



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2018
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
Higher 1

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 1

8807/01

10 September 2018

1 hour 30 minutes

Additional Materials: 12-Page Answer Booklet

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Answer **one** question.

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

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

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 'Diversity should be celebrated, not feared.' Discuss.
- 2 'We need to talk about taboos.' How true is this of your society?
- 3 'The value of memory is often underestimated.' Is this an accurate assessment of modern society?
- 4 Examine the claim that the problem of inequality can only be tackled by governments.
- 5 Consider the view that more action and less talk will help countries solve their current domestic problems.
- 6 'The battle against consumerism is a pointless one.' Comment.
- 7 'Images are always more powerful than words.' Do you agree?
- 8 Assess the view that international agreements are well-intended, but ineffective.
- 9 Has your society sacrificed too much for progress?
- 10 How important is it to have a sense of humour?
- 11 Is it justifiable for nations to always prioritise their national interests?
- 12 Given the growing demands of modern society, has raising children become more of a burden?

Eunoia Junior College
2018 JC2 H1 GP Preliminary Examinations
Paper 1 Suggested Answer Scheme

1 'Diversity should be celebrated, not feared.' Discuss.

The attitude / approach towards something should be A and not B; normative (should)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject matter: diversity in society, and whether it should be celebrated rather than feared

Key Terms:

- *diversity* – candidates may consider diversity in terms of race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, beliefs, identities, or any conceivable variations
- *should* – candidates must consider which of these states is desirable instead of the other: that diversity is feared or that it is celebrated, or whether diversity is something there is reason to fear or to celebrate (embrace)

Context: societies in general (not just one's own); global consideration of different societies

Issues:

- Why should diversity be 'feared'? Does diversity bring great harm to society? Should diversity be discouraged and met with caution?
- Why should diversity be 'celebrated'? Does diversity encourage us to better understand and accept others for their humanity rather than judge them based on superficial factors?

Assumptions:

- It is desirable to embrace and celebrate all forms of diversity, and fearing such diversity is unproductive and undesirable for the growth of humanity.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidates must consider reasons why celebrating diversity is desirable, as opposed to being averse to it.
- In order to engage balance in the essay, candidates should also demonstrate awareness and understanding of perspectives that may posit that diversity itself is something undesirable for society and humanity.

Possible Arguments & Examples:

- Because diversity brings tends to bring about differing views and thus conflict, we should fear its potentially divisive and harmful effects on communities.
 - Various kinds of tensions have arisen because of the wide range of different views and identities.

- Fully celebrating and embracing diversity may be seen to loosen and disrupt the boundaries that govern our systems and ways of life, thus causing instability, which should be feared.
 - Accepting a variety of beliefs that is too wide may shake or undermine some important principles that have governed our behaviours and systems in a way that seeks to protect quality of life and even rights.
 - Celebrating diversity may condone acts that may be considered by some to be immoral.
 - Being too liberal with one's viewpoints may encourage deviance from judgements and decisions that are considered moral or normative.
 - Mere diversity does not take into proper consideration the impact that people's decisions have on those around them.
 - For example, some lifestyles harm nature and wildlife more so than others: vegans or animal rights activists would argue that people with meat diets or who purchase products that involve animal testing are harming nature with their lifestyle and habits; yet supporters of diversity would argue that these are simply different lifestyles that everyone has a right to choose.

- Although many may fear diversity in today's world, diversity should be celebrated because accepting others despite their differences makes us kinder and more generous human beings towards one another.
 - Celebrating diversity enables us to look past relatively inconsequential differences and instead focus on what we have in common.

- Diversity should be celebrated and not feared, because fear itself drives us to treat others unfairly based on very arbitrary conditions. What makes us different from one another is often an innate or significant part of our identity that we cannot necessarily change/control.
 - Fearing diversity and therefore discriminating against a particular racial group is unfair because one is born with a clear racial identity and cannot change one's skin colour.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will be able to engage both parts of the question throughout the essay:
 - Consider reasons why one might expect diversity to strike fear in people, but arguing that such an expectation is unrealistic or not viable due to the nature of our diverse world, which requires that we embrace and celebrate diversity.
 - Consider reasons why one might find the expectation of celebrating diversity too optimistic or idealistic, and thus offer more realist perspectives of the rifts and divides that diversity has brought about as well as a counterargument.

Limited Responses:

- May merely describe reasons that make us fear or celebrate diversity, rather than explaining clearer reasons why we **should** fear or celebrate it
- May focus only on more minute instances of discrimination or prejudice without considering the wider scope of 'diversity' as a concept
- May merely list the advantages / benefits and disadvantages / harms of diversity

- May be example- or domain-driven¹, based on the type of 'diversity' that the candidate identifies

2 'We need to talk about taboos.' How true is this of your society?

There is a need for something (invites consideration of the point of the need) => extent to which this is true of the local context, in the current time context; imperative (need)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: taboos in society, and the extent to which people in the candidate's society need to talk about them

Key Terms:

- *taboos* – actions, practices or words that are avoided for social or religious reasons; there would be customs that prohibit or restrict such taboo behaviours, ways of life and things; the consideration of taboos usually requires the consideration of societal context as these implicit or explicit prohibitions are usually based on a cultural sense that the taboo is (excessively) repulsive, undesirable or frightening; such prohibitions are present in virtually all societies
- *taboos in Singapore* – race, religion, sex and sexuality (LGBTQ), death, history, and others
- *need* – the idea of moving forward, making progress towards something, hence the necessity, urgency, critical push
- *talk about* – this could range from talking about issues in advocacy groups, to talking across groups with fundamentally different perspectives, which have not been talking, to larger community discussions, national discussions, talk in policy circles and in government

Context: the candidate's society / Singapore

Issues:

- What makes something taboo in the candidate's local context, e.g. Singapore?
- What good or bad can come out of talking about taboos? This could be considered from previous experiences within society or by drawing from other contexts' experiences.
- What kind of society does the candidate want to live in? What kind of society do the majority of people in the candidate's society want? This informs whether there are good grounds to push for talks about taboos, and the extent to which this push and need exists in the candidate's society.

Assumptions:

¹ domain driven = the appearance of different arguments when actually the candidate only adopts one argument, and transposes it across different domains across different paragraphs

- Taboos are not really talked about in the candidate's society, hence giving rise to the question of whether we need to talk about them or not, and the extent to which the need is reflected in the candidate's society.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must calibrate the extent to which taboos need to be talked about in his or her society, and justify why.
- The candidate must demonstrate an awareness of the key word 'need'.
- The candidate must recognise that different groups in society feel differently, for different reasons (subjective beliefs and values), and the candidate must reach a reasoned conclusion after consider all these reasons.

Possible Arguments and Examples:

- When left unexamined, taboos can lead to unfair treatment of groups, and hence they need to be talked about in order to prevent such cultural / societal oppression.
 - Singapore is changing as a society – despite the pull of convention, orthodoxy and tradition, there seems to be a push towards building a more inclusive society, and the construction of such a society, would require some taboos to be talked about as some groups' practices and ways of life are deemed taboo, deviant and undesirable and this could contribute to the perception or reality that such groups are socially excluded or marginalised.
 - If younger Singaporeans genuinely desire a more inclusive society, as reflected through platforms such as Our Singapore Conversation, then conversations need to take place to consider if certain taboos are indeed taboo and therefore still socially undesirable, or if it is time to reconsider our social norms.
- We need to talk about taboos to ascertain if there are really legitimate grounds to forbid and prohibit them given that what is taboo in one context need not necessarily be in another.
 - It is largely true that we need to if we consider the broader context of rights and respect for our fellowmen.
 - Taboos become taboo because of their social context, for example, in some societies, certain religions are regarded as cults and taboo despite them being regarded as orthodox and normalised in other societal contexts. Would it be fair to practitioners of such faiths to have their religions labelled as deviant and taboo?
 - Examples could include Jehovah's Witnesses, Seven Day Adventists and Mormons. Even marriages between brothers and sisters, which is now almost universally regarded as socially unacceptable, was once a norm in Roman Egypt in ancient times.
 - The felling of laws against same-sex marriage and sex acts between members of the same sex all around the world also calls to mind the need to talk about the way forward for Singapore in spite of resistance.
- It is not always productive / fruitful to talk about taboos because objections and acceptance of them are both based on fundamental values and core beliefs that rationality cannot necessarily overcome. The contesting of such values through the discussion of taboos would only lead to resistance and conflict.
 - Certain taboos are regarded as problematic in many societal contexts, for example, incest and bestiality, and in most traditional circles, they are hardly talked about

because of a variety of fears: fear that talk about such taboos would corrupt, offend one's own or others' sensibilities, or signal that such taboos can be condoned.

- These fears are shared in even liberal circles too but perhaps more open cultures feel that open conversations about such taboo topics can only be healthy for the nation, in terms of values education and forging social consensus that such practices are morally problematic.
- Singapore is a country where both circles have a strong presence, but on the whole, it seems to be the case that there are more who would feel that we should not and do not need to talk about such taboos for the reasons aforementioned.
- Hence, given a culture that is rather reticent to talking about what is perceived to be "dirty" and deviant, it seems to be true that the majority of Singaporeans believe that we should not talk about such universally problematic taboos at all.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will consider the nature of taboos and realise that the nature of subjective beliefs about right and wrong, and what is socially desirable and not, needs to be considered
- Will understand that it is this difference in subjective beliefs and values that causes people to feel differently about the need to talk about taboos
- Might wonder about what it is about the nature of taboos that makes people fear them and conversations about them; what causes the feelings of offense, disgust and fear?
- Might wonder about how talks about taboos have been in their own and others' local contexts – have these talks led to impasses because of the nature of the way the talks have unfolded? E.g. combative and confrontational rather than consultative?
- Might wonder if there is a healthier, more inclusive way to talk about taboos such that all stakeholders in society are ready to converse rationally, with respect, and as equals

Limited Responses:

- A bare listing / description of instances where Singaporeans have resisted talking about taboo topics, with bald assertions that such is discriminatory, prejudicial or undesirable, which then lead to hasty conclusions that we therefore need to talk about taboos
 - Candidates should close the logical leap between something being discriminatory, and why, therefore, we should talk about it – what will talking do? How will it alleviate the situation, and what end is achieved through talking?
- Careless reading of the question – not realising the question requires one to calibrate extent to which the statement is true in one's society, and not realising the statement puts forth an imperative (it is not "we should"). The former issue is less grievous than the latter though, and competent responses that slip just on the extent front could still be credited beyond the band.

3 The value of memory is often underestimated. Is this an accurate assessment of modern society?

The value of something is often underestimated => extent to which this is true in modern societies, in the current time context; consideration of realities (is)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject matter: memory, and the extent to which it is true that modern societies often underestimate its value and worth

Key Terms:

- *memory* – in the context of modern society, could refer to the history of a community, the collective memory that a people has of shared experiences, or the more general sense of nostalgia and sentimentalism
- *value* – the importance or significance that we attribute to memory, or monetary value
- *often* – the claim in the statement indicates the frequency and prevalence of this trend of underestimating the value of memory in modern society
- *how far, modern society* – the essay should address the question by considering the extent to which the statement reflects *modern society*; *key trends and characteristics* of modern society need to be considered throughout the essay

Context: modern societies worldwide; modern societies in general

Issues:

- Is there a disparity between the *actual* value of memory and how valuable such forms of memory are currently *perceived* to be?
- What is the yardstick against which one can measure the value of memory? What does valuing memory look like?
- How is memory underestimated? On what basis is memory being underestimated?

Assumptions:

- The current perception of memory by modern society does not take into account its true value.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidates need to examine whether the claim that the value of memory is often underestimated is actually *true* of modern society, based on recent trends and current characteristics of today's world.

Possible Arguments & Examples:

- Memory is not necessarily under-valued in modern society, as can be seen from the priority and significance that is placed on various forms of memory to support current aspects of life.

- History is often drawn upon to support narratives of identity and belonging that endure through time and that manifest in our various systems and policies today.
- Resources are pumped into sustaining these aspects of history as part of our present ways of life.
- In fact, it could be said that rather than memory being undervalued in modern society, sometimes too much value is placed on memory instead, both sentimentally as well as financially.
 - The culture of memorialisation has gripped the modern psyche with a relentless need to remember people, things and places that have passed, so much so that the original intentions and meanings that these events once represented have become diluted or reduced to simpler narratives or interpretations, e.g. war memorials and the over-sentimentalisation of war stories.
 - Historical sites often become places of interest for tourists and academics, sometimes commercialised as sources of revenue rather than representations of memory.
- Yet, the value of memory is more often underestimated in modern society because of our focus on progress and the future.
 - We often sacrifice elements of memory (such as tradition, history, and nostalgia) in order to make way for greater economic and social progress.
 - Various symbols of memory (such as buildings, historical sites, or memorials) are destroyed in order to prioritise more pragmatic needs.
 - There is a tendency to disregard heritage claims in the name of economic progress.
- The value of memory is underestimated because people seldom understand the depth and dimensions of thought and emotion that memory can offer as an abstract concept, especially in a world that operates largely based on calculations of concrete costs and benefits.
 - It is difficult to put a price or value on abstract ideas of nostalgia and sentimentality, as opposed to more practical considerations of present issues and concerns.
 - Such ideas of memory are thus often sidelined.
 - In the short-term, we can understand the value of what we want to pursue, but not the value of what we are giving up. We cannot foresee the consequences of underestimating the value of memory.
- Due to the capacity of modern technology to capture, store and search for information, the value of memory, in the cognitive sense, has definitely been underestimated.
 - Given the ease and convenience of searching for information online and in digital archives that we keep, it has also become less important to know things by heart since we can rely on these tools for recording purposes, thus showing that modern society has underestimated the value of memory.
 - Our tendencies to take photographs of everything we experience has transformed memories from psychological and emotional records of significant experiences into the multitude of files and posts that sit in our albums and social media accounts.
 - While some may argue that photographs serve as precious records of memories as well, hence demonstrating the extent to which we value memory when we look through old photographs, it is difficult to say that many of us actually do take a second glance at the many photographs that we take of people, places, and things, due to their sheer number.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will acknowledge the central tension in the question between the forward-looking impulses of modern society and the value that memory holds in preserving our past
- Will evaluate whether our appreciation of these forms of memory accurately reflects how valuable they really are
 - Make acute observations of our current valuation of memory based on modern behaviours and habits
 - Make considered judgements of the value that memory holds for modern society
- May consider various forms of memory in the context of modern society

Limited Responses:

- May merely *describe* valuable aspects of memory
- May only consider one form of memory (e.g. only history, sentimentality, or cognition) that has limited scope in substantiating main arguments
- May interpret the key term as 'memories' and provide rather literal and specific examples rather than demonstrating awareness of 'memory' as a more abstract concept

4 Examine the claim that the problem of inequality can only be tackled by governments.

Absolute claim being posited => a problem can only be tackled by one stakeholder; consideration of realities and logical possibility (can)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: the problem of inequality, and the extreme position that it can only be tackled by one stakeholder of the problem: governments

Key Terms:

- *the problem of inequality* – the existence of inequality is a fact of life, a corollary to the natural lottery;
 - Consider inequality that is *acute* to constitute a serious local or global problem.
 - Inequality could refer to social, economic, and power inequalities. Each form of inequality is intricately linked and reinforces other forms of inequality.
 - Social inequality occurs when social and economic goods in a society are distributed unevenly, because of norms and beliefs about how allocation of resources ought to be done.² When norms of allocation exacerbate natural forms of inequality (of natural advantages and disadvantages), the distribution of *rights, privileges, social power and access to basic public goods* can be severely impacted.

² This differential allocation could be along the lines of socially-defined categories of persons, such as those with more power, those of a certain religion, kinship, race / ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and class. This differentiation in access to social and economic goods could also result in persons' rights to labour markets, sources of income, health care, freedom of speech, education, political representation and participation being unequal.

- Any consideration of the problem of inequality cannot be divorced from consideration of meritocracy which is a system that upholds certain beliefs about how socioeconomic resources ought to be distributed.
 - Inequality between societies can be in terms of international inequality (inequality between countries), and global inequality (inequality between people across countries, e.g. differences in access to healthcare and education).³ Many citizens of nations live in constant envy of the provision for basic needs in other countries: food, clean water and basic safety and security.⁴
- *can only be* – realistically, and in terms of logical possibility, the problem can only be tackled by governments
 - *tackled by* – to try to deal with something; make determined efforts to manage a difficult problem; to attempt to stop, alleviate or mitigate an issue (need not entail resolution but there would be a sustained effort to address a problem)
 - *governments* – the state entity that governs a society, and is conferred the executive power to set and administer public policy; it has, beyond executive power, political and sovereign power too, enshrined by the institutions and laws of the state, and in many countries, conferred by its electorate's votes that give it the mandate to rule and decision-make on behalf of citizens

Context: local and global; in both societies and between nations

Issues:

- The nature of government and its role: why would it be believed that only governments are in the position to tackle the problem of inequality?
- How would different conceptions of the social compact, and considerations of context, influence perspectives on this question? E.g. A struggling nation, transiting from a period of failed government to one with more promise would necessarily look more towards the government for answers. Contrast that with a more mature polity where solutions to inequality could be found within the community and in the business sector rather than solely from the ranks of political and bureaucratic leadership.
- What makes the problem of inequality so intractable and complex? What would have happened to make unequal distribution of resources so pronounced that reified class hierarchies are created?
- What has past and current history shown us in terms of governments' success stories (or lack thereof) in tackling inequality? Do we have cause to be optimistic when government takes the lead or are there more grounds for pessimism?

Assumptions:

- The government(s) in question are functioning ones, that enable them to tackle the problem. They are equipped with the political and executive power to put in place policies to alleviate

³ Considerations of World Systems Theory and Dependency Theory would be useful in understanding international and global inequality.

⁴ Philosopher Ronald Dworkin claims that equality is a state of people being able to live without envy, that is, countries or citizens being able to live lives without the constant desire for the lives of others in other nations.

the ill-effects of inequality, and to redistribute socioeconomic goods. They also possess the political will and gumption to policy-make well, and see the changes through.

- For a variety of reasons, other stakeholders are less viable options to either take the lead or be relied on for answers to the problem.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the problem of inequality, minimally, at the level of society. This understanding should be demonstrated by an awareness that inequality is not only economic in nature; it also comprises inequality in access to basic public goods, such as education and healthcare, and rights.
- The candidate should notice that the word choice is 'tackled' and not 'solved', indicating recognition that the problem of inequality is complex enough that seeking a complete resolution would be but a pipedream.
- The candidate should demonstrate awareness about the unique role of government.

Possible Arguments and Examples⁵:

- Though governments are not the only ones who can tackle the problem of inequality, given the level of power they wield in making decisions that shape the systems and structures of a country, they indeed play a crucial role in addressing the *systemic* causes of inequality.
 - Governments are in a prime position to tackle seemingly intractable problems such as inequality as they not only have the power to determine policy, they also have the power to mobilise and determine distribution of resources, both within and between nations.
 - "[S]tate actions (and inactions), in tandem with corporate practices, are crucial for intensifying or ameliorating problems."⁶
- On the other hand, due to the decisions that governments are responsible for making with regards to other areas of need, they may not prioritise tackling the problem of inequality.
 - Governments tend to be motivated by "vested material and symbolic interest in its perpetuation" and "narratives of growth, development and meritocracy". Inequality could be seen as a necessary trade-off for growth for the country on a larger scale.
 - In order for governments to adequately tackle the problem, they must develop the political will to fully understand and address it. Teo argues that "To see better, we need to expand our narratives. We must uncover more data. [...] An important goal to set for ourselves lies in changing the narrative."⁷
- Perhaps the answer to the problem of inequality lies in our *individual choices and acts*, the decisions of advocacy groups to rally, condemn and boycott systems of exploitation and oppression, and the collective will of many in society to commit to dismantling highly

⁵ Other arguments informed by observations from:

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/inequality-is-a-threat-name-it-and-face-it>

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/commentary/can-education-fix-growing-inequality-in-singapore-10308796>

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/commentary/this-is-what-the-face-of-poverty-inequality-looks-like-10633800>

<https://inequality.org/great-divide/8-ways-reduce-global-inequality/>

⁶ Teo You Yenn, *This is What Inequality Looks Like*, p. 22.

⁷ Teo You Yenn, *This is What Inequality Looks Like*, pp. 35-36.

asymmetrical power structures, rather than more slow-moving bureaucracies and governments.

- The desire to have the state 'nanny' us, and provide us with solutions, will further incapacitate us in our quest to tackle the problem of inequality.
- Hence, the solution cannot possibly only lie with governments, even though governments hold one of the many important keys to the solution.

Thoughtful Responses:

- May not only consider the problem of inequality in societies, but also consider the problem of global inequality
- Will recognise the multifaceted and complex nature of inequality: that different forms of inequality are the result of each other and they reinforce each other
- Will recognise that the government-only perspective is one rooted in a certain conception of government: they know better, it is filled with experts and technocrats, and decision-making is best left to them to steer the way
- Will question this assumption and mode of addressing community and global problems, and realise that individuals too, have power

Limited Responses:

- May reveal sketchy understandings of inequality, the role of government and the power it has
- May be overly-mechanical in outlining of how governments have managed to tackle the problem of inequality rather than engaging with the reasons why such governments were able to do so (the *nature* of government and how it pertains to the question)
- May shift off focus to become an essay about meritocracy and poverty
- May show limited thought revealed by believing that only government holds the solution

5 Consider the view that more action and less talk will help countries solve their current domestic problems.

The position that more A than B would help a party solve a problem => a question about causality: comparatively (between A and B), what would be the result? Context of time matters (will; current): connotes that postulations based on current realities are required

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: assessing approaches to solving domestic problems within a country – 'talk' or 'action' – and evaluating how much of each approach we need

Key Terms:

- *current domestic problems* – candidates should focus on recent problems that are faced specifically by individual countries within their national borders
- *action* – **actual steps** taken to resolve problems or to work towards a resolution in response to contentious issues that have arisen within countries

- *In a *positive* sense, action is what is ultimately needed for problems to be solved and not just discussed at the level of policy legislation or civil discourse.
- Taken negatively, this could also refer to rash or impulsive action (e.g. knee-jerk reactions or hasty policy-making) without careful consideration of issues on a deeper level.
- **talk** – any **verbal or written response** to current problems that a country is facing
 - *In the question, 'talk' is implied as *negative*, possibly referring to empty promises that are not honoured, or lip service by governments and leaders. It could also include comments from members of the public that merely criticise either the problems themselves or failed attempts at resolving them.
 - Seen in more positively, it could encompass meaningful discussion / dialogue or contemplative talk.
- *more ... and less* – the relative nature of the terms 'more' and 'less' imply that an adjustment to the level of 'action' and 'talk' to address current problems is required in order to solve them

Context: Examples from any country can be used (global consideration), but candidates should keep the scope of their essay focused on different countries' domestic issues (local contextualisation) rather than international / global issues.

Issues:

- What would help countries solve the domestic problems that they are experiencing in the present? Would it be more action and less talk or more talk and less action, or a good balance of both?
- Does current discourse or criticism of a country's domestic problems create too much noise that overshadows efforts to take real action?
- Is not enough being done currently to solve a country's domestic problems? Are more concrete and constructive measures necessary to properly address these problems?

Assumptions:

- There is currently an imbalance between 'action' and 'talk': an excess of 'talk' or discourse that drowns out or clouds an accurate assessment of whether enough is actually being done to solve domestic issues in a country.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Consider whether both 'more action and less talk' will facilitate the process of solving problems within a country's national borders.
- Consider opposing perspectives to this statement, that even 'more action and less talk' would not fully address the root causes of the problems that countries are facing.

Possible Arguments & Examples

- More action and less talk is definitely needed to solve problems, because current discourse and criticism tends to drown out more constructive discussions on concrete steps to be taken to fully address pressing issues.
 - Talk is cheap. 'Keyboard warriors' or 'armchair critics' tend to simply criticise others' behaviours, government policies, or any aspect of society that is found to be unsatisfactory in any way.

- Their comments, often posted on online platforms nowadays, seldom do much in the way of actually triggering concrete and constructive actions to resolve the issues they talk about.
- These comments also tend to go viral, creating an 'echo chamber' that reinforces a singular view or interpretation of the event, policy, or person in question.
- Too much talk and no action would be ineffectual in addressing problems because people can easily get stuck in a deadlock in the process of reconciling a wide range of differing views on the best way to proceed with coming up with solutions.
- However, it is not necessarily true that more action and less talk will enable us to better solve current domestic problems, because it still remains necessary for society to engage in critical discourse ('talk') to fully understand various angles of a problem, before crafting the most suitable 'actions' to resolve it.
 - Focused group discussions may seem to be tedious and time consuming, but gathering a variety of perspectives from the ground is definitely necessary for authorities to better understand the nature of the problems they are tackling.
 - A significant amount of 'talk' can actually draw attention to the most pressing domestic problems.
 - Sometimes, the right kind of 'talk' itself can solve the problem.
- More action and less talk may not necessarily help to solve problems, because it is not always true that the 'talk' involved is mere noise. Rather, actions that are taken too impulsively tend to overshadow the importance of listening, which enables us to be more sensitive to the reasons for domestic problems as well as the gaps in current measures to tackle them.
 - Based on what we learn from actively listening to opinions that are voiced out of a genuine desire to resolve pressing domestic problems and based on keen observations of society, relevant stakeholders and authorities can then design real solutions and take action to solve these problems.
 - We need more constructive talk including listening to what is being said, and seeking to understand different perspectives.
- Even with more action and less talk, we may not necessarily be able to solve current domestic problems because of the complexity of these issues.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will convincingly assess the current state of affairs in most countries to evaluate the efficacy of the ways in which domestic problems are being addressed, given characteristics of modern discourse and action
- Will evaluate what is necessary for countries' domestic problems to be fully resolved, and assess if these current methods (of 'talk' and 'action') are sufficient for achieving more desirable outcomes
- Will clearly delineate different ways to understand 'talk' and 'action' as multi-dimensional
- Will set a clear context to raise the counter-argument that talk could also be positive, or that action could also be negative

Limited Responses:

- May de-couple the statement to deal with 'talk' and 'action' separately in each argument
- May suggest various ways in which 'more talk and less action' could be achieved without a proper and convincing assessment of current needs in solving domestic problems
- May confuse what is considered 'action' and what is considered 'talk'

6 'The battle against consumerism is a pointless one.' Comment.

Absolute claim being posited => fighting something is a pointless exercise; consideration of current realities (is) and projecting into the future (pointless)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: consumerism, and the battle against it – is this battle a pointless one?

Key Terms:

- *consumerism* – a social and economic order that encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-increasing amounts; the human desire to own and obtain products and goods in excess of one's basic needs (having sufficient food, clothing and shelter); a theory that a country that consumes goods and services in large quantities will be better off economically; a policy that promotes greed
- *battle against [it]* – connotes that the fight against consumerism is a sizeable and severe one, so much so that it is likened to a war / battle; there is a sense that the battle is a losing one, in the face of growing and overwhelming consumerism, and that those who wage war against / fight consumerism have to expend massive efforts against the power of consumerism; those who battle might be outnumbered; there are various groups battling consumerism; not only one -- who are they?
- *pointless* – having no purpose or use; would be a waste of time; having little or no sense

Context: global; worldwide

Issues:

- The context that has allowed consumerism to become a scourge in the modern world – what has allowed certain societies to see rising levels of consumerist behaviour, and what are the impacts on people in other countries?
- Are there systems and structures that enable and fuel consumerist behaviour, to the point that consumers have very little agency to combat their own behaviour (has it become a matter of uncontrollable impulse?) – to the point that the battle against it is deemed pointless?
- What beliefs and values fuel consumerism? Are matters of identity involved when people engage in consumeristic behaviour? E.g. beliefs that status and wealth are important; the belief that class identity is reified when one acquires more?
- Which stakeholders are involved in consumerism and what are their agendas?
- Movements against consumerism and have they been successful? This should inform inferences about the point to or pointlessness of the battle.

- The conflict between those who encourage consumerism, and those who discourage it -- is it almost like an ideological battle between both camps? Why?
- Implications of an apologetic and resigned attitude towards this problem: what would be the harm done to not only others in other societies but also to one's self and community?
- Exploitation, fair trade, food waste, conservationist movements, fast fashion, minimalism, pollution and environmental degradation, sustainable development, and responsible consumerism

Assumptions:

- Consumerism is a bad thing; it has become an undesirable and unhealthy phenomenon that has caused problems for societies, people and the world

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must comment on whether he or she believes the battle against consumerism is pointless, or not, and justify with reasons grounded in evidence.
- The candidate must demonstrate an awareness of the key words, 'pointless' and 'battle'.
- The candidate must consider the impacts of excessive consumerism: to not only the consumer himself or herself, but also upon his or her community, the lives of others who produce so that people can consume, and the global environment: waste, unsustainable production of goods that harm our natural environments
- The candidate should show an awareness of the systems and structures that create consumerism: the global supply chain, exploitation

Possible Arguments and Examples⁸:

- In the face of all the forces that encourage individuals to buy: either for status or to display their economic worth, or to get value of money by buying more for less, it seems that movements to stem waves of consumerism, such as minimalism, are futile at best.
 - The rise of consumerism is evident in countries with emerging and mature markets such as the United States of America, Singapore, China, India, South Korea and Brazil.
 - The battle against this rising tide of buying and acquiring more seems to be fuelled by the mass production of both luxury and cheap goods, the saturation of the media with advertisements to encourage consumer spending, and emerging platforms that make consumption an easier task, such as food and goods delivery services (Grab Food, Amazon Prime).
 - Consumers either choose to remain conscientiously ignorant of the real-world impacts of their consumerist behaviour, or they can persist in such wasteful behaviour because of a lack of care or mindfulness.
- The battle would be pointless because there are real benefits to be reaped from consumerism. If we remove humane and environmental considerations from the equation and only focus on economic ones, we will see that there are real advantages to consumerist behaviour for the economy.

⁸ Other arguments informed by observations from:

<https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/the-good-and-bad-sides-of-consumerism>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/08/online-shopping-and-accumulation-of-junk/567985/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMrGDSIRMHQ>

- Consumerism creates a boom in goods and services industries and for retailers that serve such industries and this purportedly creates a cycle of demand that also creates jobs for people.
 - Many developed societies hence do little to combat consumerism because it is not in their national interests to do so. Never mind the exploited workers in less developed countries, or the heaps of waste accumulating in oceans or the massive deforestation and loss of plant and animal life due to pollution.
 - The not-in-my-backyard attitude towards this pressing global problem enables it to continue.
- In the face of big companies' marketing tactics and the power they exert over consumers, there seems to be grounds to believe that the battle is pointless.
 - Firstly, psychologists have found that consumption and purchasing items makes consumers feel good (research shows consumers actually have heightened dopamine when they buy), and secondly, goods and services companies invest huge amounts of resources into studying ways in which they can influence people to buy more things.
 - In the face of all these influences, especially in a media-saturated world, some would contend that it is almost as if individuals have no choice but to succumb to their impulse to buy.
 - Rising credit card debts in societies such as USA and Singapore point towards the gravity of the problem.
 - It would take massive awareness campaigns, as well as tighter credit governance to stem the problem of consumerism.
 - Engagement of the success of anti-consumerist movements: have they gained traction and actual influence or have they merely succeeded in raising awareness and only converting some such that only a dent on the problem has been made.
 - This would inform the candidate's inference about the pointlessness or the point to it all.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will understand the complex web of relationships that creates consumerism and the effects of it: that consumerism is not just a problem that local contexts have to grapple with, it has far-ranging impacts on people in other countries and on our natural environment
- Will recognise reasons why it is seen as an intractable problem: why people would perceive that the problem has mushroomed to the point that solutions seem futile (as it might entail dismantling global capitalist systems of production and supply)
- Will not adopt a resigned and apologetic attitude and recognise that individuals have agency and there are ways to disempower systems and structures propped up by companies and richer nations

Limited Responses:

- Listing of effects of consumerism with little to no engagement of whether there are ways to ameliorate these effects by tackling consumerism and reducing it
- Conflation of meaning: not recognising that pointlessness entails futility and is of a different degree than even the greatest difficulty

- Might conflate consumerism with capitalism (but if the links to consumerism are made evident, this would not be considered limited)

7 'Images are always more powerful than words.' Do you agree?

Absolute claim being posited => that something is always comparatively more powerful than another thing; consideration of past and current realities (are)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject matter: images and words – is the former always more powerful than the latter?

Key Terms:

- *images* – artefacts that depict visual perception, or a two-dimensional picture that has a similar appearance to some subject; it could encompass most forms of such visual representation, including, most prevalently, photographs, or paintings, digital renderings, and even moving images (although this last example should not be the main or only focus of the essay)
- *words* – encompass both the verbal and written word, including speeches, articles, books, captions, or any form of textual information produced by individuals or institutions
- *always* – the claim is absolute in nature, requiring candidates to examine if images are more powerful than words in **all** situations and circumstances, past, present and even in the future.
- *more ... than* – candidates must **compare** the power of images with that of words in order to evaluate the statement as a whole

Context: global, worldwide; historically, as well as in the short and long term as well.

Issues:

- Do images have such a degree of power that no words can ever convey?
- How can power be measured?
 - Power can be measured based on the *magnitude* of the impact on the viewer or reader that is created by images or words respectively.

Assumptions:

- The statement implies that the power of images in creating an impact on viewers is so strong that words can never compare.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidates must evaluate whether images are powerful to the extent of always creating a larger impact on viewers than words do.
- Candidates must address the absolute nature of the question throughout the essay and compare the power of images and words.

Possible Arguments & Examples:

- *[Immediacy]* Some may indeed argue that images are always more powerful than mere words, because they have a greater capacity to capture the immediate attention of viewers.
 - Photographs have the capacity to capture the actual appearance of any particular subject, thus presenting the viewer with a most realistic portrayal of that subject and an immediate representation of reality.
 - 'A picture speaks a thousand words.'
- *[Reach / Magnitude]* The nature of viewers' engagement with images as opposed to words makes the former more powerful, because images can convey a more direct message to a universal audience, without any barriers of language.

Due to the absolute nature of the question, it is more important that candidates evaluate the limitations of the stand embedded in the question by including strong alternative arguments:

- *[Openness to interpretation / Subjectivity]* However, it is difficult to argue that images are always more powerful than words. Due to the wide range of interpretations and responses that words allow compared to the fixed and prescriptive nature of images, words are often more powerful than images in enabling readers to exercise the range of their imagination and to enrich their encounter with the text.
 - Granted, some people may find greater enjoyment and comfort with viewing images rather than the tedium of ploughing through words. However, it still stands that when considering the breadth of interpretations and the excitement of such variation in reading words compared to viewing images, words are indeed seen to be more powerful in eliciting unique personal responses.
 - Some may also argue instead that images could also give rise to a wider range of interpretation without the specific guidance of words, such as the case of abstract art pieces in museum galleries without textual descriptions, or posts of images on social media platforms without a caption to provide context. However, considering images and words as distinct media in their own right, it is still true that most would consider a well-written body of text more liberating and compelling compared to a mere image without language to express the full weight of its message.
- *[Depth / Detail]* Images are ultimately limited in terms of the **detail and depth** that they can convey as compared to written or spoken texts.
 - Words can be said to carry deeper meanings compared to images, and thus create a more powerful impact on viewers, especially when fueled with the imagination.
- Images and words produce rather unique effects in their own right, and one cannot reliably be said to be more powerful than the other in all circumstances.
 - In fact, it is often a combination of both images and words that produces the most powerful effects on viewers.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Convincingly substantiate arguments about the powerful effects of images based on the nature of images, as demonstrated through a range of examples

- Acknowledge some limitations of the power that images have, especially in comparison to the effect of words
- May challenge the absolute nature of the question by arguing that images, like words, cannot be said to have absolute power, given the various limitations that these mediums would have in conveying ideas and concepts
- Will compare the level of power that words and images have on readers / viewers based on specific criteria
- May explore nuances of the power relation between images and words

Limited Responses:

- May merely consider the power of images without comparison with that of words
- May not address the absolute nature of the question and thus merely list various ways in which images are powerful (and/or cases in which their power is limited)
- May make the assumption / assertion that most people are visually-oriented
- May conflate 'powerful' with 'effective' without explaining more specifically the relative nature and magnitude of the effect that is created by words and images

8 Assess the view that international agreements are well-intended, but ineffective.

Something is A (good intentions), but not B (not effective); disconnect between theory and practice; consideration of past and current realities (are)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: international agreements and an assessment of whether they are well-intended but ineffective

Key Terms:

- *international agreements* – An international agreement is an instrument by which states and other subjects of international law, such as certain international organisations, regulate matters of concern to them, or an official document signed by a group of countries that wish to make new rules relating to trade, the environment, so on and so forth.⁹
 - The agreements are governed by the law of treaties, which is part of customary international law.
 - International agreements can also be known as accords, annexes, charters, conventions, memorandums of understanding, protocols and treaties.
 - Such formal understandings and commitments between two or more countries could comprise **bilateral** agreements (2 countries), or **multilateral** ones (more than 2 countries). Candidates need not explicitly distinguish between the different forms of international agreements but breadth of consideration is still expected.

⁹ The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties specifies that an international agreement is an "agreement concluded between states in written form and governed by international laws, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments and whatever its particular designation." Although considered binding, international agreements may lapse on expiration, through war or denunciation, or when a fundamental change in circumstances occurs.

- There are many international agreements to be engaged. Those that are more prominent include: the Geneva Protocol, the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement (2015)
- *well-intended* – having or showing good, benevolent or the best of intentions; desiring good effects
- *ineffective* – not producing the effects or results that are desired; no or poor effects on a situation or process; inefficient or ineffectual; not capable of performing satisfactorily

Context: global; regional and world-wide

Issues:

- Why is there a need for international agreements?
- Why do some international agreements work and some not? Are there problems of enforcement?
- *How* is effectiveness measured? *Who* measures effectiveness?

Assumptions:

- International agreements are well-intended, with no agendas favouring certain countries.
- International agreements are well-intended but either well- or poorly-conceived, resulting in implementation issues.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must demonstrate a basic grasp of the nature of international agreements, and show awareness of some international agreements that have been made, in order to examine if they were well-intentioned and effective or ineffective.
- The candidate must flesh out what the effectiveness of an international agreement entails: this could comprise a range of effects from full compliance to overall alleviation of the problem (presumably, an ineffective agreement would be one that achieves no overall betterment in terms of outcomes, or is purely symbolic / a paper exercise).
- The candidate should have a sense of clarity of the intentions behind some of these agreements: what were their intended outcomes, and the reasons why these outcomes were achieved to an extent, or not achieved at all. An examination of reasons contributing to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness, or mixed outcomes, must be ventured.

Possible Arguments and Examples¹⁰:

¹⁰ Other arguments informed by observations from:
<https://www.asil.org/insights/volume/1/issue/1/enforcing-international-law>

- The perspective that international agreements are well-intended but ineffective arises from the many occurrences of failed or ineffectual international pacts and treaties.
 - The Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Helsinki and Oslo Protocols, the Kyoto Protocol and the 1951 Refugee Convention are prime examples of international accords and agreements that had the best of intentions and aspirations, but which fell short in efficacy.
 - One reason for these agreements' hampered and handicapped implementation lies in the fact that generally, **there exist no real ramifications should parties to the agreements back out of or flout the terms of agreement as it has been generally true that international law cannot really be enforced.**
 - The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has provisions to impose mandatory sanctions such as economic ones, diplomatic ones, or military sanctions, but historically, such sanctions have seldom been imposed because the UNSC is not seen to be an adequately representative international body.

- International agreements are also seen to be merely well-intended and not effective because **in reality, many states join treaties not because of aspirational goals of a more orderly, better world, nor because they have a real desire to properly tackle an international issue.**
 - **Most states simply enjoin themselves in international treaties because they have something to gain:** for example, they are cajoled by allies into joining these treaties in the hopes of gaining political leverage for future causes (e.g. North Korea giving in to pressure from China and Russia to sign the NPT; Iran too, under pressure from USA).
 - In the absence of a shared vision and political will to actualise a common goal, the international agreement is doomed from the start with the absence of a shared outcome.
 - **Furthermore, even in cases where multiple parties have a common shared goal, there have also been instances where the international treaty is badly crafted or lacks sturdy implementation mechanisms.**
 - The Biological Weapons Convention is an illustrative case in point, as it was such a quick and loose treaty that had no monitoring, verification or compliance systems, and unsurprisingly, it was aborted in 2002.

- To tar all international agreements with the same brush because of the many instances of failed, ineffective and hollow international agreements would be too harsh a generalisation because there have been clear examples of international agreements that have been both well-intended and effective.
 - The differences in the design and effects of the Montreal Protocol are best observed by comparing it against the Kyoto Protocol, which paled in its ability to implement an effective monitoring system.
 - The Montreal Protocol (MP) was **effective in comparison because it managed to monitor** the ban on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by subjecting all developed and developing nations that were signatories to the same requirements.

<https://voxeu.org/article/international-environmental-agreements-don-t-work>
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2012/jun/07/earth-treaties-environmental-agreements>
<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7839.pdf>

- Many observers contend that the MP was also successful in its monitoring because it had **simple outcomes that were easily trackable and measurable**: it simply wanted a ban on the release of CFCs into the atmosphere and this was an action that was easily enacted by all parties which also valued the common aspiration to reduce the role in the ozone layer, and **all parties could see tangible results from their collective action**: a reduction in ozone layer depletion.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will examine the reasons for the disconnect between theory (well-intentioned design and creation of the international agreements), and practice (these agreements being ineffective in implementation): what causes international agreements to work, and to not work?
- Engage a range of international agreements to reflect awareness that international agreements are made on a variety of bilateral and multilateral issues
- Might recognise that effectiveness is dependent on perspective, which might differ from party to party

Limited Responses:

- Will assume that international treaties have always not worked and venture a one-sided and misinformed response that shows skewed knowledge on only failures (limited scope)
- Will only demonstrate awareness of failed international agreements without recognition of the reasons why these agreements were ineffective
- Will describe the ineffectiveness without attending to reasons accounting for the lack of efficacy
- Will consider only international agreements pertaining to the environment; there exist a variety of international agreements, spanning civil rights to economic pacts (the scope of consideration ought not to be limited to only environmental, worse still, only climate change agreements)
- May de-couple the statement, hence disregarding intentions and focusing only on effectiveness
- May bark up the wrong tree and launch into an examination of international agreements that are not well-intended
 - Some international agreements have hidden agendas, but to question the intention as being dishonourable would be pointless in responding to the question.

9 Has your society sacrificed too much for progress?

Consideration of whether an excess – more than necessary has been sacrificed for an end; consideration of past and current realities (has)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject matter: society's progress – whether too much (what specifically?) has been given up in service of the pursuit of progress

Key Terms:

- *society ... progress* – can be considered in terms of various domains: economic, social, or political
- *too much* -- candidates should assess whether the price that one's society has paid for the sake of progress is **excessive**, or has resulted in a state of affairs that has become unsatisfactory or undesirable (or even worse off than before), despite the benefits that progress itself has brought about

Context: the candidate's society / Singapore

Issues:

- Can we justify the price that one's society has paid for the sake of progress?
- If we cannot, does this entail that too much has been sacrificed for progress?
- If we can, what are the reasons to reconcile the trade-offs and rationalise that too much has not been compromised in the pursuit of progress?
- What does progress look like in one's society?
- What are sacrificed in pursuit of it? How were these sacrifices legitimised? Were they small trade-offs or trade-offs of important national needs?
- Would the magnitude of sacrifice be perceived differently by different stakeholders? E.g. would environment conservation groups hold a different view from urban developers?
- What have sacrifices in the short-term looked like? And in the long-term? Do the short- and long-term sacrifices bear upon the worthwhileness of these sacrifices?

Assumptions:

- One's society has sidelined other important concerns in the name of progress to a degree that is too much for society to bear.
- Progress is a good in itself and ought to be pursued.
- Most in society agree that what is defined as national progress is beneficial are truly a hallmark of national advancement.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidates must assess whether various aspects of the price we have paid in order for the country to gain progress in multiple domains has become excessive, or come at the expense of equally or more important concerns.
 - Candidates must first be able to identify areas of development that have been sidelined, overlooked, undermined, or completely sacrificed in the pursuit of progress.
 - Candidates must then be able to assess whether these sacrifices that have been made are justified or worthwhile, based on the effect that has been produced on society – for the better or worse, and for whom (differing perspectives by differing stakeholders).

Possible Arguments & Examples:

- Due to the pragmatic pursuit of progress, my society has indeed sacrificed too much of the more intangible, emotional dimensions of our lives.
 - In Singapore, the psyche of pursuing tangible economic growth and progress has resulted in a very competitive, calculative, and individualistic culture.
 - The way in which my country has progressed as a society is also reflected in our individual mindsets and ambitions for ourselves: just as Singapore behaves as a country in relation to bigger powers in the region or world, many Singaporeans seek to outperform others around them in pursuit of quicker and greater progress.
 - Such a culture has proven to be detrimental to our sense of civic-mindedness and in our social interactions, as we often prioritise our own interests rather than those of others.
- Progress, which looks forward towards ever-rising standards and goals, has often come at the cost of cherishing and preserving the things that really matter in the present, and even the parts of our past that have led us to our present stage.
 - Our society has progressed to a level that is lauded in the international community, in terms of economic growth, education standards, and social and political stability. However, these improvements have also come at the cost of rising complacency, ruthless competitiveness, and general apathy.
 - Our country's steady economic growth has led us to feel a sense of complacency and dissatisfaction with the state of our individual lives.
 - We engage in competition in so many aspects of our lives (education, social status, wealth, careers) that we seldom allow ourselves to slow down to savour daily experiences, and instead relentlessly pursue the next milestone or goal in our lives.
 - Many still feel that Singaporeans are not sufficiently aware of, let alone engaged with important issues of politics and civic discourse (for the citizen: economic acumen developed at the expense of political consciousness).
 - Our society's impressive progress has ironically left the current generation rather disengaged and uninterested in taking ownership of the country's future progress – a price that is too high to pay as a result of the stable progress that we have enjoyed for a large part of our country's journey towards achieving progress.
 - What we might have gained in the short-run: political stability and follower-ship as a result of a citizenry that does not often question the decisions political leaders make, we might lose in the long-run, especially in a future world where the political climate might be volatile, and political discernment is necessary.
- With that being said, there is truth to the perspective that the sacrifices that my society has made have not been 'too much'. Hefty as they may seem, these sacrifices have in fact been necessary and worthwhile in order for the country to have progressed.
 - As said by Lee Kuan Yew in his book *Hard Truths to Keep Singapore Going*¹¹

Thoughtful Responses:

¹¹ Could be contested with the ideas in Donald Low and Sudhir Thomas Vadaketh's *Hard Choices: Challenging the Singapore Consensus*

- Will engage with the core requirement of the question to assess if sacrifices made are considered 'too much' even with the advantages that progress has brought.
- This will require candidates to weigh these costs against the benefits of progress.

Limited Responses:

- Only consider various sacrifices that society has made, without any connection to how this has resulted from the pursuit of progress.
- Domain-driven or example-driven answers would limit the scope of the argument. (Domain-driven = the appearance of different arguments when actually the candidate only adopts one argument, and transposes it across different domains across different paragraphs.)

10 How important is it to have a sense of humour?

Extent to which something is important

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: a sense of humour – the degree to which it is important to have this

Key Terms:

- *to have a sense of* – the ability to appreciate or to express; a mood or state of mind; to have the temperament or disposition to; a quality of being
- *humour* – the quality of being funny, amusing or comic, especially as expressed in literature or speech; the ability to express humour or to amuse other people and make them laugh
- *important* – to be of great significance, worth or value; to be of consequence or social relevance

Context: timeless; all contexts

Issues:

- What role does humour play in our lives? Not only in our personal lives, but also in various aspects of community – in education, advertising, political satire, the media.
- How has humour had positive and negative impacts on the self, community, state and in international relations? In light of these observations, what has been the overall extent to which it is important to have a sense of humour?
- What kind of humour causes offence? What undergirds reactions that deem such humour in poor taste or as socially irresponsible or disrespectful? What are some ensuing responses that have regarded such reactions as reflecting a lack of a sense of humour? Are they justified or not?
- Do comics and comedians have the right to free speech, and also the right to offend? Is it fair to say that some audiences do not understand the nature of humour and comedy, and therefore have no sense of humour?

Assumptions:

- Humour is undoubtedly valuable and important, but it has fallen to bad use

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must evaluate to determine the degree of importance attached to having a sense of humour.
- The candidate must recognise that humour can yield both benefits and harms, and in considering all these, decide the overall extent of importance that having a sense of humour should be regarded and treated with.
- The candidate should pay attention to the key words 'have a sense of' and understand that humour is relational – it requires a party to generate / produce the humour, and another party to understand / interpret the humour.
- The candidate should realise that there might be situations where intended humour is not interpreted and understood as humour, and that it might cause offence.

Possible Arguments and Examples:

- Arguments about levity vs. causing offence:
 - Those who would devalue or regard humour with suspicion should interrogate the intentions and interpretation of humour: something intended as humorous could cause unwitting offense, therein necessitating the audience's ability to take things in a more light-hearted manner.
 - With that being said, some variants of humour are absolutely in poor taste, and are intended to harm and disrespect. People who produce such jokes and jest often lament that people should not take things so seriously and should acquire a sense of humour, despite the fact that their jokes are really offensive and hurtful, e.g. jokes about sexuality, gender, race and religion.
 - This points to the fact that while having a sense of humour is very important, one should not venture humour with malicious intent and one should not be expected to tolerate mean-spirited humour.
 - While it is absolutely important to have a sense of humour, norms of respect should not be flouted, and neither should people have to laugh off blatant disrespect or condescension.
 - It is hard to understand how the 12 offensive editorial cartoons of Prophet Mohammed by Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, were humorous in any way. Granted, they were intended as political humour and purportedly sought to contribute to debates about self-censorship in Islam, but the depictions of Prophet Muhammad were flagrantly disrespectful to Muslims' cherished belief that it is blasphemous to visually represent Prophet Mohammed.
 - Muslims' reactions also should not have been dismissed as overreactions as offence was caused given the sacred nature of the subject of the political cartoons. As such, while having a sense of humour is absolutely important in life, that ability to share humour must be exercised responsibly.
- It seems to be that humour has grown in importance, particularly in hectic, modern societies such as Singapore. This could be because of how draining working life and modern living can be, so much so that people value humour more so than before as it provides an avenue through which people can be happy and laugh.

- Interestingly, in Singapore's 2018 National Values Assessment, having a sense of humour and fun made the list of Top 10 values, beliefs and behaviours that best describe themselves, Singapore society currently, and their notion of an ideal Singapore society.
 - Observers ventured explanations for the increasing degree of importance placed on having a sense of humour by opining that this could be due to the growing expectations of Singaporeans, and the stresses of escalating costs of living and external pressures, which have caused Singaporeans to believe that it is important to laugh, have an outlet, and let off steam.
 - This lead one to also consider the importance of humour during personally difficult times.
- Historically, humour has been a means of communicating complex and possibly unpopular ideas to make them palatable to the masses (and sometimes, to sway perceptions). Hence, the importance of having a sense of humour to communicate these ideas and to also understand them cannot be understated
 - The role of the fool in Renaissance England
 - Chaplin's films
 - John Oliver
 - This bears upon the debate about understanding and/or accepting political critique delivered through humour:
 - Jimmy Kimmel and his frequent jibes made at Donald Trump and Trump's reactions
 - Ricky Gervais and his views on offensive comedy, shared in his Netflix special, 'Humanity'
 - Jerry Seinfeld other comedians' views that comedians have the right to be offensive.
 - Also possibly, though not the weightiest point, the role and importance of humour in interpersonal relationships
 - Other arguments informed by observations from:
 - <http://theconversation.com/what-is-the-point-of-offensive-humour-76889>

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will consider humour more broadly, and perhaps consider why comedy is such an important genre in literature, and the draw of great comedies such as those of William Shakespeare's.
- Will consider the controversies over political humour and satire.
- Might attend deeply to the nature of humour itself, and show awareness of the 'outrage culture' and the notion of political correctness.

Limited Responses:

- Will forget to calibrate the extent of importance, and perhaps answer a simpler argumentative question, 'Is humour important?', or worse still a simple expository question, 'What are the benefits and harms of humour?'.
- Will see humour only in individuals' lives, and neglect to consider humour in the media, in politics and aspects of community and international relations.

11 Is it justifiable for nations to always prioritise their national interests?

An absolute position in all circumstances => privileging one thing over another in all instances => whether this is justifiable

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject Matter: justifiability of nations prioritising their national interests all the time, in all circumstances

Key Terms:

- *justifiable* – there is good reason for it; defensible and defensible as reasonable or right
- *always* – in all circumstances; at all times; on all occasions
- *prioritise* – designate or treat something as being more important than another; to decide which is of more or the most importance and to focus one's attention on those before all others
- *nations; national interests* – the needs and wants of the nation as a whole, above and beyond the interests of subordinate areas or groups within the nation; a country's goals and ambitions (it's *raison d'état*) and the process of fulfilling or securing these through various tools such as foreign policy

Context: global; worldwide

Issues:

- Apart from national interests, what other interests do nations have to consider and act on?
- The contexts of various types of nations, and how this bears upon justifiability: a beleaguered nation would have justifiable reason to always prioritise its national needs as (1) its resources might very well be limited, and hence, (2) should reasonably be directed to its own citizens, when (3) there are other nations that are in better positions to help
- The duties of care governments owe to their citizens, and the citizens of other nations
- A more inward-looking and protectionist outlook versus a more global, cosmopolitan outlook
- Is any nation in the position (in terms of resources and power) to ever not prioritise national interests? Would doing so be irresponsible on the part of the government?
- How national interests are framed varies from context to context, and this has implications on the question: some nations have very parochial concerns whereas others have national interests that do not exclude non-national interests

Assumptions:

- There are nations that exhibit such behaviour: always putting their national interests before all other interests
- It can be observed that many countries exhibit the behaviour of always prioritising their national interests above all other interests
- National interests are exclusionary and inward-looking and do not encompass more global and inclusive outlooks

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- The candidate must engage reasons for justifiability: the grounds upon which we can or cannot rationalise / legitimise a nation always putting its national interests above all other considerations.

Possible Arguments and Examples:

- Generally, it is believed that countries have every justifiable reason to always prioritise their national interests. This is because there is truth to the assumption that the world comprises an inter-state system, and states must compete as *unitary, rational actors* to maximise their national interests in order to benefit their citizens whom governments owe *fundamental duties of care* to.
 - This *realist* paradigm portends that governments are not only duty-bound to serve their countries' national interests first and foremost, in order to maximise their citizens' well-being in relation to other citizens in other nations, they must compete against other nations in order to develop ahead of others.
 - This is why despite censure from humanitarian groups, rich nations continue to prioritise their interests ahead of those of poorer nations, and why countries turn away refugees seeking asylum on the grounds of needing to prioritise their national interests.
- In an increasingly *interdependent* world, the realist paradigm of countries needing to prioritise their national interests above other countries' needs, or shared global concerns, is fast losing relevance.
 - Many international relations theorists and scholars have posited that bilateralism and multilateralism, and seeking mutually-beneficial outcomes that serve both national and common bilateral and multilateral interests, are more beneficial to all nations overall rather than solitary pursuits of national interest.
 - Sometimes, national interests can be de-prioritised in relation to more universal goals, whilst still remaining important even though it is of secondary significance.
 - This would be better for nations as a collective, and various advantages could be reaped, for example, stronger regionalism.
 - We must prioritise national interest in all we do by fostering partnerships and cooperation that have some benefit for us. This provides the basis for consistent international relations.
 - The prioritisation of national interests does not have to be a zero-sum game. National interests and the interests of other countries are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
- It is not always justifiable because national interests are often erroneously thought of as the shared, common interests of all in society, when in actual fact, the state does not always represent all sections in society.
 - In reality, most states represent the interests of specific groups more so than others', and sometimes, even at the expense of the latter's interests. This means that the rights and needs of some in society can be compromised in service of what are deemed to be larger, national goals.
 - In some countries, civil rights and liberties have been suppressed or violated in the name of national interest, such as in the case of Sri Lanka where the Sinhalese-

majority government implemented the Sinhala Only Act, an official language act, to purportedly unify the nation, when in actuality, it resulted in many Tamils being denied jobs and opportunities as they had to learn the language of the majority Sinhalese in order to gain public service employment.

- Hence, policies and legislation, which claim to be in service of larger national goals can have discriminatory and disadvantaging effects on minorities in societies and therefore cannot always be prioritised.
- Prioritising national interests without regard to the well-being or rights of citizens is not justifiable.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will have a clear conception of what national interests are, and what they could comprise
- Will engage in reasoning, and put forth bases to ascertain justifiability
- Might go beyond considering the tension between national and more universal interests, to realise that national interests might not always represent the interests of groups in society
- Will weigh arguments against one another
- May raise problems of coming to a consensus of what national interest is, but this only works if it is carefully linked to problems of a certain national interest being pushed too far at the expense of another national interest (or this risks being too tangential)

Limited Responses:

- May list or describe examples in which national interests have been prioritised to beneficial and detrimental ends, with a lack of attention to the key words 'always' and 'justifiable'
- May fail to recognise that the key contention in the question is about something '*always*' being 'justifiable'
- May merely make assertions about the moral obligation to set aside national interests to help other countries, rather than excavating the deeper reasons behind this obligation
- May make appeals to prioritising national interest that are not really in the national interest (For example, North Korea's or Duterte's regimes disguise regime interests under the veneer of national interest, so this cannot be an argument against national interest.)

12 Given the growing demands of modern society, has raising children become more of a burden?

Given a condition, has something become more A than B (cause and effect; comparative: become more A than B); consideration of past and current realities to compare (has ... become)

QUESTION EXPECTATIONS:

Subject matter:

- Candidates must have an informed and sensitive understanding of the challenges of raising children in today's world, for all levels of society.
- This is primarily focused on **parents** as the key figures responsible for the raising of their children (from infancy to their school-going ages), but could potentially include other members of the family involved in the process of raising children, or even the role of

institutions in shaping the formative years of children in the education system as well (although this latter point should not form the main or only focus of the essay).

Key Terms:

- *growing demands* – candidates must also be able to consider how modern society places increasing demands on parents to raise their children in an increasingly complex world.
- *more of a burden* – the term ‘more of a burden’ requires candidates to compare whether the challenges and costs of raising children in today’s world have increased as compared to the past.

Context: modern societies, worldwide; modern societies, in general

Issues:

- The raising of children is inextricably connected to the environment in which they grow up. Parents take on the main responsibility of ensuring that their children are raised in a physically, mentally and emotionally healthy manner.
- However, given the higher expectations that modern society exerts on parents as compared to the past, this task of raising children has become much more demanding, and therefore a heavier burden on the shoulders of parents, who have to navigate these challenges alongside their children.

Assumptions:

- Because of the more complex and challenging demands that modern society creates for families with children, it has indeed become more burdensome to have children and to raise them based on good moral standards together with a good standard of living.

QUESTION REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidates should analyse ‘the growing demands of modern society’ in countries beyond their own, in order to broaden the scope of their arguments to consider a range of concerns that parents face in raising children.
- Possible ways of presenting opposing arguments could be to posit that the task of raising children has always been burdensome or challenging, and is not significantly increased despite the growing demands of modern society.

Possible Arguments & Examples:

- Raising children has indeed become more of a burden in modern society because of the greater need to guard them against challenges of an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world.
- Raising children is also more of a burden because societal expectations of children as well as parenthood have become simultaneously higher and more diverse.
 - There are various perspectives on what constitutes good parenting principles, based on sources ranging from books and online forums to professional advice or word-of-mouth. Parents have the task of navigating this deluge of differing viewpoints in order to decide what is best for their children.

- Parents are also now facing a bigger problem of meeting higher expectations with regards to ensuring that their children are not disadvantaged in comparison with other children, especially those in families with more resources.
- Raising children might not be a burden, since they, as adults, eventually help shoulder the burden of family expenditure, and contribute to the taxpayer pool to aid an ageing population in modern society in the long term.
 - As children grow up to become moral, productive and responsible members of society, this is a practical consideration that many parents might consider. Especially in societies that prize filial piety, there is a general expectation that children will provide for their parents in retirement.
 - In the short term, however, the onus of raising such cherished members of society largely falls upon the parents.
 - One may argue that this sense of filial piety is no longer as strong in modern society, where individual liberty is prized above collective well-being. However, it would not be considered too much to expect one's children to care for their parents, and to see that as one of the factors that may alleviate the financial burden of raising children, in the long run.
- The supposed emotional benefits that outweigh, alleviate or remove the burden of raising a child amidst the demands of any modern society hinges greatly upon the importance of raising the children right in the first place.
 - Some may feel that the joy of raising children makes all sacrifice worthwhile in the end.
 - Children become a precious part of the family whom parents are willing to give up anything for, in order to protect, love, and care for them.

Thoughtful Responses:

- Will recognise the negative connotation of the word 'burden' and form arguments that support or challenge this perception of raising children as becoming more of a burden
- Will demonstrate a deep understanding of how the demands of modern society have affected the task of raising children, and critically analyse the extent of this causal relationship

Limited Responses:

- May make superficial assumptions and assertions about the task of raising children without considering issues from the point of view of parents and other significant adults involved in the process of raising children
- May merely list the various challenges of raising children without assessing how the demands of modern society have affected these

Eunoia Junior College
2018 JC2 H1 GP Preliminary Examinations
Paper 2 Suggested Answer Scheme

From Para 1

1. What are the two opposite reactions towards slang described in paragraph 1? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)	Direct Paraphrase / Literal
pervades to a startling degree ... Its POPULARITY can be gauged by the rush of journalists, politicians and purveyors of popular culture to EMBRACE the latest word or phrase to spice up a newspaper headline, advertisement or television script.	A (POPULARITY, EMBRACE) [1]: <u>popular</u> : One reaction is the (rush of) widespread acceptance / great support <u>embrace</u> : and approval / recognition / welcoming / celebration of the newest / most current slang terms by <i>newsmakers, politicians and purveyors of popular culture</i> .
On the other side of the fence, prescriptive guardians of standard English and morality BEMOAN slang's ' DEGRADING ' effect on public discourse and culture; their outcry ...	B (BEMOAN, DEGRADING) [1]: <u>bemoan</u> : In contrast, the opposing reaction is that <i>defenders / champions of standard English and social values</i> lament / grumble / complain about / express disdain (what they perceive to be) <u>degrading</u> : the demeaning / damaging effects of slang.

2. Using material from paragraphs 2–4 only (lines 10–30), summarise the reasons for the popularity and power of slang. [8]

Slang is popular among speakers of American English because ...

Point	From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)	Paraphrased
A	(By design,) slang is WITTIER (11) OR slang's rich flashes of HUMOUR (12)	<i>Slang is popular among speakers of American English because ...</i> it is funnier / funny
B	and more CLEVER than standard English (11) OR slang's ... GENIUS (12)	and more intelligent than standard English.
C	As a species, we seem to have a GENETIC INCLINATION to linguistic creativity (11-12)	We naturally / innately / inherently prefer / have a predisposition / lean towards / have an affinity for / are drawn to such flair / style in the use of language.
D	each generation or subculture or counterculture group has the chance to SHAPE (13-14)	Slang allows each unique group to customise / create
E	and PROPAGATE its own lexicon (14)	and spread / promote / popularise unique phrases,
F	exercise INGENUITY . (14)	demonstrating / flexing creativity / innovativeness.
G	a DYNAMIC , (15)	The outcome is a lively / spirited / vibrant
H	MISCHIEVOUS body of language (15)	and playful / cheeky language
I	it is FUN to use (16)	that is enjoyable / amusing to use
J	and IDENTIFIES the speaker as clever and witty. (16)	and conveys the impression that the user is / causes the user to be seen as / regarded / known as intelligent and humorous.
K	establish a sense of COMMONALITY among its speakers (17)	Slang builds a shared sense of identity / provides a form of shared identity among its users
L	When slang is used, there is a SUBTEXT to the primary message (18)	by conveying an underlying / subtle message
M	That subtext speaks to the speakers and listeners in the same 'TRIBE' . (19)	that only those from the same in-group / identity group / community would understand.

N	slang is an explicit MANIFESTATION of that (tribe) identity. (20-21) <i>Context: Because 'tribe' identity is so important,</i>	slang is a strong / powerful / clear / vivid / graphic representation of an identity.
O	its VARIED (23)	Slang is also popular because of its assortment of / different / myriad of / wide range of
P	and UNAMBIGUOUS vocabulary (24)	and distinct / specific / precise vocabulary
Q	that reflects the NUANCES of status. (24) <i>Context: in a society preoccupied with status</i>	that gives us words to express / communicate / show / demonstrate the subtleties of status / different social statuses of people
R	Slang plays a CRITICAL role (24)	Slang plays an important / indispensable / essential / imperative role
S	(inferred) whether it DELINEATES a winner ('top dog') from a loser ('toast'), or an oppressor ('the Man') from the oppressed ('doormat') (25-26) OR LABELS for 'us versus them' (26)	in differentiating / distinguishing between those who are powerful / successful and those who are not
T	providing CATCHY and MEMORABLE labels (26)	in an instantly appealing, unforgettable / impactful way.
U	In a similar vein, slang is also much more EFFECTIVE than standard or conventional English (27)	Slang is also much more lucid / powerful than standard English
V	(inferred) when it comes to DESCRIBING sports, sex and intoxication. (27-28)	(inferred) when we want to convey thoughts / talk about informal / leisure / casual / frivolous topics.
W	and when it does we DRAW UPON slang far more than (29)	As such, we rely on it more
X	(inferred) we would if discussing, for example, the economy, religion or foreign policy. (29-30)	than when talking about serious / formal issues .

[Total: 24 points]

No. of points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15 & above
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

From Para 5

3. In line 31, why does the author describe American slang as 'fertile'? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

<p>From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)</p>	<p>Use of Language [reason for author's word choice]</p>
<p>American slang is also known for being FERTILE. At any given moment, there are MANY, MANY new slang words and expressions being CREATED and in use with each new generation.</p>	<p>Answers could be presented in the following formats:</p> <p>1. Function & Context <i>Seeing the question as a metaphor-type question (a fertile being)</i></p> <p>A1 (FUNCTION: Meaning: to <u>CREATE OR MANY, MANY</u>) [1]:</p> <p>He does so because fertility connotes reproduction / the giving of life <u>OR</u> He wishes the reader to have the idea of abundance / aplenty (, just like fertile land that can give life to bountiful crops)</p> <p>and he wants to convey that likewise,</p> <p>B1 (CONTEXT) [1]:</p> <p>American slang also reproduces itself (A2) <u>AND/OR</u> gives expression to a great number of new words (B2).</p> <p>2. Two reasons for why the word 'fertility' was used to describe <i>Seeing the question as a paraphrase-type question (two senses of fertile)</i></p> <p>A2 (first meaning of <u>FERTILITY</u>: to <u>CREATE</u>) [1]:</p> <p>He does so because slang reproduces itself</p> <p>B2 (second meaning of fertility: <u>MANY, MANY</u>) [1]:</p> <p>in abundance with each new generation.</p>

4. What is the author’s purpose in comparing the language process of meaning-making to ‘natural selection’ (line 33)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)	Use of Language [infer author’s purpose]
<p>In fact, the language process of meaning making is akin to natural selection. With a few notable exceptions — most especially “cool” — we tire of even the strongest words and they FADE AWAY ... Just like a living organism, to counteract its short-lived nature and survive, slang must constantly REGENERATE as a body of speech and subset of the language.</p>	<p>ALL-OR-NOTHING</p> <p>A (PURPOSE: of comparison) [1]:</p> <p>Either to show similarities:</p> <p>The author is using an analogy to help his readers understand that the processes of both meaning-making and natural selection are similar ...</p> <p>The author wants to highlight the similarities between both ...</p> <p>The author intends to create a parallel between ...</p> <p>Or to make a less familiar concept understandable:</p> <p>The author hopes to use a process that most readers would be familiar with, to illustrate / help readers understand a process that is less familiar</p> <p>B (CONTEXT: understanding of natural selection must be shown) [1]:</p> <p>and therein show that it is important for slang to continually evolve to meet the needs of people otherwise it would risk dying out.</p>

From Para 7

5. In lines 45–50, why is youth ‘the most powerful stimulus for the creation and distribution of slang’ in comparison to the other factors? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)	Inference
<p>The four factors that are the most likely to produce slang are youth, oppression, sport and vice, which provide an impetus to coin and use slang for different sociolinguistic reasons. Of these four factors, youth is the most powerful stimulus for the creation and distribution of slang.</p> <p>For, although we are not all MEMBERS of a GROUP that is oppressed by a dominant culture, or sports fanatics immersed in the language and lore of the game, and we do not all dip our toes into the pool of vice with its attendant slang, we are all young once.</p>	<p>ALL-OR-NOTHING</p> <p>A (universality of the experience of youth) [1]:</p> <p>This is because all of us went through the same phase of growing up / adolescence.</p> <p>VS</p> <p>B (lack of a common experience with the other four factors) [1]:</p> <p>However, we may not have all experienced the other factors (of oppression, sport and vice).</p>

6. Explain the author’s use of the expression ‘let alone’ in line 52. [2]

From Passage	Use of Language [reason for author’s choice of expression]
<p>generational imperative to invent a slang vocabulary that we perceive as our own, rejecting the slang of our older brothers and sisters, let alone our parents, in favour of a new lexicon</p>	<p>ALL-OR-NOTHING</p> <p>A (FUNCTION: meaning of expression) [1]:</p> <p>The function of the expression could be understood as ONE of these:</p> <p>Expression used to indicate <u>probability</u>:</p> <p>The author wants to highlight / emphasise how (highly) unlikely / the improbability / implausibility ... (tied to context of adopting old lexicon)</p> <p>The author wishes to indicate how it is more likely that ... (tied to context of rejecting parents’ lexicon)</p> <p>Expression used to indicate <u>expectation / obviousness</u>:</p> <p>The author wants to establish that if we cannot expect ... The author wants to show that obviously ...</p> <p>B (CONTEXT) [1]:</p> <p>it would be for the young to accept / use the slang of their parents given that the more likely / probable situation of accepting / using the slang of their older siblings is not even happening.</p>

young people would reject the slang of their parents, since they **already do not wish to** adopt the slang of siblings who are closer to them in age, and who would purportedly have less dated slang.

young people to be willing to adopt the slang of their parents if they **already reject** the slang of older siblings, which might be trendier and therefore more acceptable to young people.

young people would not want to inherit slang from their parents **given the fact that they already do not wish to** use the slang of their older siblings.

E.g.

The author wishes **to indicate that it is implausible** (A) for us to not reject the slang of our parents, **given that we already** reject the slang of our older siblings who are of our generation. (B)

The author wants to impress upon us that **given that we already reject** the slang of those who are just slightly older than us – our siblings of the same generation (B), **it is hard to expect us to not** reject the slang of our parents who are one generation older (A).

From Para 8

7. What is the author implying about slang with the use of the word 'predatory' (line 54)? [2]

From Passage	Use of Language [reason for author's word choice; implication due to the word choice]		
<p>Youth slang derives some of its power from its willingness to borrow from other bodies of slang. Despite its seeming mandate of creativity and originality, slang is blatantly predatory, borrowing without shame from possible sources.</p>	<p>ALL-OR-NOTHING</p> <p>A (FUNCTION: Meaning of 'predatory') [1]:</p> <p>The meaning of the word could be understood in terms of ONE of these:</p>		
	<p>A1: an animal predator feeds on (‘derives some of its power from’, ‘from other other bodies’):</p> <p>Just as how a predator feeds off prey to survive, ...</p> <p>As a predator is more powerful than its prey because it feeds on them ...</p>	<p>A2: animal predator instinct (‘from other bodies’, ‘borrowing without shame’):</p> <p>Just as how a predator would eat / hunt others instinctively / naturally / as a matter of nature ...</p>	<p>A3: human predatory behaviour - exploitative / unashamedly (‘blatantly’, ‘borrowing without shame’, ‘from other bodies’):</p> <p>Predatory behaviour is often exploitative ...</p> <p>Predatory behaviour involves a person deriving his or her power from using the body of another weaker person ...</p> <p>Human beings can behave in a predatory way by shamelessly using others ...</p>
	<p>B (CONTEXT: corresponding implication by likening both):</p>		
<p>B1:</p> <p>slang is derived from words from other dialects / languages (to survive).</p> <p>slang also grows more powerful because it takes from words of other languages.</p> <p>Just as a predator feeds off prey, slang too, derives words from other languages.</p>	<p>B2:</p> <p>slang instinctively consumes words from other languages, and creates its own vocabulary list.</p> <p>slang naturally draws on words from other bodies of slang as that is the nature of slang itself (as a derivative language)</p> <p>slang’s borrowing from other languages is likewise without guilt / ill-intent as it is the nature of how slang is created.</p>	<p>B3:</p> <p>and likewise slang exploits other languages by strengthening itself by drawing on other vernaculars.</p> <p>and slang is similar because it takes words from other languages and therein gains its power.</p> <p>and slang’s borrowing from other languages is likewise unashamed and blatant because it is willingly taking / has always taken from other languages.</p>	

8. How does the author illustrate his point that American youth slang has borrowed 'consistently' (line 60) from the slang of the black American urban experience? [1]

From Passage	Inference
<p>Foremost among them is the African-American vernacular, whose influence on American youth slang of the 20th century cannot be over-stated. Beginning in the late 1930s with the wild popularity of swing jazz and the jitterbug, continuing into the 'jive generation' that fought World War II, through the beats and hipsters of the 1950s, the Sixties' mainstream youth and hippies alike, into the pervasive patois of hip-hop, American youth slang has borrowed consistently from the slang of the black American urban experience.</p>	<p>He illustrates his point by using examples across time / throughout history. (inferred)</p>

From Para 9

9. (a) Give one similarity and one difference between slang and fashion mentioned in paragraph 9. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From Passage (words UNDERLINED IN BOLD are key words; also, meaning of words in bold must be captured)	Direct Paraphrase / Literal
<p>youth slang is a core element of youth culture -- a defiant gesture of resistance and an emblem of tribe identity. Fashion and hairstyles are other KEY MANIFESTATIONS of a generation's identity, but they can be REGULATED by adult authorities with LESS EFFORT. With music and language, REGULATION and RESTRICTION are much more DIFFICULT. Even the most vigilant and repressive attempts by adult authority cannot completely eradicate slang and music with its slang lyrics.</p>	<p>A (SIMILARITY - KEY MANIFESTATIONS) [1]:</p> <p>Both slang and fashion are important / crucial / vital / main ways in which people can display / exhibit their individuality.</p> <p>B [DIFFERENCE - ease of REGULATION, RESTRICTION: LESS EFFORT vs. much more DIFFICULT]:</p> <p>ALL-OR-NOTHING Both B1 + B2 needed to secure the 1m</p> <p>The difference is that ...</p> <p>B1: while fashion can be policed / controlled easily,</p> <p>B2: monitoring the use of slang is much more challenging (as even the most watchful and strict adults struggle to entirely eliminate the use of slang).</p>

(b) What is the author implying about slang by highlighting the difference between slang and fashion? [1]

From the Passage	Inference
<p>Whatever its source, youth slang is a core element of youth culture, as a defiant gesture of resistance and an emblem of tribe identity. Fashion and hairstyles are other key manifestations of a generation's identity, but they can be easily regulated by adult authorities. With music and language, regulation and restriction are much more difficult. Even the most vigilant and repressive attempts by adult authority cannot completely eradicate slang and music with its slang lyrics.</p>	<p>The author is implying that slang is more pervasive / enduring than fashion in establishing one's identity.</p>

From Para 10

10. Suggest one reason for the author ending the passage with 'Slang swings. Slang moves and grooves. Slang rocks, slang rules.' (lines 72-73). [1]

Inference
<p>Answers <u>must</u> focus on the use of slang / the nature of slang:</p> <p>It is to sum up his topic about slang by using expressions with words that have acquired slang usage such as 'swings', 'grooves', 'rocks'.</p> <p>OR It is to keep to his theme of slang by closing with a series of slang expressions.</p> <p>OR It is to conclude on an informal note as it befits the nature of slang.</p> <p>OR It is to capture the energy / life in slang to end the passage in an interesting manner.</p> <p>Even better answers will <u>also</u> notice the rhetorical / literary device used:</p> <p>The author uses the device of repetition, of the word 'slang', and the use of slang words, 'moves', 'grooves', 'rocks' and 'rules', to memorably end his essay on slang.</p> <p>The author uses repetition and slang words to end the passage in a memorable way.</p>

11. Tom Dalzell makes a number of observations about the popularity and power of slang. How far do you agree with his observations, relating your arguments to yourself and your society? [10]

Requirements:

R1: How far do you agree with his observations?

In addressing R1, candidates should draw from their own experience, especially given the fact they are young people, and that of their society.

What is slang?

- From the passage:
 - 'used only by certain groups, such as teenagers or people of certain professions' (lines 8-9)
 - 'establishes a sense of commonality among its speakers' (line 17)
- OED / Other online resources:
 - **(OED)** A type of language consisting of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal, are more common in speech than writing, and are typically restricted to a particular context or group of people.
 - **(Wikipedia)** Colloquialisms are distinct from slang or jargon. Slang refers to words used only by specific social groups, such as teenagers or soldiers. Colloquial language may include slang, but consists mostly of contractions or other informal words and phrases known to most native speakers of the language.
 - **(Literarydevices.com)** Colloquialism can be confused with slang and jargon, since these are two other ways of conversing in informal ways. The difference is that slang words are used in specific social groups, like teenagers, whereas colloquialisms can generally be understood across age and socioeconomic barriers as long as the speakers are all from the same geographic region. Colloquialisms may use slang within them, but this is not always the case.
 - Similar to slang, jargon is used only by certain groups, but it often refers to words used in a particular profession. For example, the way in which lawyers speak is so specific to their profession that it is often known as "legalese." Other professions that rely on exchanging complex information also use jargon, such as scientists, doctors, and businesspeople.
- For the purpose of this AQ:

SINGLISH

- 'Singlish' is not the best example of slang; it is an entire creole.
 - Candidates who raise Singlish as an example of slang will "show an adequate level of understanding of terms and issues (which may include minor distortion)", but manage to show features of slang as raised by the passage.
- Singlish, however, contains slang words/phrases which can be raised as examples for this AQ -- these words are used by specific groups of people: e.g. 'ponteng' for skipping lessons → evolved in simply 'pon'
 - Candidates who show the ability to differentiate slang words and phrases from the entire creole of Singlish will "show an adequate to good/very good understanding of terms and issues": Band 1 or 2 for AQ Content.

SLURS/DEROGATORY TERMS/VULGARITIES

- By definition, trending slurs do belong within the scope of slang -- candidates should recognise these slurs are not nice though, and socially frowned upon. When examples are cited, there should be explanations and discussion about the negative implications of the use of derogatory slang terms.

Other things to note:

- A few Text References are not the best to use as they tend to invite candidates to list examples of slang and can be difficult to evaluate deeper.

- Also, many candidates may tend to narrowly refer to slang from the English or Singlish language. For a broader range of illustration, candidates should try to provide examples of slang used by the Malay, Indian and Chinese communities as well (which are separate from the Singlish lingo).

Possible Responses:

These are just possible responses and are not exhaustive. Candidates should be given credit when they generate unanticipated but sensible arguments, ideas and illustrations that are relevant.

Para 1

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
prescriptive guardians of standard English and morality bemoan slang's 'degrading' effect on public discourse and culture	Slang is seen as something that could thwart the government's efforts in ensuring that Singaporeans have a good command of standard English. A good command of standard English will help Singaporeans communicate ideas that could be understood by other people around the world, especially when it comes to business dealings.	There is a clear ban on the use of slang and colloquialism especially in English Language examinations at the different levels e.g. PSLE, O and A-levels. There is a more pervasive use of slang through the increasing popularity of social media sites such as SGAG which promote the use of slang heavily. While many teachers can empathise with the draw of such sites, they have raised concerns about the influence of such sites when it comes to students' ability to express themselves clearly using standard English.

Para 2

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
By design, slang is wittier and more clever than standard English ... rich flashes of humour, genius and poetry .	Slang is able to incorporate humour through its smart use of words (new words are sometimes created) and this is one of the reasons for its appeal. Slang can also express certain sentiments or describe situations in a way that is easily understood without the use of too many words.	The Singlish slang "chimology" is a portmanteau of "chim" meaning "profound" in the Hokkien dialect, and -logy. It refers to the study of things that are profound, usually of concepts, ideas. It is used almost exclusively by students during examination preparation. Another Singlish slang "pattern more than badminton" is the English version of the saying " <i>pattern chay kway badminton</i> " - it describes an "innovative" person who thinks up excessively inventive solutions to do (or to avoid doing) tasks he is given.
With slang, each individual, society and generation has the chance to shape and propagate its own lexicon ... exercise ingenuity	Slang allows people to come up with their own distinctive language, forging a bond between its users in the process. Each generation can come up with its own slang unique to its users and sometimes older slangs could be modified or have their meanings changed or expanded. In 'Singlish', the influence of other languages and dialects has allowed its users to come up with innovative ways to describe different situations and sentiments that are uniquely Singaporean.	The use of "little red dot" reflects Singaporeans' narrative of our vulnerability and resilience. The relatively new slang "chillax" demonstrates how two words "chill" and "relax" can be fused to form a new word that incorporates the meanings of both words. Such slang overlaps with foreign slang terms. In fact, SGAG is a local spinoff of the internationally popular 9GAG which contains many references to western slang.

Para 3

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
<p>Slang's primary reason for being - to establish a sense of commonality among its speakers ... subtext speaks to the speakers and listeners in the same 'tribe'</p>	<p>Slang spawns from various social groups and Dalzell is right to say that it creates a sense of belonging amongst people from the same social group or 'tribe'. Singapore slang borrows from a colourful array of languages such as Hokkien and Malay. The multi-ethnic nature of Singapore calls for an even greater need to speak the same language and borrowing words from the language of each race can help to build a greater sense of identity. These slang terms allow various social groups and even Singaporeans as a whole to bond and feel a sense of commonality.</p> <p>In addition, slang also helps people from different social groups to understand each other's culture. With globalisation and the media, Singaporeans are well-connected to the world. The exposure to foreign slang also makes it easier for us to understand the culture of people outside of our 'tribe' and country. Such knowledge goes beyond mere awareness, but can also influence Singapore's culture in ways that may not be desirable, especially amongst impressionable youth.</p>	<p>Some samples include: the Hokkien slang 'chao keng' (slacker) used by military men; the Malay slang 'buaya' (womaniser) used by Singaporeans in general; the English slang 'being arrowed' (to be delegated an unpleasant job) used in office settings. Another common slang is "sabo", which is taken from the English word sabotage, which refers to situation where one deliberately causes trouble or inconvenience to (someone else), especially in order to gain a personal advantage.</p> <p>For example, the American slang 'YOLO' (you only live once) reflects the indulgent and reckless youth lifestyle promoted by American media. Another American slang, 'Noob' refers to individuals who know little and have no will to learn any more. They expect people to do the work for them and then expect to get praised about it.</p> <p>The Japanese word 'kawaii' (things that are cute) has been adopted by many around the world including Singaporeans to refer to things that are adorable.</p>

Para 4

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
<p>Slang's widespread use is guaranteed by its varied and unambiguous vocabulary that reflects the nuances of status ... providing catchy and memorable labels</p>	<p>Status is an important aspect of Asian societies. Respect is paid to those who are of a higher rank or position. However, as in all societies, there are also derogatory terms used on people who are seen to be of a different status in the eyes of society. As suggested by Dalzell, slang words used to delineate status are assorted and explicit.</p> <p>In Singlish, there are numerous words that denote someone's status or background. Once labelled as such, it is hard to shake off. Very often the labels are attached to one's status in society. People of higher social status tend</p>	<p>For example, 'tai tai' is used for a woman, usually wealthy, who does not work but spends her time shopping, meeting friends and so on - basically, deemed a lady of leisure.</p> <p>On the other hand, if someone or something is deemed as 'CMI' or "cannot make it", it suggests he is somewhat of a loser, one who is not up to scratch. 'Blur sotong' is similar in that this person is slow to catch on to ideas.</p> <p>Popular Singaporean artistes and television shows have the ability to spread and propagate funny and catchy Singlish slangs. Sitcoms such as The Noose were well-loved by Singaporeans and the slang used in these shows were</p>

	to use Western slang and those of lower social status tend to use Singlish slang. When it is so easy to identify someone's status based on the slang he/she uses, it may emphasise the difference of status and may lead to further problems involving social cohesion and inequality.	familiar and thus spread easily. The catchy and memorable slang terms would often be repeated by amused Singaporeans in jest to relive the hilarious moments in the sitcom.
Slang is also much more effective than standard English when it comes to describing sports ...	(focus on sports) Exciting moments in sports are made all the more exhilarating when shared with friends. Cheering and shouting together builds camaraderie and brotherhood especially when the love for the same team is shared. The use of slang whilst watching sports has brought all manner of Singaporeans together in the cheering or heckling during soccer games. Many Singaporeans view sports as a leisure or casual activity and the use of slang is more apt for the context and the intended audience, rather than using formal, standard English.	(focus on sports) Very often when supporters do not agree with a referee's decision, the common chant is "referee kayu".

Para 5

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
American slang is also known for being fertile . At any given moment, there are many, many new slang words and expressions being created and in use with each new generation .	<p>Outdated phrases or slang no longer reflect the perspectives or situations that the youth of today find themselves in. New slang is born and sprouts up because it better captures the essence of young people's experiences. Various changes such as changes in technology, culture and society might be responsible for this (e.g. there were no "selfies" 10 years ago).</p> <p>Strong phrases resonate or contain deep meaning which succeeding generations of young people may continue to appreciate or identify with. Such terms continue to be relevant as they remain part of the national psyche where being competitive is what keeps Singapore surviving.</p> <p>Slang which is not timeless or strong enough to make the cut, or slang which is associated only with one-off occurrences will tend to fade or decline in popularity over time.</p>	<p>Strong slang or phrases survive, such as "kiasu" (afraid to lose out) and "cannot make it" (not up to standard) are still used by young people after many years.</p> <p>For example, Ris Low's expression "Boomz" and the Singlish/army slang term "gabra" (meaning confused/scattered-brain/poorly organised).</p>

Para 7

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
<p>Youth is the most powerful stimulus for the creation and distribution of slang ... when we are young, we are subject to the generational imperative to invent a slang vocabulary that we perceive as our own, rejecting the slang of our older siblings and parents.</p>	<p>We reject the slang of our siblings and parents because they belong to different generations and the experiences or slang of older generations is rejected or perceived as “uncool”, because it does not reflect the worldview of the youth. Also, many of the conversations among youth take place in informal setting, unlike the formal work setting of their older siblings or parents.</p> <p>Young people want to distinguish themselves from their parents and older folk. The slang they invent or adopt allows them to identify with their peers.</p>	<p>Young people have a slang vocabulary of their own that is cobbled together from the different social media sites or memes that are popular with young people (e.g. from sites such as SGAG). Young people will use expressions or slang that are derived from these sites or memes such as “YOLO”, “Face palm”, “thick skinned” or “thin skinned”.</p> <p>Examples of slang used by the previous generations which are rejected because they no longer fit the worldview or experiences of the younger generation would be terms like “goondu” (the Tamil word for idiot) for a foolish person, or “bao kar liau” which is a term with Hokkien/Chinese origins that can mean various things: going to great lengths to find favour with someone, or to describe two people who are on extremely good terms with each other.</p>

Para 8

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
<p>Youth slang derives some of its power from its willingness to borrow from other bodies of slang ... without shame (especially from the American music scene).</p>	<p>Slang used by any generation is derived not just from one culture but does tend to be reliant on pop culture, especially pop, R&B and rap music for its source.</p> <p>American slang is popular with Singapore youth, especially when conveyed through pop songs. This is to be expected given that the media which young people in Singapore are exposed to are heavily American. This cannot be helped given that the local radio stations are themselves setting the music agenda which is heavily leaning towards Western songs. Thus, our youth which are heavily into music, are borrowing slang terms from the Western songs they have been listening to.</p> <p>However, home-grown slang is also commonly used by the young although these are mostly dependent on the dialects or</p>	<p>Examples include bro (brother), yo man (hey, brother) and chill (relax, don't get worked up). However, slang terms like “dope” that young Singaporeans have borrowed may give legitimacy to the drug culture and may run counter to Singapore’s tough anti-drug laws and stance.</p> <p><i>[could add in examples of K-Pop influences after looking at students’ scripts]</i></p> <p>Examples are 'referee kayu', 'kelong (from football, from Malay), kiasu (from Hokkien), and so on. These examples show that the young in Singapore can</p>

	vernacular languages in our society. Within ethnic groups, young people are also using certain unique slang in their vernacular language.	create their own slang but their creations are confined to expressions that are mostly Singlish, Malay or Hokkien for mileage. For example, young Malay Singaporeans now use Malay slang terms such as “sado” (muscular-bodied men) and “payong” (to offer support).
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Para 9

Text Reference	Explanation & Evaluation	Evidence
Youth slang is a core element of youth culture - a defiant gesture of resistance and an emblem of tribe identity ... adult authority cannot completely eradicate slang.	<p>Young people heavily use slang to express rebellion against authority.</p> <p>However, it may be hard to agree with the author on this point. It is not so obvious that the youth in Singapore use slang to express rebellion against authority - their usage is more an indication of bonding or belonging to the group.</p> <p>While it is true that slang cannot be eradicated by authorities, for example, teachers (specifically language teachers, only because their concern is with formal or standard English), it is also a fact that many Singaporean adults are quite tolerant of slang language used by the youth. This is because the older generation too have their own slang expressions; after all, slang expressions boost camaraderie because of their informal character and the way they reflect current thinking. Slang can also express some ideas better and more economically than formal language can.</p>	<p>For example, “obiang” (usually relating to fashion, obiang is used to describe something as being old fashioned and therefore undesirable) and “koyak” (something that is spoiled or broken).</p>



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2018
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
Higher 1

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

INSERT

8807/02

10 September 2018

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

CANDIDATE
NAME

CIVICS
GROUP

17 -

Tom Dalzell writes on the pervasiveness of the use of slang.

- 1 Slang pervades American speech to a startling degree. Its popularity can be gauged by the rush of journalists, politicians and purveyors of popular culture to embrace the latest word or phrase to spice up a newspaper headline, advertisement or television script. On the other side of the fence, prescriptive guardians of standard English and morality bemoan slang's 'degrading' effect on public discourse and culture; their outcry further attests to slang's persistent and powerful presence in everyday American English. However, we must never make the mistake of confusing slang with colloquialism. While both use informal register, colloquialism is used by people in everyday speech, whereas slang is used only by certain groups, such as teenagers or people of certain professions. 5
- 2 Slang's popularity and power with speakers of American English should not come as a surprise. By design, slang is wittier and more clever than standard English. As a species, we seem to have a genetic inclination to linguistic creativity, as illustrated by slang's rich flashes of humour, genius and poetry. With slang, each generation or subculture or counterculture group has the chance to shape and propagate its own lexicon, and in so doing to exercise ingenuity. The end result is a dynamic, mischievous body of language that is at times used for no other reasons than that it is fun to use and identifies the speaker as clever and witty. 15
- 3 Slang's primary reason for being — to establish a sense of commonality among its speakers — further ensures its widespread use. When slang is used, there is a subtext to the primary message. That subtext speaks to the speakers and listeners in the same 'tribe'. Owing to the fact that 'tribe' identity is so important, slang becomes important too because slang is an explicit manifestation of that identity. At times, the primary message is not in the meaning of what is said, but in the very utilisation of slang — a compelling example of how the medium can be the message. 20
- 4 Similarly, in a society preoccupied with status, slang's widespread use is guaranteed by its varied and unambiguous vocabulary that reflects the nuances of status. Slang plays a critical role whether it delineates a winner ('top dog') from a loser ('toast'), or an oppressor ('the Man') from the oppressed ('doormat'), providing catchy and memorable labels for 'us versus them'. In a similar vein, slang is also much more effective than standard or conventional English when it comes to describing sports, sex and intoxication. Conversation often turns to these important aspects of American culture, and when it does, we draw upon slang far more than we would if discussing, for example, the economy, religion or foreign policy. 25 30
- 5 American slang is also known for being fertile. At any given moment, there are many, many new slang words and expressions being created and in use with each new generation. In fact, the language process of meaning-making is akin to natural selection. With a few notable exceptions — most especially "cool" — we tire of even the strongest words and they fade away, usually after being co-opted by advertisers and headline writers. Just like a living organism, to counteract its short-lived nature and survive, slang must constantly regenerate as a body of speech and subset of the language. 35
- 6 Historically, in 1892, Whitman described slang as "the start of something unconventional and fanciful." In the century-plus since Whitman's characterisation of slang, the America that Whitman knew has been radically changed by immigration, industrialisation, urbanisation and mass communication. Due to these changes and for the reasons suggested by Whitman, slang — with its breath of life — has permeated everyday speech. Slang is, to a large extent, ephemeral, and so to survive, it must constantly renew itself; both the ephemeral and regenerative traits are nowhere more apparent than in the slang of American youth. 40

- 7 The four factors that are the most likely to produce slang are youth, oppression, sport and vice, which provide an impetus to coin and use slang for different sociolinguistic reasons. Of these four factors, youth is the most powerful stimulus for the creation and distribution of slang. For, although we are not all members of a group that is oppressed by a dominant culture, or sports fanatics immersed in the language and lore of the game, and we do not all dip our toes into the pool of vice with its attendant slang, we are all young once. When we are young, we are subject to the generational imperative to invent a slang vocabulary that we perceive as our own, rejecting the slang of our older brothers and sisters, let alone our parents, in favour of a new lexicon. 45 50
- 8 Youth slang derives some of its power from its willingness to borrow from other bodies of slang. Despite its seeming mandate of creativity and originality, slang is blatantly predatory, borrowing without shame from possible sources. Foremost among them is the African-American vernacular, whose influence on American youth slang of the 20th century cannot be over-stated. Beginning in the late 1930s with the wild popularity of swing jazz and the jitterbug, continuing into the 'jive generation' that fought World War II, through the beats and hipsters of the 1950s, the Sixties' mainstream youth and hippies alike, into the pervasive patois of hip-hop, American youth slang has borrowed consistently from the slang of the black American urban experience. 55 60
- 9 Whatever its source, youth slang is a core element of youth culture — a defiant gesture of resistance and an emblem of tribe identity. Fashion and hairstyles are other key manifestations of a generation's identity, but they can be regulated by adult authorities with less effort. With music and language, regulation and restriction are much more difficult. Even the most vigilant and repressive attempts by adult authority cannot completely eradicate slang and music with its slang lyrics. 65
- 10 As we move into our twenties, we gradually stop acquiring new slang and then ultimately just stop; we also slowly stop using our existing slang vocabulary. For most of our adult lives, we use the core slang vocabulary acquired in our youth either as a lingering symbol of our generational identity or simply on a vestigial basis. When we think of slang, then, we either think of our children's slang or the slang of our own youth. For this reason, if no other, the slang of youth exerts enormous power over American English. Of all the vernacular, slang is the most spectacular. Slang swings. Slang moves and grooves. Slang rocks, slang rules. 70

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GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

8807/02

10 September 2018

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, 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.

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

CANDIDATE
NAME

CIVICS
GROUP

17 -

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

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

For
Examiner's
Comments

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

- 1 What are the two opposite reactions towards slang described in paragraph 1? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[2]

3 In line 31, why does the author describe American slang as 'fertile'? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[2]

4 What is the author's purpose in comparing the language process of meaning-making as being 'akin to natural selection' (line 33)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[2]

5 In lines 45–50, why is youth 'the most powerful stimulus for the creation and distribution of slang' in comparison to the other factors? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[2]

6 Explain the author's use of the expression 'let alone' in line 52.

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.....[2]

7 What is the author implying about slang with the use of the word 'predatory' (line 54)?

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.....[2]

8 How does the author illustrate his point that American youth slang has borrowed 'consistently' (line 60) from the slang of the black American urban experience?

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.....[1]

9 (a) Give one similarity and one difference between slang and fashion mentioned in paragraph 9. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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.....[2]

(b) What is the author implying about slang by highlighting the difference between slang and fashion?

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.....[1]

10 Suggest one reason for the author ending the passage with 'Slang swings. Slang moves and grooves. Slang rocks, slang rules' (lines 72–73).

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

