

ANGLO-CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2024

GENERAL PAPER

8881/01

Paper 1

August 2024

Additional Materials: Cover Page and Answer Paper

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your index number and 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 **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.

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



Anglo-Chinese Junior College
General Paper Department

GP 8881_1
ACJC 2024

[Turn over

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 Have digital media made artists worse off?
- 2 'Being healthy is a luxury only the rich can afford.' How far is this true of your society?
- 3 Is there any point in studying history when we should look to the future?
- 4 'Ignorance is bliss.' To what extent is this true?
- 5 Consider the view that there is too much emphasis on individualism today.
- 6 Assess the view that our world today is more divided than before.
- 7 Is noise pollution increasingly a problem in your society?
- 8 'We are scientific giants but ethical infants.' Comment.

8881 H1 General Paper
2024 ACJC Preliminary Exam Paper 1 Essay Outlines

Overall Examiners' Comments

Content

- Introductions were often able to establish a clear stand and outline the two opposing sides, though appropriate contextualisation was less commonly observed. Weaker responses lacked explicit focus on the key words in the question, instead regurgitating generic information about the broader topic.
- Weaker responses outlined the scope of the discussion before abruptly ending their introduction by saying that they therefore agree or disagree with the statement. In their concluding paragraphs, many students did not provide an overall evaluation or weighing of the points they had discussed, and hence appeared to be sitting on the fence.
- Weaker responses often relied on listing examples instead of evaluating specific reasons (e.g. Questions 2, 6 and 8), being more descriptive instead of having focused analysis, or making multiple generalised assertions which may not necessarily be relevant to begin with.
- Weaker responses failed to maintain consistent focus on the specific debatable issues, instead discussing the key words and topics more broadly, which hence compromised on the degree of relevance.
- Most students showed an awareness of the need for a balanced discussion, though several only briefly presented and instantly refuted cherry-picked counter arguments.

Planning / Structure

- The frequent use of the caret symbols, the need for extensive crossings out or other untidy revisions in various parts of the essays revealed insufficient planning before students started constructing each paragraph.
- Attempts to link paragraphs were mostly evident, though the use of such links were sometimes insecure, even contradictory (e.g. using 'furthermore' even though the paragraph takes on an opposing stand as the previous one).

Language

- Some students are still using phrases such as 'I agree to a small / large / certain extent...', mistaking it as an attempt at showing nuance.
- Some students often did not form letters clearly enough, affecting the legibility of their handwriting and hence the ability of examiners to understand and possibly credit their responses. Students are also reminded that illegible handwriting will be marked out as spelling errors, and the frequency of these errors affects their language score.
- Students should bear in mind that clarity of logic is key to the flow of writing and argumentation. Avoid the use of flowery language as it can muddle one's overall point.
- Students are reminded to use a formal register (i.e. avoid a conversational tone) and to avoid the use of slang e.g. "normies", "legit" "super good".

Common Language Errors

1. Subject Verb Agreement – Singular/Plural especially for "The artists are..." (not "The artists is...").
2. Countable vs Uncountable nouns e.g. "the number (not "amount") of people", "the elderly" (not "the elderlies"), "research" (not "researches")
3. Tense errors – when engaging in comparison of past and present-day contexts or giving examples of past events, students should use the past tense.
4. Inconsistent use of pronouns – e.g. using 'one' and 'their' / 'themselves' interchangeably when referring to the same subject.
5. "Its" is a possessive pronoun vs. "it's" is a contraction of "it is" which should not be used in formal writing.
6. Omission of hyphens e.g. "fast-paced society", "well-being", "long-term effects", "one-sided views"
7. Omission of the definite article "the" – e.g. the USA, the majority, the elderly, the state, the internet, the Arts.
8. The first letter of proper nouns should be capitalised e.g. Instagram, Asian, YouTube, Western, TikTok.
9. Ungrammatical sentence structure – e.g. sentence fragments, run-on sentences without appropriate use of commas, sentences without verbs.
10. Spelling errors – "portrays", "occasion", "perseverance", "prevalent", "privilege", "occurrence", "legitimacy", etc.
11. Expression errors
 - "Thus, this shows that..." – "thus" & "this shows that" cannot be used together
 - "Hence, solving the problem." – incomplete sentence
12. Writing style
 - Do not describe the writing process, e.g. "In this essay, I will ..." / "This essay will discuss..."
 - Do not conclude every paragraph by merely repeating the entire question. Vary the phrasing.

1. Have digital media made artists worse off?

Question Type: Cause and Effect / Time-based

Debatable Issue: made artists worse off vs not made artists worse off

Keywords:

'digital media': creative content that can be accessed through electronic devices, via online platforms, streaming services, and social media etc

'artists': creative individuals, from musicians and painters to filmmakers and writers

'made... worse off': situation has deteriorated compared to the past, can apply to various aspects such as financial, creative, recognition, reach

Context:

Modern world: democratisation of artistic creation; a plethora of online platforms which facilitate global reach and exposure; information overload online which can make it difficult for artists to gain attention; digital piracy and copyright issues; the need to go viral and staying relevant requires constant adaptation by content creators; the rise of the gig economy and its impact

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should discuss the reasons why the impact of digital media on artists has been positive or negative, and how that compares with the past.
- Students can consider whether the impact of digital media may vary depending on the art form (music, visual arts etc.), or differ across societies.

Pitfalls:

- Students merely list or describe examples of digital media/artforms without considering the impact on artists specifically, and whether they are worse off today as compared to the past.
- Students simply focus on digital media as social media.

Possible Stand 1: Digital media have made artists worse off.

- A. Digital media have the potential to foster piracy and copyright infringement, making it more difficult for artists to make a living from their work today.

E.g. The rise of "remix culture", where copyrighted material is used and repurposed without permission, blurs the line between artistic tribute and infringement of copyright. While this can be positive for exposure, it can also lead to artists' work being used for free in fan art, remixes, or memes without proper compensation or credit. In 2021, a remix of Olivia Rodrigo's "Drivers License" by a popular TikTok user went viral. While it brought more attention to the song, the original artist was not initially credited, potentially impacting her streaming royalties and overall recognition for the remixed version.

- B. The reliance on algorithmic curation on streaming platforms and social media has introduced new hurdles which can make it more difficult for emerging artists to gain recognition, hindering their ability to build a fanbase and potentially harming their long-term careers.

E.g. YouTube's recommendation algorithm often promotes established channels, making it difficult for new creators to gain traction. An independent filmmaker releasing their first short film on YouTube might struggle to compete with channels with millions of subscribers, leading their content to be buried in obscurity. This can stifle innovation and discourage new voices from entering the filmmaking space.

E.g. Online marketplaces like Amazon or Etsy often highlight "best sellers" or heavily promoted products on their search results pages. This can make it difficult for independent artists to compete, limiting the visibility of their unique handcrafted goods in favour of mass-produced items.

C. The rapid pace of digital media creates immense pressure on artists to constantly create and maintain a strong online presence, leading to a decline in artistic quality.

E.g. The pressure to capture "Instagrammable" moments can lead photographers to prioritise aesthetics over artistic expression. Photos might be staged or heavily edited to fit a specific online trend, sacrificing originality and depth. As certain styles and locations become trendy on Instagram, photographs become more homogenised. Popular travel destinations see photographs taken from the same angle, with similar editing techniques, prioritising replicating a popular aesthetic over capturing the unique essence of the location.

E.g. The rise of online platforms offering short stories or serialised content can pressure authors to prioritise quantity over quality as they churn out new chapters quickly. Such a "fast fiction" environment can result in authors potentially sacrificing in-depth character development and plot complexity for faster updates to keep readers engaged. In fact, some authors who find success on such platforms might struggle to adapt their writing style for a traditional publishing audience that expects more developed narratives.

Possible Stand 2: Digital media have not made artists worse off (Digital media have made them better off).

A. Digital platforms have empowered artists by democratising the creation of art whether one is a professional artist or an amateur, allowing anyone to break into the art scene.

E.g. Previously, high-quality tools for artistic creation were expensive and often inaccessible. Aspiring filmmakers needed access to expensive cameras and editing suites. Now, smartphones with high-resolution cameras and powerful editing apps like LumaFusion or Premiere Rush allow anyone to create high-quality videos. These tools offer features like colour grading, transitions, and even basic special effects, making professional-looking filmmaking accessible to a wider audience. Sean Baker's *Tangerine* (2015), for instance, was one of the first critically acclaimed feature films shot entirely on iPhones. The money saved on camera equipment was used to pay for shooting locations and to pay extras.

E.g. Creating high-quality music used to require expensive studio time and specialised equipment like synthesisers and recording consoles. With the advent of digital media, digital audio workstations such as Logic Pro or Cubase Pro offer professional-grade recording, editing and mixing capabilities to anyone with a personal computer, allowing up-and-coming musicians to make music despite budget constraints. The rise of "bedroom pop", a genre of music that is self-made and low-quality in sound and production but high quality in every other sense is a result of this.

B. Digital media allow artists to bypass traditional gatekeepers, giving them new avenues to monetise their work.

E.g. Traditionally, musicians relied on record labels for funding production, promotion, and distribution of their work. Singer-songwriter Amanda Palmer bypassed record labels and launched a very successful Kickstarter campaign that raised over \$1.2 million directly from fans, which allowed her to record a record and release an album on her own terms.

E.g. Mr Doodle, a British street artist known for his black and white doodle art, amassed a huge following on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram and achieved world-wide recognition without relying on the traditional art world gatekeepers such as galleries and established critics. His online fame has opened doors for collaborations with established brands like Puma and Converse, featuring his doodle art on clothing and accessories.

C. Digital platforms allow artists to directly interact with their fans in a myriad of ways today more so than in the past, helping them to build loyal fanbases.

E.g. Fans used to rely on traditional sources such as magazines or fan clubs to get information about their favourite artists. Now, artists can create online spaces where fans can connect with each other, share their passions, and discuss the artists' work. Such online communities provide a sense of belonging and allow fans to feel like they are part of something bigger. K-pop groups such as BTS have massive online fan communities on platforms such as Weverse and VLive. These platforms offer exclusive content, live streams, and interactive features, fostering a strong sense of connection between the artists and their global fanbase.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts had a wider range of examples discussing artists from various genres. Weaker scripts conflated 'art' with 'artists', without focusing on how digital media impacted artists specifically, which resulted in a generic discussion of the arts.

2. 'Being healthy is a luxury only the rich can afford.' How far is this true of your society?

Question Type: Absolute

Debatable Issue: is a luxury only the rich can afford vs is NOT a luxury only the rich can afford (i.e. it is something the middle class and the poor can afford as well)

Keywords:

'being healthy': a state in which one's physical, emotional and mental well-being is taken care of; not just the absence of diseases

'a luxury': expensive, costly

'only the rich': exclusive to the wealthy

'can afford': can spare the time, resources, effort/focus

Context:

'your society': In this outline, the focus will be on Singapore – high costs of living (incl. concerns over cost of food, esp. organic and fresh ones); intensely competitive, long working and schooling hours coupled with sleep deprivation for a large number of people; rise of lifestyle-induced diseases associated with affluence; range of government subsidies and schemes to manage and promote good health, etc.

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should discuss the various resources required for being healthy, and whether these resources are (readily) available to those who are not rich.
- Students should examine the characteristics of 'your society' to assess the validity of the absolute claim.
- Students can consider the impacts of both preventive care and medical care in contributing to one's health status, as well as the changes to the healthcare system over time.

Pitfalls:

- Students merely describe the costs involved in being healthy, without explaining whether it is something affordable to all income groups or just the rich.
- Students only focus on the financial costs of being healthy, ignoring other aspects such as the time, knowledge or infrastructure required.
- Students may try to argue that being healthy is in fact a necessity (rather than a luxury), not realising that they must also engage with the clause 'only the rich can afford'.

Possible Stand 1: In Singapore, being healthy is a luxury only the rich can afford.

- A. Some may consider being healthy a luxury only the rich can afford, given the high financial costs involved when trying to make healthier choices in Singapore, a country that is known for its high cost of living in general.

E.g. Faced with a restricted budget and rising standards of living, what is available and affordable takes priority over more nutritious choices for poorer Singaporean households; trade-offs and compromises are often the norm, with families swapping fresh food for frozen or canned ones or going for carbohydrate-heavy foods which are more filling and less expensive but less rich in nutrients than other foods. In the long run, poor diets also contribute to ailments such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease and cancer.

- B. While Singapore is generally fast-paced, middle-class and working-class individuals might be the only ones who must endure long working hours without plausible alternative options, making it hard for them to maintain a healthier lifestyle.

E.g. Middle-class individuals are likely to feel the time pressure and may resort to convenient but less healthy meals and food options (eating out – less control over the amount of oil, sodium, etc.) on a regular basis as they struggle with long working hours. Even carving out time to exercise might be deemed a luxury if one is struggling to make ends meet.

- C. For the sake of cost efficiency, the Singapore healthcare system tends to focus more on common diseases and physical ailments which affect a larger proportion of the population, while rarer genetic disorders and mental health conditions are granted disproportionately less subsidies, making them almost exclusively affordable to the rich rather than to the average Singaporean.

E.g. Long waiting times are a concern for those who cannot afford to seek out a private therapist. It is not uncommon to hear of people who were, and are still, given a few months of waiting time for their first or next appointment in public

hospitals. The longer it takes for someone to receive help, the more difficult their recovery can be. Delays in treatment time can cause other serious consequences too, such as limiting social and occupational opportunities, and increasing the risk of depression and substance use challenges.

Possible Stand 2: In Singapore, being healthy is NOT a luxury only the rich can afford (even the middle class and the poor can afford)

- A. In the light of an ageing society, Singapore has been actively encouraging seniors, who may not always have the financial means, to go for free health screenings and programmes to promote physical and mental well-being.

E.g. Project Silver Screen (PSS), rolled out in 2018 by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Health Promotion Board (HPB), aims to detect functional decline in vision, hearing and oral health among seniors in the community early, and to provide timely follow-up, to extend their years of independence and improve quality of life. In the same spirit, the National Seniors' Health Programme, part of the government's Action Plan for Successful Ageing, seeks to encourage and empower seniors to take charge and remain active and healthy. Since 2015, there have been campaigns such as easy exercises that can be done at home, healthy eating, falls prevention and stroke awareness. This allows elderly Singaporeans, regardless of their level of wealth, to adopt healthy ageing practices to prevent and mitigate the onset of ill health.

- B. With the broad vision that no one will be denied healthcare because they cannot afford it, the Singapore government has rolled out a range of financial schemes to ensure accessibility.

E.g. The Singapore government seeks to ensure that all Singaporeans are well-protected against ill health and large medical costs by setting up four lines of defence before and in the event that someone falls ill and require treatment: subsidies (for hospitalisation, outpatient care and long-term care (e.g. Community Health Assistance Scheme)), insurance (MediShield Life and CareShield Life), Medisave (which can help pay for surgery, health screenings, severe disability, etc.), and safety nets (MediFund for those having financial difficulties with their remaining bills, after government subsidies and drawing on other means of payment, and ElderFund, a discretionary assistance scheme targeted at severely disabled lower-income Singapore citizens aged 30 and older, and cannot benefit from other provisions).

- C. In encouraging Singaporeans to embrace a healthier lifestyle, there are actually very affordable ways in which Singaporeans can transition from a sedentary lifestyle to a more active one without having to break the bank.

E.g. Recognising that Singaporeans generally lead a hectic lifestyle, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) offers suggestions for basic exercises which people can do to squeeze in physical activity and keep fit at work or even while standing in line. There are also incentives in the form of transport or supermarket vouchers on the HPB's Healthy 365 app to get Singaporeans moving. Moreover, readily accessible ActiveSG gyms and classes cost a nominal sum or are free of charge. Even Standard Chartered Bank has offered quick workout ideas that take less than 15 minutes daily to keep one's body and mind functioning well. Such exercises do not require payment of hefty sums for gym memberships or equipment, which are out of reach for the less wealthy.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts had insightful contextualisation of Singapore society in the discussion of the arguments and understood the nuances between the rich and the poor (such as considering the middle income). Weaker scripts tended to make tokenistic reference to Singapore society without contextualising it to their arguments. Some students also relied heavily on overgeneralisations (e.g. stereotypes of the rich and the poor) and examples that were unqualified.

3. Is there any point in studying history when we should look to the future?

Question Type: Absolute

Debatable Issue: pointless to study history when we should look to the future vs there is a point in studying history even as we look to the future

Keywords:

'any point': meaning, purpose, rationale, reason for an action

'studying history': having knowledge or a keen appreciation of past events or developments of a particular country, period or subject

'look to the future': being forward looking, anticipating what is to come

Context:

Modern society: volatile; uncertain; increasingly polarised; characterised by rapid changes in technology; progressive

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should address the specific context of 'when we should look to the future'.
- Students should address the more extreme view that believes in the futility of acquiring an appreciation of history because such a preoccupation takes our attention away and holds us back from anticipating what is ahead of us. Conversely, a deeper understanding of history may give us insights into future possibilities and keep us grounded in uncertain times ahead.
- More perceptive responses will recognise that studying history and being future oriented are not mutually exclusive.

Pitfalls:

- Weaker responses may ignore the absolute nature of the question, while also simply explaining the benefits and costs of having knowledge of history without linking such discussions to the potential impact on the future.

Possible Stand 1: There is no point in studying history when we should look to the future.

A. Retrospectively examining past events to make predictions of what is to come is meaningless and serves to distract us because the future is uncertain. Each event that unfolds is unique and overreliance on the past to guide us into the future is dangerously myopic, leaving us floundering in a vastly different future.
E.g. While the age of the Industrialisation Revolution was a period of scientific and technological revolution that transformed largely agrarian and rural societies in 18th century North America and Europe, with steam power and mass-produced goods replacing handcrafted ones, the 21st century artificial intelligence (AI) revolution is an entirely different beast. What we can learn from the Industrial Revolution cannot possibly prepare us for an AI future. In the Industrial Revolution, workers had jobs but were concerned with poor working conditions and pay. In contrast, an AI future, in the worst-case scenario, could see the displacement of both blue-collar and white-collar workers. We are better off dealing with each unique challenge as it arises.

B. Studying history keeps us trapped in the traditional ways of doing things or causes us to hold on to past grievances or glories that are counterproductive to our future. Moving forward necessitates taking on new ideas or starting afresh with open minds.
E.g. In the US, some American citizens refer to the Second Amendment to justify the right to bear arms. However, many argue this is outdated today because the Second Amendment was conceived in the 18th century when the country was unstable and experiencing multiple conflicts and citizens needed to arm themselves for defence. Today, there is increasing gun violence and there is a need to balance this constitutional right with public safety concerns.

C. History is the history of victors and tells only one side of the story. Since history can be distorted, what we learnt is a skewed version of the past that could not have allowed us to learn anything useful for the future.
E.g. Italian explorer Christopher Columbus was often feted as the discoverer of the Americas in 1492. Many North and South American nations commemorate Columbus Day which officially celebrates the anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas. Yet, Columbus's arrival was rather controversial since it threw open the floodgates to European imperialists to loot, rape and massacre indigenous people. With the whitewashing of the 'history' of the Americas, the indigenous people are deceived and made to suppress their own histories. What can be learnt from this whitewashed version of history to contribute to a progressive and egalitarian future is therefore questionable. As it is, some South American nations such as Mexico and Argentina have removed or replaced Columbus Day.

Possible Stand 2: There is a point in studying history even as we should look to the future.

- A. As much as we think that the future is uncertain and unpredictable, we should not dismiss knowledge of past events because they may offer some valuable insights to address future challenges. There is a grain of truth in the adage that those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.

E.g. The Great Depression in the 1930s and the Great Recession in 2008 demonstrate how we do not always learn our lesson. Both economic crises were the result of unregulated US financial markets and the fact that it was easy to obtain credit to speculate in the stock market in the 1920s and in the housing market in the 2000s. Consequently, a series of bank failures in the US sparked off the recessions which also had wider implications on the global economy. As it is, what we are seeing today of bank runs in the US such as the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank in 2023 or the forced merger of Credit Suisse with UBS demonstrates that we have not truly learnt our lesson and there may be more of such collapses to come.

- B. Our appreciation of history keeps us grounded and rooted in our core values and sense of identity. Such continuity is necessary even as we look to the future because it acts as an anchor in uncertain times ahead.

E.g. Switzerland's history of neutrality continues to guide its policies and national values today, allowing the country to remain stable while the world around it is experiencing a lot of conflicts. Historical neutrality is a cornerstone of its identity and it dates back many centuries when the country was a battleground for other powers. In order to survive, the Swiss chose a path of non-involvement in foreign conflicts.

- C. Studying history and looking to the future are not mutually exclusive. Just because we have a deeper appreciation of history does not mean that we will be held back by our knowledge of the past and neglect or overlook the future that is ahead of us.

E.g. As Singaporeans, understanding our colonial past and the hardships of the Japanese occupation did not keep us shackled in the past or left us wary of others. Far from it, Singaporeans have chosen to pragmatically court the British and Japanese for investments while forging close diplomatic ties. Therefore, this false dichotomy of having one or the other but not both is an oversimplification of reality.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts considered how different methods of studying history had some bearing on the future. Weaker scripts failed to consider the condition of looking to the future, neglecting to discuss the significance of studying history in the context of the modern world. Some scripts conflated 'heritage conservation' with 'studying history' without any clear explanations to link the two.

4. 'Ignorance is bliss.' To what extent is this true?

Question Type: Simple Polarity

Debatable Issue: ignorance is bliss vs ignorance is not bliss

Keywords:

'ignorance is bliss': this idiom is said to emphasise that sometimes it is better for you if you do not know all the facts about a situation. This idiom means that one is untroubled, unencumbered and unworried, not about being joyful or euphoric.

'ignorance': unintentional ignorance (a general lack of awareness or insight regarding a particular situation; involuntary and may be due to incomplete information/knowledge or limited experience) versus intentional/wilful ignorance (voluntarily/deliberately ignoring/disregarding information/a problem)

Context:

Modern world: easy access to information; interconnected world in which events elsewhere can have an impact on an individual or a country as well; political instability and conflicts; inching towards environmental catastrophes if appropriate and adequate measures are not taken

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should consider the extent to which ignorance is beneficial, and conversely the extent to which ignorance can be detrimental when it backfires or when considered in the long run.
- Students may discuss ignorance from a range of perspectives (individual, community, country, business) and in different contexts (e.g. healthcare and medical science, environmental issues, geopolitical events, social causes).

Pitfalls:

- Students merely describe examples illustrating what ignorance looks like, without explaining whether it is beneficial to the parties involved because of what happens due to their lack of information/knowledge.
- Students have a narrow understanding of what ignorance entails, for example limiting the discussion to the economic aspect or merely focusing on the individuals.

Possible Stand 1: Ignorance is bliss.

- A. When it involves things beyond our control, ignorance is truly bliss, helping us to avoid unnecessary stress and anxiety which have no benefit to us.

E.g. Social media and general internet usage can lead to an onslaught of news and information about dire, traumatic events. Being consumed by this content could negatively impact one's well-being, while a healthy level of ignorance can be beneficial instead.

E.g. Doomscrolling is when a person actively seeks out saddening or negative material to read or scroll through on social media or news media outlets. The idea is to get access to all the information one needs to protect oneself from what is dangerous. This may however just lead to catastrophic thinking and cause one to feel worse instead, without actually reaping any benefits. In such cases, one is clearly better off being ignorant to some extent.

- B. "Naïve idealism" (which describes a way of thinking that is full of optimism and a strong belief in achieving positive change, often without considering the practical challenges involved) can motivate action, which is better than adopting a defeatist mindset and not even trying anything at all as a result of being all too aware of the realities of the status quo.

E.g. From Greta Thunberg's school strikes to grassroots movements protecting local ecosystems, naive idealism plays a crucial role in environmental activism. Despite the fact that those in power are entrenched in their way of thinking and behaviour, many of these young people still believe in a better future for the planet, pushing for stricter environmental regulations and inspiring others to take action.

- C. The adage "ignorance is bliss" finds particular resonance in today's world where we constantly compare ourselves with others. By strategically choosing what information we consume, we can cultivate contentment

E.g. A global movement towards decluttering and simplifying lives highlights a rejection of consumerism and a focus on experiences over possessions. People are finding contentment in having less and prioritizing quality over quantity. This is in part a response to the constant barrage of advertising and social media which feeds us a curated reality, showcasing the latest possessions, luxurious vacations, and seemingly perfect lifestyles. This relentless exposure can trigger feelings of inadequacy and a desire to chase the newest trends. However, by consciously limiting our exposure to such content, we can shift our focus to appreciating what we already possess.

Possible Stand 2: Ignorance is NOT bliss.

- A. A lack of necessary knowledge can compromise one's ability to make informed decisions, and unchallenged ignorance breeds misinformation, leading to consequences which may even be deadly.

E.g. Not knowing what one's allergy triggers may be life-threatening. Reactions to foods are the most common cause of anaphylaxis in the United States. Shellfish and fish allergies can be so serious that just the cooking vapours can sometimes trigger an allergic reaction. As a reaction gets worse, tissues swell, blocking airways, and people can have deadly heart and circulation problems. In such cases, what you do not know can actually hurt you.

- B. Being ignorant causes one to be susceptible to manipulation and exploitation, which can lead to effects ranging from financial losses to emotional trauma to bodily harms.

E.g. Being unaware of scammers' tactics increases the likelihood of one falling victim to online fraud. Scam victims in Singapore lost \$651.8 million in 2023. According to the Singapore Police Force's Mid-Year Scams and Cybercrime Statistics 2023, scammers are reaching out to victims via online and digital means, with messaging platforms, social media, phone calls, online shopping platforms and SMSes being the top five approach. Exploiting Singaporeans' nature of being somewhat too trusting and too compliant, many scammers easily cheated victims of their money by pretending to be the authorities. Despite repeated warnings, public education campaigns and widespread news coverage, more and more Singaporeans are falling victim to love scams, being exploited for their desire for love and companionship, and ending up with significant losses and emotional trauma.

- C. Cultural ignorance can cause one to incur the wrath of others or hurt the feelings of others when their inappropriate actions lead to misunderstanding about their intentions.

E.g. There are often reports on tourists acting inappropriately at sites of cultural, religious, or historical significance. Instead of being happily ignorant and just enjoying while travelling, not acting in alignment with local customs can lead to misunderstandings and be highly offensive, such as when a tourist accidentally uses informal language when addressing someone of higher status in South Korea, a country with strict social hierarchy.

E.g. In 2019, e-payment firm NETS and creative agency Havas Worldwide Singapore had to put out an apology as a result of their "brownface" ad campaign that was for a unified e-payment solution being deployed at hawker centres, canteens and coffeeshops, but was described by many as offensive and insensitive towards ethnic minority groups in Singapore instead. It featured Mediacorp celebrity Dennis Chew portraying characters such as a woman in a tudung and a man with visibly darker skin.

- D. In anti-intellectual communities, there is the rejection of critical thinking or the glorification of the emotional and irrational. People allow themselves to be motivated by fear and susceptible to tribalism and simplistic explanations, and such wilful ignorance can have far-reaching consequences.

E.g. During disease outbreaks, distrust of scientific expertise can lead to vaccine hesitancy and resistance to public health measures. This can slow efforts to control the spread of disease and put more people at risk. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, misinformation campaigns and dismissal of scientific recommendations on masks and social distancing hampered efforts to control the virus.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts demonstrated good understanding of the idiom and discussed a wide range of issues across different contexts. Weaker scripts did not fully understand the idiom holistically and had a very literal understanding of the phrase. Some examples were questionable in terms of relevance and significance.

5. Consider the view that there is too much emphasis on individualism today.

Question Type: excess

Debatable Issue: too much emphasis vs not too much emphasis

Keywords:

'too much emphasis on': suggests a concern that something is being prioritised too heavily, over-valued or taken to an extreme, implying a potential imbalance

'individualism': a focus on the individual, emphasising personal freedom, self-reliance, and the pursuit of one's own goals and desires

Context:

'today' (modern society): globalised and interconnected world; empowerment of the individual; rise of social movements; consumer culture which emphasises personal desires and happiness; social media platforms which encourage self-promotion

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should discuss how a focus on the individual has been taken to an extreme today, to the extent that it has negatively impacted others or society, and the converse, that individualism today is not excessive as it has empowered individuals or positively impacted others and society.
- Students may consider how the degree of emphasis on individualism and its impact differ across societies.

Pitfalls:

- Students describe examples of individualism, without considering whether there is too much emphasis on it.
- Students hijack the question such as discussing collective action without linking it back to individualism.

Possible stand 1: There is too much emphasis on individualism today.

- A. An excessive focus on individual achievement and self-promotion can lead to a decline in social cohesion and sense of community, especially when people prioritise personal gain over collective well-being.

E.g. The "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) mentality, where people prioritise their own immediate comfort over broader societal needs can hinder progress. This is seen in cases where wealthier communities use their resources to effectively block projects like affordable housing developments in their neighbourhoods, further pushing low-income residents to less desirable areas. Excessive NIMBYism can also delay or even block crucial infrastructure projects such as modernising electricity grids, embarking on renewable energy projects or expanding waste management facilities. These can have long term negative impacts for an entire community.

- B. An overemphasis on individual responsibility for success has exacerbated existing inequalities by downplaying the role of systemic factors in determining individual outcomes.

E.g. The "self-made man" narrative promotes the idea that anyone can achieve success through hard work alone. This disregards systemic issues like poverty, racial discrimination, and limited access to quality education and healthcare. Individuals from low-income backgrounds might face greater barriers to educational opportunities even if they are highly motivated. Without adequate financial aid or access to quality schools, their chances of upward mobility are significantly impeded.

E.g. An overemphasis on individual responsibility can lead to a victim blaming mentality. Individuals struggling with poverty, unemployment, or addiction might be stigmatised as not working hard enough, ignoring the complex social and economic forces that contribute to these issues. In many countries, homelessness is often blamed on individual choices like substance abuse. However, factors like mental health issues, domestic violence, and a lack of affordable housing play significant roles.

- C. The relentless pursuit of individualism has raised concerns about the negative impact on mental health issues in many societies.

E.g. Social media platforms can cultivate a curated online persona focused on individual success and possessions. Such an idealised version of reality presented in a constant stream of highlight reels could

potentially foster feelings of inadequacy and social comparison among viewers. This can lead to FOMO, a constant feeling of missing out on experiences and opportunities. This fear can lead to anxiety and dissatisfaction with one's own life, as reflected in the many studies across the world which have linked increased social media use with depression and loneliness among teenagers.

Possible Stand 2: There is not too much emphasis on individualism today (The emphasis on individualism is justified today).

- A. In a world where creativity and innovation are prized, individualism fosters a culture where personal drive and the pursuit of one's ideas are valued.

E.g. The maker culture celebrates individual creativity and problem-solving through DIY projects. Many innovations that started as individual tinkering projects have evolved into successful business, like the 3D printing industry. Dr Adrian Bowyer's vision of a self-replicating 3D printer, the RepRap, revolutionised the accessibility of 3D printing technology. His open-source design allowed individuals to build their own 3D printers, further fostering innovation and experimentation within the maker community.

- B. Individualism empowers people to question the status quo and advocate for change based on their own beliefs, allowing individual voices to become catalysts for change, which is especially important as societies strive towards greater progress and social justice.

E.g. Malala Yousafzai defied the Taliban's ban on girls' education by advocating for her right to learn. Her individual voice, amplified through media and activism, brought international attention to this issue and inspired global support for girls' education.

E.g. Greta Thunberg's school strike for climate change outside the Swedish Parliament challenged world leaders to take action on climate change. Her individual initiative inspired a global movement of young people demanding action on climate issues.

- C. In a rapidly changing world where lifelong learning is more important than ever, individualism emphasises personal responsibility for one's actions and growth.

E.g. Individualism, which emphasises personal responsibility for one's career path, fuels the trend of lifelong learning. Online learning platforms cater to this by empowering individuals to take charge of their professional development and pursue new skills at their own pace. This is particularly relevant in today's job market, where automation and technological advancements are constantly changing the landscape. Individuals who proactively learn coding or data analysis skills, in addition to their existing skillsets, demonstrate a strong sense of agency in adapting to these changes and remaining employable.

E.g. Individualism encourages people to define their own learning goals and transforms learning from a one-size-fits-all approach into a highly personalised journey. The plethora of resources online allows individuals to customise their learning experiences and empower them to continue their interests beyond traditional educational institutions. Personalised apps such as language learning app Duolingo allows users to set personalised goals, choose their preferred learning pace, and tailor their learning path by focusing on specific skills such as speaking or vocabulary learning.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts had a wide range of relevant examples. Weaker scripts failed to understand the concept of 'individualism' and often conflated it with the simplistic idea of individuals doing things.

6. Assess the view that our world today is more divided than before.

Question Type: Time-based

Debatable Issue: our world today is more divided than ever before vs our world today is not as divided as before

Keywords:

‘our world today’: interdependent, governed by multilateral organisations, increasingly progressive

‘more divided’: implies lack of unity and cohesion, marred by strategic rivalry, conflicts and disagreements

‘than ever before’: compared to the past

Context:

Modern society: becoming more polarised; deglobalised; uncertain and volatile even though countries are still interdependent; more global conflicts, political instability

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should offer reasons for more tense or fraught relations between people and countries compared to the past while also evaluating if the tensions today are really more severe than the polarisation of the past.
- Students should consider divisions across different aspects such as in the political, social, economic dimensions.
- Students may choose to demonstrate divisions at the local, regional or international level.

Pitfalls:

- Students may simply describe current examples of conflicts as evidence of divisions without assessing if we are more divided now or in the past.

Possible stand 1: Our world today is more divided than before.

- A. The world has become increasingly cosmopolitan and open to people from all walks of life. Ironically, this openness, stemming from a more interconnected environment, has also resulted in backlash from locals who wholeheartedly embrace a nativist ideology, calling for the well-being of locals to supersede those of migrants. Such close-quarters encounters between locals and migrants have also caused more friction and unrest in some parts of the world.

E.g. The groundswell of anti-migrant sentiments in Europe to the US have galvanised far-right groups in these regions, allowing groups such as the National Rally in France to make political inroads. Locals, frustrated by perceived competition with migrants over employment, housing and healthcare, coupled with an irrational fear that their culture will be eroded by newcomers, have repeatedly rewarded parties with nativist ideologies at the ballot box. Politicians today have a tough balancing act in appeasing locals and allowing enough migrants to keep the economy running. Such matters would not have really concerned empires or administrations of the past since their fates were not necessarily determined by the ballot box.

- B. While some may argue that the internet has democratised the spread of information and brought people together, it is also true that the vastness of the internet and algorithms that keep people in their own filter bubbles may have contributed to greater intellectual isolation and increased social fragmentation.

E.g. Today, there are even more extremist groups sowing the seeds of discord than before. Groups such as QAnon in the US propagate outlandish conspiracy theories that the US government has been overtaken by lizard people or that former President Donald Trump was under assault by Satan worshippers. Others such as ISIS promulgate hate and violence against others. Clearly, the internet has inadvertently given impetus to these groups to reach out to a larger audience, polarising society.

- C. The recent rise in identity politics, which could be attributed to a push towards more progressive and inclusive societies, may have inadvertently led to ugly and open confrontations between rights activists and conservatives. Compared to the past, when prejudice and discrimination was, unfortunately, a fact of life and normalised, today, any perceived or real acts of bias could be a trigger for protests or cries of injustice.

E.g. Political correctness must have been on overdrive with even minor transgressions being called out and people or organisations being cancelled. J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter series, came under heavy criticism for the tweets she posted about the transgender community, not because she actively discriminates against transsexuals, but because she professes to believing that there can only be two sexes – biological male and female. The problem with today’s environment is that people are quick to judge and take sides rather

than to recognise the nuances.

- D. While globalisation has uplifted societies and brought immense wealth, the gains of globalisation have been uneven causing more tensions between the developed and developing world today.

E.g. Developing countries such as Brazil, India and China have frequently accused the rich world of exploiting poorer nations and not doing enough to help stave off the effects of global warming for instance. The increasingly strategic rivalry between China and the US is only going to exacerbate this divide and force the world to choose sides. In fact, the recent US ban of TikTok, prohibition of sale of high-end semiconductor chips to China and the string of alliances it forged with Australia, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the UK, Europe and Southeast Asia are meant to contain China's rise.

Possible Stand 2: Our world is not more divided than before (It is less divided or more united).

- A. The establishment of multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the European Union are critical to maintaining peace and harmony today. These organisations transcend national boundaries and seek to promote good will and cooperation to combat intractable and complex issues such as health crises, poverty and environmental pollution. Without the existence of multilateral organisations, disagreements and disputes may easily undermine our fragile stability.

E.g. While the United Nations may not have been successful in managing conflicts and disputes all the time, it has over the years mediated and sent peacekeeping troops to maintain peace in places such as Namibia and El Salvador and has been a driving force in tackling issues such as poverty and hunger, all the while rallying the world behind common, humanitarian causes.

- B. While there may be talks of deglobalisation today, we cannot ignore the fact that countries are still deeply intertwined economically. Complete self-sufficiency is an impossible dream and most countries will have to rely on imports from others whether they like it or not. Therefore, there is more at stake for countries today to foster a cordial and mutually beneficial relationship than to engage in disputes.

E.g. As large a country as China might be, China lacks sufficient resources for its vast industries. China relies heavily on imports of copper, iron ore, minerals, advanced semi-conductors and even foodstuff such as soybeans, corn and meat. Despite tense relations, it did not cut off ties with the US and its allies because China is aware that there is more to be gained in trade today. This kind of symbiotic relationship is helping to keep the world balanced and preventing disputes from escalating into conflicts.

- C. People worldwide are now relatively well-informed about sociopolitical issues thanks to the internet and education. The fact that, globally, many are discussing ways to seek social justice or improve the lot of the marginalised suggests that more are united behind a common cause.

E.g. Many charities today such as Oxfam, Mercy Relief and Doctors Without Borders are engaged in programmes to uplift communities and provide aid. The fact that humanitarian organisations are gaining more prominence and more people are willing to volunteer or donate for causes they believe in is testament that humanity is still willing to help to promote peace and stability.

E.g. When the Black Lives Matter movement broke out in the US, other nations such as the UK, France and Germany also had similar protests highlighting issues of racial profiling and racial injustice. In Australia, there were also calls by activist groups to eliminate discrimination of indigenous Australians and support their communities. The #MeToo movement which originated in the US to combat sexual harassment and violence against women also gained traction in other nations such as South Korea, Mexico and Taiwan. All this shows the shared unity and camaraderie of people gathering together and standing up for justice and equality.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts demonstrated understanding of the changing contexts and were able to give a variety of examples. Stronger scripts were also able to address ideological divisions successfully. Weaker scripts simply described instances of discrimination, conflict or connectedness without explaining how they were linked to division or unity. Such essays tended to be example driven, without distinct arguments. Some essays also did not engage with the time-based comparison and even if they do, the comparison with the past might be awkward or inappropriate.

7. Is noise pollution increasingly a problem in your society?

Question Type: Time-based comparison

Debatable Issue: is increasingly a problem vs is not increasingly a problem (i.e. is less of a problem or equally so)

Keywords:

‘noise pollution’: unwanted or excessive sound that can have deleterious effects on health, wildlife, and environmental quality; comes from various sources such as construction sites, vehicles, electrical appliances, human activities, etc.

‘increasingly’: more and more as compared to the past

‘problem’: regarded as unwelcome or harmful and needing to be dealt with and overcome

Context:

‘in your society’: This outline will focus on Singapore – high and increasing population density; seemingly unceasing infrastructure development (residential, commercial, transport), with extended hours at construction sites but with effects partly mitigated by careful planning of residential areas and government regulations on noise levels.

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should discuss whether and how noise pollution is more or less of a problem now as compared to the past.
- Students should consider different contributing factors and the extent to which mitigation measures are effective.
- Students should anchor their arguments in a society of their choice and examine salient characteristics.

Pitfalls:

- Students focus on describing examples of noise pollution, without considering whether it is increasingly a problem. Similarly, students may only give details about noise control options, without discussing whether they are adequate and hence help to reduce the extent of noise pollution overall instead.
- Students fail to contextualise their discussion according to Singapore’s characteristics and environment.

Possible Stand 1: Noise pollution is increasingly a problem in Singapore.

- A. As Singapore’s population density continues to grow, the problem of noise pollution is exacerbated by increase in traffic and a rising number of development projects to accommodate the needs of various groups. While there are no comparative studies, anecdotally, the city-state has become noisier over the years with the cycle of construction and demolition playing out repeatedly.

E.g. Increased human activity concentrated in smaller areas is leading to higher overall noise levels. Constant construction and development projects are a major source of noise pollution, with drilling, hammering and heavy machinery use disrupting residents’ peace and quiet. This is especially the case as the government ramps up the building of Build-to-Order (BTO) flats and expansion of MRT networks to cater to increasing housing demands in recent years and reach the Land Transport Master Plan 2040’s ultimate goal of transforming the nation into a “45-minute city” with “20-minute towns”.

E.g. Singapore’s growing population and economic activity lead to increased traffic, such that the unceasing cacophony of horns, sirens and revving engines becomes increasingly unbearable, especially for those who stay near busy roads or expressways. Traffic congestion, especially during peak hours, contributes significantly to this problem. A 2017 study from the National University of Singapore (NUS) found that Singapore’s average outdoor sound level throughout the day is 69.4 decibels, which is equivalent to the noise made by a vacuum cleaner and exceeds the National Environmental Agency’s recommendation of no more than 67 decibels.

- B. Even when the construction is completed, the rise of integrated mixed-use developments – which integrate residential areas with commercial spaces (like shopping malls and entertainment venues), offices and transport hubs, means that residents are exposed to noise from businesses, traffic and various human activities throughout the day and possibly late into the night, making noise pollution increasingly a problem for them.

E.g. In the western part of Singapore, Clementi Mall is an example of mixed-use development, with residential units above the shopping mall. The bustling commercial activities in the mall (and neighbourhood shops) lead to a constant stream of noise, especially for those who stay in lower-level units. The challenges involved in enforcing noise regulations mean that businesses who intentionally disregard them may continue to be a

problem, just as congregational noise (i.e. noise from common areas around residential estates) and noise from neighbours (e.g. DIY works, residents' daily activities such as gathering, or furniture dragging and item dropping) do.

- C. With flexi-work arrangements and home-based learning becoming more common, more people are working and studying from home, leading to greater concerns over noise from neighbouring units. While the noise levels may or may not have been higher than what they used to be, having more residents at home for longer hours may mean that more are also under the perception that noise pollution is a concern.

E.g. There has been an uptick in complaints received by the Housing and Development Board (HDB) about noise from renovation and neighbours' activities as more people work from home.

Possible Stand 2: Noise pollution is not increasingly a problem in Singapore.

- A. Singapore's extensive noise regulations have prevented the issue from escalating despite the seemingly never-ending cycle of construction and demolition all around us.

E.g. There is a whole range of mitigation efforts put in place to control construction-related noise levels: The National Environment Agency (NEA) actively enforces its maximum permissible noise limits for construction sites and industrial premises and have introduced a no-work rule on Sundays and public holidays since 2012 for construction sites located within 150m from homes and noise-sensitive premises such as hospitals. As a result, it was reported that construction noise-related complaints have dropped by almost half from 2012 to 2016.

- B. By leveraging technology, Singapore has managed to keep the problem of noise pollution in a densely populated city state from escalating further.

E.g. Noise barriers are installed at MRT tracks near residential blocks and at expressway viaducts. These noise barriers are made of metal plates, solid panels, and hollow slats which absorb and deflect sound away from residential areas. For those residing near above ground MRT stations, trains are also fitted with noise-dampening wheels plus noise barriers to mitigate the level of noise generated.

- C. While it might be inevitable that noise pollution is a challenge with a growing population of 5.8 million cramped in a limited land area of just 750 square kilometres, mediation and education have somewhat mitigated the adverse effects.

E.g. Town Councils have educational and outreach campaigns that encourage residents in estates to be mindful of the noise they generate in their own HDB apartments such as being a good neighbour by avoiding dragging furniture or playing loud music at odd hours of the day. Residents can also turn to Town Councils for mediation, so that compromises can be reached.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts understood various policies regarding noise pollution in Singapore. Weaker scripts relied on anecdotal examples which did not necessarily reflect a broader trend or relate to specific Singapore characteristics. Weaker scripts also struggled with the time-based comparison.

8. 'We are scientific giants but ethical infants.' Comment.

Question Type: Simple Polarity

Debatable Issue: we are scientific giants but ethical infants vs we are scientific giants and not ethical infants

Keywords:

'scientific giants': technologically advanced societies which have discovered revolutionary or groundbreaking breakthroughs in the areas of physics, chemistry, biology, computer science or the social sciences

'ethical infants': highly underdeveloped in morality and ethical principles

Context:

Modern society: scientifically advanced; characterised by a digital economy driven by artificial intelligence (AI); cosmopolitan; scientific research is dominated by tech firms, pharmaceutical companies, corporations, governments and intergovernmental organisations; greater public scrutiny of the ethics of scientific research and application of science; concerns over privacy, security and equity issues

Recommended/ possible approaches:

- Students should address both parts of the question to justify how we might be scientifically advanced but sorely lacking in moral compass. Conversely, they should also consider how our scientific successes may not be achieved at the expense of sacrificing our cherished principles and morality.
- Students can highlight how different countries may regulate research differently or how some research studies may be predisposed to ethical transgressions.

Pitfalls:

- Students only address one part of the question such as our scientific achievements or focus only on our ethical breaches.
- Students only focus on ethical breaches with no reference to scientific research.
- Students rely too much on a particular field of science such as AI and lack the range of examples needed in stronger scripts.
- Students did not get the DI right and choose to debate over whether we are scientific giants or not.

Possible stand 1: We are scientific giants but ethical infants.

- A. In some of the emerging areas of scientific research, we are slow to implement safeguards or a robust ethics framework to govern the use of these research outcomes. We seem to be more preoccupied with making groundbreaking discoveries than to address the moral ramifications of our creations.

E.g. The explosion in generative artificial intelligence (AI) such as Dall-E, Gemini, Meta and Chat GPT may hold many promises such as increasing workers' productivity but there are still outstanding issues such as copyright matters, job displacements and spread of misinformation which are just the tip of the iceberg. The same goes for genetic engineering which could see the elimination of hereditary diseases but to date, remains highly unregulated with US and Chinese companies purportedly offering such gene editing services with the potential to create children who are healthier.

- B. In our quest for scientific progress, we tend to downplay the moral costs of our research findings which may involve the lives of innumerable animals and even human lives in clinical research. While we might have made advancements in leaps and bounds, often, the price we pay is our sense of humanity.

E.g. It was experiments on cows which created the smallpox vaccine. Later on, mice, dogs and monkeys were experimented with to create the polio vaccine. Many of our greatest lifesaving drugs are discovered and trialled, unfortunately, with animals, which are at times subjected to unnecessary pain and torture before meeting their untimely demise. With the advancement of modern technology, animal experimentations could have been reduced and perhaps alternatives such as computer simulations could have been employed. Furthermore, during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, even human lives are treated as dispensable when untested Covid-19 vaccines were distributed to Indian villagers who have not given their informed consent. Clearly, in these instances, morality has been sacrificed at the altar of science.

- C. Although we have made major breakthroughs in science, our over-competitiveness and one-upmanship have clouded our judgements and prompting us to create ever more powerful weapons of war and mass destruction.

Ethics are ignored in this race to the bottom in which technological supremacy to deter and attack others takes priority.

E.g. Research in nuclear weapons, supersonic missiles, hydrogen bombs and drones have all but overtaken research in areas such as climate science and healthcare. The destructiveness of such instruments of war are products of our ingenuity – and our unquenchable thirst to dominate. If we had our morals firmly in place, perhaps military science would have taken a backseat in favour of science for the betterment of all.

Possible Stand 2: We are scientific giants and we are not ethical infants.

- A. The scientific community, corporations and governments around the world have taken the lead in attempting to regulate new and emerging fields of science. There is collective understanding that something must be done to pre-empt or mitigate the effects both in the short and long term.

E.g. In the emerging field of AI, the Group of Seven (G7) launched the Hiroshima AI Process in 2023 with the aim of promoting safe, secure and trustworthy AI. The Hiroshima AI Process Comprehensive Policy Framework is the first international effort to achieving some semblance of regulation over AI globally. It acknowledges the need to foster and promote inclusive global governance on AI so as to maximise its potential while reducing the risks and challenges from advanced AI systems. Similarly, Singapore launched the Model Governance Framework for Generative AI to address concerns over this relatively new field of AI and to create a responsible and safe conditions for its growth.

- B. Perhaps because of previous egregious breaches in ethical codes in the past such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study and a more enlightened community today, research ethics is taken seriously and observed in educational institutions and laboratories.

E.g. The EU's European Research Council stipulates that research 'must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values (such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities).' In Singapore, the Bioethics Advisory Committee (BAC) advises on the ethical, legal and social issues arising from research on human biology and behaviour and its applications. For undergraduates or graduate students conducting research studies, their studies will have to go through the institutional review board (IRB) first which reviews the methods proposed for research involving human subjects, to ensure that the projects are ethical.

- C. Today, developing countries are challenging the notion that profit-driven companies are free to exploit their scientific discoveries for profit, without caring for the welfare of the people.

E.g. HIV was thought to be a death sentence until the breakthrough discovery of antiretroviral drugs that made it possible to reduce the viral load to the point that the virus becomes undetected in the bloodstream. However, such drugs are costly and to the millions of HIV sufferers, treatment was out of reach until lower cost, generic versions of the drugs were produced. The same applies for cancer drugs which became a lot more affordable to those in less affluent nations.

Examiner's comments: Stronger scripts had current examples which featured cutting edge technology. Stronger scripts also demonstrated an understanding of the complexity of ethical concerns in relation to scientific advancements. Weaker scripts were example driven without distinct arguments. Some students also had a simplistic understanding of 'scientific giants' and discussed any form of technology. Similarly, any problem of technology was seen as an ethical issue, demonstrating a poor understanding of 'ethical infants'.