

- The sciences: As a method of inquiry (empirical, quantitative, rational) and body of knowledge, and application of this knowledge through the development of technology

Types of technology

- Medical technology
- Environmental technology
- Weapons technology
- Transport technology
- Information and Communications technology
- Finance and banking esp. cashless transactions
- Surveillance technology

Science and Ethical concerns

- many scientific inventions involve ethical considerations
- animal testing vs animal rights
- genetic research vs sanctity of human life
- nuclear energy vs safety
- GM food vs food safety

1. Should scientific research be restricted in any way?
'It is not the business of science to deal with ethical issues.' Discuss.

Yes, scientific research should be restricted when...	No, scientific research should not be restricted because...
<p>It jeopardizes the safety of the human race. E.g., research in chimeras may ultimately lead to humanized primates</p>	<p>It is against the spirit of science which is about the pursuit of scientific truth and factual knowledge. Scientific research is amoral - it is how man uses it that renders it immoral. So the restriction should be placed on man's usage of the scientific discovery</p>
<p>It exploits and infringes on the rights of animals when these studies can be done using scientific calculations and simulated computerized graphic models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>alternatives to animal testing</i> (for eg, in-vitro tests, computer software, databases of tests already done to avoid duplication) are available and <i>cite some examples of some companies which have started to adopt these alternative measures</i> (for eg, Body Shop, L'Oreal). • Perhaps, mankind may divide the animals into groups – people may 	<p>It may be difficult to enforce the restriction on scientific research and it may result in secret underground research by unscrupulous organizations. Better to have regulations and guidelines to maintain some form of control rather than placing restriction on the research.</p>

perceive that it is more inhumane to conduct tests on some animals like chimpanzees and dogs compared to rodents.	
It is against moral and ethical values . E.g. liberal eugenics , which is an ideology which advocates the use of reproductive and genetic technologies where the choice of the goals of enhancing human characteristics and capacities is left to the individual preferences of consumers	It jeopardizes the chance of a breakthrough that may bring tremendous benefit to the human race. For instance, therapeutic cloning, has tremendous potential for solving the problem of organ shortage

2. Should ethical concerns be second to pragmatism in Science? [Prelim 2008]

- ethical concerns - issues that are related to morality / our sense of what is right and wrong. Ethics is subjective to a certain degree and while there are universal values, the benchmark for morality may vary in different groups/societies.
- pragmatism – what is practical /sensible

Prioritising ethical concerns	Prioritising pragmatism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will give rise to the abuse of science for selfish reasons such as individual fame and may have wide societal repercussions. • Consider also the slippery slope argument. Laws / policies have to be implemented to ensure that ethical concerns are not compromised (eg stem cell research, abortion, euthanasia) <p>e.g. disgraced South Korean Hwang Woo-Suk, a pioneer researcher in stem-cell who was fired for falsifying research on the extraction of stem-cells from cloned human embryos, offering false hopes in a breakthrough in diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, spinal cord injury, heart diseases and diabetes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the sake of economic development and the need to remain competitive in the globalised world, ethical concerns might be expected to take a backseat. • Consider stem-cell research in Singapore for example. Some may regard the use of embryos as unethical but cannot deny that such research is crucial for Singapore's development • Chimera in Britain • Biofuels in Indonesia. The growing of biofuels is a lucrative source of income for farmers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper legislation ought to be in place so that businessmen do not exploit the masses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To solve pressing global issues <p>e.g. surveillance technology may invade privacy but this is inevitable in today's</p>

<p>e.g. melamine in China food products</p> <p>e.g. giant corporations Monsanto and Novartis owning patents to seeds of genetically modified food.</p>	<p>age of terrorism</p> <p>e.g. injection of human cells into animals is necessary so as to find cures for neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's disease. This is especially so when the problem of an ageing population is plaguing many nations.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where illnesses are concerned, ethics might give way to financial considerations, the desire of the patient, or the inability to care for the sick <p>e.g. a mother is compelled to abort her child if her health will be in danger during the pregnancy.</p> <p>e.g. euthanasia to lessen the suffering of patients suffering from terminal illnesses</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the well-being / sovereignty of a nation is an issue, very often, pragmatism triumph (consider research of chemical, biological, nuclear weapons)

3. Science cannot be separated from ethical concerns. Discuss.

Cannot be separated	Can be separated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science can be used to commit good or evil. has tremendous potential to bring immense benefits to mankind but it can also be manipulated and abused to bring gross destruction to mankind With such power to influence humanity, it has tremendous social and moral responsibility and it should be expected to live up to such responsibilities. If science can be absolved of all ethical concerns, we would see a proliferation of harmful research and technology because there is nothing to govern or prevent such things. The human conscience is the best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science and ethics are mutually exclusive. Science is objective while ethics is subjective as science involves hard facts and evidence while ethics involves a certain degree of personal judgment. For example, in an operation, science is concerned with how we can save a person but ethics is concerned with why we are saving the person. The duty of science is save lives, not to question whether the life we are saving is that of a fire-fighter or that of a terrorist. That belongs to the realm of ethics. Since they belong to two completely different domains, how can one lump

<p>defense we have in the face of such devastating threats from Science. If we take that away, it is the start of the end for mankind.</p>	<p>them together?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science is an invention of human beings (ie scientists) and hence, morals and ethics must be taken into consideration. • Our actions are motivated by our intentions, and all our intentions are determined by our morals and values. As such, how can we claim that science has nothing to do with morals or values? • Some scientists may be trying to further their own selfish aims at the expense of other people. In order to achieve their aims, some are even willing to fabricate their findings such as disgraced South Korean scientist Hwang Woo-Suk. • Science cannot be separated from ethical concerns, for we have a moral obligation to keep scientific research in check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science cannot possibly be responsible for how it is used. It is the job of a scientist to come up with scientific inventions but it would be pushing it too far to demand that the inventions he comes up with can only be used for positive things. • Also it would be very naïve and impractical to do so. To illustrate, the Wright Brothers came up with the first airplane but it would be unthinkable to blame them for the 9/11 incident where terrorists hijacked 2 airplanes and crashed them into the World Trade Centre. • In the real world, there is no way one can govern or dictate how science can be used. As such it would be unfair to pin the blame on science for anything that goes wrong.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would do more harm than good if science is bogged down by ethical concerns. • Let us take the Human Genome Project as an example. The potential to benefit lives is mind-boggling but so are the inherent problems and dangers. If proven successful, it would lead to a host of ethical, social and legal issues. If scientists are too bogged down by these issues, would they be able to carry out their research successfully? There is too much at stake and the scientist would not want to risk his reputation and career by coming up with an invention which would bring untold harm and destruction to mankind. • Hence. science can never truly progress and achieve its aim of benefitting mankind if it operates within the confines of ethical considerations.

4. 'Instead of the pursuit of the truth, science has become the pursuit of profit.'
Comment.

Pursuit of truth	Pursuit of profit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a philosophical point of view, the underlying goal or purpose of science to society and individuals is to produce useful models of reality. • The social sciences allows for predictions for complex interactions like economic turbulence and also to better understand human behaviour and to produce useful models of society and to work more empirically with government policies. • Spending on space research brings out the fundamentally human instinct to explore. Already some of our most amazing achievements have taken place in space. No one can deny the sense of wonder, when for the first time Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon. • Large Hadron Collider, the largest particle accelerator. Thousands of collaborators hope to use the accelerator to solve long-standing physics problems, such as why fundamental particles have mass 	<p>Due to the growing economic value of technology and industrial research, the economy of any modern country depends on its state of science and technology. The governments of most developed and developing countries therefore dedicate a significant portion of their annual budget to scientific and technological research. E.g. Singapore</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering new knowledge to heal the world • Charitable organisations, e.g. in 2003 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation awarded a \$70 million grant to the University of Washington (UW), Seattle, to promote genetics research. Such research funded by charities is expected to be carried out for the sake of improving the state of the world. • Scientists are also looking into the development of vaccines that do not require refrigeration or needles as this would make it easier and cheaper to deliver immunization in poor countries. Microbicide gels that help women 	<p>Most scientific research is currently funded by government or corporate bodies. These relatively recent economic factors appear to increase the incentive for some to engage in fraud in reporting the results of scientific research, often termed scientific misconduct (as in the aforementioned case of Hwang).</p>

protect themselves against HIV are also in the midst of development. People can then stop diseases like malaria and tuberculosis from killing millions of people every year.	
	The scientific research carried out with funding for private corporations is mostly, if not inevitably profit driven. e.g. Monsanto and Novartis in the field of GM food

5. Scientific research and applications which are exploitative should not be allowed. Do you agree? [Prelim 2008]

- exploitative: the act of using something/someone in a cruel and unjust manner

Scientific research and applications which are exploitative should be allowed	Scientific research and applications which are exploitative should not be allowed.
Certain sacrifices have to be made and should be allowed if the net effect is the attainment of cure for diseases for the progress of humanity. (utilitarian view)	Scientific research such as animal testing should not be allowed because animals also experience some degrees of sentience like human beings. It is a cruel act to inflict pain or jeopardize the life of animals which are considered the experiencing subjects of a life, with inherent value of their own. (infringement of rights – animal rights)
In this age, with civil suit-happy society, it is unlikely that exploitation will occur as those involved in the experiments are informed of the procedures and dangers involved and often compensated for their efforts. In addition, each country would already have stringent guidelines and ethical watch dogs to ensure no ethical transgression is made.	To condone exploitation is to allow science to degenerate into a business transaction and emphasise the faultlines in society further. An example would be the sale of organs where the poor are sucked into the trade and some are over-promised about their rewards but in the end they are conned.

Others: Should concern for man and his fate be the main priority of scientific endeavours? [Prelim 2008]
'We're in an age where no one really knows where the lines can or should be drawn.' How true is this of medical science today? [Prelim 2008]

6. Have the issues faced by scientists become more complicated in recent times?

	More complicated	Not more complicated
1	Society in general demands greater	The issues faced by current scientists are

	<p>accountability for their research.</p> <p>→ Any misstep or infringement on scientists' part could taint their credibility as a respected professional in the field or even spell the end of their career</p> <p>→ e.g. disgraced South Korean Hwang Woo-Suk, a pioneer researcher in stem-cell who was fired for falsifying research on the extraction of stem-cells from cloned human embryos, offering false hopes in a breakthrough in diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, spinal cord injury, heart diseases and diabetes.</p>	<p>easier to handle now as compared to the past.</p> <p>→ Easier to ensure the integrity of their research and respect that of others</p> <p>-> Vast array of information available to them makes it easier for them to conduct follow-up research into various discipline</p> <p>→ These resources offer scientists more support</p>
2	<p>Scientists need to look into the economic viability of their proposed research before they can receive sufficient support from the government, and respective authorities</p> <p>> Scientists have to be pragmatic about the types of research to undertake, while respecting the political agenda of its own government, the region and that of the world</p> <p>→ They can no longer embark on research purely for its intrinsic value</p> <p>→ e.g. In S'pore, more funds and support are given to research on the biomedical sciences, environment and water technologies, interactive and digital media</p> <p>→ Scientists who reject the commercialisation of science and wish to follow their ideals will not be able to obtain the necessary infrastructure or funding to carry out any kind of research.</p>	<p>The issues faced by scientists have not become more complex today as they are largely similar to those in the past.</p> <p>→ The pressure to locate new niches and find novel ideas has been a constant focus for scientists ever since the incipient reliance on science to explain and manipulate nature.</p> <p>→ This 'pressure' motivates scientists to maximally utilize all the knowledge and skills that have been handed down from the past.</p>
3	<p>Scientists need to be sensitive to how science is linked to profit while adhering to their ethical considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profit-driven companies often fund scientific research in the hope of 	

	<p>patenting a new product and monopolising its distribution e.g. Human Genome Sciences and Incyte have invested heavily in gene research but are also notorious for trying to corner the market by patenting as many human genes as possible; Pfizer and GlaxoSmithKline have been researching a cure for Aids but are accused of monopolising the distribution of Aids medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temptation to make a profit will cause some scientists and firms to rush new products on to the market before they have been thoroughly researched. • The desire to boost the profit margin will tempt some firms to use unscrupulous but cheaper means of testing a new product e.g. using people in Third World countries as human test subjects for pharmaceutical products (e.g. study of the AIDS drug AZT on pregnant women in Thailand and Uganda). 	
	<p>Scientists usually have to play a myriad number of roles as compared to those in the past</p> <p>→ Increasing demand on scientists to be specialists in their field as well as to be good administrators, fund raisers, communicators, educators and ‘maintainers’ of societal well-being.</p> <p>→ the need to multi-task and to produce tangible results from their research makes it difficult to nurture or retain professional and committed scientists</p>	

7. Sagan is full of praise about the virtues of science while Appleyard has reservations about science. Which view do you find more convincing? You must refer to both authors in your answer. In giving your views, explain where and why you agree or disagree with the author. [8]

Virtues of science	Reservations about science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As science is objective and is based on proof and logic, the scientific attitude of examining the evidence helps us counter superstitions, tribal fundamentalist claims, conservative views which are prejudicial and the clamour of views and conflicting claims and information on the internet etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific R and D commercially motivated; leads to unethical practices e.g. releasing drugs without sufficient testing for safety or side-effects; GM food still a controversial issue; AIDS medication priced beyond the means of the poor E.g. fake Viagra sold by unauthorized dealers has led to health problems and even deaths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual level. Numerous benefits derived from science and enjoyed by society e.g machines, appliances, cures, today's therapeutic stem cell and cloning technology, etc. Increases standard of living and material comforts Improves emotional health with Ritalin for the young, Viagra for the old, Prozac for everyone. Ritalin: a drug used to treat attention deficit disorders. Prozac: a drug used to treat depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People do over-use/abuse Ritalin or Viagra Examples - children who are difficult or are discipline problems may be prescribed Ritalin (incorrectly) because it will make them less active, even lethargic (and hence easier to control). This is a growing concern
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientists not always transparent about their research and finding. This gives rise to the abuse of science Scientific misconduct hence arises. e.g. disgraced South Korean Hwang Woo-Suk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National level. Application of technology creates goods and markets and benefit countries economically e.g Singapore's Biopolis and the focus on research and development in the life sciences as one more avenue for growing the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploitation of the poor/ disadvantaged as organ donors is a growing problem in poverty stricken areas of India and Indonesia, for example

economic pie	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science remains the hope of the human race in the face of current global problems e.g. environmental devastation → hybrid vehicles, renewable sources of energy, eco-cities e.g. food shortage → Genetically Modified Food, bio-fortified rice e.g. epidemics → clinical trials, vaccines and immunizations e.g. terrorism → surveillance technology, biometrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many poor countries still do not have infrastructure to go into science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science keeps extending our frontiers of knowledge; we progress because of science e.g. Space research e.g. Large Hadron Collider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruits of science not easily available to poor eg. Expensive medication or medical technology, digital divide; backlash against human transplant, offending culture and religious views {More information from essay on how technology divides rather than unifies people}
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost all societies have watchdog bodies and ethics committees (e.g. Singapore's Bioethics Advisory Committee) to prevent people from abusing science. There are examples of resistance to beneficial changes; religious objections to stem cell research is most well known
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genetic screening Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis makes it possible for couples with terrible hereditary diseases to have children without condemning them to a life of suffering. Genetic screening has ensured hundreds of children are alive today because "saviour siblings" were created as a match. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'saviour siblings' - What is needed (like bone marrow) for the stricken sibling is usually harvested when the donor ('saviour sibling') is still too young to understand; the procedures are often extremely painful Whole concept of having a child solely so it can serve as a donor is very questionable ethically Example - in a US case, a teen who had been fighting cancer for years (and was considered terminal by doctors) got tired

	of seeing his sister used repeatedly for painful donor procedures and tried to take his parents to court to prevent them from extending both his own and his sister's suffering
--	---

Impact on society

8. Has science and technology caused society to progress or regress?
Is science a salvation or threat to society?
'We are victims of our own creation.' Is this a valid statement about science and technology?

Progress/Salvation	Regress/Threat
<p>Science should not be blamed for the flaws in human nature. Science, in fact, has ensured that wars such as the Cold War were bloodless events.</p>	<p>Man now has the ability to 'play God'. Such meddling is irresponsible and potentially dangerous. [Moral/ethical]</p>
<p>[Information and communication technology] Has information and communication technology truly kept us connected?</p> <p>Communication and IT – Mobile phones, Radio, the Internet, Email, Skype, MSN, Blackberry, Podcasting, Youtube, Live Video Feeds.</p> <p><u>YES</u>, we are kept well-connected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this era of globalization and jet-setting families, communications and IT plays a pivotal role in keeping families together and maintaining friendships. Indeed it is the glue that binds humans together across long distances. • Rapport improves. Networking sites such as Myspace enable friends to share pictures, videos and information freely and readily. It provides a shared space online for people to meet and interact if they are unable to do so in person. One can also track down old friends and 	<p>[Information and communication technology]</p> <p><u>NO</u>, we are not kept well-connected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are inundated with information. We receive many smses, emails and spam on a daily basis. Smses and Emails inhibit rather than promote communication. Oftentimes our messages are terse, snappish or lack warmth. Misunderstandings may arise as paralinguistic features (i.e. body language) and tone of voice are absent. • The ease of use of instant messaging systems such as MSN. Many people prefer to interact with peers in the comforts of their homes rather than arrange for more intimate, face-to-face meetings Others feel that keeping themselves updated of their friends' happenings through blogs, photo-sharing websites and virtual communities like Friendster and Facebook is sufficient. However, these are not a substitute for the actual

<p>long-lost acquaintances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRC/MSN and other networking software allows us to make and maintain more friends than we ordinarily would have; it enriches our lives and enhances connectedness. • The Internet allows people unprecedented access to information and hence make informed decisions→ active citizenry. 	<p>physical presence of a person and create distance, rather than bridge it. The quality of the relationship is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People spend more time in virtual worlds than interacting with their family and friends around them. E.g. Home Boys in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan • Emerging trend of people breaking up with their partners through Short Messaging Service (SMS) in countries such as Singapore and Malaysia <p>[Communications technology]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the ready availability of information on the Internet, plagiarism has become a problem, with students copying and pasting information from online sources without doing their own research. Internet plagiarism has quadrupled in the past six years, according to a 2006 Newsweek article. • Other students buy their research essays online at sites such as Gradesaver.com instead of taking the trouble to generate their ideas. <p>[Communications technology] child pornography</p>
<p>How has technology changed the way we do business today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must give specific examples of technology that have affected how businessmen, entrepreneurs, companies operate. Examples: the Internet, 3G phones, laptops, satellite dishes, modern telecommunications, wireless network, fiber optics, fast transport. • Examples of business practices: online marketing and advertising, teleconferencing, electronic transactions. 	
	<p>[Environmental science] Acid rain, overfishing, animal experimentation</p>

<p>[Medical science] Enabled children to be vaccinated against diseases which before had caused high rates of infant mortality. Robots are typically used in the manufacturing and banking sectors. Currently, Japanese scientists have developed a robotic seal Paro to be used as a form of therapy for patients in Singapore hospitals.</p> <p>Q: How far do you support medical interference in human procreation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover a wide enough scope: from obvious ones like fertility treatment, abortion & genetic engineering, to less obvious ones like contraception & sterilization. <p>Q: To what extent should the State be involved in medical science?</p>	<p>[Military science] Increases the capability of men and women to kill each other. Stockpiled nuclear weapons give man the capability of obliterating the world many times over.</p>
<p>[Food science] Irrigation, fertilizers and pesticides, GM food help increase yields</p>	

8. ‘Science promises but rarely delivers.’ How far do you agree?

BASIC REQUIREMENT

- ☐ Address ‘rarely’. It should not be misinterpreted as ‘never’.
- ☐ Must recognise the link between promising and delivering, instead of discussing them as separate parts.

HIGHER ORDER

- ☐ Discuss the factors that have hindered Science from delivering. The problem may not be due to Science but the other factors involved in the various processes.
- ☐ High or even unrealistic expectations towards Science?

Others: Do you agree that technology has made the world more dangerous than ever?
 “The main benefits of science have been material comforts and longer life.” Do you agree?
 ‘Science has been made a scapegoat for the ills of modern society.’ Comment.
 ‘The idea that science will one day create a perfect world is a dangerous delusion.’ Discuss.
 Advancement in Science and Technology today, leaves man with a bittersweet taste. Comment.

Can science solve problems?

9. Technology divides rather than unifies. Do you agree?

Tech unifies ...	Tech divides ...
<p>Tech helps to unite the business world-- advancement in technology has allowed business deals to take place despite the barriers imposed by distance and time lag. Regardless of the time lag between different parts of the world, financial transactions can still be conducted via the internet e.g buying of stocks on Nesdaq via the internet. Video-conferencing can also be done even though people are at different parts of the world and meetings can be conducted from different boardrooms around the world. Information is accessible to all via the internet. Hence we all have equal chances at getting the same piece of knowledge and this should give us equal chances in competing for jobs or business opportunities.</p> <p>Technology unifies the world by increasing the chances of cure/survival for each human regardless of race or wealth and status. This is achieved by giving better access to medical knowledge/better access to doctors in developed countries via email etc. Medical knowledge can be shared on the internet. With improvement in technology, surgical procedures can be filmed and uploaded on the internet. Doctors around the world can discuss, and share medical knowledge, thus benefiting different societies around the world. Doctors, rich or poor, have access to medical knowledge which they can then share with their communities.</p> <p>Technology allows people to communicate cheaply and easily Families that are separated as a result of one parent posted overseas can communicate with one another easily through improved technology e.g cheap international calls are now easily available via the internet. Hence technology helps to keep families together.</p>	<p>Tech generates a growing divide between tech elites and the rest who are without access. Underdeveloped infrastructure leads to unequal access to technology. Some countries do not have the infrastructure to support the internet. Within one country, the major cities may be better wired than the rural areas e.g Beijing and Meizhou. Underlying assumption is that everyone owns/has access to a computer which is not true.</p> <p>Tech skills influence the quality of life-dividing the people into the 'haves' and 'have-nots' Many jobs now require good fundamental technology skills and technology has become a quality of life indicator. Tech elites can demand higher pay, they can communicate better and faster, and save time and money by handling routine tasks online instead of in person. In contrast, people without tech skills are left further behind as they struggle to grapple with the changing workplace which is getting increasingly complicated. This may lead to them being left out of the scramble for better paying jobs and promotions. Eventually, a country may end up with a rich tech savvy urban population, and a poor rural uneducated population.</p> <p>Tech divides the world in terms of opportunity cost, due to its inherent requirement for tech users to possess fairly good literacy skills There is the assumption that any population in the world is educated enough to absorb the skills needed to manipulate technology once technology becomes available (e.g setting up of hardware, wiring up the country). However, this is not true as there are many countries with people struggling with basic literacy and these people have differing</p>

Tech unifies ...	Tech divides ...
<p>Technology helps to gather international aid in a short period of time, and therefore unifies the poor and the rich countries. News around the world can be reported and telecast real-time and information shared amongst all. This is particularly important with major news events e.g. September 11 incident, and the Boxing Day Tsunami where help was needed immediately. This helps to strengthen international ties.</p>	<p>abilities to manipulate technology.</p> <p>Tech affects the export revenues of poor and rich countries, and gives a competitive edge to rich countries, leading to a growing gap between rich and poor countries. Countries that do not keep up with global technology often teeter on the brink of collapse because they depend on a narrow range of exports which can lose their profitability in the world economy. For instance, copper wire has largely been displaced by fibre optics, which rely on sophisticated technology in the manufacturing process. New technology is often costly and poorer countries cannot afford these new inventions, and this leads to a growing income gap between the rich and poor countries.</p> <p>Developing countries which are not well placed to absorb technologies from abroad, lose out. Successful importers of technology tend to be close to big markets or on principal sea routes or both e.g. Hong Kong and Singapore. Studies show that technology does not flow as easily to remote areas or regions that are far from sea ports such as inland China or Africa.</p>

10. Has technological advancement worsened the problem of poverty/the plight of the poor?

Technological advancement:

- Improvements in the usage / application of science. Can be taken as modern day usage of science.

Possible arguments

Agree:

- Mechanization has meant the loss of jobs for unskilled or semi-skilled labour.
- Small local farmers cannot compete with large-scale farming using expensive pesticides and machinery.
- The Digital Divide has only widened the gap between rich and poor countries. Poor countries are at a disadvantage when it comes to access to information and communication. They hence fall behind in efficiency and competitiveness. The increasing gap between those with regular, effective access to digital and information technology,

and those without this access to the hardware, skills and resources which allow for its use. The greater concern is the global digital divide, which widens the gap in economic divisions around the world.

- Research and development of new technologies are overwhelmingly directed at rich-country problems. To solve the distinctive challenges poor nations face, science and technology must be directed purposefully towards them. On health and medical science: Focus of drug research has been on diseases that affect rich countries and people. Of the 1,400 new drugs approved between 1975 and 1999, only one per cent were for tropical diseases. In addition, In 2001 drug companies spent \$70 billion on research for new drugs eg 8 drugs for impotence and erectile dysfunction, 7 for obesity and 4 for sleep disorders. These are ‘diseases of the rich.’ The market mechanism in science and technology - driven by short-term profit and shareholder value - will not deliver for the poor in developing countries.

Disagree:

- Life expectancy has greatly increased in the developing world since WWII. Even in Sub-Saharan Africa, the least developed region, life expectancy increased from 30 years before World War II to about a peak of about 50 years before the AIDS pandemic and other diseases started to force it down to the current level of 47 years.
- Technology has improved the plight of the poor: it has created new surges of wealth and well-being in developing countries that have embraced free-market economies. It helps in modernising agriculture, increasing output, developing industries that increase jobs.
- To tap into the potential the technology brings for the economy, governments, businesses, schools and even NGOs have also invested in education and offered opportunities to the poor to gain access to the use and promises of technology.
- Technological advancements cannot be blamed for the plight of the poor: Poverty exists due to various causes and technology may not be relevant in some cases. Governments should then work at developing a partnership between developed and developing nations to provide the poor access to the benefits that these technologies bring and thus alleviate poverty.

11. Can we rely on science and technology to solve our environmental problems?

Can rely on science and technology	Cannot rely on science and technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Science and technology have led to the creation of new inventions which are cleaner and more efficient. E.g. hydrogen powered cars, alternative energy sources, coal that burns more efficiently such that less residue/emissions are produced. ▪ We can rely on science and technology as long as we get other kinds of support. E.g. support from concerned individuals, groups, communities. NGOs worldwide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Science and technology is the main culprit of environmental problems; Man should be thankful if science and technology stops adding on to the problem, never mind solving it. ▪ The pace of environmental problems has always moved faster than the solutions that scientific and technological advances can offer. And this situation is unlikely to change.

<p>work for the cause of saving the Earth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We can rely on efficient technology as long as there is increasing awareness about conservation towards achieving sustainable development. Many countries now recognize the need to treat the environment as shared heritage and hence are willing to work towards conservation on a global scale. ▪ Science and technology is more reliable than other possible solutions to environmental problems. Although environmental treaties which were signed and ratified, they have not been abided. E.g. America has not kept to its part of bargain with regard to the terms of the Kyoto Protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scientific & technological advances are too expensive. It has not been cost efficient or it is too expensive for companies and (developing) countries which do not have the financial ability to dedicate to the environmental cause. Bread and butter issues are still very real for people in various parts of the world. ▪ Solving the problem requires long term effort from all parties and at all levels. E.g. governments/ grassroots participation/ consumers/ schools. ▪ It is hard to arrive at an agenda for conservation as different nations face different environmental problems and have different approaches. The developments in science and technology have not resolved these differences.
---	--

12. Can the use of surveillance technology ever be justified?

The use of surveillance technology is justified	The use of surveillance technology is not justified
<p>1. When it is used for the safety of individuals to prevent crime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -pinhole cameras are used to deter would be criminals from attacking us at ATM machines. -Security cameras are also placed along school corridors for students' safety especially during hours when there are not many school personnel around. -Thus these examples of surveillance technology play a part in deterring would be criminals from carrying out their nefarious activities knowing that their images are caught on tape and may be used for capture and prosecution. <p>2. When it is used to ensure national security.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All MRT stations are now equipped with 24-hour camera surveillance as added "eyes" to the presence of security personnel on trains. 	<p>1. When it invades and violates the right to privacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some parents use surveillance technology to monitor the actions of their children's nanny. -This is a clear violation of an individual's right to privacy especially if the nanny is not even aware of prying "eyes", following her movements. -It is a violation of rights because of two reasons; bullying a vulnerable employee by threatening the loss of their job if they do not agree to surveillance. Another reason is the action of non-disclosure that the employee does not even know that she is being monitored. <p>2. When it is used as a tool for the government to control its political opponents and suppress differing</p>

<p>-These cameras complement the work of security personnel and thus provide added protection against sneaky terrorist attacks.</p> <p>3. When it is used to better our quality of life.</p> <p>-Surveillance technology is used to monitor food preparation in restaurants so as to prevent health hazards and the safe preparation of food.</p> <p>-This kind of technology provides ease of mind for restaurant patrons.</p> <p>-Surveillance technology provides instant feedback through the connected email for any observed anomalies in production of goods and services in industries and F&B outlets.</p> <p>-Thus such technology eases consumers' minds and helps maintain high service and production standards.</p>	<p>opinions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some governments use surveillance technology to tap into political opponents' phone lines. - In repressive regimes, political opponents routinely find that sensitive information has somehow been leaked to the government who can act out of impunity since they hold the reins of power in the country. - Even in liberal America, surveillance technology was used to spy on President's Nixon's presidential opponent so as to find out campaign secrets.
---	---

13. To what extent has science and technology changed the face of crime?

face of crime:

- Covers all aspects of crime from preventive measures, punishment, forensics, legislation to resolution

Demonstration of relationship:

- Student will have to define and narrow down "face of crime" and the corresponding science application which impacts → include scientific methods to detect, prevent and solve crime, impact on legislation and society
- Evaluation of the impact (i.e. how has the face of crime been changed by science & technology)
- Focus on transnational and organised crime

Possible points of reconciliation:

- Consider the various types of "conventional" organised crime that can be facilitated by digital technology, as well as terrorism, which itself can be regarded as a special kind of organised criminal activity. One fundamental question whether the activities of organised crime have become substantively different as a result of technology, or whether traditional organised criminal activities are merely being conducted on a more efficient and effective basis. Note the transnational nature of much organised criminal activity, and discuss mechanisms for the control of organised crime in the digital age
- Recognise the role of technology in precision forensic and how perpetrators are wising up to the methods of crime detection. Even the public is more aware through television programmes like CSI
- Recognise that electronic crime is maturing. i.e. clever criminals are adopting conventional approaches that reflect cold business sense - from supermarket-style pricing to outsourcing to

specialists acting as portfolio managers, coders, launchers, miners, washers and minders of infected "zombie" computers

- What is helping the criminals may also turn against them i.e. growing communication web makes it hard for criminals to hide
- Evaluation of how such changes “force” our current law enforcers from police to judge to lawmakers to make adjustments i.e. new rules and ordinance, transborder cooperation, training to evaluate cybercrime

1. Akihabara killer, Tomohiro Kato blogged about his intention before massacre in Tokyo
2. A Missouri woman was indicted for her alleged role in perpetrating a hoax on the online social network MySpace against a 13-year-old neighbor who committed suicide
3. Idea of GPS monitoring of high-risk offenders
4. The surreptitious collection of a DNA sample – violation of suspect’s rights?
5. Spy drones – invasion of privacy?
6. International drug traffickers are among the most widespread users of encrypted messages, coded messages by cell and satellite phones and use anonymiser features on computers. They also are able to hire technical specialists capable of using steganography and other means to make messages hard or impossible to decipher. This access to high level specialists allows illicit businesses and terrorist organisations to transcend borders and operate internationally without detection

Others: New technologies have made crime fighting more challenging than ever. Do you agree?

14. How far is nuclear energy the answer to our dwindling energy resources?

To pass

- Candidates need to consider the effectiveness of nuclear energy in terms of ameliorating the current depletion of energy resources.
- They have to show evidence of evaluation of the limitations or benefits of nuclear energy and consider both perspectives. (i.e. dangers of nuclear contamination, political unrest, more affordable, ample supply of raw material-uranium)
- They need to compare the effectiveness of nuclear energy with other possible solutions.

To score

- Candidates must cite specific and elaborated examples to show their knowledge of nuclear energy. (I.e. Chernobyl incident, Iranian/North Korean nuclear crisis etc...)
- They also need to show in-depth and broad knowledge of other possible forms of alternative energy (i.e. wind energy, solar energy, biomass etc...)
- Excellent scripts may show awareness that whilst critics claim that nuclear energy is harmful due to radioactive substances, the irony is that it is also one of the most environmentally safe as there are no noxious fumes created.

Science versus the arts

15. Examine the claim that people need the arts now more than the sciences.

- the arts is defined as the whole of the creative endeavour, ranging from the visual arts, literature to music

People need the arts now.	People need the sciences now.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emphasis on the non-material aspects of life, having fulfilled our material needs – ability of the arts to enhance one’s quality of lifeImportant in preserving and advancing our cultures, traditions, morality amidst the homogenisation of cultures, creation of mass/ popular cultureAs a means of communication; fosters cultural exchange and interaction in this globalised world: “As a universal language through which individuals can express common aspirations, the arts are a channel to understanding and appreciating other cultures.”Increasingly communicating through the arts and visual images with advances in communication technology – creation of new art forms with the computerEssential in equipping people with the ability to observe and interpret what they see, especially in a society so steeped in information and diversityIncreasing emphasis placed on creative abilities and thinking out of the box in the global marketplace – skills which can be cultivated through the arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Competing and more dominant political, economic and environmental concerns - less importance placed on arts as sciences can address these problems more readily and effectively (e.g. poverty, health problems, sustainable development, global warming)An interconnected world that is increasingly dependent on technology in every aspect of life: economic, work, leisure, communication, travel etc.Required to advance human knowledge and welfare in this knowledge-based economy“Development” and “progress” defined in material terms i.e. access to technology – perceived need for sciences more than the arts.

Science and religion

- religion is based on faith/belief and is hence subjective, while science is based on empirical observations and experiments and is hence objective. However to claim that religion is about blind faith and lack of reason is gross oversimplification.

16. Does religion still have a place in our scientific world today?
It is a fact of life that science and religion will always come into conflict. Is this true?
Just as science needs religion, religion also needs science. Do you agree?

- ***Religion is able to meet certain needs in our lives that science may not be able to***
 - Religion provides emotional security and spiritual fulfilment in troubled times; provides direction and assurance in an age of uncertainties and constant changes. This is one aspect that other disciplines cannot do
 - Helps man to search for meaning and answers to many fundamental questions that other spheres such as science and tech still cannot answer, e.g. issues on the human condition and human suffering, the purpose of human existence on earth, the existence of good versus evil, questions like ‘how did the world come about?, what happens after death?
 - provides a framework for the behavioural norms, that is, how one should act and behave both as an individual and as part of society.
 - Religion plays a very important role in our world today as it can be used as “unifying” force for a society to hold together - essential to civil order, sense of belonging among the people - this is far better than societies which run amok with no “central” force, or with other guiding “principles” such as materialism, selfishness, etc
- ***Recognise that religion still is a sensitive issue/ held in high regard*** in our world today. Religion is a sanctuary and a source of identity for people living in a world that is undergoing rapid change and, in situations when that sanctuary and identity are challenged, it leads to conflict that, in extreme cases, manifests itself in acts of terrorism.
 - the influence religion has over legal systems (e.g. Sharia Law) in Muslim countries
 - the increasing number of people embracing Buddhist philosophy as a means of coping with the stress of modern living and to counter materialistic values
 - the growth of evangelical Christianity as people seek meaning in life and the attempts to marry science and religion through the theory of Intelligent Design.
- Science and religion need not necessarily be mutually exclusive

Science needs religion in the following areas:

- Moral guideline/Set boundaries we should not cross/Make science more humane
- Make scientists accountable for their developments/discoveries

Religion needs science in the following areas:

- To ground it with the truth?
- To tie it to something provable/empirical? (Gallileo, Copernicus)
- ***Science and religion come into conflict in some instances***
 - Chose relevant areas for discussion and good examples
 - Creationism vs Darwinian theory
 - Copernicus, Gallileo vs church
 - Einstein (and other religious scientists who show one does not exclude the other)
 - Stem cell research
 - Religion providing ethical guidelines for the use of scientific discoveries

Reasons why science may not need religion

- Limits extent of discoveries(how far they can go)
- Limits areas of research and development(when they can go/explore)

- Why should something spiritual dictate to something dealing with secular realm? (should follow separation of church and state)

Reasons why religion may not need science

- The spiritual cannot be proven by the 5 senses
- It's an innate truth that people feel in the heart – science cannot measure/prove it

Others: 'Have faith.' Consider the implications of this conviction for researchers.

Philosophy for AQ

This section contains:

- Problems in city life that affect one's happiness
- The pursuit of happiness
- Do we set limits on material desires to attain happiness
- Value of risk-taking
- Can adversity be beneficial
- Narcissism
- Pancake phenomenon
- Identity
- Managing diversity

City life

- "Affluence is as much a curse as a blessing." Discuss.
- The writer of Passage 1 discusses the problems that have arisen as a result of affluence, while the writers of Passage 2 suggest solutions to these problems. To what extent is the world today plagued or afflicted by affluenza? How far are people in your generation willing to re-examine their priorities and values to combat affluenza?

Problems due to affluence	Solutions to these problems
Work-life imbalance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• multitasking and workaholism to sustain high-powered careers and chic lifestyles• Friends and family often take a backseat as people build their careers and go after material pursuits or success in career.• The time we spend on the hedonistic treadmill is time we do not spend nurturing and sustaining relations with friends, family and community.• Hedonistic: a person whose life is devoted to the pursuit of pleasure and self-gratification.• Generation gap → loneliness in teenagers → juvenile delinquency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• John de Graaf, one of the authors of Affluenza, a book that criticizes materialism and overconsumption, has organized the National Take Back Your Time Day in the United States.• Global Shutdown Day for people to think introspectively about gaining a work-life balance.• In Singapore, the government has to step in by implementing a 5-day work week as well as organising campaigns such as the 'I Love Children' and 'Romancing Singapore' to promote the importance of families and relationships• The Social Development Unit in Singapore offers one opportunities to mingle and date members of the opposite gender.

<p>Materialism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an over-emphasis on wealth acquisition in developed societies • There is an increasing trend of the wealthy in Asia buying expensive watches; more luxury cars such as Lamborghinis, Ferraris are sold in Singapore for the sake of building up an image, for elevation of status. • Many Australians and Americans are plagued by credit card debts because they consume excessively due to their inability to exert self-control. Seems prevalent amongst young people even in Singapore as well, as more file for bankruptcy before they reach thirty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societies also emphasise other things, besides wealth. • The attempt to instil social etiquette is an example. For e.g. Singapore's courtesy campaigns, Beijing's attempt to educate its residents to stop spitting and littering (i.e. it's not just building up infrastructure to get ready for the Olympics and hence showing off its economic prowess only)
<p>Individualistic individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As societies focus on building wealth, and with personal choice and freedom being the basis of consumption, societies seem to have become more individualistic and liberal. • Values have changed to reflect a more self-centred approach to life among youth • Individualism and materialism increasingly drive young people to abandon/neglect their poor, elderly parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic education: schools should be devoted to improving the physical, emotional and moral health of our young people, rather than certifying them for the workplace. • Governments play the largest and more active role in promoting family relationships, such as encouraging people to start families through various incentives (for e.g. Germany contemplating giving mothers a year's maternity leave, suggesting the emphasis/importance placed on family.)
<p>Obesity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obesity. Increasing obesity rates in developed societies. Parents in China, even send their children to camps just to lose weight. 	
<p>Environmental damage/pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We also consume at the expense of the environment. The Inter-governmental Panel of Climate Change has recently concluded that they are 90% certain that the environmental problems we face today is a result of humans' action. Consumption and the 'throw-away' culture are reasons for the environmental problems we face today. • With emerging economies such as China and India, and their rapid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around the world, the effort to save the environment is gaining momentum (example: Live Earth concert). • Governments have begun putting in place measures to do their part or encourage their citizens to do their part for the environment. • The Swedish government has been rolling out incentives to prepare consumers for the switch. Incentives are given to those who buy green cars, and tax relief is also offered on renewable

<p>industrialisation (fuelled by demand) as well as the middle classes increasing demand for what used to be considered luxury items, such as cars and air-conditioners, the problem will only get worse.</p>	<p>fuels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities, towns and even villages across Europe are pressing ahead with deep, unilateral in carbon emissions. For instance, Woking, Britain's greenest city, has solar-powered street lights and photovoltaic panels, fuel cells and energy-efficient power generators. • In order to get citizens to care for the environment, many states in the US offer rebates and incentives through tax breaks, loans and perks such as allowing hybrid-car drivers to use car-pool lanes. San Francisco will pay residents cash rebates for simply replacing old appliances with more energy-efficient ones or for buying hybrid cars. • Singapore's 'Bring your own bags Day'. • These show that we acknowledge that we need to pay a price for the affluence we enjoy and we need to start looking at the long-term consequences.
<p>Rich-poor disparity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening income gap. This results in the unhappiness of those in the lower and middle-income brackets. The rich get richer while the poor get poorer. • Globalisation widens the wealth gap between the haves and the have-nots; wages in Singapore are driven down by increasing competition from low wage foreign workers from countries such as China and India. • Low wage/elderly workers could even be retrenched or unemployed when more foreign workers take their places at the workplace (employers prefer to hire foreign workers to lower costs in a competitive business environment). 	<p>Helping the poor in Singapore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government has put in place measures to help the poor (e.g. financial aid in the form of Workfare Income Supplement Scheme, Comcare Fund, CPF Life- compulsory annuities scheme to help people save for old age, growth dividends, GST credits, public assistance) • Non-Governmental Organisations or civil societies / groups like Nature Society, Lion's Befrienders Groups, SAGE, Singapore International Foundation, Dover Park Hospice Support Group give support in the form of advocacy, nursing, counselling and fund-raising among others.
<p>Promotion of a hedonistic lifestyle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The problem of affluenza is exacerbated by advertising messages that promote a hedonistic lifestyle. Advertisers resort to selling lifestyles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscious consumption: cultivating an awareness of why we buy things and understanding what needs we are trying to meet by buying this item or that one. People who have a better understanding

<p>rather than products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially prevalent as a marketing strategy for beauty products, and the said products as a solution if one wants to be more popular, or if one does not want to be rejected. • Media literacy is given little emphasis in most countries and there is very little done to cultivate an awareness of our consumption decisions. Hence, many people are a lot more prone to affluence due to their ignorance. 	<p>of themselves and are less prone to self-deception can see through marketers' attempts to deceive them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental guidance: Parents to teach their children to adopt a critical attitude towards marketers' attempts to influence them. • Bodyshop: popular among the young because of the marketing strategy about non-animal testing (a different way of marketing themselves by promoting animal rights, thereby showing that we need not compromise the environment while promoting consumption) • Dove has tried to deviate from such advertising tactics by using 'normal' women of all shapes and sizes, from all walks of life, and to promote what they call 'true beauty'.
--	---

How far are people in your generation willing to re-examine their priorities and values to combat affluenza?

Willing	Unwilling
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult for young people to cultivate conscious consumption because they are at an age where they tend to be less self-assured and more self-conscious. • They are thus more vulnerable to the deception of marketers and this is exacerbated by peer pressure.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents themselves may be plagued by affluenza and are busy amassing their wealth to even spend time with their children. Young people take the cue from their parents and in their own ways succumb to affluenza. • Parents also contribute to the problem by making up for their lack of attention with material goods, and hence send the wrong message to children.
Volunteerism More and more Singaporean youths passionate about volunteer work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youths are self-centred and tend to make decisions based on what they think will benefit them. They are unlikely to think of

	<p>the impact of their decisions on the others around them and they are too caught up in the hedonic treadmill to reflect on the impact of their consumption on others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many societies are still result-oriented, especially as competition becomes more intense in the global economy. Young people may find it hard to choose not to be part of the rat race. This is evident in the Singapore system, where the young are encouraged to do CIP so that they can stand out and market themselves better (resume padding). • There is also evidence that youths these days are plagued by many more problems (such as self-mutilation and suicide). This suggests that the competition has become even more intense. Hence, consumption in the form of retail therapy could be a means of escapism.
<p>Governments have realised the impact of affluenza. The Chinese government is reinforcing Confucian values amongst the young. Singapore government's efforts to nurture strong families Therefore young people will re-examine their values and learn to place greater emphasis on family and relationship.</p>	
<p>With greater emphasis on holistic education (example, character development), young people may be willing to re-examine their values?</p>	<p>Difficult to change the mindset of people who have been ingrained with the mentality that Singapore can only rely on human resource and that the economy will only survive if the people are skilled to work in the economy.</p> <p>Unwillingness to re-examine our priorities and values stem from the fact that people in this generation have grown up in relatively affluent times where their needs and wants are very much provided for by their parents. Being used to it, it would take tremendous effort to get this generation to alter their consumption patterns.</p>
<p>Religion could also be a positive source of influence by promoting values/virtues such as prudence, charity, compassion, and the same time denouncing materialism. More young Singaporeans turning to Buddhism</p>	

Happiness

Q: 'The pursuit of happiness will remain what it is – a pursuit.' Comment.

- Myriad different kinds of happiness—short-term pleasure, meaning derived from work, a deeper sense of purpose in life, perhaps coming from religion or spirituality.
- Most of us assume that external things - a bigger house, a better job, a winning lottery ticket - will brighten our lives. While they do bring temporary delight, the thrill invariably fades.
- Consider the case of a Kentucky couple who won \$34 million in 2000. Thrilled to be released from the demands of their boring old jobs, they frittered their fortune away on fancy cars, mansions etc- losing everything that mattered in the process. They divorced, he died of an alcohol-related illness, and she died alone in her new house just five years after cashing the winning ticket.
- The key to enduring joy is to look beyond fleeting pleasures, to the other pillars of authentic happiness: engagement with family, work or a passionate pursuit, and finding meaning from some higher purpose.
- Positive psychology has shown that happy people thrive. They're more creative and productive, earn more money, attract more friends, enjoy better marriages, stay healthier and even outlive their grumpier peers.
- Money does give us material comfort and emotional security without which happiness would be impossible.
- But wealth alone isn't necessarily what makes people happy. After a certain income cap, people simply don't get any happier. This is due to is the "hedonic cycle": we get used to being richer darn quick, and take it for granted or compare it to what others have, not what we used to have.
- People then measure happiness not in terms of absolute wealth but relative financial standing. Even the wealthy would bemoan their 'deprivation' if they choose to compare themselves with the super-affluent.
- 24-hour television and the Internet have allowed us all to see more seemingly happy people than ever before. We are now surrounded by the lifestyles of the rich and famous, rubbing our noses in the fact that others have more.
- Every culture has different measures of happiness. There are cultures which shun materialism as the only means of happiness. The leaders of such societies, whom people turn to, are often not economic leaders, but spiritual leaders who have attained bliss through worship and devotion. Such examples of leaders would include the Dalai Lama who is revered throughout the world for his simple lifestyle and dedication to Tibet..

Happiness economics

- Countries as diverse as Bhutan, Australia, China, Thailand and the U.K. are coming up with "happiness indexes," to be used alongside GDP as a guide to society's progress.
- Happiness economics is gaining popularity because it offers ways to counter the disruptions of globalization. Rather than telling people to work harder, politicians can discuss work-life balance
- In China, the government's new happiness index, due out at the end of 2007, was part of Beijing's campaign to create "a more harmonious society."
- There is also a happiness-related push in the U.K. to ban advertising targeted to children in order to combat materialism (something Sweden has already done).

- Happiness is important for a country's well-being. An absence of happiness brings about a feeling of emptiness and not belonging, a lack of defined relationships and solid social structures. In other respects, it is readily quantifiable: rates of drug abuse, violent crime and depression and suicide are rocketing.
- The onus is on the government to show leadership and lead the change in the many areas that impact on well-being. For example, everyone would agree that spending more time with family is crucial to happiness. Here governments should be pioneers of flexible working with public-sector employees. Another instance would involve the setting of a framework that creates a price for carbon in our economy and encourage green innovation

Is happiness over-rated?

- A meaningful existence depends on the ability to feel emotions other than happiness, as well as ones that compete with happiness. Our capacity for joy depends inversely on the magnitude of past misery. (Cite the analogy of good health, the recognition/enjoyment of which is enhanced by occasional bouts of manageable illness)
- Negative emotions build up resilience and serves as a coping mechanism for one to tackle life's problems.
- Compulsive attention to one's happiness can be counter-productive because it creates greater anxiety and self-doubt, which makes happiness even more unattainable.
- We don't want to be too happy; it is better to err on the side of pessimism or realism/pragmatism, because it will allow individuals to actively seek solutions to address their problems. If we are so happy and optimistic all the time, we become complacent.

Can Singaporeans attain happiness?

Attainable	Not attainable
Singaporeans do need a reasonably high level of material wealth to enjoy a good lifestyle. Since Singapore is a meritocratic society, Singaporeans have access to education and climb up the socio-economic ladder. Hence, their aspirations for material possessions can be fulfilled.	<p>Singaporeans do not consider themselves happy despite Singapore's meteoric rise from Third World to First World status within one generation and her boasting of one of the highest per capita incomes in Asia.</p> <p>With the influx of foreign talents and the government's assertive reminder that "no one owes Singapore a living", Singapore has become a relentless, fast-paced society. Hence, many people cannot cope with the pressurised lifestyles. Since an increasing number of Singaporeans have to deal with loneliness, 1 in 6 Singaporeans succumb to mental illnesses.</p>
<p>Many Singaporeans take the initiative to enjoy a work-life balance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singaporeans are known to be among the most well-travelled in the world. The travel industry designs short weekend getaways on their tours such 	Singapore's highly competitive environment encourages social envy. Singaporeans wish to be richer, more successful and more upwardly mobile. In the pursuit for material possessions, Singaporeans get so obsessed with keeping up with the Jones that they acquire status symbols feverishly. This greedy consumerism traps

<p>as free & easy packages, which are well-received as attested by the frequent and popular travel fairs held in the city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increasing number of Singaporeans are getting health-conscious, with many signing up for marathons and gym memberships. Exercises like yoga and line-dancing are popular among Singaporeans. • Being an Asian society, our emphasis on filial piety and group solidarity means that we enjoy good family and community ties. Self-help community groups such as CDAC, Mendaki and Sinda are always on hand to ensure that their communities cooperate and help one another. • The government also publicises the need to maintain a healthy work-life balance. It initiated a 5-Day work week, Eat With Your Family Day and Sports for Life National Campaigns. The Sports for Life campaign promotes healthy living, recreation, sports and exercise as a means of better quality of life for individuals, families and corporate organisations. • Singaporeans are adept at using technology such as Facebook and MSN to maintain friendships. Hence, although they work long hours, it is unfair to say that they are detached from family and friends. 	<p>many Singaporeans in an expensive lifestyle, compelling them to work hard to sustain their lifestyles, bringing about a work-life imbalance.</p> <p>Many young executives, anxious to acquire instant gratification, overspend by taking on too many credit cards without ensuring they have the finances. Some are even declared bankrupts before they reach 30.</p> <p>Singaporeans' narrow definition of 'the good life' in terms of career and the 5Cs limits their ability to feel happy with themselves.</p> <p>Singaporeans get stressed out by what they perceive is an inflexible meritocracy narrowly based on academic qualifications (within an education system that is itself too conservative to recognise or develop diverse competencies).</p> <p>Singapore's move towards a broad-based education system ironically brings about more stress to youths, who feel overwhelmed to prove their mettle in all areas.</p> <p>A recent Straits Times article revealed that Singaporean children and teenagers do not get the 8 to 10 hours of sleep they require nightly due to their rigorous study schedules.</p> <p>Singaporeans place a huge premium on their careers and believe that it is a waste of time to invest in the build-up of relationships with family and friends.</p> <p>Even social gatherings, once a time to catch up with friends, have turned into networking sessions, with people driven to gather contacts of influential people who can help them with their careers.</p>
---	--

	<p>Younger Singaporeans have no experience of harder times. They have grown so accustomed to economic growth, world-standard amenities, stable government and social order that they see these as a form of entitlement. It is hardly surprising that Singapore has been called “an air-conditioned nation”. Singaporean schools even have to send students on overseas community projects to open their eyes to the Third World squalour Singaporeans should be grateful they have escaped from.</p>
--	---

Setting limits on one's desires

- Both writers believe in the need for Man to set limits on his material desires.
To what extent should your country adopt the writers' philosophy of life?

Setting limits on our desires	Should not set limits on our desires
<p>Work-life balance</p> <p>Singaporeans need to counter the ill-effects of their demanding and gruelling work culture and give more attention to self, the family and their closest relationships.</p>	<p>Economic vitality</p> <p>Singapore's only resource is human capital. Given the phenomenon of globalisation, the only way in which Singapore can continue to compete in the region would be to continually invest in the country's labour force. Examples include encouraging Singaporeans to go for skills upgrading and reintegrating homemakers and older workers into the workforce.</p> <p>Setting limits on our desires will be severe as our economic growth and productivity index may be overtaken by other rising regional powerhouses such as Vietnam and Malaysia.</p>
<p>Pursue activities to find spiritual, social or emotional enrichment</p> <p>We <u>should</u> limit our desires and curb excessive ambitions to release more time, energy and emotional resources to more fulfilling pursuits. This greatly helps to nurture our soul.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers who are willing to sacrifice their busy schedules to reach out to the marginalised and invest their care and energy in non-materialistic pursuits. 	<p>Upholding the quality of life</p> <p>The writers' views (that we should slow down) cannot be fully adopted in Singapore as our culture of excellence are endemic to Singapore. It is a prominent feature of the civil service, in which performance bonuses are pitched to pre-hard work and job competencies. Being career-oriented is a way of life for a vast majority of Singaporeans employed by the Singapore Civil Service, the biggest employer on the island. Not following suit will mean that the individual loses out to his peers in terms of career advancement.</p>

<p>Bioethics in Singapore</p> <p>Society <u>should</u> impose limits on its members' potential wants as well. In this context, it is done to maintain respect for human dignity in line with advancements in biomedical research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical codes of stem-cell research in Singapore: Recommendations made by Bioethics Committee on the regulations imposed on stem-cell research. This is to prevent any possible breach in the field of eugenic enhancement procedures such as disease screening, sex selection and gene screening during the IVF process. • Our ethicists are aware of the need to impose rules on biomedical science. Limits are set to safeguard any attempt to devalue life and compromise human dignity in the use of human embryos for research. This is one way to disallow excessive ambition from blinding us to the ethical minefield of human cloning or reproductive technology. 	
--	--

Risk-taking/Living dangerously

- How true is it that people who crave danger have nothing better to do with their lives?
 - People who look for excitement and danger are foolish. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
 - The author supports the view that having courage is a balance between taking risks and being cautious.
How far have the people in your society shown courage? Support your answer with examples, making relevant references to the passage.
 - Kluger suggests reasons why humans find risk assessment difficult. Grayling argues that humans should live more dangerously.
How far do you agree with the views of both authors? Using ideas from both passages, critically evaluate the world's response to risks.
 - Should one always be encouraged to take risks?
- Identify a variety of areas in which risks can be taken and discuss the impact of risk taking from these areas, eg in areas like business, politics, education, scientific and technological developments, personal choices (like taking drugs)

Yes for risk-taking	No for risk-taking
<p>(Individual) To achieve greater things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk takers tend to have a healthy disregard for the impossible and hence they are challenged to move beyond their comfort zones in order to pursue their goals. Psychologically, risk taking can be a great confidence booster when one takes calculated risks and achieves success. ○ There are thrill-seeking adventurers who revel in significant risk-taking, people for whom the adrenaline rush of facing such danger is worth the potential that one may pay the ultimate price. ○ For many, it represents a true sense of feeling alive. All their senses are in an acute level of awareness, and it is that fight or flight response. They either do it and live -- or they die. ○ Eg: Alain Robert, nicknamed “Spiderman” is a French skyscraper climber who never uses security devices and climbing is not a mere hobby - his life is on the line every time he climbs a building. He has topped more than 50 of the world's highest buildings such as the Empire State Building in the United States. He enjoys getting an adrenaline rush through the adventure. ○ Eg: Steve Irwin was criticised for making his career out of antagonising frightened wild animals, interfering with nature by jumping on animals, grabbing them, holding them, and having this very dramatic way of presenting things. However, it is through his effort, people started to look at crocodiles as less dangerous and monstrous; and that they all have an important place in the environment and in the world. ○ Entrepreneurs who set their own businesses. Examples of Singapore entrepreneurs include Olivia Lum of Hyflux Group and Kenny Yap of Qian Hu Corporation ○ Even if one does not achieve success, the experience of occasional failure that 	

<p>accompanies risk builds character and brings about personal growth.</p>	
<p>(Nation) To seek opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many nations now realize that to stay ahead of the pack in the global race, they need to take some risks, instead of continuing to wallow in safety. Eg. Singapore's former conservative approach to progress is being overhauled in favour of a more unconventional high-risk approach (eg. building IRs and having F1 night races). 	<p>Survival mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A healthy fear of risks is inbuilt in every human being as a survival mechanism, to help the individual distinguish the boundaries between the possible and the impossible (which might maim or kill him). ○ Risk taking can be dangerous and even life-threatening.
<p>(Global) For progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Humans were made to take risks. Every step ahead involves a risk. Without such risks, humans would not learn and therefore would not progress as a species. ○ Excessive fear paralyses individuals and societies alike into inaction, hindering advancement. ○ Space research ○ Large Hadron Collider 	<p>When risk assessment is unfavourable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Taking risks is hazardous when outcomes are uncertain or when one has no confidence to overcome the odds, hence resulting in possible failure.
<p>To raise independent, responsible children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As a result of the uncertainty in today's world, many children are "bubble-wrapped". Under the supervision of helicopter parents, they have so many supervised playdates and scheduled sports, their lives have become a curriculum rather than a childhood. This is creating a generation of children so overprotected that it's stunting their growth. ○ Children needed to be empowered to experiment with independence and take responsibility for themselves. 	<p>Do no harm to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk taking should not be attempted at the expense of jeopardizing the well-being of others or when it may run afoul of the law. ○ E.g. pathological gamblers do not know how to control themselves. They often lie to friends and family to conceal their behavior, resort to theft or fraud to finance it, and succumb to "chasing"--ever more risky and high-stakes gambling in attempts to recoup losses. ○ This is especially applicable for youths who love to live life on the edge and indulge in car racing, extreme sports and other dangerous activities.
	<p>To ensure security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governments cannot ignore the real threats to our security today. They have a responsibility to their people to take precautions against threats. Not taking precautions would in fact allow undesirable characters to harm us more. Eg. Anti-terrorism initiatives such as tighter

	<p>border checks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Another related reason would be the non-intervention in another country's affairs during precarious situations. Take for instance the involvement of several of America's allies in the Iraq war, eg Japan, Spain, Philippines etc. They have instead made themselves enemies of terrorists, and their soldiers or civilians working in Iraq have been targeted or taken hostage.
--	---

Are Singaporeans risk-takers?

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increasing number of Singaporeans are embarking on "the road less travelled". • This trend is expected to continue in the future with the setting of the arts and sports schools, the upgrading of the technical institutes (ITEs) and the opening of foreign schools like the Digipen Institute of Technology for software, animation and gaming development. All these offer viable alternative routes for education and skills development. • Local entrepreneurs • 150, 000 Singaporeans work and live overseas 	<p>S'poreans are known to be afraid of losing 'face'. Hence, they suffer from the lack of creativity & entrepreneurial drive.</p> <p>Embark on the conventional route to success</p>
	<p>Wanting to speak up but preferring anonymity through the use of pseudonyms on the internet, or complaining and gossiping at the coffeeshops.</p>

Adversity/Crisis

- Adversity: very difficult or unfavourable situations or misfortune befalling the victims
- Adversity brings suffering, pain, anger, disappointment, cynicism, drug addiction, pessimism, envy, acrimony and suicide, The causes can be poverty, war, family/marital breakup, crises caused by economic downturn, bankruptcy, ill health or death, or some natural disasters.

Value of adversity

- Adversity develops **resilience**, which allows one to look beyond immediate and seemingly overwhelming problems to maintain optimism, leading to the belief that one can overcome current problems, or ride out current difficulties. This helps the sufferers to develop a higher adversity quotient by exercising more control over adverse events by learning to

turn obstacles into challenges. E.g. Southeast Asian countries managed to overcome the **Asian Financial Crisis in 1997** by restructuring and reforming the economy.

E.g. SARS crisis in Singapore when medical professionals stood by their patients

- Developing accountability and resourcefulness. **New technologies** come about because of the need to find solutions to problems. In Singapore, a scanning machine to detect fever in people was invented and installed at hospitals and airport to screen people during the 2003 SARS outbreak. Also, Singapore's grave insufficiency of water resources led to the development of **Newater**. This is done through the recycling of used water via the process of reversed osmosis. This arose out of the need to be less dependent upon water purchases from Johor.
- People learn **important, useful lessons**: patience, humility, adaptability, resilience, appreciation of past blessings or better circumstances, re-evaluation of the meaning of life and work, a fresh perspective on human relationships, a new found confidence and self-esteem in being able to overcome adversity. This will allow one to deal with problems more confidently, giving one a sense of control over one's life and be more resourceful.
- In times of disaster, **people rally round each other**, rendering help without thought for their own safety. For instance, when national interests are threatened/during natural disasters, people close ranks with their fellow citizens to help their fellow men. E.g, the heroic acts of American firemen and police officers after the 9/11 incident, the selfless acts of the Chinese after the Sichuan earthquake

However,

- Adversity may not always prove to be a great teacher for those who buckle under the pressure of great difficulties. Some people may enter into **an emotional tailspin** or depression and inability to cope under adverse circumstances.
- Research shows that children exposed to long term physical, and emotional suffering do not recover sufficiently to lead normal lives later. E.g. trauma of war & ethnic killings, child slavery, ill treatment by family members lead to **deep psychological & emotional scars**, anti-social behaviour, aggression, etc.

Qs: 'Adversity is always a great teacher.' Discuss. (CJC Prelim 2006)
"Adversity is not necessarily bad." Do you agree? (SRJC, Prelim 04)
'Adversity creates the best entrepreneurs'. Do you agree?
'Adversity reveals genius, prosperity conceals it'. What are your views?

Q: Is it true that the only way for one to grow is through adversity? (VJC Prelim 06)

Other ways of developing character:

- Experiencing continuous and overwhelming adversities could crush even those with strong spirit.
- Different individuals have different learning needs, ie a nurturing environment may be more conducive.
- One may learn from the experiences of others, via books, follow in the footsteps of others, etc.

Q: Examine the notion that the real test of character is power, not adversity. (VJC Prelim 04)

Power as the better test

- It is when one is in command, with no one to challenge, no checks and balances, no limits / inhibitions / prohibitions, i.e. When one is basically free from societal pressures to behave and toe the line, that one is faced with the temptation to do as one pleases – character built, then, from discipline and recognition of need to work for the greater good, when there may be no compelling reason to do so
- Might be a better test since one has to actively make a choice, compared to adversity, where one is, as it were, a victim of circumstance, and hence has no alternative

Adversity as the better test

- It is when times are tough and facades are stripped away, that people are forced by environment to face troubles head on, or perish – whatever doesn't kill you...
- Easy life, things on a platter, nothing to challenge one, no occasion to rise to. It's when support networks etc are not available, that one has to be independent, find one's own way, find how tough etc (or not), one really is stretched.

Influence of the new media

A. Narcissism

In passage 1, Trevor Turner describes the manifestations of narcissism in society and discusses some possible reasons for it. In passage 2, Lakshmi Chaudhry examines how the new media has fostered narcissism in peoples' lives.

Which author do you find more convincing? To what extent are these views relevant to you and your generation?

- a. Passage A: Media influence and more specifically individuals themselves as causes of narcissism
 - b. Passage B: New media that employs technology, and that empowers individuals as the main cause of narcissism
- Narcissism describes the trait of excessive self-love, based on self-image or ego
 - Narcissism is not just attention-seeking or wanting to be liked. It is more severe and characterized by an inability to form healthy, long-term relationships due to narcissistic people using their relationships for self promotion with an emphasis on quantity of over quality.
 - The tremendous growth of social networking sites (Facebook now has 100 million users, for example) has led psychologists to explore how personality traits are expressed online.
 - Narcissists tend to have a lot of Facebook friends and wallposts on their profile pages, corresponding to their behaviour in the real-world, with numerous yet shallow relationships.
 - Narcissists are also more likely to choose glamorous, self-promoting pictures for their main profile photos while others are more likely to use snapshots.

Are young Singaporeans narcissistic?

Yes, they are	No, they are not
<p>Greater emphasis on physical appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetic medicine is increasingly become a norm, with even general practitioners conducting procedures on those interested to alter their appearance. Some of these procedures are so convenient that they are known as “lunch-time fixes”. • Mothers have been known to get cosmetic surgeries for their daughters as sweet sixteen birthday presents <p>Influence of the media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media and advertising industries in Singapore are obsessed with appearance and markets products in a way which emphasizes the relevance of self-maintenance and focuses on the need for self-help and self-renewal amongst the youth. • Television programmes directed at young adults such as <i>Her World</i>, <i>Female</i> and even <i>8 Days</i> abound with advertisements luring people into believing that they need to enrol with a particular slimming agency or engage in breast enlargement to look and feel their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much larger emphasis being placed on charity and voluntary work. • Youths eagerly form groups and participate in programmes such as Citibank-Youth for Causes, Young ChangeMakers and Youth Expedition Project. There is a trend of active volunteerism, in which youths initiate projects to help the less fortunate in their society. <p>Influence of the media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media is turning its attention to charitable efforts to highlight the need for the ones who are better-off to return in kind to society. • President’s Star Charity on Mediacorp • The Straits Times devotes coverage to local voluntary welfare organisations every Saturday. • This therefore encourages increasing social awareness.
<p>Digital democracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are making use of digital technology to market their public identity and get famous online. • Famous local celebrity bloggers such as 'Xiaxue' and 'Dawn Yeo' post flattering photographs of themselves and rant about controversial issues to <i>announce to the whole world what their personal beliefs are</i>, and how things should be done <i>from their own perspectives</i>. • Mr Brown with his podcasts about the Singapore socio-political scene 	<p>The focus on service orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local government emphasises service orientation in its desire to <i>craft a more magnanimous and gracious society in Singapore</i>. • Emphasis on the need for individuals in society to accommodate to one another's needs and wants, rather than to think only for themselves.

B. Creation of the pancake phenomenon (CJC Prelim 08)

- **The pancake phenomenon is formed / established by means of our connections / links / ease of (human) networking / reach / interconnectedness with /to other people / the rest of society / the rest of the community ...**
- **... and the accompanying disappearance / erasure / existence for no longer of our view / perspective of knowledge as solely attained by one person / through each person's capability**

Identity

- Both writers observe various trends with regard to seeking membership in a community. Based on your knowledge and experience, which passage do you find more relevant to your society? Do you think that such trends will be largely beneficial or detrimental to your society if they were to continue in the future?

Relevant	Not Relevant
Ideas from Passage: Very often, the price of belonging to a community is to forfeit one's individual autonomy Society requires the individual to conform, to obey, to serve the "greater good" of the community	
Membership in communities usually requires one to behave in a certain way in order to be accepted. In Singapore, various institutions require the individual to conform in the name of serving the community. <u>Schools</u> -wearing of uniform; students have to conform to standard dress code prescribed by the school; In the case of Muslim students, the wearing of the head-dress in secular schools has been frowned upon. No expression of religious freedom is allowed in this case. Utilitarian arguments given if questions are asked, therefore consistent with the author's idea of societies requiring individuals to serve the greater good of the community. <u>Family</u> -Traditional Asian families require obedience from children; a need to meet up to the expectations of its older members <u>Work</u> -To be accepted at work is to generally follow the crowd and not go against one's superiors <u>Politics/Govt</u> In Singapore, people are expected to conform to	With an increasingly education population and the emphasis on the individual and freedom, such constraints are changing. There is greater tolerance towards/acceptance of idiosyncratic behaviour. Conformity is seen to be rigid and inhibitive. <u>Schools</u> Students have a greater say in school policy and even in what they are allowed to wear. Increasing number of schools are deviating from the standard syllabus and offering their programmes in selected niche areas. This results in greater choice. <u>Family</u> Children are given more choice to experiment with their identity. <u>Work</u> Greater employee recognition if one is seen to be different <u>Politics/Govt</u> Greater acceptance of differing views. There is acknowledgement of that with an increasingly educated and discerning population, some degree of dissent is necessary. Deviance is made out to be less of an issue. Eg – dialogue with MM Lee and PM

<p>the govt's political ideologies and non-conformity is dealt with in various ways. eg: Mr Brown's political commentaries/ His section in Today's paper was suspended</p> <p><u>Evaluation – Beneficial or Detrimental</u></p> <p>Society would not be able to progress if we are held up by too many restrictions. In this global world, change is good and allows us to adapt quickly.</p>	<p>Lee on television</p> <p>Adoption of NMP system in parliament to hear out alternative perspectives.</p>
<p>Ideas from Passage:</p> <p>Many people will have very little traditional loyalty to a geographic community</p>	
<p>This is very relevant in this age of the global citizen where people have to travel for work or study. Globalization encourages such a trend.</p> <p>Increasing numbers of Singaporeans are going abroad for either work or study.</p> <p>Currently, 150, 000 Singaporeans work and live overseas.</p> <p>Many of them have no qualms about giving up their Singaporean citizenship if another country meets their needs. One thousand Singaporeans give up their citizenship every year.</p> <p>Entry into a country nowadays is solely dictated by practical reasons such as avoiding NS or the second language requirement in education.</p> <p>Increasing numbers of foreign talent in Singapore with no sense of allegiance either to their country or to Singapore.</p> <p><u>Evaluation – Beneficial or Detrimental</u></p> <p>The negative effects would be the lack of an identity or sense of rootedness. The society is faced with a dilemma of not having enough patriotic citizens</p>	<p>Only those people who are mobile have no affiliations to Singapore. Middle and lower segments of society still call Singapore 'home'.</p>
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <p>Joining a highly specialized, personally challenging community of interest will become easier and easier</p>	
<p><i>Facebook</i> has areas where companies can set up their own private networks to link up employees, much like corporate intranets. E.g. Ernst & Young's <i>Facebook's</i> private network boasted some 16,000 members. A study on Internet users, released this year by research company Ipsos Insight found 1 in 5</p>	<p>Such communities apply only to the younger generation. Older and less savvy people still join groups offline i.e. religious communities, community gatherings etc</p> <p><u>Evaluation: Beneficial or Detrimental</u></p>

<p>adults around the world use social networking sites, many from the media, finance and tech industries.</p> <p>More and more users now go to social networks for practical purposes like finding advice for work or even help. E.g. <i>Multiply</i> helps some social networks, such as a group of journalists from different newsrooms around the globe, debate and discuss world issues and also trade advice and information on journalism.</p> <p>There is “social and relational capital” on these sites. They go down well with the younger Singaporeans.</p> <p><u>Evaluation: Beneficial or Detrimental</u></p> <p>In the future, where more and more people are tech-savvy, with our Island becoming almost completely wireless, such sites will be increasingly useful for advertisers and businesses. They act as cheap advertisements to reach many for small businesses. Such social networks also allow companies to build relationships with customers rather than blatantly pushing for their products.</p> <p>Easy to form niche sites, even very unusual ones, such as skills on how to manage finds, trade horses and information on horses, object oriented sites like sneakers, sites for animal lovers and activists to start petitions and donation drives for their favorite causes. These sites are for people who are looking to fulfill a specific need. They are able to tap into the wisdom of the crowd and community.</p>	<p>This could leave older people behind as they are not information savvy. Implications of a class/age gap. Society may not be able to build a cohesive community then.</p>
<p>Ideas from passage: Many communities of the future will have a totally different character – they will be communities of choice. Members will be able to leave on short notice with very little personal cost</p>	
<p>This is largely beneficial because many of the communities do not require commitment of any sort from their members and members are free to leave whenever their needs change or have been met. All that is required is a login password or email address, hence the convenience.</p> <p>This is very relevant to our society where needs and interests change easily and quickly.</p>	

Managing plurality of identities/diversity

Q 'It is definitely more advantageous to be a diverse society than a homogeneous one.'
Discuss.

Diverse Society: A society defined by plurality and in various aspects- race, ethnicity, religion, culture and viewpoints/perspectives, sexual orientation, gender, ability...

Homogeneous Society: A society that is defined by uniformity in structure or composition throughout. People will have similar cultures, mindsets and opinions; conformity and like-mindedness prevail.

Yes, diversity is advantageous

- Variety is the **spice of life** – people are able to explore various cuisine and cultures from different countries due to globalisation. For example: Singapore – melting pot of different cultures and foods which contribute to her attraction as both an interesting holiday destination and place to work. Members of the multi-racial society are able to experience the uniqueness of different cultures without leaving the country.
- **Global outlook.** Members of the society are equipped with the cultural knowledge of other races from a young age. Living in a potpourri of different festivals, foods, clothing and traditions. Getting opportunities to mix with people from different races allows them to improve their world view and social awareness which will give them a tremendous advantage over people from single-race societies in terms of business dealings and even social interaction. For example: Australia
- **Attractive as a tourism destination.** Many tourists would want to visit a multi-racial society, especially if they are arriving from a different part of the world. Especially with the global accessibility of today which emerges in the form of backpacking. For example, the recent influx of European travelers to Asia. With Malaysia and Singapore identified as multi-racial societies, most travelers who have limited time in Asia would rather spend a few days in these two countries to immerse themselves in Asian culture than visit all the different countries individually.
- There is **unity in diversity** – often when many cultures converge in one country, a new sense of belonging can be cultivated and learnt (e.g. multiracialism in Singapore; a national identity based on diversity; foreign talent, MNCs and their contributions).
- Diversity allows for the teaching of tolerance towards individuals, class, society, and prospects – **new perspectives are learnt.** A diversity of views is fundamental for a country's progress- open debate and discussion are important for finding solutions to problems in a globalised world.

No, diversity is not advantageous

- A diverse society may open the door to any number of **sociological problems – conflicts**, clashes or wars may arise, especially when one party is of the opinion that their territory has been invaded or trespassed upon. Homogeneity reduces the chances of such conflict in society.
→ Violence could erupt when there is a clash of cultures/ideologies: vigilante groups/militant groups and military forces could enact violence on victims of prejudice and discrimination (e.g. racial attacks against the blacks in America; ethnic cleansing in Darfur; victims of the holocaust in Germany).

- ➔ The majority race must give way to the minority in terms of both citizenship rights and political autonomy. With a racially balanced governmental structure put in place, policy changes can be made to ensure that attention is paid to different races and they receive treatment on a more “equal” level.
- A lack of tolerance – racial, religious, cultural– can be potentially destructive, particularly if one group feels that they are given less opportunity to practise their religion/have the freedom to worship in their own temples, mosques or churches.
 - ➔ **A lack of understanding of cultural practices may be prevalent-** people are bothered or annoyed by the noise and disruptiveness of weddings, funerals or festivals (of different cultural groups or foreign workers) that occur near their place of dwelling – some people take action and call the police.
 - ➔ Homogeneity eliminates the need for integration and assimilation of diverse groups. Governments can focus their efforts on economic development and other goals instead of managing conflict caused by cultural intolerance.

Has Singapore managed diversity well?

- Both writers discuss how harmony can be achieved in societies with diverse cultures. Amartya Sen believes that we need to recognize **the plurality of our identities**. Mark Easton argues that there must be a balance between respecting differences and drawing strong links between the different groups.

Using material from both passages, identify two problems raised by the writers and discuss how far you agree with them. Assess the effectiveness of how your society deals with any one of the problems identified.

Agree/Disagree	How Singapore deals with them (EX) and effectiveness (EV)
Ideas from Amartya Sen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The civilisational theory is problematic because civilizational categories are crude and inconsistent and also because there are other ways of seeing people... (linked to politics, language, literature, class, occupation...) 	
Agree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotes ethnic/religious segregation rather than united society. Nationality at stake. Dangerous in times like that: terrorist attacks and a globalised world where people are mobile. ▪ Crude categorisation encourages people to ignore and overlook more salient similarities. May lead to stereotypes and feeling of superiority (<i>e.g. Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka; Irish Protestants and Catholics</i>) ▪ With liberal education, people want to be more individualistic, do not want to be stereotyped according to race. Gives 	Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To strike a balance between respecting ethnic differences by allowing people to practise their way of life, and providing the common space for different races to interact and bond (housing, education, community centres, workplace) Effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing (racial quota): superficial because there is no real interaction. But this could be because of the demands of city life; people are too busy for their neighbours. ▪ Schools: meritocracy is practised and same criteria for university admission apply to all students.

<p>them greater freedom of choice as to what they want to believe in, the lifestyle they want , friends etc (<i>e.g. In modern society, religion a la carte is common</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree that there are other ways of seeing people – shared values or language (<i>e.g. Singaporeans are linked by certain shared values like meritocracy and a work culture that emphasizes diligence and efficiency. Another common feature, is the use of Singlish by all races. Although this is officially discouraged, it does give the Singaporean a distinct identity</i>) <p>Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorisation ensures that specific needs of different ethnic/religious groups are met effectively. Ease in identifying people and affecting change specific to an ethnic/religious group It is needed because it determines who we are – our history and identity Categorisation is not a problem because it promotes a more vibrant and colourful culture where different groups retain and promote their own traditions Not suggesting that we assimilate into a homogeneous culture, rather accepting the belief that diversity ought to be celebrated. This is beneficial rather than problematic (<i>e.g. Singapore - Draw for tourists and visitors to Singapore. Interesting to see the diverse cultures. If we had forced all to assimilate into one culture, Singapore would be a boring place with a brief history and a lack of a sense of belonging</i>) 	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handling of terrorist threat is judicious: sensitive to feelings of Singaporean Muslims. Govt and Media do not emphasise the religious background of the terrorists. <p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has generally made Muslims in Singapore feel secure and encourages a greater sense of belonging to the nation. <p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-lingual policy, CME and National Education to promote understanding of other cultures and a greater sense of national identity <p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not effective – National Education viewed as propaganda and seen as contrived and trite by both students and teachers
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <p>Our religion, important as it may be, cannot be an all-engulfing identity.</p>	
<p>Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion can be a divisive force if people are obsessed with it and religious leaders push their own agendas. (<i>e.g. Al Qaeda /</i> 	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore has adopted a draconian stance on the issue of racial and religious harmony. Acted quickly to arrest the culprits and deal with

<p><i>Jemaah Islamiyah able to recruit terrorists of different nationalities; Sunni and Shi'ite struggle for power in Iraq to ensure that the other will not be discriminated against)</i></p> <p>Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion is what determines our values and is the best means to unite people/give them a distinct identity. • Religion can be used for good – to encourage believers to show compassion to others, even those who are not of the same religion 	<p>them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Religious Harmony Act and the Internal Security Act are examples of laws enacted by the government to protect Singapore's multi-cultural society. Under these laws, those guilty of trying to undermine racial and religious harmony, by plotting terrorist attacks or posting racial hate speeches on their blogs can and have been dealt with severely by the law. Eg terrorist suspects have been detained without trial. <p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective - Such measures taken to regulate behaviour have been effective. Together with the wide publicity given to them by the state-regulated media, these measures have succeeded in curbing public speech and actions that might lead to racial or religious violence.
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The civilisational theory is also dangerous because political leaders who think and act in terms of sectioning off humanity into different 'worlds' stand to make the world more flammable- even when their intentions are very different. 	
<p>Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In trying to increase cohesion among the majority, result in discrimination against the minority ▪ "Us against Them" mentality (<i>e.g. Conflict between Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda</i>) 	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies (e.g. GRC representation) and organisations (e.g. Inter-Racial & Religious Confidence Circles) to ensure that minority voices are heard and needs met ▪ Specific groups to meet needs of specific ethnic groups (e.g. Mendaki, SINDA, CDAC) <p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective - Outright discrimination is minimal and minorities are represented in politics and other areas with open discussion among religious/ethnic leaders
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <p>New immigrants into Britain brought social tensions, but they disappeared as they became integrated into British life. Today, however, globalisation has brought new challenges- a diversity of culture and ethnicity never seen before. <i>Infer: Integration is not going to be easy today in multi-cultural societies</i></p>	
<p>Agree that integration is not easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immigrants/foreign talent are perceived as a threat to job opportunities of locals. Easier to blame immigrants because they stand out (they either undercut locals or are perceived as superior competition) (<i>e.g. Pauline Hanson situation in Australia</i>) 	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefits for locals (e.g. lower school fees, places in university) to ensure that they don't feel threatened by foreigners ▪ Books written to help foreigners integrate, befriender schemes to introduce foreign students to local lifestyles and habits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration is difficult in countries with a large cultural capital as they fear cultural dilution and are hence more unfriendly to new cultures (<i>eg France, Malaysia</i>) <p>Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pragmatic societies like Singapore, many realise that integration and social stability are important for progress. Also a message that the govt. constantly conveys to its citizens. With media proliferation and increased travel, foreign cultures no longer appear strange and is more easily acceptable <i>Example: Singapore also has a long history of immigrant culture- so having foreigners making Singapore their home is not something strange to the locals.</i> 	<p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful – foreigners integrate well into local culture (e.g. invited by local friends to take part in festive celebrations, eating in coffee shops, living in HDB flats) Successful – sports matches between local and foreign teams and other forms of interaction obvious Not successful – many still view foreigners as a threat to their jobs Not successful – stereotypes of foreigners hinder integration and acceptance (e.g. Bangladeshi construction workers, Filipino maids) Not successful – many foreigners send their kids to international schools and keep to their own kind
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A society that has only bonding social capital (bonding people from the same ethnic group) and no bridging social capital looks like Beirut or Belfast or Bosnia, that is tight communities but isolated from one another. Working out how to grow bridging social capital is the greatest challenge for Western society. 	
<p>Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to build bridging capital because people are afraid of the unfamiliar. Vicious circle because lack of interaction further perpetuates this Idealistic suggestion that would not work in real life: This would only encourage tolerance of diversity but not full acceptance of differences. Difficult to balance between the two: People may look harmonious superficially but lack understanding of each other's culture because given a choice, they would not make the extra effort to get to know people from another race/religion etc... Hence, this is only but an ideal situation. Top down effort to make policies look good. Difficult to respect other people's ethnicity when one doesn't spend 	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HDB ethnic integration policy makes it mandatory for different races to live together in a HDB precinct. Hence it is a norm for minority and majority races to live side by side. This ensures that racial enclaves that lock a group away from the mainstream is not formed. Such enclaves develop a sense of exclusivity and breed resentment and distrust which can be lead to volatile situations. Different religious/ethnic groups celebrate festivities together (e.g. MPs of different ethnicities asked to grace celebrations) Interaction during national service, CCA involvement etc. <p><u>Effectiveness (EV)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively successful - More interaction between neighbours. Not unusual to see Chinese children playing soccer with Malay or Indian children in HDB estates. Although we

<p>enough time with them. Children do not form true friendships with those of other races/groups. Keep to their own race, narrow view of the world</p> <p>Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education, media, travel, increased focus on cultural intelligence – all these develop a greater interest in other cultures and a willingness to interact 	<p>need more time to examine the effectiveness, can be sure that it is necessary and effective to a large extent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not successful – Surveys shows that many students only have friends of their own race and would rather remain in their comfort zone Not successful - Interaction is superficial. Beneath veneer of tolerance lies lack of understanding and suspicion (e.g. racist bloggers)
<p>Ideas from passage:</p> <p>What is required is a sense of identity that overarches creed, culture or ethnic background...nations take different views on how this might be achieved. The French model is to have a strict definition of Frenchness...prohibits religious headscarves in schools... in the UK...tolerance of diversity and cultural difference</p>	
<p>Agree</p> <p>It is true that we have to find a common space to bond as Singaporeans. As mentioned, this is difficult. Different nations find the balance between diversity and integration in different ways.</p>	<p><u>Approach</u></p> <p>The challenge for Singapore is: How do we embrace diversity yet be able to create our very own, unique Singapore identity? Singapore does not try to assimilate its people into one particular ethnic culture like the French. Although like the United Kingdom, it believes in shared values, like the tolerance of diversity and cultural difference, it takes a very cautious approach to matters pertaining to racial and religious sensitivities. Singapore also prohibited the use of religious headscarves in schools on the grounds that they accentuate differences between ethnic groups in a common space that is important for integration. Schools are places where students can connect with others of different ethnicities.</p> <p><u>Effectiveness</u></p> <p>Most students in Singapore prefer to be with those from the same ethnic group, speak the same language. Idea of a comfort zone. SAP schools which are Chinese-based, do not make things better.</p> <p><u>Other measures</u></p> <p>GRC policy Sedition Act Media Responsibility National Service CCA Involvement in schools National Education/Social Studies</p>

Importance of collective memory/identity to the nation

- Both A C Grayling and Roberto Cabrera highlight the relevance and importance of memory. With reference to their views, justify whether society needs a collective memory and in the case of individuals, is there a need to forget at times?

Importance of a collective memory

1) Aid / instrument for nation-building; instilling rootedness to the state.

Singaporean government's perception of Singapore as a young nation in search of a national identity amidst its insecure / vulnerable multicultural heritage. Overt signs of nation-building such as the history syllabus, national education trips, iconic national monuments / personalities.

2) As a means to remind society of the lessons of history.

Holocaust Museum in Germany to remind Germans of the need for restraint / pacifism.

Economic boom and bust cycles such as the Great Depression (1933), Oil Crisis (1973), Black Monday (1987), Asian Financial Crisis (1997)

3) Collective memory preserves tradition/cultural heritage

As a means to instill/ build the arts as a tradition thus providing avenues for evolution / development for the arts.

- 1) Singapore: preservation of artistic traditions / practices such as wayang kulit, Chinese opera.
- 2) Japan: preservation of Noh theatre as a ritualistic artform delineating Zen / Shinto religious beliefs / philosophy.

4) Collective memory as a mechanism to interpret and verify the truth and degree of injustice.

Examples:

- 1) South Africa: reconciliation between human rights abusers and victims from the apartheid era.

Society needs to come to terms with past atrocities and achieve reconciliation between aggressors and sufferers.

Example: East Timor's decision not to pursue Indonesia for past atrocities committed between 1975-1997.

Individuals or groups of individuals (eg. comfort women in WW2, families of 911 victims) may need to forgive the perpetrators but not forget the event.

Students may argue whether it is feasible to forgive and forget or forgive but not forget.

5) To provide society with a voice and redress grievances/wrongs committed against

innocents.

Example: WW2 incidents of the Nanjing Massacre and comfort women which are still not acknowledged fully by the Japanese government, hence rendering the victims' claims meaningless. Political implication: Japan's unwillingness to admit to these truths has long prevented better rapport / relationship with its Chinese and Korean neighbours til recently

Collective memory allows victims to claim reparations from aggressors within an agreed-upon framework.

Reference to Individual

Our memory is the history of our unique existence, and amnesia would then displace the self.

(Evaluation) At times, forgetting is not necessary but one should not put too much weight on it when memory as an unreliable source of knowledge.

(Evaluation) If people do not forget at times, they may get stuck in the past, either in nostalgia or painful memories and cannot live in the present.

It is necessary to forget at times so that people can let go of their painful memories.

Sensitive students should distinguish between absolute denial of painful memories and the successful move in remembering them and then letting them go.

Multiple identities in the real and virtual world

- Donath believes that people have only one personality in reality but create multiple identities online while Newitz writes about how multiple identities exist both in the virtual and the real worlds.
Which author's view would you subscribe to as a member of the most wired country in the world?

Possible points for discussion

- Proliferation of online communities frequented by people such as Friendster, Facebook, My Space, etc where identities and portrayal of one's self are not verified.
- Increasing number of cases of crimes involving false identities created in cyberspace/online communities
- Extensive usage of Wikipedia by many where online users contribute and change information on the website based on their own knowledge
- The creation of various types of email addresses on web-based email providers also reflect some form of personality
- Free flow of information on the Internet
 - gives people the freedom to air their views on certain sensitive issues with some anonymity such as blogging views about Singapore elections & Tibetan and China conflict
- Citizen journalism platforms such as YouTube, STOMP (Singapore), weblogs, podcast.sg gaining popularity
- Splitting into various roles to fulfil responsibilities required of a person instead of the fact that one has split personalities
- Being a competitive society, people today often display different behaviour at work and at home, being more guarded at work, speed of completing various tasks, etc.
- Through technology and the Internet, many people already maintain multiple identities online as well

- Constructivist learning environment
 - ✓ Active engagement, authentic, collaborative, complex, productive, multi-ideas, ownership, autonomy, self-relevant, reflection and self-management
 - ✓ ICT incorporated in the classroom
 - ✓ Student-centred, inquiry-driven, project-based/problem-based learning
 - ✓ Effective toolset for global collaboration and learning
 - ✓ Online communities that focus on civic engagement

- Education systems everywhere are facing unprecedented challenges, from the massive impact of new technologies to the explosive growth of human populations.
- Knowledge is infinite. It is a borderless world where information is as powerful as its availability. Aligned with the transformation to digital age era, we need to bring school transformation to the next generation schooling lifestyle
- Radically new strategies, which harness the creative powers of students and teachers are now needed.
- Traditional didactic approach to intuitive-experimental approach (IEA) and ICT-rich pedagogy
- Success in the future-for individuals, for communities, for companies, for nations as a whole-will be based not on specific knowledge or skills, but on the ability to think and act creatively
- The essence of innovation in today's digital culture is the democratization of learning, a phenomenon that challenges the role and structure of today's schools
- With mobile technologies and devices becoming increasingly affordable and prevalent in our students' day-to-day life, the potential for synchronous and ubiquitous learning is gradually becoming a reality. Virtual learning spaces can be leveraged to develop higher order thinking skills
- Need for a twenty-first literacy-one that integrates core subject knowledge with learning and innovation skills; information, media, and technology skills; and essential life and career skills
- Need to evolve a new, more vibrant, interactive, webbed culture of learning-one that actively engages students in deep, gregarious learning that is intricately linked to community, work, and life experiences
- Future classrooms need to provide educational opportunities for students to develop communication skills, leadership skills, technology literacy, social responsibility and global awareness

- Students who are learners, creators and communicators as well as resourceful and innovative.
- Leverage Information Communication Technology (ICT) to revolutionise learning as it has transformed and become an integral part of our daily lives
- Technology intervention/Technology has catalysed transformations in the learning process
- Various blends of pedagogical strategies and technological affordances have been proposed for the twenty-first learners commonly known as the Net Gen, Gen Y or Digital Natives
- A curriculum that encompasses the development of habits of thinking, researching and problem solving, a pedagogy that engages students in their learning and provides a curriculum that requires an inquiry approach to learning that involves learners being engaged with a real-world problem before being presented with content information. The rapid development of informational technologies, particularly the use of the Internet and the need for a problem-based learning environment using the Internet will lead schools to innovate a curriculum that includes the use of computer technology as part of a generic designed instruction of problem-based learning
- High tech tools serve as an extension to the student's thinking-a place to explore ideas, research questions, test hypotheses, compose thoughts, and come to conclusions. These tools serve as vehicles for building skills, advancing thinking through multimodal learning, collaborating through social networking and increasing understanding through authenticity-highly effective differentiators of learning
- Technology has become significantly ingrained in the lifestyles of today's adolescents
- Digital natives seek out new technologies and quickly move in to construct their digital space, languages and cultures, even as these technologies and digital worlds emerge
- ICT tools are leveraged on to facilitate constructivist learning environments/web-based collaborative learning environments where students get to use the Internet to do research work, make use of Skype to do video conferencing and online blogging to share their learning
- Helps to set aspirational goals for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in today's Digital Age
- Deeper learning and more engaged learners
- Team synergy, strategic partnerships
- Growing worldwide consensus on the key skills needed for success in twenty-first century work and life-the "Seven Cs"
- Students need to be media-savvy, that is, to become fully conscious of how their thought processes and decisions can be influenced, and what effective communication means.
- Need to deliver the national curriculum and impart twenty-first century skills through experiential and inquiry-based learning, cognitive apprenticeship and strategies based on

human dynamics. This is achieved via the use of innovative Information Communication Technology coupled with strong pedagogical consultancy.

- In the context of the current digital age, schools are compelled to facilitate a style of learning that is engaging and relevant to the world in which our students live. Pedagogical practice that utilizes virtual learning environments and multimedia so as to facilitate aspects of digital literacy involving video production, student-based research and online specific learning intervention will become common place within classrooms. Sustainable technologically rich learning culture
- Technology acts as a cognitive tool, empowering the students to control and construct their own learning with appropriate teachers' guidance. In addition, students develop lifelong skills through the process of tutorial video-making with the use of software and hardware such as Windows Movie Maker and Newsmaker and a digital video recorder.
- Rapid shifts in the education paradigm as new technologies impact on our daily lives
- With the shift of instructional paradigm, the construction of a new student-centred instruction through designing constructivist learning environments is promoted
- Democratization of classroom dynamics in previously unimaginable ways. Learners themselves will become producers of collaborative, student-authored resources, contributing to the ecology of 'open educational' resources
- Customizing lessons to cater to students' diverse learning needs. More differentiated pedagogical approaches within each individual classroom
- The concept of learning through play via the interactive media is a platform for all educators to rethink pedagogies and create endless possibilities in teaching and learning. Purposeful play is achieved through school-designed curriculum such as inquiry-based lessons
- In blended learning, teachers innovate their pedagogical approaches by leveraging on ICT to engage students meaningfully, in a way that best suits their learning needs. Another characteristic is that blended learning promotes accessibility-the ability to use the web to serve any student, at any time, in any place
- Foster a transformative-learning culture through an integrated curriculum which harnesses technology for teaching and learning and develops students' and teachers' technological literacy and capacity.
- Multi-disciplinary nature, making connection between underlying concepts that link various subjects together in real-world applications. The gap between theory and practice is bridged
- Procedural skills and conceptual understanding
- Authentic tasks with real-world relevance present students with the opportunity to exercise inventiveness and imagination in their pursuit of problem-based learning
- The emergence of the Web 2.0 phenomena as a social revolution has enabled and encouraged through open applications and services. Emerging trends in e-learning are shaped by Web 2.0 whereby students actively create content and collaborate with peers to

establish learning networks. They share their reflections and learning experiences as well as obtain feedback from peers.

- The media literacy programme in Singapore enables students to transfer their training to the production of quality multimedia projects. Media forms such as digital music, video and art are integrated to encourage students to express themselves beyond the standard written reports. Enables autonomous language learning
- Integrated Robotics Curriculum (IRC) could enhance character development of students
- Robotics is commonly used in colleges and tertiary instructions, especially in engineering and computing courses and its used is infused into teaching and learning. The hands-on handling of robots creates avenues for incidental learning and independent discovery
- Incorporation of social networking tools is bringing about greater knowledge sharing, connecting the community and the users. It broadens the learning experience of the learners. As students collaborate to build knowledge through the use of wikis, blogs, and student-authored information, this will provide broader access to knowledge and support constructivism pedagogies
- ICT tools such as blogs, email, wikis, Google tools and digital story-telling can be utilized to create educational experiences to develop globalization awareness through collaboration and information exchange between participants in different countries
- The Wiki is a powerful tool to facilitate collaborative authoring, sharing of knowledge as well as communication. It supports the creation of a constructivist learning environment and value adds to the teaching and learning of the English language
- Multimedia document templates support online mentoring and peer review
- New Interactive Media elements such as podcasting, vodcasting and blogging allow the students to present their ideas in speech, writing or through acting
- Virtual worlds are increasingly becoming a cornerstone of the lifestyles of current and future generations of learners. Collaborative learning is a key approach in education whereby students learn together as they work towards achieving a common goal. Hence, the challenge for educators is to use virtual worlds as an engaging platform to foster collaborative learning and related activities.
- Second Life, launched in 2003, by Linden Lab is one of the most popular online 3D social network environment. Various schools have integrated this online platform into their curriculum
- Animation is increasingly-used in technology-based learning resources. It allows for a plethora of activities that engage students in cooperative and self-directed learning. Gaming instructional design models effectively integrate content area concepts with higher order thinking skills, twenty-first century learning skills and technology literacy
- Courseware, interactive games, virtual experiments and simulations, Tablet PC
- Podcasts facilitate the push towards borderless classrooms, and help address the issue of limited curriculum time as students can learn at any time or place and at their own pace.

Enables students to have greater ownership of their own learning as it caters to different learning styles

- Schools can leverage on the communicative and entertainment features of handphones for educational purposes as it is exciting for students to publish their learning on their handphones for showcasing to their family and friends. Short Messaging System (SMS) can also be develop as a mobile real-time feedback system
- Dataloggers and sensors
- Deliver content through Web pages or virtual learning environments such as Blackboard or Moodle using just-in-time learning
- Google Earth is a virtual globe browser that presents the surface of the earth as seen through a collage of satellite photographs and 3-D terrain models. It has the capability in incorporating the vast source of web-based geographical information and data into a user-friendly interface, making it an excellent learning portal as students explore and construct their learning on the virtual highway. Especially appealing to visual and kinaesthetic learners.
- The Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) is an innovative tool used in the classroom to increase student engagement during the learning process
- Interactive Whiteboards, Microsoft inking function and educational software are some tools to engage and provide interaction for the learners, bringing in an element of fun to learning
- Vodcasts facilitate multimodal instruction and develop practical strategies for enhancing inquiry-based and authentic learning tasks in today's classrooms. It also forefronts students as content creators; the production of vodcasts as a learning tool provides opportunities for experiential, interactive and authentic learning experiences.
- Social bookmarking affords enhanced online collaboration between students by enabling decentralized online access and simple sharing of URL databases. The tagging of articles improves organization, eschewing traditional folder hierarchies and using automated search as well as visual metaphor. This method of organization effectively has students employ metacognition to more meaningfully represent their understanding of connections between disparate topics
- Transmedia storytelling, story, play, socialization and learning represent the core experiences that are essential to our life's experiences. Language acquisition can be enhanced by extending story and play as well as socialization. The use of SIMS and/or simulation games such as Second Life can be harnessed for language acquisition.
- Socratic Questioning, in its original form, is based on conversation-oriented questioning, exploration, inquiry and discovery process, with a high degree of interaction and involvement between the learner and the Socratic questioner. The use of Windows Live Agent-a chat interface with artificial intelligence capabilities, coupled with the choice of a Socratic-like questioning approach, gives rise to a relationship that makes technology and pedagogy fit together well.

- Research materials indicate that the cornerstone on the use of technology for learning lies in how it is used for learning, not on the technology itself. An equally compelling challenge is in creating learning experiences that engender engaged learning
- In the last decade new developments in imaging the brain through magnetic resonance and other technologies have allowed scientists to observe how the brain functions when learning. The main areas of research include the brain's plasticity and its ability to continually adapt and change throughout the life of the individual; the brain's use of neuronal networks to create understanding; and the vital importance of emotion in cognition. The ways in which the individual collects, learns and uses knowledge have been transformed through the power of the Internet and classroom ICT
- The Internet Age has spawned a new generation of Asian youths who spend significant amount of time in cyberspace-where they are exposed to illegal or unwholesome content, or are lured into unlawful activities or behavior that put them and the security of their computers at risk. Schools have to teach students to be safe and responsible Internet users by introducing cyber ethics/cyber safety curriculum to their classrooms.
- The recent explosion of social networking sites aimed at school-age youth presents both challenges and opportunities for schools. Privacy, security and classroom management issues are creating crises for school decision makers unsure of the impact of online social networking on learning. At the same time, the technologies are creating new and unparalleled opportunities for engagement and collaboration. The commercial and consumer-oriented nature of the sites also presents a challenge.
- Personalized learning is defined as 'a unique, blended classroom and non-classroom-based public educational model that is tailored to the needs and interests of each individual student'. Collaborative learning technologies can play a role in defining practical, achievable personalized learning environments that raise the level of student engagement and improve student outcomes.
- Constructivist approach where students are empowered to be active knowledge constructors that will lead to authentic learning and deeper understanding

History

- History fundamentally has two meanings, the first meaning being that history is a series of past events and the second one being that history is an academic discipline, whose object of enquiry is the past.
- History is an artificial construct and may therefore be biased, inaccurate or subjective.

Should we study history?

1. **‘The study of history is futile.’ Do you agree?**
‘History helps us to understand the past, but it does not help us to prepare for the future.’ Is this true?
Is the study of historical events still relevant?

<i>Stand</i>	<u>This is what makes the study of history relevant till this very day.</u>
<i>At the individual level</i>	<p>History can give one a sense of identity.</p> <p>The past is an accumulation of ideas, knowledge and events which inevitably link to who we are today. There are insights to be gathered from a careful study of the past by historians and archaeologists. These insights allow us to better understand ourselves and better appreciate our heritage and traditions. The understanding is critical in further establishing one’s sense of identity and being rooted to one’s nation, particularly in the context today of a globalised world. For example, our past is a constant feature in the school curriculum to develop in our students a sense of our history to give them a frame of reference so as to better prepare them to deal with current and future demands and challenges of globalisation.</p>
<i>At the individual level</i>	<p>Helps us understand people and societies</p> <p>Our past offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>a.The study of the Greek civilization is indeed a work of art. Myths of early battles with Mycenaean Troy are preserved in the works of the story – teller – or tellers – given the name of Homer.</p> <p>b.The Renaissance which means ‘rebirth’ is the name given to the renewed interest in the art, architecture and learning of Classical Greece and Rome, which inspired people to try out new ideas, and marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of Modern Times. The movement began in Italy in the 14th century, and eventually influenced all of Europe, reaching its height in the 15th and 16th centuries. The most powerful patrons of the Renaissance were the Medici, a family of Florentine bankers who encouraged artists and scholars to work in their city. Florence was the home of great artists such as Leonardo da Vinci(1452 – 1519) and Michelangelo Buonarroti(1475-1564), architects such as</p>

	<p>Filippo Brunelleschi(1377-1446) and writers such as Dante Alighieri(1265-1321).</p> <p>The history of ancient civilisations tells us a lot about the culture and practices of the ancient people. With this information, we can try to understand the current practices and behaviour of modern man.</p>
<i>At the national level</i>	<p>Studying the past is essential for good citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History provides data about the emergence of national institutions, problems, and values. It offers evidence also about how nations have interacted with other societies, providing international and comparative perspectives essential for responsible citizenship. • Further, studying history helps us understand how recent, current, and prospective changes that affect the lives of citizens are emerging or may emerge and what causes are involved. • To understand issues of change and continuity in our society, we need to learn from the past. This enables us to avoid mistakes in the future. <p>Example: The study of Singapore's history – founding, progress and continued survival. 1989– Pro-democracy demonstrations all over Germany. The government gives in and the Berlin wall is knocked down.</p>
<i>At the global level</i>	<p>History provides us with lessons from the past which may hold possible solutions and for the present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes fairly recent events in the past will suffice to explain a major development, but often we need to look further back to identify the causes of change. Only through studying the past, can we grasp how things change; only through the past can we begin to comprehend the factors that cause change; and only through the past, can we understand what elements of an institution or a society persist despite change. • History helps us to appreciate the political process and therefore provide valuable policy lessons that will shape the future • Deeply-rooted political conflicts between Palestine and Israel, India and Pakistan, the Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka
<i>Philosophy</i>	<p>One can continue to tap on the wisdom and tacit knowledge of the past.</p> <p>Words of wisdom by great philosophers and scientific theories and discoveries of the past have served mankind well. Moreover, such wisdom and knowledge continue to make us re-think our common history and question the extent to which it is accurate and objective in our records. Each decade sees the new interpretation of past events in civilisations which challenge these theories and knowledge about them. For example, the 'discovery' of the alignment of the Great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx to the constellations of the Orion and Leo respectively prompted scientific research that extrapolated to the time frame that they were built more than 10,000 years ago, and not 5,000 years as we currently believe. This prompts us to continue to explore what other</p>

	sophisticated knowledge in maths and science in ancient times that have never been discovered which could benefit mankind today.
	TWISTER
Recognise that certain events are unpredictable and cannot, therefore, have any precursors as guides.	<p>Over-reliance on History can make one unduly conservative and fail to adapt to changes today and in future well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What used to work well in the past may no longer work well today or in the future. Past success does not guarantee future success. This is because the context has changed and with the advent of technology, change is even faster and unpredictable. New threats ranging from modern warfare to newly mutated viruses and the ever blossoming new knowledge areas of science, technology and economy have certainly taken precedence over history. • As such, looking to the past for solutions or inspiration may not necessarily help one to deal with present issues or problems effectively. Instead, it may cause one to be averse to risk-taking when given the opportunity to change given the ‘why rock the boat’ mentality. Such conservative outlook could hold one back and fail to adapt to changes well.

How is a knowledge of the past useful?

2. Does knowing the past hinder more than help us?

‘Without our past, our future would be a tortuous path leading to nowhere.’ Do you agree?

- Agree with the given statement to a great extent, that is, without our past, our future will indeed be a journey which leads to an undetermined destination.
- Agree with the given statement to a small extent, that is, without our past, we would be able to still carry on with our lives.

Agree	Disagree
Value of studying history at the individual, national and global levels [See above]	<p>History can only serve as a point of reference for the unpredictable future.</p> <p>There is a need to manage and make sense of the increasing confusing world brought about by globalisation today. Hence, people turn to religion to achieve the certain desired level of mental well-being today e.g. ancestor reverence and deity worship are still by and large retained in relatively traditional societies in Asia.</p>

Discuss the appeal and dangers of our preoccupation with the past.

It can be <u>appealing</u> to look to the past...	However, there are <u>dangers</u> of our preoccupation with the past...
<p>▪ as it gives one a sense of nostalgia.</p> <p>Emotionally, nostalgia offers one a sense of comfort and peace that can be good for one's mental health. Fond memories of the past, be it in the form of a person, a group of friends, a place or events could offer one a certain degree of psychological comfort, especially during challenging times. It can serve as a form of mental or emotional 'safety net' if there is a cherished part of one's past to look to as a way to cope with the present, either in the form of momentary escape, or to gather the needed strength to go on with one's life. After all, some authors have admitted that publishing their memoirs is cathartic to some extent.</p>	<p>▪ as it can make one overly sentimental and become self-indulgent.</p> <p>One's preoccupation with the glorious past may lead one to be unduly sentimental, swelled with pride and go to extreme to 'protect' the past in the way as how 'memory' and 'records' have captured them. While this may not be a problem at the individual level, it may become an issue if it a society's or nation's psyche is such and causes potential conflict with the rest of the world. For example, the atrocities committed by the Japanese during their occupation of China and S.E. Asia during WWII were largely ignored, disregarded or kept out their recorded history despite the constant demands from Asian countries to review and change their history records.</p>
<p>Value of studying history at the individual, national and global levels [See above]</p>	<p>History can only serve as a point of reference for the unpredictable future.</p>

'The political turmoil we face today is largely due to leaders who have not learnt from past mistakes.' Comment.

Disagree

1. Past mistakes cannot be of much help to the leaders as they have to constantly deal with new emerging problems on a daily basis.
 - a. Let us take the Lebanese political protest which started from 2006 to 2008. it began on 1st December 2006, led by groups in Lebanon that opposed the western backed government of Prime Minister Fauod Sinora.
 - b. The opposition group was made up of pro-Syrian, Iranian backed Hezbollah and anti-Syrian Free Patriotic Movement (FPM).
 - c. The simple fact remains that Lebanon cannot be ruled by a simple majority government. These internal conflicts escalated and culminated in the political turmoil of 2008.
 - d. In May 2008, gun battles erupted between Hezbollah supporters and pro-government loyalists.
 - e. The origins behind this problem are due to religious and political concerns. Such disputes cannot be solved amicably as the country is torn into different directions.

2. At times, political turmoil is caused by rampant mistrust and mismanagement, which has no bearing on the mistakes made by political leaders.
- a. Sometimes the current underlying economic and social problems create conditions that trigger political crisis. This can be seen in the 2007 – 2008 Kenyan crisis.
 - b. This refers to the humanitarian, political and economic crisis that erupted after incumbent President Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner of the Presidential election held on December 27, 2007.
 - c. Supporters of Kibaki's opponent, Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement, alleged electoral manipulation, a notion widely supported by the Kenyans.
 - d. The reason being that voting has widely been along ethnic lines in most Kenyan communities. In addition, there is a widespread perception that the count of the presidential election was modified in favour of Kibaki.

As such, due to constant mistrust and inefficient management of political systems, the resultant effect is political turmoil and in this case past mistakes are not going to be of much help to the leaders.

3. Even climate change can and might possibly cause political turmoil.
- a) According to American scientific reports, climate change will turn the Arctic into one of the world's hot spots. The Christian Science Monitor expects that the melting ice in the Arctic will start a race for oil. As Arctic ice melts, new and unknown sub-oceanic oil fields will become reachable. Therefore, countries around the North Pole are seeking to extend their authority as far as possible to the seafloor. This changes the sovereignty question in a fundamental way as it could pit traditional allies - such as the USA and Canada - against each other. If large areas of the Arctic become navigable for large portions of the year, a list of other possible threats emerge, as marine operations in the Arctic increase.
 - b) In addition to the Arctic, the Christian Science Monitor expects that global warming will cause political turmoil in East Africa, Nepal, USA, Indonesia, and in Lagos and Nigeria.

In view of such reports, it is evident that political leaders might seem to be rather helpless in this case.

TWISTER

Past mistakes made by leaders serve as good historical recounts of past failures but are not learnt by current political leaders.

- a. In history, we are bombarded with numerous accounts of despotic leaders who caused great distress to the people. One example of such a leader is none other than Adolf Hitler himself. The atrocities committed by Hitler in the name of achieving glory for the German people cannot be easily forgotten. The Holocaust remains deeply etched in our history books. However, do our present leaders learn anything from this? The murder of millions of people in the name of ethnic cleansing today serves as a reminder of past murders which such biblical proportions.

- b. Another example is that of the numerous wars which had taken countless numbers of lives. World War I and II, the Vietnam War and many others are vivid examples of the loss of innocent lives and destruction to the economy. However, have our present leaders learnt from this? If yes, why then do we still have the Gulf War and the Iraq War?
- c. History merely repeats itself, rather dismally to all who are interested in reading its account.

As such, political turmoil is caused by current leaders who may not take these historical lessons to heart.

Conclusion

A study of our past mistakes makes a real contribution to the education of our leaders. It aids their individual personal development and contributes to their awareness of society and the rights and responsibilities of being a leader. Examining historical events can lead to a better understanding of certain mechanisms and can be really handy in solving contemporary or future political problems. At the other side of the spectrum, we find that some historians say that one can never learn from history. Every period and every place in history had its own mentality and morals. Those different morals and mentalities play a large role in the way a certain crisis, problem or event will be handled. Every person is a product of his own time and because of that every time deals with specific problems or events in a certain way. What once worked in a certain time, in a certain place, does not have to work in another period. In view of this, any leader seems to be on his own. What is pertinent to note, that in order to avoid any political turmoil, our leaders need all the help that they can obtain.

Lessons from history

3. ‘History has taught us that blind obedience does not pay.’ Discuss. (SAJC Prelim 07)

- ‘blind obedience’: adhering to rules, conventions, traditions; following orders without thought or question; from the government’s perspective, citizens are obliged to obey the policy, imposed as a law
-

Possible Approaches:

- History has taught us that blind obedience does / does not pay.
- Essay can be either philosophical or example-driven

Possible Points:

History has taught us that blind obedience does not pay.	History has taught us that blind obedience does pay.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ignores the individual’s ability to reason, right to choose and think independently ▪ Hinders progress and change – unquestioning adherence to tradition / authority impedes creativity and the desire for excellence, which involve challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vital in preserving public order and stability in times of crisis, war, threats to national security etc. (e.g. WW2: thousands of Japanese-Americans were interned in camps so as to prevent any security threats)

<p>the norm (e.g. revolutions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No opportunity for dialogue / debate – no consideration of the impact of the decision / policy, from the perspectives of various stakeholders: resulting in drastic consequences ▪ Moral responsibility and accountability rests on those in authority – no qualms about committing travesties ▪ Serves the needs and ambitions of those in authority – individual needs not met ▪ Results in the loss of basic freedoms which determine one's quality of life ▪ Unrestrained, often fast-paced perpetuation of destructive ideologies, lies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vital in situations where knowledge would result in more dire consequences ▪ Curbs the self-serving tendencies within individuals – self-control, responsibility and respect for authority & others inculcated through adherence to a strict code <p>Some examples from history: the holocaust, Tiananmen incident, Rwandan genocide, autocratic / totalitarian regimes (e.g. Stalin, Hitler)</p>
---	--

4. The questions raised by history are more valuable than the facts that we learn from it. Discuss with reference to your society.

questions raised by history: history provokes thought; raises doubts/problems (eg. questions about our identity, roots, choices we make, whether the top-down approach was the best choice, whether we made the right choice, the founding of Singapore). It does not refer to the subject or academic area of learning.

facts we learn from it: the bodies of knowledge (based on narrative records, memoirs, testimony from living witnesses, letters) about the past produced by historians.

Possible Approaches:

A good script should look at the value of the questions raised and discuss **the ways in which it is more (less) valuable than that of the facts learnt from history.**

1. Stand: that questions raised by history are **more valuable** than the facts we learn from it
 - due to the limitations and failures of representation; that history is based on evidence that could be biased or fragmentary and is therefore not an objective fact (*so questions raised may shed more light on our collective past*)
Eg. Singapore history cannot be reduced to an account written by prominent Singaporeans/ academics
 - Thinking through the questions raised by history may prove valuable in coming to a better appreciation of our history. (*If history is left unchallenged and taken as the final reality about the past, then it loses meaning to the changing times.*)
Eg. Instead of simply assimilating the historical account of our merger with Malaysia, actively thinking through why we had to do that then or what other alternatives we could have pursued or why the merger was unsuccessful could lead us to a better understanding of our constraints.
 - “New generations need to re-look and re-possess history on their own terms. Such debates are healthy, and contribute to engage the nation into thinking and re-thinking about what constitutes Singapore's past, to constantly decide what they want to include as their heritage and identity, thereby instilling, perhaps through a rather roundabout but possibly

more heartfelt sense of national belonging, because it is arrived at after much more struggle; the sense of an 'ownership' of the past is more ingrained and real.”
[http://www.singaporeangle.com/2007/08/history_nation_singapore_part_2.html]

2. Stand: that questions raised by history are **less valuable** than the facts we learn from it
 - the facts provided compelling evidence to justify for the need to implement specific policies to ensure social order/ progress (*while questions raised may not convey as forceful an impact*)
Eg. Maria Hertogh riots and the Hock Lee Bus strike in 1955 reinforce the need to preserve racial harmony.
 - facts we learn from history may shape a collective consciousness which will be valuable with regard to nation-building. Nation-building requires a monolithic, coherent and unified national history that gives a sense of direction. (*questions raised on the other hand may be less successful in nation-building as it may create more confusion about our identity*)
Eg. our immigrant past, the Japanese Occupation in 1942-1945, our shortlived merger with Malaysia, to some extent instilled a sense of patriotism amongst our forefathers.
5. To what extent does man's history paint a bleak picture of humanity?

Examine the question

- Is man generally motivated by his desire to create a better world for humanity?

Different aspects of humanity's history

politics

- history of war- man's ability to annihilate en masse
- BUT coming to the rescue of countries/people who were downtrodden
- fight for greater freedom from colonial masters/ tyrannical regimes

economics

- manipulation of market for profit, causing world/regional currency crisis
- unfair trade agreements
- BUT providing jobs/ sharing expertise and technology

social

- discrimination of all sorts
- BUT equality movements

science and technology

- detonation of atomic bombs/ use of weapons of mass destruction
- some inventions proved detrimental
- BUT history of inventions prompted by desire to improve life

Future implications

- we will continually be faced with new challenges
- greater cooperation between people will be inevitable for the survival of the specie

6. 'History is a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies.'
Discuss. (YJC Prelim 2008)

- Gallery of pictures – a collection and display of historical events, information, discoveries, etc
- Few originals – that was not done or had happened before
- Many copies - numerous imitation and reproductions

	Introduction
Opener Elab/ Lead in to stand (underline)	<p>Historians have spent years profiling significant events and information that took place in almost every part of the world. It is through these records that people can be further educated and enlightened of what and who they are today. In the study of history, some have regarded history as mere collation of events and information that are repetitive and at time ambiguous. However, in analysing significant events, discoveries, inventions and ideologies in the past, it would not be fair to conclude that there are few originals and many copies in <u>history</u>.</p>
Arts	<p>An assessment of the aesthetic achievements of man would be indicative that there are more to credit man for being original.</p> <p>In the arts, many of the techniques, styles and perspectives there we see in the world today are strongly linked to the development and progress made in the past.</p> <p>The Italian Renaissance saw artists experimenting for the first time with oil-based paints. They mixed powdered pigments with linseed oil. The paints dried slowly, and remained workable for a few months. Stonemasons of the Middle Ages began to be replaced by Artists. They used materials like bronze to make the scenes in their bas-reliefs more lifelike. Perspective and light were introduced into art. The painters and artists that lived during the Renaissance changed the way the world looked at art for all time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michelangelo and his painting of The Sistine Chapel, the Pope's chapel in the Vatican Palace. The frescoes of the Sistine Chapel were incredibly difficult to create. He worked high above the floor, lying on his back on scaffolding. He painted some of the finest images of all time. <p>English literature from Elizabethan Era to Jacobean, Romanticism and Victorian age has changed its emphasis in the plays, poetry, drama and theatrical performances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sonnet was introduced into English by Thomas Wyatt in the early 16th century. Poems intended to be set to music as songs, such as by Thomas Campion, became popular as printed literature was disseminated more widely in households. <p>The introduction of new elements at different time period is thus evident that history keeps score of many original developments and introductions to appeal to the aesthetic appreciation of man.</p>
Science	<p>In scientific development and advancements, there are more extensive originals than mere copies. From Botany to Mathematics, Medicine, Physics and Chemistry, many wonderful discoveries and inventions were made that</p>

	<p>enable man to advance and stretch his potential as evident in today's world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Botany began with tribal efforts to identify edible, medicinal and poisonous plants, making botany one of the oldest sciences. From this ancient interest in plants, the scope of botany has increased to include the study of over 550,000 kinds or species of living organisms. - Evolution from penicillin/immunizations to biomedical science <p>The modern society relies heavily on the theories, concepts and principles conjectured and experimented by many scientists in the past. It has clearly exhibited that the phrase 'few originals' is definitely not appropriate to describe what history can offer.</p>
New Ideas	<p>Ideologically, we see the emergence of new ideas, new school of thoughts and new perspectives. These new perspectives have given the current world a tool to function at different level, meeting different needs and creating a better tolerant and understanding group of people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karl Marx proposed an economic base/superstructure model of society. The Marxist view of ideology as an instrument of social reproduction has been an important touchstone for the sociology of knowledge and theorists such as Karl Mannheim, Daniel Bell, and Jürgen Habermas, amongst many others. - Niccolò Machiavelli was the first to link ideology with terror, regarded as "handbook for republicans." - Economic science of Adam Smith - The Christian Crusades against the Turks and the wars between Catholics and Protestants in early modern Europe - Hundred schools of thoughts (Confucianism, Legalism, Taoism, Mohism, etc) - Feminism in the 60's and 70's - Chomsky's, Skinner's, Piaget's contribution in the area of language learning and development <p>As a result of these thoughts and ideas, the world today is able to continue its progress towards a more civilized and gracious one with better understanding and appreciation.</p>
	Twister
Monumental events	<p>To account for the view that there are few originals and many copies, an aspect to focus on is to assess history through the achievements and advancements made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historians have unanimously agreed that some of the events that had taken place are of great significance such as the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, the unification of the Qin Dynasty, the French Revolution, the two World Wars, the Holocaust and the conquest of the Everest. These events exhibited individual prowess through influences, unifications and destructions which was deemed unimaginable and impossible to achieve then. They are spectacular in terms of its leaders and the outcomes, be it in the extent of control of the empires, the ability of the ruler to unify the sparsely dispersed group of countries or

	<p>the massive destruction and atrocities committed at that one period of time. And such achievements could only be achieved based on the dream, drive and abilities of the different individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is therefore difficult to see these passion and drive easily replicated in anyone, thus limiting man and leaders of such potential to only a few.
Civilisations	<p>Another original development as reflected from the analysis of world history is the type of civilization in existence. The nature and development of civilisations takes millions of years to evolve that it would be impossible to see many originals within the time span. In fact, there are many copies as a result of culture contact between previously separate civilizations and this has led to accelerated social change such as from China to the Mediterranean, associated with the spread of coinage, larger empires and new religions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Old World – Indus Valley Civilization, Helladic period, Ancient China - New World - Caral of the Norte Chico (Western Hemisphere), Aztec civilization Maya civilization, Inca Empire, Zapotec Civilization) <p>Civilizations affected by these developments include : Mediterranean Civilizations, Middle Eastern Civilizations, Indian Hindu and Buddhist Civilizations, East Asian Civilizations, The Civilizations of South East Asia, Central Asian Civilization, European Civilizations. With the voyages of discovery by European explorers of the 15th and 16th century, European forms of government, industry, commerce and culture have spread from Western Europe, to the Americas, South Africa, Australia, and through colonial empires, to the rest of the planet.</p> <p>Today it would appear that we are all parts of a planetary industrializing world civilization, divided between many nations and languages.</p>
Reinforcement of stand & summary of main points	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>History is therefore a repertoire of man's achievements and progress at different time period, witnessing breakthroughs, discoveries and understanding. There are originals and there are copies. However, the many 'first-steps' taken by man in their quest for survival, progress and better understanding of the world is a reaffirmation that history presents a gallery of pictures with many originals albeit many copies.</p>

History as a necessarily subjective discipline

7. History is a tool for politicians to achieve their intentions/ends. Do you agree?

Is History manipulated to achieve the desired results [political motives, personal ambition or having a national agenda] of politicians?

Acknowledges that history has a potential to be manipulated, but also retains its intrinsic value for educational purposes

Possible points:

-- show that history may be employed to achieve what politicians desire, but that such results may be both desirable (*eg. political interests of the country, nation-building*) or harmful (*eg. manipulation for less scrupulous ends, war-mongering, gerrymandering*); history as both accomplice for evil and instrument for good, notwithstanding the “manipulative” factor.

- Interpretation of 'ends' depend on the level at which they are discussed

1. Japanese politicians' rewriting of history (conflicts between China and Japan)
2. Events and actions leading from WWII (displacement of Jews etc)
3. Religious conflicts between Jews and Muslims
4. Nation building in small countries (e.g. Singapore)
5. Territorial disputes (China and Taiwan/Tibet)
6. Discussion of topics in various education system
7. Historical depictions in museums and artifacts in the tourism industry

8. History is nothing but a well-written fiction. Do you agree?

Fiction could be both a manipulation of the fact or an imagined story, which is not related to any person, thing or event.

YES, “History is nothing but a well-written fiction”.

Socially, history at its best is only one historian’s selection of what he/she believes at any particular time is most relevant from the body of material that survives. Facts do not speak for themselves until historians make a conscious effort to select them. At worst, it is no more than the sort of bigoted opinion and blatant manipulation of sources that have recently been exposed in the work of Holocaust denier, David Irving.

Facts are manipulated by the historians using language. For example “many people died in the Rape of Nanking” is essentially different from “many people were massacred in the Rape of Nanking”

The emergence of historical fiction points in the direction that history is nothing but fiction and this point is well illustrated in the novel “The Passion” written by Jeannette Winterson.

Culturally, the accuracy and reliability of evidences, which historians work to recreate events of the past for the everyday man, are questionable. How much of what is left from the past is readable or accessible? Over time some documents may have been lost or burnt in a fire.

History books must appeal to the reader, and mere facts and statistics will not appeal to us, hence the historian colours them with his own imagination and interpretation of events.

Politically, history is but a fable agreed upon, especially so by the winning side. History is always told from the point of view of the winners.

Eg: The argument put forth by the Japanese that Chinese women were not used as comfort women for Japanese soldiers in the 2nd World War, however the story from the other side tells a different story. *(This answer could also fall into the social category)*

Politicians have been known to have doctored history for motives such as glorification amongst others. Stalin and Hitler are both common examples.

From a personal viewpoint, the objectivity of history is questioned; whose point of view is history narrated from?

Nietzsche asserted that “there are no truths mere interpretations”. This is what Historians do, they attempt to make sense of the facts after selecting them by infusing them with his personal interpretation. Thus History in some sense loses its objectivity. *(This could fall under Social/Cultural)*

There are gaps in history, and historians fill up these gaps with their imagination. Statistics and imagination are to history what oil and petrol are to a combustion engine; an excess of one will not compensate for the deficit in the other.

NO, “History is nothing but a well-written fiction”.

Socially, the chronological order is clear of the sequence of events, there is no argument against that. Facts speak for themselves .

Example Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 or the Great War broke out in 1914. These are true and immutable facts, because they retell the events as they happened.

Culturally, moderate postmodernism has transformed history into a more inclusive one, with more historians taking different social and cultural perspectives into account and therefore improving representation and fairness to different social and cultural groups thus making history more objective than before. *(This could fall under political)*

From a personal point of view, there is a level of personal response to the reading of history, people have to take ownership of what they read and how they interpret it. When one questions what they read the question the accuracy of it. *(This answer will be given credit) This could also fall into the social/cultural framework)*

Morally, the purpose of History is to educate. “Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.” Because of this purpose historians have the innate need to inject ethical and moral sanctions in their handling of the facts.

A good answer will be able to show how history is a mix of both fact and fiction. It is at best only superficially objective, not completely objective.

Globalisation and Singapore

1. To what extent has globalisation affected your country?

Positive Impact of Globalisation:	Negative Impact of Globalisation:
1. Economic Impact The process of globalisation has enhanced the free flow of goods and services, capital and information in and out of Singapore. Embarking on trade has lifted hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty to enjoy a high standard of living in Singapore. Singapore has enjoyed decades of unprecedented economic growth through trade and will continue to enjoy economic growth due to globalisation. An open economy also helps spurred innovation and competition.	1. Economic Impact The opening up of our economy to the global market has made us even more vulnerable. What may start out as a problem in a country can balloon into a regional problem, and fast threaten to become a global crisis, eventually impacting on us. E.g. the currency crisis which erupted in Thailand in 1999 saw how economic problems quickly developed into full-scale social problems, which in turn became political problems in the regional, including Singapore. The crisis then spread from Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia, Russia and even Latin America.
2. Social Impact Lifestyles which were once a dream for our parents are a reality for us. Our cities are increasingly plugged into the world information super-highway. Globalisation has significantly improved our way and quality of life, enjoying the finer aspects of living from our social interactions with expatriates and workers from America to Australia, China to Canada, Malaysia to Mexico e.g. more vibrant social life: more Singaporeans in pubs playing and enjoying jazz and blues e.g. fine dining: we drink Irish whiskey and French wines; we eat Italian pizza and Japanese sushi.	2. Social Impact In today's world, live images are transmitted from one end of the globe to another as events unfold, via global networks such as CNN and host of cable network channels. Perceptions can be changed, emotions can be roused, and confidence irrecoverably shaken in minutes. These exert greater pressure on governments, businesses and even the people to spend some time to examine their values and attitudes. We can easily be led into the belief that the Internet is about the future; and globalisation is about living life anywhere. But living anywhere can mean living nowhere i.e. a loss of sense of identity. We all want some place to call home. To move confidently into the future, it helps to know who we are and where we have come from.
3. Cultural Impact Globalisation can also be seen as a cultural phenomenon. Advent of technology allows for quick transmission, sharing and adoption of ideas, attitudes, opinions and interests (collectively known as 'components' of lifestyles in marketing) e.g. cable channel	3. Cultural Impact As interdependence between nations grows, nations, political systems, economic organisations, social structures, family units, and individuals will face countless dilemmas. This is due to the spreading of common standards across cultures such that they come to resemble each

Positive Impact of Globalisation:	Negative Impact of Globalisation:
<p>MTV allows youth all over the world to access to a 'one-size fits all' global representation of pop culture which they emulate in the form of the language used, sense of fashion displayed, taste and preference in pop literature and the liberal attitudes displayed through their behaviour. One may argue that this is a step closer to the ideal of a more united world as we have more in common with each other.</p>	<p>other to a large extent i.e. mass culture e.g. McDonaldisation. As such, Singaporeans must find new ways to define who we are and what we want as individuals and as a nation. While it is necessary for Singaporeans, particularly our youth, to be plugged to the world, there is concern that this is done at the expense of our cultural heritage and good traditions that are critical in defining who we are as Singaporeans and as a nation. This is because without strong anchoring in our cultural heritage, we may not achieve the objective of 'being global, stay rooted' to Singapore.</p>
<p>3. Political Impact With globalisation, economies could no longer be isolated but to join forces to form regional economic groupings, and promote regional prosperity. As such, Singapore has increased and improved dialogue and cooperation with other countries as countries found issues of common interest, and more areas of interdependence e.g. exploring trade relations with Saudi Arabia, India and China. This is possible as an increasing number of countries embrace free-market principles, remove barriers to international trade, investment, travel and communication, and integrate themselves into what is perceived as a single global economy.</p>	<p>3. Political Impact While a single global economy means more economic opportunity for Singapore, it also brings along challenges to our political leaders to continue to maintain and to promote higher standards of governance and build bilateral ties with other nations. This may be a challenge, as our political leaders would need to exercise greater degree of diplomacy, requiring us to align our economic policies with the political agendas of other nations as we continue to put into place sound macro-economic policies and build strong regulatory structures to make her economy more resilient.</p>

Positive Impact of Globalisation:	Negative Impact of Globalisation:
<p>5. Physical / Technological Impact Singapore's city landscape has been radically transformed. The Central Business District (financial centres) has replaced sleepy shophouses and godowns. They form a microcosm of the world in the midst of Singapore.</p> <p>A major part of world trade is now conducted through trans-national corporate channels; vast volumes of money move across national borders through global financial markets via electronic communication systems.</p> <p>E-mail and the Internet enable almost instantaneous communication among Singaporeans and others regardless of geographical distance. It is as easy, maybe easier, to chat with a person across an ocean, than a neighbour a few doors away. Young people around the world who are hooked on the Internet are so much alike – the way they dress and talk, and the music and fast food that they enjoy.</p>	

Remarks (tie-breaker):

On the whole, globalisation has done Singapore a lot of good. The trend towards globalisation is a tide that we cannot fight. But we can shape it, and we can prepare ourselves for it, so that we enjoy more of the benefits, and less of its evils.

It will not be possible for countries or a people to progress if they isolate themselves, if they separate their community or their economy from the world. Large countries like China and India found this out to their cost as they closed themselves off and tried to develop on their own. They are now opening up.

Singapore as a global city

2. Is Singapore really a global city?

- European-based lifestyle magazine, Monocle, which targets an international, well-travelled readership, ranked Singapore 22nd on its list of top 25 liveable cities in 2008.

Agree

- Diverse human capital. Highly skilled people-both locally born-and-bred Singaporeans and foreign talents-help facilitate the process of creativity and innovation.
- Dynamic and entrepreneurial economy.
 - Besides focusing on environmental and water technologies and interactive media, Singapore has built Biopolis, a medical park to bring research and development talents from around the world and to help fuel the synergy required to keep the city-state in step with global scientific developments.
 - Prime Minister Lim Hsien Loong has also personally led the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC) to spearhead the national drive to promote knowledge creation and innovation. In 2008, the RIEC would build on Singapore's laurels and boost research into cancer and natural disasters, forming National University of Singapore's Cancer Research Centre of Excellence and Nanyang Technological University's Earth Observatory of Singapore respectively.
- First-rate amenities. Singapore is well-connected to the world through Changi Airport which reportedly serves 80 airlines. She is also one of the most wired cities, with her comprehensive mobile and communications network. These factors ensure that Singapore is the ideal place for MICE (Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions and Exhibitions), having successfully organised the IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings in 2006 and the Formula One Grand Prix in 2008.
 - The Singapore cityscape will become even more vibrant and exciting as she gears up to host major world events such as the inaugural Youth Olympic Games 2010. Singapore is also confirmed as the first South East Asian stopover city in the Volvo Ocean Race 2008-9.
- First-rate government with political tie-ups and collaborations with numerous countries. It has 14 bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements with countries such as the USA and Japan and groupings like ASEAN.
- Blossoming cultural and artistic landscape.
 - Arts activities have more than tripled over the last decade. Aside from the annual Singapore Arts Festival, the Republic has organised its own mega arts events in the last five years, such as the visual arts-focused Singapore Biennale and the Singapore Season, a showcase of local works to the world.
- Singapore has produced people and brands that are beginning to command global recognition.
 - Two local biotechnology companies, HealthStats and CyGenics, have been awarded the prestigious Technology Pioneer status by the Swiss-based World Economic Forum (WEF).

- Ong Keng Sen in theatre, Tan Swee Hian in visual art, Stephanie Sun in popular music, Singapore Airlines, Breadtalk, Old Chang Kee, Charles & Keith, Creative Technology, Raffles Hotel and Banyan Tree are other names that have contributed to the globalisation of Singapore.

Areas of Improvement

- In order for ideas to flourish freely, Singapore must look into allowing more political outspokenness.
 - Today, critics increasingly focus on the use of defamation lawsuits by PAP government leaders to silence opposition parties or public dissenters who they consider to be questioning their positions of authority in the media.
 - Similarly, the Complaints Choir had to change its public performances to invitation-only private shows in 2008 after the Media Development Authority of Singapore said foreign members could not perform and complain about Singapore.

3. Should a small country like Singapore have big dreams? Discuss.

Big dreams: Aspirations that are ambitious/ almost unimaginable by the standards of a small country

Agree

- In the age of globalization, geographical size no longer stymies dreams. Resources can be gathered worldwide → Import of foreign talents.
 - In 2007, Scientists from various Agency for Science, Technology and Research institutes developed a test kit that can tell if a person or animal has contracted the H5N1 form of the avian flu virus in less than half an hour.
 - Singapore is carving a niche for herself in clean energy initiatives. These include her R and D drive to create Newater, efforts to groom local and foreign talent, and construction of an industry ecosystem by attracting established clean energy firms to set up shops in the Republic.
 - Norway's Renewable Energy Cooperation will build the world's largest solar manufacturing facility in Singapore.
 - NUS is also working with China's Beijing University and Britain's Oxford University to develop purification systems that use sunlight and microbes.
 - In 2008, 6000 delegates from around the world flew to Singapore to participate in the Singapore International Water Week and World Cities Summit and pointed to Singapore's development experiences on water recycling and waste management as the way forward.
- The use of diplomacy to help Singapore achieve goals.
 - Singapore is part of ASEAN. Working together as a bloc allows member countries to leverage on collaborative strength. For instance, ASEAN energy ministers will join their peers from Japan, South Korea and China to set up an oil stockpiling group known as ASEAN +3.
 - The European Union (EU) Centre, a partnership between the European Commission, NUS and NTU, was launched in Singapore in 2008 and serves as a focal point for research partnerships and cultural and educational exchanges with

all 27 members of the bloc. Through this centre, both universities can invite top-notch academics, public policy experts and politicians from Europe to give lectures, as well as source collaborative research opportunities with European universities. It is the only centre in ASEAN.

- Dynamic and entrepreneurial environment.

Balance

- How Singapore might be more successful in achieving certain big dreams -- Engineered success in areas like biomedical sciences, world-class airport vs. the arts and sports
- Brain-drain as a result of not being able to fulfill big dreams
- Need to do away with Singaporeans' imbued mentality to walk down the safe path (result of paternalistic and pragmatic government). Singaporeans are generally adverse to risk-taking.

Others: How accurate is the use of the description, 'Uniquely Singapore'?
 How far is Singapore truly "a city of possibilities"?

Singapore Governance

4. "Good governance is the only reason why Singapore has succeeded." Discuss.

Good governance	
Economic vitality Diversification of economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub for international events • Spearheading new innovations e.g. bird flu test kit, Newater • FTAs • Eco-cities • Biomedical science, environmental engineering, digital media • Singapore Airshow, Formula One, Integrated Resorts 	Not the only reason <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brilliance of human capital. Singaporeans are deemed rather competent due to our skill sets and knowledge. • Regional stability in ASEAN instills confidence in investors to set up companies in Singapore
Social stability and cohesion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict laws ensure low crime rates. All 17 murders that happened in Singapore in 2006 are solved. • Racist bloggers promptly charged and punished. • Addressed the issue of self-radicalised terrorists sensitively by promoting more inter-faith dialogues and interactions and building up trust among different racial groups 	Singapore cannot be considered to be successful in various areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our bad habits of littering and leaving our trays behind have received national press attention on numerous occasions. The Straits Times even took initiative to organise a campaign to encourage apathetic Singaporeans to put their trays back!
Political recognition	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past decade, countries as far apart as China, Russia and the Gulf states have explicitly praised the Singapore model as the one they wish to follow. In 2008, 6000 delegates from around the world flew to Singapore to participate in the Singapore International Water Week and World Cities Summit and pointed to Singapore's development experiences on urban planning, easing traffic congestion, water recycling and waste management as the way forward. 	
---	--

Others: 'To govern is to manage change'. How successfully has your society responded to this challenge?
 Evaluate the impact of recent world events on Singapore's future.
 Has the government of your country got its priorities right both in terms of its present policies and future plans?
 Too much focus is given to the lack of resources and not enough to its solutions. Is this an accurate assessment of the situation in your country?

Sovereignty or Collaboration

5. How far should your country act unilaterally, without getting international support for its actions?

- Unilateral:** done by, or having effect only by one side. In this context, it refers to an action which is carried out by one country, without consultation with other countries.
- International support:** this can range from joint declarations (which are not legally binding) to treaties (which are binding), and encompass a range of actions from disaster relief to military action.

Should take unilateral action	On the other hand...
<p>When the issue at hand is a matter of urgency, and speed is of the essence, unilateral action should be taken.</p> <p>For example, in response to the SARS crisis, the Singapore government instituted strict border controls, by installing thermal screeners and physical checks on visitor arrivals at ports and immigration checkpoints. There is no luxury of time to wait for other countries to come up with an agreed set of standards for health</p>	<p>However, in the case of Singapore, which is in close proximity to Malaysia and Indonesia, the decisions taken by the government in one country can have ramifications in the neighbouring country.</p> <p>For example, the affirmative action policy taken by Malaysia, in which bumiputra or Malay Malaysians are granted certain economic concessions, has the side-effect of driving dissatisfied citizens to emigrate to Singapore. Since the two countries are in</p>

<p>screening, because if the epidemic had spread, the consequences would be disastrous.</p> <p>This same rationale of the need for speed to forestall disastrous consequences, also applies to the hypothetical example, of the cutting of Singapore's water supply by Malaysia. If such a situation were to occur, it would not make sense for the country to sit still, and to appeal for international intervention, because it takes time for U.N. resolutions to be passed. By the time international support has been garnered, the country would already be on its knees, and its investment in defence training and weapons would have been fruitless. Therefore, in such a situation, which nobody hopes will actually happen, Singapore will need to take unilateral military action against the aggressor.</p>	<p>close physical proximity, the emigrants do not feel that they are cutting off ties with their family members left behind. There is also another flow of emigrants from Singapore into Malaysia – Singapore citizens who feel that they can achieve a better standard of living in a country which does not practice meritocracy. In a sense, the two countries' policies are intertwined, and while each of them have full authority to implement policies which affect their citizens, it is undeniable that their policies also have a ripple effect on the citizens of the other country.</p> <p>An example of this ripple effect is Singapore's approval of the construction of two integrated resorts which contain casinos, targeted at foreign tourists. It is anticipated that there will be an inflow of rich Malaysians and Indonesians (as well as citizens of other countries) into the country. While this is a boost to the Singapore economy, the frequent visits by the wealthy citizens of neighbouring countries will add further fuel to the accusations that Singapore is a centre where corrupt millionaires launder and hide their ill-gotten gains.</p>
<p>When the issue at hand is clearly a matter which lies within the authority of the state, there is no reason why any international support needs to be gathered.</p> <p>For example, educational policies do not require international approval. Our strict laws including capital punishment</p>	
<p>Unilateral action allows the country to set a good example for the rest of the world. Since different countries have different levels of preparedness to implement tough but beneficial policies, governments which are willing to bite the bullet and be at the forefront of innovative practices that take care of the interests of its citizens should do so.</p> <p>Example: For example, Singapore did not wait for the rest of the ASEAN countries to agree on liberalizing their controls on trade. Instead, it went ahead and acted unilaterally in</p>	

signing Free Trade Agreements with the United States, Australia, Jordan, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand among other countries.	
--	--

**6. ‘For a small country, cooperation and not competition is the best way to survive.’
How true is this of Singapore?**

Case for cooperation

- We are too small a nation, land or manpower wise, and if we choose to go heads on and not cooperate, we may be sidelined due to our negligible size
- As a nation, being highly competitive may be seen as being aggressive by other nations, and with regards to our size, that is highly inadvisable
- Cooperation will also able us to have better say and decision making power on a larger scale – ASEAN. ASEAN energy ministers will join their peers from Japan, South Korea and China to set up an oil stockpiling group known as ASEAN +3.
- Internally, cooperation will enable us to maximize whatever limited manpower we have, rather than pit the people against each other

Case for competition

- Without competition, there will be no checking of standards and the people may become complacent and take things for granted –Malaysia’s bumiputra policy
- Internationally, even though joint cooperative efforts are everywhere, it is still every nation for itself.

The Singapore Spirit

**7. ‘Aim for the top.’ To what extent is this good advice in your society?
“First come, first served.” How far has this served your country’s needs?**

- First come, first served: emphasis on fairness/order (literal) or merit (figurative)
- Needs: What is necessary to the country, e.g. economic competitiveness/ what the candidate think are needed in the country e.g. a more equal society

Should aim to be first and be in the top
It has brought about the mentality of urgency and competitiveness among the citizens in Singapore. This sense of urgency to compete augments our strength as a competitive workforce and enabled us to lead the world in terms of finance, education and research and development.
The system of meritocracy mirrors this idea of first come first served where equal opportunity for all will also mean that whoever grabs the opportunity first will reap the benefits first. This mentality has underpinned the fairness/justice in the way the society functions successfully thus far. Many Members of Parliaments are examples of how one may rise from the poverty cycle in Singapore by working hard and proving his capabilities.
Negative consequences
It causes many Singaporeans to overlook development/fulfilment in other areas of life. Singaporeans’ emphasis on furthering their career aspirations is so ingrained that the government

had to intervene and implement a Five Day Workweek in 2004.
It has given rise to the 'kiasu' mentality that Singaporeans are so known to possess. It also means being ungracious which does not bode well for Singapore in its bid to achieve a developed nation status.
We have become an individualistic society where there is a lack of community spirit among the people. This may exacerbate elitism in Singapore where status consciousness and a lack of sympathy for the weak is already a social problem. Currently, young Singaporeans who wish to enter university may volunteer at charitable organisations but their intentions are not altruistic as they will disappear after obtaining a favourable testimonial from these organisations.
Aiming only for the top has prevented many Singapore students from enjoying the process of learning in their exclusive focus on the end product.

8. To what extent has your society pursued economic progress at the expense of morality today?

Yes
<p>1. <u>Willingness to push ethical boundaries in science for economic progress.</u></p> <p>-Today's Singapore is seen as a life-science hub and stem-cell research is one of its forward looking core areas of growth.</p> <p>-The economic argument is that Singapore can only progress if it moves towards growth areas in the life-sciences which have potential for big money.</p> <p>-There is then the worry that scientists may come to Singapore to take advantage of huge growth areas in the life-sciences and in the process ignore ethical considerations of the sanctity of life and the importance of disclosure. This can be seen in the Shorvon case where this doctor fraudulently used medical data from research subjects without disclosing this to the subjects.</p> <p>-Thus in our rush to make money out of economic progress in the form of stem-cell research, we may have ignored ethical considerations on the sanctity of life and taking care of patient's rights.</p>
<p>2. <u>In our push to create an economically vibrant global city, we may have created and intensified moral problems.</u></p> <p>-Today's Singapore is moving towards creating a vibrant global city with particular focus on entertainment and lifestyle infrastructure such as the setting up of the Integrated Resorts.</p> <p>-This has created the fear that we may be moving too fast into the entertainment industry without taking into considerations the increase in vice and addiction and other such moral issues that these industries naturally attract.</p> <p>-There is a possibility that with the Integrated Resorts, there might be an encouragement towards a gambling culture which will then affect homes and families.</p> <p>-There is already a concern that in our push to make Singapore attractive to tourist's dollars, we have created a city of pubs and encouraged a drinking culture even among young people. The old morality mindset that drinking excessively is immoral and detrimental to the health of the</p>

family as well as the individual may now disappear in our drive to make Singapore a more cosmopolitan and global city so as to attract tourists and talent.
<p>3. <u>In our push for economic development, we have forgotten our moral responsibility for the have-nots in our society.</u></p> <p>-Many policies in Singapore seem specially geared towards opening the economy and creating wealth.</p> <p>-Less care or concern is displayed in creating policies to help those who are affected by the widening income gap.</p> <p>-In today's Singapore there are pockets of workers who do not seem to be benefiting from the fruits of globalization and economic development.</p> <p>-Thus there are low-skilled workers in economically depressed areas who languish for want of a helping hand such as re-training and matching their skills to availability of jobs. In our push for economic progress, we seem to have forgotten our moral obligation to look after this group of people.</p> <p>-This is because of the modern mindset that people must somehow progress on their own and those who are left behind are lazy and thus do not deserve our moral obligation to help.</p>
No
<p>1. <u>To deal with the negative effects of economic progress, there is government aid and re-training to fulfil moral obligations to help the have-nots in society.</u></p> <p>-Singapore has introduced a whole slew of policies to help the have-nots in our society.</p> <p>-This includes re-training grants and grassroots help to match jobs to skills.</p> <p>-Housing grants are also given to help Singaporeans who cannot afford their own homes due to the rapid increase in home prices.</p> <p>-When society is willing to accept their moral obligation to the have-nots and agree to increased revenues and more help, it shows that we have not sacrificed morality for economic progress.</p>
<p>2. <u>There are medical and legal measures in place to deal with the immorality that comes with economic progress.</u></p> <p>-Singaporeans understand their moral obligation in trying to limit the spread of vice and addiction that comes with the building of huge casinos.</p> <p>-Legislation will be in place to prevent entry of registered gambling addicts into casinos at the IR.</p> <p>-Medical help is available to help alcohol addicts kick their habit.</p> <p>-Therefore the issue of morality is taken seriously by the community and measures are in place to tackle problems arising from economic development.</p>

Others: How far does your country encourage risk-taking?

Science versus Arts

9. Singapore needs scientists more than artists. Do you agree?

It is more important to educate the young Singaporean in science than the arts. How true is this?

- What is associated with the scientist – making scientific progress, innovations in the scientific fields of study, typically associated with fuelling economic progress and is a niche area that Singapore is investing heavily in.
- What is associated with the artist – creativity, appreciation of the finer things in life, culture, imbuing a nation with soul and life

Critical thinking bonuses

- ☐ Good candidates should be able to point out
 - while Singapore probably needs the scientist for economic survivability and their breakthroughs to put Singapore on the map, they need the artist for creating a vibrant culture and home base for all - World-class scientists look for a place that has a vibrant culture and arts scene as well
 - in the early days Singapore needed to focus primarily on economic survival and sustainability but today, we need to also position ourselves as a truly developed world-class city.
 - world-class scientists and artists actually have more in common than different – spirit of innovation, setting high standards, desiring to perfect their craft, passion and determination to succeed – all of which are qualities that Singapore look to.

Others: Is there a real need to cultivate a love for the arts in your society?
To what extent should the Arts be funded by the state? Refer specifically to your society.
Should Singapore invest only in art which has economic value?

Racial harmony

10. How far is it true that the law in Singapore encourages social cohesion?

"The Law"	
1. Housing policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ encourage young families to stay within proximity of their extended family○ race quotas in housing estates. This policy allocates housing according to the racial composition of the population○ The Group Representation Constituencies (GRC) ensure minority representation in politics and multi-racial political parties
2. Civil/criminal laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ strict laws discourage antisocial acts and behaviours like drug-taking○ monitoring/regulating expression of opinions over race and religion. The Sedition Act (in

<p>place since 1948 amended in 1972 and 1985). Metes out punishment e.g., to any act, speech, publication that has the tendency to produce ill will/enmity between races Offences under the act carry a maximum jail term of 3 years and a \$5,000 fine</p> <p>3. Tax laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ as a means of lessening income inequality between the rich and poor <p>4. Education policies, Formal curriculum - Incorporation of National Education lessons on racial harmony. Informal curriculum: encouragement of inter-racial mixing through co-curricular activities, community service projects emphasizing racial unity, Racial Harmony day, Heritage tours, Emphasis on unity in diversity in the celebration of ethnic festivals. Others: Establishment of ethnic self-help groups MENDAKI, SINDA & CDAC, meritocracy, compulsory national service</p>	<p>How far is it true that they encourage social cohesion</p> <p>True</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These laws encourage social interaction, communication and understanding between various social groups ▪ They shape the Singaporean's social experience and do encourage social cohesion ▪ These may appear superficial but they do make a difference, OR ▪ We might be better off with these in place, even if we think their effect on social cohesion is marginal <p>Not true</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They only give the appearance of encouraging social cohesion ▪ They encourage tolerance and acceptance, not necessarily cohesion ▪ It takes more than laws; authentic experiences as a community, like a shared history or culture, are what would genuinely encourage social cohesion, and these can only develop with time
--	--

Attitudes towards Gayhood

- Acknowledgement from the government that the Civil Service now admits gay men into employment and access to classified information such as in the Ministry of Defence shows that the government is keen to signal non-discrimination against the gay community. This is necessary so as to enhance Singapore's public image as a cosmopolitan, tolerant, and liberal society in order to attract foreign talent.
- Gay unions are a fundamental challenge to an Asian society's belief in the unique contribution of each sex in a marriage and family and could result in unstable families and other related social problems. heterosexual marriages are still very much the norm in our society and the government's interest in promoting traditional marriages is evident in the presence of the Social Development Unit and efforts such as the Romancing Singapore Campaign.
- Section 377A of the Penal Code-the law that criminalises gay sex was not repealed in 2007. The government's decision to retain it shows that it is still reluctant to openly sanction homosexual unions despite its presence in society.
- Although Singaporeans become increasingly cosmopolitan and homosexuality will be less abhorrent to an increasing segment of the population, the government is likely to shy from open endorsement as it has always advocated slow change to cater to the silent, but conservative majority. Since the government has only recently lessened disapproval of the gay community, it is unlikely to take the drastic step of legalizing same sex unions so quickly.

Meritocracy

11. Is meritocracy in Singapore fair and effective?

Fair and Effective	Unfair and Ineffective
<p>Individuals are given opportunities on the basis of their ability (equality of opportunity) as opposed to a class system.</p> <p>Policies in Singapore pertaining to education etc emphasizes this belief. Unlike Ivy League American Universities, there is no practice of "legacy preferences"--affirmative action for children of alumni.</p> <p>Singapore education system is deemed highly successful and is imitated by other countries. It also attracts large numbers of foreign students to join the system.</p> <p>E.g. National level examinations pits all Singapore students against each other and marked blind. High regard for 'O' Levels and 'A' Levels by foreign universities emphasize the success of the meritocratic system.</p>	<p>Exam meritocracy Vs. Talent meritocracy. "Success" of an individual is still largely based on academic achievements. However, this is risky as it negates the importance paid to various other criteria. E.g: A diligent student who is exam smart might not always be the best candidate for the job. A changing global world requires other skills such as innovation, tenacity and quick wits.</p>

Singapore's economic prosperity and racial harmony are testament to the policy of meritocracy. This is unlike Malaysia which practices a Bumiputra Policy as there is incentive to succeed in a meritocracy.	Emphasis on academic qualifications in the formal school system shuts out slower learners who might need more time to adjust and adapt relegating them to less prestigious schools if they do not achieve certain grades. Examples include policies of streaming by the end of primary school, lower secondary and upper secondary.
Meritocracy does not merely refer to academic achievements but sports and arts etc as well. If an individual is the best in his chosen field, he will still succeed. Ability driven system hence is fair. Emphasis on grooming the bright and talented regardless of sex, race and age.	Better schools are more likely to produce better results and attract better batch of students who typically are from better family backgrounds. This favours those who are already privileged and puts obstacles in the way of those who are not.
	Meritocracy has led to an aggressively competitive society with a widening inequality of income and wealth. Unequal distribution of opportunities signals a failure in the system. E.g. Growing Income inequality and falling social mobility of certain ethnic groups (Malays have not progressed as rapidly as the Chinese)

Others: Is meritocracy responsible for the widening social inequalities in Singapore?

The aged

12. Are the elderly an asset or a liability in your country?
 ‘The elderly are a stumbling block to progress.’ To what extent is this true of your society?
 “Grey is the new gold.” [*the aged being regarded as a valuable asset / vital resource to society*]. To what extent is this true of the aged in Singapore?

Opening	In the context of the Asia–Pacific region, Singapore represents a unique case of a rapidly ageing and geographically small nation, .Between now and 2030, Singapore will witness a most profound age shift in its history. In 2005, one in 12 residents was 65 years or older. In 2030, one in five residents will be 65 years or older. This undeniably brings challenges. But it also provides opportunities to transform Singapore’s socio-economic infrastructure to help Singaporeans enjoy healthy and happy lives in their golden years. With sound government policies, <u>the elderly are hardly considered a burden here.</u>
Stand (Underline)	
TS	The economic power of the elderly has not gone unnoticed by businesses.
Elab/Eg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “silver industry” is recognised as an area of great business potential. Our government is urging global businesses to use Singapore as a “living lab to innovate and experiment” before launching new businesses to corner the “silver industry” in Asia. 4 broad areas where products and services will be in heavy demand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial services, when retirement years will be prolonged and estate planning must be done ○ Health care, from health screenings to geriatric services and chronic disease management ○ Programmes to promote active ageing, such as wellness programmes ○ Provision of elderly-friendly features in shops, homes and offices; and barrier-free public facilities.
PC	Thus, the aged are vital financial players in contemporary Singapore.
TS	Moreover, with labour resource being in a state of flux in most developed societies, the elderly, being more rooted, provide reassuring level of participation in Singapore’s labour market.
Elab/Eg.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ageing revolution will also change the face of our labour market. In a society where there will be a shortage of young workers, it will become increasingly critical for employers to attract and retain mature, experienced workers to maintain a competitive advantage in an evolving economy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Singapore government sets in place policies to encourage their continued contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retaining the elderly in the workforce longer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delayed retirement age ○ Requiring employers to offer re-employment to older employees up to age 65 ○ Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) scheme to provide older, low-wage workers with higher take-home pay and more CPF

	<p>contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incentives to encourage hiring of older workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ADVANTAGE! scheme which provides funding to companies when they recruit, retain and re-employ mature workers - More companies are tapping on the mature workforce to meet their manpower needs. In fact, some companies particularly highlighted their preference for older workers because of their positive and mature work attitudes, sense of loyalty and are a reliable source of manpower
PC	Therefore, the elderly provide crucial services in the workforce.
TS	The elderly are also increasingly valued for the important social role they play.
Elab/Eg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society extolling the contributions of senior citizens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior citizens are highly regarded for their roles in volunteerism, and as grandparents, some of whom help their working children take care of their children. Take for instance the Reading programme under the National Library Board (NLB) in which senior volunteers conduct storytelling sessions for children in the libraries. 1. Many programmes have been launched by multiple agencies to promote positive attitudes towards seniors. One example is the annual Senior Citizens Award which seeks to honour model grandparents and active senior citizens in the community and provide role models for other seniors to emulate. In addition, a taskforce to promote grandparenting and intergenerational bonding was set up in 2002 and intergenerational programmes were co-funded by Family Matters! Singapore and MCYS. 2. A person's priorities change through the different stages of life. Older individuals whose children have grown up and are independent may have less family commitments. They will want to have opportunities for new pursuits and to lead an active lifestyle into old age. Many older persons will want to continue to work and contribute to society. An active lifestyle would bring seniors into contact with their peers and the community, and enable them to form social networks. Seniors with strong social networks are healthier and tend to live longer. These social networks also enable them to provide support to one another. Strong social bonds are also one of the foundations for a cohesive and resilient society.
PC	As active participants in the community, the elderly provide support and facilitate cohesion.

TWISTER

TS	However, a major gripe about the ageing population is its impact on healthcare services
Elab/Eg.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As the population ages, demand for healthcare services will increase. In 2006, persons aged 65 and above accounted for more than 40% of the total hospitalization days in our public sector hospitals, despite being 8.5% of our resident population. The average length of stay for this age group is also longer, at 7 days, compared to 4 days for persons aged 15 to 64 years. (Singapore Budget 2008 Report).

	2. However, seniors are increasingly leading more active lifestyles. Sports participation rate of seniors has increased from 33% in 2001 to 37% in 2005. This is likely to have a positive impact on their health.
PC	Thus, whilst one must acknowledge that old age brings with it a set of ailments, their increasing involvement in physical activities would ameliorate the situation.
TS	Moreover, the varied range of infrastructural changes required to support an ageing population is not welcomed in any society.
Elab/Eg.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With increasing numbers of seniors living alone, there is a need to build an environment with sufficient and easily-accessible facilities and services for seniors. 2. Under the Main Upgrading Project (MUP), the Housing Development Board (HDB) upgrades sold flats with elder-friendly features such as grabbars in the bathroom / toilet and non-slip floor tiles. At the precinct level, barrier-free features like ramps leading to blocks and to outdoor recreational facilities are provided to facilitate mobility of seniors. Similarly, HDB rental flats are upgraded under the Lift Improvement and Facilities Enhancement (LIFE) and the Rental Flat Upgrading Projects to provide a better living environment for elderly rental tenants. To provide a customised housing option for seniors, HDB built Studio Apartments (SA) which are integrated within existing public housing estates.
PC	The cost of such changes to the physical landscape of the country is invariably high, and not one like to drop in the near future.
TS	Some Singaporeans regard the elderly as a burden.
Elab/Eg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior citizens are not accorded the respect and status befitting a senior member of society either from his family or the community at large <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cases of elderly facing neglect or abuse still significant ○ More cases of the elderly taking their own lives, one major reason being the lack of support from loved ones
Summary of main points & reinforcement of stand	In conclusion, the statistics show that the future seniors will be qualitatively different and will have different needs and aspirations. Despite taxing public funds to support lifestyle and healthcare needs, the majority will be healthy and ambulant, and will engage in social and economic initiatives. They represent a major ability pool who can make significant contributions to their families, communities, society and to the economy.

Youths

- Young people—possibly those aged between 12 and 29

13. Is the future for the youths of Singapore exciting and inspiring?

‘Young people today have never had it so good.’ Is this true of youth in your country?

‘You [Singapore teenagers] are a generation that is especially blessed.’ (Lee Kuan Yew). How far would you agree with the Minister Mentor’s sentiments?

Agree

- Diverse educational opportunities– more areas of specialisation
 - Singapore’s fourth university will be opened in 2011, with a focus in the humanities
 - Tertiary institutions, including the polytechnics, are offering more tie-ups, internships, with top-notch universities and companies overseas
 - NUS High School, Singapore Sports School, School Of The Arts (SOTA)
- Diverse career options due to Singapore’s foray into new emerging industries
 - Opportunities in tourism and hospitality industry with Singapore’s ambition to be a MICE hub
 - Biomedical science, environmental and water technologies, and digital media
 - Taking the lead in sustainable development in South East Asia
 - The government is increasing its funding in the Arts, to create a more vibrant city. 9 home-grown film-makers received \$250, 000 each from the Singapore Film Commission in 2008 to make movies. Successful homegrown artists e.g. Royston Tan, Eric Khoo (film directors) and Ashley Hisham (designer) also help inspire the young to pursue their dreams.
- Singapore gaining more international presence
 - More Singapore brands going overseas and getting recognised as a brand name. Hence, youths will be encouraged to venture out and develop their entrepreneurial spirit.
 - Singaporeans highly sought after as managers in Asian and Middle-Eastern countries due to their technical and professional expertise as well as their bilingual competencies. The world is their oyster.

Disagree

- Singapore being one of the most liveable cities in the world today has attracted talents all over the world to settle here. Out of 4.84 million people currently residing in Singapore, 35 per cent of them are foreign-born. Our young people are thus not shielded from the competition posed by foreigners
- Ageing population, declining birth rates – results in greater economic burden on the young
- Our educational system’s focus on holistic and all-rounded education places more stress on our young as they are expected to be competent in all areas. This is especially so when average students find it increasingly difficult to secure a university education these days.

14. Young people in Singapore today lack independence. Is this a fair comment?

- Financial, emotional and academic independence.
- Depending on others in some areas does not mean that a person lacks independence in other areas.

Agree	Disagree
Smaller nuclear families leading to greater pampering of children by their parents and grandparents;	Students are learning to be more of independent thinkers and learners (due to the change in emphasis in the education system)
Absence of war or crises that could enable the young people to cultivate independence;	Those who have lived abroad for a period of time may have shown greater ability to meet their personal needs in all aspects
High standard of living in the country that does not necessitate the young people being resourceful and creative.	It is reasonable for certain groups of young people (eg teenage students) to be dependent on others (eg their parents) in some ways but not in others

15. “The heart cannot be taught where its home is.” How effective are your government’s efforts in creating a sense of rootedness among Singaporean youths? ‘There is no place I would rather be’. Is this the feeling of young people in your country?

Effective efforts	Ineffective efforts
The government initiatives in this area have ensured greater engagement of youth in issues pertaining to the nation. E.g. YouThink page in the national newspaper and youth forums and dialogues with political leaders. The high participation rate testifies to the growing sense of ownership and belonging that the youths have in Singapore.	While considerable efforts have been made to inculcate the sense of belonging among Singaporean youths, these approaches tend to top-down and do not really address the real needs of the young.
While many of these initiatives might originate from the government, there are now more youth-initiated community activities such as the Community Involvement Program ventures which manifest the youths’ sense of social responsibility and affinity to community and country.	Despite the government’s effort, there will still be other places that will appear more attractive to the some Singaporeans.

Others: ‘The youth of today have no high ideals or great dreams; just selfish desires and vain ambitions.’ How far is this true of young people in your country?
‘Today’s youths are conditioned to be apathetic.’ How accurate is this description of your society?
Do the young people in Singapore have what it takes to ensure that Singapore remains successful in the future?

Parenting

16. “Parenting has become a nightmare in modern society.” How far is this true in Singapore?

Are Singaporean parents paying too much attention to their children today?

Children—young children, teenagers, young adults

Students need to **weigh** the joy and challenges that come with the task of parenting, today as compared to yesterday (i.e. at least around 10 to 20 years ago)

Nightmare	
The expectations and demands of being a good parent have soared with the progress of our society.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in the cost of living and rise in inflation• Intensification in the degree of competition in the society• Parents are compelled to send their children for tuition and enrichment classes even when they are in kindergarten to ensure that they nurture them to be all-rounded individuals.• Many parents have to do proper family planning, especially in terms of finances, so that they can afford to provide for their children’s needs (and wants) until they become full-fledged adults, especially in terms of their education	
The 24/7 work culture suggests that most parents have to juggle a myriad of roles and do not have the time or energy to enjoy the parenting process.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The lack of quality time spent with children is a factor that contributes to the rise in juvenile delinquency in which impressionable teenagers shoplift, vandalise and engage in gang fights.• Increasingly, young offenders come from middle-income families due to the lack of parental supervision.• Some parents have to bring their children to court as the latter are deemed as Beyond Parental Control.	
It is now more demanding to care for a child well because of the individualistic culture that he or she is growing up in	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The dominant culture in today’s society, especially that promoted by the mass media, is rather youth-centric. Youths are perceived to be the ‘future of the nation’ and are constantly given special attention.• Hence, children today tend to be more self-centred because they are not required to do otherwise. Many of them may be materialistic and demand that their parents provide the best for them in a myriad of luxuries ranging from branded goods to holidays to enrichment courses.• It is indeed more difficult to handle the task of nurturing a child well because parents find it more difficult to discipline their child as they have to constantly prove their love.	

Increasing numbers of young adults who go bankrupt before 30 as they overspend on their credit cards.
Not a nightmare
More support available to address parenting concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quite a number of workshops have been organised by family service centres and Ministry of the Community, Youth and Sports to share useful parenting tips, especially those on communicating well with one's children • Today, more workplaces are becoming more family-friendly as they adopt pro-family employment policies such as shorter working hours and the convenient access to reliable childcare services near the workplace.
The government has taken the lead to implement various child-friendly programmes, ranging for maternity leave, baby bonuses, tax breaks to even funding for In-Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) treatment
From National Day Rally Speech 2008 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 months maternity leave has been extended to 16 weeks. • \$4, 000 cash gift for the first two children. The cash gift remains at \$6,000 for the third and fourth kid. • Tax relief for \$4,000 for children under 16.

The less privileged

17. Are we doing too little to help the needy in Singapore?

AGREE
<p>The Government has conscientiously increased efforts to help the needy in Singapore</p> <p>From Singapore Budget 2008</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>Public Assistance (PA) Scheme</i> applies to needy Singaporeans who are unable to work and have no other means of support. <p>In addition they are given a PA card which makes them eligible for free healthcare and many other subsidies, as well as extensive community support. The monthly PA rate for a single-person household has been raised to \$330 to better meet their basic needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The <i>ComCare Endowment Fund</i> has also been topped up by \$200 million this year to \$800 million to help the needy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to obtain jobs, – look after their children's needs and – integrate into the community.

<p>More public campaigns, advertisements and documentaries to help raise awareness of the needs of the needy in the society</p> <p>→ The Straits Times Pocket Money Fund – “Got Heart”; The Children’s Cancer Society, special documentaries featuring how some needy elderly people are scrimping to get by the days so that more can be done to help them)</p>
<p>Voluntary Welfare Organisations are also working hand in hand with the National Council of Social Service to help cater to the needs of these people</p> <p>→ e.g Autism Early Intervention Programme, Mendaki Student Service Centre, Fei Yue Family Service Centre, Lions Befrienders, Metta Day Activity Centre for the Intellectually Disabled, Metta Day Rehabilitation Centre for the Elderly</p> <p>→ each of these organisations have their own programme to help their target group (those in need, distress, at-risk, disadvantaged or disabled) in areas such as their financial, social, education, health and emotional well-being.</p>
<p>Schools and community groups have also been doing their part to help the needy in Singapore</p> <p>→ Community Involvement Project (CIP) was launched to inculcate the spirit of active citizenship in students and make them realise how volunteering to help others can deeply enrich their lives</p> <p>→ The National Youth Council also play a key role in promoting Service Learning to help cultivate this positive attitude towards helping those in need</p>
<p>DISAGREE</p>
<p>Though the Government has increased its efforts to help the needy in Singapore, these are still insufficient</p> <p>→ some groups of ‘the needy’ get left out, especially those who are not in such dire circumstances that they fall into the ‘needy’ category but who are struggling to get by everyday (e.g. families with mildly autistic children or those with slower intellectual capabilities, elderly folks who are merely passing their time in an unfulfilling way as they have no goals or work to keep them meaningfully occupied)</p> <p>→ there is a need to create more opportunities for those who can help themselves</p>
<p>General apathy of Singaporeans</p> <p>→ many Singaporeans tend to equate help as giving money, which may not always help to address the concern or their needs</p> <p>→ a real challenge to find and sustain a reliable and committed pool of volunteers to help out such that ‘the needy’ do not feel ‘discarded’ by one group then ‘re-covered’ by another before they are ‘discarded’ again. Need to break free from this negative cycle as this seems to widen the gap than to bridge it.</p>

Others: To what extent should your country protect the disadvantaged?

Foreign talents

18. 'The brain drain is a universal problem as many nations scout for talent.' Examine the measures your country has taken to deal with this problem.

<p><i>Opener</i></p> <p><i>Elab</i></p> <p><i>Lead in to stand (underline)</i></p>	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>'The grass is greener on the other side'. This is a common saying but often uttered by people seeking greener pastures elsewhere. Indeed, human capital flight or the brain drain phenomenon, which refers to an emigration of trained and talented individuals, is a global problem accelerated by globalisation. Singapore is no stranger to this concern. While it is true that some of the West's best scientific minds have come here to actively contribute their expertise in sectors such as the biomedical industry, it is also a fact that we lose about 4 to 5 percent of the top 30 percent of the population every year. <u>Singapore has chosen to tackle this problem through a two-pronged approach.</u></p> <p>While luring top foreign talent to set up homes here, it has also enhanced the living environment and opportunities available to local talent. While there are merits to this approach, it is not a foolproof solution to the problem as there is no 'one-size fits all' approach.</p>
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p><i>Elab / Example</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation of measure/PC</i></p>	<p><u>Body Paragraph 1</u></p> <p>One obvious measure that has been successfully adopted is the attempt to woo foreign talent.</p> <p>As talented locals are enticed by overseas opportunities, Singapore ensures its competitive edge by adopting an open immigration policy with a strong belief in attracting "foreign talent" to drive the country's economic growth. This has contributed to a consistent growth in the number of non-residents in Singapore since 2003, rising from 748 million to about 1,005 million in 2007. Singapore welcomes highly-skilled workers. It has company grant schemes to reduce the costs of hiring foreign skilled laborers and has relaxed its policies to allow foreign skilled workers to enter and stay. One of the more recent changes includes the Personalised Employment Pass (PEP) scheme where a skilled foreign worker is not tied to any employer and can remain in Singapore for up to six months between jobs to evaluate new employment opportunities. Such flexible arrangements are aimed at encouraging talented individuals to set up homes here.</p> <p>However, although Singapore has been largely successful in attracting top Indians and Chinese, it was reported that many Chinese use Singapore as a stepping stone to move on to the United States later on. Thus, besides focusing its energy on attracting top foreign talent, Singapore has also actively stepped up its efforts to retain local talent. The perennial concern that foreigners may not be loyal to the nation has also necessitated the focus on nurturing local talent.</p>
<p><i>Topic Sentence</i></p> <p><i>Elab /</i></p>	<p><u>Body Paragraph 2</u></p> <p>Providing talented individuals with ample opportunities is another key strategy adopted by Singapore to keep local talent from leaving for greener pastures. Talented individuals who lack opportunities at home are drawn by the change of lifestyle and environment at a foreign land and they set up homes there.</p>

<i>Example</i>	<p>Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew estimates that about 1,000 of our top people give up their citizenship every year owing to such circumstances. He revealed that many Singaporeans go for their degree courses abroad such as the United States and stay on there to find jobs. Thus, Singapore has quickened its response to this situation and in February this year, the Nanyang Technological University unveiled its prestigious Nanyang President's Graduate Scholarships targeted at outstanding graduates with First Class Honours degrees. Although foreigners may also apply for this award, the priority will be given to Singaporean graduates, which clearly demonstrates the government's keenness in attracting top local talent. But, it opens up opportunities to both local and foreign talent as it realises that this two-pronged approach will sustain Singapore's competitiveness in the foreseeable future.</p>
<i>Evaluation/ PC</i>	<p>However, it may be argued that this policy, while being effective to some extent, is not foolproof. People go overseas for the exposure and experience. Some may find it an enriching experience to learn about new cultures and lifestyles. Overseas institutions also offer attractive scholarships to international students. Therefore, although this measure is certainly a step in the right direction to keep the best brains here, not all talented individuals would want to pursue local postgraduate degrees.</p>
<i>Topic Sentence</i> <i>Elab / Example</i>	<p><u>Body Paragraph 3</u></p> <p>Enhancing the living environment is yet another way to cajole talented individuals to remain in Singapore.</p> <p>This approach serves the needs of both local and foreign talent. Singapore has unveiled numerous measures to improve the peoples' standard of living. The extension of the rail network to make the city more connected, the plans to upgrade residential areas such as Jurong, Paya Lebar, Kallang and Punggol and the increase in leisure and recreational areas such as the plans to build the Integrated resorts are just some examples of enhancing the living environment. For instance, the plans to upgrade the Jurong area include a slew of nature-themed and edu-tainment attractions. It was also revealed that the area is slated to become the largest commercial hub outside the city centre. All these plans are aimed at providing a 'total' experience for locals and by enhancing convenience by bringing their workplaces closer to where they live, Singapore hopes to ensure that both locals and foreign talent will find it irresistible.</p>
<i>Evaluation/ PC</i>	<p>Enhancing the living environment has its limits and a higher quality of life results in a higher cost of living. Unpopular policies like the ERP and the rather restrictive political climate are drawbacks too. Unless Singapore addresses these grouses, the changes made to the exterior environment may not matter a great deal for talented individuals who disdain living in a stifling environment.</p>
<i>Topic Sentence</i> <i>Elab /</i>	<p><u>Body Paragraph 4</u></p> <p>Another way to address the brain drain problem is to keep the links with overseas Singaporeans, especially those who have not given up their Singapore citizenship.</p>

<i>Example</i>	This is done in the hope that these individuals would return to their homeland after some time to contribute to the economy here. For instance, the Home Affairs Minister, Mr Wong Kan Seng, recently revealed that the new Contact Singapore can play a useful role to inform overseas Singaporeans about the exciting career opportunities back home, especially in the new growth industries. It can help link up interested overseas Singaporeans with companies back home through internships and job recruitment exercises. For example, the new Contact Singapore's dedicated job website will be linked to the Overseas Singaporean Portal. This will enhance Singapore's overall outreach and enable it to keep overseas Singaporeans informed of the latest developments in industry, the professions and employment opportunities in Singapore and the region.
<i>Evaluation/PC</i>	However, keeping the links with overseas Singaporeans entails a two-way process where overseas Singaporeans should want to be connected as well. If they do not have any interest or stake in Singapore, it will be difficult to achieve this. Moreover, if they had stayed in a foreign land for some time, they may find it difficult to give up what they have painstakingly built up over the years.
<i>Topic Sentence</i>	<u>Body Paragraph 5</u> Engaging Singaporeans at all levels through grassroots activities, feedback mechanisms and National education programmes is yet another way to address the problem of brain drain.
<i>Elab / Example</i>	The government believes that talented Singaporeans leave because they do not feel involved in national issues. The lack of engagement and the stifling political climate are some reasons cited by some Singaporeans who settle overseas. To tackle these issues, the government invests heavily in grassroots programmes to actively engage Singaporeans in issues affecting their immediate neighbourhood. Efforts have also been stepped up in recent years to enhance feedback mechanisms especially in government agencies. The 'no wrong door policy' and the establishment of various public consultation channels, such as the Land Transport Authority's public consultation programmes, serve to underscore the importance of engaging the public actively by giving them an avenue to air their concerns. Furthermore, the National Education programme is another platform through which the government builds national cohesion and as put by the then Minister of Education last year, one of the reasons as to why National Education is even more important today relates to the intense competition for talented Singaporeans, who have become the foreign talent of choice in Asia.
<i>Evaluation/PC</i>	Though these various measures have been adopted, sceptics argue that the top-down approach in getting Singaporeans to become more nationalistic will only work to a limited extent as the existing policies curtailing freedom of speech and other freedoms are still drawbacks that make this place less palatable as opposed to other Western societies.
<i>Topic</i>	<u>Body Paragraph 6</u> The government also believes that rewarding talent is another strategy to

<i>Sentence</i>	attract and retain individuals.
<i>Elab / Example</i>	Monetary incentives are vital in keeping motivation high. One clear example of rewarding talented individuals is in the political sphere where it was reported last year that the salaries of Singapore's Ministers will be raised by more than 60 percent by the end of this year. The ruling party has maintained that top officials in the cabinet and civil service must be paid well to attract the best talent. Even the infamous T.T Durai, who has been accused of fraudulent practices, was paid a hefty \$600,000 annually.
<i>Evaluation/ PC</i>	Although this measure of using monetary incentives as a carrot to entice talented individuals to work here may work, this is but an extrinsic motivational tactic that may fail if individuals are not intrinsically motivated. A high pay can also be easily matched by top overseas firms. This suggests that this measure cannot be a long term plan to attract and retain talent. Nevertheless, a good pay guarantees a high standard of living and several talented foreigners are attracted by this prospect.
	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Singapore's comprehensive two-pronged approach in dealing with the brain drain phenomenon is laudable as its plans are aimed at sustaining the nation's competitive edge in the face of stiff competition. In the years to come, the competition for top talent will only get tougher but if Singapore manages the issue with great sensitivity and farsightedness, it should be able to survive in the global war for talent.</p>

Others: To what extent is foreign talent in Singapore favoured at the expense of the locals?
Do foreigners bring more problems than benefits to your country?

- "Winning the hearts and minds of people is the best way to defeat terrorism." Is this true of your society today?
- 'Singaporeans have forgotten how to wait.' How far is this a cause for concern?
- 'Censorship is a hindrance to education'. Discuss with reference to your own society.
- Is there far too much attention given to paper qualifications in your society?
- Is pursuing sports as a career option futile in Singapore?
- Are children forced to grow up too quickly in your country?
- 'All civilised societies should abolish the death penalty.' Discuss this view with reference to your country.
- Capital punishment is a violation of human rights. Do you think it should be abolished in your country?
- To what extent is there freedom of speech in the mass media in Singapore?
- There is little value in being bilingual in your country today. Discuss.
- Do you agree that Singapore has no culture of its own?
- "Singapore has not done enough to foster entrepreneurship." How far do you agree with this statement?
- 'The media have made morality almost a thing of the past.' How true is this in your country?