

Name: _____

Class: _____



JURONG PIONEER JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 Preliminary Examination 2026

**GENERAL PAPER
Higher 1**

Paper 2

8881/02

14 September 2026

1 hour 30 minutes

INSERT

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class in the spaces provided above.

This Insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.

Passage 1. *An author writes about the advantages of helicopter parenting.*

- 1** Helicopter parents are as ubiquitous as reward stickers and untied shoelaces. Some arrive for Meet the Teacher Night an hour early; others attend kindergarten orientation ready to map out a path into the Gifted Programme. They linger at classroom doors each morning, checking, prompting, ensuring everything is just right. Taken together, these behaviours reflect a broader pattern of close parental involvement that places children under relentless pressure to excel, often causing them to grow into anxious adolescents, dependent young adults and risk-averse adults. 5
- 2** Yet the experience is not uniform. Some children, whose parents work full-time and are rarely present at school, observe this involvement with a mix of curiosity and envy. They watch classmates whose parents are constantly in touch with teachers or present at school events and wonder what that level of attention might feel like. At the same time, those same classmates sometimes describe them as “lucky” — free to do as they please without constant parental oversight. 10
- 3** In an era when many feel alienated from institutions, neighbours, and even family, it may be worth reconsidering whether this heightened connection between parents and children also offers certain benefits. After all, parents began parenting this way for good reasons. Many were reacting against the free-form, unbounded childhoods they themselves experienced, where they faced daily risks and prolonged uncertainty without consistent guidance. Because their parents were often reluctant to address topics such as relationships, risk-taking, or difficult life choices, they turned instead to their peers for information, which was often incomplete or misleading. As a result, some grew up feeling unseen. 15 20
- 4** While helicopter parenting has its flaws, it also offers advantages. For one, these children know they have a safety net, allowing them to take risks and learn from failure. Unlike previous generations, who often had to cope with setbacks on their own, they can experiment with greater confidence. Extended parental support also gives many young adults more time to mature before assuming greater responsibility. This is reflected in the trend of delayed transitions into adulthood: studies show that in 2023, nearly one in five adults aged 25 to 34 were still living with their parents. Such patterns suggest that sustained parental support contributes to a more gradual path towards independence. Moreover, helicopter parenting may also foster a greater sense of community and connectedness. In turn, children may grow up valuing close familial ties. 25 30
- 5** The benefits of close parental involvement extend beyond providing emotional assurance. It can also encourage children to engage in a wider range of activities and opportunities that they might not have pursued on their own. While this may sometimes result in overscheduling, it also exposes them to new experiences that broaden their perspectives and help them discover their interests and strengths. Engaging in unfamiliar or challenging activities can build resilience, persistence, and self-awareness, enabling them to make more informed decisions about their future education and careers. 35
- 6** A parent is a child's first teacher, first role model and first advocate. As parents and members of society, we must reflect on how our actions shape children's growth, ensuring that in supporting them, we also leave room for independence to develop. 40

Passage 2. *A writer examines the cost of over-parenting.*

- 1 Children in the 1960s and 1970s enjoyed far greater independence, often spending long periods unsupervised. By contrast, children today grow up in structured, closely supervised environments with constant parental oversight. This shift away from independent play reflects a broader trend with significant consequences. Psychologist Peter Gray, a research professor at Boston College who has spent decades studying play, described this shift in vivid terms. He explained that from the 1960s onward, there has been a continuous and measurable decline in children's opportunities to play freely, away from adult intervention and control. As opportunities for independent play decline, children have fewer chances to develop an internal locus of control—the belief that they can influence outcomes—making them more vulnerable to anxiety and depression. 5 10
- 2 Studies indicate that children who engage in independent play learn to regulate their emotions, negotiate social hierarchies, and tolerate frustration. These skills develop because there is no adult immediately stepping in to intervene. In contrast, constant supervision reduces opportunities for such growth. As a result, children today may feel capable of navigating structured environments such as school but lack the confidence to deal effectively with the unpredictability of the real world. They may also become increasingly reliant on external direction and reassurance, seeking validation before acting on their own judgement. 15
- 3 Another important aspect of independent activity is boredom. The ability to tolerate boredom is a skill that develops through experience. In environments shaped by over-parenting, children are often provided with constant stimulation and structured engagement, leaving little room for deep, restless, nothing-to-do boredom that forces their brains to generate their own entertainment. As a result, this limits the development of creativity and reduces their ability to become comfortable with their own thoughts, ultimately hindering their capacity for self-directed growth. 20 25
- 4 The issue, then, is not neglect but balance. By constantly stepping in, excessive parental involvement may deprive children of the opportunities to develop the capacity to direct their own lives.

Passage 3. *Pamela Druckerman argues that hyper-involved parenting is the route to children's success in today's unequal world.*

- 1 Psychologists, sociologists and journalists have spent more than a decade critiquing “helicopter parents” and their school obsessions, arguing that hyper-parenting creates stressed-out children who cannot function independently. Parents themselves often feel guilty, anxious and even ridiculous. Yet new research suggests that in an unequal era, this kind of parenting can bring significant benefits. 5
- 2 Analyses of the 2012 PISA, which assessed 15-year-olds worldwide, found that an “intensive parenting style” is associated with higher academic performance. Parents who adopt an authoritative approach—combining high expectations with reasoning, guidance and emotional support—tend to achieve better outcomes. They cultivate adaptability and problem-solving within a structured environment. Instead of fostering unquestioning obedience, such parenting encourages children to think critically about the values they have inherited. 10
- 3 So why wouldn't everyone just become an authoritative parent? Obviously, not all families can adopt this approach. Working-class parents may lack the time or resources to provide such support and may prioritise discipline suited to different job demands. As a result, those who can afford intensive parenting may widen existing inequalities. This suggests that hyper-parenting is not merely a preference, but a powerful advantage in today's unequal world. In an increasingly competitive world, stepping back may no longer be a neutral choice, but a disadvantage. Moreover, the influence of such sustained parental involvement may extend well into adulthood, shaping how children approach challenges and encouraging them to turn to familiar figures when making important decisions. 15 20

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JC2 Preliminary Examination 2026

GENERAL PAPER Higher 1

Paper 2

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1 hour 30 minutes

ANSWER BOOKLET

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class in the spaces provided above.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

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

Answer **all** questions in the Answer Booklet.

The Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

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

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

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

For Examiner's Use	
SAQ	/ 15
SQ	/ 8
AQ	/ 12
LANGUAGE	/ 15
TOTAL	/ 50

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

Answer **all** questions.

For
examiner's
use

Your answers should be:

- written **in your own words as far as possible**. Where you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it.
- written in **continuous prose**.

From Passage 1

1 What is the author suggesting by the use of the word 'ubiquitous' in line 1?

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

2 What is the author implying about the impact of helicopter parenting by the description 'relentless pressure to excel' (lines 5-6)?

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

3 In paragraph 3, what reasons does the author suggest for parents choosing a more involved parenting style?

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

- 4 According to paragraph 4, in what **three** ways are the current generation of young adults different from their predecessors?

.....

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.....

.....

.....

..... [3]

- 5 Identify **two** ways in which the final paragraph provides an effective conclusion to the author's argument.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

From Passage 2

6 Summarise the cost of over-parenting.

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**.

[8]

From all the passages

- 7 Passage 1 states that helicopter parenting may lead to children who 'grow up valuing close familial ties' (line 32).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

- 8 Passage 2 states that 'excessive parental involvement may deprive children of the opportunities to develop the capacity to direct their own lives' (lines 26-28).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

9 The reading passages cover a range of views about the impact of intensive parenting on children's development.

Support your answer with reference to:

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This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

END OF PAPER

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2026 JC2 GP Prelim P2 Answer Scheme (25 Sep 2026)

From Passage 1

1. What is the author suggesting by the use of the word 'ubiquitous' in line 1? [1]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
Helicopter parents are as ubiquitous as reward stickers and untied shoelaces.	The author uses 'ubiquitous' to suggest that helicopter parents seem to be <u>everywhere/ widespread/ very common</u>. Examiners' comments: while students may be quick to infer what 'ubiquitous' suggests based on the question prompt 'suggests', appropriate inferences should relate to how helicopter parenting is a normal trend, people take it for granted, does not see anything wrong with it. Nevertheless, the students must demonstrate the basic meaning of the word to be awarded any mark at all.

2. What is the author implying about the impact of helicopter parenting by the description 'relentless pressure to excel' (lines 5-6)? [2]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
Taken together, these behaviours reflect a broader pattern of close parental involvement that places children under relentless pressure to excel, often causing them to grow into anxious adolescents, dependent young adults and risk-averse adults.	a. The author implies that helicopter parenting subject children to constant/unceasing expectations/stress to achieve outstanding results/do exceptionally well. b1. concept of <u>enduring/lasting</u> impact (inference) and can have <u>lasting</u> repercussions on their development/ which can <u>continue</u> to shape their attitudes and behaviour in harmful ways as they <u>mature</u> or b2. for precise impact: ... - turn young people into nervous individuals - highly reliant - do not dare to take chances/ be adventurous / afraid of failure Note: • For (a), the meaning of "relentless": constant/unceasing must be captured to be awarded 1 mark. • For (b2), credit when the student successfully paraphrase any 2 out of the 3 precise impacts.

1 pt = 1m, up to 2m

3. In paragraph 3, what reasons does the author suggest for parents choosing a more involved parenting style? [3]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
Many were reacting against the free- form, unbounded childhoods they themselves experienced where they faced daily risks (line 18) prolonged uncertainty (line 18) without consistent guidance // they turned instead to their peers for information, which was often incomplete or misleading (lines 20-21) As a result, some grew up feeling unseen. (lines 21-22)	a) They are rejecting / rebelling against the kind of unrestricted way of life they had earlier. b) They want to protect their children from the <u>everyday dangers</u> c) and <u>extended periods of insecurity</u>. d) They wanted to prevent their children from relying on friends/other young people for <u>advice</u>, which could be <u>inaccurate/unreliable</u>. e) They wanted to ensure their children felt <u>valued</u>. Note: • For (b), accept "frequent/many". • For (b), do not accept "challenges" • For (c). "prolonged" must be paraphrased to capture concept of time

1 pt = 1m, up to 3m

4. According to paragraph 4, in what three ways are the current generation of young adults different from their predecessors? [3]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
they have a safety net, allowing them to take risks and learn from failure (line 24) / they can experiment with greater confidence (line 26) more time to mature before assuming greater responsibility (line 27) / delayed transitions (line 28) / more gradual path (line 20)	The current generation of young adults a) feel <u>more secure/certain</u> to liberally explore their options/ try new things with <u>more assurance</u> // know they are more <u>supported</u> should they make mistakes. b) are allowed to grow/develop in a <u>less hurried pace/ without being rushed</u> c) <u>develop stronger/deeper relationships with others and their family members.</u>

a greater sense of community and connectedness (line 31)/ In turn, children may grow up valuing close familial ties (lines 31-32)	Note: • Whole answer to contain at <u>least</u> one comparison/ comparative (between past and present or using more/greater) • For (c), “close/closer” cannot be accepted as part of the answer.
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1 pt = 1m, up to 3m

5. Identify two ways in which the final paragraph provides an effective conclusion to the author's argument. [2]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
A parent is a child's first teacher, first role model and first advocate. As parents and members of society, we must reflect on how our actions shape children's growth, ensuring that in supporting them, we also leave room for independence to develop.	a) The repetition of "first" emphasises that parents have the earliest and most formative influence on a child's development, reinforcing the lasting importance of their role. b) By using “we”, the writer <u>connects directly/engages</u> with the reader. It turns the development of children into a <u>shared</u> mission/ reminds readers that raising the next generation is <u>everyone's responsibility</u>/ reminds readers that <u>what we do influences how children develop</u>. c) The use of “must” makes the final message feel <u>urgent and personal</u>/ is a <u>call to action</u>, prompting readers to reflect on how they balance support and independence for their children. d) It is effective because it summarises the <u>central conflict</u> of the text, reminding the reader of the <u>balance</u> required between protecting a child and allowing them to become self-reliant. Note: • For Points (a) and (b), ‘Language/technique feature’ and ‘Context’ are required • For Points (c) and (d), quotation / reference is not required

1 pt = 1m, up to 3m

From Passage 2

6. Summarise the cost of over-parenting. Write your summary in no more than 120 words.

Pt	Lifted	Paraphrased
1	decline in children's opportunities to play freely (line 7) (context is play)	reduction in independent playtime
2	fewer chances to develop an internal locus of control —the belief that they can influence outcomes (lines 8-9)	prevents cultivation of a sense of personal agency/ recognition that their own actions shape what happens
3	making them more vulnerable to anxiety and depression (line 9)	children face increased mental health difficulties
4	(inferred) learn to regulate their emotions (lines 11-12)	fewer chances to manage their feelings effectively
5	(inferred) negotiate social hierarchies (line 12)	fewer chances to handle/manage interactions and relationships with peers//structures of society
6	(inferred) tolerate frustration (line 12)	fewer chances to learn to cope when things do not go their way Note: - Do not accept "anger" unless it is accompanied by a phrase such as "when things do not go their way" - Do not accept "withstand pressure" - Pt 6 is accepted as a pt but should avoid sounding like pt 4
7	lack the confidence to deal effectively with the unpredictability of the real world (lines 15-16)	are not equipped to cope with unfamiliar/changing situations outside structured settings Note: Do not accept "unprecedented".
8	increasingly reliant on external direction (line 17)	become more dependent on adult guidance
9	and reassurance (line 17)/ seeking validation (line 17)	and affirmation
10	little room for deep, restless, nothing-to-do boredom (line 22)/ The ability to tolerate boredom is a skill that develops through experience (lines 19-20)	less exposure to periods without planned activities or stimulation/ becoming less able to cope with periods of inactivity Note: Award the mark if the student captures the idea of "boredom" or "having nothing to do". Possible answers include "dull", "mundane" and "must always be occupied/engaged".
11	(inferred) force their brains to generate their own entertainment (lines 22-23)	reduces motivation to invent activities for themselves
12	limits the development of creativity (line 23)	preventing originality/imagination
13	reduces their ability to become comfortable with their own thoughts (lines 23-24)	they do not learn to secure about their personal reflection
14	hindering their capacity for self-directed growth (lines 24-25)/ deprive children of the opportunities to develop the capacity to direct their own lives (lines 27-28)	preventing personal progress.

No. of points	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Marks allocated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

7. Passage 1 states that helicopter parenting may lead to children who ‘grow up valuing close familial ties’ (line 32).

Identify one specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer. [2m]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
Identified Idea: Moreover, the influence of such sustained parental involvement may extend well into adulthood, shaping how children approach challenges and encouraging them to turn to familiar figures when making important decisions. (lines 19-21)	Paraphrased Idea: Passage 3 states that consistent parental support influences how children handle difficulties, leading them to rely on their family’s advice when deciding on key matters/ determining significant course of action well into their adult lives. Justification: This supports Passage 1 because regular parental involvement strengthens <u>children’s trust in and attachment to their family</u>, leading them to continue to treasure their family’s input even as adults. OR This supports... because the kin whom they seek help in show <u>the trust they put in them</u> OR The fact that young people consult their loved ones is <u>evidence</u> that show how children are would <u>be more comfortable</u> / <u>prefer to journey with those</u> they cherish more / see as <u>role models</u>. Note: • Award the mark if the overall idea is captured, even if “important” is not.

8. Passage 2 states that ‘excessive parental involvement may deprive children of the opportunities to develop the **capacity to direct** their own lives’ (lines 26-28).

Identify one specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer. [2m]

From Passage	Suggested Answer
Identified Idea: They cultivate adaptability and problem-solving within a structured environment. OR Instead of fostering unquestioning obedience, such parenting encourages children to think critically about the values they have inherited.	Paraphrased Idea: Passage 3 states that hyper-parenting equip children with flexibility and reasoning skills. Note: If “adaptability” And/Or “problem-solving” is paraphrased, award 1 mark for the paraphrased idea. Justification: This contradicts the statement because children <u>can develop skills</u> to exercise sound judgment and make <u>independent</u> decisions later in life despite intensive parenting. This shows that when children are able to find answers to challenges in life <u>on their own</u>, they grow in <u>confidence/ self-assurance</u> in steering their own path. Paraphrased Idea: Passage 3 states that rather than promoting blind conformity, hyper-parenting enables children to evaluate the beliefs they have been brought up with. Justification:

	This challenges the statement because children who can critically evaluate what they have been taught <u>demonstrate independent judgment, a key foundation of autonomy</u> without being beholden to society's expectations.
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9. Application Question

The reading passages cover a range of views about the impact of intensive parenting on children's development.

How far do you agree that hyper-involved parenting brings more advantages than disadvantages?

Support your answer with reference to:

- the ideas and opinions from at least one of the reading passages.
- examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society.

Points from Passage	Possible Response
Passage 1 Paragraph 4 “These children know they have a safety net, allowing them to take risks and learn from failure.” (ADVANTAGE)	Hyper-involved parenting can provide children with a strong emotional safety net in the high-stakes education system in Singapore. Many parents closely monitor their children's academic progress, arrange tuition or consultations, and actively guide decisions on subject combinations and post-secondary pathways. Following the 2024 PSLE results, MOE reminded parents to reassure children that there are multiple pathways to success rather than treating posting outcomes as a measure of worth. Such sustained involvement helps children recover from setbacks with greater confidence instead of fearing that a single failure will define their future. In Singapore, where academic achievement is often perceived as determining future opportunities, this support can encourage students to take calculated risks, knowing that they have both emotional and practical guidance if they encounter setbacks. Evaluation: However, this advantage depends on parents providing reassurance rather than exerting excessive pressure, as over-involvement may instead make children more fearful of failure. Therefore, the author's claim is largely applicable in Singapore, although its benefits depend on how parents exercise their involvement.
Passage 2 Paragraph 3 “Constant supervision reduces opportunities for such growth.” (DISADVANTAGE)	This concern is highly relevant to Singapore because intensive parenting often limits children's opportunities to develop independence. A 2025 CNA report found that many Singaporean children spend much of their time moving between school and enrichment classes, while even outdoor play and playdates are closely supervised and organised by adults. Experts interviewed warned that such highly structured childhoods reduce opportunities for children to negotiate conflicts, build friendships and solve problems on their own. In a society where parents understandably prioritise safety and academic achievement, such supervision can become excessive,

	depriving children of valuable opportunities to make mistakes and learn from them independently. Evaluation: Therefore, the author's concern is largely applicable in Singapore, although this does not mean all parental involvement is harmful; rather, the key issue is whether parents progressively reduce supervision as children gain maturity and competence. Excessive parental intervention may discourage children from taking responsibility for their own actions. In 2017, Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Primary School sparked public debate after asking parents not to deliver forgotten homework, textbooks or pocket money so that children would learn from the consequences of their mistakes. In 2019, then Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam similarly warned that helicopter parenting could increase anxiety and reduce children's independence. The fact that both educators and policymakers have publicly raised this issue suggests that over-parenting is not merely an isolated behaviour but a broader societal concern in Singapore. This lends considerable support to the author's argument that constant parental intervention can hinder children's personal growth. Evaluation: However, the problem lies not in parental involvement itself, but in failing to strike a balance between providing support and allowing children to experience failure and develop accountability independently.
Passage 3, Paragraph 3 "Hyper-parenting is not merely a preference, but a powerful advantage in today's unequal world." (ADVANTAGE)	Intensive parenting often requires substantial time and financial resources, giving children from wealthier families in Singapore a distinct advantage. The Household Expenditure Survey shows that higher-income households spend substantially more on their children's education, enabling parents to fund specialist tuition, Olympiad training, coding academies and overseas enrichment while remaining closely involved in their children's schooling. Such sustained investment allows these children to develop stronger academic portfolios and gain access to more educational opportunities than peers from less advantaged backgrounds. Evaluation: Therefore, the author's argument is particularly convincing in Singapore, where educational success is often closely linked to access to enrichment opportunities that require considerable financial investment. Nevertheless, the advantage stems not from hyper-parenting alone but from the combination of parental involvement and socioeconomic privilege. While government policies seek to level the playing field, they cannot fully replicate the additional opportunities that wealthier families are able to provide.

Sample paragraphs with typical content (from students' common experience) and distinct links made to parenting:

To begin with, there is certainly some wisdom in passage 1's argument that intensive parenting can engender academic excellence and success. This is particularly true in the area of fostering literacy especially for younger children or preschoolers. Especially when we consider that language acquisition occurs at a younger age before 10 years old, parents' close monitoring and cultivation of literacy and language skills will likely let them stand a higher chance of doing better in school examinations be it their Mother Tongue or English language. In Singapore, public libraries are often filled with 'kiasu' parents (who fear losing out to others) and their children, with many reading to them, curating books to read to them there and then, or before bedtime like I used to remember. Unsurprisingly, children who grew up under close supervision and cultivation of reading by their parents tend to do better especially where language examinations are concerned. Perhaps the most telling example of why intensive parenting leads to greater success, is Singapore's stellar results in the OECD PISA ranking survey which measures the academic accomplishments of the young. While public schools may play a huge role, those rankings on PISA could arguably be contributed by the billion-dollar tuition industry, which owes its success to the intense preoccupation of many parents on their children's school performance. Some or many parents often compel their children to sign up for enrichment programmes in Learning Lab for instance, or attend extra tuition to either beef up their portfolios or their current schoolwork respectively. While the effectiveness of tuition or enrichment classes may not be proven effective, those extra structures provided by parents arguably give them more life experiences (enrichment classes wise) or at least clarify some areas of schoolwork, helping them to do better in school and build better portfolios for higher education. In a meritocratic society like Singapore where one is rewarded based on performance, who can blame helicopter parents who only want the best for their children?

Even so, we must draw the line on excessive parenting as this can culminate in much precarious situations where students succumb to excessive pressure as stated in passage 2. While parents are not to be totally blamed, alongside a pressure cooker society, parents' well-meaning relentless pressure on their children may become the final straw that break the children's back. It is not uncommon to hear on Reddit, suicide cases happening in secondary schools or Junior Colleges in Singapore from time to time. Today, Singapore's parents often pay more attention to their children's work than in the past. The pressure from parents are a contributing factor to the mental stress young people face. This is certainly a common phenomenon in East Asian societies and Singapore certainly is part of such a culture of academic excellence. Many children often have little time for themselves even at a young age to do what they want. On weekdays, many children as young as preschoolers are already attending many enrichment programmes be it at Tian Xia Language school or in Mindchamps, chaperoned tirelessly by their parents who harbour great ambitions for their young charges. For older school-going children it is also not uncommon to hear many of my friends who had to attend unceasing tuition classes under their parents' coaxing. The lack of time to explore other interests and passions can prove overwhelming and suffocating, leading to stress and depression as passage 2 highlighted. The failure to see beyond academics by both parents and child often leads to why some children have a tunnel vision of their journey - that if they fail (to score stellar results) in school, then it is a lost cause.

Indeed, parents, and future parents must tread lightly and find the delicate balance between parenting and over-parenting.