



RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Higher 1

JC2 Preliminary Examination

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

INSERT

8881/02

2 September 2026

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

Passage 1. An author considers why eating has become increasingly complicated in modern life.

- 1 For millennia, eating was a necessity woven into the rhythms of daily life. People ate what the land provided, what the seasons allowed, and what their cultures prescribed. Eating was therefore simultaneously about the food eaten and not about it. Simply put, it did not draw attention to itself: it mattered less as an object of scrutiny than as an unremarkable daily necessity. A warm bowl of hearty borscht¹ shared among Ukrainian peasants on a bitter wintry evening, accompanied by chatter about the minutiae of daily life, carried warmth and necessity far beyond its nutritional value. 5
- 2 Fast forward to this era: eating has become a veritable minefield, an exhausting exercise in decision-making. Modern society increasingly treats food as a problem to be solved, beyond mere accessibility and availability. This transformation has been driven largely by nutrition science, with scientists and governments identifying nutrients, measuring risks and issuing ever-changing advice. Where science ought to anchor us in assurance, it appears to unmoor us, bringing greater stress and uncertainty. One decade praises a food while the next condemns it. Red meat is one such victim: once blamed for clogging arteries, it was later celebrated as a tool for weight loss and muscle building, and is now treated with renewed suspicion because of its possible link to cancer. Should the growing teenager avoid it to reduce future health risks, or consume it as a useful source of protein? Such flip-flopping has made the modern eater navigate a battlefield of claims, warnings and anxieties. 10 15
- 3 Adding to these health complexities are the ethical implications of eating meat. The meat paradox describes the unease that can accompany eating animals: to continue eating meat, one may avoid knowing too much, thereby making it easier to downplay the animal's sentience. More broadly, people want cheap and readily available meat while objecting to the intensive farming practices that make such abundance possible. Animal activists are quick to expose another human inconsistency, such as condemning the cat and dog meat trade while eating octopus, even as evidence suggests that octopuses can experience pain and possess striking intelligence. The meat paradox therefore leaves individuals to rationalise their preferences. 20 25
- 4 As a result, many people no longer trust their own instincts about food. Somewhere online, a wellness influencer with hollow credentials insists that your pantry is toxic and your body inflamed. Supermarket aisles resemble moral battlegrounds, where every label promises redemption: Low-fat. High-protein. Sustainable. Plant-based. Gluten-free. Dietary choices increasingly serve as shorthand for identity, suggesting whether one is ethical, environmentally aware, health-conscious, or simply committed to efficiency. Even simple meals can feel burdened with guilt, as though eating the 'wrong' food reflects personal failure rather than a normal human choice. When eating becomes a moral performance, meals risk turning into silent indictments of character. 30 35
- 5 Although knowledge about nutrition can certainly improve health, society may have gone too far in turning eating into a carefully controlled activity. Food is not merely fuel for the body; it is also connected to pleasure, tradition and human connection. By constantly analysing every meal, people risk losing the simple happiness that eating once provided.

¹ borscht: a sour soup, often made with beetroot, commonly eaten in Ukraine and other parts of Eastern Europe.

Passage 2. An author argues that modern food culture needs to become more responsible.

- 1 What we eat matters far more than our waistlines. Modern food culture, which encourages impulsive purchasing and indiscriminate disposal, has left consumers increasingly detached from how their food is produced. Overeating, once regarded as an indulgence requiring restraint, is now progressively normalised, as exemplified by the popularity of competitive eating events, in which participants consume extraordinary quantities of food for entertainment. The decline of cooking as an essential life skill, coupled with the embrace of takeaway culture, reflects changing attitudes towards food. Having grown accustomed to food being easily available, we scarcely question the expectation that it should always be within reach. The proliferation of twenty-four-hour supermarkets, for instance, enables purchases at virtually any hour. As familiarity with ingredients and their origins diminishes, so too does awareness of the environmental consequences of what we consume. 5 10
- 2 Yet responsible and sustainable eating need not entail a joyless existence defined by guilt and deprivation. Addressing the problem requires more than simply restraining individual appetites; it requires challenging the values that modern society rewards. Renewed interest in cooking, for instance, may help restore a meaningful connection between consumers and the ingredients they eat, while choosing seasonal produce can both reduce environmental strain and challenge the expectation that every ingredient should be available throughout the year. Responsible consumption also demands that we challenge the expectation of visual perfection by accepting edible but misshapen produce, as doing so challenges narrow assumptions about what constitutes quality food. 15 20
- 3 Today, every meal reveals our indifference towards the value we place on food. What we eat should instead be a genuine commitment to environmental responsibility. Since human survival ultimately depends upon the planet – not the other way around – choosing to value food more thoughtfully is a mark of maturity and respect for our world.

Passage 3. A writer reflects on giving up food delivery apps.

- 1 A few months ago, I deleted the food delivery apps from my phone. Not because I disliked them. I loved them. There was something almost indecently luxurious about lying on the sofa, tapping a few buttons, and having exactly the food I wanted arrive half an hour later. It made exhaustion easier. It made laziness respectable. It made dinner feel like a problem technology had solved.
- 2 But I also realised that food had become another thing I was outsourcing, optimising and barely thinking about; the convenience began to leave an aftertaste. I started noticing the plastic containers, the extra charges, the riders hurrying through traffic, the restaurants that seemed increasingly dependent on platforms they did not control. Every order felt small, but together they added up to a way of eating that asked very little of me and a great deal of everyone else. Ultra-convenience is addictive precisely because it hides its costs so well. 10
- 3 Living without the apps has not made me virtuous. Some nights I still eat badly. Sometimes even a plain meal of toast, eggs or leftovers can carry comfort, pause and care beyond the fact of being fed. Cooking has changed the pace of my evenings. It forces me to stop working, look at what I already have, and accept that food need not always be instant, impressive or morally perfect. I do not think everyone can or should abandon convenience entirely; for some, it is genuinely useful. Still, I have begun to suspect that the best meals are not those that prove anything, but those that leave room for care, pleasure and ordinary human indulgences. 15



RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Higher 1

JC2 Preliminary Examination

Candidate name	
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Class	
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Index number	
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GENERAL PAPER

Paper 2

8881/02

2 September 2026

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class index number on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use highlighters, 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.

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

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** In paragraph 1, explain why the author states that eating 'did not draw attention to itself' (lines 3-4) in the past.

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.....[1]

- 2** In paragraph 2, how does the author's use of language show concern that eating is no longer a simple pleasure?

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.....[3]

- 3** Using paragraph 3, identify **three** contradictions people face when eating meat.

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.....[3]

- 4** From paragraph 4, explain how the author illustrates that consumers 'no longer trust their own instincts about food' (line 27).

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.....[2]

- 5** In paragraph 5, explain the author's use of the phrase 'gone too far' (lines 36-37) in describing society's approach to healthy eating.

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

6 Summarise the consequences of modern food consumption and what responsible eating entails.

[8]

From all the passages

- 7** Passage 1 states that food 'carried warmth and necessity far beyond its nutritional value' (lines 6-7).

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

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.....[2]

- 8** Passage 2 suggests that 'having grown accustomed to food being easily available, we scarcely question the expectation that it should always be within reach' (lines 7-8).

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

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

How far do you think our modern day concerns about food are justified?

- the arguments expressed in **at least one** of the reading passages
- examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society.

[illegible]

[12]

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1. In paragraph 1, explain why the author states that eating 'did not draw attention to itself' (lines 3-4) in the past. [1]

Idea from the passage	Answer in own words
It mattered less as an object of scrutiny than as an unremarkable daily necessity	(A) Rather than something people consciously examined / worried about, (B) eating was once a natural / ordinary part of life. OR Eating was a common activity that people did not spend time perusing / analysing (A & B consolidated) (A) + (B) = 1m

2. In paragraph 2, how does the author's use of language show concern that eating is no longer a simple pleasure? [3]

Idea from the passage	Answer in own words
<i>The author uses the word / phrase...</i> veritable minefield	(A) to highlight that eating is full of hidden / unexpected dangers / hazards . <i>Idea of uncertainty / caution as it implies hidden danger = BOD</i>
exhausting exercise in decision-making	(B) to convey the mental strain / drain / burden placed on consumers selecting food items. <i>'tiring' = BOD</i>
ought to anchor us...appears to unmoor us	(C) to highlight that Science [should make people feel secure but] leaves them bewildered / lost / confused / insecure about the right food to eat.
flip-flopping	(D) to show how repeated / constant reversals in the / contradictory advice make nutritional guidance seem unreliable or frustrating. <i>Note: the idea of going back and forth</i> <i>Note: 'always changing' = BOD</i>
battlefield of claims, warnings and anxieties	(E) to suggest that modern food advice is presented as aggressive / competing / conflict-ridden / a struggle of competing narratives , making the consumer feel under attack by the messages. OR to suggest that dissenting food advice today has made eating stressful . <i>Any 3 for 3m</i>

3. Using paragraph 3, identify **three** contradictions people face when eating meat. [3]

Idea from the passage	Answer in own words
The meat paradox describes the unease that can accompany eating animals: to continue eating meat, one may avoid knowing too much ...animal's sentience.	(Purposeful ignorance) (A) People feel discomfort / guilty knowing that animals suffer so that we can eat meat... yet they do not stop eating meat OR yet they choose to be less informed about the animals' suffering / instead of learning more .
More broadly, people want cheap and readily available meat...	(People's desires vs ethical consideration) (B) People desire affordable / accessible meat...

while objecting to the intensive farming practices that make such abundance possible.	but reject cruel farming practices <u>that allow for such a provision / that come with it.</u> <i>Note: people want more humane farming' = BOD</i>
Animal activists are quick to expose another human inconsistency , such as condemning the cat and dog meat trade while eating octopus , even as evidence suggests that octopuses can experience pain and possess striking intelligence .	(Selective consumption) (C) People are being hypocritical / practicing double standards about the consumption of some bright / clever animals... where they refrain from eating some but indulge in others. <i>1m each</i>

4. From paragraph 4, explain how the author illustrates that consumers 'no longer trust their own instincts about food' (line 27). [2]

Idea from the passage	Answer in own words
<i>no longer trust their own instincts about food</i>	<i>Useful context:</i> <i>Consumers start second guessing / doubting themselves...</i>
Somewhere online, a wellness influencer with hollow credentials insists that your pantry is toxic and your body inflamed .	(A) when they receive messages from <u>online influencers</u> who have suspect / questionable / irregular qualifications , telling consumers that their food purchases are extremely unhealthy / poisoning their bodies... [1]
Supermarket aisles resemble moral battlegrounds , where every label promises redemption: Low-fat. High-protein. Sustainable. Plant-based. Gluten-free.	(B) and when <u>food shopping</u> becomes filled with moral judgement / pressure / debate / tensions / conundrums about buying the right / correct product . [1] <i>Note: idea of morality or ethics must be present</i>

5. In paragraph 5, explain the author's use of the phrase 'gone too far' (lines 36-37) in describing society's approach to healthy eating. [2]

Idea from the passage	Answer in own words
<i>Although knowledge about nutrition can certainly improve health,</i>	<i>Useful context:</i> <i>While understanding about diet is important in making us fitter / making us healthier...</i> <i>Note: comparative must be present to capture 'improve'</i>
society may have gone too far in turning eating into a carefully controlled activity . Or By constantly analysing every meal,	(A) We have become obsessed / too focused about eating. [1] OR We seek to manage eating to extremes . OR We over plan / overregulate our eating habits.
people risk losing the simple happiness that eating once provided.	(B) This could result in overlooking eating as a pleasurable pursuit / failure to enjoy eating . [1]

From passage 2

6. Summarise the consequences of modern food consumption and what responsible eating entails.

[8]

	From the Passage	Re-expressed
From Paragraph 1 (consequences)		
A	Modern food culture, which encourages impulsive purchasing (l. 2)	We now indulge in careless consumption...
B	and indiscriminate disposal (l. 2)	resulting in limitless / unconscionable food waste / discarding of food <i>Accept 'wastage of food'</i> <i>Do not accept 'food waste' on its own as it means leftovers which is not equal to the unnecessary / excess discarding of food</i>
C	has left consumers increasingly detached from how their food is produced (l. 2-3) OR As familiarity with ingredients and their origins diminishes (l. 10) OR Every meal reveals our indifference towards the value we place on food (l. 21)	We have limited awareness / are apathetic of how food is cultivated.
D	Overeating... is now progressively normalised (l. 3-4)	There is increasing acceptance of excessive eating... OR Excessive eating is now more and more commonplace...
E	as exemplified by the popularity of competitive eating events, in which participants consume extraordinary quantities of food for entertainment (l. 3-4)	as this is treated as a source of fun / a performance / as an exhibition.
F	The decline of cooking as an essential life skill (l. 6)	Cooking is less valued / not as important due to...
G	coupled with the embrace of takeaway culture , reflects changing attitudes towards food (l. 6)	a growing reliance on takeout / food to go shows shifting patterns of food consumption.
H	Having grown accustomed to food being easily available (l. 7-8) OR we scarcely question the expectation that it should always be within reach (l. 8)	We are now used to getting food whenever we want it. / We demand that food be accessible year-round.
I	As familiarity with ingredients and their origins diminishes , so too does awareness of the environmental consequences of what we consume. (l. 10-11)	Less knowledge about food sources leads to reduced consciousness / knowledge of environmental impacts. <i>Need cause (less knowledge about food) and effect (knowing less about the env)</i>
From Paragraph 2 (What responsible eating entails)		
J	Yet responsible and sustainable eating need not entail a joyless existence defined by guilt and deprivation (l. 12)	<i>(inferred)</i> Responsible eating means we enjoy food without feeling bad.
K	Addressing the problem requires more than simply restraining individual appetites (l. 13) OR	We have to do more than be disciplined / measured / controlled when we consume. OR

	it requires challenging the values that modern society rewards	We should reconsider what society extols /the wider impact of our food consumption.
L	Renewed interest in cooking, for instance, may help restore a meaningful connection between consumers and the ingredients they eat (l. 14-16)	We need a greater engagement in cooking, to foster a deeper appreciation of the food prepared ... <i>Cooking as context is necessary</i> <i>Cause (cooking) and effect (meaningful connection) should be shown</i>
M	while choosing <u>seasonal produce</u> can both reduce environmental strain (l. 16) OR What we eat should instead be a genuine commitment to environmental responsibility . (l. 21-22)	We should <u>select food according to nature's cycles</u> to limit ecological damage . <i>Allow lift of 'seasonal'</i> <i>Key point: cause (food in season) and effect (env care)</i>
N	Responsible consumption also demands that we challenge the expectation of visual perfection by accepting edible but misshapen produce (l. 18-19) OR as doing so challenges narrow assumptions about what constitutes quality food (l. 19-20)	We should not dismiss eating unattractive / ugly foods... OR as this encourages a broader view of what makes food acceptable / as this helps us be more accepting of good food.
O	choosing to value food more thoughtfully is a mark of maturity and respect for our world (l. 23-24)	Ultimately, we should eat with <u>more care / consideration</u> to show responsibility / stewardship towards the earth.

15 pts

Pts	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	≥10
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

From all the passages

7. Passage 1 states that food 'carried warmth and necessity far beyond its nutritional value' (lines 6-7).

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

From Passage 3	Passage 3 idea paraphrased + justification
Sometimes even a plain meal of toast, eggs or leftovers can carry comfort, pause and <u>care</u> beyond the fact of being fed.	(A) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 suggests that even simple food can provide contentment / a break from work / and a sense of care, not just physical nourishment. [1] (A1) <u>Justification</u>: This supports Passage 1 because even an ordinary meal can be full of solace / tenderness so long as it is prepared by a person / for a person you love / prepared with thoughtfulness. [1] OR This supports Passage 1 as food is nourishment for the soul and not just the body / food becomes an affirmation of one's humanity.
Cooking has changed the pace of my evenings OR It forces me to stop working, look at what I already have	(B) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 suggests that preparing food alters their relationship with time, making them slow down and pay attention to what is already present. [1] (B1) <u>Justification</u>: This supports Passage 1 because the act of cooking becomes meaningful when it takes one's mind off productivity and restores a more reflective human rhythm to the day leading to self-care. [1]
the best meals are not those that prove anything, but those that leave room for <u>care</u> , pleasure and ordinary human indulgences	(C) <u>Identification</u>: The writer of Passage 3 suggests that good meals are not valuable because they demonstrate moral correctness or healthy choices, but because they allow people to experience care, enjoyment and normal human desires. [1] (C1) <u>Justification</u>: This supports Passage 1 as it shows that food is meaningful beyond physical nourishment. The implication is that eating is not just a physiological act, but a deeply human one. [1]

8. Passage 2 suggests that 'having grown accustomed to food being easily available, we scarcely question the expectation that it should always be within reach' (lines 7-8).

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

From Passage 3	Passage 3 idea paraphrased + justification
I deleted the food delivery apps from my phone.	(A) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 deliberately removes easy access to instant food delivery. [1] (A1) <u>Justification</u>: This undermines Passage 2 because the writer actively questions constant availability rather than accepting it as normal. [1] OR This undermines Passage 2 because the writer is willing to put up with the inconvenience that comes from having to personally acquire food. OR This undermines Passage 2 because the writer can resist the systems that make food instantly accessible.
...the convenience began to leave an aftertaste	(B) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 suggests that ease of delivery leaves a sense of discomfort / unease. [1] (B1) <u>Justification</u>: This undermines the idea in Passage 2 because once we start probing the ease of delivery, we become more aware of unseen / invisible problems / exploitation. [1]
I started noticing the plastic containers, the extra charges, the riders hurrying through traffic, the restaurants that seemed increasingly dependent on platforms they did not control	(C) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 realised the environmental, financial and social costs of accessible food. [1] (C1) <u>Justification</u>: This contradicts Passage 2's idea as enough attention has been raised about these costs that society is looking at how to mitigate the negative impact of our love for convenience. [1]
accept that food need not always be instant, impressive or morally perfect .	(D) <u>Identification</u>: The writer in Passage 3 learns that food does not always have to be immediate, attractive or ethical. [1] (D1) <u>Justification</u>: This undermines Passage 2 because the writer rejects the expectation of instant food. Food can regain value / can be appreciated more through simplicity / patience / effort, not just speed and convenience. [1] OR This undermines Passage 2 because the writer accepts that acquiring food, especially through cooking, takes time and is effortful.

9. The reading passages cover a range of views about modern food culture.
How far do you think that our modern day concerns about food are justified?
Support your ideas with reference to:

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

[12]