

ACJC General Paper Department
JC2 Preliminary Exam 2023 Paper 2 Post-Exam Package

1. According to paragraph 1, why did the fishermen perform elaborate rituals in the open sea but not in the lagoon?
Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
... the 'magic' rituals performed by the islanders were a response to help them cope with the unpredictable might of the Pacific Ocean. (lines 5-7)	(The fishermen performed elaborate rituals in the <u>open sea</u>) because the elaborate rituals were perceived to be able to help them to deal with / overcome / protect them from the danger in the open sea / their fear of the open sea / from the unexpected strength / uncertainty of the open sea. (2-part answer)
But when the fishermen went out into the nearby calm lagoon, they did not use these rites. (lines 4-5)	(However, the fishermen did <u>not</u> perform the elaborate rituals in the <u>lagoon</u>) because the lagoon was placid / serene / tranquil / not turbulent / not stormy / there was no danger in the lagoon.

Question Type: Contrast Q

Examiners' Comments: Some responses missed the notion that elaborate rituals were performed as a way to manage their fears of a turbulent Pacific Ocean. Instead, these responses went straight ahead to state that rituals were performed because the Pacific Ocean was turbulent which was misconstrued. Some responses only focussed on the open sea, and totally did not mention the lagoon.

2. From paragraph 1, suggest why effigies are burnt during the New Year in Central and South America. [1]

From passage	Suggested answer
New Year activities include... burning effigies that represent the previous year in Central and South America (lines 9-12)	(An effigy is a crude figure of someone created to become the focus of hatred / contempt / ridicule and often hung up or burnt in public.) Burning an effigy represents / symbolises the driving away of bad luck / removing of misfortune / getting rid of figures, things or events that one hates / does not want from the previous year / season. <u>Note:</u> Effigies must have a negative connotation.

Question Type: Inference Q

Examiners' Comments: Most responses were incorrect because many mistakenly thought that the act is to demonstrate the passing of seasons. The burning of effigies was also seen to be a positive thing when it is not.

3. Why does the author use the word 'fateful' (line 14) to describe the decision to live in bigger groups? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
That fateful decision ... (line 14)	(The author uses the word 'fateful' because the decision has led to) disastrous / catastrophic / detrimental / harmful consequences / effects for humankind (in the future). <i>Note: Answer must be negative. Do not accept 'momentous', 'significant', 'important'.</i>
... has exposed humans to all kinds of violence , ... from conflicts within groups to wars between groups (lines 14-16)	Living in such big groups has led to battles / disagreements / aggression / altercations / strife.
all kinds of ... and diseases, ... to infectious diseases that can now spread swiftly across entire villages. (lines 15-16)	The close contact has caused diseases to be transmitted quickly / pandemics / epidemics. OR The close contact has caused many types / a large variety of illnesses.

1-2 points = 1 mark; 3 points = 2 marks

Question Type: Literal Q / Vocab Q

Examiners' Comments: A number of responses did not explain or wrongly thought 'fateful' meant 'inevitable'. 'Conflicts' was lifted in some scripts.

4. In paragraph 2, what does the author mean when she describes the human mind as 'nimble' (line 17) and 'whimsical' (line 18)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
To prevent such catastrophes from occurring, humans put their very nimble , (line 16-17)	People have lively / agile minds / are alert in thinking / can think quickly / display mental quickness / dexterity (to prevent catastrophes from occurring).
whimsical minds to work. (line 17-18)	Human beings think in unusual / strange / quaint / peculiar / eccentric / quirky / idiosyncratic / fanciful ways (to prevent catastrophes from occurring). <i>Note: Accept any paraphrase that captures the meaning of 'strange' or 'unusual'. Do not accept 'unpredictable', 'creative', 'innovative' and capricious etc.</i>

Question Type: Vocab Q; Literal

Examiners' Comments: Most responses were able to paraphrase 'nimble' but 'whimsical' was frequently misconstrued.

5. How does the example of Rafael Nadal in paragraph 3 illustrate the importance of rituals? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
Rafael Nadal, winner of 20 Grand Slam singles titles, reportedly has almost as many rituals – 19 – which he uses before each match. (lines 33-35)	Rafael Nadal is already such a skilful / competent / top / experienced / elite player who has won in many high-stakes competitions / high pressure tournaments, ...yet he still performs many rituals. OR ...and he performs many rituals. (2-part answer)
Studies show that the anxiety-reducing effect of rituals can apply to almost any high-pressure endeavour. Sport psychologists also propose that pre-performance rituals can confer benefits for athletes, such as better execution and possible reduction in anxiety levels. (lines 30-33)	The rituals can help him to decrease / minimise / alleviate his nervousness / tension / nerves / stress / apprehension. OR The rituals can help him to improve / bolster / enhance / his skills / techniques / performance.

Question Type: Example Q

Examiners' Comments: Some responses missed explaining the contradiction that Nadal was a talented player who nonetheless frequently performed rituals, causing them to lose a mark.

6. Explain the paradox in lines 49 to 51. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]

From passage	Suggested answer
Paradoxically, rituals involving pain, injury or trauma could hold some type of psychological advantage for those who perform them. For example, firewalkers reported a higher level of happiness after they had taken part in this ritualistic ordeal. (lines 49-52)	Rites that involve physical agony / suffering / harm would hurt us... <u>yet / however / but</u> they can also result in greater joy / mental benefits. (2-part answer)

Question Type: Paradox Q

Examiners' Comments: A number of responses looked at the start of line 49 instead of the example after the contextual cue 'paradoxically' in line 49 for the paradox. These scripts wrongly paraphrased 'reducing anxiety' instead. Connectors such as 'yet, however, but' were not used to indicate the contradiction.

7. Why has the author written 'spiritual practice' (line 70) in inverted commas?

[1]

From passage	Suggested answer
Group rituals indicate that members are like-minded and share certain values, which promote an atmosphere of trust... And for singer-songwriter Beyoncé, saying a prayer in a circle with all her crew is a ' spiritual practice ' that leads to a perfect performance. (lines 67-70)	(The author has written 'spiritual practice' in inverted commas because) <u>Function</u> She does not believe / disagrees / is sceptical... <u>Context</u> that the 'spiritual practice' has anything to do with religion. OR <u>Function</u> She is using inverted commas here to show that 'spiritual practice' is used in an unconventional way... <u>Context</u> because Beyoncé is using this term 'spiritual practice' in a secular / non-religious context. OR <u>Function</u> She is directly quoting a term... <u>Context</u> that Beyoncé uses to describe her pre-concert ritual. (2-part answer)

Question Type: Punctuation Q

Examiner's Comments: Some responses were able to get the function right but had the incorrect context. Others incorrectly thought that the inverted commas were expressing the author's sarcasm.

8. Explain how the two examples from lines 74 to 82 illustrate the dangers of rituals. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[2]

From passage	Suggested answer
For groups, rituals can stimulate inter-group bias. More disturbingly, group ritualistic endeavours, such as hazing, the cruel initiation ceremonies prevalent among some student groups or within the military, are extremely harmful. Hazing often involves degrading and humiliating the initiated and, on rare occasions, has resulted in death .. (lines 74-78)	(Example) The ritual of hazing (ragging / bullying / intimidating during orientation activities / welcoming rituals for newcomers / juniors who enter educational institutions or in the military...) (Danger) can cause them to feel crushed / demeaned / shamed / can damage or destroy their confidence / kill them / cause them to die. <u>Note:</u> allow the lift of 'die.'
Some are even dangerous – for instance, in some religious traditions, self-flagellation... can often cause serious physical harm . (lines 79-82)	(Example) The religious ritual of self-flagellation (scourging / whipping oneself) (Danger) can result in severe / major / injury / wounds. <u>Note:</u> Students can lift 'hazing' or 'self-flagellation', or if they paraphrase 'hazing' or 'self-flagellation', 'hazing' and 'self-flagellation' must be correctly paraphrased.

Question Type: Examples Q

Examiners' Comments: Quite a number of responses did not specify the examples. Some went beyond line 82 to explain health treatments.

9. From paragraph 7, explain how modern medicine is similar to rituals and how the two are different. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
the mechanisms of modern medicine are just as opaque as rituals are. (lines 85-86)	<u>Similarity</u> Both modern medicine and rituals are not clearly understandable / beyond comprehension (to most people).
While traditional rituals have been successfully passed down across many generations ... (lines 86-87)	<u>Difference</u> Rituals are ancient / familiar to most people / have been transmitted from their ancestors to people.
... the practices of modern medicine are relatively new . (line 87)	<u>However / But</u> methods used in modern medicine are known only recently / novel / not familiar (to most people). (2-part answer)

Question Type: Compare / Contrast Q

Examiners' Comments: Quite a few responses did not paraphrase the keywords 'generations' and 'new'.

10. Identify two ways in which the last two sentences of the passage (lines 91–94) provide an effective ending to the author's argument. [2]

From passage	Suggested answer
<u>we should adopt</u> pre-performance rituals during stressful situations in our own lives, perhaps before giving a presentation at work or before taking an exam. (lines 91-93)	(They provide an effective ending in the final paragraph...) <u>Technique</u> by providing a call to action... <u>Context:</u> to ease the pressure and strain of life / to show the readers that they too can benefit from rituals / to suggest that rituals can also help them in dealing with their personal troubles.
<u>we should adopt</u> pre-performance rituals during stressful situations in <u>our</u> own lives, they could help steel <u>us</u> for the rough seas ahead. (lines 91-93)	<u>Technique</u> by using 'we', 'us' and 'our' / personal pronouns 'to create a sense of inclusiveness / to involve the readers personally... <u>Context:</u> to show the readers that they too can benefit from rituals / to suggest that rituals can also help them in dealing with their personal troubles.
Like the fishermen of the Trobriand Islands, they could help steel us for the rough seas ahead. (lines 93-94) (Introduction) ... the Trobriand Islands in Papua New Guinea in the early 20th Century, he noted the elaborate ceremonies and rituals fishermen would perform before venturing out onto the open sea.	<u>Technique</u> by linking back to the same example in the introduction / by coming full circle / providing closure through reiterating his example at the start of the article... <u>Context:</u> of the fishermen's rituals to help them cope with the danger posed by the rough seas.
Like the fishermen of the Trobriand Islands, they could help <u>steel us for the rough seas</u> ahead. (lines 93-94)	<u>Technique</u> by using the metaphor 'steel us for the rough seas'... <u>Context:</u> to emphasise the importance / benefits of rituals in coping with difficult situations / to show how rituals can help us to deal with tough / dangerous times ahead.
<u>we should adopt</u> pre-performance rituals during stressful situations in our own lives, perhaps before giving a presentation at work or before taking an exam. (lines 91-93)	<u>Technique</u> by using relatable examples... <u>Context:</u> to help readers understand the benefits of rituals. <u>Note:</u> It is the techniques that are important. The context can be similar.

Question Type: Stylistics Q

Examiners' Comments: A sizeable number of responses did not provide the context.

11. Using material from paragraphs 4 to 6 only, summarise the benefits of rituals. Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [8]

One benefit of rituals is...

1	Rituals – typically repetitive, symbolic behaviours that we experience as purposeful (L36-37)	... rituals can serve our goals / have a role to play / are meaningful to us.
2	rituals can reinforce a sense of community (L38) they help to bring people together by bolstering communal bonds (L46-47) Ritualistic behaviour can improve social bonding (L64) ritualistic chants have been shown to make football fans feel connected (L68-69). Rituals... are particularly good at facilitating such (social) networks (L66-67).	Rituals can strengthen / boost / enhance / increase our feeling of belonging to a group / our ties with others / attachment with others / links with others / closeness with others / sense of kinship with others.
3	and (can reinforce) common beliefs (L38)	... and can encourage people to have the same / similar ideas / ways of thinking / collective viewpoints / convictions / notions of faith.
4	may have started out as attempts to avoid disaster (L42-43)	Rituals can help us to prevent / avert / keep away from catastrophes / calamities / crises.
5	may have helped human cultures maintain behaviours that people thought would keep them safe (L43-44)	Rituals can help us to act cautiously / to ensure that our actions are secure / to keep to actions that provide security / that are not dangerous.
6	provide psychological comfort during times of hardship (L45-46) rituals can help us cope with some of the most challenging periods of our lives too (L52-53)	Rituals can give us mental calmness / wellbeing / relief in difficult times / in times of adversity. <u>OR</u> Rituals can help us manage / deal with tough / difficult times of our lives.
7	Even simple rituals can be extremely effective in reducing anxiety (L49).	Rituals can lower / decrease our worries / concerns / sense of insecurity / fear / uneasiness.
8	rituals involving pain, injury or trauma could hold some type of psychological advantage for those who perform them (L49-51)	Rituals can make us mentally stronger / provide greater mental benefit.
9	firewalkers reported a higher level of happiness after they had taken part in this ritualistic ordeal. (L51-52)	Rituals can give us greater joy / bliss / sense of satisfaction.
10	End-of-life rituals can create stronger connections between the dying and their loved ones (L53-54). <i>Note: no need to specify the type of rituals for 8, 9, 10.</i>	(End-of-life) Rituals can form bonds / ties between people who are dying <u>and</u> the people they cherish / are devoted to / emotionally attached to. <i>Note: Allow lift of 'dying'.</i>
11	grief was lower among participants who performed personal rituals (L55-56)	Rituals can reduce / decrease sadness / sorrow / anguish / despair / misery.
12	rituals are used to create some semblance of order to regain control (L57-58)	Rituals can bring back / help restore a sense of normalcy / agency / composure / a sense of structure
13	Rituals can facilitate personal growth and development (L59) ...symbolising the process of self-improvement and transformation (L62-63)	Rituals can promote self-enhancement / self-advancement / upgrading of oneself / can make one become more mature / change for the better. <i>Note: Allow lift of 'self'.</i>
14	and are often used to mark personal milestones ...(L59-60) can mark the transition from one stage of life to another (L61-62)	Rituals are used to celebrate / commemorate important occasions / special events in one's life / a change from one phase / period of life to the next <i>Note: For #14 and #15, do not double penalise for 'mark'.</i>
15	are often used to mark ... achievements (L59-60)	Rituals are used to celebrate one's successes / accomplishments / triumphs.
16	They provide a symbolic way to let go of old patterns and embrace new ones (L60-61).	Rituals enable us to give up / discontinue old behaviour <u>and</u> accept / welcome / adopt new ones. <i>Note: Allow lift of 'old' and 'new'.</i>
17	Group rituals indicate that members are like-minded and share certain values, promote an atmosphere of trust (L67-68).	Rituals can encourage / foster / create an environment of / a feeling of confidence / mutual belief / faith / assurance among group members.
18	saying a prayer in a circle with all her crew is a 'spiritual practice' that leads to a perfect performance (L69-70).	Rituals can lead to flawless / faultless / immaculate excellent acts / shows / work outcomes that are without mistakes.
19	In the face of danger , group cooperation may be a matter of life and death (L70-71). the synchronised group movements practised by military units around the world prepare them to act as one in dangerous situations (L72-73).	Rituals can encourage teamwork / collaboration which is crucial / extremely important / critical in risky / hazardous circumstances. <i>Note: Allow lift of 'life' and 'death'</i>

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

Examiners' Comments: Most responses did reasonably well and were able to identify and paraphrase an adequate number of benefits.

APPLICATION QUESTION

12. The author discusses the benefits and detrimental effects of rituals in our lives. How far do you agree or disagree with the author's observations? Illustrate your arguments with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society. [10]

Requirement

- a) Show understanding and engage with the ideas and views raised in the passage.
- b) Discuss the benefits and detrimental effects of rituals in the context of your own society.
- c) Consider points of agreement and disagreement with the author's views in the context of your own society.
- d) Support your views with relevant examples from your own society.

Explanation

Show understanding and discuss some of the following issues raised by the author:

- a) What are the different attitudes and actions towards rituals?
- b) What are the functions, positive and negative effects of rituals?
- c) How relevant are rituals to the lives of people in their society?
- d) How have rituals evolved in their society?

Evaluation

Develop arguments to logical conclusions by supporting them with apt illustration and evidence. Consider some of the following issues:

- a) Under what circumstances do people in your society use rituals?
- b) Do people in your society use rituals more for celebrations or more to prevent bad things from happening?
- c) Do rituals help people in your society to cope with normal day-to-day living?
- d) How do rituals affect community ties within your society?
- e) Are rituals also used by the government and other institutions for their own purposes?
- f) How have rituals evolve in your society to suit changing norms and needs?
- g) Are there rituals that are resilient to change?

Coherence

- Include a brief introduction.
- Adopt a consistent viewpoint. Maintain relevance. Argue logically.
- Organise answers into cohesive paragraphs.
- Link paragraphs to show continuity and direction of argument.
- End with a summative or concluding paragraph.

Examiners' Comments:

Most AQ responses were complete but tended to have simplistic analyses such as how singing the national anthem increased social cohesion, when fostering cohesion is a longer-term endeavour that involves other measures. Furthermore, some tried to evaluate but these were again superficial such as how adults did not sing the anthem and therefore adults were not bonded!

Most examples of festivals were provided but specific rituals were not always identified e.g. While Chinese New Year may be a possible example, rituals such as the exchanging of red packets and its significance should be elaborated. In some responses, arguments were compartmentalised and discourse marker which affected the overall flow of the writing.

Some responses also quoted text references directly and then explained these references again which was very tedious and unnecessary.

