



JURONG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC 2 Preliminary Examination 2017

CANDIDATE'S NAME

GP TUTOR'S NAME

CLASS

General Certificate of Education

GENERAL PAPER

8807/01

Paper 1

23 August 2017

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Answer **one** question.

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

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

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

EXAMINER'S USE

Content	/ 30	Comments:
Language	/ 20	
Total	/ 50	

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

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

1. Should more emphasis be given to the arts in your society?
2. 'Traditional values should never be sacrificed in the name of progress.' To what extent do you agree?
3. 'Environmental sustainability is a desirable but futile pursuit.' Discuss.
4. Consider the view that foreign intervention in a country's affairs does more harm than good.
5. 'We can no longer trust the media.' Is this a fair comment?
6. Can the restriction of personal freedom ever be justified?
7. 'Modern life has made living longer a burden.' How far do you agree?
8. In your society, how effective have government efforts been in promoting a healthy lifestyle?
9. Is diversity necessarily a good thing?
10. Assess the view that scientific research should not be constrained by ethical concerns.
11. 'Diligence is the key to success.' What is your view?
12. To what extent have technological developments enhanced learning in today's world?

2017 J2 Preliminary Examination P1 Marking Guide

Standard Assessment Benchmarks

- Students who do not engage with the question cannot be allowed to pass overall (i.e. highest 22 marks to be awarded in total).

Specific Question Requirements

1. Should more emphasis be given to the arts in your society?

In attempting this question, students should examine and evaluate the amount of emphasis given to the arts in Singapore (or their country of origin) at present. In further engaging with the key word 'more', students should also attempt to address the implied assumption in the question that not enough emphasis was (in the past)/is currently being given to the arts in their society. There ought to be an attempt at considering the value of the arts and the benefits it brings to different stakeholders, weighing it against other priorities and challenges that are of concern to a student's society based on its specific contextual characteristics. Students should be able to provide range of examples from a variety of artistic genres (drama/theatre/television/film, paintings, literature, music, and dance) within their society to substantiate their arguments.

Weaker scripts may hijack the question and instead suggest other areas that should be given more emphasis in their society, ignoring the question's focus on the arts. Such scripts may also lose their objectivity, relying on sweeping generalisations that degenerate into a rant or complaint about the state of the arts in their society and how it is being marginalised. Weak scripts will likely provide laundry lists of the various policies and actions taken to promote the arts without a consistent evaluation of whether such efforts constitute sufficient emphasis, or necessitate more focus and attention. Such scripts will also lack concrete illustration.

2. 'Traditional values should never be sacrificed in the name of progress.' To what extent do you agree?

Students need to show an understanding of what 'traditional values' entail. These could include beliefs, principles or standards of behaviour, moral codes and cultural norms which are passed down from one generation to another. Students must discuss the significance of traditional values and evaluate the importance of their role in underpinning social stability, before explaining how various aspects of progress and modernity such as economic modernization/globalisation, and the spread of 'progressive', liberal ideas and norms are at odds with some traditional values (for e.g. communitarian principles, deference to authority & respect for elders, religious/moral principles, attitudes towards marriage). Consequently, scripts should contain an assessment of whether traditional values should be cast aside in the quest for economic growth and development, as well as in response to changing global norms. In consideration of the loaded word 'never', students need to examine whether traditional values are so sacrosanct to the extent that they should continue to be perpetuated even in our modern age. There should also be some attempt at providing a balanced perspective of the issue by students, by recognizing the importance of traditional values but also acknowledging that in certain instances, some values or the extent to which they are practiced/adhered to might have to be compromised for progress to be made. They could also utilize relevant seminal theories to justify their arguments.

Weaker scripts are likely to merely discuss why traditional values should or should not be sacrificed without linking these back to the term 'progress'. Such scripts may also ignore the

loaded word 'never' and hence fail to point out the flaws and impracticalities of such an unyielding viewpoint. In terms of illustration and substantiation, weaker scripts are likely to provide vague generalisations and stereotypes of tradition rather than relevant, specific examples.

3. 'Environmental sustainability is a desirable but futile pursuit.' Discuss.

Students should demonstrate a clear understanding of what environmental sustainability entails, and examine the question assumption that efforts to strike a balance between Mankind's use of the environment and our needs & wants are all in vain ('futile'). They should evaluate characteristics of the world today in relation to environmental resource usage management (economic activities, consumer and political attitudes, awareness, current state of environment, effectiveness of measures today) to assess if such a goal possible/impossible to achieve. Both clauses of the question 'desirable and 'futile' should be addressed, and students should at least attempt to establish why efforts to ensure environmental sustainability are desirable to different stakeholders, but, in the eyes of some, a fruitless effort. Some of the reasons could include considerations of practicality/feasibility (human needs & wants far exceed what the environment can offer), some evaluation of the varying degrees effectiveness of efforts to achieve environmental sustainability and challenges that are context-specific. More nuanced scripts may challenge the question assumption for both clauses and look at how the pursuit of environmental sustainability may not be desirable as it appears, using this argument to further bolster a stand that supports the futility of the pursuit. Given the rather broad nature of the question, students should employ a range of examples from a variety of countries in order to justify their arguments. They should also look at environmental sustainability in different aspects (biodiversity management, energy resource, waste/pollution management)

Weaker scripts will likely have a limited understanding of the concept of 'environmental sustainability'. Such scripts tend to overlook the loaded clause as well, and provide a laundry list of measures and initiatives to deal with environmental conservation, or a list of environmental problems that the world faces today. The illustration and examples provided will also be very limited in nature (for e.g. just focusing on climate change and Singapore).

4. Consider the view that foreign intervention in a country's affairs does more harm than good.

Students should first examine various possible reasons for foreign intervention, including (but not limited to) humanitarian crises, economic difficulties, threats to national security/sovereignty, as well as intrastate civil strife. Other more controversial motivations can include attempts by other countries to use their soft power or otherwise to interfere in and shape the affairs and political development of certain countries. In their essay, students must address the loaded word 'more' by consistently weighing the costs and benefits of intervention by external agencies such as international/regional organisations, civil society groups/NGOs and foreign governments. In evaluating the issue, students should assess the motivations behind external intervention, as well as the effectiveness of the intervention efforts before coming to a conclusion. More nuanced responses would avoid taking absolute stands that foreign intervention in a country's affairs will always be either more harmful or more beneficial. Students could then attempt to conclude that ultimately depend on individual situations or contexts, such as whether there is a necessity for external stakeholders to render assistance to the affected country.

Weaker scripts will likely overlook the loaded word 'more', and provide a laundry list of the benefits and consequences of external intervention without addressing the comparative requirement in the question. Such scripts would also have a limited understanding of the concept of 'external intervention', viewing it purely in terms of singular examples or forms, such as that of military intervention alone.

5. 'We can no longer trust the media.' Is this a fair comment?

Students are expected to address the inherent assumption of change in the loaded phrase 'no longer', by discussing how the trust that was placed in the media in the past has been eroded in recent times. Students should also show an understanding of the distinction between traditional media and the new media, examining how the characteristics and nature of both broad categories of the media affect their credibility and accuracy of information. In arguing their case, students should assess changes in the media landscape (as compared to the past) and explain why the media has been both criticized for its failings (for e.g. the rise of 'fake news', media bias in advertising, government objectives of propaganda) as well as lauded for upholding principles such as media ethics, accuracy and objectivity. There should be some attempt at demonstrating an awareness of how different perceptions of stakeholders towards the media's credibility will vary according to different contexts and cultures, before concluding the effect some contextual circumstances have on levels of public confidence and trust in the media as an institution. More nuanced scripts may challenge the assumption in the question, arguing that media outlets have always served the interests of those they represent. Hence, misinformation and media bias are certainly not new developments. Such scripts could also discuss the importance of diversifying one's sources of information in order to confirm the veracity and authenticity of news reports, questioning the reaction of losing one's trust in the media when consumers should instead be more discerning in light of the media landscape and developments today.

Weaker scripts would fail to consistently and accurately deal with the loaded phrase 'no longer', focusing only on arguing why we can or cannot place our trust in the media. Such scripts could also prematurely come to the conclusion that we cannot trust the media simply because of a few isolated, negative instances of misinformation and media bias. Conversely, they could swing to the other extreme when attempting to include balance and struggle to reconcile both extreme perspectives, leading to an essay of contradictions.

6. Can the restriction of personal freedom ever be justified?

Students must clearly define what 'personal freedom' is and what the restriction of such freedom entails (various types/forms of limits/controls; stakeholders involved in such restriction, for e.g. governments' limits on individual freedom of speech) in order to establish their arguments. Students must also engage with the loaded phrase 'ever be', and demonstrate an understanding of the underlying assumption, examining the premise that the restriction of personal freedom is inappropriate and unjustifiable. They may agree with this premise, or challenge it by arguing based on the nuance of the phrase 'ever be' (carries an underlying absolute tone beyond the present/immediate as well). Students should critically evaluate the various motivations/reasons for, and outcomes of attempting to restrict personal freedom (utilitarianism, moral grounds, etc.) before reaching their eventual recommendation. In elaborating on their points, students should provide concrete examples and make suitable reference to controversies (from varying contexts) regarding the restriction of individual freedom.

Weaker scripts may completely miss the loaded phrase ‘ever be’ and merely provide a laundry list of the benefits and drawbacks of limiting personal freedom. It is also likely that weaker scripts are vague in their substantiation, making cursory references to social media without any concrete evidence. There may also be weaker scripts that focus only on a particular type of personal freedom and/or context (for e.g. freedom of expression and Singapore).

7. ‘Modern life has made living longer a burden.’ How far do you agree?

Students should demonstrate an understanding that the phrase ‘living longer’ is nuanced and focuses more on the impact of a longer lifespan on individuals. In addition, they should clearly identify the scope of their discussion by clearly stating the stakeholders they will discuss (living longer does not only apply to an aging population/the elderly). Students must examine and evaluate the various ways in which specific, current characteristics (for e.g. higher costs of living, increased propensity for individuals to develop certain health conditions, increased rates of social isolation/singlehood/childlessness, or better healthcare, increased incomes/affluence, more accepting attitudes towards aging, better opportunities and conditions in developing countries, etc.) of life in modern society has caused a long life to be a worrisome and heavy responsibility, rather than a positive experience or vice versa. Given the nature of the question, in justifying their arguments, students should provide convincing trend-based examples/illustration from a range of different societies around the world.

Weaker scripts will likely list the pros and cons of an aging population on societies without consideration/appropriate treatment of the key words in the question. Students might also hijack the question by arguing that modern life has not made living longer, but other things, a burden instead. There may also be scripts that merely discuss whether or not we should live longer, again without addressing the key issue of whether contextual circumstances have made a longer life a burdensome one.

8. ‘In your society, how effective have government efforts been in promoting a healthy lifestyle?’

Students should demonstrate a clear understanding of what ‘government efforts’ entail, and must discuss specific local initiatives/policies in their essay. The definition of a ‘healthy lifestyle’ (better scripts would go beyond the formulaic diet and exercise campaigns to examine initiatives that deal with the infrastructural/psychological/economic aspects) should also be clearly defined at the onset of the essay. Students may then go on to examine why these efforts may have met with limited success (context-specific challenges to initiatives/measures, flaws of the said efforts, differing views and reception to such efforts, the lack of individual will, etc.). The scope of discussion should also be broad (for e.g. not fixated on just students in schools/the TAF club, but also include more recent trends/developments in health policies) Students should also attempt to provide a range of concrete illustration and examples to substantiate their arguments.

Weaker scripts may simply provide laundry lists of past and present government efforts to encourage a healthy lifestyle without any convincing evaluation of how effective they have been. They may also display a clear lack of contextual evaluation that is required in a ‘your society’ question. Such scripts are also likely to lack the evidence/data required to prove the effectiveness of government efforts.

9. Is diversity necessarily a good thing?

Student must demonstrate an understanding of the term 'diversity' by exploring how many societies around the world today are becoming increasingly cosmopolitan – a by-product of the past few decades of globalization. This potentially complicates and creates new challenges that governments have to deal with, in addition to having to already manage the diversity of their local indigenous populations. Other aspects of diversity that must be discussed could include those in terms of socio-economic status, religious/moral views, political leanings, etc. Students should at least attempt to engage with the key word 'necessarily', examining why diversity is commonly perceived as something desirable, and produces beneficial outcomes for society, but may, under certain circumstances, actually lead to a negative impact instead. Their discussion should include how diversity, when poorly managed, can lead to socio-political tensions. Ultimately, students should recognize that embracing diversity merely for the sake of political correctness might not always be in the best interest of society as no one-size-fits-all solution can be adopted or implemented to truly encourage, embrace or manage differences.

Weaker scripts would fail to address the loaded word 'necessarily', simply listing the pros and cons of having diversity in societies instead. Such scripts would also lack balance, or in the process of doing so, fail to reconcile opposing viewpoints in a way which does not contradict the stand provided in or the introduction. These scripts would also be limited in the examples discussed and might even be restricted to only Singapore-based examples.

10. Assess the view that scientific research should not be constrained by ethical concerns.

Students should examine and evaluate the premise behind the view in the question by looking at the theoretical functions and ideals of science, with one possible argument being that an excessive focus on ethics may hinder the pace of scientific and technological progress. Students could then juxtapose such a perspective against that of stakeholders who feel that ethical considerations are necessary to guard against unethical, immoral and potentially dangerous scientific pursuits and their consequences and evaluate the validity of both schools of thought. To illustrate their arguments, students should provide concrete and specific examples of a variety of scientific research practices and their associated ethical considerations (unbiased and impartial research, accurate record keeping and reporting, peer review, minimisation of potential harm to research subjects, research for altruism vs. profit, stem cell research, etc.). Students may discuss scientific processes and practices that result in the creation of certain technologies, but should not confuse the processes of these practices with the technologies themselves. Better scripts will likely provide a more successfully balanced and nuanced examination of the issue, arguing for the need to achieve a good balance between ensuring the autonomy of scientific pursuits, and the need for ethical checks to prevent abuses. These scripts will be able to support their arguments with a good variety of examples, illustrating the tension between the two competing priorities.

Weaker scripts are likely to provide mere lists of the pros and cons of scientific research or adhering to ethical guidelines in science, without any consideration of the dichotomy/tensions between the two. They may also resort to using broad generalisations about scientific research practices and their ethical concerns, with little consideration of contextual circumstances and poor supporting illustration. These scripts might also be example-led and might confuse scientific practice with technology in general and their ethical implications (e.g. CRISPR genetic editing, 3D printing guns).

11. 'Diligence is the key to success.' What is your view?

Students must engage the absolute phrase 'the key' and evaluate the assumption that diligence and sheer effort are most effective method for success. They should also clearly define the meaning of 'success' at the onset of their essays, in order for them to craft clearer arguments. They could either argue the case for the question, or challenge the assumption and say there may not be a 'one-size-fits-all'/sole method for an issue that can be highly individual in nature, by examining how hard work may/may not pay off under different circumstances or in different contexts (culture, socio-political factors, type/severity of success, personality/psychology of individuals, etc.). Students should also attempt to compare hard work with the importance of other positive and desirable attributes that might be more crucial to achieving success in a modern knowledge based economy. Given that the question's key focus is effectiveness (outcome-based), a variety of concrete examples (from across different aspects of life, professions, countries) establishing the effectiveness of hard work should be provided. More nuanced scripts may go on to argue how it is fallacious to place hard work or any one attribute as the most important above others, given the complexity and dynamism of the modern world.

Weaker scripts will likely miss out on the phrase 'the key' and be unable to demonstrate any comparison between hard work and other possible factors for success. Such scripts could be laundry lists of the advantages and disadvantages of hard work/diligence. They may also be very limited in their scope of discussion and content, providing vague illustration, mere hypothetical situations or repeated examples throughout. Weaker scripts could also possibly hijack the question by providing lists of all the possible measures/solutions for success rather than focusing on the comparison required.

12. To what extent have technological developments enhanced learning in today's world?

Students should begin their essays by clearly defining what technological developments refer to, before examining how and why the advent of technological developments has helped learners of different profiles better explore, master and achieve their educational goals/objectives and outcomes. The key focus of the question should be the degree of enhancement such developments have brought, rather than the presence of it. Hence, there should be at least an attempt to clearly assess the degree of effectiveness technological developments, and evaluate why there may be limitations to such purported enhancements to learning. Students should systematically evaluate specific characteristics of the world today and how technological developments may have/have not effectively facilitated stronger mastery and better learning in various domains. Students could examine how an increasing emphasis on differentiated, customised and multimodal learning, more inclusivity in the education landscape – lifelong learning, specialised educational tools for those with special needs, etc., have provided the platform for technological developments to work their magic (the use of artificial intelligence/A.I. in the formal classroom, augmented reality/AR to support experiential learning, integrated online learning systems for the disabled/less mobile elderly, etc.) In their discussion, a variety of specific and fairly recent technological developments, as well as clear examples from various countries and contexts should be provided.

Weaker scripts will likely be vague, highly generalised or inconsistent in providing examples to support their arguments. Such scripts may also degenerate into a listing of the benefits and drawbacks of technology when it is used in education. Alternatively, these scripts may limit their discussion too specifically to a few technological examples (some of which may be old or outdated), or contexts (for e.g. Singapore's education system).



JURONG JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC 2 Preliminary Examination 2017

CANDIDATE'S NAME

GP TUTOR'S NAME

CLASS

General Certificate of Education

GENERAL PAPER

8807/02

Paper 2

23 August 2017

INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

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

Olivia Laing writes about loneliness in our modern age.

- 1 At the end of last winter, a gigantic billboard advertising Android, Google’s operating system, appeared over Times Square in New York. In a lower-case sans serif font – corporate code for friendly – it declared: “be together. not the same.” This erratically punctuated mantra sums up the web’s most magical proposition – its existence as a space in which no one need ever suffer the pang of loneliness, in which friendship, sex and love are never more than a click away, and difference is a source of glamour, not of shame. As with the city itself, the promise of the internet is contact. It seems to offer an antidote to loneliness, trumping even the most utopian urban environment by enabling strangers to develop relationships along shared lines of interest, no matter how shy or isolated they might be in their own physical lives. But proximity, as city dwellers know, does not necessarily mean intimacy. Access to other people is not by itself enough to dispel the gloom of internal isolation. 5
- 2 Loneliness can be most acute in a crowd. More than 70 years have passed since the American painter Edward Hopper produced the signature image of urban loneliness in his painting, *Nighthawks*, which depicts four people in a diner at night, cut off from the street outside by a curving glass window: a disquieting scene of disconnection and estrangement. Yet, its anxieties about connection have lost none of their relevance, though unease about the physical city has been superseded by fears over our new virtual public space, the internet. In the intervening years, we have entered into a world of screens that extends far beyond Hopper’s unsettled vision. 15
- 3 Loneliness centres on the act of being seen. When a person is lonely, they long to be witnessed, accepted, desired, at the same time as becoming intensely wary of exposure. According to research carried out over the past decade at the University of Chicago, the feeling of loneliness triggers what psychologists call hypervigilance for social threat. In this state, which is entered into unknowingly, the individual becomes hyperalert to rejection, growing increasingly inclined to perceive social interactions as tinged with hostility or scorn. The result is a vicious circle of withdrawal, in which the lonely person becomes increasingly suspicious, intensifying their sense of isolation. 25
- 4 This is where online engagement seems to exercise its special charm. Hidden behind a computer screen, the lonely person has control. They can search for company without the danger of being revealed or found wanting. They can reach out or they can hide; they can lurk and they can show themselves, safe from the humiliation of face-to-face rejection. The screen acts as a kind of protective membrane, a scrim that allows invisibility and transformation. You can filter your image, concealing unattractive elements, and you can emerge enhanced: an online avatar designed to attract likes. But now a problem arises, for the contact this produces is not the same thing as intimacy. Curating a perfected self might win followers or Facebook friends, but it will not necessarily cure loneliness, since the cure for loneliness is not being looked at, but being seen and accepted as a whole person – ugly, unhappy and awkward, as well as radiant and selfie-ready. 35
- 5 The dissolution of the barrier between the public and the private, the sense of being surveilled and judged, extends far beyond human observers. We are also being watched by the very devices on which we make our broadcasts. As the artist and geographer Trevor Paglen recently said in the art magazine *Frieze*: “We are at the point (actually, probably long past) where the majority of the world’s images are made by machines for machines.” In this environment of enforced transparency, the equivalent of the *Nighthawks* diner, almost everything we do, from shopping in a supermarket to posting a 40

photograph on Facebook, is mapped, and the gathered data used to predict, monetise, encourage or inhibit our future actions.

- 6 This growing entanglement of the corporate and social, this creeping sense of being tracked by invisible eyes, demands an increasing sophistication about what is said and where. The possibility of virulent judgment and rejection induces precisely the kind of hypervigilance and withdrawal that increases loneliness. With this has come the slowly dawning realisation that our digital traces will long outlive us. Faced with the knowledge that nothing we say, no matter how trivial or silly, will ever be completely erased, we find it hard to take the risks that togetherness entails. 50
55
- 7 All new technology generates a surge of anxious energy. Each one changes the rules of communication and rearranges the social order. Take the telephone for example - that miraculous device for dissolving distance. From the moment in April 1877 that the first line linked two phones in the Bell Telephone Company, it was perceived as an almost uncanny instrument, separating the voice from the body. At first, the phone swiftly came to be regarded as a lifeline, an antidote to loneliness, particularly for rural women who were stuck in farmhouses miles from family and friends. But gradually, fears about anonymity clung to the device. By opening a channel between the outside world and the domestic sphere, the telephone facilitated bad behaviour. From the very beginning, obscene callers targeted both strangers and the "hello girls" who worked the switchboards. People worried that germs might be transmitted down the lines, carried on human breath. They also worried about who might be lurking, invisibly eavesdropping on private conversations. The germs were a fantasy, but the listeners were real enough, be they operators or neighbours on shared telephone lines. 60
65
70
- 8 Anxiety also collected around the possibility for misunderstanding, with misgivings about how a device designed for talking might, in fact, make talking more difficult. If the telephone is a machine for sharing words, then the internet is a machine for constructing and sharing identities. In the internet era, anxieties about how technology has affected our ability to speak intimately to one another accelerate into terror about whether the boundaries between people have been destroyed altogether. 75
- 9 We are not as solid and tangible as we once thought. We are embodied but we are also networks, living inside machines and in other people's heads, memories and data streams. We are being watched and we do not have control. We long for contact and it makes us afraid. But as long as we are still capable of feeling and expressing vulnerability, intimacy stands a chance. 80

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JURONG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC 2 Preliminary Examination 2017

CANDIDATE'S NAME

GP TUTOR'S NAME

CLASS

General Certificate of Education

GENERAL PAPER

8807/02

Paper 2

23 August 2017

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

1 hour 30 minutes

Additional Materials: 1 Insert

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, civics class and GP tutor's name on all the work you hand in.

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

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

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passage for comprehension.

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

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

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

EXAMINER'S USE

Content	/ 35	Comments:
Language	/ 15	
Total	/ 50	

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

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

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

1 According to the author, what is the ‘web’s most magical proposition’ (line 4)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

2 Explain what the author means when she says ‘access to other people is not by itself enough to dispel the gloom of internal isolation’ (lines 11-12). **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

3 ‘Loneliness can be most acute in a crowd’ (line 13).

Explain the irony in this phrase.

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

4 In paragraph 2, the author describes the painting, Nighthawks, as a ‘signature image of urban loneliness’ (line 14). How does the painting reflect the similarity and difference between individuals’ experience of loneliness in the past and today? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

5 According to the author in paragraph 3, what are the consequences of a 'hypervigilance for social threat' (line 24)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

7 What does the phrase 'a lifeline, an antidote to loneliness' (lines 61-62) tell you about society's initial attitude towards the telephone? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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

8 **Using your own words as far as possible**, identify the worries that people in the past had regarding the telephone (lines 65-70), and explain if each of these worries was founded.

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

9 'We are not as solid and tangible as we once thought.' (line 77)

What does the sentence suggest about individual identity today?

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

10 Which sentence in the final paragraph suggests that the author is still hopeful that we can overcome loneliness?

.....[1]

- 11 Olivia Laing makes some observations about the relationship between technology and loneliness. How far would you agree with her observations, relating her arguments to yourself and that of your society?

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**2017 JC2 Preliminary Examination
Answer Scheme**

1. According to the author, what is the 'web's most magical proposition' (line 4)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]
(Direct Literal)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>its existence as a space</p> <p>in which no one need ever suffer the pang of loneliness</p> <p>in which friendship, sex and love are never more than a click away</p> <p>and difference is a source of glamour, not of shame</p>	<p>It is the suggestion that the Internet</p> <p>a) <u>is where/a place/platform</u></p> <p>b) <u>nobody</u> has to <u>endure</u> solitude,</p> <p>c) <u>relationships</u> (Note: any form of social connection is accepted) are <u>easily available</u> and</p> <p>d) being <u>unique/unconventional/out of the norm</u> is <u>attractive, not embarrassing.</u></p>

1 = 1m, 2 = 2m, 3 - 4 = 3m

2. Explain what the author means when she says 'access to other people is not by itself enough to dispel the gloom of internal isolation' (lines 11-12). **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2] (Extended Vocabulary)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>(Context) But proximity, as city dwellers know, does not necessarily mean intimacy NOTE: BUT students can also discuss context of the Internet)</p> <p>access to other people</p> <p>is not by itself enough</p> <p>to dispel the gloom of internal isolation</p>	<p>The author means that</p> <p>a) having the means to <u>meet/be/interact with other individuals</u></p> <p>b) alone is <u>insufficient/inadequate</u> in</p> <p>c) <u>eliminating/dissipating/chasing away/getting rid of the melancholy/sadness/dejection/misery/sorrow of loneliness that one feels within/curing</u> loneliness. (Note: as long as students capture idea of individuals no longer feeling lonely)</p>

1-2 = 1m, 3 = 2m

3. 'Loneliness can be most acute in a crowd' (line 13).

Explain the irony in this phrase.
(Inferential)

[2]

Lifted/Inferred	Paraphrased
<p>Loneliness can be most acute in a crowd</p>	<p>Expectation from situation</p> <p>a) When individuals <u>find themselves in the company of many other people, we expect</u> that they <u>feel less isolated/alienated.</u></p> <p>Contradiction/deviation from the expected in reality</p> <p>b) However, <u>in reality</u>, individuals may feel <u>the greatest (note: extent must be captured) sense of detachment/abandonment/disassociation</u> when one <u>is among many people whom we do not know/strangers/because we may be amongst people whom we know, but still feel alienated.</u></p>

1 = 0m, 2 = 2m

4. In paragraph 2, the author describes the painting, Nighthawks, as a 'signature image of urban loneliness' (line 14). How does the painting reflect the similarity and difference between individuals' experience of loneliness in the past, and today? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2] (*Direct Literal*)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>Yet, its anxieties about connection have lost none of their relevance</p> <p>though unease about the physical city has been superseded by fears over our new virtual public space, the internet</p> <p>OR</p> <p>In the intervening years, we have entered into a world of screens that extends far beyond Hopper's unsettled vision</p>	<p>The painting reflects how</p> <p>a) <u>Concerns regarding loneliness/detachment/isolation/the lack of social interaction or engagement from the past are still very applicable today</u></p> <p>b) although such concerns <u>about interaction in the real world</u> have been <u>replaced</u> by worries about social interaction/engagement <u>in cyberspace/the digital realm</u>.</p>

1 = 1m, 2 = 2m

5. According to the author in paragraph 3, what are the consequences of a 'hypervigilance for social threat' (line 24)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2] (*Direct Literal*)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>The result is a vicious circle of withdrawal</p> <p>in which the lonely person becomes increasingly suspicious</p> <p>intensifying their sense of isolation.</p>	<p>A hypervigilance for social threat results in</p> <p>a) a <u>worsening/deteriorating cycle of disengagement</u></p> <p>b) where the lonely individual becomes <u>progressively wary</u> of others,</p> <p>c) hence <u>heightening</u> his/her feelings of <u>detachment/loneliness</u>.</p> <p>(Note: If students' explanation of (b) + (c) but incorporate clear elements of (a) in their answer, we can award these students 2 marks)</p>

1-2 = 1m, 3 = 2m

6. Summary Question

Using material from paragraphs 4-6, summarise what the author has to say about the appeal of online engagement and how it may worsen loneliness.

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]

The appeal of online engagement lies in its ...

S/N	Lifted	Paraphrased
1	hidden behind a computer screen (line 29) OR or they can hide (line 31) OR they can lurk (line 32)	ability to allow people to be anonymous
2	the lonely person has control . (line 30)	empowering those without companions/isolated individuals
3	They can search for company without the danger of being revealed (lines 30-31)	They can attempt to forge relationships without the threat of being exposed/identified
4	or found wanting (lines 30-31)	or deemed to be not good enough
5	They can reach out (line 31) OR can show themselves (line 31)	They can either initiate contact/communication with others OR be identifiable
6	safe from the humiliation of face-to-face rejection (lines 32-33)	avoid the embarrassment of having one's affections being spurned in person
7	The screen acts as a kind of protective membrane, a scrim that allows invisibility (line 33)	because the internet is akin to a shield/film which gives us the choice of anonymity
8	transformation (line 34)	and the ability to make drastic/significant changes
9	You can filter your image, concealing unattractive elements (line 34)	Only allow flattering aspects of one to be revealed while hiding unappealing aspects
10	and you can emerge enhanced (line 35)	accentuate positive aspects/features
11	an online avatar designed to attract likes (line 35) OR Curating a perfected self might win followers or Facebook friends (lines 36-37)	in order to gain approval or acceptance from others
12	But now a problem arises, for the contact this produces is not the same thing as intimacy (lines 35-36)	However, these forms of interactions may be mistaken for genuine feelings of closeness/quality relationships
13	but it will not necessarily cure loneliness (lines 37-38)	which may not be an antidote to loneliness
14	since the cure for loneliness is not being looked at but being seen and accepted as a whole person – ugly, unhappy and awkward, as well as radiant and selfie-ready (lines 38-40)	because we cannot reveal who we truly are/our true self/physical appearances or other insecurities
15	the sense of being surveilled (lines 41-42) OR In this environment of enforced transparency (line 46) OR This growing entanglement of the corporate and social, this creeping sense of being tracked by invisible eyes (line 50)	The feeling of being watched/scrutinised OR In a society in which we have no control over our privacy
16	and judged (line 42)	and having others assess/form opinions/conclude
17	almost everything we do, from shopping in a supermarket to posting a photograph on Facebook, is mapped, and the gathered data (lines 47-48)	businesses extensively mine/collect data about our online activities
18	used to predict, monetise , encourage or inhibit our future actions (lines 48-49)	in order to profit from such knowledge/information
19	The possibility of virulent judgment and rejection induces precisely the kind of hypervigilance and withdrawal that increases loneliness (lines 52-53)	The fear of extreme/severe criticism and being denied causes one to be overly sensitive/paranoid and antisocial, heightening feelings of isolation
20	With this has come the slowly dawning realisation (lines 53-54)	We gradually appreciate that what we do online
21	that our digital traces will long outlive us (line 54) OR	regardless of how inane/petty/insignificant – will remain permanently online

	Faced with the knowledge that nothing we say, no matter how trivial or silly, will ever be completely erased (lines 54-55)	
22	we find it hard to take the risks that togetherness entails (lines 55-56)	Hence, it becomes challenging to embrace challenges/chances to grow closer to others

Total: 22 points

Sample 13-point summary in 120 words (excluding given opening words):

The appeal of online engagement lies in its:

ability to allow people to take virtual cover, empowering isolated individuals to forge relationships without the threat of being exposed, or deemed to be not good enough. They can initiate contact with others, or be anonymous, avoiding the embarrassment of having one's affections being spurned in person. The internet is like a shield which gives us the choice of anonymity and the ability to make drastic changes by revealing and accentuating positive aspects and hiding unappealing aspects in order to gain acceptance. However, these forms of interactions may be mistaken for quality relationships. We gradually appreciate that our online actions remain permanently online. The feeling of being constantly scrutinised makes it challenging to embrace opportunities to grow closer to others.

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

7. What does the phrase 'a lifeline, an antidote to loneliness' (lines 61-62) tell you about society's initial attitude towards the telephone? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]
(*Inferential - Vocabulary*)

Inferred	Paraphrased
<p>a lifeline, an antidote to loneliness</p> <p>(Context) <i>At first, the phone swiftly came to be regarded as a lifeline, an antidote to loneliness, particularly for rural women who were stuck in farmhouses miles from family and friends. But gradually, fears about anonymity clung to the device.</i></p>	<p>The phrase suggests that society's initial attitude towards the telephone was <u>very welcoming/optimistic</u>.</p> <p>Accept (with explanation to students in class that this is actually not accurate, both points should be included):</p> <p>The phrase suggests that society initially saw the telephone as the <u>perfect solution</u> to problems of <u>social disengagement</u>.</p>

Any 1 = 1m

8. **Using your own words as far as possible**, identify the worries that people in the past had regarding the telephone (lines 65-70), and explain if each of these worries was founded. [2] (*Direct Literal*)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>People worried that germs might be transmitted down the lines, carried on human breath + The germs were a fantasy</p> <p>They also worried about who might be lurking, invisibly eavesdropping on private conversations + but the listeners were real enough, be they operators</p>	<p>People in the past were worried that</p> <p>a) telephones and phone lines were <u>unhygienic</u> and <u>caused the spread of diseases</u>,</p> <p>b) but this worry was merely a <u>misconception/an imagined threat or prospect</u>.</p> <p>They were also worried that</p> <p>c) <u>strangers</u> could <u>listen in on</u> their telephone <u>calls/infringe</u> on their <u>personal</u> conversations,</p> <p>d) and this was a <u>valid concern</u> as telephone lines were</p>

or neighbours on shared telephone lines	<u>communal</u> /people used the <u>same</u> telephone lines.
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Any 1 pair (a+b OR c+d) = 1m, 2 pairs = 2m

9. 'We are not as solid and tangible as we once thought.' (line 77)

What does the sentence suggest about individual identity today?

[2] (Inferential - Vocabulary)

Inferred	Paraphrased
<p>We are not as solid and tangible as we once thought</p> <p>We are embodied but we are also networks, living inside machines and in other people's heads; memories and data streams.</p>	<p>It suggests that individual identity today</p> <p>a) is no longer about <u>conventional/former notions</u> of using <u>fixed physical attributes/characteristics</u> to define ourselves</p> <p>b) but <u>also how others perceive us/interact with us online.</u></p> <p>(Note: For teaching purposes, students should ideally have both parts to show the comparison between the past and the present)</p>

Any 1 = 1m, 2 = 2m

10. Which sentence in the final paragraph suggests that the author is still hopeful that we can overcome loneliness? [1] (Inferential)

Lifted	Paraphrased
<p>But as long as we are still capable of feeling and expressing vulnerability, intimacy stands a chance</p>	<p>The sentence is 'But as long as we are still capable of feeling and expressing vulnerability, intimacy stands a chance.'</p> <p>(Note: It MUST be a complete SENTENCE, without missing words/phrases/clauses. If students paraphrase sentence, it MUST be accurate enough an interpretation, but they SHOULD not be paraphrasing.)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The last sentence.</p>

11. Olivia Laing makes some observations about the relationship between technology and loneliness. How far do you agree with her observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society?

Reference from passage	Applicability
<p><u>Paragraph 1</u> Laing writes about how modern communications technology offers great convenience and easy access to others, but that this is only a very superficial connection, not enough to “dispel the gloom of internal isolation.”</p>	<p><u>Intro Paragraph</u></p> <p>Generally Disagree (Line-of-Argument)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While her arguments must be acknowledged, I argue that her pessimism towards technology is unfounded. • While it is true that information communication technology (ICT) could be a hindrance to genuine human connection, most Singaporeans seem to have become adept at using it to supplement and enhance their social lives, which is the opposite of the author’s claim throughout the passage.
<p><u>Paragraph 2</u> Laing highlights how “loneliness can be most acute in a crowd,” and how this is a phenomenon that has plagued us for a long time, now made worse by the internet.</p>	<p>Generally Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore has a population of approximately 5.6 million people, densely packed into a small area of only 719 km². • Despite this, our competitive meritocratic system rewards individual merit, which could be argued to cause loneliness and isolation, as Singaporeans strive to compete against each other in order to find success, whether in education or in their careers. • However, such emphasis on isolated individualism should not be over-exaggerated. Singapore also places a high emphasis on a collective sense of cohesion, which has been vital in maintaining harmony in a multi-racial and multi-religious society. • Such an emphasis on social cohesion and unity has been the case for 52 years since our country’s independence in 1965 and the establishment of our founding principles of a multicultural, cosmopolitan city-state. • This is especially the case since Singapore annually celebrates the festivals of all ethnic and religious groups. On a cultural level at least, it would be an oversimplification to argue that Singaporeans are lonely when our diverse cultures serves as the connective tissue that bonds us as a society. • Competition has not prevented Singaporeans from socialising, connecting and learning about their fellow countrymen of different races, cultures and traditions. The invention of the internet has also made this process easier as Singaporeans of all walks of life can communicate and socialise over common interests, such as our common love of our diverse cuisine, where “Foodies” can blog or vlog, and share their dining experiences with other Singaporeans. E.g.s LadyIronChef and “ieatshootipost.”
<p><u>Paragraph 3</u> Laing highlights how isolation can cause an individual to be “intensely wary of exposure,” which causes “hypervigilance for social threat” that leads them to “perceive social interactions as tinged with hostility or scorn.”</p> <p><u>Paragraph 4</u> She further links this to how technology can serve as a solution where “the lonely person has control” to “filter [their] image, concealing unattractive elements” so that one can craft “an online avatar designed to attract likes.”</p> <p>She expressed her doubts about this as she opines that “loneliness is not being looked at, but being seen and accepted as a whole person” which includes both their merits and flaws.</p>	<p>Generally Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her arguments do sound plausible. • It is certainly true that social media can allow a lonely person to hide behind an online persona, further worsening their sense of isolation and suspiciousness about society. • Many parents and teachers are growing increasingly concerned that their children could become victims of cyberbullying or may fall prey to cyber stalkers and are very concerned about the safety of their children and their online activities. • However she fails to substantiate her claims with any real evidence, which makes her arguments unconvincing. • Technology can serve as the initial platform that helps people to form that initial connection that helps socially isolated individuals take that first step towards genuine social connection. • Defence of the Ancients 2 (DOTA2) and League of Legends (LOL) are two cooperative Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) games which are very popular among the youth in Singapore. • In game, players play various heroes (serving at their online avatars) and have to communicate and strategize with other players to achieve their objective while preventing an opposing team from achieving theirs, • Off line and in the real world, young gamers can socialise with others who share their interest to discuss better ways to play their favourite hero characters and devise new strategies to improve their competitiveness in the game. • It has to be acknowledged that these two games are infamous for their toxic communities, as the extremely competitive and stressful nature of the game causes many players to exhibit anti-social behaviours, such as hurling obscenities and engaging in bigoted racist, sexist or even homophobic slurs to opposing players and even their own team mates. • This can certainly frighten players, leading them to perceive such online interactions with great suspicion and fear, leading to even greater alienation. • However, it cannot be denied that the game also encourages Singapore youths to communicate and collaborate with a sense of common purpose, which can foster a sense of genuine friendship as they connect over their shared passion for their favourite game.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Singaporean social media influencers and celebrities would likely not agree with Laing as well. • Indeed it could be argued that individuals like XiaXue, Naomi Neo, JianHao Tan and groups like Wah!Banana and TreePotatoes, produce content that might be perceived as superficial and an artificial representation of who they are as individuals. • XiaXue and Naomi Neo have at various times also courted controversy as Singaporean netizens criticise their content or their behaviour. • However, it cannot be denied that these individuals and groups have found success in using social media technology to attract tens of thousands of followers, which have allowed them to monetise their social media presence to find business success. • Corporations of all types have approached XiaXue and Naomi Neo to use their online influence as a means to advertise their products to a greater audience. • While we can question just how genuine these social media influencers are in their online interactions with their fans, it would be very unlikely that they would consider themselves as “isolated” or “lonely,” given their massive social media following.
<p><u>Paragraph 5</u> Laing argues that technology is breaking down the “barrier between the public and private,” contributing to “the sense of being surveilled” where “almost everything we do...is mapped” to “predict, monetize, encourage or inhibit our future actions.”</p> <p><u>Paragraph 6</u> She then argues that this leads to even greater “hypervigilance and withdrawal that increases loneliness” due to the knowledge that “our digital traces will long outlive us.”</p>	<p><u>Agree but not completely</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online technology does track our actions and preferences in Singapore society. • Singaporeans have become avid online shoppers due to its convenience and confidence about the security of online transactions. • However, online shopping websites like Amazon and even social media sites like Facebook keep track of our purchases as well as the articles and videos we watch. • These sites often have programmes and algorithms that analyse our online behaviour and then display advertising that the programme predicts might interest us to promote even more spending or usage. • This is disconcerting as social media technology can possibly be abused to build up a profile of our identities, which can be exploited for profit, to infringe on our privacy, or for stealing our identity. • However Laing’s conclusions are not entirely correct. Instead of causing us further withdrawal and loneliness, the power of internet technology can just as easily promote even more visible, dramatic or reckless online behaviour. • Many cyberbullies use the anonymity of the internet and social networks to abuse and emotionally damage their victims. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cyber wellness firm Kingmaker Consultancy conducted a survey in 2015 and discovered an increase of 7% in cyber bullying cases in Singapore. • For the victim of such bullying, the technology is a bane that alienates them, leading to the social alienation and hypervigilance that Laing predicts. • But for the bully, it is a tool for them to administer abuse. They certainly do not seem to care much that they are leaving behind the digital evidence of their actions. • Even when the individual’s identity is known to the world, the temptation to share one’s thoughts on social media sometimes promotes reckless and insensitive behaviour rather than “hypervigilance” and loneliness. • In 2013, Amy Cheong posted a racist rant against Malay Weddings at her void deck on her Facebook feed. Her comments were widely condemned. The Police issued her with a warning and she was fired from her job. • In 2015, Amos Yee released an expletive laden video celebrating the death of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, while also insulting the Christian faith. In 2016 he would release another video that insulted Islam. He would be arrested and charged by the Singapore authorities for wounding religious feelings and hate speech against race and religion. • These examples illustrate that rather than causing withdrawal and isolation, ICT can just as easily seduce individuals into abusing their freedom of speech in reckless and insensitive ways.
<p><u>Paragraph 7 and 8</u> Laing illustrates how throughout history, new innovations in technology, including modern internet, have resulted in unease about how they might be abused, or how they discourage or hinder communication, partly due to the fear of our privacy being invaded.</p>	<p><u>Agree but not completely</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Singaporeans are criticised for being too dependent on their smart devices, such that it is normal for people to be using their smartphones, even in a social setting when they should be interacting and engaging others in their vicinity. E.g. A stereotypical Singaporean family that seems more interested in their devices than talking to each other over the dinner table. • In contrast to those who recklessly use social media (mentioned above), some Singaporeans also sometimes lament that they have to be careful of what they post, as they do not want to share certain aspects of their lives with family members, relatives, colleagues and acquaintances that they have in their network. • This is particularly important for Singaporean civil servants and government officials, who are often reminded not to share content or post opinions that are too political in nature, as they have to maintain their professionalism and impartiality to the scrutiny of the public. • However, for those people who already have a genuine and close relationship, ICT and social media can be a great enabler to keep that relationship and connection alive.

- E.g. Social media apps like Skype (video calls) and WhatsApp allow family members and close friends to keep in touch with great convenience, even though they may be in different countries.
- This is especially important since Singaporeans are becoming increasingly geographically mobile as they travel the world either for work, business or education.

Table of Specifications:

No.	Question Types	Question Number	Mark Allocation
1	Direct Literal	1, 4, 5, 8	9
2	Inferential	3, 7, 9, 10	6
3	Extended Vocabulary	2	2
4	Summary	6	8
4	AQ	11	10
		Subtotal	35
		Language	15
		Total	50

