and more convenient lives. 10
- 3 Beyond the benefits targeted at individual citizens, data gathered in smart cities is wielded to improve the design of entire cities, such that that they get more efficient over time. This not only saves governments and citizens money, it increases environmental sustainability and improves the health and quality of life of all citizens. IoT-based infrastructure has been successfully tested in Amsterdam, where traffic flow, energy usage, and public safety are monitored and adjusted based on real-time data. In the United States, major cities deploy smart rubbish bins that relay how full they are and determine the most efficient pick-up route for sanitation workers. Smart cities harbour so much potential to improve societies because decisions are data-driven rather than based on guesswork. Real-time analyses of large volumes of data point to where improvements can be made and which sectors have the most to gain, whether in energy use, traffic flow or calibrating rental prices of retail spaces. This fact-based development strategy mirrors science in how it self-corrects based on new findings. 20 25
- 4 The benefits of life in a smart city transcend tangible conveniences. Smart cities can dramatically change the relationship between governments and the governed, empowering citizens to be more involved than ever before in the transformation of their cities. Cities are putting data in the hands of citizens, giving rise to better decision-making and more powerful solutions. This is because crowdsourcing ideas from thousands of people with varied experience and expertise is far better than relying on a small panel of government officials. Citizens' sense of belonging and agency are also boosted when they see their communities embrace their ideas. London's 'Smart City Challenge' is one apt illustration of this. Technology entrepreneurs utilised vast tracts of data previously privy only to city officials to develop and share innovations that improve Londoners' daily lives. The winning ideas included smart mobility and parking, smart environment, smart shopping and smart citizen services – ideas that would not have come to the attention of the city (or even been developed at all) without open access to data. Ultimately, smart cities are better places to live because they are more democratic places where governments encourage a growing cadre of citizen co-creators to participate in improving their cities. 30 35 40
- 5 The potential of improved public services, environmental sustainability and quality of life is too compelling to ignore. Let us embrace the promise of smart cities: a revolution in the way we interact with our environment and how our cities interact with us.

**Passage 2.** *Dan Wood and David Smith warn about the insidious effects of smart cities.*

- 1 Nefarious aspects of smart cities lay hidden behind idealistic visions of governments leveraging data and automation to cope with increasingly crowded cities. While the mantra that smart cities are better places to live is seductive, we should exercise caution before rushing towards the Siren of Technology to save us.
  
- 2 Smart city advocates say they engage in ‘monitoring and data gathering’ to better allocate resources. Yet, what they engage in is surveillance. Today, this surveillance is pervasive: thousands of closed-circuit television and automatic number-plate recognition cameras capture each move we make. Our smartphones continuously connect to base stations and Wi-Fi spots, transmitting our location data throughout the day. The global positioning systems fitted in new vehicles track our location and movement. The problem is that all the personal data gathered about us is available not only to governments; it is also utilised by private companies recruited to analyse such data in order to make purportedly justifiable improvements to our lives. Yet, is five minutes off an hour-long commute really worth the risk of data theft?
  
- 3 The danger lies with the quantity and nature of private data collected without our consent or even our knowledge. There is a slippery slope of social control, where there is little regulation, control or clarity around how all the data collected about us is used. An extreme example of manipulation is the Chinese government’s social credit system, which tracks every aspect of a citizen’s life, recording consumer, social, legal and financial behaviour. An algorithm integrates the data to produce a ‘sincerity’ score for every citizen, passing judgment without any recourse to appeal. The better the score, the more privileges, freedoms and opportunities they are accorded. Under such an Orwellian<sup>1</sup> scheme, political dissent could be disastrous.
  
- 4 Smart city initiatives exacerbate inequality as well. India’s Smart Cities Mission has come under fire from civil rights activists because its plan to modernise Indian cities with smart city technologies has also triggered mass evictions from slums. The Mission aims to provide better housing and services to the emerging middle-class while ignoring the needs of the poor. In other cities, the poor and the elderly are often left out of the better life that smart cities promise, widening the gulf between the tech-savvy haves and the tech-poor have-nots. Smart cities improve the lives of some people, but certainly not all.
  
- 5 State-imposed smart measures are often guilty of intensifying historical prejudice against marginalised groups. One example of this is smart city policing, which attempts to reduce crime by using a predictive model that deploys officers to areas where historical data shows crime is high. However, this data-driven approach to policing has eroded the trust between the police and citizens; police enter these communities with their guard up and residents feel dehumanised and prematurely judged. Such blind faith in technology to solve the complex issues of crime is far from smart, backfiring horribly by heightening tensions between law enforcement and citizens.
  
- 6 Prioritising efficiency over humanity also makes smart cities less desirable places to live. Songdo, in South Korea, is touted as the epitome of a smart sustainable city. Networked computers control every aspect of life: household waste is automatically sucked away in pneumatic tubes and temperatures are optimised for comfort and energy use. Yet, Songdo is struggling to attract businesses and residents. Dubbed a ‘lonely and transparent’ city, it is difficult to forge social ties as communication happens almost exclusively online and privacy is limited.
  
- 7 The darker side to smart cities lurks in the shadows as we trade our chaotic, organic city lives for the homogenised efficiency of futuristic digital dreams. Are we sleepwalking into a dystopian nightmare of central control and social conditioning?

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<sup>1</sup> Characteristic of the writings of George Orwell, especially with reference to his dystopian account of a future totalitarian state that closely monitors and controls its citizens.







YISHUN INNOVA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC 2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION  
**Higher 1**

CANDIDATE  
NAME

CG

INDEX NO.

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**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**28 August 2019**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your class, index number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in the brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

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This document consists of **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** Insert.

Read the passages in the Insert and then answer **all** the questions. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

NOTE: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words and phrases from the passage.

### From Passage 1

- 1 In paragraph 1, what are people fearful of and what is the reason for their fear? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 2 Explain the author's use of the word 'heralded' in line 3.

.....

..... [1]

- 3 In paragraph 2, the author describes the benefits of smart cities as 'safer and more convenient lives' (line 14). Give **one** example of **each** benefit that the author provides and explain how it improves residents' lives. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 4 Suggest **two** reasons as to why the author concludes his argument with the final sentence (lines 43–44).

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 5** Using material from paragraphs 3–4 only (lines 15–41), summarise what the author has to say about the ways smart cities improve people’s lives.

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

Smart cities improve people's lives by .....

[8]

**[Turn over**

### From Passage 2

- 6 Why have the authors written ‘monitoring and data gathering’ in inverted commas (line 5)?

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 7 In paragraph 3, how do the authors support their description of China’s social credit scheme as an ‘extreme example of manipulation’ (line 16)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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..... [3]

- 8 In paragraph 4, the authors claim that ‘smart city initiatives exacerbate inequality’ (line 22). Give **two** examples of how the authors support this. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 9 How has smart city policing ‘eroded the trust between the police and citizens’ (lines 32–33) in the communities described in paragraph 5? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

10 Explain the authors' use of the word 'sleepwalking' in line 43.

.....

..... [1]

[Turn over

**From both passages**

- 11 One author argues that smart cities have a positive impact on many aspects of people's lives, while the other authors warn of the threats that smart cities pose.

How far do you agree with the opinions expressed in these **two** passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.





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YIJC GP PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2019  
PAPER 2 ANSWER GUIDE

1. In paragraph 1, what are people fearful of and what is the reason for their fear. Use your own words as far as possible. [2] [DP]

From the Passage	Paraphrased Answer
The urban population explosion, which is the result of more people moving into cities, has caused a similar explosion of fears amongst people who are concerned that the outcome will be overcrowded, unliveable cities that are eco-disasters. Smart cities are heralded as the key to tackling the enormous pressure urbanisation places on shrinking resources. (l.1-4)	<p>People are fearful of their cities becoming</p> <p>(a) congested, (b) deeply unpleasant to inhabit/be in and (c) (the cities will) degrade/destroy the environment.</p> <p>Any 2 for 1 mark</p> <p>The reason for their fear is</p> <p>(d) the rapid rise in numbers of people living in cities OR (e) that the movement of people into cities places unbearable/excessive/intolerable stress on declining resources.</p> <p>1 mark for either (d) or (e)</p>

2. Explain the author's use of the word 'heralded' in line 3. [1] [VI]

From the Passage	Paraphrased Answer
Smart cities are heralded as the key to tackling the enormous pressure urbanisation places on shrinking resources (l.3-4)	<p>Smart cities are seen as a promising way to solve the issue of intolerable stress on decreasing resources in cities.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Smart cities are welcomed with great belief in their ability to solve the issues arising from unbearable stress on decreasing resources in current cities. [1]</p>

3. In paragraph 2, the author describes the benefits of smart cities as 'safer and more convenient lives' (line 14). Give one example of each benefit that the author provides and explain how it improves residents' lives. Use your own words as far as possible. [2] [PI + inference]

From the text	Paraphrased
Smart cities today track the location, speed and number of people on public transport to alleviate crowding and wait-times; they monitor air and water quality round-the-clock; they make access to	<p>Safer</p> <p>(a) Residents of smart cities enjoy greater safety as checks on the standards of air and water are carried out continuously, ensuring that our health is not compromised by pollutants. [1]</p> <p>More convenient</p>

<p>government services seamless for tech-savvy citizens and streamline payment systems. Gathering data from different sources, they offer citizens notifications about their personal energy usage, community events near them, and tips for healthier lifestyles. Residents of smart cities thus enjoy safer and more convenient lives. (l.9-14)</p>	<p>(b) Greater convenience is illustrated by the easy interaction with government agencies online // the ability to conduct financial transactions smoothly// reduction in congestion and delays on public transport. This improves convenience as time is saved / fewer steps are required to complete a task.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Residents enjoy greater convenience when they receive alerts about social activities close by // receive alerts about their power/electricity use/consumption as this means they do not need to invest time/effort keeping track/searching of the latest happenings // go through difficulty trying to monitor their power consumption. [1]</p>
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4. Suggest two reasons as to why the author concludes his argument with the final sentence (lines 43-44). [2] [LS]

From the passage	Explained
<p>Let us embrace the promise of smart cities: a revolution in the way we interact with our environment and how our cities interact with us. (l.43-44)</p>	<p>(a) It serves as an effective reiteration of the author's key argument/position that smart cities can change our lives dramatically and for the better. [1]</p> <p>(b) By switching to the personal pronoun 'us' in the final sentence (and in the final paragraph), the author is portraying the issue of adopting/implementing smart city strategies to solve current problems as a shared concern. [1]</p> <p>(c) It serves as a rallying call to action – urges readers to seize the opportunity smart cities present to improve their lives and their societies. [1]</p> <p>(d) By switching to the personal pronoun 'us' in the final sentence (and in the final paragraph), the author is making a more direct connection with the reader to persuade them about the merits of smart cities.</p> <p>(e) Any other logical answers (e.g. it presents a possible solution to the problem in the first line of the passage, ending on a hopeful note to encourage people to welcome smart cities, etc.)</p> <p>Any 2 points for 2 marks.</p>

## Summary

5. Using material from paragraphs 3–4 only (lines 15–41), summarise what the author has to say about the ways smart cities improve people's lives.

Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible.

Smart cities improve people's lives by...

	From the text	Paraphrased
Paragraph 3		
1	improve the design of entire cities (l.16)	better city-planning/enhancing the organisation/system of cities
2	get more efficient over time (l.16)	that increases productivity/effectiveness// uses resources with increasing productivity.
3	saves governments and citizens money (l.17)	They are economical/ conserve funds for both the state and its people
4	increases environmental sustainability (l.17)	Makes cities greener/ more ecologically viable, and
5	improves the health and quality of life of all citizens (l.18)	enhances everyone's fitness / physical condition/ wellness/welfare and satisfaction with life// living conditions / overall well-being / intangible and tangible /material and non-material standards of living
6	decisions are data-driven rather than based on guesswork (l.23)	Judgements/policies are based on evidence/information and not conjectures/assumptions/speculation
7	Real-time analyses of large volumes of data point to where improvements can be made (l.23-24)	Live/instant/on-the-spot examination/evaluation of huge amounts of information informs us where enhancements are possible
8	and which sectors have the most to gain (l.24-25)	and which parts/aspects of society/industries have the greatest potential benefit from them/these enhancements.
9	self-corrects based on new findings (l.26)	Smart cities improve themselves automatically according to the latest/most up-to-date information/data
Paragraph 4		
10	empowering citizens to be more involved than ever before in the transformation of their cities (l. 28-29)	They equip people with the means for/ enable/encourages/supports greater participation/ increased participation in improving /revamping their cities.

11	Cities are putting data in the hands of citizens, giving rise to better decision-making (I.29-30)	As knowledge becomes accessible to the layman, people can make improved/more informed judgements/choices/conclusions
12	and more powerful solutions (I.30-31)	and remedies/cures/answers that have greater effectiveness.
13	crowdsourcing ideas from thousands of people with varied experience and expertise, is far better than relying on a small panel of government officials (I.31-32)  OR  Technology entrepreneurs utilised vast tracts of data previously privy only to city officials to develop and share innovations that improve Londoners' daily lives (I.34-36)	Gathering solutions/information/knowledge from a large group of diverse people rather than the powerful few leads to greater/superior outcomes
14	Citizens' sense of belonging and agency are also boosted when they see their communities embrace their ideas (I.33-34)	People feel more bonded/tightly connected to society
15		and a heightened sense of being able to influence change/make a difference when their plans/opinions are welcomed/accepted.
16	The winning ideas... would not have come to the attention of the city (or even been developed at all) without open access to data (I.36-39)	Such proposals/plans/ the suggestions that improve people's lives would not be noticed/focused on/ implemented, much less created/come up with/thought of, if not for the availability of information.
17	more democratic places (I.39-40)	Smart cities give more space for various voices// have a freer climate of sharing // where citizens are better heard by those in power
18	where governments encourage a growing cadre of citizen co-creators to participate in improving their cities (I.40-41)	as governments urge/promote/support them to be partners/play an equal role in planning better/enhanced cities // as governments urge more people to jointly construct enhanced cities.

No. of points	Marks	SAMPLE SUMMARY
≥ 12	8	<i>Smart cities improve our lives by</i> enhancing the organisation of cities [1] and consistently increasing productivity [2]. They are economical for states and people [3], make cities greener [4] and enhance everyone's well-being [5] and living standards [6]. Policies are based on evidence, not assumptions, [7] and live evaluation of huge amounts of information directs us to possible enhancements [8] and the aspects of society where they will have the greatest benefit [9]. Smart cities improve themselves automatically according to the latest data [10] and support increased citizen participation in revamping cities [11]. As knowledge becomes accessible to laypeople, they make improved judgements [12] and remedies that have greater effectiveness [13]. People's connectedness to society and sense of being able to influence change grow [15 & 16]. Citizens are better heard by governments [18] which urge more people to jointly construct enhanced cities [19].
11	7	
10	6	
8-9	5	
6-7	4	
4-5	3	
2-3	2	
1	1	120 words (17 points)

From passage 2

6. Why have the authors written 'monitoring and data gathering' in inverted commas (line 5)? [2]  
[Punctuation]

From the text	Explained
Smart city advocates say they engage in 'monitoring and data gathering' to better allocate resources. Yet, what they engage in is surveillance. (l.5-6)	<p>(a) They are signalling their disagreement/reservation with the use of words that imply such tracking and collection of data is positive/harmless/acceptable/ innocuous</p> <p>(b) as cities in fact observe people too closely/put them under extreme scrutiny.</p> <p>Mark allocation: To be awarded (b), (a) must be correct. If (a) is missing or wrong, no credit should be awarded.</p>

7. In paragraph 3, how do the authors support their description of China's social credit scheme as an 'extreme example of manipulation' (line 16)? Use your own words as far as possible. [3]  
[PI/DP]

From the text	Explained
An extreme example of manipulation is the Chinese government's social credit system, which tracks every aspect of a citizen's life, recording consumer, social,	The authors support their description of the Chinese government's scheme as an extreme example of manipulation by explaining how it

<p>legal and financial behaviour. An algorithm integrates the data to produce a 'sincerity' score for every citizen, passing judgment without any recourse to appeal. The better the score, the more privileges, freedoms and opportunities they are accorded. Under such an Orwellian scheme, political dissent could be disastrous. (l.16-21)</p>	<p>(a) attempts to compel/force/coerce citizens to/into exhibit(ing) behaviour the state deems positive/desirable/right</p> <p>by</p> <p>(b) observing / watching / keeping an eye on all domains of a resident's life.</p> <p>(c) Citizens' actions contribute to a score determined by a computer/software and citizens have no avenues to request a review of their scores / are unable to challenge any penalties they face.</p> <p>A lower credit score results in</p> <p>(d) reduced entitlements, reduced independence/autonomy / self-determination / choice to do what they want and fewer chances to grow/develop/succeed.</p> <p><i>Any 3 for 3 m</i></p>
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8. In paragraph 4, the authors claim that 'smart city initiatives exacerbate inequality' (line 22). Give two examples of how the authors support this. Use your own words as far as possible. [2] [PI/DP]

From the text	Explained
<p>Smart city initiatives exacerbate inequality as well. India's Smart Cities Mission has come under fire from civil rights activists because its plan to modernise Indian cities with smart city technologies has also triggered mass evictions from slums. The Mission aims to provide better housing and services to the emerging middle-class while ignoring the needs of the poor. In other cities, the poor and the elderly are often left out of the better life that smart cities promise, widening the gulf between the tech-savvy haves and the tech-poor have-nots. Smart cities improve the lives of some people, but certainly not all. (l.22-28)</p>	<p>They explain how</p> <p>(a1) in India, the Smart Cities Mission forced out large numbers of people living in shanties/informal settlements while it worked to improve residential facilities and amenities for wealthier residents.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(a2) As the Mission worked to improve residential facilities and amenities for wealthier residents, it overlooked/ neglected its basic/fundamental requirements for life of lower-income groups. Accept: 'cast aside' for 'neglected'.</p> <p>(b) In other cities too, they argue that lower-income/destitute and older residents/the aged who lack access to/do not use technology do not benefit from the improved lifestyles smart nations bring to those more comfortable with /adept at technology.</p> <p>(a1) or (a2) or (b) alone = 1m (a1) or (a2) + (b) = 2m</p>

9. How has smart city policing 'eroded the trust between the police and citizens' (lines 32–33) in the communities described in paragraph 5? Use your own words as far as possible. [2] [DP]

From the text	Paraphrased
One example of this is smart city policing which attempts to reduce crime by using a predictive model that deploys officers to areas where historical data shows crime is high. However, this data-driven approach to policing has eroded the trust between the police and citizens; police enter these communities with their guard up and residents feel dehumanised and prematurely judged. (l.30-34)	<p>Smart city policing has reduced trust between police and citizens in these communities / communities where there have been many security/illegal incidents in the past</p> <p>(a) as the police are suspicious / on alert/ wary as they go into these places,</p> <p>(b) and residents feel like they are not treated as people/ not respected/ dignity is compromised</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(c) residents feel that they have been deemed guilty without a fair assessment / deemed guilty before they have a chance to defend themselves</p> <p>1 mark for (a) 1 mark for (b) or (c)</p>

10. Explain the authors' use of the word 'sleepwalking' in line 43. [1] [VI]

From the text	
The darker side to smart cities lurks in the shadows as we trade our chaotic, organic city lives for the homogenised efficiency of futuristic digital dreams. Are we sleepwalking into a dystopian nightmare of central control and social conditioning? (l.42-44)	The authors mean that we are not conscious of the fact that we are moving towards a world where our actions are engineered and directed by the authorities.



