



NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2026

GENERAL PAPER

8881/02

PAPER 2:

WEDNESDAY 2 September 2026

INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This insert contains the passages for comprehension.

Passage 1. *An author writes critically about ethical consumerism in today's society.*

- 1 Ethical consumerism is frequently promoted as a seemingly straightforward remedy to some of the most persistent crises of the contemporary world, including climate change, labour exploitation and environmental degradation. Consumers are encouraged to believe that moral responsibility can be exercised through ordinary purchasing decisions: that by selecting fair-trade food, cruelty-free cosmetics or sustainably manufactured clothing, they can exert a positive influence on distant social and environmental conditions. This idea resonates powerfully because it reduces morality to an act of convenience, presenting ethical action as something that can be performed effortlessly, without prolonged political engagement or disruptive changes to one's way of life. In this framing, the shopping basket becomes a moral instrument, and consumption itself is transformed into a quiet but reassuring form of personal activism. 5 10
- 2 However, this appealing narrative obscures the complex realities of ethical decision-making in contemporary consumer societies. Ethical consumerism imposes significant cognitive and moral demands on individuals, who are expected to make informed choices within environments that actively discourage careful reflection. Supermarkets and digital marketplaces prioritise "speed", "efficiency" and "impulse", thereby encouraging rapid decisions rather than ethical deliberation. Labels that claim responsibility offer only limited or superficial information, while the complexities of global supply chains remain largely hidden from view. Additionally, faced with competing claims, consumers are presented as disoriented rather than empowered, navigating a moral landscape marked by uncertainty. 15 20
- 3 More significantly, ethical consumerism risks entrenching existing social inequalities rather than alleviating them. Goods marketed as ethically produced are typically more expensive, rendering them inaccessible to those whose choices are constrained by stagnant wages and rising living costs. For lower-income consumers, ethical considerations are often eclipsed by the immediate concerns of affordability. When moral behaviour becomes closely aligned with purchasing power, ethical responsibility is subtly redefined as a privilege rather than a shared obligation. Those with limited financial resources may be implicitly criticised for making "unethical" choices, despite the fact that their decisions are shaped less by apathy than by economic constraint. 25 30
- 4 Corporate responses further highlight the limitations of ethical consumerism. Although many businesses readily adopt the language of ethics and sustainability, their commitments often remain superficial. Companies may draw attention to minor reforms, such as recyclable packaging or reduced plastic usage, while neglecting more fundamental injustices including unfair wages, unsafe working conditions or environmentally destructive production processes. This selective morality allows corporations to reap the reputational benefits of ethical branding without undertaking costly structural change. As a result, ethical consumerism risks becoming a mechanism for image management rather than genuine accountability, enabling profit-driven practices to persist beneath a carefully polished ethical facade. 35 40

- 5** Government approaches complicate the picture still further. Rather than implementing robust regulatory frameworks capable of addressing systemic harm, authorities frequently encourage individuals to “vote with their wallets”. By promoting ethical consumption, governments can appear responsive to social and environmental ills while avoiding politically contentious reforms that might disrupt markets or challenge powerful economic interests. Responsibility for change is quietly displaced onto individuals, despite their limited capacity to influence global production systems. 45 50
- 6** This is not to suggest that individual ethical choices are insignificant—but we cannot afford to overestimate their impact. Ethical consumerism may raise awareness, shape attitudes, and signal dissatisfaction with harmful practices, yet, on its own, it is far from enough. It may soothe the conscience, but it cannot, on its own, deliver systemic change. Without urgent demands for transparent supply chains, stricter regulation, and real corporate accountability, ethical consumerism remains little more than a reassuring illusion. Meaningful reform will not happen passively—it requires collective pressure, systemic change, and immediate action. 55

Passage 2. *An author presents a positive view of ethical consumerism.*

- 1 Despite its limitations, ethical consumerism remains a meaningful force in shaping modern economies. While individual purchases alone cannot solve complex global problems, ethical consumption provides people with a practical way to express concern and influence business behaviour. Increasingly, consumers are more informed about social and environmental issues and are willing to consider the broader consequences of their choices. This growing receptiveness signals that ethical values are no longer confined to activist circles but are entering the mainstream. 5
- 2 One key justification for ethical consumerism lies in its impact on market demand. Businesses are highly sensitive to consumer preferences, and sustained demand for ethical products can encourage firms to adopt more responsible practices. Over time, what begins as a niche market can influence entire industries, demonstrating that ethical consumerism can exert real pressure when demand is persistent. 10
- 3 Ethical consumerism also plays an important educational role. Labels, certifications and public campaigns draw attention to issues such as worker exploitation, environmental damage and animal welfare. Even when consumers do not always act on this information, repeated exposure increases awareness and encourages reflection. This heightened awareness shapes public attitudes and expectations, contributing to a culture in which unethical practices become less acceptable. Ethical consumerism, therefore, influences not only purchasing behaviour but also social norms. 15 20
- 4 Businesses have shown that they can be responsive to this shift in expectations. Many companies now are shifting to ethical sources, discouraging practices such as child labour and unfair trade. This reduces exploitation in developing countries. Companies also spend more to develop greener technologies. Ethical consumerism, when sustained, creates incentives for long-term improvement rather than short-term image management. 25
- 5 Governments can also benefit from ethical consumerism. Consumer pressure often strengthens political will, making it easier for authorities to introduce regulations that protect workers and the environment. As these regulations take root, they not only improve domestic standards but also enhance the nation's global reputation. Over time, the country may gain recognition for being progressive. 30

Passage 3. *This passage contains the reflections of an individual trying to practise ethical consumerism.*

- 1** I want to shop ethically, but it often feels overwhelming. Ethical products usually cost more, and I am not always sure which labels I can trust. One brand claims its goods are sustainable, while another insists it treats workers fairly, yet both are vague about what these promises actually mean. Standing in front of shelves filled with competing claims, I wonder whether my choices really make a difference or whether I am simply buying a comforting story. 5
- 2** When I do buy ethical products, I feel relieved, as if I have done what is expected of me. There is a quiet sense of satisfaction in choosing the “right” option, even if it costs more. However, there are many occasions when convenience or price wins. On those days, I feel guilty, as though I have failed a moral test. Ethical consumerism promises empowerment, but it also creates pressure, making everyday decisions feel heavier than they should be. 10
- 3** I sometimes notice how responsibility seems to rest entirely on my shoulders. Advertisements encourage me to “vote with my wallet”, suggesting that change depends on my purchases. Yet my influence feels limited when large companies continue harmful practices and governments hesitate to act. It is difficult not to feel frustrated when individual effort appears insignificant compared to the scale of the problems involved. 15



NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2026

Candidate Name: _____ Class: _____ GP Tutor: _____

8881/02

Wednesday 2 September 2026

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2:

1 hour 30 minutes

ANSWER BOOKLET

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

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

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

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

Answer **all** questions.

The Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

Note that **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.

For Examiner's Use	
SAQs	/15
Summary	/8
AQ	/12
Language	/15
TOTAL	/50

For
Examiner's
use

- 5 From lines 44-46, what contrast does the author make between what governments should do to address 'systemic harm' (line 45), and what they often do?

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

- 6 In what **two** ways is the final paragraph an effective conclusion to the author's argument?

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

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

This image shows a full page of a document template designed for handwritten notes or answers. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal dotted lines across the entire width of the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is plain white, and there are no margins, headers, or footers visible.

From all the passages*For
Examiner's
use*

- 8** Passage 1 states that ethical consumerism imposes “significant cognitive and moral demands on individuals” (line 15).

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

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

- 9** Passage 2 states that 'Businesses are highly sensitive to consumer preferences, and sustained demand for ethical products can encourage firms to adopt more responsible practices' (lines 10-11).

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

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

How far do you agree with their views?

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.

[illegible]

[12]

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JC2 NYJC Prelim 2026 P2 SAQs

From Passage 1

- 1 Ethical consumerism is frequently promoted as a seemingly straightforward remedy to some of the most persistent crises of the contemporary world, including climate change, labour exploitation and environmental degradation. Consumers are encouraged to believe that moral responsibility can be exercised through ordinary purchasing decisions: that by selecting fair-trade food, cruelty-free cosmetics or sustainably manufactured clothing, they can exert a positive influence on distant social and environmental conditions. This idea resonates powerfully because it reduces morality to an act of convenience, presenting ethical action as something that can be performed effortlessly, without prolonged political engagement or disruptive changes to one's way of life. In this framing, the shopping basket becomes a moral instrument, and consumption itself is transformed into a quiet but reassuring form of personal activism.

1. What is the author suggesting by using the word 'seemingly' in line 1? [1m]	
Ethical consumerism is frequently promoted as a seemingly straightforward remedy to some of the most persistent crises of the contemporary world, including climate change, labour exploitation and environmental degradation.	He wants to make the point that ethical consumerism only appears to be an uncomplicated solution to the major/challenging disasters of today, but actually it is not. [1m] He wants to make the point that it is not as simple as it appears to address/solve today's major/challenging issues.

5	Government approaches <u>complicate</u> the picture still further. Rather than implementing robust regulatory frameworks capable of addressing systemic harm, authorities frequently encourage individuals to “vote with their wallets”. By promoting ethical consumption, governments can appear responsive to social and environmental ills while avoiding politically contentious reforms that might disrupt markets or challenge powerful economic interests. Responsibility for change is quietly displaced onto individuals, despite their limited capacity to influence global production systems.	45 50
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5. From lines 44-46, what contrast does the author make between what governments should do to address ‘systemic harm’ (line 46), and what they often do? [1]	
Rather than implementing robust regulatory frameworks capable of addressing systemic harm, authorities frequently encourage individuals to “vote with their wallets”. (lines 44-46)	Govts <u>should put in place</u> strict rules to solve widespread structural problems. However, often, they merely urge individuals to exercise their purchasing power/purchasing choices/buy things/spend money to tackle those problems. <i>(Any answer taken from lines from 47 – 51 is wrong as the line reference is given in the question)</i>

6	This is not to suggest that individual ethical choices are insignificant—but we cannot afford to overestimate their impact. Ethical consumerism may raise awareness, shape attitudes, and signal dissatisfaction with harmful practices, yet, on its own, it is far from enough. It may soothe the conscience, but it cannot, on its own, deliver systemic change. Without urgent demands for transparent supply chains, stricter regulation, and real corporate accountability, ethical consumerism remains little more than a reassuring illusion. Meaningful reform will not happen <u>passively</u> —it requires collective pressure, systemic change, and immediate action.	55
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6. In what two ways is the final paragraph an effective conclusion to the author's argument? [2]		
This is not to suggest that individual ethical choices are insignificant—but we cannot afford to overestimate their impact. Ethical consumerism may raise awareness, shape attitudes, and signal dissatisfaction with harmful practices, yet, on its own, it is far from enough. It may soothe the conscience, but it cannot, on its own, deliver systemic change. Without urgent demands for transparent supply chains, stricter regulation, and real corporate accountability, ethical consumerism remains little more than a reassuring illusion. Meaningful reform will not happen passively — it requires collective pressure, systemic change, and immediate action.	a) The final paragraph is a summary of / reiterates / reinforces the author's argument in the passage (<i>function</i>) that ethical consumerism is insufficient without broader structural reform (<i>context</i>) [explicit] b) The author proposes concrete solutions (<i>function</i>) that go beyond individual consumer action / that is more fundamental/effective in addressing the problems faced. (<i>context</i>) OR The author provides advice/ proposes solutions (<i>function</i>) that are likely to be more effective than relying solely on individual consumerism, while also providing clarity on how to avoid the illusion that ethical consumerism alone can address these issues. (<i>context</i>) [accepted]: The author provides advice/ proposes solutions (<i>function</i>) which are likely to be more effective than individual consumerism to solve the problems we are facing. (<i>context</i>) c) The author issues a call to action (<i>function</i>) for governments and corporations/everyone to undertake/pursue real/large scale/substantial change (<i>context</i>), underscoring the urgency of sustained coordinated/unified pressure and structural transformation. (<i>context</i>)	

7 Summarise the benefits of ethical consumerism.

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

	From the Text	Paraphrased
1	ethical consumerism remains a meaningful force in shaping modern economies. (lines 1-2)	Ethical consumerism strongly determines/influences today's economies. / Able to influence the economy
2	ethical consumption provides people with a practical way to express concern (lines 3-4)	It gives people a realistic / actual/ real / effective way /power to demand that corporate practices change / to verbalize their worries
3	and influence business behaviour. (lines 3-4)	to affect/guide/drive corporate actions. <i>(Allow lift of "business")</i>
4	This growing receptiveness signals that ethical values are no longer confined to activist circles but are entering the mainstream . (lines 6-8)	The popularity of ethical consumerism shows that even the common man / ordinary consumers are able to show concern for the social and environmental issues / moral concerns are becoming increasingly widely accepted .
5	Businesses are highly sensitive to consumer preferences, and sustained demand for ethical products can encourage firms to adopt more responsible practices. (lines 10-11) OR Businesses have shown that they can be responsive to this shift in expectations. (line 22)	This desire for/popularity of ethical products can prompt/motivate them to embrace more principled/ virtuous/ moral practices.
6	Over time, what begins as a niche market can influence entire industries, demonstrating that ethical consumerism can exert real pressure when demand is persistent . (lines 11-13)	The movement's sustained growth / people continually demanding ethical products can force positive change/ create significant impact across the consumer market / force companies to comply/change their behaviour
7	Ethical consumerism also plays an important educational role . (Labels, certifications and public campaigns draw attention to issues such as worker exploitation, environmental damage and animal welfare. (lines 14-16) OR Even when consumers do not always act on this information, repeated exposure increases awareness and encourages reflection . (lines 16-18)	It informs/ teaches consumers / enables them to learn about companies' ethical transgressions (also accept: learn about workers' and animal rights, sustainability (accept even if only 1 is given correctly) OR Such recurring information makes consumers at least think about/contemplate/ponder about the right and wrong of their shopping choices / moral implications .

8	This heightened awareness shapes public attitudes and expectations,	The increase in knowledge influences collective/ people's / society's mentalities/ beliefs/mindsets ...and norms/standards/ boundaries/projected demands
9	contributing to a culture in which unethical practices become less acceptable. (lines 18-19) OR Ethical consumerism, therefore, influences not only purchasing behaviour but also social norms. (lines 20-21) they not only improve domestic standards (line 30-31)	Eventually, this will create a climate where / consumers will collectively cease to tolerate unsustainable/ irresponsible/harmful business practices.
10	Many companies now are shifting to ethical sources, discouraging practices such as child labour and unfair trade. (lines 23-24)	Many firms are moving towards responsibly obtained raw materials/factors of production, OR Many companies are already phasing out exploitative practices / labour and trade practices that take advantage of workers.
11	This reduces exploitation in developing countries. (line 24)	...alleviate the unfair treatment of poor countries / alleviate the extent to which developing countries are taken advantage of (OR alleviating the situation of workers /environment being taken advantage of).
12	Companies also spend more to develop greener technologies. (line 25)	Investment has risen in sustainable technologies/ environmentally friendly innovations.
13	Ethical consumerism, when sustained, creates incentives for long-term improvement rather than short-term image management. (lines 25-27)	ethical consumerism prompts/spurs/ encourages lasting progress than just looking good/ a temporary boost in their standing for the time being.

14	Governments can also benefit from ethical consumerism. Consumer pressure often strengthens political will , making it easier for authorities to introduce regulations that protect workers and the environment. (lines 28-30)	Governments in turn are hence likelier to legally ensure /defend workers' rights and the environment.
15	also enhance the nation's global reputation . Over time, the country may gain recognition for being progressive . (lines 30-32)	A country upholding sustainable/ethical practices strengthen the country's international standing OR be seen as a forward-looking nation.

No. of Points	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10 and above
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

From all the passages

8. Passage 1 states that ethical consumerism imposes “**significant cognitive and moral demands** on individuals” (line 15).

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

From Passage 3	Suggested Answer
OPTION 1: Para 1, lines 1-6: “I want to shop ethically, but it often feels overwhelming... I am not always sure which labels I can trust... Standing in front of shelves filled with competing claims, I wonder whether my choices really make a difference...”	OPTION 1: <u>A) Identification of idea from Passage 3:</u> In paragraph 1 of Passage 3, the author describes feeling confused and daunted by the difficulty/challenge of identifying trustworthy/genuinely ethically produced goods among many conflicting claims. <i>(summarise the idea in the whole para)</i> OR <i>(any paraphrase from para 1 which brings out (1) suspicions of reliability (2) not knowing how to proceed due to incomplete info or (3) confusion about competing claims</i> <u>b) Justification:</u> This explains/elucidates/illustrates how consumers must process complex and unclear information when making shopping decisions, supporting Passage 1’s claim that ethical consumerism places heavy mental and ethical burdens on individuals.
OPTION 2: Para 2, lines 10-12: Ethical consumerism promises empowerment, but it also creates pressure, making everyday decisions feel heavier than they should be.	OPTION 2: <u>A) Identification of idea from Passage 3:</u> In paragraph 2 of Passage 3, the author describes feeling a sense of culpability / stressed out/weighed down/ heavy-hearted about purchasing goods that are not ethically produced. (lines 10-12) <u>b) Justification:</u> This corroborates/echoes/reinforces the idea in Passage 2 that ethical consumerism places considerable/substantial/heavy mental and ethical burdens on individuals by showing how the author feels conflicted by / experiences mental turmoil over daily purchasing decisions.

9. Passage 2 states that 'Businesses are highly sensitive to consumer preferences, and sustained demand for ethical products can encourage firms to adopt more responsible practices' (lines 10-11).
Identify one specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement.
Justify your answer.

From Passage 3	Suggested Answer
Para 2, lines 15-16: Yet my influence feels limited when large companies continue harmful practices and governments hesitate to act. OR Para 2, lines 16-18: It is difficult not to feel frustrated when individual effort appears insignificant compared to the scale of the problems involved.	<u>A) Identification of idea from Passage 3:</u> In paragraph 2 of Passage 3, the author states that personal choices make little difference, as large organisations continue damaging actions and the authorities fail to respond effectively. OR <i>(summarise the idea in the whole para)</i> <u>b) Justification: (Contradiction with NOT + reason):</u> This contradicts the idea from Passage 2 since companies would NOT be compelled to act in a more accountable manner/ operate in a more socially conscious way, showing that/because consumer pressure has a minimal effect/they are NOT actually swayed/persuaded by/influenced by what customers want.

10. The reading passages cover a range of views about ethical consumerism.

How far do you agree with their views?

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

Point from text	Possible Areas of Discussion
Passage 1, Para 1, lines 7-10: This idea resonates powerfully because it reduces morality to an act of convenience, presenting ethical action as something that can be performed effortlessly, without prolonged political engagement or disruptive changes to one's way of life.	Ethical consumerism is often portrayed as an easy and convenient activity where people can support social or environmental causes simply through their purchasing choices, without needing to engage in political activism or make major sacrifices in their lifestyles. This view is true to a large extent in Singapore because many Singaporeans prefer practical and convenient actions that do not disrupt their fast-paced lifestyles too much. Due to Singapore's highly work-oriented and efficiency-driven society, many people may not have the time or willingness to participate in prolonged political activism or major lifestyle changes. As a result, they are more likely to support causes through small and manageable actions instead. Ethical consumerism appeals to many Singaporeans because it allows them to contribute to social or environmental causes simply through everyday purchasing decisions. This allows them to continue their normal lifestyles while still feeling that they are making a positive difference. Since ethical action becomes reduced to small consumer choices, many people begin to see social responsibility as an individual lifestyle habit rather than political engagement. Businesses then respond by making ethical products and services more accessible to consumers, while the government promotes sustainable habits through campaigns and incentives. Over time, ethical consumerism becomes normalised as something that can be done easily without significant sacrifice or disruption to one's way of life. Therefore, in Singapore, ethical consumerism is largely presented as an effortless activity rather than one requiring prolonged political engagement. One example is Singapore's nationwide disposable bag charge introduced at major supermarkets in 2023. Supermarket chains such as NTUC FairPrice and Cold

	Storage charge customers for disposable carrier bags during regular grocery shopping. Consumers could easily avoid the charge simply by bringing reusable bags with them, requiring only a small adjustment to existing shopping habits. Another example is the incorporation of sustainability incentives into everyday consumption practices. For example, Singapore's Beverage Container Return Scheme (BCRS) uses a 10-cent refundable deposit to financially incentivise consumers to return used plastic bottles and cans through reverse vending machines. This approach has already generated significant participation, with around 33 million containers collected since its launch in April 2026. The scheme aims to achieve a 60% return rate within its first year and 80% within three years, demonstrating how financial incentives and convenient infrastructure can encourage more sustainable consumer behaviour. The use of incentives to encourage sustainable choices can also be seen in everyday retail and food consumption. For instance, Starbucks in Singapore offers discounts to customers who bring their own reusable tumblers, while many bubble tea shops also encourage customers to reduce plastic usage through similar small incentives. These practices allow consumers to make environmentally friendly choices during ordinary purchases of drinks and snacks without needing to drastically change their overall lifestyle or engage in activism. Sustainability is therefore embedded into routine consumer behaviour in a simple and accessible way. However, while ethical consumerism appears sufficient at the individual level, the broader environmental strategy in Singapore shows that meaningful change cannot rely on consumer choices alone. For example, under the Singapore Green Plan 2030, the government implements systemic measures such as the planned deposit return scheme for beverage containers, where producers and retailers share responsibility for recycling outcomes rather than leaving it to consumers alone. It also includes the expansion of electric vehicle infrastructure and the long-term phase-out of internal combustion engine vehicles, which requires national planning and industry regulation. In addition, policies targeting zero waste and reducing
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	reliance on the Semakau Landfill show that environmental progress depends on coordinated state action rather than individual consumption alone. These examples highlight that while ethical consumerism is convenient and accessible in Singapore, it is ultimately complemented—and sometimes outweighed—by wider systemic policies.
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