



CATHOLIC JUNIOR COLLEGE
 JC2 Preliminary Examination 2021
 General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
 Higher 1

CANDIDATE
 NAME

CLASS

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

8807/02

23 August 2021
 1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

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

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

For Examiner's Use	
SAQs	/17
Summary	/8
AQ	/10
Content Total	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50
Grade	

This document consists of 7 printed pages (including this cover page)

Passage 1. *Jamil Zaki presents his ideas on the value of empathy in modern life.*

- 1 Just 30,000 years ago, humans were unremarkable, medium-sized mammals—not particularly strong or fast, lacking sharp teeth, claws, and wings. We were not even the only smart ape; five other large-brained species shared the planet with us. But humanity did have something that set us apart: each other. More than any other species, sapiens worked together cooperatively. This helped us become super-organisms who quickly took over the planet. 5
- 2 Our collaborative flair stems from empathy: the capacity to share, understand, and care about what others feel. Individuals who feel empathy in abundance experience greater happiness and less stress and make friends more easily. These benefits ripple outwards—patients of empathic doctors are more satisfied with their care, spouses of empathic individuals are more satisfied in their marriages, children of empathic parents are better able to manage their emotions, and employees of empathic managers suffer less from stress-related illness. Empathy strengthens our social fabric, encouraging generosity toward strangers, tolerance for people who look or think differently from the way we do, and commitment to environmental sustainability. 10
- 3 Yet for all its benefits, empathy often goes missing just when we need it most. To understand why, think back to our prehistoric past—the environment in which empathy evolved. Humans lived in tiny bands of hunter-gatherers, so that anyone you encountered was likely familiar, similar, and maybe even related to you. You could hold each other accountable for your actions. 15
- 4 Even now, empathy comes most naturally when those rules are in place. We care up close, when we can see suffering or joy on someone’s face, and we are most inclined to help people who look or think like us. 20
- 5 But these days, such rules that encourage empathy are being broken. More than ever, humans are urban, isolated, and anonymous to each other. We meet irregularly, often in online spaces that privilege outrage and leave cruelty unpunished. We are increasingly tribal, and sometimes view outsiders not as human beings but as symbols of ideas and groups we fear and hate. And when we learn about tragedy, it is often as an abstraction. We might hear about thousands of people affected by a disaster or civil war, but think of them only as faceless statistics, without any way to access their emotions. This is not fertile soil for empathy, and by some measures empathy has shriveled. 25
- 6 This might be a one-way trip. The world we have built is poorly calibrated with the caring instincts that allowed us to build it in the first place. As long as these trends of isolation and exclusivity continue, maybe we are doomed to become madder and meaner over the years. This would be bad news for empathy. It means that when we hit the limits of our care, there is nothing we can do to overcome them and become more empathic. And if the modern world has sapped our collective empathy, there is nothing we can do to recover that, either. 30
- 7 We actively turn empathy up or down, and make choices about empathy all the time. Will you cross the street to avoid a homeless person, or pay attention to their pain? Will you dismiss someone who disagrees with you, or cultivate curiosity about why they feel the way they do? Over time, empathic choices add up—building empathic habits and, eventually, empathic people. 35

Adapted from The Greater Good Magazine

Passage 2. Richard Fisher argues on the surprising downsides of empathy.

- 1 As the pandemic pushes us into isolation, culture wars rage, and disinhibited cruelty brews on social media, it feels a little controversial to suggest that empathy has downsides. Yet, in recent years, researchers have found that misplaced empathy can be bad for everyone, leading to exhaustion and apathy, and preventing us from helping the very people we need to. Worse still, people's empathetic tendencies can even be harnessed to manipulate them into aggression and cruelty. So, if not empathy, what should we aim to feel instead? 5
- 2 Detractors may take issue with how empathy is defined as the act of stepping into someone's mind to experience their feelings. Even in this narrow sense, empathy might seem like an obvious force for good. Common sense tells us that experiencing someone else's pain will motivate us to care about and help that person. 10
- 3 However, it leads to some tricky moral dilemmas. People are much more likely to open their hearts – or wallets – when there is a visible beneficiary whose pain could be alleviated. The charity that campaigns with a single story of a named, suffering child may win more donations compared with the charity that deploys statistics describing 1,000 anonymous children.
- 4 There is nothing wrong with using personal stories to raise awareness of a worthy cause, of course, but the identifiable victim effect does nonetheless siphon billions of dollars away from where it could do more good for a greater number of people. If your goal was to help as many children as possible, a dollar spent on deworming programmes in the developing world, for instance, would go significantly further than a dollar donated in the developed world for an expensive medical procedure. It can be even harder to attract attention to problems that have no identifiable victim at all, such as future generations affected by climate change, who do not exist yet. 15
- 5 Extending empathy to abstract strangers is a particular challenge for the human mind. Originally described by the Stoics thousands of years ago, the concept of 'oikeiōsis' describes how our empathy and affinity for others declines by proximity to our lives. Imagine a series of rings: in the bullseye there's the self, the innermost ring represents one's family, the next ring one's friends, the next one's neighbours, then one's tribe or community, then one's country, and so on. The problem is when bad actors hijack these "circles of sympathy" to try and sway our behaviours and beliefs. Our natural empathy for those closer and more similar to us can be harnessed to provoke antipathy towards those who are not. 25
- 6 Politicians and activists on both sides of the spectrum often play to the idea of 'us and them', deploying empathy and identifiable victims to make a political case. It underpins some social media campaigns to 'cancel' people, allows immigrants to be demonised, and can even stoke hatred and violence against apparent outsiders. Lynchings in the US were sometimes motivated by stories of victims affected by the crimes of black men. 30
- 7 While shared happiness certainly is a very pleasant state, the sharing of suffering can at times be difficult. At its worst, people feel 'empathic distress', which can become a barrier to action. Such distress leads to apathy, withdrawal and feelings of helplessness, and can even be bad for your health. During the pandemic, this sense of empathy fatigue has become of particular concern among care-givers, such as those working in mental health support or hospital doctors and nurses. 35
- 8 So, where does that leave us? Surely feeling no empathy at all is worse? Experts are not suggesting that empathy should be actively discouraged. There are times when stepping into somebody's shoes is a necessary first step towards positive action, care and help for others. 40

Adapted from BBC Future: Can empathy be bad for you?



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

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

From Passage 1

- 1 In paragraph 1, according to the author, what set humanity apart from the "other large-brained species"? Use your own words as far as possible.

.....

.....

..... [1]

- 2 In line 29, what is the author implying about the loss of empathy by his use of the phrase 'one-way trip'?

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 3 In paragraph 7, what does the author mean when he claims that 'we actively turn empathy up or down' (line 36)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

.....

.....

..... [2]

From Passage 2

5 Explain the author's use of the word 'very' in line 4.

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

6 In lines 11-12, the author claims that 'People are much more likely to open their hearts – or wallets – when there is a visible beneficiary whose pain could be alleviated'. How does the remainder of the paragraph illustrate his assertion? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

7 In paragraph 4, how optimistic is the author about raising awareness for a worthy cause without an identifiable victim?

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

8 What is the author implying by the use of the word 'hijack' (line 28) in paragraph 5?

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

2021 CJC JC2 Prelim Examination Paper 2
SUGGESTED ANSWER SCHEME

From Passage 1

1. In paragraph 1, according to the author, what set humanity apart from the 'other large-brained species'? Use your own words as far as possible. [1m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
But humanity did have something that set us apart: each other. More than any other species, sapiens worked together cooperatively	Humanity was set apart from "other large-brained species" in the way we have compatriots/fellow men to collaborate with on tasks / function as a team, to a greater extent than other creatures / animals. BOD: better Lift: teamwork (lift of 'worked')

2. In line 29, what is the author implying about the loss of empathy by his use of the phrase 'one-way trip'? [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
This might be a one-way trip . The world we have built is poorly calibrated with the caring instincts that allowed us to build it in the first place. [b2] As long as these trends of isolation and exclusivity continue , maybe we are doomed to become madder and meaner over the years. This would be bad news for empathy... And [b3] if the modern world has sapped our collective empathy, there is nothing we can do to recover that, either.	Literal meaning: No way of returning / coming back to the original point Inferred meaning: (a) The author is implying that the loss of empathy is irreversible/ beyond salvaging / there is no action we can take to return to caring [1] AND Context [1]: needs to convey why we have reached the point of no return (b1) as the environment we have created is not suitable for it to thrive. OR Accept b2 and b3 as specific factors (b2) if we still live / persist in living in solitude and leave others out/behind. (b3) In today's context/society our shared empathy has been depleted.

3. In paragraph 7, what does the author mean when he claims that "we actively turn empathy up or down" (line 36)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
We actively turn empathy up or down, and make choices about empathy <u>all the time</u> . Will you cross the street to avoid a homeless person, or pay attention to their pain? Will you dismiss someone who disagrees with you, or cultivate curiosity about why they feel the way they do?	<p>The writer means that</p> <p>(a) we adjust / select / opt for the level of empathy we commit / apply to a circumstance [1] Clarification: unbold empathy, it is NOT a lift Lift: choice(s), choose</p> <p>Note: (a) needs to show deliberate choice / agency, and not merely reactive / reflexive action.</p> <p>(b) this always happens / happens constantly / consistently. [1]</p> <p>Note: (b) is about frequency DNA: often, mostly Lift: all the time</p>

4. Summary

Using material from paragraphs 2-5 only, summarise what the author has to say about the value of empathy and how aspects of modern life are bringing about change to how empathetic we are. Write your summary in no more than 120 words, not counting the opening words which are printed below. Use your own words as far as possible. [8]

Empathy brings many benefits to individuals, such as ...

POINTS	FROM THE PASSAGE	PARAPHRASE
Value of empathy		
Paragraph 2:		
A	Our COLLABORATIVE FLAIR	Our talent for cooperation/communitarianism DNA: ability (no change from before; take note that flair refers to a special or instinctive ability)
B	[for the self] experience GREATER HAPPINESS	People feel increased joy / contentment LIFT: MORE, GREATER
C	and LESS STRESS	reduced / diminished anxiety / worry LIFT: MORE, GREATER
D	and MAKE FRIENDS MORE EASILY	it takes reduced effort / not as much effort / helps to build relationships with companions Accept: sociable LIFT: MORE, GREATER, LESS
E1	[in the immediate context] These benefits ripple outwards	These advantages also extend to others DNA: affects others
E2	(infer from examples) patient-doctor; child-parent; wife-husband; employee-employer	who are part of our familial and professional relationships .

		Note: DNA specific examples of managing emotions and stress-related illnesses
F	[in the wider context] STRENGTHENS our social fabric	At the societal level: Bolsters/reinforces our connections with one another Accept: makes/creates closely-knit communities Accept: society (slightly different from 'social' which refers to connections and relationships) LIFT: MORE, GREATER
G1	ENCOURAGING GENEROSITY	Promotes a willingness to share / a spirit of giving / kindness
G2	toward strangers	towards those we do not know DNA: others Only award G2 if G1 is attempted
H	TOLERANCE for people WHO LOOK [different]	Acceptance of those who are unlike us in terms of appearance Accept: outliers in terms of appearance Accept: endurance
I	or THINK DIFFERENTLY than we do	or have dissimilar / opposing beliefs / opinions / ideas Accept: outliers in terms of ideas
J	and COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	and [also promotes] dedication / pledge to ecological resilience Accept: pledge to preserve nature BOD: pledge to save/protect nature
How aspects of modern life are bringing about change to how empathetic we are		
Paragraph 3:		
Points selected from Paragraph 3 are repeated below		
Paragraph 4:		
Points selected from Paragraph 4 are repeated below		
Paragraph 5		
K	More than ever , humans are URBAN , cf humans lived in tiny bands of hunter-gatherers (Para 3)	There is an unprecedented number of (big) city dwellers Lift: increasingly
L	ISOLATED ,	who are alone / live apart from everyone else / live separately DNA: quarantine
M	And ANONYMOUS to each other cf so that anyone you encountered was likely familiar (Para 3)	are unknown / strangers to one another
N	We MEET IRREGULARLY ,	we gather infrequently / see (one another) occasionally

		DNA: periodically
O	often in ONLINE SPACES	on the internet / cyberworld / virtual realm
P	that PRIVILEGE OUTRAGE	which encourages / breeds anger / resentment / indignation / fury
Q	and LEAVE CRUELTY UNPUNISHED <i>cf</i> could hold each other accountable for your actions (Para 3)	and those who are barbaric / ruthless / unkind get away scot-free / face no penalties
R	We are INCREASINGLY TRIBAL <i>cf</i> we are most inclined to help [those we lived with] who look or think like us/are similar to, and [were] related to [us] (Paras 3, 4)	Insularity is on the rise / There is growing / greater defensiveness of those akin to us / those we deem to be our kin Lift: more
S	and sometimes VIEW OUTSIDERS not as human beings	Strangers are not considered people (to us) We perceive people unlike us as foreign entities / devoid of identity / personality Accept: demonise those we deviate fro Accept any paraphrase for 'outsiders' that captures the idea that they are seen as a group that is alien to oneself e.g. seen as 'the other'
T1	but as SYMBOLS OF IDEAS and GROUPS	Instead, they represent concepts / principles / values and factions Accept: parties
T2	we FEAR and HATE	we are afraid / scared of and scorn / loathe / detest Accept: threats (paraphrase of 'fear'), disdain (for 'hate') DNA: dislike (intensity pitched too low)
U	when we learn about tragedy , it is often as an abstraction	when we find out about catastrophes / horrific events / mishaps / calamities , it is usually in theory / philosophical
V1	We might hear about thousands of people affected by a disaster or civil war, but think of them only as faceless statistics <i>cf</i> we care up close, when we can see suffering or joy on someone's face (Para 4)	and consider them merely as meaningless/nameless data/numbers Accept: death tolls are simply numbers
V2	without any way to access their emotions	with no means / approach / method to understand / comprehend their feelings

MARK DISTRIBUTION

0 Points	1 pt	2 pts	3-4 pts	5-6 pts	7-8 pts	9-10 pts	11-12 pts	13+ pts
0 marks	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m	8m

From Passage 2

5. Explain the author's use of the word 'very' in line 4. [1m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
<p>Yet, in recent years, researchers have found that misplaced empathy can be bad for everyone, leading to exhaustion and apathy, and preventing us from helping the very people we need to.</p>	<p>(a) It is precisely / really / truly Accept: refer to a/the particular group; place emphasis on/highlight the group/people Principle: accept any answer that captures the idea of a specific group (for 'precisely') DNA: to emphasise</p> <p>(b) those who require us to come to their aid or assistance / to show them empathy who are ignored.</p> <p>OR combined (a) + (b) We are unable to assist those who require it more/ the most Rationale: 'the very people' stand out because they have marked/significant need</p>

6. In lines 11-12, the author claims that 'People are much more likely to open their hearts – or wallets – when there is a visible beneficiary whose pain could be alleviated'. How does the remainder of the paragraph illustrate his assertion? Use your own words as far as possible. [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
<p>The charity that campaigns with a single story of a named, suffering child may win more donations compared with the charity that deploys statistics describing 1,000 anonymous children</p>	<p>According to the author</p> <p>(a) greater amounts of money can be gained from advocacy [1] Lift: more donations BOD: support</p> <p>(b) for a discernible/identifiable child in agony as opposed to citing numbers/data for the same cause. [1]</p> <p>For the full mark for point b, students must show</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. comparison between 2. the known/named child and (clarification: focus must be on the child being recognisable as an individual, cf data/numbers where children are indistinguishable) 3. the children represented only by data ('numbers/data' suffice) <p>Note for 2: DNA 'relate to' (changed the meaning of 'named child') BOD: child who is given context (for 'named child')</p>

	<p>Note for 3: 'faceless children' will not suffice as it does not capture the idea of statistics which is a key part of the example that is used as an illustration Accept: 'individual', 'person' (even if not specifically a child)</p>
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7. In paragraph 4, how optimistic is the author about raising awareness for a worthy cause without an identifiable victim? [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
<p>There's nothing wrong with using personal stories to raise awareness of a worthy cause, of course, but the identifiable victim effect does nonetheless siphon billions of dollars away from where it could do more good for a greater number of people.</p> <p>...</p> <p>It can be even harder to attract attention to problems that have no identifiable victim at all, such as future generations affected by climate change, who do not exist yet.</p>	<p>(a) He is not very optimistic / pessimistic / has no hope / is in despair / cynical / not positive as [ATTITUDE] [1]</p> <p>BOD: doubtful, skeptical (does not have exactly the same meaning as 'optimism' but does convey that the author is not fully convinced/has reservations DNA: any answer that is phrased in terms of optimism (e.g. 'optimistic to a small extent') DNA: disapproving (does not answer the question)</p> <p>(b): funding / donations are channelled / funnelled / diverted to towards beneficiaries whose suffering is more visible / well-known OR away from lesser-known groups whose plight is ignored / groups that are unknown / the unborn Acceptable lift: identifiable victim effect (concept/jargon/technical term)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(c) because of how much more difficult / challenging it will be to spotlight the predicament of unknown groups OR lesser-known groups. [1]</p> <p>Award (a) + (b) OR (a) + (c)</p>

8. What is the author implying by the use of the word 'hijack' (line 28) in paragraph 5? [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
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<p>Imagine a series of rings: in the bullseye there's the self, the innermost ring represents one's family, the next ring one's friends, the next one's neighbours, then one's tribe or community, then one's country, and so on. The problem is when bad actors hijack</p>	<p>(a) He is implying that people with ill-intentions manipulate / distort for their own nefarious advantage / agenda [1]</p> <p>Accept: abuse, exploit (fully captures the meaning of 'hijack')</p>
<p>these 'circles of sympathy' to try and sway our behaviours and beliefs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Our natural empathy for those closer and more similar to us can be harnessed to provoke antipathy towards those who are not.</p>	<p>(b) the idea of extended empathy/levels of affinity/different tiers of relationships in order to influence / change how we act and our views/principles [1]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(c) the empathy we innately feel for those we have greater intimacy with/nearer proximity to and are less different from us can be employed to stir up hostility / ill-will towards those we otherize. [1]</p>

9. Using paragraph 6, identify three examples of how politicians and activists play to the idea of 'us and them'. Use your own words as far as possible. [3m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
<p>It underpins some social media campaigns to 'cancel' people</p>	<p>(a) It gives rise to / causes / is responsible for online efforts / movements to deplatform / reject / boycott / rebuke / disparage / revile others</p> <p>Acceptable lift: campaign DNA: criticise (Script F4; too vague; no change from standardisation) Principle for what to accept: any paraphrase of 'cancel culture' that captures destruction (e.g. of status, reputation, clout) and/or removal (e.g. of power, voice)</p>
<p>allows immigrants to be demonised, and can</p>	<p>(b) Vilify / portray foreigners / newcomers / new settlers as the enemy / wicked / in a bad light</p>
<p>even stoke hatred and violence against apparent outsiders</p>	<p>(c) Fuel / encourage / provoke resentment / loathing / abhorrence and aggression against those who seem not to belong to the group</p> <p>Accept: volatile behaviour (for 'violence') BOD: discrimination ('hatred' [of apparent outsiders]) DNA: anger DNA: dislike (level of intensity pitched too low, cf summary point T2 i.e. dislike also not accepted as a paraphrase for 'hate')</p>

<p>Lynchings in the US were sometimes motivated by stories of victims affected by the crimes of black men</p>	<p>(d) Unjust attacks were mounted on people of colour / those wrongly accused of wrongdoing, prompted by narratives of people who were harmed by them</p> <p>Accept: lift of 'black men'; do not need a specific reference to who is unjustly attacked Accept even if 'unjust' is implied e.g. 'attacked <u>merely</u> on the basis of hearsay'</p> <p>Any 3 points for 3m</p>
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10. Explain the author's use of the word 'Surely' in line 42. [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answer
<p>So, where does that leave us? Surely feeling no empathy at all is worse? Experts are not suggesting that empathy should be actively discouraged</p>	<p>Meaning of 'surely'</p> <p>(a) One would expect that / indubitably / it is without a doubt / definitely the case / think it is obvious that [1m]</p> <p>Context</p> <p>(b) not experiencing any empathy is a less desirable prospect than experiencing its downsides. [1m]</p>

11. Jamil Zaki presents his ideas on the value of empathy and how aspects of modern life are bringing about change to how empathetic we are, whereas Richard Fisher raises the surprising downsides of empathy. How far do you agree with the views expressed in the two passages? Relate your arguments to your own experience and that of your society. [10]

R1: Identify the claims made by the authors (Zaki and Fisher)

R2: State your stand in relation to the views of either authors.

R3: Apply the author's arguments to the context of your own experience and your society's.

Passage 1	Agree/Disagree	Application to you and your society
<p>Our collaborative flair stems from empathy: the capacity to share, understand, and care about what others feel.</p>	<p>Agree: Empathy is key in how societies approach and resolve crisis today. It is a vital factor in connecting diverse groups, and to remove feelings of isolation that minority groups or the victims of a crisis may be experiencing. In the spirit of inclusivity, societies today need to work together to find solutions that cater to the needs of all layers of society. This is vital in tackling the realities and</p>	<p>Record donations and rise in volunteerism on Giving.sg due to COVID-19. Contributions of various necessities, emotional support, caring for elderly Singaporeans who live alone and providing tuition for students from vulnerable families during HBL "provide a strong momentum for building a caring,</p>

	<p>demands of modern life that have had an impact on how we relate to one another.</p> <p>Disagree: Living in a competitive world, people in modern societies are often caught up with the realities of modern life and might not instinctively display or show empathy, generosity and genuine care to others. This make society individualistic and entitled - me-first attitude evident in how they are unwilling to share resources.</p>	<p>cohesive and confident Singapore." (MCCY website, 2021)</p> <p>Platforms to encourage and nurture a culture of sharing and empathy. Eg; Collaborate for Good facilitates partnerships between organisations in order to create social impact. Provides Singaporeans from all walks of life to be samaritans and ambassadors of doing good acts.</p> <p>Disagree: In the earlier reponses of Singaporeans to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, hoarding of face masks, hand sanitisers and disinfectants indicate extreme lack of empathy for others who may need these items more. Such self-preservation and self-centred behaviours are an outcome of a lack of empathy.</p>
<p>More than ever, humans are urban, isolated, and anonymous to each other.</p>	<p>Agree: Heavy reliance on technology, coupled with a quick pace of life leaves the unprecedented number of city dwellers very much engrossed in the hustle and bustle of their daily lives and lacking the capacity or the time to exercise empathy for their fellow man.</p> <p>Disagree: Urban settings have actually bolstered our societal empathy as the interconnectedness of these environments mean that we are confronted daily with cries for help and opportunities to show understanding for our fellow man.</p>	<p>Agree: It is not uncommon to observe representatives of charitable causes being snubbed by passers-by at MRT/bus interchanges, even on weekends when people are off work and you would expect them to be able to spare a bit more time. Many have been conditioned by their busy lives to remain within their own bubbles and not to bother even about genuine requests for help.</p> <p>Disagree: Hawkers were badly affected by the lack of foot traffic amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, where many worked from home and did not eat out as much. However, during this period, a number of concerned citizens, many of whom were regulars or people who live nearby, took notice and leveraged their online networks to garner support for these stalls. There was even an Instagram account @wheretodapao dedicated to this cause, expressing solidarity with the</p>

<p>Empathy strengthens our social fabric, encouraging generosity toward strangers, tolerance for people who look or think differently from the way we do, and commitment to environmental sustainability</p>	<p>Agree: Empathy is other-centric and makes people look beyond themselves and their present situation. This has become increasingly prominent in these few years, with stronger focus on social issues of discrimination and inequalities, breaking down social stigmas about mental wellness and people with disabilities / special needs, and more attention on embracing diversity and celebrating differences, and looking ahead to the future.</p> <p>Disagree: Empathy may prompt us to be more sensitive to other people's perspectives and situations, but it may not strengthen the connections between different groups of people if it is not translated into action. After understanding and being able to feel for what another person is going through, there needs to be a change in mindset or in our behaviour towards them for there to be any meaningful improvement in our social connections or in society. Empathy may not always strengthen our social fabric if people wish to protect their own interests even if they understand that others would receive the short end of the stick.</p>	<p>difficulty of tiding through such an uncertain and trying period.</p> <p>Agree: The SG society which has always prided itself on meritocracy in our aspirations and achievements has begun to pay more attention to unmerited stigmas and structural inequalities in our society which may disadvantage certain social groups, with more open conversations and investigation into their circumstances. Some companies have even taken concrete action to be more empathetic and compassionate. E.g. CNA Insider episodes on single-parent families, social perceptions of different education streams, mental conditions; Teo You Yenn's book <i>This Is What Inequality Looks Like</i>; Yellow Ribbon Project; rising number of social initiatives for foreign workers; Food for Thought / Eighteen Chefs (https://thesmartlocal.com/read/social-enterprise-cafes/)</p> <p>Disagree: Despite the many steps SG has taken to become more globalised and open to new ideas, our conservative values and some traditional mindsets of the family still remain firmly entrenched. The LGBTQ+ community has become more vocal and gained more support from many people over the years. While some have become more accepting of them, there remain many (even those who are in the same demographic) who still do not agree with their way of life, even if they may understand/feel their sense of injustice, because of their own cultural / religious affiliations. Such deep-seated mindsets/ beliefs may not easily be changed by empathy.</p>
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Passage 2	Agree/Disagree	Application to you and your society
<p>There is nothing wrong with using personal stories to raise awareness of a worthy cause, of course, but the identifiable victim effect does</p>	<p>Agree: The identifiable victim effect does hold sway over Singaporeans in the sense that some have the tendency to donate reactively and unthinkingly.</p>	<p>E.g (agreement). The Commissioner of Charities launched the Safer Giving campaign to remind Singaporeans to 'Ask, Check, Give'</p>

<p>nonetheless siphon billions of dollars away from where it could do more good for a greater number of people.</p>	<p>Disagree: However, it is overly simplistic to take the view that Singaporeans would let their feelings of empathy dictate their contributions to worthy causes. If it were so, donations to any cause would be short-lived, since feelings evoked by personal stories of hardship can quickly wane and one can easily migrate to the next worthy cause that receives the spotlight. Contrary to this, it is probably the Singaporean's sense of duty, discerned through structured civic awareness programmes, that engenders longer-term, more sustainable contributions. Hence, any reactive, empathetic response can be tempered by Singaporeans' dutiful, purpose-driven mindset and avert the downsides of empathy Fisher is concerned about.</p>	<p>when approached by fund-raisers. This was after a March 2017 survey that revealed that about 4 in 10 donors do not conduct checks or research prior to giving, for reasons such as their trust in charitable appeals. A correspondingly low number of respondents (6% of those who had donated the year prior) would make enquiries or seek to find out more about the cause.</p> <p>E.g. (disagreement): On giving.sg, a national platform that houses over 600 registered non-profits in Singapore, causes involving elderly folk do consistently well, which is unsurprising given how the ageing population is seen as a whole-of-society issue, and how a premium is placed on respect for our elders.</p>
<p>Our natural empathy for those closer and more similar to us can be harnessed to provoke antipathy towards those who are not.</p>	<p>Agree: While it is debatable to consider the natural empathy we have for those entirely similar to us as truly 'empathy', given how such feelings are at their core indulgent and selfish, this is not an uncommon dynamic to see playing out in Singapore society. Our highly stratified society across several faultlines (class, sexuality, nationality etc.) has indeed seen many instances where our natural empathy for people similar to us have been exploited to create animosity between different groups.</p> <p>Disagree: Instead of viewing empathy as the reason behind why lines are drawn, resulting in an 'us' and a 'them', it is perhaps wiser to mobilise the deeper resources of empathy to discover the deeper commonalities we have with one another, in spite of our obvious differences. Hence, instead of provoking antipathy, tapping on our empathetic sensibilities should lead Singaporeans</p>	<p>The recent 13.5 hour debate on the Singapore-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (Ceca) surfaced the underlying tension that Singaporeans had against Indian professionals. In raising questions about the impact of this policy on Singaporean jobs, the Progress Singapore Party mobilised the natural empathy Singaporeans had for their fellow Singaporeans to stoke racist and xenophobic sentiments against Indian immigrants in Singapore. In the words of Minister Ong Ye Kung, this was a "seductively simplistic argument that workers facing challenges at their workplaces can identify with, and has stirred up a lot of emotions".</p> <p>Singaporeans are a lot who have extended much help to those who are different from them. This was observed during the first circuit breaker of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this crisis made it easy for Singaporeans to feel empathy only for those who were similar to them, many Singaporeans went beyond just looking at the needs of people similar</p>

	<p>towards compassion and deeper understanding for the very people who are different from us.</p>	<p>to them, offering financial support to uplift the vulnerable in society. Giving.sg, a portal for donations and volunteer opportunities in Singapore had a record \$20.4 million donations in April 2020, with most of the donations directed to COVID-19 related campaigns, in aid of migrant workers, healthcare staff and other communities affected by the pandemic. Although there were many groups in this mix, Singaporeans saw them not as different from them but as similar to them because they are also experiencing the same pandemic.</p>
<p>the sharing of suffering can at times be difficult. At its worst, people feel 'empathetic distress', which can become a barrier to action. Such distress leads to apathy, withdrawal and feelings of helplessness, and can even be bad for your health.</p>	<p>Agree Empathetic distress is very real and that is the kind of burnout that caregivers are liable to suffer when it is a near 24/7 kind of condition, more so if it is a role assumed by a family member.</p> <p>Disagree We cannot deny the real danger of empathetic distress to oneself, we need to be willing to admit the burden is not all ours alone, even if it is in a professional or familial capacity.</p>	<p>In an ageing society like ours, more people will have to take care of their parents with conditions like dementia. Currently 10% of seniors aged 65 and above suffered from the condition. The numbers will gradually increase and we can foresee the level of empathetic distress will rise as a greater number of their children will take care of their parents' needs at home. It is very likely that most dementia patients are going to be sited in a home environment rather than a prolonged stay in care facilities.</p> <p>The government recognises the danger of empathetic distress, and has embarked on plans, like caregivers respite services, to expand community care (day centres and community hospitals) in order to share the burden of care primarily placed on the family (for now). The provision of respite care for the family caregivers is a means to avoid the domino effect that widespread empathetic distress may have for the society.</p>