Preface:

Hi guys,
This is my 230 page comprehensive document of GP notes for the different themes organised by the summary sidebar if you're using laptop, and I mean it when I say comprehensive because it contains a ton of examples, arguments, good phrases (both in general and specific for themes), essay outlines, my personal tips/reminders/strategies when I was a student– and I've just been compiling it all and studying with this document for the past 2 years
And it's all for free for you guys!

Personal background and GP journey if you're interested

I graduated from CJ in 2023. For A levels, I received A for GP with 87.5 RP. I did Q3 for paper 1 about space research and I don't know how I managed to pull through for paper 2 lol.

No cap, I struggled with GP initially but I picked it up along the way. Why did I make this document? I hate learning examples/arguments and then forgetting them after lol. So I made an online repository to store all of it so that when exam season rolls around I can go back and memorise again. Furthermore, there are quite a lot of overlaps between themes/ questions like you can apply a similar argument across different questions and having this repository helped me see these links which would be v helpful for future batches taking the new syllabus :))

Now down to specialising in certain topics:
KEEP happening again
Environment
Science and Tech/AI (predicted not to be so easy, will probably cross over)
Arts (again probably not easy)
Media
War and conflict
Health (because of COVID)
Be wary of crossovers, try to find the connections and links between different topics as far as possible

ALSO don't try to bring in other points besides the factor in the qn, just assess it based on it!!!
I suppose.. That's why the love of money is the root of all evil- dont bring in other factors, just talk about– also just realised this qn is technically quite hard because ALL and must show the love
money being the root of all evil
All are evils inextricably linked to the love of money?

 and why the love of money is not the root of all evil- its

Also for topics right, to give yourself the edge and show that you know the topic well, use niche terms associated with that topic– echo chambers for media qn

Qn: There is too much emphasis on image today. HFDYA?

Can define image
Stand: It is undeniable that there is a considerable increasing emphasis on image today given the prevalence of lookism and the powerful impact of branding. However, one must note that such an emphasis does not exceed to the extent that it overshadows one's intrinsic qualities and skills in certain circumstances.

Such an emphasis only exists insofar as it does not overshadow one's intrinsic qualities

TS1: In a world where there is much competition and stakes involved, there is too much emphasis on image since it could either boost or destroy one's reputation.

For brands and corporations:
Many companies and brands in the same market competing to generate the highest revenue and be the dominant brand in the market, need to stand out from the rest
- Gimmicky marketing of ingredients in skin care products that may not be effective in improving one's skin but is still marketed in a way that it would guarantee one benefits
- Green washing
- Luxury apparel brands (like Chanel, Louis Vuittion) that have insanely high price mark-up values where the ostensibly high cost of the product cannot be justified since the actual production price is low but they still price their products such a way to appear exclusive and affordable to only the rich- that's what reinforces their image as a luxury brand in the first place, also to make them appear highly sought after as they are financially unattainable to the majority of the population

For politicians:
Maintaining their pristine reputations and image is of utmost importance since their popularity and the amount of support they receive is dependent on how citizens perceive them
- PAP's recent furore- Former member of the ruling political party in SG being People's Action Party Tan Chuan Jin resigned after making inappropriate accusation on Workers party member Jamus Lim being a populist + his inappropriate extramarital affair with another member Cheng Li Hui - drew citizen's criticism
- Rare fracture in the pristine reputation of the ruling party, could undermine their dominance in the local political sphere.

Cancel culture for celebs is also why they care so much about their public image:
- Celebrities need to especially be wary of their public image, in the modern age where societies are becoming increasingly progressive and social issues are a key concern for the majority,
- K-pop and korean actors criticised for being involved in dating scandals, bullying scandals - careers at stake

Overall, so much is at stake, and one's image could either make or break one's career so of course there would be an overwhelming emphasis on one's image

TS2: For the individual, there is also an overwhelming emphasis on image today since lookism has increased in prominence in many societies.

Halo effect
Pretty privilege
Job interviews for jobs that require one to appear presentable like air stewardess- SIA's The Singaporean Girl
Increase in plastic surgery rates around the world- South Korea being the plastic surgery capital in the world quote revenue

However, to say that there is an overwhelming emphasis on looks without any qualifiers would be a sweeping statement. **TS3: One must concede that such an emphasis still does not overshadow one's intrinsic qualities and skills in certain circumstances.**

Depends on the job/profession! Jobs that depend on technical expertise
Doctors - obviously they are not doctors because of their good looks but because of their technical skills and expertise
But the line is drawn when it's a profession that is related to looks directly like modelling and flight attendant- their looks are their careers

However, balance and interesting point is that doctors who specialise in cosmetic surgeries/ related to aesthetics are judged based on their looks- after all, who would trust the advice of a dermatologist with poor skin? Or a fitness instructor who is obese?

TS4: In addition, such a significant focus on looks has raised awareness on how damaging and dangerous it is, which ironically has spurred societies to focus less on looks.
- Brands like Victoria Secret under fire for the longest time for not being body-inclusive in their previous runway shows, people recognise how the brand has invariably promoted eating disorders, body dysmorphia so the brand has succumbed to public pressure to hire runway models of various body shapes to practise body inclusivity

Qn: 'No cause is ever worth dying for'. Discuss.

Can use George Bernard Shaw's creative reconstruction of St Joan as a hook as she fights for the politically liberated France from the English and introduces unorthodox ideologies like Nationalism and Feudalism. Despite dying tragically, she still is not accepted in the end, which models how futile it is for people who died for causes.

Under certain circumstances, the cause will not be worth dying for since the people fighting for the cause are far outnumbered and just do not hold as much power as their oppressors. It would be meaningless since it would result in even more

catastrophe and ironically restrict their rights as it is perceived as defiance. (Trying to convey how some causes are just impossible to fight for so it's useless to die for it as doing so would only result in more unnecessary damage.)

- Afghanistan Taliban laws and womens' rights- as pessimistic as it sounds, women under the Taliban law just do not hold as much power as their male oppressors. Given how misogyny and patriarchy are inherently rooted in legislature, it would be harder to fight against it
- Authorities bear firearms, which women do not have to even protect themselves, already an unfair fight
- Women are fighting a losing battle, they just cannot realistically win.

Dying recklessly for a cause could potentially render one's efforts meaningless especially if it is done poorly, as the deliberate act of endangering one's life overshadows the message of the cause.

- Environmental activists sit in the middle of F1 race tracks viewed as laughing stocks for recklessly endangering their lives instead of being taken seriously. Even got some activists superglue their hands on a famous painting and needed to be taken to the emergency room, people only focused on the stupidity of their acts rather than the main message.
- All these outlandish acts of bravado ends up eclipsing the main point of the cause, a waste of effort and not worth it at all

The act of dying for causes is also notably no longer as effective with
- Self-immolation no longer an effective agent for change

However, under dire situations, certain causes are worth fighting for given the circumstance that doing so would guarantee an alleviation of further damage and suffering.
(not sure if my examples are even considered causes cos they are essentially wars at this point)
- Hong Kong Anti-extradition Bill Protestors
- Russia invasion in Ukraine

The idea that people would rather die than to continue to live in oppression

The act of dying for a cause could be **perceived as a valiant, heroic sacrifice** to bring **weight and attention to a cause**, that could be the ==**potential springboard for great change**==- the ==**death**== is the ==**catalyst for a much-needed change**== in society
- A death for a cause is a powerful sacrificial act and it is a big deal to the world today
- Hong Kong Anti-extradition bill protestors- the majority of protestors are considerably YOUNG - still in their 20s
- Idea of martyrdom
- **At its most incoherent self-immolation becomes more expressive of the frustration of the powerless.**

- **The self-immolation of a Buddhist monk in the middle of a crowded street during the Vietnam after the Government at the time banned practising of Buddhism- incredible feat because of the Buddhist monk remained very still and continued to sit in the typical lotus position with his hands in reverence to Buddha- what's even more incredible is that his heart did not burn even after his body was sent to a crematorium**

Qn: Has social media given people **too much** power?

People- the lay people, the population at large

For some, it is their livelihood and career. For the oppressed and the marginalised, social media serves as a much needed recourse to level the playing field- enable them to seek for the help they need, social media empowers them, not too much
Online activism, spread message

Though, it can certainly be weaponised by people with less than pure intentions… that's when social media gives them too much power

Stance: **Social media serves as an avenue to support and empower people to an extent. People rarely hold an excessive amount of power on social media since the content that people post and proliferate are heavily monitored by regulators and users who can flag/report questionable content. This check-and-balance system on social media leaves almost very little room for people to hold too much power and weaponize social media to their advantage.**

Social media empowers people just enough to serve as a much-needed recourse to level the playing field for the oppressed and the marginalised. In this case, the power that people hold is not considered too much but just enough since it is needed to support themselves.
Due to its **massive public outreach and how popular** it is, social media is a **powerful** tool that people often use to fight for their social and political rights, and seek social justice.

- #MeToo movement- validated the experiences of victims of workplace sexual harassment, brought concrete changes
- Black Lives Matter Campaign- systemic racism and police brutality in America, brought many minority voices to the fore and inspired numerous meaningful public discourse on the majority-minority tensions that continue to wreck society
- Myanmar citizens under military junta- the sheer violence and corruption of the military spurred ASEAN nations country officials to speak up and condemn the military for their actions

Social media gives people power by materialising their hopes and aspirations, it brings awareness and gives weight to public causes. Again, not considered too much power since these are good causes led by well-intentioned people that require as much support and power as it can receive in order to materialise it

- Many online influencers have careers because of social media- able to achieve their dreams because of it
- Online activism: Canadian YouTuber Shawn Ahmed harnessed the power of social media to raise funds to rebuild schools in Bangladesh after cyclone strike
- Youth environmental activism and Greta Thunberg's Fridays For Future global climate strike movement to condemn politicians and their inaction towards climate change, students around the world join her in her online crusade

Draw the line at ethically suspicious people and their less than pure intentions.
Raise ethical quandaries
However, it is also due to the massive public outreach of social media that people use it to their advantage and weaponise it, by proliferating unscrupulous content that sparks tension and unrest in society.
- Iris Koh a theorist, and her healing the divide anti-vaccine online group on Facebook, made unfounded claims on how vaccines are poisoning and ruining us, backed up by accounts of people, rare and isolated incidents
- At a time when cooperation with the Government was crucial in order to expedite public health responses, her online presence only sowed seeds of doubt in people and caused unrest
- British Parliament released a 2015 Report on the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into antisemitism found that social media was increasingly being used as a tool to spread racially offensive content/anti semitic content, also found that jews were 3x while muslims were 8x more likely to be victims of religious hatred
- Radical content- ISIS beheading videos

Prominence of cancel culture- social media enables users to propagate their hatred for celebs, giving them too much power over these people
Social media could either make or break one's career, often see the latter happening with celebrities getting cancelled every now and then
People even get doxxed and it's unsafe for them

Rebuttal: Notwithstanding the excessive power that social media accords people with less than pure intentions, there are still systems put in place to prevent or stop people from having too much power. Every prominent social media company has functions to enable users to flag suspicious content and there are teams of regulators and moderators to account for these reports. Thereafter, the accounts will be banned, deleting these content. In fact, given that we live in a pacifist age, offensive and extreme content does not usually last that long on social media. Hence, the existing system prevents people from having unchecked levels of excessive power so it is more so a case of people having power insofar as they do not cause unrest and tension.

Democratisation, sensationalism
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Social media- more information, people are aware
Echo chambers*****

Qn: Considering their apparent financial stability, should developed countries be **obliged** to help other countries in need?

Crash of the stock moment, US still considered developed
Doesnt just mean economic development, social development too

Justification qn type
Overall consensus is for countries to work towards international cooperation
There are many global issues around the world that would definitely require international efforts- climate change, global hunger, poverty, terrorism, global war

Think about the moral correctness of the act - obliged
Helping other fellow humans on earth

If developed countries do not support or help other countries in need, it could lead to strained relations that would only hinder global efforts
Foreign aid could serve as a form of diplomacy between countries, crucial in preventing wars
But we live in a volatile, ultra-competitive world- with resources that are rapidly diminishing with the rate at which we are desecrating earth, it only makes sense for countries to be more self-serving. It's one man for themselves. In addition, does foreign aid truly solve all the problems? More often than not, foreign aid tends to be superficial and can only do so much- it does not solve the inherent, complex problems in countries in need.
The US can continue to fund the military in Libya but will not be able to end civil wars and public unrest in this country. If the money used is not helping significantly, might as well not give it, right?
What about drawing the line at sovereignty? If a country keeps receiving aid from another country and cannot sustain itself, is it even truly a nation itself? Countries need to learn to be more reliant on themselves and sustain themself

A dog-eat-dog world, selfish and ultra competitive no, help others can lose dominance, opportunity cost for one country, not their own people, responsible to their country more
Dire situation, have their own problems to solve too, resources channelled to country itself

Financial aid more often not only helps on a superficial level, if does not significantly help, then no, financial aid is not the best solution to a myriad of problems other countries might be facing

~~Not obliged to, need to draw the line for the sake of sovereignty~~
~~Get to decide for urself, ur actions~~

Yes! Needed to build diplomatic relations for global cooperation

In order to prevent any more suffering and crisis, developed countries should be concerned
Ethical principles. After all, our world would be doomed if all countries were selfish

Obligation
They shouldnt feel, they may do it for the wrong reasons in the first place- agenda in mind
US decides to help Iraq, financial aid

Should

It's better to find shocking news/information relating to a tension/struggle/something debatable for pretty much any topic possible so that you can utilise this technique in your introductions! And best of all, it could even be outdated/old/historical news because it's just the introduction!
This is EFFECTIVE way to start the essay

Also use quotes! Quotes in the intro and link it back in your conclusion finally! It's a nice touch!

Problem w this qn: **Too many** historical figures are famous for the wrong reasons.' Discuss. [History]

Not just a laundry list of historical figures remembered for wrong or good reasons - but the problem is how do we even begin to quantify it? Cos it is an extent question but its more so numerical? Where do we even draw the line? How do we even measure how famous someone is?

My best bet and one of my arguments would be delve deeper into the human psyche/something innate about humans to give depth to my essay

1. Prevalence of the availability heuristic
2. Humans' tendency to over exaggerate/ over sensationalise/ hyperbolise events
3. Humans' tendency to remember horribly events to a t because of its vivid details or tragic events because of shocking statistics

Too many not to do with quantity, these figures
Wrong-oversimplified
Overshadow all the good stuff they did

Gaddafi superb in building up the country's economy but viewed as an oppressive leader violence to get what he wants

Agree = Infamous individuals are **often remembered for the damage and destruction** they have caused. **Instead of celebrating their legacy**, we **derive** ==lessons== to ==prevent such incidents from recurring== | The wrong reasons are often ==**more sensational and would be the focal point**== when recalling historical figures. **Shock and horror are** ==**more powerful emotions than admiration or inspiration**== | In human history, there is regrettably no shortage of deplorable individuals who would commit callous acts in the name of power
Disagree = There is also a **good balance** of many other historical figures who are famous for the right reasons, which would suggest that it is actually not as skewed to such a disproportionate extent. The **current state** of human civilisation would also **stand testament to the contributions of individuals in the past where we stand on the shoulders of these giants to progress** (note how the logic addresses the issue of 'too much', instead of simply discussing good historical figures; explanation it key when it comes to ATQ)

Qn: Should poorer countries address environmental issues when the basic needs of their own people are not being met?

OA1: Poorer countries should not address environmental issues since it would be more important for them to divert all resources and funds towards meeting the basic needs of their people, which should be the forefront of their focus rather than

environmental issues. (Besides, meeting the basic needs of people is a minimum requirement for countries to survive, prosper and thrive)

OA2: Poorer countries should not address environmental issues since they would not have the adequate resources, funds, expertise or technology to even alleviate environmental ills- given they cannot even meet the bare basic needs of their citizens! They wouldn't be in a good position to address it, so their efforts would ultimately be futile, a wastage of resources.

SA1: Notwithstanding the validity of the aforementioned points, one must acknowledge that environmental issues have become so large to an unprecedented scale that we will need all hands on deck to effectively target it so poorer countries should still address them. It is a global issue that would need global effort, if we want to even think about solving it.

SA2: Every country is affected by environmental issues– with poorer countries being hit the most since they do not have the resources to protect their people from the adverse effects of climate change so poor countries should have the prerogative to address these issues as a way to protect its people.

SA3: Furthermore, environmental issues are an inevitable problem that will persist in the world, regardless of whether countries have met the basic needs of their citizens. Hence, poor countries should just address environmental issues anyway.

Qn: 'Advertising is largely about persuading people to buy what they do not need.' How far do you agree?

What is the contention?
No argument that the function of an advertisement is to persuade people to buy but whether its a product they need or not is the issue

SA1: Advertisements tend to over-glamourise products using cinematic techniques which draws people in, conflating their value beyond the purpose they serve
Common products include perfumes- a lot of brands tend to have dramatic advertisements YSL Libre perfume formal advertisement consist of a couple at the top of a skyscraper mingling, capturing a adventurous night between 2 lovers - directed and staged of course by a marketing team who aims to promote the product

SA2: A lot of advertisements capitalise off our own insecurities/problems that we didn't realise before, making it appear as though we absolutely need products even if we don't

need them. (The world of advertisements especially related to the beauty industry heavily utilises this marketing strategy of playing off our insecurities)

Dull, dark underarms by Nivea whitening deodorants - not an absolute life-threatening emergency and some people may not even realise they have them but Nivea's advertisements tend to portray these insecurities as alarming, making it appear as problems that need to be solved by using their product, convincing people

SA3: Advertisements appeal to our human emotions which
Tiffany's jewellery- wedding, bride presented with Tiffany's jewellery

OA1: As palates have become increasingly discerning and more people are aware of gimmicky advertisements, more advertisements in the modern age are more geared towards justifying the utilitarian purposes of a product, so advertisements are now largely persuading people what they may need.

Agree = Emotional manipulation is a common technique used by advertisers to encourage consumption, some advertisements are even accused of resorting to subliminal advertising (tapping on our subconscious), or artificially enhancing products with the precise intention of convincing consumers they need the product | Advertisements often accompany the latest available technologies and products, which may inherently be items that we do not need (companies release them for profit, not to address real needs). Advertisements come in to convince us of the need
Disagree = Consumers are getting more savvy and discerning with the amount of available information, advertisers would have to satisfy a real need for it to be attractive | Advertising may not always relate to businesses; it is also extensively used by advocacy groups to try and evoke social change (need not involve buying, it could just be about behavioural or attitudinal change)

Qn: 'There is no such thing as bad art.' Discuss.

Would want to definitely define an ambiguous term- 'bad'
Bad could mean morally bad, art created for nefarious reasons
Or bad could also mean poor quality, so art that just doesn't meet standards of excellence \
Can use both meanings of bad right? Don't need to stick to one right since i would be able to come up with more arguments but at the same time, i don't wanna be unclear and confuse reader

Only issue w this qn is what are the 2 sides?

SA: Cos there is definitely such things as bad art
OA (cannot be absolute what so how) Indeed no such thing? Of course got lah

OA1: No such thing since art is subjective and up to the taste of the individual- where one person may deem a certain art to be poor in taste and quality, another person may like it and find it captivating.

- 'Comedian' artwork consisting of a banana taped to a canvas sold at 120,000USD Generated a fuss over people criticising it heavily for lacking any artistic value and how it lacks any redeeming quality to justify its ostentatious price but it is still sold to an individual who probably saw immense value in such an artwork.
- Ai Wei Wei- destroying ancient Chinese urns that dates back to the Han Dynasty- of great cultural, historical significance as performative art - his intention was to create a performative art that went along the themes of destruction and transformation, death of the old to bring in the modern, was harshly criticised while others saw value in his art form

By extension, it is very hard to justify that there is bad art since there will always be an audience to which the art appeals to

Rebuttal: Although.. This point can be easily rebutted because of the existence of art subject in schools and art schools which would obviously grade students' artworks based on a set of fixed criteria- some art pieces deserve to receive a poor grade on an objective basis, meaning they are bad in quality while art pieces that are better in quality deserve a better grade so inherently, art can also be objective- so there can be such thing as bad art.

Banksy- insightful message or vandalism at best?

SA1: There are such things as bad art since some arts are created for nefarious purposes and agendas
- Charlie Hebdo French satirical magazine that mocked prophet Mohammed, offended numerous muslims especially in a country that is already secular where Muslims do not have the legal right to don their ethnic wear
- Propagandas to achieve political agenda

SA1: There is such thing as bad art if the art was plagiarised off someone else's hard work and creativity, at this point it would be considered art theft

Important and insightful art that serves humanitarian purpose/ reveals smt important of society

Qn: 'Diplomacy, not war, is the solution to conflicts in the world today.' Do you agree?

A good framework for justification questions

1. Consider from **a moral and legal standpoint**, notably using the **articles from the UDHR/International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights/ and what they decree**, and how these overarching principles and rights are **enshrined and espoused by the legal systems and penal code in sovereign countries** (UDHR articles that talk about certain rights that every human is entitled to-> How those rights are enshrined by legal systems in sovereign countries -> As long as every human continues to enjoy these rights that they are rightfully entitled to, XXX cannot coexist alongside the **valorised** ideals of universal human rights so XX is not justified!) Phrase: At its **core**, XXX inflicts XXX which **does not align with the moral values of a pacifist age** and the **legal conventions of modern governance.**

2. A nice way to link from the previous argument which is kinda fluffy and talks about the lofty ideals of human rights, you can examine the **deeper root cause of an issue and see if XXX actually tackles it**! You can take a range of issues from **micro (individual) to macro (community) level to strengthen your argument**. Phrase: For the **pragmatists who are unconvinced by the lofty ideals of human rights**, physical violence is **still indefensible**

as it is largely ineffective as a tool in solving problems since it is a blunt instrument by nature.

3. Also a nice point to think about: of course it might take up too many resources/ pose certain problems but you can consider it a CALCULATED DECISION- after weighing both the benefits and the risks, you'd realise it's a humongous benefit and a small price to pay for that

Another good thing for your intro if u dont have an interesting hook is to scope it via stakeholders. Like who says……, who says…… etc
For ex, support artificial reproductive technologies
LGBTQ Activists would support cos it extends the right to parenthood to more people, while (overzealous? fanatic?) religious institutions would condemn these technologies for they go against the natural order of the world which their Gods/religious scriptures have ordained.

Common phrases/arguments that you use:

- At the heart of the matter lies how…..
- XXX provides the financial impetus that is the foundation that will be needed for XXX
- To put things in perspective with theory,
- **Implicit in this essay question is the assumption that….**
- Pointing out a false-dichotomy: **Instead of seeing X and Y as oppositional, it is more worthwhile to see them as complementary agents where one aids the other.**
- (really good for transitioning from ur CA to ur SA) It is **far too simplistic to conclude whether or not** XXXX…..AI is replacing humanity with no qualifiers. ==A more nuanced discussion should include the angle that== **humans, while replaced in some areas, still retain their roles and are not worse off in the fourth industrial revolution.**
- From a **libertarian** standpoint, (Terri Schiavo case- body autonomy)
- From a **utilitarian** standpoint, XXX **achieves the greatest good for the highest** number of people so wouldn't it make more sense for XXX
- From the **perspective of fundamental human rights being sacrosanct and inviolable**: XXX cannot be justified as a matter of principle since it violates human rights, and human rights are largely regarded as non-violable. As long as humans continue to enjoy these rights, XXX cannot exist alongside the valorised ideals of human rights. Use the **UDHR articles and what they**

decree to support the rights. Next argument would be practical/economic standpoint: For the pragmatist who is unconvinced by the lofty ideals of human rights,

- From a **moral/legal standpoint**, XXX institution has the **moral and legal obligation** to XXX
- From a **political standpoint**, XXX could be a **tool weaponised by political leaders/ totalitarian Government** to **further their political agenda/ for political indoctrination/ to legitimise their political authority.** XXX opens the door for belligerent nations to which **THREATENS NATIONAL SECURITY OF OTHER COUNTRIES** who are the targets of these belligerent groups.
- XXX could lead to **strained political tensions between countries as they compete…**
- In **light of the current moral climate** we live in/ the **socially-progressive climate/a pacifist age** that we live in where **social justice is a key concern for the majority.**
- In light of the **increasingly conflict-prone/volatile state of the world, XX**
- Taking a **more optimistic stand**: But to say that it is an impossible dream would be **too fatalistic**. We still have a long way to go in XXX, but the success we had thus far testifies that it can be done and that humans are not inherently prejudiced. **The danger in believing we cannot completely eradicate it is that we accept** prejudice as a part of ourselves or something to live with. This leads to a **diminished will to fight and an increasing blindness to it.** Without this **firm conviction that we can** get rid of prejudice both in unity and diversity, **in our individual capacities and on a global scale, we rob ourselves of true hope and make a mockery of the efforts of the past** to emphasise the dignity and inalienable rights of every human being.
- For **solving an issue:** Instead of falling into the trap of assigning blame and inertia, **grounding ourselves in the quintessential belief of equality in responsibility,** reasonable within each country's limits, presents a more progressive and inclusive means to effectively combat modern day terrorism.
- Something doesn't solve the root issue (deep): XXX is **ineffective** in specifically tackling the **root cause**, since it is a **blunt instrument by design**.
- From a **biological standpoint** and the prefrontal cortex
- Something requires a **multidimensional and a multi-pronged approach**/ a more **holistic criteria** to evaluate XXX (our political monoliths)
- Something is better simply because it is **quantifiable and objective** whereas the other thing is not as good because it is **subjective** and up to an individual's **subjective opinion**.
- From an **economic/utilitarian standpoint**, the **cost-prohibitive nature** of XXX renders it **unaffordable** to the layman/ majority so **any benefits** it renders to society is **marginal at best** + continue to **widen the perennial gap** between the rich and the poor + it **incurs high opportunity cost** where the

money could be **better allocated to solving perennial issues** like poverty etc. since it **achieves the greatest good for the highest no. of people.**

- XXX could **transcend biological limitations..**
- **Commercialisation and commodification**! Plus more underlying ethical issues
- Society/ legislation is just **inherently rooted/entrenched in particular issues like misogyny and sexism that still pervades less developed/ inherently patriarchal/conservative nations!**
- XXX is only valid if the **benefits outweigh the cost**
- Something is flawed because it **erroneously shifts individual/ national responsibility towards global responsibility-> easier to shirk national responsibility in sovereign countries.**
- **There will always be Xxxx, yyy, zzzz people…. But let us hope for a world where…**
- **Furthermore, such an ultra utilitarian stance shows a very myopic view and understanding of the arts and its primary intended purpose at its very core. <u>To associate value to only things that are useful to society would be too pragmatic and narrow minded of a view, and simply sap the joy of life.</u>**
- **It's a small price to pay in order to obtain big returns IN THE LONG RUN.**
- **While wanting to inspire artists is well-intentioned, would it not be better to allocate more funds to solving these perennial, pressing issues first since doing so would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people?**
- **Alas, this quixotic ideal does not manifest for many when…**
- **This vision aligns with the claim that…. Insofar as….**
- **…..And it is a moral imperative that we do so (for justifying certain actions based on the morality of it)**

PESTLE ANALYSIS
Consider different aspects of society
Political: The speed and ease of flying has facilitated international relations and cooperation- rely on people travelling far
Economic: air travel has boosted economic productivity
Aviation industry provide a wide range of jobs
Social: cross-cultural exchanges/families/ airports in the world that have become global landmarks/ national carriers- Singapore airlines
Technological: flying remains the safest form of air travel/ aviation industry sparks technological innovations
Legal: risk of air terrorism
Environmental: contributes to global warming and carbon emissions.

Global: global environmental degradation: increase the risk of global health crises
regional: facilitates regional cooperation and integration
national: greater risks for national security; boosts economic productivity
community
individual: leisure

Stakeholders analysis: consider different groups involved
Conflicting interests and conflicting interests-> to consider the different points of view-> a good way to achieve balance and consider all aspects
Concerned about the national economy and national security
Gov vs people
Progressives vs conservatives
Individuals vs communities
Locals vs foreigners
Businesses vs consumers
Environmentalists

Good general phrases

- **Prima facie**
- (Good to use for rebuttals) However, such cases are rare and isolated incidents **in light of today's moral climate** where social justice is a key concern for the majority.
- **The facts are sobering** - XXXX data/ statistic
- I would argue that XXX is justified on the grounds of XXX (social justice)
- **Faced with an institutionalised system** XXX (of privilege stacked) against them, some groups encounter XXX (prejudice simply because of their gender, ethnicity or religious backgrounds and not fundamentally due to their innate individual qualities.)
- **Extraneous factors** (fancy way to say external factors)
- As **disadvantage and privilege are constantly perpetuated, the demographic composition of elite educational institutions and prestigious occupations might be naturally skewed towards those from the upper-class and predominantly male, majority-based backgrounds.**
- Such interventions are **crucial in the preservation of the delicate social fabric (such as censorship of offensive material)**

- Yet, **notwithstanding the above arguments, critics of** XXX claim (reconsidering this because it sounds like ur rebutting your SA which is not that good)
- It was a watershed moment for XXX
- **Proponents of (Supporters/advocates of)** the power of Science/ XXX would argue that…
- The **exorbitant price tags of such XXX technology** render them **inaccessible to those who are less well-off**, so any supposed benefit they render to society are **marginal at best.**
- The belief in XXX for **creating a better world** can be **realised**, only if idle optimism is **supplanted by concrete action** in the society outside the lab.
- XXX **evinces** the YYY (**Evinces** means signify)
- Instead of **falling into the traps of assigning blame and inertia**, we should **ground ourselves in the quintessential belief of XXXXX (**equality in responsibility, reasonable within each country's limits), to present a more progressive and inclusive means to effectively combat modern day terrorism.
- These critics fail to take into account people's changing taste for pop culture. As the pop culture market becomes increasingly saturated, consumer's palates have also become increasingly discerning.
- This **seemingly impregnable argument is easily broken down** by **examining** the fact that….
- However, while the **aforementioned reasons in support of the need for XXX are certainly valid**, there are **equally, if not more, compelling reasons to** have XXX including XXXXX
- XXX **cannot be justified as a matter of principle** since it **violates human rights**, and human rights are **largely regarded as non-violable.** (Can be used for most justification questions in considering the moral and legal framework, the Universal declaration of Human rights and penal codes in sovereign countries)
- XXX is ineffective in specifically **tackling the root cause**, since it is a **blunt instrument by design**. (therefore not justifying it etc)

- However, an exception can be made for the use of XXX as a **begrudging last resort** when the **stakes are high and all peaceful alternatives have failed.**
- In exceptional cases, XXX can be justified as a **calculated sacrifice in the short run** if it leads to **lasting XXX in the future**. (Considering that the long-term benefits in doing so outweigh the short-term negative impacts it imposes)
- At its core, XXX inflicts harm and damage on purpose which **does not align with the moral values of a pacifist age** and the **legal conventions of modern governance.**
- **XXX cannot coexist alongside the valorised ideals of universal human rights**. <u>AS LONG AS</u> every person **enjoys these rights**, XXX cannot be justified.
- In theory, XXX **cannot be justified on moral grounds**. It is a **severe transgression both in the eyes of the law** and in the eyes of those who make up civilised society. The **range of international and national policies** proscribing violence reflects our abhorrence towards it.
- At the **heart of the matter**, XXX has an **innate tendency to descend** into XXX
- From a logical perspective, XXX **cannot resolve political/ideological** conflicts since they come from **far more intricate and interwoven factors** involving <u>history, religion and culture at large.</u>
- If we consider **human rights to be relative instead of absolute**, then XXX… meeting violence with violence is fair **when one's life is at stake**, such as during armed robberies and wars.
- Our enduring belief in the **value of a technocratic political system** that can bring us economic success likely stems from our **colonial legacy** as well as the **Confucian ideals** that we so faithfully subscribe to- 2 systems that **value the intellectual**.
- In Singapore, the model of pragmatic meritocracy espouses equality of opportunity for all, allowing those with the ability to flourish but simultaneously creating natural losers that are left downtrodden from such a competitive, cut-throat environment.
- increasingly **conflict-prone/volatile state of the world (nuclear tech/ space)**
- As the nation's caretaker, the responsibility of providing an avenue for those who consciously pursue art **should rest on the shoulders of the government, which is bound by duty to serve the people it has sworn to protect.**

- This would perhaps provide a springboard for the arts scene in Singapore to thrive in a more genuine and organic fashion.
- That sentiment is far from truth-
- But to say that it is an **impossible dream would be too fatalistic**.
- *****We still **have a long way to go in eliminating prejudice**, but the **success** we had thus far testifies that it can be done and that humans are not inherently prejudiced. The danger in believing we cannot completely eradicate it is that **we accept prejudice as a part of ourselves or something to live with**. This leads to a **diminished will to fight and an increasing blindness** to it. Without this firm **conviction that we can get rid of prejudice both in unity and diversity**, in our individual capacities and on a global scale, we **rob ourselves of true hope and make a mockery of the efforts of the past to emphasise the dignity and inalienable rights of every human being.**
- However, the issue is **not as black and white as it seems**.
- **From the utilitarian perspective**, XXX is justified because it allows the state to **generate the greatest good for the greatest no. of people**
- **From the libertarian perspective (liberals who are low–key obsessed with maximising personal freedoms and autonomy)**
- This is dangerous/unjustified because it could **invariably construe the notion that ….**
- **Modern society finds itself in an age of unrivalled possibilities- as long as one possesses the resources, the question now is no longer if we can do it but rather, if we should.**
- **Human rights are sacrosanct and should not be violated. Since XXX cannot exist alongside the valorised ideals of rights that every human should be fundamentally entitled to, XXX is not justified. For the pragmatist who is not convinced by the lofty ideals of human rights,**
- **From a utilitarian standpoint, this would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people, which is a net benefit for society at large. (Democracy model being the best, a particular action)**
- The **international** nature of social media enables information of happenings around the world to **transcend national boundaries**
- Since time immemorial, XXX (the arts) has been regarded as one that was **secondary to that of meeting the basic needs as iterated under Maslow's hierarchy of needs.**
- Pragmatic meritocracy espouses equality of opportunity for all (to succeed and be rewarded), however, the fundamental flaw of such a principle lies in it allowing those with the ability to flourish but

simultaneously creating natural losers that are left downtrodden from such a competitive, cut-throat environment.

- The nation's **burgeoning problems of poverty and rapid ageing**. While wanting to inspire artists is well-intentioned, would it not be better to allocate more funds to solving these **perennial**, pressing issues first since doing so would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people from a utilitarian standpoint?

- Due to the **proprietary nature of many Scientific and technological inventions,** they are often **commercialised and commodified by profit-driven firms who are fuelled by corporate greed,** tainting the very purpose of Science in the first place.

- Arguing Governmental efforts vs individual efforts: A **top-down approach** by a **governing body with ample resources** at its **disposal** can **compel a plan into being**, but **individualised responsibility relies too much on uncertain variables like the goodwill and coordination of a large population.**

- **Presenting a false binary: The question presents a false binary; involving the populace does not automatically absolve the Government of its responsibilities nor nullifies its importance. Having seen both sides' merits and shortcomings, the optimal solution would be one that leverages everyone's strength to maximise positive outcomes. (But this is only applicable for comparison questions tho, which would be the best to steer clear from since its harder but this is an impressive pt to have)**

- **Hence, it would be heavily misguided to have only one party responsible for saving the earth as both sides bring something unique to the table. At the rate in which the Earth is being desecrated, we would need all hands on deck to alleviate the environmental crisis.**

- **The social media age has empowered today's youth to mobilise quickly, spread their message more widely, and connect with like-minded individuals across the globe. Their activism is not confined by geographical boundaries, making their reach and impact far more significant than what was feasible in the past.**

- **From an economic standpoint and considering the long term benefits, the money would be well spent since a more educated populace would generate more individuals that are eligible for PMET positions and generate higher revenue-> higher economic growth for the country-> More public goods for people.**

- However, it is not a level playing field when digital technologies fail to overcome existing obstacles to equality when digital technologies create new inequalities, adding a new dimension to the divide.
- It logically follows that….
- Alas, this quixotic ideal does not manifest for
- The rapid development of these technologies/inventions is akin to opening Pandora's box of implications that will outpace our ethical and legal structures.
- Such ethical quandaries and ambiguities undermine conventional forms of family and parenting, devaluing the institution as a whole because of distinct birthrights and the violation of religious sanctions. The complexities of blurred lineages invariably undercut the wholeness of parenthood and family.
- Raise ethical quandaries and philosophical questions
- Given our dark history, it is precisely our obsession with perfection that enabled us to survive and transform ourselves from an obscure, third world nation to an Asian economic superpower. The merits gained from striving to be perfect saved us, which is why we're still currently obsessed with perfection and cannot bear to rest on our laurels.
- The democratisation of something… The democratisation of news dissemination opens up a realm of challenges in distinguishing fact from fiction, requiring a more critical and investigative approach from the audience
- Ensuring equitable access to healthcare is a key pillar to social justice and it is a moral imperative that we do so
- While universal healthcare remains an admirable goal, the economic foundation required to fund it is difficult to maintain/ the economic foundation provides the financial impetus
- A prosperous economy provides the financial impetus necessary for bolstering fundamental aspects such as healthcare, education, infrastructure. The Governance showcases responsiveness and responsibilities towards citizens' needs and welfare
- Art is a constantly evolving medium, every era has seen the usage of different techniques, tools and mediums. Given that we live in a technological age today, it only makes sense that technology is a tool that will be harnessed by artists to support/boost their artistic regime.
- Questions relating people vs Gov/politicians, can use the argument of people having power in masses. It's the number: Individuals, when unified within institutions, can overcome political inertia by amplifying their collective voice.
- The sheer expanse of new media has made it impossible to govern, as there is no existing method or body of personnel that exists now which can impose any measure of control over the infinite media landscape.
- Governments have a greater access to the collective resources of the state necessary to enact any effective action- also possess the expertise and knowledge that are needed to take action in the environmental sphere.
- The burden of _____ (issue) naturally falls on the shoulders of Governments, since they are bound by duty/legal obligation to provide a safe and conducive living environment for people they are sworn to serve

- Citizens, instead of the Gov, must be held accountable for _____ because their sheer numbers make their participation integral to the outcome of _____ .
- Art is an endeavour of creativity and innovation. Using technology to produce art pieces is the ==epitome of expanding artistic boundaries and still requires a capable and creative mind at the helm– and therefore can be considered art.==
- The frontiers of new media are constantly expanding, leading many to claim that regulations can never keep up with the ever-evolving ways in which _____ .
- Nuclear technology paves the way for surreptitious development of nuclear weapons, opening doors for belligerent nations to weaponise nuclear technology (maybe cos they are vying for global dominance but in the process, they could undermine the national security and safety of other countries)
- Although tourism is known for being lucrative under the right circumstances, the reality is that most tourism is problematic because it can disrupt the livelihood and innovation of many businesses, causing the entire state to be dependent on economic areas which are tenuous and unreliable
- New media also changes, adapts and evolves so quickly that any legislative attempt at regulation will always be lagging several steps behind the current state of media development
- Despite the vagaries (uncertainties) and the long-winded nature of international resolutions, when the discussion is complete, and the smoke clears there are meaningful solutions and action plans being implemented to tackle environmental issues.
- Although critics would argue that the actions of governments and people alike have been woefully inadequate, we cannot tar the entire society with the same brush. Some climate visionaries in our society exist and continue to work indefatigably despite being maligned by the mainstream.
- A high budget would provide the financial impetus that is the foundation needed to cultivate a robust education system that would nurture and grow the future pillars of our nation, very worth it. - investment of sorts.
- Education levels the playing field of the disadvantaged by providing them access to opportunities to improve their standard of living and overcome the problems their communities might face. It equips them with the skills that they need to get jobs and uplift themselves from poverty
- It serves as a recourse to alleviate the struggles that the disadvantaged face in their society.
- However, the danger of restricting ourselves from progress in the name of preserving traditional values may cost us crucial and life-saving inventions that could drastically alleviate crises.
- In times of global crises, it becomes all the more essential for us to put others before ourselves to ensure that society does not tear itself apart through avarice.
- In light of the systemic racism and institutional bias that the marginalised are perennially subjected to, preferential treatment serves as a much-needed recourse to alleviate the struggles of this group. Hence, preferential treatment can be justified on the grounds of social justice and uplifting/empowering the marginalised in our society.

- The government is the **only institution with a bird's eye view of all stakeholders** within the country and arguably the **strongest institution with the most power and resources**.
- Just as politicians leverage on their authority and political dominance to uplift and empower the marginalised in society, citizens' collective support for the politician (power in masses) are what legitimise the politicians' authority in the first place. Both sides' power irrevocably depend on one another and there are instances where both help boost the other side's power.
- HENCE, an **intense focus on economic achievements** might **not** always translate into a **net benefit** for society. It is essential to maintain a balance where **economic strategies do not overshadow the government's responsibility** towards **holistic and sustainable societal welfare and development.**
- In conclusion, it is **unfair and misguided** to posit that the key criterion for good government is how well the **economy** is managed. It **ignores** the fact that accurately assessing a government's levels of **efficiency and competency is both complicated and perplexing**. While a **well-managed economy** may be able to signal the **high degree of competency** of a government through the fulfilment of citizens' material well-being, this overly simplistic measure fails to provide a holistic evaluation of the government. Hence, a more superior assessment should also include **criteria such as accountability and transparency and to a smaller extent, democratic rights.** Indeed, countries are increasingly cognisant of the importance of using a **multifaceted approach to measure their political monoliths.**
- With how **technology is irrevocably intertwined with one's financial strata**- and how **rampant class inequality is in the world**, technology exacerbates these class differences even further.

Proclivity- tendency/inclination towards/gravitate towards

Good Quotes!
- **SCIENTIFIC REGULATIONS:** "Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants." By Omar Bradley
- **EQUALITY/TREATMENT/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**: "There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequal people" Thomas Jefferson's words remain as relevant and provocative now as it was in the 18th century
- **SPACE**: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" Neil Armstrong, American astronaut also the first person to walk on moon.
- **SPACE**: "If there's something terrible that happens on Earth, either made by humans or natural, we want to have, like, life insurance

for life as a whole," Musk said during a virtual Mars conference on Aug 31 on his plans of colonising Mars.

- **FOREIGN AID**: "the one percent we spend on aid for the poorest not only saves millions of lives, it has an enormous impact on developing countries- which means it has an impact on our economy."
- **VIOLENCE**: Renowned pacifist Mahatma Gandhi believes "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent."
- **GOVERNANCE:** According to Thomas Hobbes, human life would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" in the absence of political order and law.
- **GENDER EQUALITY**: "Women are not making it to the top of any profession in the world" - Sheryl Sandberg, Chief operating officer of Meta Platforms
- **STATE CONTROL:** 1984 by George Orwell "Big brother is watching you"
- **VISUAL MEDIA**: Joe Sacco- a cartoonist and journalist
- 'It's a visual world and people respond to visuals'
- **ENVIRONMENT**: "Social justice is climate justice. Climate change is a human rights issue as the climate crisis exacerbates inequalities," said environmental human rights defender, multimedia journalist and film director, Sophia Li.
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Environmental photographer Ansel Eaton 'It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the government.'
- **VIOLENCE/TERRORISM**:'**Never again'** cemented as a slogan to decry another genocide of the Jews, subsequently against coups, mass shootings and terrorism.
- **DEMOCRATISATION OF INFORMATION/TECHNOLOGY**: "Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That's what we are doing" boldly declared Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, a digital encyclopaedia that aims to create a world in which information is available to everyone.

UDHR

Article 18
Everyone has the right to **freedom of thought, conscience and religion**; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19
Everyone has the right to **freedom of opinion and expression"**

Article 19 Every human has the right "**to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media** and regardless of frontiers."

Article 1: All human beings are born '**free and equal in dignity and rights**'

Article 3: Every human being has the inherent right to '**life, liberty and security of person**'

Article 12: No one shall be subjected to '**arbitrary interference with his privacy**'

Article 26: "Everyone has the right to education."

Article 27: Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the Human Rights Committee under UN

Notes for paper 2

https://gp.sg/gppaper2.html#h.i9zeg3l0o6if

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Notes for Essay

https://www.theknowledgeloft.com/notes/gp-essays/

Framework for essays

http://a-leveltuition.com/?s=general+paper

REMEMBER THE <mark>SPERM FRAMEWORK</mark> TO GENERATE IDEAS FOR A WELL-ROUNDED ESSAY!!

https://tick.ninja/

Important for dichotomy questions! Evaluate if the dichotomy provided in the question is MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. In certain cases, it may be considered a false dichotomy since the 2 may not be mutually exclusive!

Elderly

<mark>Being an economic burden</mark>

The elderly are the ones who incur the most costs in terms of healthcare needs, especially due to the ill-health and diseases they face with old age. A recent report even predicted that healthcare could rise by tenfold by 2030. And now with the pandemic, and with the elderly being more susceptible to the virus, more money has been spent worldwide to care for their well-being. In OECD countries, over 65 age group accounts for 40 to 50 percent of healthcare spending and their per capita healthcare costs are three to five times higher than those under 65.

==Psychological and financial burden by individuals related to the elders==
The burden can also be felt by families who have to care for the elderly. The burden can range from a financial point of view to one of psychological and emotional well-being. Some might even fall prey to caregiver burnt-outs.

(NICE WAY OF SEEING IT) Though the elderly may bring with them more healthcare costs incurred for society, the issue (if managed well governmentally) can translate to more jobs and a better economy as well as a more caring and inclusive society. It would be ungrateful of society to 'abandon' them in their old age and more jobs are created in the area of geriatric care as the population ages, giving young people employment opportunities in healthcare.

Family

"Should parents have complete control to impose their values and beliefs over their child?"

Insofar that they do not end their child's wellbeing
Questionable.
- Evangelical Christian parents deny their children of medical treatments under the belief that their prayers would work.
- A phenomenon called 'faithful healing' whereby parents refuse their sick children proper medical treatment because of religious reasons.
- They believe that mere prayers and having faith is sufficient to heal their children.
- And what's worse is that some states in America (one prominent one being Idaho) which do not have any laws which prosecute these parents.
- Idaho's laws exempt dogmatic faith healers from prosecution. (FLAWED LEGISLATIONS! Valid legal systems?)

Bring the question of
(A) Should parents really be having total autonomy over their children's lives because it's clearly evident that some of these parents...are bad at parenting because of their **misguided religious beliefs that could bring potential harm to their child!**
(B) Should Governments make laws to protect a particular group in society from persecution?

It makes more sense for the parents to deny themselves medical treatment because of their own religious beliefs or so BUT this probably should not extend to their children.

While parents possess the legal right to and should enforce important universal values and beliefs when their children are young, subject to their child's age and maturity, parents should also apply wisdom in judgement, allowing their children the autonomy and space to pursue their own happiness and develop their own values and beliefs (given that these views are not harmful)

The opposing views could look at how maybe **equal responsibility is hard to define** and feels somewhat **forced and inorganic**, so it could instead be left up to a parent's own discretion based on their career circumstances or their other obligations.

Youth

Their dedication to fight issues

It's their **indomitable spirit** that is **fuelled by their youth**
For instance, the global environmental movement has been **spearheaded** in recent years by the youthful exuberance of Greta Thunberg. At just **15 years old, Thunberg put her adolescence on hold** and **assumed the mantle of environmental champion**, initiating the **"Fridays for Future" school strike outside the Swedish parliament**. Moreover, Thunberg has expertly harnessed social media to spread her word, amassing a **staggering 5.7 million followers on Twitter and 14.7 million followers on Instagram. Influential figure worldwide, even gaining the attention of former US president Donald Trump.** Her online presence has been **pivotal in galvanising a generation to her aid**, who similarly **join the online crusade** for the environment. Her work and dedication has displayed passion and wisdom **beyond her years**, and sparked a green wave among her peers - all this while **bearing the brunt of criticisms from her elders for being a "foolish" teenager and an upstart.- youths will always be misunderstood by their much older counterparts who believe that they do not know any better.**

Is it true that young people of today are a **lost** generation?

Not lost
Youth activism is prominent today, **social causes** initiated by youths who feel a **strong sense of civic responsibility- fight social issues**

Contrary to popular belief, the youths of today are not 'lost' - they have at their fingertips an **unprecedented reach**, which they are using to **champion social causes** much like their forebears. The affordances of social media and the Internet **in the contemporary age** (must contextualise to NOW because this is a time context) have ==amplified the voices of youth on a global scale, an avenue for the youth to fight social injustices.== Their **heightened social consciousness**, seen in their active engagement in causes located far from their milieus, exhibits the youths' ==clear dedication to altruism - despite the unfair label that youths today are directionless.==

For instance, the global environmental movement has been spearheaded in recent years by the youthful exuberance of one Greta Thunberg. At just 15 years old, Thunberg put her adolescence on hold and assumed the mantle of environmental champion, initiating the "Fridays for Future" school strike outside the Swedish parliament. Moreover, Thunberg has expertly harnessed social media to spread her word, amassing a staggering 5.7 million followers on Twitter and 14.7 million followers on Instagram. Her online presence has been pivotal in galvanising a generation to her aid, who similarly join the online crusade for the environment. Her work and dedication has displayed passion and wisdom beyond her years, and sparked a green wave among her peers - all this while bearing the brunt of criticisms from her elders for being a "foolish" teenager.

While previous generations have certainly had their share of activists and pioneers, the ==social media age== has e==mpowered today's youth to mobilise quickly, spread their message more widely, and connect with like-minded individuals across the globe.== Their activism is **not confined by geographical boundaries**, making their reach and impact **far more significant than what was feasible in the past.** The youths of today are **not aimless at all** - they have committed to a cause and dedicated their lives toward the common goal of saving our planet.

Therefore, the "lost" label is **unfair to the youths of today, given their keenness for social causes.** A more accurate label might be to view them as a generation that's deeply connected, informed, and proactive in shaping global narratives and pushing for societal progress.

Should we <u>always</u> listen to the youth? / Should we allow young individuals to vote?

From a ==biological== standpoint, young individuals are more susceptible/ more vulnerable to making poor decisions. Their ==prefrontal cortex (a critical region of the brain that is responsible for having sound judgement and making rational decisions) is still not fully developed==. Young individual's **undeveloped prefrontal cortex** is what attributes to them being **vulnerable to making poor decisions and irrational judgements**, as seen in the **Tide pod challenge** that mainly occurred in America where teens are daring each other to

consume Tide Pods, the laundry detergent soap bar. It became a trend where many teens even documented their participation on social media sites like TikTok/ Devious Licks challenges on TikTok in SG where 2 teens stole the Kaki Bukit MRT sign and documented their experience- arrested shortly after->These teen's poor decisions raises the question as to whether we should really be listening to the youth/or let them vote when they have fall prey to their poor judgement and make irrational decisions that **endangers** themselves! The fate of the country should not be falling into the hands of individuals who have yet to fully mature. However, it **should not be misconstrued** that young individuals are incapable of making sound decisions, it's that young people are **MORE susceptible** to making poor, irrational decisions **because of the biological make up of their non-fully developed brains, they are just not fully mature which is why we should not completely listen to them blindly.**

And they are impressionable, non fully developed prefrontal cortex, still trying to navigate their way in a world, still building beliefs
2021 16 SG male was self-radicalised, motivated by a strong antipathy towards Islam and a fascination with violence. He watched the live streamed video of the terrorist attack on the two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 15 March 2019, and read the manifesto of the Christchurch attacker, Brenton Tarrant (Tarrant). He had also watched Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) propaganda videos, and came to the erroneous conclusion that ISIS represented Islam, and that Islam called on its followers to kill non-believers. Bruh he bought a machete from carousell tf
Explaining how the 16-year-old was self-radicalised, ISD said he had a fascination with violent materials, and frequented sites and forums specialising in gore. BRUH the need for censorship is here

In late 2019, he viewed ISIS propaganda videos while surfing for violent material, and was particularly angered by an ISIS video showing an execution of Ethiopian Christians.
But young people have the energy and the spirit to lead causes making them important catalysts for social change, equipped with the massive public outreach of social media and technology
Greta Thunberg amassed **15.7 million Instagram followers**, a **pivotal** figure in **galvanising** a generation to join her in her online crusade to fight for the environment to be prioritised by Governments.

A declining interest in politics is alarming since the future of the country would lie in the hands of today's youth which would eventually spearhead our country later.
If young individuals were **given the ability to vote**, voting would become **rigged and unfair.**
For young individuals who are not concerned with the political state of the country, their votes would just translate into an extra vote for their parents. ** flawed way of arguing:
Voting is a form of power that (young people cannot appreciate/ that young people are not aware of) and they may just hand it over to their parents. It is unfair that this power is abused because it is lied within the hands of someone irresponsible, unaware, or just doesn't care about political affairs. Less than a third of young people from the UK express any interest in politics, according to an official survey as reported by BBC News. Concerning

In addition, it is dangerous to always ==assume== that they are ==utilitarian in motivation.== The young may be **self-centred in nature** due to the changing dynamics and **upbringing** received.

The young have the ==power to change matters==. They have the ==energy== to move others to do likewise and the ==inspiration to want to make changes.== This is especially crucial in encouraging them to have ==civic-responsibility== as they are the ==future of a country==. They are the future pillars of society anyway

Nkosi Johnson (1989 – 2001) South Africa. He was **born with HIV/AIDS inherited** from his parents. After being **refused admission to a public school because of his HIV status**, he became a **powerful speaker for treating HIV victims with equality and respect in a society that was prejudiced against people with HIV/AIDS.** He also founded a refuge for HIV mothers and their children with his foster mother.

Faced with an institutionalised system against him, …..

St Joan of Arc in the 15th century: a 17 year old girl filled with conviction and inspiration to bring France political freedom from the English and managed to bring this major, revolutionary change to France.

To remain **economically viable**, Singapore **ingrained the idea of ==practicality== into the education system**; means an immersion into a pressure-cooker of a learning journey with **industriousness and ==achievement being the foremost values. That's why there's such a huge emphasis on academic achievement-> It literally determines the course/ the direction of your life. + there is a larger emphasis on academic excellence/ development of a student's intellectual ability rather than their practical skills as expected of a country whose== Government consists of technocratic political leaders who would naturally reward the cognitively-driven. ==The whole basis of where meritocracy comes in.==**

In fact, it is **myopic to deny** that Singaporeans are academically-competitive. Take for instance, the tuition industry in Singapore. A 1.4 billion dollar industry. **Back in 2013, there were only 600 registered tuition centres. In 2016, there were 800 and increasing.** More tuition centres to meet the demands of parents who expect their children to perform well, students themselves who do not want to fall behind etc. Tuition centres boasting the grades and aggregate scores of their top scorers.

The tuition culture just highlights how exam-crazy our society is.

In Japan, it's pretty competitive too. **Juku are Japan private tuition centres** that reflect the **academic rivalry** that exists between students. If students weren't so concerned about their grades, the tuition industry wouldn't be flourishing so much.

Youths Self entitlement?

- In more recent times, there has been an i**ncreasing focus on individualism**. There has been **greater** value on young individual's **achievement over their civic duty.**

- Societies have become increasingly liberal with the proliferation of progressive ideas, the youth from traditionally conservative societies have indeed become more liberal.
- Technological and cultural changes may be fostering a rise in vanity and narcissism.

Leisure

In the past, handicrafts held **immense value** because they tangibly and pragmatically enhanced the living conditions of families. Crafting processes were time-consuming and required prerequisite skills, making such handcrafted goods extremely **limited and expensive**. Unfortunately, the **ready accessibility of quicker and cheaper alternatives** offered by modern machines today has **devalued both machine and handcrafted goods.**

This reality highlights how the **value of handicrafts is greatly diminished** because they have been **replaced by machine-produced goods with similar functionality**, produced in a quarter of the time and at a fraction of the cost.

This **commodification** of handicrafts turns **handmade cultural icons into kitschy souvenirs**, where they become little more than **tokens** from one's bucket-list destinations.

Artisans might argue that in such an era of mass manufacturing,the value of rare handicrafts has paradoxically been **enhanced** because of their exquisiteness and craftsmanship.

The appeal of handicrafts as **cultural symbols** is also being rapidly eroded by modernisation and those who appreciate them are tourists who drive the **commodification** of these crafts, turning cultural value into kitsch.

Education

High expenditure justified?

Need to roughly know the different countries' expenditure on education
In order to provide **students with a balanced and well-rounded education (emphasis on holistic education as well because a holistic, well-rounded education is what makes it expensive yet it is so vital in the development of students)**, so as to help them **discover their talents and maximise their full potential**, and **nurture** them into committed citizens. The **revised 2021 total expenditure of the Ministry of Education (MOE) is $13.17 billion.**

Has it been proven by statistics that spending more money on education would translate to better outcomes?

A high budget would provide the financial impetus that is the foundation needed to cultivate a robust education system that would nurture and grow the future pillars of our nation, very worth it. - investment of sorts.

YES

Governments have a **legal obligation to provide students with the best quality education <mark>it could possibly offer within its means</mark>, and that often comes with an exorbitant price tag so it is justified. After all, any good government would have the prerogative to improve the quality of its education system.**

A high expenditure provides the financial impetus that is the foundation needed to cultivate a robust education system.

UDHR Article **26**: "Everyone has the right to education."

Any **good Government should aspire to improve the quality** of the education anyway since it is their responsibility and obligation.

(PERIPHERAL POINT) Education itself can be used to solve perennial social issues that have plagued society like discrimination/prejudice + level the playing field by providing poor students an avenue to uplift themselves. A holistic education is expensive but can be used to fight these issues so it is justified. - although a lot of modern problems are multifaceted in nature and far too complex for education to be a solution alone.

Explain how from a **biological standpoint** how the **prefrontal cortex works and why holistic education, which is expensive, can be used to fight these issues to prevent the propagation of a vicious cycle of prejudice and discrimination.**

For the pragmatist who is unconvinced by the lofty ideals of human rights and fighting social issues, perhaps they could look at the situation from an economic and utilitarian standpoint. From an **economic standpoint and considering the long term benefits,** the money would be **well spent since <mark>a more educated populace would generate more individuals that are eligible for PMET positions and generate higher revenue-> higher economic growth for the country-> More public goods for people. An overall net benefit</mark>**
A **generally more educated and competent populace** that is equipped with the skills for higher-paying positions would contribute to a country's **economic growth.** Note that these students would **become the future pillars of Singapore** anyway! They will be the ones representing parliaments, becoming our future doctors, future technicians and executives! Given the rapid advancement in technology, **digital literacy is in high demand in many jobs** around the world so Singapore decides to **integrate Computer skills in the curriculum of primary school students.** That would mean **purchasing computer equipment and building a computer lab-> expensive! But it is necessary to develop the digital skills of students to ensure they are fully-equiped with the skills needed for the future.**

The future of the country lies in our current students and how educated or supported they are now will determine the fate of the country. A more educated populace would achieve the greatest good for the country's politics and economy so it is justified.
In a way, it's sort of a calculated decision

OR you could even argue from a **utilitarian standpoint** that providing your students now with the best education you can offer within your means would **result in a <mark>net gain</mark> for the country in the future- filled with highly qualified and intellectually-capable PMETs that**

are able to work high-paying jobs and sustain the country's economy. *It's a small price to pay in order to obtain big returns IN THE LONG RUN.*
IT'S A CALCULATED DECISION
All Singapore Citizens born after 1 January 1996 and living in Singapore must attend a national primary school unless an exemption is granted.

NO
Pragmatists argue that high expenditure on education incurs a high opportunity cost and the funds should be allocated to solving more pressing, burgeoning CURRENT issues like poverty and an ageing population. **While wanting to improve education is well-intentioned, would it not be better to allocate more funds to solving these perennial, pressing issues first since doing so would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people right now?**

Minor point but sometimes some of this money is spent on expensive inventions which are problematic and immoral like the headbands in China which measure the concentration level of students.

PLDs that poorer students cannot afford-> continue to widen the perennial gap between the rich and the poor.

Sometimes, certain schools like elite schools ==disproportionately== receive more funding than their less elite counterparts-> some students receive more benefits while some receive less? Another socio-economic division mechanism!

Education paves way for **greater understanding** between ==**races, sexes, orientations.**== No longer believe that there are 'innate' qualities attached to people. **<u>Early theorists held the false belief that there were biologically distinct characteristics that determine peoples' intellect and moral qualities without regard to their social and cultural traits.</u> Helps people to see there is no reason to fear/discriminate against one another - creating an inclusive society employing strengths of all individuals So education can be the first step to eradicating racial tensions/discrimination. <u>Education is a powerful tool to fighting social issues that pervade in society</u>**

A lot of CCE lessons too-> Character and Citizenship education in schools which is integral in the moralistic development of students-> first step to fighting these social issues and bringing about powerful social changes

The debate of the century questions the utility of schools: They do not REALLY prepare students for life. How valid is this?

Life vs future

Schools preparing students for <mark>LIFE</mark> VS Schools preparing students for the <mark>FUTURE</mark> are **<u>DIFFERENT</u>**.

I mean,, I suppose what schools teach is what schools consider are important skill sets to possess in the future. The syllabi of the education system reflects what the Government deems important. + Many of the learning objectives in the syllabi of various subjects have an **overwhelmingly disproportionate emphasis on the development of intellectual skills, as opposed to practical abilities**.

If it's the future, you need to be well-read on the <mark>demands of the future workplaces</mark>. Jobs are constantly changing and evolving. Jobs existing now may not even exist in the future. The world that we live in is <mark>volatile and ever-changing.</mark> As such, just to set some context: The ability to critically analyse, reason and apply knowledge is far more valuable in most workplaces than merely regurgitating facts.
Employees of global companies like **Google, Amazon, and Microsoft** all agreed that the ability to **<u>critically think and analyse</u>** was one of the most important skill sets for a student to have in the 21st century.
In addition, coding skills are essential for many high-paying jobs now which are not commonly taught in schools besides specialised courses in higher institutions.

The world is increasingly growing more dependent on technology, developing more advanced technology and increasingly incorporating technology in their workspaces YADAYADAYA The **demand for digital skills (like coding)** in global workspaces has grown by 60% over the past several years. Digital literacy is important: The ability to differentiate between reliable internet sources

But in Singapore, usually **specialised courses in tertiary education institutions** are the ones that **develop digital skills** and digital skills are **less emphasised in lower education.**

Singapore is moving from traditional rote learning to teaching methods that develop critical thinking. This ensures that Singaporean students would have one of the most important skill sets of the 21st century.

Singapore students' top scores on **Pisa** (Programme for International Student Assessment) test show the effectiveness of Singapore's move from traditional rote learning to teaching methods that strengthen a student's critical thinking. In **2012**, Singapore came in **second in mathematics and third in science and reading.** The latest Pisa **2015** comes and Singapore was **ranked the world's best in mathematics and science** by a key global study, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science. The improvement shows the result of **MOE placing more emphasis on higher-order, critical thinking skills over the**

years. There was also a conscious effort to move learning beyond content to **problem-solving.**

Conformity and creativity

Sometimes, to conform is to resign ourselves to a one-size-fits-all standard that may not provide room for the rich variety of potential voices and the plethora of personalities and perspectives among us. Although we are members of a collective, we are also individuals, each endowed with a unique identity and creative potential. To completely lose oneself in the crowd rnay be to suppress, distort or relinquish these essential elements of one's self, in favour of bland homogeneity. Consequently, beneath the placid surface of social harmony, an individual may feel tension between who she is and what society demands her to be. This may be why children raised to follow the conventions of their parents' generation often come to rebel against those conventions. Furthermore, students drilled to adhere to formulaic answering techniques find such education neither inspiring nor illuminating, but rather, mind-numbing.

The ==rigidity== of examinations (ESPECIALLY IN SINGAPORE) has encouraged CONFORMITY. Students have to **CONFORM to a set, fixed mark scheme** and even at times, memorise it + regurgitate during exams just to be given **CREDIT**. However, this cannot be blamed because exams are an objective measure of a student's capability in a subject. Being objective comes with being strict.

It does sometimes seem like the exam format is penalising those who do not memorise and regurgitate model answers. (Besides showing the issue of encouraging conformity to gain credit, it also shows that education really just makes students memorise and regurgitate chunks of information. Singaporean students are able to memorise all this theoretical content but how it is often rare for the need to memorise in life generally once an individual no longer attends educational institutions-> **Questions how valuable schools really are for LIFE**-> More importantly, it's more about the **emphasis that the skills taught in schools are not in demand in the future**. **Regurgitating is not as relevant as critical thinking** in our world today. Remember? Leaders of the world's biggest companies like Amazon and Google agree that the ability to critically think is the most important and crucial skill to have in the 21st century. "These mindless graduates, after spending years regurgitating, will have to re-educate themselves with skills that are actually valuable for their workplace." This brings the question as to whether schools are useful in preparing students for life.. + Another idea: Students also learn to memorise all this chunk of info **but schools do not really teach students how to apply it in a way that would bring value to their lives**. For example, at the end of their educational journey, a student learning Economics would be educated in various Economics theories, concepts and graphs. However, when that same student is asked to apply their theoretical knowledge to start his business, he is left stumped simply because he does not even know where to begin applying all his knowledge!

Textbooks are basically the best tools to limit the content of the subject to match the syllabus-> Yet this often leads to large, gaping discrepancies between what they learn at school vs what they learn outside of school. Even certain principles that are taught in school are outdated and no longer relevant to today's world

Education is a form of political tool that can be abused by totalitarian Governments to push for an agenda/ to push for one-sided perspectives that are favoured by the Government. A form of political indoctrination

 In addition, sometimes these textbooks are controlled by the Government only to **teach the youth one-sided/radical perspectives and ideologies that are favoured by the Government**-> Education is used as a form of **propaganda and political indoctrination** (IDEA OF CONFORMITY TO ONE IDEOLOGY)-> cultivating students who are biassed and limited in their thinking For example, British History textbooks would talk about what a great man Robert Clive of India was. However, Indian History textbooks would highlight Clive's villainy in India for all the atrocities he had committed.

Individuality vs conformity
"Should/To what extent should schools promote conformity?"

Consider perhaps conformity from the viewpoint of clothes/attire
Having a set school uniform would enable students to centre their school lives around education rather than being preoccupied with vanity, and also **prevent potential pitfalls from allowing students to wear their own clothes- exacerbate class differences and marginalisation of the financially-disadvantaged students.**

While promoting conformity in schools has its own merits (and detriments too…), promoting individuality in schools has far more useful and impactful merits (in shaping a student who is equipped with skills that meet the demands of the future workspace, one notable skill being the ability to critically think and analyse.) **so schools should promote individuality to a larger extent.**

The current mode of exams encourages individuals to regurgitate and follow a rigid mark scheme and rewards them for it. Overtime, students are conditioned to think in such a rigid manner which causes their creativity to be stifled.

In addition, I'm pretty sure an emphasis on conformity **may limit the imaginative capacities of individuals that may prevent them from making innovative creations or having breakthroughs** in their research since it is possible for their worldview/scope to become limited-> if they're **so used to a formulaic way of thinking and are rewarded for formulaic answers for a substantial chunk of their childhood this may translate to less**

creativity in the future as adults. Adults just **mindlessly slaving away, unable to come up with original ideas or think outside the box/ embrace being different.**

** Thought of this example! One prominent cause of the drop in creativity scores is the education system itself! Since students are spending a very long time in school, regurgitating, memorising, conforming

This is what **Dr. Kyung Hee Kim**, an **Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at The College of William and Mary**, **analysed almost 300,000 scores of children and adults and found** creativity scores rise with age until around 5th grade and then they remain static or decline during high school.

My criteria to evaluate/weigh which merits are better would be based on which merits are far more lasting and impactful in the student's future (Of course, in this future, one key area would be their careers.)

Merits of promoting conformity:
The rigid nature of examinations- STRICT, RIGID, FIXED **mark schemes**. In certain subjects, students have to memorise content or even the answer scheme itself and regurgitate it during the exam to gain credit. Essentially, students are conforming to a fixed mark scheme. Schools should **promote conformity** in the area of examinations to ensure that their students obtain the **most credit for their hard work because it's just the way exams are**. In this area, promoting conformity HAS MERIT.

However, the merits of promoting individuality are far more impactful and lasting.

Individuality in schools is promoted through having discussions/

To remain **economically viable**, Singapore **ingrained the idea of** practicality **into the education system**; means an immersion into a pressure-cooker of a learning journey with **industriousness and** achievement being the foremost values. That's why there's such a huge emphasis on academic achievement-> It literally determines the course/ the direction of your life.

"All schools are good schools"; if so, all educational pathways can lead to reasonable lives and decent well-being, if so, parents won't be so stressed and tuition centres would be out of business
All schools are well..supposedly DECENT at the very least but it is undeniable that some schools will always be better than others.

In fact, it is **myopic to deny** that Singaporeans are academically competitive. Take for instance, the tuition industry in Singapore. A 1.4 billion dollar industry. Back in 2013, there were only 600 registered tuition centres. In 2016, there were 800 and increasing. More tuition centres to meet the demands of parents who expect their children to perform well, students themselves who do not want to fall behind etc. Tuition centres boasting the grades and aggregate scores of their top scorers. The tuition culture just highlights how exam-crazy out society is. In Japan, it's **pretty competitive** too. Juku are Japan private tuition centres

The need to take risks is best highlighted by the distinct differences in graduates from Western and Asian educational systems, which hold vastly disparate perceptions and beliefs about hazarding a try at new things. In the Asian education system, a risk-friendly stance is often shunned in favour of a conventional and safe route. Individuals who have been moulded in a culture of caution aversion to risk have demonstrated less resilience in dealing with mistakes as opposed to their Western counterparts. The valuable experiences of taking risks

The **skill/ ability to take calculated risks is VERY CRUCIAL AND IMPORTANT**

However, the truth is people should not be taking risks if they are unable to calculate and manage the risks and liabilities involved. Even fewer people possess the ability to deal with setbacks properly! Worrying for individuals already at the lower end of the financial strata and are still trying to start independent small businesses.

The poor lack the knowledge and resources required to handle risky pursuits. Unable to take proper calculated decisions, end up taking unnecessary risks at such a high cost that it's not worth it.

Practical skills vs intellectual skills

A very holistic way of arguing it would be from:
- Education system: Since a country's education system reveals what the country sees to be important skills
- The workplace culture
- The Government itself: Technocratic Government

Developing students' intellectual skills will always be at the **forefront** of SG's education system. Such an education system which, by and large, **rewards those academically-driven as seen in Edusave money rewards** awarded to those who have excellent academic results.

Of course, it is crucial to acknowledge how Singapore has been attempting to offer students a more holistic approach to education by emphasising the importance of developing one's practical skills, as seen in the integration of more co-curricular activities (making them compulsory) and the inclusion of subjects of **Project Work i**n Junior Colleges to teach students time management skills. However, the learning objectives for many different subject syllabi reveal an **emphasis on the intellectual development** of a student. In addition, many examinations are still 'pen and paper'- modelled in a way that **rewards those who are cognitively-driven**. SINGAPORE'S APPROACH TOWARDS EQUIPPING STUDENTS WITH THE SKILL SETS TO SURVIVE IN SOCIETY REVEALS THE OVERWHELMINGLY

DISPROPORTIONATE EMPHASIS ON INTELLECTUAL ABILITY OVER PRACTICAL SKILLS. This shows that intellectual skills are largely valued over practical skills

Students who hold leadership positions in schools would be granted **direct admission** into institutes of higher learning. SkillsFuture was a scheme implemented to incentivise adults to upskill themselves. These new changes suggest a **shift in how** the current Government **perceives the value of practical skills**. This definitely paints a **more optimistic picture** for Singapore.

In the workplace, even when one lacks the necessary practical skills, it is presumed that they will still be able to pick up these skills while on the job. This is seen in a lot of job advertisements in SG- typically stating the **minimum education qualification required**, while any form of **work experience or skills are often a bonus**. Also, **management staff** turned for their intellectual ability are almost **always paid much higher than ground staff**, who **possess technical and practical skills**. This perpetuates the commonly-held belief that practical ability is not as important as intellectual skills.
Coupled with the presence of a **technocratic** Government, it is little surprise that the Government rewards those who have excellent academic achievements, thereby emphasising the **overwhelmingly disproportionate emphasis on intellectual abilities over practical skills.**

Our enduring belief in the **value of a technocratic political system** that can bring us economic success likely stems from our **colonial legacy** as well as the **Confucian ideals** that we so faithfully subscribe to- 2 systems that **value the intellectual**.

But our education system, workplace culture and national leadership have historically contributed to a deeply-embedded culture that prizes intellect over practical ability. Singapore society is simply not ready to embrace the notion that practical ability is just as important as intellectual skills.

Meritocracy

In Singapore, the model of pragmatic meritocracy espouses equality of opportunity for all, allowing those with the ability to flourish but simultaneously creating natural losers that are left downtrodden from such a competitive, cut-throat environment.

The fundamental flaw in meritocracy is the assumption that every student has equal opportunity to excel academically. It is not that simple. A study done by the **Michigan State University** found that students in **poorer** neighbourhoods received substantially **less academic support** than their counterparts living in rich neighbourhoods which account for the **37% score difference in their maths tests.** **Meritocracy in this case can inadvertently be a socio-economic division mechanism that segregates students based on their financial strata and that is**

THE FLAW. It may only continue to widen the perennial gap between the rich and the poor!

AND ALSO, IT IS IRONIC ENOUGH THAT EDUCATION ITSELF ALSO CAUSES NUMEROUS PROBLEMS AND EVEN EXACERBATES THEM THAN SOLVE THEM!

Education being a socio-economic division mechanism - widening the perennial gap between the rich and the poor study by Michigan State University + Singapore primary 1 registration exercise where all the elite primary schools are concentrated in regions where housing is only afforded by the rich. Bukit Timah- Raffles Girls school and NY Girls school

Or the meritocratic principles that MOE so faithfully espouses and its fundamental flaws! Exacerbates the perennial gap between the rich and the poor again! Despite education itself being an avenue/ an opportunity for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to uplift and empower themselves.

Assess the view that Literature is a subject that has no practical value.

More revealingly, a **Ministry of Education** census in 2022 revealed that the **number of students taking up arts subjects such as literature and history had been steadily declining in the twenty-first century as young people are being raised on a strict diet of meritocracy and pragmatism.** These subjects are traditionally low-scoring due to their subjectivity and cannot be relied on to provide the stellar grades that universities covet.

Nice education phrases
- **While education empowers individuals and provides them access to more opportunities, and that in this**

respect, it is indeed a key tool and the answer to some of the many challenges which we face today, it cannot stand alone or solve all problems. Given the complexity of the issues and its inherent flaws and limitations, education alone cannot solve all the issues within our world today.

- Education levels the playing field of the disadvantaged by providing them access to opportunities to improve their standard of living and overcome the problems their communities might face. It equips them with the skills that they need to get jobs and uplift themselves from poverty
- It serves as a recourse to alleviate the struggles that the disadvantaged face in their society.
- In such cases, strong political will and corporate-sector leadership would be more effective in combating these issues. (Education cannot really solve issues exacerbated by poor Governance in a country)
- Some of the problems we face require a multidimensional and a multi-pronged approach, in which education can only form one pillar.
- The differences in access to educational opportunities since young inevitably result in severely hampered social mobility.

Science

Munchkin cats, dwarfism genes which are not ethical at all
Munchkin cats, though cute, have spinal deformities like people with dwarfism
Creating these cats to grow up just to suffer? Just cos they're cute!
Banned in some countries too
GMO foods like Tomatoes/beets/soybeans for cultivation, have antibiotic resistance
Contemporary and probably more acceptable for food security

- How far is Science fiction becoming fact?
- 'Science is unreliable, being based as much on theory as on fact' Is this a fair comment?
- Does advancement in modern Science truly bring progress for the world?
- Science has no value if it does not have any real-world application. Do you agree?
- Is the high expenditure on Science and technology justifiable?

I mean, the purpose of Science is to enable us to have a better understanding of the natural world we live in so if Science can't do that then what would it be for? Not like art

But much of the theory is checked on and verified- because Scientists follow a strict code of conduct
Back then it was Lamarck's theory- false!

Haruko Obokata- Japanese Scientist caught **guilty of falsifying her scientific research on Stem cells** - Scientists **desperate to make Scientific breakthroughs** that they falsify their data in order to receive credit

Recent developments in chemicals have allowed for the **discovery and creation of euthanasia drugs**, ones that can put a person to rest without any suffering. While many governments restrict its usage and only one. **Sweden and Switzerland have legalised assisted suicide for medical reasons, allows foreigners to undergo it, but the general population is still torn by the ethical concerns of this choice.**
Due to the **proprietary nature of many Scientific and technological inventions,** they are often **commercialised and commodified by profit-driven firms who are fuelled by corporate greed,** tainting the very purpose of Science in the first place.

Traditional **values** should **never** be sacrificed in the name of progress. HFDYA?

Traditional values- ethics/morality/confucianism in Asian cultures/ Are religious beliefs considered traditional values? Can argue it as traditional values that stem from religious beliefs
Traditional values also have the connotation that they are conventional, well-accepted
The tension lies in pursuing advancements/progress which would often lead to the demolishment of older/archaic ways of thought/beliefs/practices that stem from traditional **values.** It's about VALUES, the intrinsic belief that someone has / cares… responsibility… integrity. The word 'values' gives it a spin towards moral/ethics
ABSOLUTE question too- quite drastic, worth pursuing progress and traditional values then die?
Progress- you'd think of Scientific research and development but c'mon. Broad scope- wider, you got less restrictions.
Social
Political
Economic/environment
Racial/religious
Moral/military
SHOULD NEVER
(possible rebuttal to should utilitarian)
A world that consistently **forgoes traditional values in the pursuit of progress is doomed to fail since traditional values serve the critical function of maintaining civility in a society.**
Our traditional values serve as **important moral compasses/moral arbiters** that **guide us to make humane decisions**, if they are constantly sacrificed then our world would be reigned by chaos and calamity. These 2 cases- Dr Marion Sims developed the vaginal fistula technique and Edward Jenner in his development of the smallpox vaccines- no doubt they ARE critical inventions that revolutionised the medical industry/ breakthroughs BUT sacrifice their ethical principles, brought serious harm and side effects to their test subjects? If every medicine was created like that and everyone deemed it fine since it is in the name of progress, then our world would be in ruins. No civility which is why traditional values cannot be sacrificed.

However, the danger of restricting ourselves from progress in the name of preserving traditional values may cost us crucial and life-saving inventions that could drastically alleviate crises.
Of course- lab rats used in creation of vaccines for COVID, much to the chagrin of animal activists and pacifists who are frustrated at the unethical treatment of animals but… consider the scale of this crisis- its a global crisis.

In addition, the other danger is being stubbornly stuck to our mundane beliefs that would not do us any good either
Ex- St Joan can- cause her values and ideologies were different from the Church
situation w Galileo - although that's not traditional values, it's more so

SHOULD
From a utilitarian standpoint, traditional values should be sacrificed in the pursuit of progress when the progress made brings **a net benefit to everyone.**

It is the **very nature** of progress itself- it's considered progress because it **disrupts conventional ways of thought/traditional values**, otherwise it wouldn't be considered progress.
Gene editing - Dr He Jian Kui condemned

Synthesis:
But they are **not 2 mutually exclusive outcomes**! There has **surely been progress and the simultaneous preservation of traditional values, or at least no violation** of it, right?
They can exist together in harmony, can't they?

AI

To what extent is AI replacing the role of humans?

unprecedented capabilities and how it can **perform tasks with more precision, speed and accuracy, will eclipse human intelligence/even spell the end of it and essentially take over either really dangerous jobs or really menial repetitive tasks**. It can also make more rational choices based on hard evidence in their databases because of the large amount of memory they can store and the algorithms that would help it make predictions that are not susceptible to human error. Examples include new AI medical programmes, Project Artemis. Foxconn replacing manufacturing plant workers with robots, Amazon's drones etc.

Chat GPT performed worse in solving arithmetic problems, had a 97% accuracy rate in identifying 17077 is a prime number- inconsistencies in computational intelligence.

Furthermore, it was significantly worse at answering sensitive questions and generating software code etc.

When **our role in processing information and generating insights** is far **eclipsed by AI**, it stands to reason that **AI is in good stead to replace** us in this regard. <u>**At the heart of the matter lies how**</u> AI far exceeds the human brain in the speed and precision of computing basic operations. To put things in perspective with theory, **AI's computers can perform elementary arithmetic operations at a speed of 10 billion operations per second.** Meanwhile, the **highest frequency of brain neuronal firing is about 1000 spikes per second- 10 million times slower than a computer.** Computers using **a 32-bit processor have a precision of 1 in 42 billion while the brain has a precision of 1 in 100 at best, which is millionsfold worse.** In practice, AI has been used successfully to process big data and stimulate findings that are inconceivably complex to the human mind. **Between 2013 and 2018, the UK successfully completed the 100,000 Genomes project, after sequencing 100,000 genomes, from around 85000 patients.** Success is attributed to machine learning techniques that automated data interpretation. **According to Stanford University, a person would take 9.5 years to simply read a list of the 3 billion base pairs of DNA that comprise the human genome, and this without factoring in the time needed for interpretation and analysis.**

AI is also replacing significant sectors of human employees in their economic roles when their jobs can now be performed by machines. The retail industry has been aggressively swapping human employees with intelligent machines for job tasks that follow predestined logical pathways. The North Face relies less on salespeople and more on IBM Watson to help shoppers find their desired winter coat. IBM Watson's cognitive computing technology asks questions about where they will wear the coat and what they will be doing for curating a list of options for the customer. In addition, replacing humans with AI bots cuts costs for the company. There is less of a need for as many sales experts when machine learning can come to the same conclusion. Humans are fallible: We need toilet breaks, fall ill, go on paid leave, go on strike under unfair working conditions. **As callous as it sounds, rational profit-maximising firms will prefer to hire machines that have less**

downtime. Crucially, it should not be misconstrued that only blue-collar jobs are at risk of being replaced by AI. Given how advanced AI now is, they are in good stead to compete with intelligent white-collar workers too. **JP Morgan has leveraged machine learning to interpret agreements and contracts in record time. What used to take lawyers and loan officers 360000 hours a year to sift through can be processed in seconds.** Also decreased the number of loan-servicing mistakes that largely stemmed from human error when interpreting contracts. In fact, many Amazon employees are so afraid of being replaced by AI that they do not take bathroom breaks so that they won't fall behind these robots who require none.

However, AI cannot fully replace human beings when they are presently **unable to replicate human emotions, instincts and moral compasses.** Using the same logic as above, human traits that cannot be neatly reduced to an algorithmic script, operate along a predetermined set of functions or be projected from a data set henceforth (as of now/ from now on) cannot be replicated by AI. Science has yet to yield a straightforward and universal answer to fickle human behaviour. Radiologists who observe X rays for visual indicators of abnormalities are among the most at risk of being replaced by AI. Nurses, therapists and physicians who specialise in care delivery and need to constantly be mindful of their bedside manners are far less likely to be replaced.
Singapore's therapy chatbot for stressed and overworked MOE teachers 'drew flak for being unhelpful, even aggravating, to the users who seek mental support in it." according to TODAY online. While the bot's AI Penguin, Wysa, could guide users in self-care and self-management exercises, it lacked the emotional range and empathy to respond appropriately to user's rants, which in some cases only further aggravated struggling teachers.
Fundamentally, AI mental health therapists merely recognise input from human users, match it to a predetermined list of symptoms and derive a recommended form of therapy. Any words of consolation follow a set script and tend to repeat themselves. This is patently inadequate as human users benefit greatly from empathy and organic conversations.

Presently, self-driving cars can determine the right of way and identify traffic violations, but have no concept of driving etiquette. Tesla cars with full self-driving software have unexpectedly braked, driven dangerously close to pedestrians and even swerved aggressively such that the beta test driver had injured her wrist. As it is, moral dilemmas are agonising enough for humans with a functioning moral compass, let alone machines when morality has yet to be coded into an algorithm. We can be consoled that for as long as AI is unable to develop human emotions, humanity will not be replaced on this front.

Lastly, **instead of seeing AI and humanity as oppositional, it is more worthwhile to see them as complementary agents instead where AI aids people in performing our (lower-skilled) duties, giving humans the time and opportunity to engage in more higher-skilled tasks. Implicit in this essay question is the assumption** that all intelligent beings- whether organic or artificial- that are capable of learning and thinking end up doing the same things, and thus directly compete for the same positions in a zero-sum game. **Many companies believe that menial tasks should be reserved for AI while human employees move on to do more value-added roles.** Unemployment statistics are frequently distorted to paint AI as net evil. In the oft-cited prediction by McKinsey that 49.1 million people will be unemployed after the rise of AI, the reality is that only 14.9 million will have to find work in another industry because technology eliminated their job from the market.

A fairer statement to make is that **our old roles got replaced by AI but humans have simply moved on to a new role that serves us better.**

Alibaba's contract analysis AI competed against legal-trained humans to identify flaws in a given contract. The AI won in speed and accuracy overall, but lost to humans in detecting more complex problems.
Proves that humans and AI should work side-by-side to complement each other's shortcomings for optimal performance.
It is far too simplistic to conclude whether or not AI is replacing humanity with no qualifiers. A more nuanced discussion should include the angle that humans, while replaced in some areas, still

retain their roles and are not worse off in the fourth industrial revolution.

Impact: Multifaceted

Manufacturing jobs/ jobs that involve repetitive tasks to be done are most easily replaced by AI. Robots can perform repetitive jobs without fatigue- no need work breaks, no need paid leave, works benefits unlike a human

The rise of AI does not only threaten blue collar job workers' livelihood! This extends to white collar jobs too! 44% of all legal duties can be automated

MIT study found that from 1990 to 2007, every additional robot added in manufacturing replaced about 3.3 workers in the US- lowering wages by about 0.4% in the same period.

Goldman Sachs report found that 300 million jobs across US and Europe will be threatened by AI. ⅔ of all US jobs will be partially automated.

In 2010, lawyers and law students from **Zhejiang University's Guanghua Law School** were pitted against **AI from Alibaba group** in **reviewing** contracts. The AI **outdid humans in speed and accuracy**, returning results **under 1 minute with an accuracy rate of 96%**. However, human lawyers were **better at uncovering nuanced problems that AI could not detect.** Hence, while it may seem that AI will dominate the workforce and cause workers to lose their jobs, it's not so simple!

In April 2023, cloud storage firm Dropbox culled 500 employees, making up 16% of its entire staff Ai to pivot to AI.

Even as people try to combat Ai's domination in the workforce, it's still difficult! Report from the National Bureau of Economic Research discovered that workers displaced by automation will try to land jobs in sectors still remaining untouched by automation. However, the large influx of unskilled workers into these low-skilled sectors results in increased competition and shortage of jobs.

Workers undercut each other by accepting lower salaries resulting in downward pressure on all wages in the sector.

50-70% of US wage changes are caused by wage declines by blue-collar workers displaced by automation.

Brandon Bryant, a former US Air Force drone operator who logged thousands of hours firing remote missiles at distant targets in Afghanistan and Iraq over 6 years- Innocent victims who have no power to alleviate themselves of this violence? An abuse of power and privilege?

ChatGPT performed worse on solving maths problems, answering sensitive questions, generating software code, and visual reasoning. In June, GPT-4 was able to correctly identify that 17077 is a prime number 97.6% of the time. But this accuracy plummeted to 2.4%

However, it would be far too myopic to conclude that the arrival of AI in the workforce would lead to the end of human jobs, simply because AI generates new jobs too!
Software engineers, data Scientists, AI specialists, AI ethics officers are seeing an uptick in demand due to the AI revolution- though these jobs are predominantly limited to technology!

Employment for data Scientists is expected to be boosted by 36% in the next 10 years, much higher than the average for all jobs.

Our overreliance on AI is also bad!

AI simplifies tasks, tempting for individuals to use AI as a crutch.
It can switch on lights, write emails and even drive our cars for us!
However, when it reaches a point where people rely on automated systems without questioning their outputs, this is where it becomes very problematic. This leads to **a decrease in our own thinking ability and problem-solving skills, as we grow accustomed to defaulting to AI's expertise at the slightest hiccup.**

AI may end up making **most of our decisions for us, leading to a loss of human agency and individuality- making AI bots help us write complete essays, craft arguments**

Bias in AI! Its huge flaw!

AI systems learn from **human data**, which when **biassed**, could potentially **program** the AI to become biassed too! AI if left unchecked and unregulated, could perpetuate inequalities in society unwittingly. Poor or limited data can cause AI to produce **wildly inaccurate or biassed results**

A study discovered that facial recognition in AI often misidentified the colour of people, up to 35% of the time, despite a near perfect accuracy rate when used to identify white men. -> potentially lead to wrongful arrests and exacerbate existing issues of police abuse in the US

In 2018, Amazon was forced to scrap its **AI-driven hiring tool when they discovered that the bot was discriminating against female applicants.** AI was fed with data of the **best resumes of software engineers over a 10 year period. The only issue is-** most of these resumes came from MEN, given the male-dominated nature of the tech space. **This caused the machine to associate the male gender with superiority and gave male candidates an edge in their application**

In **2020**, the **UK Government** came under fire for their **implementation** of AI, which **downgraded the A level results of students who came from disadvantaged backgrounds**. Some students were unable to complete their A level exams due to the ongoing pandemic, **mock exam results and individual schools' historical performance** were input into an AI algorithm to **predict each student's grade**. HOWEVER, the AI is being fed data which shows how **the UK education system** naturally adopted these inequalities into its own decision-making process. The **AI favoured students from affluent schools, while disproportionately downgrading good students from public schools, causing students to lose their university spots.**

Autonomous vehicles

Use AI to interpret sensor data, allowing them to navigate roads, recognise traffic signs, avoid obstacles without human intervention. AVs reduce traffic incidents caused by human error, increase fuel efficiency and increase mobility for people with mobility issues.

Benefit of AI- simply better than humans? Produce less errors than their human counterparts

In 2010, 38824 people were killed in traffic accidents in the US. 94% of vehicular crashes were caused by human error. On the flipside, autonomous vehicles have the potential to reduce crashes by up to 90%, saving up to 190 billion USD per year.

Autonomous vehicles safety features: Automated blind spot monitoring, night vision capabilities, lane-keeping assistance- crashes are less likely to occur. YET we cannot rely on AI for decision making in emergencies!
The ethical implications of leaving human life in the hands of a robot, citing a lack of emotion or morality as a concern.

MIT study in 2016 The Moral Machine
2 million people made a snap decision of killing one of two choices given. The life of a dog was valued above a criminal, valued above cats.

Autonomous vehicles collect a vast amount of data and its users including their locations, their habits, routes and even schedules. IF such information was made accessible by HACKERS, the sensitive nature of all this data could spell calamity for riders. With an AI operated vehicle, hackers could even redirect the route of these vehicles and potentially harm the rider- where a regular car would not be having these issues!

The International Transport Forum estimates that demand for drivers in US and Europe will dip up to 70% by 2030, with more than ⅔ of jobs becoming redundant and obsolete!

AI in spreading disinformation

Xinhua- China's state agency news broadcasting channel
First to air an AI news anchor
Deliver news and work 24 hours a day while cutting down production costs
This technology opens doors to bad actors who utilise AI generated news anchors for more nefarious reasons **- Spamouflage - a China pro government campaign used the AI news anchor to criticise UK, Taiwan and Hong Kong**

Facebook had to recently take down a video containing a deepfake Ukrainian president urging citizens to stop resisting the Russian invasion.

AI in healthcare too!

AI in healthcare diagnostics involves algorithmic analysis of images and patient data, which can help doctors detect diseases at a much higher efficacy rate, leading to more accurate diagnosis, personalised care plans and result in better patient outcomes.

AI algorithms will read and identify patterns faster than human doctors. **Google's DeepMind Ai systems outperformed humans in identifying breast cancer in mammograms. AI software also reduced false positive diagnoses by 9.4%.**

AI in the healthcare industry is expected to reach 45.2 billion USD by 2026, growing at an unprecedented rate of 44.9% annually.

AI / technology in Art

Can art created with technology still be considered art? Art that is meant to be an original and authentic expression of oneself- but now that technology is used as a tool to facilitate the creation of it, the authenticity and originality of the artwork is now called into question
This point could be easily rebutted cos it assumes that the artist is completely hands off during the process of making art- only relies on solely technology
Like… AI generated art, give the AI art generator a few prompts and words and the AI can create a completely new art, that doesn't require a lot of effort on the 'artist' part.

Anna Ploin, Oxford Internet Institute researcher report on the potential impact of machine learning on creative work
The **creative decision making that results in artwork cannot be replicated by current AI technology. At best, you can really only just feed the machine tons of artworks from different artists and the machine tries to generate works that emulate these artworks- though the artworks would then not be considered 'original' anymore. [That's how machine learning works anyway]**

Art is an endeavour of creativity and innovation. Using technology to produce art pieces still requires a capable and creative mind- so it can still be considered art.

A good conclusion: <mark>**Art is a constantly evolving medium, every era has seen the usage of different techniques, tools and mediums. Given that we live in a technological age today, it only makes sense that technology is a tool that will be harnessed by artists to support/boost their artistic regime.**</mark>

Human

Essay Dissection
Examine the view that the scientist is concerned only with knowledge, not morality.
False, because absolute question.

Topic	_Definition + Working Understanding. What areas/spheres of society do we generally associate with this issue?_
	Dr Marion Sims labelled 'father of gynaecology'- Prima facie, those who see his title would laud him for bringing great discoveries to gynaecology. However, once these same people actually find out what he has done- they would be appalled and horrified by what he did to achieve the title: Performing surgeries on 3 female slaves in order to perfect his vaginal fistula technique on women, WITHOUT anaesthesia. He even performed surgery on the same woman, 30 times.
	Those who are merely <mark>concerned with the advancement of Scientific knowledge</mark> would argue that what Dr Sims did was **justified** since our current world today would <mark>lack this important clinical technique had he not done these surgeries</mark>. However, a **humanitarian individual** would not agree so.

Thesis	We live in a pacifist age To the chagrin of pacifists Science, Knowledge vs ethics/morals-> How far should a Scientist go to pursue Scientific knowledge? At the expense of other people? How do TAKE NOTE U STILL NEED TO <mark>BALANCE</mark>! AND TALK ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE WHERE SOME SCIENTISTS ARE CONCERNED WITH ONLY KNOWLEDGE-> <mark>Take it 1 step further by seeing their POV, trying to justify from their lens</mark><mark>-</mark> Utilitarianism? > **A utilitarian would argue that what Dr Marion Sims did was justified since his work on perfecting his vaginal fistula technique did advance gynaecology practice today. Hence, on that ground, some Scientists would justify being concerned with only knowledge and not morality.** **While it is undeniable that there have been instances when Scientists have sidestepped ethical considerations in the relentless pursuit of knowledge, I venture to argue that the Scientist is concerned with morality just as he is concerned with knowledge, given Science's primary purpose in light of today's moral climate.**
Task	_What is the command word / phrase in the question? What considerations must be taken into account to address the question?_ Examine the view -> discuss both sides (duh) Absolute word (ONLY)
Context	_What is the sandbox set by the question? (e.g. your society? your generation? today's world?)_ No sandbox.

Content Paragraphs

Key points:
- _Ensure that topic sentences are **broad** enough_
- _Do not write example-driven topic sentences._

Counter Argument 1	Topic Sentence	From a **utilitarian perspective**, Scientists would only be concerned with the pursuit of knowledge and side step **all** (because this is an absolute) ethical considerations **since the pursuit of knowledge at the expense of ethics would benefit more lives for the greater good.** Achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people (phrase this more nicely) After all, to a utilitarian, what would 1 person suffering be

		when there could be more people benefiting?
	TWO Examples	"Little Albert " experiment: a baby named Albert who was the centre of this cruel, yet fruitful experiment on inducing fear in children. They wanted to know whether it was possible to condition a phobia into a child. The fear conditioning that the baby went through was never reversed.
		HeLa was obtained by sacrificing the genetic identities of a woman with cancer in the 1950s. The doctors used part of her cancerous tumour without her consent to advance medical research. The result was fruitful as it led to the development of HeLa, the most commonly used cells in research to test for cancer, and in 2022, there were approximately 1.9 million new cases in the US.
		While the controversial birth of HeLa and the psychology study on fear were both on the grounds of the lack of ethical considerations, it would be myopic to deny the innumerable benefits it has brought to our world currently.
Counter Argument 2 (optional)	Topic Sentence	Another one??? Or is this enough?
	TWO Examples	
Rebuttal	Topic Sentence	
	TWO Examples	
Supporting Argument 1 The fundamental purpose of Science + Morality and knowledge are not mutually exclusive	Topic Sentence	At its very core, Science serves the fundamental purpose of benefiting the lives of humans. It is only logical that a **Scientist's pursuit of knowledge would not come at the expense of morality given the true purpose of Science.** In fact, some Scientists pursue knowledge and become Scientists for the precise reason to improve human life! **IN THIS CASE, KNOWLEDGE AND MORALITY IS NOT ALWAYS MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE**
	TWO Examples	**Therapeutic robots that provide lonely humans** with company, promoting mental well-being, **Paro- designed by Japanese research Scientist Dr Takanori Shibata**. AI used in the **healthcare industry for diagnosis**: SELENA+ used in Singapore to screen patients for eye deficiencies caused by diabetes.
Supporting Argument 2	Topic Sentence	In light of today's social climate and numerous regulations, it is incredibly difficult for Scientists to sidestep ethical considerations in their research. There

		have been guardrails put in place to prevent egregious abuse of power. In fact, many of the aforementioned examples I listed about Scientists sidestepping ethical considerations were all mainly dated before the 2000s, since the changing social landscape and the greater emphasis on ethics.
	TWO Examples	**In more recent times, we have the:** **Gov**- allows research to go as far as to **provide betterment for mankind** without compromising **ethical, legal and social standards** for all groups of people. If Scientists do not abide by the standards and laws set in place by the Gov, they will face legal punishment. **International Science council which stipulates a universal code of conduct** that Scientists around the world are expected to abide by- Scientists are responsible for conducting scientific work with considering the consequences of new knowledge and its application. **The maintenance of ethical standards by scientists and their institutions is a prerequisite for trust in science by both policymakers and the broader public.** Media also serves as a watchdog so the Scientist's moves are under heavy public scrutiny, and will be condemned should they forgo ethical considerations. **Dr He JianKui is a prime example of this.**

Best to **round up the conclusion to link back to the intro**:In hindsight, XXXX. On a more optimistic yet oddly grim note, perhaps Dr Marion Sims would have been cancelled in the modern world, and lambasted for forgoing ethical considerations if the case had occurred in the 2000s.

Dr Marion Sims, more famously known as the 'Father of modern Gynaecology' in the late 1900s, is celebrated for having developed the world's first successful vaginal fistula technique, which is still heavily used by Gynaecologists globally in current times. Prima facie, anyone would laud him for his efforts in research. However, when one finds out the truth that he had performed surgeries on 3 female slaves without anaesthesia, one would be appalled at the horrors of the Scientist sidestepping ethical concerns. Dr Marion Sims' case is just one of the many examples which illustrates the ever existing concern of Scientists relentlessly pursuing knowledge at the very expense of ethics. While it is undeniable that there have been instances when Scientists have sidestepped ethical considerations in the relentless pursuit of

knowledge, I venture to argue that the Scientist is concerned with morality just as he is concerned with knowledge, given Science's primary purpose and the changing moral landscape.

** In hindsight, a good universal argument that could be applied almost anywhere would be from a moral/legal standpoint about human rights: The scientist does not sidestep ethical concerns because because doing so would violate human rights, and human rights are largely regarded as non-violable*** Use the universal declaration of human rights and even if it cannot be enforced since it is more global, use penal code in sovereign countries which would penalise scientists who do sidestep ethical considerations.

CA1
To a utilitarian, the Scientist would only be concerned with knowledge….
EX
ELAB
Hence, a utilitarian would argue that the Scientist would only concern himself with knowledge on the grounds of the greater good.

REBUTTAL:
While it is undeniable that some Scientists are only concerned with knowledge, one must concede that such cases are rare and isolated incidents in light of today's moral climate where ethics are a key concern for the majority. In the modern landscape, there have been a greater emphasis on ethics, ex when anyone doesn't consider ethics is eventually condemned

While the aforementioned reason in support of the Scientist being concerned only with knowledge is certainly valid, there are more compelling reasons for a Scientist to be equally concerned with morality.
SA1
It is incredibly difficult for Scientists to sidestep ALL ethical considerations in their research. There have been guardrails put in place to prevent egregious abuse of power.
EX Gov, International Science Council, even media. Under heavy public scrutiny
Ex Dr He JianKui's research on gene-editing received heavy critical opprobrium.

Identify any false dichotomy: Are progress and morality always mutually exclusive? No!

On the other hand, Science may not be so reliable because Scientific theories are falsifiable and peer review is prone to human error.

Science vs religion

Science leaves room for existing theories/principles to be challenged, while religious views tend to be absolute.
*** Lamarck's theory (17TH CENTURY) vs Darwin's theory on evolution (18TH CENTURY). Lamarck's theory on evolution stipulates that living things evolved in a continuously upward direction, from simple to more complex forms, until "perfection." is attained. However, this is false and proven wrong when a new theory emerges almost more than 100 years later, which is Darwin's theory that stipulates that there already existed genetic changes between organisms and that only the fittest would survive. Darwin's breakthrough theory **disproves** Lamarck's theory!!

The groundbreaking discovery of Darwin's theory **created paradigm shifts in the Biology community** and **radically transformed the way we view the evolution of organisms in the natural world.**

Now **compare Science with religion using this example**. **Religious** beliefs tend to be **absolute and non-negotiable/non-arguable** as stipulated in the religious text like the **Bible or the Quran**. This would be especially true for overzealous, fanatic religious extremists. Science still **leaves room for challenges to be made to existing theories/ principles** because of the fundamental role that Science serves (besides helping humans, of course) is to **enable humans to understand our world better and any discoveries that disprove current ones but HELP us to understand the world BETTER and more accurately are welcomed!**
This 'welcome' is seen in the way the Science community reacted to the introduction of Darwin's theory which challenged the existing Lamarck's theory at that time.

***Of course, where religion is concerned, this is not to discredit religion and say that EVERYTHING related to religion is absolute because in more recent times, I suppose less conservative people who practise religion are open to different interpretations of their respective religious texts**

Science is seen as more objective due to its methodical methods in accumulating data and forming facts, while religion is perceived as subjective.

Science relies on **methods of study and data accumulation based on observation and experimentation. <u>Methodical</u>** knowledge collection and also confirmation of knowledge as other scientists replicate and **corroborate observations, experiments, results and conclusion.**

All **hypotheses and theories <u>must be tested and observed to be accurate</u>** and true to the natural world (That's why you can argue that Science is **reliable** as it can be tested, and **proven**), empiricists tend **<u>not to believe in dogmas and absolute truth.</u>**

A **healthy dose of critical scepticism** is <u>crucial</u> for the world, it leads to paradigm shifts and **<mark style="background-color:yellow; color:red">deconstructs old, outdated (archaic) ways of thinking and radical beliefs</mark>**. <mark style="background-color:yellow">(Lamarck's theory of evolution in the 17th century vs Darwin's theory of evolution in the 18th century)</mark>

<mark style="background-color:yellow">(Which is why individuals are increasingly leaning more towards 'Science' as opposed to 'religion' since it's rather difficult to prove religion as opposed to Science.</mark>

Think Galileo- deemed heretical by the church for devising the hypothesis that the sun was

the centre of our solar system rather than the earth which was eventually proven true- spent the rest of his life under house arrest and took more than 300 years for the Church to admit their mistake

Science is **reliable** because of its <mark>objectivity</mark>**, and that it is also based on empirical evidence, the reproducibility of results, the peer review among Scientists to filter out flawed Scientific knowledge before it is added to canon**.
Some argue that Science is objectively more accurate than religious beliefs (absolute), which is well…. Objectively true.

Religion on the other hand, tends to be up to how the individual practitioner views it and how he practises it. Religious texts also tend to be subject to the individual opinion and different interpretations.
Never-ending debate on whether Christianity accepts LGBTQ people or not.

Conservatives use this part of the Bible to argue that Christianity does not tolerate homosexuality:
The Bible **defines marriage in Genesis 2:24 as a union between one man and one woman**.

Non-conservatives use another part of the Bible to argue that Christianity accepts LGBTQ people!

"your works are wonderful, I know that full well." (Psalm 139:113-14) **Sexual identity and gender identity are components of a person's personality**, and as such are **part of who God made each of us** to be.
Demonstrates the subjective nature of religion- can be interpreted differently, each individual has a personal relationship with their own Gods/deities
IT'S PRECISELY BECAUSE **RELIGIOUS TEXTS ARE AMBIGUOUS**! That's why it's up to debate and it's **subjective**, **not objective**!

INTERESTING TO CONSIDER- aren't there also religions which intersect with Science?
We would usually associate maths to be similar to Science, not at all with religion but
Pythagoreanism was a religious and philosophical movement adopted by followers of Pythagoras the Mathematician himself, believed in sacred mathematics and thought that the universe could be understood through numbers.
Pythagoreans believed in reincarnation, embraced an egalitarian communal lifestyle, and believed in universal music or harmony of the spheres, wherein it was believed that the movements of celestial bodies were a form of music.

Consider other spheres as well! PESTLE!
Political! Both religion and Science are used in politics!

Nuclear tech under Science weaponised as a tool by belligerent nations/ space exploration and research under Science where China and US are locked in a space race- fight for political/global dominance
The Governments of some countries practise religious fundamentalism mainly the Middle East countries
Both are equally **influential** in the **sphere of politics**
Could go both ways- Secular or religious fundamentalism

Also educational I suppose. Again it depends on the country though France practises secularism to strengthen national identity; religious individuals cannot wear religious accessories so sikh men cannot wear turbans, muslims cannot wear hijabs- generated critical opprobrium from the religious community. Is this so good though? Would it be a violation of the fundamental human right to practise religion though? -> Article 18 of UDHR decrees that every human has the right to 'thought, conscience and **religion' Is Secularism valid under the guise of strengthening the national identity?**

Morals vs Scientific progress, mutually exclusive? Is Science progressing at an unprecedented rate to the point where ethical concerns are not considered?

Dr Marion Sims labelled 'father of gynaecology'- Prima facie, those who see his title would laud him for bringing great discoveries to gynaecology. However, once these same people actually find out what he has done- they would be appalled and horrified by what he did to achieve the title: Performing surgeries on 3 female slaves in order to perfect his vaginal fistula technique on women, WITHOUT anaesthesia. He even performed surgery on the same woman, 30 times.

Those who are merely concerned with the advancement of Scientific knowledge would argue that what Dr Sims did was **justified** since our current world today would lack this important clinical technique had he not done these surgeries. However, a **humanitarian individual** would not agree so.

Also similar to the Dachau hypothermia experiments conducted during **World War II**, study how hypothermia impacted the human body in **Dachau concentration camps** using prisoners of war as test subjects- needless to say, such an act is **cruel and inhumane but it is only because of those studies back then that we now know a lot about the condition and how to treat it! Tension/debate**

A modern example- **CRISPR technology** - play God? Make designer babies? Choose which alleles deserve to survive in a population? What has the world come to!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Cryogenics- deep freezing of human body parts: a shot at immortality
Alcor Life Extension Foundation - at 200,000 people can deep freeze their bodies

ULTRA-Utilitarianism VS Humanitarianism

- Such an ultra-utilitarian point of view is flawed! Not applicable to every subject/topic in the world

Gov- allows research to go as far as to **provide betterment for mankind** without compromising **ethical, legal and social standards** for all groups of people.

Religion provides a sense of **universal responsibility for humanity** usually through its religious principles and beliefs, and often acts as an **arbiter for moral judgements which Science may lack since it is only concerned with the pursuit of knowledge.**

Regulation of Scientific advancements could **hinder** Scientific progress. Science would then **lose its primary purpose which is to better our lives.**

HeLa- the oldest and most commonly used human cell line for Scientific research, vital for developing numerous life-saving technologies such as the polio-vaccine, cloning and gene mapping. **HeLa was obtained by sacrificing the genetic identities of a woman with cancer in the 1950s. The doctors used part of her cancerous tumour without her consent to advance medical research.**

Regulation can help to stymie unintended but harmful uses of Science and technology.

While it is undeniable that there are cases where Scientists are motivated by selfishness, expedience and warped notions of morality, such cases are **rare and isolated** especially **in light of the current moral climate** we live in where **social justice is a key concern for the majority.** It is **impossible for a Scientist to ignore moral considerations as they face pressure from the public** as well as **different external agencies** to advance the common good. Presently, Scientists generally operate in systems where **accountability structures are put in place to prevent egregious abuses of power that harm people**.

In addition, the very notion of progress is inherently moral for the most part: the public often benefits when a Scientist pushes the frontiers of Scientific knowledge. Therefore, I disagree with the myopic view that the Scientist is only preoccupied with progress and not morality **since both progress and morality are not mutually exclusive.**

In Scientific research, morality and ethics are not always sacrificed in order to bring Scientific advancements because it is **very difficult for the modern Scientist to side-step ethical considerations**, especially since the modern world has become more **progressive**. It has become the norm for Scientists to factor in ethical considerations when pursuing Scientific progress as they are held accountable for their actions. They, too, are **subjected to public scrutiny and existing systems of checks and balances.** Such as: Regulations from Government agencies/ court of public opinion like public backlash, international Science community/ Federal Laws

In addition, Scientists serve as voices of reason when they express disapproval of new Scientific theories that are potentially harmful. Doing so comes at a **great personal cost,** showing that morality is not always sacrificed for Scientific progress. \

Again! Morality and progress is **NOT always mutually exclusive**! They can **go hand in hand** as well! Sometimes certain Scientific research/advancement could **potentially enhance the quality of life for individuals**, **alleviate suffering**-> **contributing to the common good** which is morally-good by standards*

The creator of an online AI chat system ChatGPT, set guardrails in place to ensure that the chat bot does not generate racist, sexist, morally-undesirable content. For instance, when the chat bot was asked who the best Nazi is, the bot would point out the inappropriateness of the question and highlight that the actions of the Nazi party were reprehensible.

This demonstrates that the creators did take into account the ethical and moral considerations to avoid being on the wrong side of moral justice. The court of public opinion exerts pressure over the Scientists to align their scientific innovations with prevailing moral standards.

Ex: Donald Trump claimed that **hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug, could be a cure for COVID-19 despite the lack of Scientific evidence** to back the claim. This was a politically-motivated / calculated decision made by him since he did not want to seem feckless during a time of crisis. **Anthony Farci**, a **former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the United States of America**, **warned Americans about the veracity of Trump's claim. His willingness to speak the truth made him a target of vitriol (bitter criticism and malice) among Trump's right-wing supporters.**

During this period, there were no approved cures to the pandemic. This Scientist **prioritised the wellbeing of people.**

However, there are also certain instances whereby **Scientific innovations do not contribute to the common good** or do not bring about any discernible benefits for the majority or for select groups of individuals

HOW DO YOU EVALUATE IF SOMETHING IS MORALLY GOOD OR BAD? Well, you could follow certain principles:

- **Utilitarianism** is a moral principle that holds the morally right course of action in any situation is the one that **produces the greatest benefits over harms for the greatest number of people.** The end justifies the means. Does this action maximise happiness and benefits for the majority, even at the expense of a minor group of individuals who will probably have to face setbacks? - Is it justified for Scientists to conduct harmful experiments on sentient animals or human beings if the results of the experiment would ultimately maximise benefits for the majority.
- A **NET GAIN**/A **NET BENEFIT** for society at large

Perhaps merely evaluating the morality of an action based on its consequences and results is flawed and we shall go by the deontological approach instead.

- **The Deontological approach:** The ends do not justify the means. We are now evaluating the morality of a situation based on how virtuous the action itself is/ whether the action itself is right or wrong rather than based on the consequences of the action. People should be duty-bound to perform a certain action because it is the ethical thing to do based on common standards of moral decency, regardless of the net effect and regardless if doing so would not benefit the majority.

 - Spending taxpayers' money on the elderly even though this may not necessarily maximise benefits for society as a whole.

- **Beneficence**: Researchers should prioritise the welfare of research participants.
An entrenched societal expectation. Regulated and upheld by external agencies that form a system of checks and balances to prevent scientists from abusing their power and harming individuals to ensure they adhere to sound scientific principles.

Religion: Science itself is not based on religion but Scientists will still have to contend with pressure from religious groups who may be opposed to their technological innovations, should it go against their religious beliefs.

Ex: The Food and Drug Administration finalised a rule in 2022 that expands the availability of abortion pills in certain states in America where abortion is legal. Religious conservatives were up in arms about this.
E.g: Cryogenics- Religious conservatives against a Scientific invention that gives people a possible shot at immortality through deep freezing since it goes against the natural order of life and death! TENSION!

Should Scientific research be available to everyone?

Scientific knowledge is understood to be a **shared public good of society** but at the same time given its potential, it also has the potential to **induce great ramifications**. Even if it is shared, should it be for everyone or are there groups that should be left out?

There's a UDHR that could be used to argue it
YES
Democratisation (Making something available to everyone) of Scientific results is important to **allow for the collective wisdom of masses** to **decide how to best utilise this knowledge.**

Democratisation also creates an avenue for **collaboration** and the **scientific method** is also premised on **peer reviews**. Sharing with everyone gives **the opportunity for feedback and suggestions** to improve it and **ensure its credibility. Considering that the purpose of science is to better society in the first place, it makes sense for it to be made freely accessible**

Anyways, everyone should have the **fundamental right to knowledge and have access to these Scientific results.**

NO
Knowledge is power and power can be abused so making it inaccessible to everyone in society would **prevent the abuse of such knowledge.**/ These results could be **exploited at the expense of the greater good.**

Good pt. I did not think of:
Results of new scientific research <u>may not always be in the final stage</u>, the <mark>uncertainties surrounding it could lead to widespread panic</mark>, especially for newer types of research that <mark>create unprecedented problems</mark>. Withholding it allows for a <u>controlled release of this knowledge in a careful manner, preventing widespread panic and the proliferation of false information!</u> -> Covid 19 Pandemic, as Scientists were still working hard to understand the disease, people were already making false claims on the disease, which led to <mark>widespread panic and misinformation! Even Donald Trump…</mark>

How far is Science fiction becoming fact?

Science fiction-> imagined sciences upon society and individuals
Imaginative concepts and scientific principles and theories/projections/ speculations
Vehicle to investigate the intricacies and restriction of human behaviour amidst extraordinary situations.
Films/movies/videos/books/literature don't just focus on 1 medium

How far- measure extent
Global context- general broad context-> broad range of examples

Many futuristic technologies that we observe in science fiction are impractical and infeasible to create
Flying cars and time travel are impractical and impossible!
Blade Runner 2049 (2017 movie)
Need to implement a whole new infrastructure, new traffic rules

Time travel
The Adam Project (2022)
Cannot happen violates the 2nd law of thermodynamics
Entropy or randomness must increase
Time can only move in 1 direction, can only increase cannot go back
Cause a change in the laws of physics

Expensive- high costs

Defies the natural laws of the human world
Require a change in the laws of physics which is not possible

Ideas from Science fiction still remain under speculation, for it raises social, ethical and philosophical questions that are still largely unanswered.
Creation of a sentient machine that is conscious
Cloning of humans

Do clones have parents? Would humans then lack character and individuality? Would they be treated in undignified ways, be ascribed the same level of respect and rights that the UDHR decrees?

Given the rapid advancements in technology today, these futuristic technologies may not be a pipe dream any further. In fact, many innovations we once brushed off as too cutting-edge, are not only feasible but have become a part of our daily existence

Electric cars-> once thought revolutionary but became a fact

The reality is that Scientists who work at the forefront of development often deliberately push their research in the direction of fantasy and fiction in a bid to achieve new discoveries.
Science fiction is a driver of innovation, change and progress- find inspiration and motivation to create from fictional ideas
Holographic technology- Marvel Cinematic Universe, but now found in Drivers License, the Looking Glass Factory working on HoloPlayer which plays 3d holograms on glass

Provide a **reason** why they have become plausible. How did this become fact? **Rapid advancements in technology, Scientists deliberately push their discoveries in this direction**

Use examples to link directly to SF

Modern trends in Science!

Beauty industry and its gimmicks! And how people easily fall for it

- Shiseido's recent international launch of its new Body Creator skin gel claims that its fat-burning pepper and grapefruit oil can melt 1.1kg of body fat in a month without any need to diet or exercise. At its launch in Japan, consumers bought a bottle every 3.75 seconds.

Beauty firms spend next to nothing on research and innovation but billions on advertising and promotion. Even then, they market and boast of their products that are filled with 'miracle ingredients' even though testing these 'miracle' ingredients are no better than the ingredients in regular supermarket brands. Yet, people fall for it almost all the time because of the superfluous, exaggerated marketing and promotion tactics espoused by many brands in the beauty industry.
- People easily fall for gimmicks without concrete proof
- People are attracted to superfluous marketing tactics easily

So what does this example illustrate and where can it be used?

Climate change: American Scientists at the National ignition Facility in California achieved a nuclear fusion breakthrough in December 2022. They generated more energy from a nuclear fusion reaction than they put in.

Gene editing- yay or nay?

Apply it to many different areas, not just people
Like food, animals and such

Animals whose genes are edited so that they would be born with desirable traits
Munchkin cats- while well-loved by humans for their cute short legs, they live their days in pain for having legs shorter than normal which humans caused by deliberately causing a mutation in their genes- resulting in a condition in cats which is **similar to dwarfism** in humans. This condition causes munchkin cats to be **more susceptible to chest deformities and spinal problems- unethical**

However, when it **comes to food, people tend to accept it more readily** since foods tend to be inanimate and do not feel pain from our endeavours. In fact, they result in an overall net benefit for more people
GMO tomatoes which **confers antibiotic resistance** and **slow down the ripening process** during transportation so that they will be fresh for sale

Dr He JianKui, a **Scientist** in China, created the **first gene-edited babies in 2019** using **CRISPR to protect these babies from HIV infection**. (But he was imprisoned and condemned) Members of the Scientific community argued that this guy was irresponsible for creating genetically modified babies since he did not have conclusive proof that this would not have adverse-long term effects. Based on these Scientist's perspectives, Dr He was merely prioritising progress over morality but Dr He thought that he was doing a beneficial thing by protecting babies from HIV. (Personal opinion: It's kinda sad because he had the right intentions but he is STILL condemned because he was reckless and irresponsible in his decision. **He did not consider the potential adverse side effects of his gene-editing experiment IF it went wrong + he's essentially treating these babies like they're test subjects which shows that he does not respect the sanctity of life-> negates the fundamental principles of Science**)

Also **therapeutic robots that provide lonely humans with company**, promoting **mental well-being**, **Paro**- designed by **Japanese research Scientist Dr Takanori Shibata**.
AI used in the healthcare industry for diagnosis: SELENA+ used in Singapore to screen patients for eye deficiencies caused by diabetes.

Stem cell research- induced pluripotent stem cells to regenerate limbs- reduces the risk of tissue rejection since they are cells derived directly from the patient and also does not raise ethical concerns since it does not violate the sanctity of a life.

Apply technology to be used in military warfare. Combat drones, nuclear technology, robotics.

'Interesting and current developments in science and technology are **only** enjoyed by the **few** who can afford them.' Discuss.

ABSOLUTE QUESTION
But i wont do it because there are wayyy too many requirements

But the issue is- it's either afford or don't afford. What else to say??

Due to the <mark>proprietary nature</mark> of <u>most</u> Scientific/technological inventions, many of these inventions tend to be <mark>commercialised</mark> due to the <mark>profit-driven nature</mark> of many companies. Only those who are <mark>rich</mark> enough are able to practically afford them. Apple Vision pro $3,499. Apple's first wearable **headset** device, offering a **mixed reality** experience.

Space exploration- 3 billionaires each paid a 55 million USD dollar ticket to space under Elon Musk's SpaceX space exploration programme: an 18 day field trip to space.

CRISPR technology

Cryogenics

However, there just as many interesting and current development in Science and T that can be enjoyed by the masses -
Is it just a case of affording?

Epipen and the proprietary nature of most Scientific inventions which paves the way for the commercialisation and commodification of many Scientific inventions- ethically suspicious and taints the purity of Science

Mylan is the pharmaceutical company that invented the Epipen, and has increased the cost of a 2 pack epipen by sixfold in a decade from $100 to $600. Why the price hike anyway? **The success of the product coupled with the lack of competition were the reasons why Mylan increased the price of the product by such large margin- elucidating the profit-driven nature of companies and the proprietary nature of Scientific inventions In a way, it almost seems like those who suffer from allergies are punished for being poor.**

IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE IT'S A PRODUCT THAT PRIVATE BELONGS TO THIS INDEPENDENT COMPANY THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN PRICE- AND MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, IT'S A HUGE MARK-UP.

Proprietary nature of Scientific inventions which paves the way for the **commercialisation and commodification of such inventions**, resulting in its **cost-prohibitive nature.** The exorbitant costs of such inventions could **inadvertently send the message that only rich people** should have access to healthcare/ crucial life-saving devices- **thereby unwittingly exacerbating the perennial class inequality between people of different financial strata!**

The cost-prohibitive of Scientific inventions defeats/ goes against the intended purpose of Science in the first place-> (Besides enabling us to better understand the natural world around us) expedite processes/ make our lives easier/ BASICALLY HELP US
The cost-prohibitive nature of such inventions renders any benefit gained to be marginal at best.

Nuclear technology

So does it solve the problem? Does it pose less damage to the environment?

TS: In a world where our main source of energy, fossil fuels, is depleting at the rate faster than it could meet rising energy demands, nuclear technology is a strong contender to potentially being our main source of energy given its plethora of benefits. Not only is it a clean source of energy, it is also efficient as well!

A **cheap, reliable and efficient source of energy in a world that will soon run out of fossil fuels despite the increasing energy demand. An emerging potential substitute for fossil fuels and other finite sources of energy!**
It also produces zero carbon emissions unlike fossil fuels, which makes nuclear technology clean while having a MUCH higher energy output than fossil fuels!

In fact, nuclear technology triumphs in almost every aspect of fossil fuels in its role as a much more clean and efficient energy source, making it a stronger contender to our already diminishing energy source (fossil fuels) and has the utmost potential to become the main energy source of the future.

The **increasingly volatile landscape** has also brought about another danger associated with nuclear technology- the creation of nuclear weapons that could potentially threaten security in the world / **weaponized by belligerent nations.** -> It is precisely because of the hazardous nature of it that **Nuclear technology paves the way for potential wars as it could be a tool weaponised by belligerent nations which threatens the national security for countries. HOWEVER, not only for other countries but also the country that uses it due to the risk of plant failure and radiation! It is dangerous for the country using it and other countries too!**
This would only **decrease the incentive to pursue such a dangerous technology** as this would **motivate belligerent and violent nations to send nuclear threats** (to establish their dominance over other counties, i guess)

N.K fired 2 nuclear ballistic missiles to S.K in Nov 2022- action was **condemned by UN and S.K**

For the country itself, the adverse consequences stemming from the use of nuclear technology disproportionately outweighs the benefits of it, making the endeavour not worth it at all!
The **famous 2011 nuclear accident** occurred at the **Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Fukushima, Japan, triggered by the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake in Japan**. The

effects of **human exposure to nuclear radiation and the incident are still prominent to this day in victims who were in close proximity to the nuclear power plant.** TOTAL COST OF 12.1 TRILLION YEN

In **2006**, the **international Physicians for the prevention of nuclear warfare** released reports **linking both deformities and high infant mortality** in the region to the 1986 **Chernobyl power plant disaster**, stating that hundreds of thousands of people who worked at the disaster site still **suffer from radiation sickness**. Hence, the **long term health risks of a nuclear power plant meltdown should be sufficient reason to rethink our pursuit of nuclear technology. The debilitating health risks AND HIGH ECONOMIC COST it poses is just not worth it.**

 You can also phrase it as SHORT-TERM BENEFITS VS LONG TERM ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES (to the health and having to restore the economy of the nation!)

In **small countries** like Singapore, the **pursuit of nuclear technology is even less of an option** as should such incidents occur, t**he whole country may be wiped off the map (Land area is a mere 729 square kilometres** . It's such a small nation (Because it is undeniable that nuclear energy harnessed is very good for the environment- less need for burning of fossil fuels!) The **tiny red dot would just be wiped off the world map** if such a situation ever occurred- showing the DIRE consequences which is just not worth it!
And it is NOT ever worth prioritising environmental benefits of nuclear technology over the health and national security concerns! The cost outweighs the benefits by a large margin

And also, since we are so small, we have problems of competing land use- there is no viable location to build these power plants, far enough from residential areas in case there's a power plant meltdown!

It could lead to the **surreptitious development** of nuclear weapons (surreptitious precisely because of the unclear agendas of countries who develop nuclear power! North Korea..) The world today is becoming **increasingly volatile.** The pursuit is still far from desirable as it **opens doors to belligerent nations and extremist groups to exploit the technology for nuclear warfare. THREATENS NATIONAL SECURITY OF OTHER COUNTRIES who are the victims of the nuclear attacks from these belligerent nations.**

Possible thesis: No longer desirable today due to the **high health risks of operating a nuclear power plant** and the **increasingly conflict-prone/volatile state of the world which could fuel the development of nuclear weapons for nuclear warfare.**

Remember, where the environment is concerned and how beneficial it is to exploit nuclear power to harness a more clean energy, nuclear power is not the only option!!!!!!!!

As we continue to develop new forms of technology such as **solar energy**, **wind energy** and hydroelectric power to make them more efficient and reliable energy resources and

==increase efforts in environmental protection, the **incentive to pursue nuclear technology will only decrease.**==

The process of harvesting nuclear energy does not involve combustion and the production of greenhouse gases. Hence, considering the current environmental challenges, the pursuit of nuclear technology is even more desirable.

In addition, one would expect nuclear technology to be a lucrative business but reality suggests otherwise!

Report published by the **German Institute for Economic Research** (known as DIW Berlin) reviewed the **development of 674 nuclear power plants built since 1951**, finding that **none** of the plants was built using 'private capital under competitive conditions'. The results showed that in all cases, **an investment would generate significant financial losses**. The **average net** present value was around **minus 4.8 billion euros**. The study found that most plants have been built while heavily subsidised by governments, and often motivated by military purposes, and is not a good approach to tackling climate change.

Space exploration and research

Space: the final frontier

 Frivolous? Truly useful if it is not even available/ accessible by the layperson?

It paves the way for more competitions between the global superpowers of the world- increased global tensions.
Mangalyaan is the first Mars space orbiter launched by India in 2014, the only orbiter to observe Mars - national pride on being one of the few global superpowers of the world that was capable of successfully launching a spacecraft at a fraction of the cost.
Attract global investors due to the technological prowess of India, drawing their attention towards India
But is India's investment in these space inventions justifiable? No.

Questions are still being raised about the **cost-prohibitive nature of space research, and the ==tensions/hostilities it can generate among nations vying for global dominance==**. Given today's advancements in the geo-political **environment that favours international cooperation**, space research can certainly be justified for the enormous benefits it renders to humankind (BUT are these benefits **accessible to every socio-economic group** in society?)

Advancements in space research and technology have allowed us to discover **potentially habitable planets such as the Kepler-22b**, a planet with **temperature conditions similar to Earth**. We need to continue to invest in space research so that the **quest for finding ourselves another habitable home becomes a reality. Cue Elon Musk's famous quote**

Benefits of space research

1) Many practical technologies and research findings would not have existed had it not been for space exploration and research! While the layperson may not be able to afford an ostentatious ticket to space, one cannot deny that these more financially affordable inventions are **certainly useful and more accessible to a wider range of individuals from varying socio-economic statuses/ financial strata!**

- **Memory foam:** A temperature-sensitive material developed by NASA's Ames Research Centre to **improve the safety of aircraft cushions and seat belts used in aeroplanes, jets**, a monumental discovery which is crucial for **improving the safety of people- a life saving invention that was only discovered due to space exploration!**

Some inventions are important too!
- **Geostationary ~~and polar-orbiting Operational Environmental~~ Satellites** important for **weather forecasting**! It is a system that allows for observation and monitoring of weather patterns to track and predict possibilities of potential natural disasters like hurricanes! FROM SPACE!
- Interesting!! In September 2022, **NASA crashed a multimillion dollar car sized spacecraft into an asteroid** that was the size of a football stadium that was making its way to Earth. **Mankind could alter the orbit of a celestial body, defending Earth** from a **doomsday** scenario of asteroid collision. IT WAS **A WATERSHED MOMENT FOR PLANETARY DEFENCE!**

2) We could also **exploit the resources in space**, since space is rich in resources that we could mine to use on Earth, which **would slow down the rate at which we deplete Earth's minerals and resources/ are desecrating the Earth!**

- The **Rosetta probe** launched by the **European Space Agency** discovered that C-type asteroids were **rich in carbon, minerals and silicate rocks** that could be **harvested and used on Earth to generate energy. Space is abundant in raw materials and elements like carbon and silicon which are heavy in demand on Earth- and could certainly be exploited/harvested for our use here!**

3) **Relocating to other planets**

The interesting **idea that fiction is becoming fact in relation to space and Science**, and how important Space exploration and research is on **At the rate that humans are desecrating the Earth, Earth may soon become uninhabitable**, making relocating to outerspace a viable option for the continuation of human life. Space researchers are actively looking for signs of life on other planetary bodies, seeking ways to make these planets hospitable to living things. One notable example of this would be the **2014 movie Interstellar**, a Science-fiction movie about space travel and exploration following **Earth's decay into an uninhabitable and environmentally disastrous future.** In the movie, a group of astronauts set out to find a new home for humanity by travelling through space.

Compare **this fiction to the real-life example of Elon Musk, the CEO of SpaceX, who planned a manned mission to reach Mars this decade.** He **founded SpaceX in 2002 with the goal to colonise Mars,** believing that **colonising Mars would ease life on an overcrowded, dying earth.**

Real quote of his:

"If there's something terrible that happens on Earth, either made by humans or natural, we want to have, like, life insurance for life as a whole," Musk said during a virtual Mars conference on Aug. 31. (Could also be linked to the environment **and how the Earth is essentially doomed**, with the extent of **irreversible** damage we have caused to Earth, there is almost **no possibility to undo** them.) **KEPLER-22b** is a possible habitable planet because of the similar temperature and weather patterns in the planet as earth.

Long-term economic gains compared to the short-term economic costs which makes space exploration a worthwhile endeavour simply because it is lucrative! (Despite its cost-prohibitive nature of course)

4) Highly lucrative and profitable: Exploiting the resources from space + creates job opportunities! **economic benefits of space research still**

far outweigh the investments needed. Space research **funding** is typically **only a fraction of the country's total GDP** yet space research and development **continue to generate billions of dollars in jobs and revenue for both developed and developing nations**. Construction and maintenance of the International Science Station for example require not only Scientists but also require engineers, construction workers, technicians and even cleaners and cooks. For **every dollar** that **NASA** invests in space research, **eight dollars are returned to the U.S. economy** and similar statistics are also reported for the impact of space research on the economies of developing nations.

Detriments of space research

1) About the point earlier about space being rich in minerals and resources, there would be an **abundance of competition as well, which only leads to strained political tensions between countries. Space research might result in a Cold War era type arms race in space, where countries exert their superiority, build national prestige at the expense of peaceful cooperation.**

- US and China, the 2 powerhouses of the world, are locked in a space race, **competing over lunar resources from the moon**.
- In 2022, **US spent $62 billion**, followed by **China coming in at $12 billion** dollars in space research. China has **expressed increasingly ambitious space goals, and planned to establish an autonomous lunar research station** near the **Moon's south pole by 2025.**

Rebuttal: Space exploration has shifted to **embrace international cooperation rather than promote competition**. International Space Station. **15 nations** have come together in the last 10 years **settling aside borders and differences**, to design and assemble and conduct research at the station. **Rather than fostering unhealthy competition among countries, space exploration instead provides an avenue for countries to share their findings and intelligence, bridging gaps between them.**

2) Many argue that resources invested for space exploration and research could **be put to better use** in solving the **more pressing global issues** on Earth, such as **global world hunger and poverty**. Rather than

investing much time and resources into space, these issues require ==more of our immediate attention==. Use direct comparison of the amount of money invested in space research and amount of money invested in ending global hunger:

- The **UN World Food Programme** estimated that ==**$40 billion per year was required to end global world hunger by 2030**==.
- In comparison, the **combined space budget** for governments' worldwide amounted to a much higher amount ==$216.27 billion between== 2018 to 2020, **with the US spending 62 billion alone in 2022 on solely space research**.

This pressing issue of global world hunger could certainly be solved had we chosen to invest in these rather than space exploration and research! **To humanists**, they would argue that investing resources and time into space exploration is a waste given how these same resources **should be invested in solving these pertinent issues on earth instead that require our more immediate attention.**

But the above argument is arguing that resources allocated to space research are wasted because there are more pressing issues on earth that could have been solved with these resources!
*** GOOD REBUTTAL: This argument is not only **short-sighted but fallacious**. Despite the downturn in the world's economy, the **economic benefits of space research still far outweigh the investments** needed. Space research **funding** is typically **only a fraction of the country's total GDP** yet space research and development ==**continue to generate billions of dollars in jobs and revenue for both developed and developing nations**==. Construction and maintenance of the International Science Station for example require not only Scientists but also require engineers, construction workers, technicians and even cleaners and cooks. **For every dollar that NASA invests in space research, eight dollars are returned to the U.S. economy** and similar statistics are also reported for the impact of space research on the economies of developing nations.

3) The results of space research are only accessible to the rich, which only leads to further division between the rich and the poor. **The price of such a technology renders space research inaccessible to those who are not rich, so ==any supposed benefit space exploration renders to society is marginal at best==. So unless one is a professional astronaut working at NASA or a billionaire with loads**

of money, one would likely never access the opportunity to explore space.

- According to The Washington Post, 3 **billionaires Larry Connor, Mark Pathy and Eytan Stibbe** have **paid $55 million each** for a **17-day mission onboard a trip to space** for **Elon Musk's SpaceX project.**

The **exorbitant price tags** associated with travelling to space makes travelling to space a mere dream to the **layperson**. Only the **ultra-rich** are able to afford a trip to space, which again, **widens the gap between the rich and the poor**, causing societies to become **more class-conscious.**

And the money could be better used to solve these more perennial issues on Earth! Perhaps a more logical and viable approach is to invest money to solve these issues on earth FIRST before investing it on other planets! - Is the high expenditure on space research justifiable?

Does advancement in modern science truly bring progress for the world? (holistic progress..)

SPERM- more implied social progress, but can other practical forms of progress
Ex:
Proprietary nature of many Scientific inventions leads to the cost prohibitive nature of modern Science- only exacerbates class inequality in a world that already has many divisions and inequalities between people.
Space research
CRISPR Technology
Epipen
What good is the progress/benefits if any benefit is rendered marginal at best?

Modern Science is advancing too quickly which leads to ethical concerns being left at the backburner since we prioritise the results of Science rather than these ethical concerns– What good is the progress if it is done at the expense of other beings?
Vaccinations use animals in research?
Study of cancer- animals

Many advancements in modern science leads to revolutionary changes/progress in research,

Stem cell research-> revolutionary because

Should there be restrictions placed on scientific research when the need for development is so great? (Justification qn type)

This has given way to **cutting edge technology that revolutionised** the way humans think and act. However, the **immense power** of such developments and the **pace of breakthroughs have raised ethical and security concerns**, resulting in the setting up of **regulations in the form of ethics committees**, legislation or international agreements. Such regulations can be justified if they benefit the individual and society through serving as a moral compass, prevent harmful creations and exploitation by profit-driven firms.

Regulations can be justified by preventing the ethical boundaries from being crossed. Regulations also serve as moral guides for scientists in their pursuit of new discoveries.

Regulations also prevent the profit-driven firms from exploiting scientific and technological advancements at the expense of society's welfare.

Should not
Restrictions placed on Scientific research would only hinder the growth and pursuit of important technologies that are desperately needed to alleviate suffering and crises.
COVID_19 vaccine tested with lab rats to check for any potential undesirable side effects. In the middle of a global health crisis that is the pandemic where tens of thousands of people are dying because of the virus. It is thus easy to see that Scientific research should not be limited by ethical considerations since so much is at stake.

From a utilitarian standpoint, uplifting restrictions on Scientific research is the wiser thing to do as a calculated decision if the results of the Scientific research can guarantee us major breakthroughs that would revolutionise lives.
Stem cell research to regenerate limbs and save lives- cutting edge technology
Yes, use embryos which may violate the sanctity of life but these embryos would not have matured into real humans anyway so might as well

Should have
Restrictions are more necessary than ever under the context when the need for development is high so as to prevent Science from advancing to the point it bypasses ethical concerns.
Dr Marion Sims- father of gynaecology, vaginal fistula technique performed on 3 black slaves without anaesthetic

Even if the need for development is great, restrictions are still needed because without it, <mark>ethical quandaries are created which would only divide society and create civil unrest.</mark>

In a pacifist age where ethical issues are a key concern for many

Dr HeJianKui's research on gene editing on a pair of twins received critical opprobrium from the international Science community and people since he did not consider the potential risks of editing the genes

Assisted death by euthanasia legalised in Switzerland- citizens are torn about the issue as their opinions were not consulted- many debates and tensions about such a controversial machine/drug, one one hand alleviate suffering of people but on the other hand, the Government is condoning this?

Assess the view that attempts to tackle global health threats can never be truly effective.

'Mankind's technological innovations say little about his intelligence, but speak volumes about his laziness.' To what extent would you agree with this viewpoint?

Health

Key to health is wealth

Try NOT to bring other factors, keep it exclusively to wealth/ and its limitations in bringing people health

Life expectancy is generally the **key metric for assessing population health.** **International journal for equity in health** found that wealthier countries have a **higher average life expectancy than poorer countries** [2,3,4], which can be argued to be achieved through **higher standards of living, more effective health systems, and more resources invested in determinants of health** (e.g. sanitation, housing, education)

On an <u>**individual level**</u>, having financial prosperity allows one to access premium healthcare services, nutritional foods and programmes which promote overall well-being.
I'm a bit sceptical about quoting the bare minimum being having access to clean, uncontaminated water because that's…. Like the very very bare minimum. I'm associating wealth with something more. Then again, **what's considered wealthy is different across different nations. Having access to clean, unfiltered, purified clean water may be a luxury that can be afforded by people who are considered wealthy in a poverty-stricken nation.**

On a <u>corporate level</u>, **being wealthy equates to the provision of superlative healthcare perks to employees, compared to small-scale businesses that have little to no budget for healthcare initiatives.**

Google, a multinational technological company worth 1.5 Trillion as of 2023 by Yahoo Finance, provides healthcare insurance for all its employees. The office also houses an onsite healthcare professional and fitness centres. Google also pays for its employees gym memberships.

On a <u>**Governmental level**</u>, **financial capacity for healthcare can ensure good health for citizens through improving existing services, <mark>enabling equitable access to healthcare. (key pillar of social justice that countries should generally work towards)</mark>**

A lot of good rebuttals as well.
From an individual level- it's the healthier FOOD and medical services that people can afford, which gives them a higher chance of being healthy - UNDER the assumption that people with access to it will utilise them/maximise them. **<u>Even if wealthy people do possess the ability to access these, it does not necessarily correlate to people making healthy and balanced lifestyle choices.</u>**
Wealth may not always guarantee the quality of the service received. Healthcare racism is a thing.

The digitisation of healthcare services

<mark>National Health Service in England- offer virtual wards</mark>
Bring hospital grade care to patients at home safely and in familiar surroundings, while freeing up hospital beds and resources to those who need them the most.

Patients under virtual wards will be monitored via video calls or home visits, ensure consistent care
Utilises technology like apps, wearables to monitor patients' conditions

SG National Steps challenge- incentivised to encourage healthier living- SGPs don a wearable device that would track their steps, reach their goal of 5000 steps a day can attain rewards and vouchers

Health Hub- a one-stop portal for easy access to medical records and health tips
RoboCoach Xian- an automaton, robotic trainer which teaches physical exercise routines to senior citizens and keep them mobile esp senior citizens suffering from Parkinson's disease

Ensuring equitable access to healthcare is a key pillar to social justice and it is a moral imperative that we do so

The 1946 Constitution of the WHO envisions 'the highest attainable standard of health as a fundamental human right of every human being'

The United Kingdom's National Health Service is a beacon of this principle, in fact, the **UK is hailed because of its healthcare system and its relatively low cost** compared to the US healthcare system. **The healthcare industry in the UK are all funded by taxpayers' money which is why the cost is relatively low.**

Ethos that access to health is a right and not a privilege
Super long waiting time, waiting 1 year for a surgery
In the UK, it is also precisely because of the lack of profit driven nature of medical practitioners which leads to inefficiency.
As of April 2023, there are about 7 million patients on the waiting list, about 300K people who waited for more than 52 weeks
Not every individual in the country enjoys the relatively low cost either since there is an Increase price of healthcare for immigrants- which is to be expected since the country would prioritise the financial welfare of its citizens first.
Immigration Health Surcharge (150 pounds a year)

While universal healthcare remains an admirable goal, the economic foundation required to fund it is difficult to maintain- a highly desired but unrealistic goal

Numerous inequalities/discrimination in healthcare not just limited to income!

Ensuring equitable access to healthcare is a key pillar of social justice and it is a moral imperative that we work towards it

So many inequalities!
- Racial profiling in medical treatments
- Also racial profiling of doctors- black doctors vs white doctors
- Discrimination of nurses who are perceived to be inferior to doctors- patients denying treatment or assistances from nurses as they demand doctors, despite nurses having gone through appropriate training for their job
- Female patients pain vs male patients pain - female pain not taken as seriously because of harmful stereotypes such as females exaggerating their pain. Published in a medical Journal of Pain- extensive review of 17000 clinical trials revealed that women, despite experiencing comparable levels of pain to men are frequently administered less pain medication
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-

Should we aim to extend life expectancy?

Should medical resources be allocated to extending life expectancy?

IMPORTANT **DISCLAIMER**: There is a subtle difference between the 2 above questions. The first one sounds more general/ no sandbox right so the point on: "We should aim to extend life expectancy because a higher life

expectancy suggests better life quality of citizens + numerous health benefits-> greater good for society" is v. applicable but this same point doesn't sound so applicable for the 2nd question because the 2nd question kinda implies that the individual in question is already in the hospital bed and has a terminal illness that is incurable.

YES
Health institutions and legal systems have the **moral and legal obligation to ensure that every human being's fundamental right to life is protected**, and that is by extending life expectancy. (It is more so the implications of a higher life expectancy

Japan-84.95
SG- 83

Both Asian countries with world-class/robust healthcare systems

The large quantity of systems put in place that are all geared towards increasing life expectancy shows how paramount it is, so we should aim for it/ we should allocate medical resources towards it.
Article 3 of the **UN's UDHR decrees that every individual has the inherent right to 'life, liberty and security of a person'**

Based on the social contract theory, Democratic states also have **contractual obligation** to **steward taxpayer's monies to create accessible and affordable healthcare that safeguards every citizen's health.**

3 of the UN's 8 Millennium Development Goals were essentially oriented towards **raising the life expectancy in all countries to that of the 'normal' developed country life expectancy.**

NO
From a <u>**utilitarian**</u> **perspective**, **rationing our medical resources** towards extending life expectancy proves to be inefficient. Medical resources should instead be allocated to **other** facets of human life <u>**in order to generate the greatest good for the most number of people.**</u>

From a **libertarian perspective**, extending the life expectancy of an **unwilling** patient would be **an infringement of one's right to autonomy.**

The Terri Schiavo case which sparked debate on the deliberate decision to end one's life- should they be given the autonomy to choose death if there is no point to living (terminal illness, no cure, irreversible vegetative state)? Terri Schiavo had been in a **vegetative state for 15 years**, her parents and the state of Florida decided to **continue to keep her on life support, even when doctors testified that she had no hope for recovery and her husband's belief that she would have preferred to die in peace.**

In this case, extending one's life is not ideal because it would be an **infringement of one's right to autonomy** (at least from a libertarian perspective) In addition, let's talk about human euthanasia and assisted-suicide. Deliberate action taken with the intention of ending a life to **relieve persistent pain. (Individuals should possess the fundamental right to autonomy and decide what they would want for their bodies)**

In addition, the **artificiality of a long life** could potentially **diminish** the **meaning of life**. Cryogenics maybe, although….

Euthanasia/ the right to end one's life

Arguments for euthanasia and assisted suicide:
(libertarian perspective) Freedom of choice: Advocates argue that the person should be able to make their own choice.

Quality of life OVER quantity of life: Only the individual really knows how they feel, and how the physical and emotional pain of illness and prolonged death impacts their quality of life. **Some people place a higher value over a short life filled with dignity and quality rather than a long, menial life.** To them, being able to **die in a dignified way when the time comes is more preferable to being forced to spend their last days in an ICU Resources**: It makes more sense to channel the resources of highly skilled staff, equipment, hospital beds, and medications toward life saving treatments for those who wish to live, rather than those who do not.
Humane: It is more humane to allow a person with intractable suffering to be allowed to choose to end that suffering. It is simply unnecessary and even inhumane to subject a patient experiencing intense pain to continue to suffer if they wish to end that pain. An individual's right to autonomy

Arguments against euthanasia and assisted suicide:
The doctor's role: Healthcare professionals may be unwilling to compromise their professional roles, especially in the light of the Hippocratic Oath.
Moral and religious arguments/conservative individuals: Several faiths see euthanasia as a form of murder and morally unacceptable. Suicide, too, is "illegal" in some religions.
==Morally, there is an argument that euthanasia will weaken society's respect for the sanctity of life. Good point. If it becomes too common, it could potentially impart the==

Patient competence: Euthanasia is only voluntary if the patient is mentally competent, with a lucid understanding of available options and consequences, and the ability to express that understanding and their wish to terminate their own life. Determining or defining competence is not straightforward.

Mental illness: A person with depression is more likelyTrusted Source to ask for assisted suicide, and this can complicate the decision.

Thats why Switzerland and Sweden legalised assisted suicide

Slippery slope: There is a risk that physician-assisted suicide will start with those who are terminally ill and wish to die because of intractable suffering, but then begin to include other individuals.

Possible recovery: Very occasionally, a patient recovers, against all the odds. The diagnosis might be wrong.

Palliative care: Good palliative care makes euthanasia unnecessary.

Regulation: Euthanasia cannot be properly regulated.

Artificial human reproduction- to what extent should we endorse/condone it?

Surrogacy, sperm banks, in vitro fertilisation are ALL considered artificial reproductive methods/ genetic engineering CRISPR technology which leads to the formation of designer babies!

Could create ethical quandaries and moral dilemma- cause social unrest given that the world is already volatile and unpredictable

Parents who abuse the system by screening only the best traits for their offspring- questionable profiling and deciding what kinds of people are allowed to exist- conceptions of an ideal human

The commercialisation and commodification of embryos- a decreasing respect for human life? Viewed only as a means to have a 'perfect' child?

Raises many philosophical questions and ethical concerns on such an endeavour.

Homosexual couples/ older women who are no longer fertile/

Good to consider the health risks involved

Contentious- who really has the rights to motherhood of a child borne of a surrogate mother? Such ambiguities

Some have heralded artificial reproductive technologies as a revolution, grateful for its ability to **overcome biological obstacles.** Religious authorities question whether we have gone too far when we pursue the creation of life through unnatural procedures, **challenging the natural laws that God has ordained.** Medical experts worry that innovations in this particular field are **advancing too quickly to the point that moral standards are violated.** It is undeniable that this Scientific breakthrough seems nothing short of miraculous to couples who desire to have children but are unable to conceive.

The fear is that encouraging these developments would be akin to opening Pandora's box of implications that **will outpace our ethical and legal structures.**
Religious authorities who reject these technologies since they go against the ordained nature of the world
The Vatican church believes that **fecundation must be carried out according to nature and through reciprocal and responsible love between a man and a woman**

YES
The advent of such reproductive technologies would extend the opportunity of parenthood to homosexual couples and singles/ couples who are not medically fit for pregnancy. Individuals can now transcend biological limitations to fulfil their wish of having a family. Since reproductive technologies enable more individuals to

be accorded the fundamental right to parenthood, it should be justified.

Artificial reproductive technology extends the right of parenthood to more people, helping them overcome biological obstacles and materialise their dreams of becoming a parent.

Rebuttal to points of the contentious issue of WHO are the parents/ or religious individuals who contend any unnatural means of reproduction: Instead of making false assumptions about who most deserves to be parents, or being blinkered by narrow and outdated definitions of parents, one should not limit other people's choices about their own bodies and instead embrace the new and exciting possibilities for people who can now becoming loving and responsible families. In addition, religious views are subjective and differ from person to person- entirely dependent on the individual in question.

NO

Interesting rebuttal to the point above it!--> So you are aware that artificial reproductive technologies would extend the privilege of parenthood to more groups of individuals BUT these groups of individuals are already met with much stigma and discrimination because of their unconventional relationship statuses. **EVEN IF these parents/parent/ stigmatised minorities are prepared to take criticisms from disapproving communities, would their child be ready? Their children may not be ready to cope with these non-traditional circumstances! And artificial reproductive technologies may continue to propagate these issues.**

Sir Elton John is a British composer married to a man who has admitted to worrying that his children may face bullying for not having a mother.

Statistics also show that children from **single-parent households** are more likely to **engage in criminal activities** and **suffer from poor social mobility** as they get older, simply because their **single parent** has to **juggle** between **parenthood and career**. It is already **hard**

enough to have a single parent. Will these children be ready to **face discrimination and bullying because of their unconventional parents/ parent?**

Such ethical quandaries and ambiguities ==undermine conventional forms of family and parenting, devaluing the institution as a whole because of distinct birthrights and the violation of religious sanctions.== The complexities of blurred lineages invariably undercut the wholeness of parenthood and family.
Raise ethical quandaries and philosophical questions

Reproductive technology could **radically ==transform social structures (I don't think the world is ready for that)== for the worse because it raises numerous debates on who the artificially-produced child belongs to.** For instance, are surrogates considered the real mother of the child? Who really has the rights of parenthood to a child born through surrogacy? Reproductive technology is contentious because it **blurs the lines of distinct birthrights.** Hence, reproductive technologies should not be justified/encouraged because **the complexities of blurred lineages could invariably undercut the wholeness of parenthood and family, radically destroying social norms.**
The very proprietary nature of Scientific inventions which paves the way for the commercialisation and commodification of these inventions- only widen class inequality.
In addition, WE KNOW THAT parenthood is **a fundamental universal right that should be accorded to everyone**- including homosexual couples/ single parent/ people not fit for pregnancy but still desire children AND the **advent of reproductive technologies makes that universal right more accessible to everyone** BUT NOTE that these technologies are often **EXPENSIVE** and only afforded by the rich. The right to parenthood is therefore only extended to the rich, which could ==**invariably construe the notion that only the rich are accorded this right**== **—> Which would only continue to widen the perennial gap between the rich and the poor!** And on top of this, **any benefit that reproductive technology brings is ==rendered marginal at best simply because it is not financially viable for the poor.==** Most people are

ineligible for a service that proponents claim gives access to a 'universal' right to parenthood. Until society is ready to put the necessary guardrails in place to ensure ethical considerations are not sidestepped, such reproductive technologies should not be encouraged.

Also it's a common argument— yes it may be good and extend the right of parenthood to more people but what good can it really do if it's not gonna be affordable to that many people? The benefits are really only marginal at best! It harbours motives of financial gains and carries an air of exclusivity that is ironic given its claimed basis in fundamental human rights.

Commercialisation and commodification! Plus more underlying ethical issues layered with these economic issues!
ALSO- with reproductive technologies especially in vitro fertilisation, **'designer babies'** are more possible than ever, parents can **manipulate the genetic makeup of their child**, essentially such services enable people to 'play god'. "Designer babies"- choosing favourable alleles-> choosing the right of certain traits to exist?

Singapore MyResponder App
Detection of a nearby casualty and user can locate the nearest AED. Several lives can be preserved, if not saved with this app- the smart technology.

Food

Wheat prices have jumped because of the Russian-Ukraine war

Erewhon's Hailey Bieber's strawberry glaze smoothie costs 18 USD
Packed with superfoods like sea moss, organic vegetables etc etc

According to Harvard School of Public Health in 2013, the healthiest diets cost about 1.50 more per day than the least healthy diets.

Cosmetic filtering when it comes to fruits and vegetable produce: Common practice for produce suppliers to discard these **edible but visually-unappealing vegetables**

due to the misconstrued perception that visually-appealing vegetables are more tasty. - Disposal of **almost 1 ⁄ 3 of all free produce at the Pasir Panjang wholesale market which is equivalent to almost 30,000kg of food per day.** A lot of these **produce sellers prioritise their personal economic gain even at the cost of environmental devastation.**

Assess the **importance** of food within the **Singaporean** culture-> ONLY SG FOOD, please not Italian pastas and pizzas!
Think BEYOND just food! Think diets! Kitchen! Cooking! Places where foods are sold! **THINK BEYOND!!!!!!!!**

Expand the **scope** of the essay

Value question type
Role it serves + context it exists in
Think **SPERM** model
What and How

ALWAYS give a **characteristic of SG** to stay strictly within the SG context! Use it in ur topic sentences!
For a **multi-racial and multi-cultural Singaporean society (context)** , food is immensely important (value) for it is a reflection and promotion of each culture's/race's unique identity and heritage (role).
Food being a microcosm, being representative of our multiracial and multicultural society. Hawkers centres are considered a UNESCO heritage site added to Unesco list of intangible cultural heritage

THINK politics where food is concerned!

V. Interesting point
Food, **an indicator of socioeconomic status (role)**, is paramount (value) as a **political tool** in a Singaporean culture marked by a **high wealth disparity. (Context)**
Its **affordable prices, high accessibility, located at the heartlands of Singapore** Hawker food in particular is the **prevailing social language of low-middle income** SGPs. **Consumption and promotion** of hawker food and its culture, **by politicians and make them seem relatable, and not far removed in their high offices. For political sway and win the hearts of citizens**

Think of food in terms of policies! And also health in the SG context- context in this case being a specific characteristic of SG
Given a paternalistic Government like SG (context), food plays a key component (value) in their regulation and control of Singaporean's bodies. (Role)

Closing bubble tea stores, implementing <mark>nutrigrade ratings, and sugar tax, ban on narcotics, ban of chewing gum too!</mark>

In Singapore's **beauty and fitness-obsessed subcultures (context), the importance of food** <u>ironically</u> **lies in the lack of it**

Keto diet
Dieting culture #thinspo movement
Intermittent fasting- skip lunch/breakfast

With the increased economic development of the nation (context), the importance that SG places on cooking and consuming authentic (role), home-cooked food has waned overtime. (Value)

Modern kitchens being smaller and less functional than before tell us that food and cooking is not that big deal as the economy advances

Many new refurbished houses have kitchenettes which are increasingly becoming smaller in area in newer homes- a decreasing emphasis on home-cooked meals and cooking in general- no time!
Less people know how to cook.

Ruled by **practicality and pragmatism** (context), many SGPs see food as practical objects just for survival (role); denying it any significance (value)

Many eat to live than live to eat
Average office worker- what to eat for lunch? **Conundrum** is a dreary riddle we do not want to solve, just eat and get it over with!
Instant meals- just wanna be full don't wanna think too much about it

Hawker centres and food courts are NOT the same!!!!!
Hawker centres- open air while food courts are air conditioned
Many stalls with a variety of food, affordably priced
Located at the heart of neighbourhoods so it's accessible
Connected to a wet market

Kopitiam is a FOOD COURT, Koufu and Food Republic also

Just because a cuisine isn't of our majority races, it doesn't it doesn't have culture
Mexican and Korean food contain culture of their own
Consider fast food and diet foods-> all different types of foods
Have a precise understanding before making any claim!

In your society, how well are the demands of the economy and the environment balanced?

Goals of the economy and the environment
Profit? Environment
Environment sustainability
Combat climate change

HOW WELL- Balanced
Evaluate the extent of balance between demands
Bring in SGP characteristic

ESPECIALLY in our society essay qns, apply AQ skills! Add Sg context/characteristic to ensure
Considering the limitations placed on **resource-limited SG/ small land size ,** the demands of economy and the environment are balanced insofar as we attempt to conserve and undertake sustainable practices.

It is precisely **our pragmatism and competitiveness** which has given rise to state and corporation-led drives towards sustainable economic growth, forcing a balance between the economy and the environment.
Singapore charges **single-use plastics at 10 cents each.**
Many supermarkets such as Sheng Shiong are charging

Frugal and money-minded SGPs face **a high cost of living** and are unwilling and unable to keep up with the steep price tag that is tied to environmentally-friendly projects
This characteristic is not just extended to Sg citizens but SG business leaders and the Government
Shein vs sustainable clothing
Cross island line cross Bukit Timah nature reserve rather than around it

Despite the natural challenges of being a small nation, SGPs are **extremely materialistic and adopt a consumer first mentality**. Led to sustainable economic growth being more perceived than real- often resulting in adverse outcomes.

Overcompensation by the usage of tote bags
The overproduction of which is actually terrible for the environment
Do not just write generic arguments that could apply to any country on Earth-
Countries that naturally prioritise any country on Earth because it is about SG so it is SAFEST to have a characteristic! CONTEXT!!!!!!!!
Are we taking enough responsibility for our own health?

- In Singapore, the **total revenue in sales of organic produce** was **19.1 million SGD in 2019**. This reflects the **growing popularity and demand in organic food** among SGPs, and needless to say, consuming organic produce indeed has **innumerable health benefits** so we CAN see more SGPs taking responsibility for their physical health by improving their consumption patterns, as seen from the increase in the consumption of organic produce.

Mental health

The alarming issue of youths becoming more depressed/ mental health deteriorating among the youths

- Based on a report by the **Centre for Big Data Research in Health at the University of New South Wales**, it was found that the use of **antidepressants** among the **youth** (10-17 year olds) continued to **rise by 46% from 2015 to 60% 2019. (NOTE: Of course,** prima facie, such an alarming statistic paints a grim picture of the mental states of young people but you could also flip this statistic to be positive! This statistic also shows that **more and more youths are willing to invest in healing their mental health** through medical means. HIGHLIGHTING the **financial investments that the youths are willing to make in order to look after their mental health at such a young age + the willingness of the increased no. of youths to reach out for help!**
- The meditation app **'Headspace'** has accumulated more than 40 million downloads as of 2018, showing the **financial investments** that people are **willing** to make in order to improve their mental health. (Individuals ARE taking enough responsibility to look after their mental health)
- A recent study in Singapore on youth mental health has found a gap in parents' understanding of mental health issues- only 1 in 10 parents observed signs of distress in their children, but 1 in 3 adolescents reported such symptoms. Findings from the Youth Epidemiology and Resilience Study of 3336 respondents aged 10 to 18, found that 12 percent of respondents met the full criteria for having at least one disorder, including depressive and anxiety disorders.

The importance of leisure:

Essentially, leisure is an inseparable aspect from human life. Without it, our lives would be dull and tiring, toiling away endlessly at work.

A lot of psychological benefits:
- MedicalXpress, a reputed medical website recently published an article which outlined the many benefits that leisure activities, such as playing sports, engaging in gardening or even playing card games could bring about.
- These benefits include, enhancing the immune system, improving flexibility, improving memory and reducing stress. All of these are important to ensure the overall wellbeing of an individual.

Leisure is often important for companies to achieve their business goals.
OH leisure can most definitely be capitalised to generate profits from- in fact, it is our proclivity to do so given how rampant corporate greed is in societies.

- Leisure is also important as **Forbes** recently discovered that companies who provide their employees with leisure time generally **see the efficiency of their staff increase** translating into **greater revenue** for the companies themselves. Look at Google! One of the most successful and renowned tech companies in the world and they've got sleeping pods for their employees and even gaming rooms where employees can have breaks engaging in leisure activities!
- A study conducted in America by the **Massachusetts daily collegian newspaper uncovered that in European nations where employees are allowed more va**cation time and leisure activities have greater **productivity** than their American counterparts.
- **Leisure still remains a multi-billion dollar industry in today's world where countries seek to find new types of leisure activities to bring increased revenue to the country. -) how serious is leisure? Is it all just fun?**
- **Tourism sectors** in many countries such as Thailand, Philippines and Sri Lanka are gearing towards focusing on **developing leisure based resorts in order to get greater revenue.**

Exercise

- As of March 2023, the Government has planned a 100 SGD top-up in ActiveSG credit for youth aged 4-12, to cultivate interest in sports and physical exercise and inculcate good habits in children since young

Social issues

'It is not winning, but taking part, which matters.' How acceptable is this as an approach to life?

COMPARISON QUESTION
Privileging participation over winning is profoundly <mark>problematic</mark> – and thus unacceptable – as the <mark>lack of competition encourages mediocrity and stagnation.</mark> In addition, it does not do any justice to those who genuinely worked hard to succeed and strive to win.

Mobile phone market- Samsung vs Apple, 2 of the **largest shareholders in the mobile phone market compete neck-to-neck based on sales**, this competition and their **desire to emerge as the dominant** brands in the market led to the **advent of advanced technology like FaceID, voice recognition etc.**
Compared to the lack of competition between **internet service providers- stagnation** even in a world where technology is considered highly developed.

Grade inflation, where students are given a **higher grade** than their quality of work deserves, causing scores to **look more impressive and students to appear more intelligent and/or improving in school just for showing up for exams.**

But from a gentler perspective, participation should be preferred precisely because it accommodates the **many mediocre members of society who would otherwise be frequently demoralised against winners. Very nicely put! After all, a highly competitive society would produce natural winners while cutting out natural losers who are left downtrodden.**

Participation trophies in children's sports incentivise them to keep playing, even if they are not particularly good at the game. <mark>The greater goal is to inculcate a healthy lifestyle and a love for exercise.</mark>

Even for those with a good chance of winning, taking emphasis away from achievements should be encouraged to allow them to enjoy the process and learn in a no-stakes environment.

Carol Dweck, the Stanford professor of psychology, discovered that those who were **praised for being smart and doing well on tests or winning awards** eventually **fixated on their performance and shied away from taking risks or any endeavour that could result in failure.** However, children who were **praised for trying tried even harder and persisted with tasks for longer.**

More importantly, we must be **wary of a hypercompetitive, no-holds-barred attitude** as it inherently **justifies trading moral scruples for a better chance at winning. -> doping scandals in sports- people who try everything at all cost- at the expense of their morality- to achieve.**

Numerous fraudsters have **fabricated** their results as they could not tolerate not having a win.
German physicist Jan Hendrik Schön fabricated data to be the first to demonstrate superconductivity in organic materials and the first to produce a transistor on the molecular scale.
Dr Haruko Obokata- fake lab results for stem cell research, all fabricated.
Also famous sports people- Kamila Valieva, Russian female ice skater under fire during the 2022 Beijing olympics for being caught taking heart medication which gave her an edge during the sport.

Any value in preserving minority language today?

Even if there is **enormous collective effort to preserve a minority language, we must be mindful of the waste of resources in maintaining a language that serves only a small number of people**. The **money and time invested in such efforts can instead be channelled** towards **other developmental goals and better serve a larger segment of the population.**
Promotion of the Gaelic and Cornish languages in the UK meant funds were spent on creating anything from **street signs to official legal documents in several languages**, even though **most** people were already **proficient in the universal language being English**. The **waste of taxpayers money, also well-documented that speakers of minority languages rank low on the socio-economic ladder due to long periods of institutionalised suppression and active discrimination by the authorities.**

ALSO democratic Governments have the contractual obligation to steward taxpayers' money to initiatives that are good for society! Most useful most…

Also **problematic** when a **minority language does not serve a living community's needs, and instead hampers their progress.**

The **S'aoch people of Cambodia** have been **driven away from their original village and farms** during the **Khmer Rouge regime,** have **now put their own language and customs behind them to adopt the majority language simply because they aspire to the relative wealth of their Khmer neighbours. Young Hispanic immigrants** to the US are **adopting the lingua Franca** that will **transcend cultural boundaries and gain them a foothold in the modern capitalist world.** Because of declining numbers of fluent speakers, it now depends on the **interest** of the **younger generation whether a language is preserved or not.**

A very pragmatic way to see it: **Forget about ideals of identity and selfhood**- a language may already be in its death throes if **the economic inferiority of its people causes it to lose its immediate value in their daily lives.**

The **preservation of minority languages** might actually **mean sustaining or promoting a divisive sense of difference in population**. Political authorities throughout history have **banned minority languages in the name of national unity or other vested interests**, and **our support for their preservation turns the tide for political autonomy and to overcome entrenched oppression.**

Language unfortunately becomes a **weapon in the politics of separation and independence**, serving to **worsen conflict**. It would thus be **wrong to say that there is no worth in conserving minority languages**, especially if such efforts only serve to **deepen social divides in a world as already chaotic as ours.**

Also, it would make no sense to preserve language because of the **semantic shifts of the meanings of words and how they are used. Nature** of language-> changes overtime and the **sensible thing is not to blindly preserve them**
Current use of the English words **girl and gay have narrowed and shifted the context. Organic process** and **irrevocable** as the <u>world of yesteryear changes along with its languages.</u>

Besides, the **diversity of language is an acceptance of cultures beyond our own.**

How valuable is selflessness in today's world?

Acknowledge that it's a VUCA world– highly competitive in countries where there is such a high demand but very little supply

Supporting Argument 1:
In times of global crises, it becomes all the more essential for us to put others before ourselves to ensure that society does not tear itself apart through avarice.

In the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a drastic shortage of **ventilators**, essential equipment to assist the breathing of patients. **Ford**, the motor company, **transformed parts of its Michigan factory to produce ventilators instead of car parts, sacrificing their own profits to do so.** By the end of 2020, they had **produced 50,000 ventilators to ease the strain on global supplies.**
Selflessness of a motor company- truly remarkable

Such selflessness

Supporting Argument 2:
As the world tends dangerously towards self-centredness in this social media obsessed age, we need selfless individuals to remind us of the importance of being charitable.

- E.g. Content creators like **Mr Beast inspire countless others to give back to the needy**, even if it is ultimately for self-serving content. Mr Beast alone is estimated to have donated over **5.5 million pounds of food, feeding 300,000 people.**

Counter Argument:

That said, the vast majority of celebrities do not harness the power of being unselfish to build their brands - in fact, they engage in the contrary.
Selflessness, though commendable, is <mark>naive in a society that rewards self-obsession</mark>, since the former is <mark>a less effective guarantor of success. Self-preservation</mark>
Jussie Smollett, an actor best known for his role on the TV series "Empire," came under intense scrutiny in 2019 after alleging that he had been the victim of a hate crime. He claimed that two men attacked him in Chicago, yelling racist and homophobic slurs, putting a rope around his neck, and mentioning "MAGA country". The story immediately gained traction, and Smollett received an outpouring of support. However, inconsistencies began to emerge and eventually, Chicago police alleged that Smollett had orchestrated the attack himself, hiring two brothers to stage the assault. The motivation behind this alleged orchestration, according to authorities, was to bolster his career and negotiate a higher salary for his role on "Empire". He was found guilty and sentenced to 150 days in jail.
I'm not so sure about this example though hmmm

Supporting Argument 3:

In a world **rife with such hoaxes and self-serving objectives** (context), ==selflessness emerges as a beacon to **guide our actions towards more altruistic motivations.**==

The **#TrashTag Challenge** stood out in a digital age littered with inane challenges designed to gain clout at all costs (swallowing tide pods, self strangulation). This challenge involved taking a picture of the same location before and after it had been cleared of litter, and served as a genuine call to action to get people to clean up their environment.

Free speech

In a free society, there should be no restrictions on freedom of speech. Comment
Free society is defined as the citizens having the freedom to define a society where individuals can determine their own power and potential

THERE NEEDS TO BE RESTRICTION:
Giving citizens the complete freedom to express any opinion may lead to the propagation of extremist ideologies which may lead to radicalisation, ultimately threatening the internal security, national harmony and peace of the nation. Hence, restrictions on the freedom of speech are necessary to serve as a protective mechanism to prevent the above from happening.

By giving complete freedom of speech to citizens, there is a high possibility for the spread of problematic concepts and ideas that could potentially radicalise individuals to adopt extreme, radical views.
The only issue is that these examples do not show a freedom of speech
2023 MOE teacher radicalised and became a Palestine sympathiser, wanted to fight the Israeli Army, detained under the ISA- found that he had been exposed to content….
2017 infant care teacher radicalised to support terrorist group ISIS after exposure to their extreme views

In a world that is **already plagued with innumerable social divisions between different demographics of individuals**, the absolute freedom of speech would only lead to the **proliferation of offensive content intended to marginalise, which would worsen faultlines and exacerbate even more inequality in the world.**

Certain content is inherently offensive to a particular demographic in society. This could rouse tensions between different groups in society which threatens national harmony.

Asian hate crimes because of the **widespread propagation of the belief among anti-Asians** in the UK and US that **Asians were to be blamed and punished for causing the pandemic. SG student attending university was beaten in asian hatecrime**
In **2015,** the British Parliament released a report entitled **"All party parliamentary inquiry into antisemitism" found that the media was increasingly being used as a tool to spread anti muslim and antisemitic sentiments. Muslims were 3 times while Jews with 8 times more likely to be a victim of religious hatred.**

Plain factually incorrect! Misleading and wrong
Trump's claim that **antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine could potentially be the cure for COVID. Dr Anthony Farci**, former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the USA warned people about the v**eracity of his claims and became the target of vitriol among Trump supporters.**

SHOULD NOT BE ANY RESTRICTION!
UDHR article **19** decrees that **every human has the right to 'freedom of opinion and expression'**
The freedom to express oneself is a fundamental human right and since human rights are sacrosanct and should not be violated, restrictions are not valid.

Freedom of speech can be a potential avenue for the marginalised and the oppressed to contest their opposition so there should not be any restrictions.
Preetipls rap video with her brother which was **full of vulgarities indeed but it still shed light on racism!!** Gov asked them to apologise -> this **prevented public discourse on the innumerable majority-minority tensions that wrecked society.**

Only by giving individuals the freedom of speech can light be shed on the pressing issues and galvanise concrete actions to solve the issue. So no restrictions (Good point)
Greta Thunberg and her 'how dare you' speech at the UN convention- valid example for the free society because she's Swedish and the UN is in NY which is also a free society. Though her figure of speech was **unpopular** and **sparked the ire of many politicians, her speech illuminates the pressing need for action to be galvanised against climate change.**

In addition, any restrictions on citizens' freedom of speech mandated by the Government could be a tool weaponised by the Government to reduce political dissent and oppress people.

Iran shut down the internet for a week after a hike in gas and fuel prices to reduce political dissent online in September 2022.

Equality vs Equity

In light of the **systemic racism and institutional bias that the marginalised are perennially subjected** to, preferential treatment serves as a much-needed **recourse** to alleviate the struggles of this group. Hence, preferential treatment can be justified **on the grounds of social justice and uplifting/empowering the marginalised in our society.**

Preferential treatment aimed at elevating disadvantaged people **might be key to preserving social stability** and to averting broad public discontent with the status quo and therefore should be implemented. However, we must also **be careful not to overreach in our approach as this might sometimes lead to resentment** from the other groups in society and preferential treatment might even be **counterproductive by not helping disadvantaged groups in the long term.**

Faced with an **institutionalised system of privilege stacked against them**, some groups encounter prejudice simply because of their **gender, ethnicity or religious backgrounds** (Which they have no control over) and **not fundamentally due to their innate individual qualities.**

Evidently, preferential treatment might be a much-needed recourse for the unjust disadvantages that are afflicted on the systematically disenfranchised, and on the grounds of social justice, preferential treatment is thus justifiable. To level the playing field
A study by **Michigan State University** found that students living in **low-income neighbourhoods received less academic support than their wealthier counterparts.** Such differences account for up to **37% of the differences in maths scores**, demonstrating that **social class and wealth have a tangible impact on students' academic performance. (See the fundamental flaw in the meritocratic principles that MOE espouses?) Without additional academic support or resources (essentially preferential treatment in this case)** catered to low-income students, the **gulf in academic achievement will continue to persist.** This has a direct impact on disadvantaged groups and for the broader society as well. They will continue to fall behind! **This would only perpetuate the perennial inequality between the rich and the poor, exacerbating the divide between people of varying financial strata!**

As disadvantage and privilege are constantly perpetuated, the **demographic composition of elite educational institutions and in prestigious occupations might be naturally skewed towards upper-class and predominantly male, majority-based backgrounds.**

SO there is a need for some sort of preferential treatment/ external intervention to aid those who may not be blessed this way!

more than 1,600 CEOs have endorsed the **CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion Pledge**, a commitment to account for demographic backgrounds in hiring practices and to artificially **enhance the employment chances of certain disadvantaged individuals.**

Affirmative action

There are also pragmatic reasons for preferential treatment as such interventions might be **crucial in the preservation of the delicate social fabric.**

pragmatic meritocracy espouses equality of opportunity for all (to succeed and be rewarded), however, the <u>fundamental flaw</u> of such a principle lies in it **allowing those with the ability to flourish but simultaneously creating natural losers** that are **left downtrodden from such a competitive, cut-throat environment.**

The introduction of preferential treatment policies might thus elicit resentment and animosity between the majority and minority groups in society, further widening the PERENNIAL inequality between the majority and the minority groups.

Life is just not fair sometimes, and there is even competition starting from as early as primary 1:
The current Primary 1 registration exercise is tricky with competing interests from across the social spectrum.
Many alumni claim that the current registration system helps them build on and preserve school ties/cultures and heritage while others feel that these schools have essentially become exclusive clubs for the elite. This essentially allows the **past to be superimposed onto the present by sending parental privileges forward in time, intergenerationally, to children who did nothing in particular to merit them. T**hese children can then enjoy the material and reputation all benefits of attending an elite school.

And also these more elite schools tend to be **clustered in the more expensive parts of Singapore**- Bukit Timah: Nanyang girls primary, Raffles Girls-> usually those who reside at Bukit Timah already tend to be those who are **born into wealthy families so wealthy people get higher chances** to send their children to these more elite schools because they live at richer places. Many elite schools in Singapore are **clustered within its wealthiest neighbourhoods, benefiting those already privileged to have a house there.**

The **primary 1 registration exercise can inadvertently become a** ==mechanism of socio-economic division (JUST LIKE MERITOCRACY WHICH SINGAPORE SO FAITHFULLY ESPOUSES!)==**, contradicting** the open and meritocratic principles upon which it seeks to stand.

Good primary schools should ideally be within reach of all students regardless of where they live, but instead they are concentrated within wealthier areas thus turning distance-based enrolment into a room of social reproduction.
Women participation in SG, female graduates working in technology

Are women playing a big role in the arts and culture scene?

Gender equality

“Women are never making it to the top of any profession” Words of Sheryl Sandberg, former Chief operating officer of meta platforms.
“We can never close the gender divide”
NUANCE! If the qn asked is rather ambiguous on who is the one being marginalised, remember not to have all examples on just female oppression! Talk about male oppression too! Toxic masculinity, male rape victims taken less seriously and not believed as opposed to female rape victims! And how males suffer under patriarchy as well. It limits their artistic creativity and style because they’ll get laughed at etc, ‘A 2007 study found that the more men conformed to traditionally “masculine” ideals, the more they engaged in risky behaviours – like excessive drinking, using tobacco and other risks.’ The pink tax for the economy!
Disclaimer: When it comes to tackling questions with solving certain issues, it is much easier for u to take the optimistic approach because of the good phrase: **Instead of falling into the traps of assigning blame and inertia, we should ground ourselves in the quintessential belief that it is possible to eradicate gender divide. Resigning ourselves to our fates would only be a mockery of past efforts. **To say that is an impossible dream would be too fatalistic. We still have a long way to go in eliminating gender inequality however, ==the success that we have had thus far testifies that it is possible.== In addition, the danger in believing that we cannot eliminate it is that ==we accept gender inequality as a part of ourselves or something to live with.== This leads to a ==diminished will to fight it and an increasing blindness to==

Some put forth the view that we can never close the gender divide due to such **economic realities, legislative barriers and sexist mindsets that pervades in our society today**, creating an irreconcilable chasm between males and females. This has led some to believe that the gender divide is insurmountable.

The social landscape- in the arena of employment.
According to authors **Kanwaljit Soin and Margaret Thomas**, **second-wave feminism** occurred in SG in the **1980s** which was notably characterised by women **going out of their way to reject gender stereotypes + reject the heteronormative roles that women played as the unpaid cook of the family**. The feminist movement in SG has **instilled a disdain for cooking amongst local women since careers take priority- defy gender norms.**

In the traditional landscape of the world before the era of industrialisation and automation, men were at a relative advantage because of their **greater physical strength. After the era of industrialisation and automation**, we are now steadily moving past the notion that males are the **sole breadwinners of the family**. As more women enter the workforce, **dual-income households are on the rise**. In **more progressive and liberal parts** of the world, **traditional heteronormative roles are eradicated** and now <u>both men and women take up chores and have jobs</u>.

Consider the view that some careers are better suited to one gender than the other

Women, on the other hand, who have had a relative advantage in **human skills and emotional intelligence** (whether by biological disposition or socialisation) have become increasingly **more important in an economy more oriented towards human services than to the production of material objects**. → replacement of sole male breadwinner families by <u>**dual-income households + move past the heteronormative roles that wife and husband play in a family in the past.**</u>

The sad thing about gender inequality being a lot more pronounced in LDCs, **lower** echelons of society.

Because we can't afford to feed everyone in the goddamn family! We can't give every child in the family the opportunity to have an education! And **what exacerbates the issue is the** misogyny and sexism that still pervades less developed/ inherently patriarchal/conservative nations! **(They are not as liberal and progressive as the developed nations simply because they don't have the MONEY, OR THE RESOURCES for equality of opportunity for both genders! So what do they have to do? PRIORITISE it to the men!)**

Prior to development, poverty-stricken families respond to income shocks by **reallocating resources to sons**: In India, excessive mortality rate of girls, relative to boys, spikes during droughts, when they c**annot afford to feed everyone**, **families disproportionately sacrifice the welfare of girls** - On the other hand, wealthier families with liquid assets **don't** show the same gender disparities

However that is not to say that having a good economy or being rich would automatically exempt one from experiencing gender inequality! After all, in many developed countries, there still lies wage gaps between male and female employees and gender stereotypes that pervade the internet.

The existence of legislative barriers that institutionalise gender discrimination and perpetuate gender inequality.

In conservative nations where many citizens are **still deeply-entrenched in their** misogynistic and sexist **beliefs**. Such as China-> **The** one child policy produced millions of deaths, a large proportion of which were female infants because many Chinese families preferred having a son over a daughter since they could contribute to the labour. **The one child policy was the** cause of one of History's most notorious female infanticides. **Women lose their chance of life even at birth simply because of the gender inequality that has perennially existed in China!**

Article 1 of the UDHR decrees that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'.

Article 3 of the UDHR decrees that all human beings have the 'inherent right to life, liberty and security of person'

Gender inequality **cannot coexist alongside the valorised ideals of universal human rights.** AS LONG AS every person enjoys these rights, **XXX cannot be justified.**

Anyways, looking at the issue from a ==purely pragmatic/economic== standpoint, gender inequality **does not serve the economy of nations** well either!
Cost of failing to educate girls to the same standard as boys in **65 low-middle income countries estimated at $92 billion a year**

The UNFAIR legislations that fail to protect women! Even your laws can't protect people. What's the point then???
Marital rape is **not** considered a crime in China, and no legislation has resulted despite years of campaigning. Marital rape is not a punishable crime in the eyes of the law!

Patriarchy continues to be entrenched in the legislature, and ingrained in societal institutions, leading some to think that it is a futile quest and that we can never close the gender divide.** There's a good rebuttal to this!

Since the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021, women have been wholly excluded from public office and the judiciary.
You can rebut that the above legislations such as the one-child policy are outdated and a product of the past and do not align with modern principles!

Besides, the legislation is improving in being more inclusive of women!
==US==: **Kamala Harris**'s nomination as the **Vice President for the US democratic party** is a milestone. She is the **first** woman and the first person of colour to serve as vice president.
==CANADA==: **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** made **half** the ministers in his **cabinet women.** ==SINGAPORE==, other than having a **first female president**, in the last election, 29 per cent of seats for elected Members of Parliament went to women, compared to 24% of seats during the 2015 polls.

Offering equal opportunities to all is **unlikely to improve inequality**, for some groups are **better able to exploit opportunities** available for development and advancement that capitalism affords and translate them into tangible benefits than others. Thus, **equal opportunity instead worsens inequality.**

"There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequal people" Thomas Jefferson's words remain as relevant and provocative now as it was in the 18th century – affirmative action

The US supreme court ruled 2023 that race can no longer be considered as a factor in university admissions. US supreme court reverses affirmative action, ending race-conscious admissions

 "Women are not making it to the top of any profession in the world" - Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of meta platforms, presents the bleak reality that women face in light of the modern employment landscape.

Technology-induced toxic masculinity, technology enabling men to project their control over women by the **'male gaze'**- **objectifying** women to a larger degree. The popularity of the concept rose quite recently.

Under **feminist theory,** the male gaze is a sexualized way of portraying women. By objectifying women, the male gaze **depicts women through the sexual desires of heterosexual male viewers.** It (objectifies women, implying that a women's sole purpose is to look good for a man) **depicts the female body and personality as an object for men to view, own, and conquer. Visual media that respond to masculine voyeurism will tend to sexualize women for a male viewer as well as the male characters being depicted on the screen.**

Conversely, media also perpetuates patriarchy-induced toxic masculinity too which doesn't benefit men

Patriarchy doesn't benefit men either

But you also need examples to show that the gender inequality issue is indeed getting solved!

Survival of the fittest

To what extent is **human life in general** about the **survival of the fittest?**

BALANCE COUNTER ARGUMENT:

And competition is everywhere, subject to all demographics where the adjective 'fittest' varies in meaning across different contexts.
In most settings, there is often competition among people- there ALWAYS seems to be competition among all demographics of people! - Schools for academic performance, sports in competition (There can only be 1 competitor clinching 1st place after all), in the workplace for a promotion!

POSSIBLE REBUTTAL? -> yes undeniable that there's almost always competition but it's not always the 'fittest' that get chosen' in some circumstances due to the existence of preferential treatment aka AFFIRMATIVE ACTION! In the workplace, at schools etc a set of procedures designed to; eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. **Those who come from minority backgrounds are also given opportunities**

1600 CEO endorsed the CEO action for diversity and inclusion pledge to vow that they will take the background of applicants into account and artificially increase the chances of disadvantaged people.

Intro: The term 'survival of the fittest' is a phrase that originated from Darwinian evolutionary theory as a way of describing the mechanism of natural selection.

THESIS:

Conclusion: Nowadays, it is not just merely the 'fittest' surviving themselves, but rather the '**fittest' helping the less fit to survive too.** (End on an optimistic note)
It's **not always hypercompetitive everywhere either**
No, it's not always that the fittest will survive, leaving behind the rest to lag:
  - An increasing focus on collaboration
  - uplifting the marginalised
  - celebrating **diversity instead of trying to decide who's the 'fittest' and having each individual offer something unique to the table**

emphasising introspection and reflexivity (trying to compare ourselves with ourselves and focusing on self-improvement rather than beat others)

An increasing focus on collaboration and teamwork:
Even in schools or at work, we see an increasing rise in team projects that require people to **join in a collaborative effort to achieve their goals.** Ex: PW module in the Singapore A level syllabus for instance. Those who are academically-inclined would assist their less academically-inclined project mates in order to complete the project. The Oral Presentation segment of the exam which requires collaborative effort among ALL the team members to coordinate a presentation that would run smoothly. The 'less fit' or in this case, those who struggle with their tasks would naturally be assisted by their 'more fit' project mates since each member's performance would influence each one of their grades. The 'fitter' people are inclined to help those who are 'less fit' since it's a group tals

Uplifting the marginalised:
In light of today's social climate where social justice and uplifting the marginalised is a key concern for many. Recognising and alleviating the oppression that the less privileged face in society is easier than ever.
Black Lives Matter Campaign- After witnessing the blatant racism and police brutality displayed by white officer Derek Chauvin, millions joined to protest and fight for black lives. Individuals from all walks of life joined together to speak on the oppression that black people have historically faced

On a national scale, **we have seen MANY cases of GOVERNMENTS from developed countries helping developing countries in times of crisis. FOREIGN AID EVERYWHERE! Global cooperation and collaborative efforts.**

U.S. foreign aid provides financial support for Afghanistan amounted to more than $1.1 billion in humanitarian assistance since August 2021, ever since civil wars and political strife in the developing country took place.

With the aforementioned examples of how those **blessed with systemic privileges have uplifted the marginalised, we see that it's not merely just about the survival of the fittest.**

There's also such a thing as AFFIRMATIVE ACTION? (moved up as rebuttal to CA)
Providing preferential treatment to those: a set of procedures designed to; eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior

discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. Those who come from minority backgrounds are also given opportunities

In the modern world, there has been an increasing emphasis on introspection and reflexivity when it comes to individual performance: trying to compare ourselves and focusing on self-improvement rather than beat others
MOE remove Secondary school traditional express streams/ etc

Physical violence

[**Define** it] The essence of physical violence involves **inflicting damage and destruction with the intention to hurt another**. In the ==overwhelming majority== of situations, physical violence **violates human rights** and **cannot fix the root cause of problems**. On rare occasions, when more pain and suffering will follow from pacifism or when there is no other way out, one must be **prepared to allow the use of violence- but if and only if the benefits outweigh the cost.**

ALSO just food for thought but still important, under political context- why does physical violence exist in the first place? To achieve a political agenda of course

The Palestine military fought the Jewish Army because of the economic and political discrimination that Palestinians are subject to under Jewish law (2023 MOE teacher radicalised and Palestine sympathiser planned to go overseas to join the Palestine army; detained under the Internal Security Act). + HAMAS is a political organisation whose goal is to eradicate the economic and political discrimination that Palestinians are subject to under Jewish law, turned RADICAL and violent because the situation isn't improving. + The Karens and the Burmese in the famous Karen conflict: **One may be able to negotiate a ceasefire between the 2 groups but it would be difficult to cease the long-standing division and animosity between both groups.** Physical violence in many cases, is seen as a **last, begrudging resort** simply because **all other peaceful alternatives have failed and aren't viable in producing results!** Or until these people are accorded their rights/ discrimination is eradicated which are ALL very difficult to achieve!

Look at the issue from a ==moral/legal standpoint for justification== questions because that would be your **strongest, most overarching reason** to ascertain whether something is justified.

The act of intentioning inflicting physical harm on an individual is not ethical so it cannot be justified.

1. **Physical violence cannot be justified as a matter of principle since it ==violates human rights==, and human rights are largely regarded as ==inviolable==.**

At its **core**, physical violence inflicts harm and damage ON PURPOSE which ==does not align with the moral values of a pacifist age== and the ==legal conventions of modern governance==. (YES, considering the issue from a moral and legal standpoint respectively)

- The **right to be free from violence** comes from ==Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights==, which ==decrees== that ==every human== has the ==inherent right to 'life, liberty and security of person'== //** I thought article 5 was more fitting though. Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights decrees that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." - But i can think of a reason why they didn't use it because later on ur gonna be talking about penal codes and justifying corporal punishment as a deterrent for potential crimes. Using article 5 would only contradict your point + It's kinda obvious that people shouldn't be subjected to torture and degradation…..

Physical violence **cannot coexist alongside the valorised ideals of universal human rights**. AS LONG AS every person **enjoys these rights**, physical violence cannot be justified.

Now use this UDHR to strengthen your next subpoint which is how **modern Governments in sovereign countries espouse and enshrine this article**!

- For example, Singapore's **Penal Code explicitly criminalises assault under section 351**, and the use of criminal force under section 349. Even when the involved parties perceptibly consent to mutual combat, it is still illegal to disturb the public peace by fighting in a public place.
- In June 2020, 2 men were arrested for affray after brawling outside Great World Shopping mall.

In theory, the use of physical violence **cannot be justified on moral grounds**. It is a severe transgression both in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of those who make up civilised society. The range of international and national policies proscribing violence reflects our abhorrence towards it. [Considering the issue from a moral and legal standpoint]

Could also consider our socially-progressive climate/modern moral climate that we live in to illustrate our growing disapproval of the use of violence- including in legal systems.

2. **Even when deployed as a tool in problem-solving, physical violence cannot be justified when it is ineffective in specifically tackling the root cause, since it is a blunt instrument by design.**

THIS IS A NICE WAY TO LINK TO UR PREVIOUS ARGUMENT WHICH CONSIDERS MORAL/ETHICAL STANDPOINT

For the pragmatists who are unconvinced by the lofty ideals of human rights, physical violence is still indefensible as it is largely ineffective as a tool in solving problems. At the heart of the matter, violence has an **innate tendency to descend into vicious cycles**, noted famously by Martin Luther King Jr who asserted that 'violence begets violence'.

The act of hurting others only **establishes an antagonistic relationship between aggressor and victim**, and the damage accumulated thwarts all further attempts to promote the goodwill needed to move forward. It doesn't result in anything constructive.

At a micro level, physical violence in corporal punishment is increasingly rejected as a disciplinary tactic when modern science finds it increasingly counterproductive.

- According to **Dr Elizabeth Gershoff**, a **professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at the University of Texas** in Austin, " Hitting children does not teach them right from wrong… Spanking gets their attention, but they **have not internalised why they**

- **should do the right thing in the future**. They may behave when the adult is there but do whatever they want at other times."
- According to the **American Psychological Association**, parents who hit their children are warned that this may inadvertently **impart the lesson that physical aggression solves problems, since children are highly impressionable and might mimic their parents in using force to fix behavioural problems.** Spanking can even worsen said behavioural problems when children come to resent their disciplinarians or fight back against this perceived abuse.

This is also observed at a macro level.
- The **USA's response to the 9/11 attacks with the protracted War on Terror** proves that <u>**complex international conflicts cannot be quashed by brute force and bombings.**</u>
- Even after **assassinating Osama Bin Laden**, leader of ISIS, anti-American terrorism still lives on. Ironically, it is sustained by American aggression as it thrives on fighting back and outdoing the damage the other side has done.

Use of violence in corporal and capital punishments becoming increasingly **ineffective**- many countries have abolished the Death penalty (New Mexico, Malaysia, Colorado) and wanna focus more on rehabilitative measures- SG criticised around the world for its draconian laws and zero tolerance on drug abuse- recent death penalty for someone charged under the Misuse of Drugs Act -> simply because it is ineffective in teaching criminals! Rehabilitative measures are a better alternative as opposed to violent punitive measures.

From a **logical** perspective, physical violence **cannot resolve political/ideological conflicts since they come from far more intricate and interwoven factors involving history, religion and culture at large.**

If anything, physical violence only seems to **exacerbate the conflict at hand and result in a mindless, vicious cycle of never-ending violence**, where one side continually tries to **outdo the damage that the other side has done.**

3. **However, an exception ==can be made for the use of force as a begrudging last resort==** when the <u>stakes are high and all peaceful alternatives have ==failed==</u>.

These scenarios are few and far between as they have to be sufficiently extreme and dire. When an individual, group or country faces death, and there is no nonviolent alternative on the table, it may be fair after all to allow force and violence as a last-ditch attempt at ensuring one's survival, security or sovereignty. (Ukraine's response to Russia's invasion: Clearly Ukraine was left with no choice! With the goal to protect its own sovereignty and clearly all peaceful alternatives are inviable)

- To the individual, self-defence laws permit retaliation against aggressions. Section 98 of Singapore's Penal Code states that 'every person has a right… to defend his own body.. Against any offence affecting the human body'
- So by extension, if we consider human rights to be relative instead of absolute, then meeting violence with violence is fair when one's life is at stake, such as during armed robberies and wars.
- The Just War Theory delineates the right to go to war, which consists of a set of criteria including having the right intentions and as a last resort when all peaceful and viable alternatives have been seriously tried and exhausted.
- This is applicable to real life when we see Ukraine's response to Russia's invasion. It is only logical for Ukraine to respond to Russia's violent invasion with violence in the attempt to protect its citizens and sovereignty, since the invasion was instigated by Vladimir Putin with the partisan agenda of restoring Russian influence by capturing former Soviet territories.

4. **In exceptional cases, physical violence can be justified as a ==calculated sacrifice in the short run== if it leads to ==lasting security in the future. (Considering that the long-term benefits in doing so outweigh the short-term negative impacts it imposes)== OR Physical violence can be justified because it is used in corporal and legal punishments which is crucial as a deterrent for potential**

lawbreakers-> <mark>Important for maintaining order and peace in society! FROM A UTILITARIAN STANDPOINT</mark>

- In Criminology, it is well established that incapacitation is one of the 5 purposes of punishment. Bluntly put, the Death Penalty is the most effective way of ensuring violent criminals cannot hurt anyone again when they are dead, especially for sufficiently egregious crimes.
- Execution of infamous American serial killer, kidnapper and rapist Ted Bundy is a prominent example. Life imprisonment was initially ruled out as a safe option after Bundy escaped twice in 1977, and committed more atrocities while on the run.
- Meting out the death penalty is a relatively small price to pay to bring about a net increase in public safety, as no more lives would be lost to them.
- For this reason, countries like South Africa are in favour of reintroducing capital punishment where over 75% of youth polled in 2013 in favour of the death penalty, in a country where there is an absurdly high murder rate across the country, with an average of 45 murders each day, 5 times the global mean.

Taking the life of a human being is indeed ostensibly harsh, incapacitating the worst offenders is a tried and tested way of reducing the harm that befalls the rest of society, since dead criminals commit no murders.

LGBTQ

The violence and discrimination that continues to exist against minority groups in society + and the poor Governance (Kenya and LGBTQ rights) that continues to exacerbate the issue.
The idea that discrimination can <u>never</u> be eradicated. The violence that is still exhibited towards the marginalised in the modern world, despite increased movements and activism, highlights the ever-existing/ <mark>irreconcilable</mark> conflict/tension that continues to exist between the oppressed/marginalised groups and the oppressors in society. It is precisely because of how prejudice is deeply ingrained in the minds of people which makes the eradication of discrimination impossible at large.

- **Edwin Chiloba** is a 25 yr old fashion designer, model and **LGBTQ activist**, found dead in a metal box by the side of a road of a rift valley in Kenya on 6 Jan 2023. LGBTQ+ rights activists have called for investigations into attacks on LGBTQ+ people.
- **Background**: Kenya is a **predominantly conservative Christian nation** and British colonial-era laws continue to exist, **banning homosexuality** - gay sex is a punishable crime where those guilty could face imprisonment of up to 14 years.

- In 2016, gay rights activists filed a petition against the law that bans homosexuality, arguing that this contravened Kenya's 2010 constitution and encourages discrimination. However, the judges at Kenya's high court **rejected the bid to repeal these laws, citing that there was a lack of evidence on discrimination.**
- Peter Kaluma is a member of parliament and opposed the recent rule to legalise homosexual relationships, he even vowed to foot a bill to prohibit these relations and even suggested stiffer penalties to be subjected to those caught.

Homosexuality/ Politics/

Prejudice has been **successfully countered** in the recent past, giving us **good grounds to believe that together with the human capacity for change**, it **can** be eliminated with time. This real possibility is **strengthened by the major trends of globalisation like democratisation**, strengthening of the **international** community, travel and migration, and new media, all of which if harnessed for good will help to completely and **permanently get rid of prejudice.**

This is a very STRONG conclusion that resonates with me on the possibility of eliminating discrimination:

We still **have a long way to go in eliminating prejudice**, but the **success** we had thus far testifies that it can be done and that humans are not inherently prejudiced. The danger in believing we cannot completely eradicate it is that **we accept prejudice as a part of ourselves or something to live with**. This leads to a **diminished will to fight and an increasing blindness** to it. Without this firm **conviction that we can get rid of prejudice both in unity and diversity**, in our individual capacities and on a global scale, we **rob ourselves of true hope and make a mockery of past efforts.**

BUT! Recently in 2023,
- The **Supreme Court of Kenya** ruled that **everyone has a right of association and criticised the Government for failing to do so for the past decade.**
- Although **same sex union remains illegal** in Kenya, this **landmark decision** is the **culmination of a decade-long legal battle**, and a **victory nevertheless** for the LGBTQ+ community.
- The supreme court stated that "**Human rights are inherent and held simply because of being a human."**
- However, this was met with **strong opposition, mainly from evangelical churches and conservative politicians**. The hashtag 'SayNoToLGBTQinKenya' has been trending for the past week.
- **Peter Kaluma**, an MP allied to the opposition, vowed to **table a bill in parliament** to **prohibit homosexuality and impose stiffer penalties, including life in prison for those engaged in same sex liaisons.**

Singapore's diverse demographic needs are often overlooked for the state's objectives. Focus on housing policies that favour traditional families. State prioritises housing for traditional families to promote societal stability and higher birth rates so singles and LGBTQ individuals under age 35 find limited options and feel

marginalised. Current policies may not resonate with evolving demographics and lifestyles, showing a gap in balancing state and individual needs.

Such policies, while aligned with the state objectives, do not always resonate with the evolving demographic landscape and preferences, illustrating a gap in balancing the state's needs against individual preferences and societal changes.

Lit/Arts

EVEN in Literature/ the Arts we can still see prejudice! Prejudice is pervasive in our society and could easily extend to different spheres of our life- INCLUDING THE ARTS! From the arts to education, it seems like there are no spheres in life which are exempt from some form of prejudice.

- **The SALT (South Asian Literature in Translation) Project has been set up by the University of Chicago in partnership with the American Literary Translators Association.**
- **Founders of this project Daniel Hahn found that too little translated literary works from South Asian languages made it into the US libraries or other Western Anglophone markets. In fact,**
- **Literary works translated from South Asian languages accounted for less than 1% of all translated literature for over the past 10 years in the US.**
- **It was found that this issue was not caused by merely funding but also PREJUDICE. The US/UK publishing world is predominantly white.**

Police brutality towards the marginalised in society: The failure of the justice system in protecting the disadvantaged/ the abuse in power/ corruption

- **Derek Chauvin and George Floyd case**-> some condemn Chauvin's display of **police brutality** -> where justice systems are put in place and meant to protect its citizens (ESPECIALLY the **most vulnerable and marginalised**), what was shown instead was **an abuse of power**. In spite of how societies have become increasingly liberal and progressive, cases like these continue to elucidate that the marginalised can never truly be 'free'
-

Terrorism

'We **must** surrender our human rights to win the battle against terrorism.' Do you agree?

IT'S AN ABSOLUTE QUESTION SO WHEN UR ARGUING YES, YOU MUST MAKE THE SITUATION SOUND DIRE

(It's a smart risk to take)

Surrendering our human rights is a calculated decision that can be justified if it would guarantee us lasting peace and security in the long run

Privacy is a human right that is often surrendered to mitigate terrorism,............

Chats/Search engines in SG monitored by the authorities, signal to authorities when an individual is at a high risk of being radicalised by high exposure to extreme content

2017 infant care teacher radicalised

In exchange for eliminating terrorism, we surrender our rights.

(It's a devastating situation)

Given the tangible devastating consequences that arise from terrorism, we must do whatever we can to win the battle against it~~, even if that means surrendering our rights.~~ To alleviate these devastating consequences as far as possible

Avoid terrorist attacks at all costs!

9/11 terrorist attack shocked the world

NSA of US controversially trapped into the phone calls

We must surrender our privacy in order to avoid the recurrence of more cases like this in the future!

We must not because it wouldn't solve terrorism, since terrorism is a multifaceted issue that will not be solved by stripping people of their rights. Not the root solution- and even then, there are cases where terrorism happens because rights are violated, so violating rights would, by extension, only be exacerbating the problem.

But also consider the root cause/very complex nature of terrorism-> **Terrorism is a complex issue due to many interwoven cultural issues that cannot be eradicated just by limiting the rights of humans. We must not because doing so would not solve terrorism, a complex issue with…..**

Long-standing hatred and divisions among groups: The Karen conflict since the 1940s between the burmese and the Karen people cannot be easily solved with limiting rights!

Rights are sacrosanct and should not be sacrificed

Given how progressive and liberal the world has become, surrendering rights to solve an issue does not align with the values of the modern world so we must not. Besides, we are advanced enough to use other measures to mitigate the issue– implicit in this

essay question is the assumption that there are no other measures to fight terrorism but there are! Rehabilitative programmes in place

~~Unconventional but interesting argument that I probably might not wanna risk writing in an exam: We must not surrender our human rights because terrorism is an issue itself that strips people of their rights. We would be no better than terrorists themselves if we use their tactics to win against terrorism.~~
More so violence because of extreme beliefs
Stoop down to their level to project violence onto the population

The **complete elimination of terrorism is unrealistic** due to the bewilderingly complex root causes of terrorism. However, terrorism at the very least can **still be fought against, prevented and even ameliorated with the right measures.**

Terrorism is so rampant because our nature as humans: uncompromising and rigid in our beliefs. Can always talk about the prefrontal cortex being the critical region of the brain

Usually these people come from countries whose laws and beliefs are governed primarily by religion- such as countries who practise the religious fundamentalism form of Governance. They cannot accept anything that is beyond the stipulations of their religious texts.

Many of the most publicly visible forms of terrorism would be terrorism that arises from **radical religious fundamentalism**- like radical organisations that carry out terrorist acts in the name of religion. However, these groups tend to be **unreflective of the vast majority** of believers; religiously motivated terrorists are often only a **small fraction of the entire religious population** which **makes it easier to believe that with proper rehabilitation and guidance, the threat that terrorists pose can be minimised.**

A lot of terrorist cases arise from radical religious fundamentalism. In fact, most cases of terrorism elucidate that terrorists were **religious fundamentalists** who later became **extremists**, after **being exposed to extreme propaganda. (**Once again related to media and censorship: There is a **need for censorship of media** in order to **prevent** these kinds of cases from happening. The **proliferation of propaganda** could result in **radicalisation** and later on **terrorism**. Censorship in this case acts as a **'protective mechanism'** to prevent radicalisation. A highly educated populace does not obviate a need for censorship of the media that is accessible to the public! **MOE teacher radicalised in 2023**, **Palestine** sympathiser planning to join militant group in Palestine against the Jewish military after **seeing political and economic discrimination that Palestines face under Jewish law**.)

Religious beliefs are deeply ingrained in the mindsets of individuals; it is a fundamental part of their identity as religious beliefs would subsequently shape their worldviews, opinions on certain matters, which makes the elimination of terrorism impossible.

- From an **objective** standpoint, eliminating this form of terrorism becomes **more realistic** as religious fundamentalists **only occupy a small fraction** of the entire religious population.
- In addition, the advancement of modern technology has made it **easier to identify, monitor and eliminate possible terrorist threats.** The existence of **surveillance devices as well as tracking programmes** are able to **monitor the communication devices of suspected terrorists**, allowing authorities to take necessary measures preemptively before potential terrorist attacks. **SG SECURE APP - Singapore's fight against terrorist attacks!** In addition, the authorities can also track the online search engines of potentially radicalised individuals, take the necessary actions to prevent further radicalisation. **This ensures that the further spread of terrorism can be rightfully nipped at the bud**. **2017 radicalised infant care teacher was detained in Singapore under the Internal Security Act**
- MORE recent ex: 11 Jan 2023, Singapore arrests teacher who planned to join militant group in Palestine over terror-related offences. He had intended to engage in armed conflict against the Israeli military.
- Furthermore, technology allows society to **reach out to and treat potential terrorists,** who are often mentally unbalanced, thereby eliminating the threat that they pose to society.

BUT the complete eradication of terrorism, by and large, is still unrealistic!!!
- For **religious fundamentalists who engage in terrorist acts in the name of religion**, it would be incredibly difficult to eliminate terrorism because these are **deep-seated religious beliefs which are difficult to change**. Precisely because religious beliefs are **deeply-ingrained into someone; it is a part of someone's identity, these beliefs cannot be changed overnight.**
- In addition, it is crucial to consider that terrorism is the by-product of a vast array of factors, terrorism is often **a result of socioeconomic problems, political discrimination etc. (similar to the root cause of crime) Sometimes terrorism occurs because individuals are stuck in a vicious, intergenerational cycle of poverty, discrimination, inequality and violence. All these systemic issues are COMPLEX and interwoven, making it very hard to eliminate these issues.**
- Political organisation **Hamas** turned radical as a result of political and economic discrimination against the Palestinians living under Jewish governance. **BACKGROUND: Hamas is an organisation whose goal is to politically liberate Palestine from Israeli occupation and transform the country into an islamic state. However, they turned radical and resorted to engaging in terrorism as a result of the continued political and economic discrimination against the Palestines living under Jewish Governance.** REALLY, unless the Palestinians are **granted their political and economic rights**, there is still the possibility that **terrorism is an expression of frustration and grievance.**
- To eliminate terrorism completely, one must first eliminate long-standing hatreds and divisions, which is realistically impossible. Furthermore, one must also accord certain groups of individuals the rights that they deserve, which is impossible too!!!!!
- **The Karen conflict between the burmese people and the Karen people has been a longstanding conflict since 1949.** One may be able to help the Burmese and the Karen people to negotiate a ceasefire during the Karen conflict but one cannot easily eliminate the mistrust that they have had of each other since the

colonial era. As long as the hatred continues to exist, the possibility of terrorism will too. Similarly, **unless the Palestinians are granted their political and economic rights, there is still the possibility that terrorism is an expression of frustration and grievance.**

One of the major root causes of terrorism is the long-standing hatred and divisions between people, which is very difficult to eliminate, making the elimination of terrorism impossible.

Religiously motivated terrorists make up the majority of terrorists and it is difficult to

Very nice terrorism phrases:

1) The **moral imperative** to **uphold the basic tenets of human rights** underscores the need to uphold a **shared responsibility from every nation to eradicate terrorism (do all countries have equal responsibility to fight terrorism or is it more of your country your problem? I suppose due to the transnational nature of terrorism, all should come together to fight it! But richer countries who have more resources readily may have a greater responsibility to fight it than countries with less resources/ countries with more problems on their own)**

2) Because of the Prima farcic? Moral impermissibility of terrorism and its profound violation of an international community ratified legal code, each member of the international community needs to exhibit an equal response against violence and intimidation.

3) ********Instead of falling into the trap of assigning blame and inertia, grounding ourselves in the quintessential belief of** equality in responsibility, reasonable within each country's limits, presents a more **progressive and inclusive means** to effectively combat modern day terrorism.

But to label the eradication of terrorism an 'impossible dream' would be too fatalistic. The successes that we have had thus far testifies that it can be done. The danger in believing that it is impossible is the acceptance that terrorism is something that we have to live with as part of our lives. This erroneously leads to a diminished will to fight it and an

War and conflict

War cannot be justified because of the sheer amount of destruction it causes, it involves unwilling innocent people outside of the original conflict and subjects them to inhumane suffering.

Wars cause sheer destruction and suffering to such unprecedented lengths that it just cannot be justified.

Wars cannot be justified if there are other alternative ways to resolve the conflict between 2 parties- wars should be seen as the absolute last resort.

Inevitable because of the **incompatibility of ideologies/beliefs** between different countries/parties, spread **capitalism**

USA wants to achieve **liberal hegemony through promoting liberal democracy also entails progressive values like respecting human rights and democratic peace**
US tries to democratise countries through the NATO

Organised and prolonger conflict, extreme violence, economic and social disruption, high mortality
Self defence, political dissent, superiority
Western narrative that Russian aggression and Putin's desire to resuscitate the Soviet Union as the source

Ukraine used to be a part of the Soviet Union, strong connections with Russia
Want sovereignty and independence from the Soviet Union
They started to move closer to the Western side
Western Ukrainians- nationalist, fervour for their own country, believe in their sovereignty
East- ethnic Russia, support Russia more
The US and the NATO are largely involved in the war as well, want the entire world to be democratic, Ukraine is so close to Russia

Russia is threatened by Ukraine's allies with the US

Liberal hegemony America wants to spread capitalism to Russia and China, also entails progressive values like respecting human rights, and democratic peace Spread democracy, spread capitalism, could alienate Russia, Western world trying to exert its dominance

Feel like Russia is aggressive

Israel- a state of israel to protect independence, has support from the US, UK who support their right to self defence
Zionism- Jewish nationalist movement to create a Jewish state, a state for the Jews in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews, believes that is their homeland

Palestinians fighting for their own rights, Israel slowly taking over their territory
Want their own territory
HAMAS the terrorist group- free palestine, the total eradication of Israel without justification, very anti-jewish

Destruction of culture

The pursuit of peace post war- people will remember the wars and the atrocities, learn from history, arbitration (consensus of where to go ahead from there)
The creation of the UN after WWII

Crime

CEO of SpaceX Elon Musk agreed to pay US10,000 to settle a defamation lawsuit by Tesla critic who became a hero to short-sellers with his Twitter posts and then accused the CEO of smearing him with false allegations that he menaced the electric-car makers' employers

Apparently Mr Musk's public criticism of him triggered an online hate campaign in which he was accused of being a 'liar, a murderer, a terrorist and a deranged maniac'. So essentially the settlement achieves the goal of clearing his name

Stress and pressure

- It can be self-imposed or due to expectations from others; it can be short-term such as when there is an urgent deadline, or long-term such as

when one feels pressured to lead his or her life in a different way. It can be argued that pressure when based on goals will be more likely to be a motivating force, while pressure that is experienced over a longer period of time, will more likely cause one unhappiness

●

Poverty

- Based on a report by OECD (Organisation of economic co-operation and development), it was found that **698 million people live in poverty as of 2022.**
- An estimated **150 million that live in world hunger**
- The UN estimated that 20 billion USD would be needed a year to solve global hunger by 2030. US contributed 60 billion USD to space research and exploration efforts in 2022 alone. The total financial contributions by all countries towards space research and exploration accumulated to 200 billion in 2022 alone.

Food waste

- Singapore generated an estimated **600 tonnes of food waste in 2020**, that is equivalent to **wasting 1 bowl of rice per citizen**.
- **Cosmetic filtering: Pasir Panjang Wholesale Food market has disposed ⅓ of** wholesale produce after inspection, throwing away foods that do not appear visually appealing/ have blemishes on them. Disposal of almost 30,000kg of food daily.

Leisure

- Singapore being only **1 degree north of the equator**, experiences **tropical climate all year long**. Singaporeans mainly travel during the holidays to gain a respite from the heat, seen in 22% of SGPs planning to travel from June to August 2022, during the hottest months of the year. Genting Highlands and Cameron highlights are prime spots for Singaporeans to travel to because of the cool weather.

Taking risks: it is essential and should be encouraged
Taking risks recklessly without any careful planning should not be encouraged as it will only threaten the stability of social institutions. Excessive and negligent risk-taking was the main catalyst behind the economic recession that crippled Europe and has inevitably damaged the foundations of families and livelihoods.

Steve Jobs took a risk in ignoring the standard market research that preceded many product launches and designed products that people did not yet know what they wanted.
There would never have been any cutting-edge phone constructed if these individuals had not decided to allow for some degree of uncertainty in their endeavours.

Risk is an essential part of any discovery and only with sustained risk-taking can communities hope to progress beyond their existing pool of skills

It is the most direct way to learn important lifelong lessons like how to deal with failure and grapple with the possibility of alternative viewpoints.

Unique opportunity to see the world through new eyes.

Beauty and appearances:

- Provided that humans are **visual creatures** and rely on their sense of sight, physical appearances tend to be the **first immediate factor that is perceived and, by and large, judged by individuals.** In fact, physical appearances **form the first immediate impressions which could subsequently influence how an individual is perceived** by others:
- Halo effect example where a stranger is judged for their appearance at first glance and if they happen to be good looking, others associate them with positive words. To put theory into practice, research has shown that good-looking people are less likely to be put through criminal proceedings and even if they are found guilty in court, they tend to be given less harsh sentences than their counterparts who are visually-challenged.

In spheres where skill sets play an important role, the vast majority would argue that abilities are judged more so than physical appearances, since the individual abilities translate into value.

Examine the view that **our society** is **obsessed with perfection.**

SPERM
Don't want an essay to be so area driven THINK REASONS
Maybe think characteristics instead and use the different areas of SG as evidence
Perfection itself is kind of absolute
Stakeholders

Being a country with limited resources and limited opportunities, it is no wonder that Singapore is a hypercompetitive country that demands nothing but utmost perfection in order for one to succeed.
Education sector- compete to secure educational opportunities that could radically change the trajectory of one's life. Singapore's GCE A level is regarded as the most difficult A level in the world
Or also our improvement in PISA scores from 2012 to 2015 (now best in the world) - our enduring efforts towards towards attaining perfection

PISA- Continually striving to improve teaching pedagogies to provide the best educational experience for students which paid off 2018 PISA test scores vs 2015 PISA test scores show a candid, remarkable improvement
OECD report- SG has one of the largest working hours in the world
Our narrow, stringent definition of success
The 5Cs- Credit card, country club membership, car, cash, condominium

Being obsessed with perfection is a characteristic that is deeply ingrained in the cultures of Asian countries, and Singapore is no stranger to this.
The perfect trading seaport-
Asia's first financial and technological hub

keeping up appearances and not wanting to lose face

Given our dark history, it is precisely our obsession with perfection that enabled us to survive and transform ourselves from an obscure, third world nation to an Asian economic superpower. <u>The merits gained from striving to be perfect saved us, which is why we're still currently obsessed with perfection and cannot bear to rest on our laurels.</u>

Perfection/a pristine reputation for our political parties to uphold since they are the one steering the country to either success or doom
British soldiers underestimated their Japanese opponents- led to Japanese occupation
This affected the present where we are still trying to perfect our 5 pillars of defence- now 6 additions of digital defence to protect ourselves and maintain internal security, national harmony and protect our sovereignty.

Ironically, it is this obsession with perfection that has raised numerous health concerns in Singapore, spurring us to take a step back and reconsider our obsession with it. Being obsessed with perfection leads to burn outs and deteriorate mental people's health, and since SG citizens are becoming increasingly liberal and progressive
There has also a decreasing emphasis (or at least some form of effort towards it) on perfection and instead- self-improvement- emphasised and reinforced

Globalisation

Globalisation is the process of the **integration of various cultures and people** into a **single global network**. As diverse groups of people are integrated worldwide, they each

bring with them unique beliefs and practices, languages and history, which make up their culture.

In the integration of various cultures, **cultural homogenisation coupled with the destruction of numerous unique cultural identities is inevitable.**

Despite the **inevitable erosion of certain aspects of individual cultures,** globalisation is merely another step in the ==evolution of culture==, and individual societies are still able to ==**retain their unique cultural identities** with the **simultaneous** creation of an unprecedented global cultural identity brought about by globalisation.==

Westernisation and the global dominance of American culture

- **Popularised by Western shows** that **espouse western values** which largely contrast Asian values- Western **mindsets and values of independence, individuality over community** are popularised through these platforms TV channels Disney channel, Nickelodeon channel especially among the Generation Z children. **Cultural Homogenisation** occurs due to **mass media**, where **broadcasting corporations transmit cultural values** and **societal practices** of the developed countries these corporations are based on to the developing countries. **Vast majority of movie releases** originate from **Hollywood** which, by and large, reflect American ideals and social practices.
- Western clothes and styles popularised by these series and shows-> Denim, jeans, sneakers, jerseys
- On top of that, English is considered a universal language which is learnt in schools around the world, and English is the predominant language spoken in America and European countries so it seems like the Western market and culture is indeed dominating the world, threatening the existence of niche cultures around the world.
- The dominance of a **universal language like English** is resulting in the **erosion of unique languages (dialects etc) in these cultures**. Of course, it is becoming increasingly ==**important to standardise communication with people around the globe**==, this is just a byproduct of globalisation where the world is becoming **increasingly interconnected.** Mass media and corporate advertising is done in **English**.
- An easy way to counter the threat of globalisation/ dominance of American culture is to say that the American culture is an ==**eclectic**

- **mish-mash of other various cultures**- the **Native Americans, African Americans, European settlers and even Asians.**
- - **America has had a diverse history and welcomes individuals of all nationalities and identities to migrate there from an early time.**

In certain instances of globalisation, we have seen these corporations adapting to the culture of the country it is in. Prime example is McDonald's- Hong Kong rice burger/ Singapore's Nasi Lemak burger

- ● Large multinational corporations are predominantly concentrated in America and Western Europe, and these corporations tend to market products that are a **reflection of their own culture worldwide.**

- - A large element of culture would have to be the unique language that is used to communicate. This even extends to different dialects of the language- **Hokkien/Cantonese dialects of the Mandarin language** representing the different sub-cultures existing in China.
- - **Dove campaign** which celebrates the natural physical differences personified by all women and encourages them to feel confident in their own skin. Nancy Etcoff, a Harvard psychologist who examined the campaign then and now, found that more women today describe beauty on a wider variety of qualities outside of just looks, such as confidence.

Governance and politics:

Based on the **social contract theory**, **Democratic states** also have **contractual obligation** to **steward taxpayer's monies** to _____ invest in initiatives for the greater good/ common good

create accessible and affordable healthcare that safeguards every citizen's health.

'Governments should never hide the truth from their people.' Do you agree?

Governments should never hide the truth from its people since doing so could erroneously erode public trust and transparency, both of which are crucial in the foundations of a well-functioning Government. AND also the relationship between a Government and its people is very fragile and tenuous one that could change drastically. This may lead to a loss of authority and power of the Government, which would impede a

country from prospering-> THINK how can a country prosper if its people does not even trust the ruling authorities?
The people would be constantly against it! Think Myanmar under the military junta- high political dissent-> country is in shambles and cannot prosper since its people are against its rulers, almost impossible to live in harmony.

[Topic Sentence] Governments should never hide the truth from their people as transparency and accountability are important factors in maintaining trust between them and their citizens.

[Elaboration of Topic Sentence] Each government has a **vested interest in establishing and upkeeping a bond of trust** as it greatly eases the already difficult and complex task of ruling over the masses. **Any hint of concealment or subterfuge on the part of the state, especially when attempts are made to cover up flaws in the government itself, will lead to a loss of authority and destabilisation.**

[Example] A clear example of this would be the recent furore surrounding the **PAP** government, which has maintained its strong mandate in Singapore by emphasising its stellar track record founded on a clean reputation that borders on infallibility. In July 2023, uncharacteristically, **two Cabinet Ministers, Mister Shanmugam and Balakrishnan, were accused of using their positions of influence to secure special privileges for themselves by renting government-owned bungalows at Ridout Road.** This **rare fracture in the reputation of the leading political party was exacerbated by the Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan Jin's behaviour, who, in the same week, was caught using an unpleasant expletive to accompany his accusation of MP Jamus Lim as a populist.** His resignation inadvertently revealed his engagement in illicit conduct with another member of Parliament, Cheng Li Hui.

[Explanation of Example] Even though the initial allegations of **corruption and criminal wrongdoing** were eventually put to rest, this torrid period could be recognised as a significant shock to the otherwise **cast-iron trust** between the Singaporean people and the party that has ruled over them since independence.

[Link] What we can derive from this saga, and others like it, is that the relationship between the people and their government is a **truly fragile one,**

where <mark>any perceived or actual suppression of truth wil</mark>l, at the very least, take a long time and a plethora of investigation and explanation to heal. At worst, in the long run, it could be the start of a <mark>ripple effect of distrust within the populace which could eventually topple the government.</mark>

Should only smart people be allowed to vote?

Justification question type!!!
Don't forget to use distancing language
STAND + REASON

For:
From a pragmatist's perspective, voting is a serious affair with real consequences, so only smart people should be allowed to vote since they are **intelligent enough to comprehend the complex issues of the country they are in.**

/ From a utilitarian perspective, allowing only smart people to vote would achieve the greatest good for the most number of people since it is likely that smart people are capable of making well-informed decisions, which a net benefit for society at large
Avoid this because it is a sweeping statement

Against:
From a moral standpoint, voting is a fundamental human right that should be accessible to every individual regardless of their intellect level. Voting is an avenue for individuals' voices and concerns to be heard and put into effect

Disenfranchising the less intellectually-capable may inadvertently exacerbate discriminatory issues in society, so the right to vote should not only be limited to smart people. (May send out the false message that only smart people should be allowed to further their interests/ implicit assumption/ stereotypes)

Well, as callous as it sounds, humans are inherently biassed towards smart people and since a well-functioning Government requires trust and support from its people, the high ranks of a political should only be restricted to smart people.

How far should Governments have the right to restrict the freedom of its citizens?

Governments have the right to restrict the freedom of its citizens <mark>insofar as they do not violate rights</mark> (and there must be a legitimate reason)
Governments have the right to restrict the freedom of its citizens especially if these freedoms could **potentially deepen faultlines and divisions between groups in societies and threaten internal order.**

Governments should not be restricting the freedom of its citizens since it could lead to an egregious abuse of political power which may potentially infringe and violate basic human rights.
Most commonly seen in totalitarian nations
Cut off internet from a certain time period
Completing ban foreign content in order to keep the nation 'pure' and prevent the spread of Western values and Western influence in North Korea
One should note that these restrictions of freedom do not come with good intentions, and are mere abuses of power and authority

Besides, when the freedom of citizens are restricted to such an overwhelming extent and there is even one hint of subterfuge from the Governments, political dissent could rise among people which would not bode well for Governments and internal security either. Governments will need to exercise control and restrain themselves from restricting too many freedoms as doing too much would cause them to lose political dominance in a nation
Burmese people outraged by the internet restrictions, they all set pictures of former leader Aung San Su Kyi as their profile pictures on Facebook- a lack of support for the military junta.

Restricting freedom

Freedom of speech/ massive protests- they are avenues for people to have meaningful discourse and conversations of issues in the nation, surely these issues are big enough if people are protesting about them

By restricting the freedom of speech, the Government would short-change its societies by inhibiting the flow of meaningful discourse that would be sparked from people's words.
About deciding where to draw the line for racial satire in Singaporean society- UOB advertisement under fire 2019, caricature of ethnic minorities in SG. A pair of indian siblings

Notwithstanding the validity of the aforementioned arguments, one must concede that Governments still possess the right to restrict the freedom of its citizens in times of crises under the pretext of protecting their citizens, which they are <mark>legally obligated to do.</mark>

Restricted the freedom to move about anywhere, people to stay at homes unless of emergency
Mandatory to wear masks everywhere
Practise social distancing
These restrictions were only lifted when there was an improvement to the crisis.
Also heavy censorship online as well

Governments

SG

DRACONIAN LAWS: SG IS KNOWN FOR ITS DRACONIAN LAWS

List down all the draconian laws now!

Under the Misuse of Drugs Act, those guilty are liable to be sentenced to the Death penalty which showcased SG's zero tolerance on drug use. Singapore's staunch stance on death penalty being imposed on those who consume drugs

Fine for littering could go up to $600-$700.

Section 351 of the Penal Code criminalises assault and battery

Section 377a of the penal code before it was repealed- imprisonment for 2 years for. Males to be in a mutual, consensual relationship?

$500 fines for carrying a durian on public transport, all these signs put up everywhere

Why does SG uphold internationalist principles and uphold international law? Simply because SG is a small nation that thrives from <u>a rule-based and rule of law-based</u>

international order. A trading nation like Singapore, in particular, thrives on a relatively predictable global environment. International legal rules help to foster such an environment.

SG topped the 2019 Xinhua-Baltic International Shipping Centre Development Index, which ranks cities that offer port and shipping business services, for the sixth consecutive year. The port attracts 130,000 vessel calls on average a year, while the maritime industry accounts for 7% of Singapore's GDP and 170,000 jobs
The new generation of leaders and Singaporeans will have to form bonds and connections afresh, forge their own compact, find their own ways of working together and strike their own balances.

ASEAN exists to **mitigate these visceral diversities**: **ensure order / civility in inter-state relations given tumultuous history of region**

Singapore is still a little **red dot** in an uncertain, volatile world. To **survive and thrive, we must stand out compared to other countries**. We need to **be <mark>more resilient and nimble than others in responding to change</mark>**. We must do things that **others cannot do, and do the things that others can do, even better.**

SG joined ASEAN because of the **political and regional influence it could bestow us** given our **small size** + **international cooperation and diplomacy** with the other Asian countries too! **Solidarity** between the ASEAN nations!

Of course we also see this in other **major political unions** as well like the **European nations coming together as EU**- **regional power and influence granted to these nations**
Membership in organisations grants **more political influence than size might warrant** bc of principles of non-discrimination / unity

This requires us to reach a broad consensus on the economic and social changes necessary, the Singaporean identity we aspire to forge, and the kind of politics we want to have.

They have to continue to deliver **effective and sound government**, while accommodating the growing diversity of views. And they have to foster a more open spirit in our society, even as we strengthen the common cause holding us together as Singaporeans.

Some popular decisions made by ignorant or unscrupulous governments may be **detrimental** to the country. As such, I agree that a **good government needs to be able to bite the bullet and make unpopular decisions that are crucial for the country's survival.**

The government is the **only institution with a bird's eye view of all stakeholders** within the country and arguably the **strongest institution with the most power and resources**. Thus, the government **sees the big picture** and is **able to weigh the benefits and costs pragmatically**, before deciding on its actions, OF COURSE **with the caveat** that the Government has good intentions and is not corrupt.

Issue of privacy/control of the Gov/Social Contract theory
The **National Security Agency (NSA) is the US**, a **governing body in the United States of America**, which had **controversially tapped on to phone calls and messages of individuals to track terrorist activities**. When news of these nationwide spying was leaked, many individuals were outraged at such a massive breach of privacy. It would not be difficult to empathise with the Americans over such a blatant breach of privacy. However if we consider the context under which the surveillance program was implemented, **the issue is not as black and white as it seems.** The surveillance program was implemented in the **aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.** In the immediate aftermath, **strict security measures** were put in place such as **body scans in the airport**. Individuals, at that time, were **more than willing to sacrifice their personal privacy in exchange for security.** US citizens also failed to recognize just how valuable the policy is after living through a long era of peace. Thus, unpopular decisions must be made in order to ensure the well-being of citizens.

Also in the local context can talk about **NIMBYISM**!

Can also bring up the idea of the Social Contract Theory to justify the NSA's decision: citizens exchanging their privacy and power to gain protection from the State/Government

A well functioning Government, which is crucial for the well-being of the country, requires trust and support from its people so it should also make popular decisions at times.

Moreover, people today are more educated and are more fervent in fighting for change that they deem beneficial even if it may not be true. This would mean that if a good government were to lose popularity among its people, it might lose its power and this could lead to a transient government which could hinder long-term progress

For example, the Singapore government has implemented many beneficial policies such as the **Central Provident Fund (CPF)**, a **compulsory and comprehensive saving plan for working Singaporeans and Permanent Residents which would fund their retirement,** healthcare and housing needs. A **recent review** of the policy to **increase minimum contribution sum** has caused **protests** amongst some Singaporeans. In this situation, the government's decisions were **well founded and for the benefit** of the people. However, some Singaporeans were **unhappy** about it. This puts Singapore's government in a tight spot because **they could lose popularity and thus lose its governance over Singapore.** And the increase in GST as well- increase to 9% in the near future

Being stubborn in making unpopular decisions could end up **harming** citizens instead. This can occur when governments are **ignorant of the current situation or if the government**

is corrupt. An ignorant government <mark>may mistake the possible merits of the decision</mark> or they could <mark>underestimate the costs of the decision.</mark> **(Hence, the validity and importance of an opposition party in parliament)**
And most of the times, these decisions are unpopular among citizens simply because they are dumb decisions.

Brazil won the bid to **host the 2014 FIFA World Cup.** However, the victory was not celebrated by many. With **many** parts of the country **undeveloped and social services uncared** for, many Brazilians were **not keen on the idea of spending billions of dollars on huge soccer stadiums that would serve no other purpose other than hosting the World Cup.** As such, the disgruntled members of the public took to the streets and carried out **massive protests, hampering the preparations and infrastructure building** for the World Cup. Although the government justified its spending by **citing the huge tourism revenue and the boosting of Brazil's image, much of their claims were overly optimistic.** Multiple economic studies have shown that **hosting major sporting events have more often than not led to more social problems and negative economic benefits**. People's **standard of living might deteriorate because of the huge debt the government might incur due to hosting a major global event.**

Do politicians have the most control/power?

Politicians vs citizens

The Government has the final say in many decisions that will have tremendous effects on its citizens. This is notorious in totalitarian states where the Government practises dictatorship. The <mark style="background-color:cyan">**National Security Agency (NSA) in the US**</mark>, a <mark>governing</mark> **body in the United States of America**, which had <mark style="background-color:lime">**controversially tapped on to phone calls and messages of individuals to track terrorist activities**</mark>. When news of these **nationwide spying** was leaked, many individuals were outraged at **such a massive breach/infrigement of privacy**. It would **not be difficult to empathise with the Americans** over such a blatant breach of privacy. However if we <u>consider the **context** under which the surveillance program was implemented</u>, **the issue** <mark>is not as black and white</mark> **as it seems.** The surveillance program was implemented in the <mark style="background-color:cyan">**aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks to protect US citizens from another terrorist case by amping up security and surveillance to prevent the recurrence of a similar case in the future**</mark>. In the immediate aftermath, **strict security measures** were put in place such as **body scans in the airport**. Individuals, at that time, were <u>**more than willing to sacrifice their personal privacy in exchange for security.**</u>

Understand though that the citizens also can very much control what the Government does- at least in a country that practises democracy. And in order for the Government to be effective, it must firstly be respected and trusted by its citizens. The Government would only gain the respect and trust of its citizens by firstly listening to its citizens.

Events vs politicians in shaping the future

The question whether leaders can handle the volatility and unpredictability of unforeseen events is more pressing than ever.

Momentous events that are beyond the control of the politician mould the future because of the complex challenges and consequences they engender.
For all the messiness that arbitrary events have thrown at humanity, politicians have proven their competence in steering their nations away from ruin and at best, a promising future.

The worst politicians have demonstrated their incompetence in creating more complex problems for their societies to wrestle with.

The **2008 Subprime mortgage crisis** unveiled the **inadequacy of American politicians** as they blindsided by the schemes that were concocted in the underbelly of Wall Street. Urgent environmental efforts to reduce global warming did little to stem the arbitrary natural disasters of Hurricane Harvey.

Cannot deny that their actions are powerful in steering the fates of their people. **Trump's politicking**- his **aggressive** moves to **overhaul the historic Iranian nuclear deal** and the **Trans-pacific Partnership** established under **Obama's administration** have inadvertently **derailed past collaborations and set in motion a new reality.**

It is perhaps only in retrospect can we fully appreciate how the decisions of politicians have shaped human history, especially because of their access to and control over resource allocation in their nations. A small country like SG **is capable of overcoming its Achilles heel of a shortage of natural resources to become a Southeast Asian economic superpower is a result of ingenious policymaking. Politicians constant control over national planning and a country's resources gives them substantial power over the fates of their citizens.**

We see politicians playing crucial roles of legitimising the efforts and voices of the disenfranchised. Politicians possess the prerogative to cement the values that these socially progressive events push forth, shaping the country's culture and beliefs in the long run.

In view of how politicians have great say over the internal and external environments of societies and control over tangible societal narratives, politicians are still very much the masters of our fate.
OH nice for qn on who has more control right- sometimes it's not just either one side having disproportionately more power than the other, they go hand in hand
Just as politicians leverage on their authority and political dominance to uplift and empower the marginalised in society, citizens' collective support for the politician (power in masses) are what legitimise the politicians' authority in the first place. Both sides' power irrevocably depend on one another and there are instances where both help boost the other side's power.

V nice quote to use at the intro and end with conclusion
According to Thomas Hobbes, **human life would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" in the absence of political order and law.** In its absence, we would live in a state of nature, where each person has unlimited natural freedoms, including the "right to all things" and thus the **freedom to plunder, rape, and murder; there would be an endless "war of all against all"**
Although a strong opposition would seem to put a damper on efficiency, the conflict and subsequent revaluation of ideas it generates, as well as its role as **a check on abuses of power by the ruling party, do far more to ensure a country's survival and long term** progress.

The presence of a strong opposition helps a country to progress further by **stimulating discourse on important national issues.**

The presence of a strong opposition is often beneficial as it acts as a **check on absolute power, discouraging abuses of power like corruption.**

A strong opposition would in fact be necessary for a country's continued progress and survival, since it **averts the possibility of an oppressive or incompetent regime** and its provides a **mechanism whereby corrupt or incompetent regimes can be removed from power.**

Those who extol the benefits of a government without a strong opposition base their views on the assumption that the government is always competent and upright.

Without the presence of the opposition led by current Premier Ma Ying Jeou, Chen Sui Bian might have been able to cling to power despite the atrocities he committed. Thus, the presence of a strong opposition is often beneficial as it acts as a check on absolute power, **discouraging abuses of power like corruption.**

State surveillance:

"Big brother is watching you" is a line from the **famous book '1984' by George Orwell** that is set in a **dystopian, Orwellian state** where citizens are granted little to no freedom. The setting described in the novel strangely **resembles many totalitarian states in the real world today.**
The biggest issue with state surveillance is the **overzealous or excessive monitoring** can lead to **a violation of a citizen's fundamental right to privacy.**
The **general consensus** is: While states **possess the right to monitor their citizens**, this **right should not extend to the point of infringing upon citizens' fundamental right to privacy OR states have the right to monitor their citizens insofar as they do not violate human rights.**

Real time data transfers to collect data
Privacy of citizens is **breached and infringed**

Former US president commented ==China's <u>social credit system</u> 'Orwellian system'==
==China's giving a higher social credit score to people who buy diapers and not play==
==games.==

Western media outlets follow the **same line of rhetoric**- freedom, liberal, fundamental rights granted to people

==China's **sharp eyes project**==- CCTV cameras
Create an activity log to catch crime and **deter crime from happening**
Aim to ==achieve **100% camera coverage by 2020- no concrete evidence**==
==**IHS Markit**== estimates that there are ==**540 million cameras countrywide**== in China and China
aims to increase the camera coverage!
More than **one camera for 3 persons, a high coverage**

Beneficial or bad?

Topic sentences
States possess ==**both a political and moral obligation**== to **monitor the actions** of individuals within their borders in order to ==**maintain security, safety, social**==
==**stability, national harmony - under the pretext of protecting their citizens which**==
==**is their legal obligation.**==

Key aspect of the Government's role in the **social contract and holds intrinsic value**
Provide economic contributions and privacy in exchange for safety/security

States have a right insofar as they exercise caution to ensure that **this power is not abused for personal or political gain, such as suppressing dissent and opposition, to not further their political agenda.**

In particularly **perilous and excruciating** circumstances, states should be granted **the right to monitor the actions of people**

SINGAPORE AND NSA OF USA monitor the search engines of SGPS- too many searches on questionable topics may be flagged to the authorities-> thats how they catch potentially-radicalised terrorists! **That's how the 2017 infant care teacher was detained under the ISA and how the MOE teacher in 2023 was detained also because he was a Palestine sympathiser**
Search for signs for radicalisation- although its not directly correlated, excessive searching of an extremist group's ideology may indicate that the individual is radicalised
UDHR article 12

Private data can be **exploited/weaponized** by **authoritarian Government** to employ **surveillance** on **political opponents/ suppress dissent and opposition and free speech** **(Limit the freedom of speech of opponents to reduce political dissent, to further their political agenda)**
Iran 2019 Nov suppressing protests over rising cost of living and fuel costs to reduce political dissent
Nationwide internet shutdown for a whole **week**, **isolated** Iran from the web
Affected millions

Abused by totalitarian states
Also **Myanmar**! Prevent organisation of protests or rouse dissent online

Sep 2022, Improper hijab wearing woman was taken into custody by police
Demonstration labelled violent by authorities
Responded with digital suppression
SIAM allow the Iranian communications regulatory authority to remotely manipulate cellular connections
Interrupt messages/monitor phone usage/ track movements/reduce data speeds.
Suppress current protest silently, suppression unnoticed
Prohibit future protests/riots
Not a surveillance system anymore
A tool **weaponised to control and oppress people from freedom**
Mass surveillance on thwarting terrorism attacks
Advert 50+ terrorism attacks in USA

State surveillance is proving **rather ineffective** because the state **cannot handle or maximise the information gained from mass information obtained through state surveillance because of the dragnet approach.** Investigators are **overwhelmed** with the **massive** amount of **irrelevant data, and miss the genuine warning signs of a potential attack. Since it is ineffective and the results are not worthwhile, giving up our personal data is not justified.**

Underwear bomber- bombed the flight wanted **revenge** over America's actions over Al-Qaeda. CIA received a warning about his contact with Al-Qaeda group
Yet no action! Worst of all, he was ALREADY on the potential terrorist list yet the terrorist attack list was way too extensive and long so no one knows who's attacking next. Humans are also prone to errors too and can get blindsided/overwhelmed by the massive load of information!

The **2011 Boston Marathon bombing neglected to pass a tip about Tamerlan Tsarnev**
The **FBI thought the police department would look through the database themselves.**
1000 terror suspects on the suspect list! How to predict? It is impossible for every assessment to be thorough

Morally questionable profiling:
A **significant impact** on people's lives- how to choose who to look at and examine?

Crime rates and prison populations reveal which **demographics are statistically more likely to commit crime and be in prison**

Discriminatory treatments- minorities/ communities of colour especially

Disproportionately and wrongly targeted

Unjust profiling ESP after 9/11 Radical Islam- muslims and the Middle East

Propagate the bias that they will commit crimes

Racial profiling and institutional bias and discriminatory

Muslims who took to Twitter to document their experiences of being singled out and questioned by immigration officers for simply being muslim.

The percentage of hate crime incidents directed towards Muslims increased by over 500 percent, spiked in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack.

Intrusion into one's personal privacy- everyone has the **fundamental right to privacy**

Especially when these personal affairs cause no harm

Good case study: Data collection in contact tracing-> **greater good**! **Benefit** many people in the end. **The advent of the TT token (2022 March), though beneficial, the case is also flawed**

Significantly aided in the **early detection of pandemics**-> **monitor and track the spread of diseases**- catch substandard safety measures

Expedite quarantines and improve pandemic treatment by **deploying swift medical supplies and personnel**

The information was only decrypted and accessible if the patient is positive.

Effective in **achieving low viral transmissions in the community**

If 2 Tokens come close together

App would trade encrypted data

SGPs **begrudgingly accepted this** <mark>**as part of the broader fight** <u>against</u> the pandemic the greater good of the society to fight the pandemic</mark>

PROMISED that the data **would not be used by other purpose**

Revealed **2021 Ministry of Home affairs** used tt data for the **police criminal investigations** broken promise as data was already being used in a murder investigation

Angered citizens who trusted the Gov that broke their promise

Erroneously eroded public trust in future health responses

Impede their privacy by such a huge extent

South Korea legalised the collection of handphone data

Patient 15 sharing a meal with his sister in law

Netizens speculated and accused them of having an extra-marital affair

The loss of personal privacy is no laughing matter

Reducing crimes/ effective deterrent against them
Can **reduce crimes significantly**
People are concerned with **saving face**
Theft/ assault/ breaking in
Respond to unavoidable consequences
Facial technology/track our crimes and movement
Advanced computer and camera systems working hand in hand with recognition algorithms detect the crime and the perpetrators

Deloitte's 2018 study- tech like AI reduce crime by 30-40%
84% cities using facial recognition and biometrics by employing drones and aerial surveillance

90,000 police cameras around SG
Police authorities

Researchers from Cambridge Uni CCTV saw crime rates reduce by 13%
Crimes that are petty and non violent in nature
car robberies, theft
And also not useful for locations and places where there are blindspots/ locations where it is impossible to install surveillance cams. Bigger and notorious crimes that go undetected because criminals can simply just adapt
Death of LGBTQ activist and model Edwin Chiloba found dead in a metal box near a rift valley-> virtually impossible to install cameras at rural part of Africa

Effective in reducing crimes that are unreported power differential the abuser on the abused in workspace.
Build solid evidence to reduce workspace abuse
Does it address the root cause?

Reduction in police brutality
Surveillance system **necessitate accountability on their end**
Body cameras as a **tech tool to monitor and hold these police officers accountable in their conduct**

Counterproductive because it clears them of their wrongdoing rather than keep them accountable?

2000 Washington police officers engaged in one of the largest randomised control trials on body cams
Little to no role in holding them accountable

Lucie Krahulcova director of Australian privacy watchdog digital rights watch
Worst case scenario about eroding public trust
Impede efficacy to health responses in the future

Reduction in police brutality- accountability for the police force
Providing more accountability for the police force
Prevent large scale pandemics

Health and survey- for the greater good of its citizens

Topic sentences

Starting from a legal/moral framework is pretty effective
States possess **both a political and moral obligation to monitor the actions** of individuals within their borders in order to **maintain safety, security, social stability and national harmony**.
OR you could also argue that
By monitoring the actions of people within its borders, states would **be committing a massive infringement of privacy which is a fundamental right every citizen should be entitled to.**

Article 12 of the UDHR decrees that no one shall be subjected to 'arbitrary interference with his privacy'

States have a right **insofar (to the extent that)** as they exercise caution to ensure that this **power is not abused for personal or political gain, such as suppressing dissent or opposition. /** could also argue that states do not have the right to monitor the actions of its people as the **information gained could be weaponised by totalitarian states to further achieve their political agendas, whether it is to legitimise their power/ subjugate its citizens.**

In particularly **perilous and excruciating circumstances**, states should be **granted the right to monitor the actions** of people within their borders, especially if they possess the **capability to effectively do so without infringing upon individual rights.**
However, this right **should not extend to the point of infringing upon citizens' fundamental right to privacy. Rights are sacrosanct and are inviolable.**

What constitutes a good Government?

Is a thriving economy the best measure of a good Government?

A thriving economy is indicative of good governance since it can translate to improvements in the quality of life of citizens, especially in **nascent countries**. In the early stages of the development of a **budding** country, the influence of a thriving economy in enhancing the

citizens' quality of life is often **more profound and immediate** due to the **existence of more pronounced developmental needs and opportunities for development. A successful economy** ==directly impacts the standard of living, which is a clear reflection on the efficacy of governance.==

A **prosperous** economy **provides the** ==financial impetus necessary for bolstering fundamental== aspects such as healthcare, education, infrastructure. The Governance showcases **responsiveness and responsibilities towards citizens' needs and welfare** Economists would argue that a flourishing/ prosperous economy is the hallmark of a good Government. A strong GDP would definitely boost a country's development and subsequently improve the quality of life of its citizens.
Botswana has one of the **highest average economic growth rates in Africa** since its independence while accumulating **negligible foreign debt.** This has since **catapulted poverty-stricken Botswana** to a **middle-income country** with **living standards comparable to Turkey**. It is valid to conclude that a good economy translates into a good Government. After all, any good Government would aspire to generate more funds for public merit goods to improve the standard of living of its citizens.

 However, don't be too quick to happily conclude this! ==Such economic growth is often accompanied by **significant trade-offs**== anyway! Whether this is **environmental** trade-offs!

Vietnam's journey from a **war-torn country** to a **rising star in the ASEAN economy** amplifies the **transformative power of effective governance and economic revitalisation/** ==**1986 Doi Moi policy**== marked a pivotal transition towards a socialist oriented ==market economy==, steering the nation towards **economic affluence through enhanced private sector development**

Poverty rate **plummeted from over 70% in 1980s to 4.2% in 2022**
Underpinning a holistic national development
Responsive to citizens' needs and welfare
Can resolve these issues

Hence, through strategic economic policies and governance, **Vietnam transformed its adversities into a trajectory of sustained growth and societal advancement**, proving how a thriving economy can enable good governance/**reflects the efficacy of the government.**

Venezuela presents a compelling example of how **prioritising economic objectives** can initially bring **prosperity but later result in detrimental consequences.** ==**Venezuela, rich in oil reserves, is heavily focused on monetising this natural asset**== **to boost the national economy. Initially, this strategy yielded substantial benefits, such as an influx of revenue, increased public spending, enhanced social welfare programs- giving an impression of economic prosperity and effective Governance.** However, other sectors ==were neglected, and economic diversification was limited-== global oil prices **fluctuate** and **decline**- the country found itself to be in a **vulnerable** position due to its **over reliance on a single industry**- Government failed to think of the economy in the **long run** and had to pay the **price of neglecting other sectors** - lead to **rampant inflation, poverty and social**

unrest. This demonstrates that a **sole focus on economic goals without a well-rounded strategy can lead to severe social repercussions.**

A prominent example is China: Ever since she has opened up her economy, the **pursuit of economic profit** has led to the **fast-paced proliferation of factories in cities that discharge unchecked levels of pollutants at an alarming rate.** The situation has since worsened till the point that only **one percent of its urban population breathes air that is considered safe by European Union standards.**

A **thriving economy is not synonymous with long term effective Governance, if the benefits accrued from it are not sustainable in the long run**

A Government's pursuit of policies primarily aimed at economic advancement often entails a **complex array of benefits and drawbacks.**

On one hand, such policies can lead to **immediate economic benefits** such as
(Growth in economy is usually accompanied by significant trade-offs)
However, a **relentless pursuit of economic goals may inadvertently lead to compromises in other crucial areas of Governance such a social welfare and environmental sustainability**

HENCE, an **intense focus on economic achievements** might **not** always translate into a **net benefit** for society. It is essential to maintain a balance where **economic strategies do not overshadow the government's responsibility** towards **holistic and sustainable societal welfare and development.**

Instead, <u>**accountability and transparency**</u>, an **integral** part of many **representative democracies** globally, should be the key criterion when it comes to assessing governments
• All decisions are fair and based on "merit", and not on personal or individual political agendas, including nepotism.
 • The Government has clear policies to guide fair and effective decision making, and respects these policies at all times.
• The Government evaluates its programs and decisions on a regular basis to ensure that funds are being managed fairly and effectively.
• The Government has the conviction to respect its own decisions, even in the face of personal opposition, and knows how to deal with criticism in a constructive manner.
• The Government provides a full, accurate and timely report and accounting on the funds entrusted to them, on a regular basis. These reports are designed to be simple, so that everyone can understand them.
• Likewise, the Government provides a full, accurate and timely report and accounting on any commitments and campaign promises they made to the People.

• The Government respects its Code of Ethics and Good Conduct, and enforces the respect of the Code.

In conclusion, it is **unfair and misguided** to posit that the key criterion for good government is how well the **economy** is managed. It **ignores** the fact that accurately assessing a government's levels of **efficiency and competency is both complicated and perplexing**. While a **well-managed economy** may be able to signal the **high degree of competency** of a government through the fulfilment of citizens' material well-being, this **overly simplistic measure fails to provide a holistic evaluation of the government**. Hence, a more superior assessment should also include **criteria such as accountability and transparency and to a smaller extent, democratic rights.** Indeed, countries are increasingly cognisant of the importance of using a **multifaceted approach to measure their political monoliths.**

Politicians and morals

Even though politicians that are elected are mandated to represent their supporters and make decisions that are best for the countries, they are ultimately humans at their core and are thus equally vulnerable to the same human temptations as the layperson. Previous president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, is guilty of embezzlement of funds- misappropriation of a sum of Ukraine's savings to build his lavish mansion, which houses gold taps and numerous luxury cars.
Even if morally upright leaders are democratically elected, they may still succumb to financial temptations just like the average layperson.

Democracy and populism

SG politicians, populism and pristine reputations

According to the 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer Index, 50% of Singaporeans polled feared that government leaders are purposely trying to mislead people by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations.

August 2021, then Workers' Party Member of Parliament Raeesah khan claimed in a parliamentary speech that she accompanied a 25 year-old victim of sexual assault to a police station and alleged that the police treated the victim insensitively. Upon further questioning by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Raeesah Khan confessed that she was no truthful. Furthermore, the Workers' Party leaders knew that she lied but still did not compel her to come clean which painted the entire party in a bad light as politicians who would condone lying instead of punishing one of its own.

Proponents of democracy argue that democracy is the best political movement since it gives people the ultimate power to vote for their desired government.

SG any adult aged 21 or above are eligible to participate in the Singapore General Elections held every 5 years. Democracy enables the fair representation of every individual's interests, regardless of their background, this gives everyone a fair chance to vote and further their interests. It could be opined that the political party with the highest number of votes is chosen by the majority of the populace since it aligns with their values/ interests/ needs -> precisely because it could benefit the majority of the population + deemed the best for the country.

Even then, this model is flawed because in democratic system where the political party with the majority of the votes win, this may motivate political parties to utilise deception in order to win + they are often so caught up in winning votes that they present false/misleading information. Thus, when the winning party is ultimately elected in the end, the Government is usually unable to fulfil its promises.

The flaw in democracy is that it may lead to a populist Government + the Tyranny of the majority could occur where decisions made by a majority could place their interests above the minority's interests such that the latter is actively oppressed.

Populism and why I think it's problematic

Ok it's a political approach which espouses the rhetoric of 'the people' (The disenfranchised/ the oppressed/ the minorities) against 'the elites' in the upper echelons of society. A lot of politicians who practise populism have a lot of political sway especially in countries where privilege and disadvantage keeps being perpetuated, since it appeals to the marginalised who feel that their concerns have been disregarded by the wealthy elite. This is very problematic because

1. The struggles and oppression that 'the people' face are clearly being weaponised as a tool by the politicians who have an agenda of winning an election, may not be the most ethical decision to politically weaponise someone's very real struggles…
2. It would only continue to widen the ALREADY WIDE gulf between the elites and the marginalised, since it elicits resentment and indignance from the marginalised. This would also only create a more class-conscious society characterised by its tension between the rich and the poor.
3. To me, it just seems like… a rage pity party where the marginalised gather in a crowd (psychology of gathering in a crowd; it empowers and uplifts people, gives them the added encouragement to express their dissent towards the elites and the political leader encourages it too…) but in the end, what is being done to actually uplift the marginalised from their plights? Do these politicians even have a concrete plan of action to implement if they do get elected? Can they fulfil their promises? **Populism has the very danger of trapping the marginalised into a cycle of assigning blame and inertia.**

Foreign Aid

In addition, most forms of foreign aid tend to be **practical**- food/money so it's not effective in **solving the more systemic issues** in the country-> misogyny/civil strife/ discrimination and oppression. Like… poor countries have bigger

Foreign aid does not solve long-term problems. To what extent is this a fair viewpoint? Humanitarian concerns and the moral imperative: If foreign aid is given to alleviate the suffering of others and born out of altruistic intentions, then it should be given freely and without conditions attached, such that the help is extended to those who need it is maximised. Important because the terms and conditions of aid given often prove to be obstacles themselves in the economic development of the country in the long term.

Many of these recipient countries are also categorised as highly corrupt. Corrupt elites syphon aid money intended for the world's poorest.

What about the countries that are mined in political corruption and turmoil and the people are suffering from such systemic failures?
It is not fair at all to expect foreign aid to be the panacea to problems caused by corruption
Continuing political strife between Syria, Yemen and Libya and the Congo work against the alleviation of the long-term problems that foreign aid is meant to address
Much of the foreign aid is not accounted for when it arrives in the recipient countries because mechanisms are not put in place to check on how and where the aid is distributed

Embezzlement of funds! Thank you!

Foreign aid is meant to address these long-term problems in poorer countries, which are complex in nature

Foreign aid has to then work in conjunction with other means/players to achieve a long-term solution to these problems.

Aid: goods and funding, technical assistance etc) provided by donor countries to achieve certain objectives in recipient countries.
Capital, goods and services

Functions of foreign aid:
- Provide basic necessities
- Build infrastructure
- Reduce poverty, hunger, improve literacy
- Protect the lives of people and the security of the nation

Objectives of foreign aid:
- Humanitarian: Alleviate a disaster situation or a more systemic issue like poverty : Donor countries asked by UN to set aside 0.75 of their GDP yearly for foreign aid
- To address some of the long-term problems in poorer countries which are complex in nature: Extreme poverty, life-threatening diseases, widespread hunger
- Foreign aid has to work in conjunction with other means to achieve a long-term solution
- To strengthen international alliances and maintain diplomacy
- Strengthen political regimes
- Gain 'soft power' to persuade a country to do what it wants without resorting to violence
- The cultivation of goodwill in order to build/maintain trust and respect
- Mutually beneficial for both parties, resulting in long-term alliances
- China sending medical supplies to Italy and Spain to overcome the COVID_19 situation in 2020
- Gain support in international affairs for political capital
- National security to aid allies to fight terrorism/ eradicate narcotics production
- Regime maintenance: a prop up friendly regimes in order to maintain influence in important strategic regions of the world
- Regime maintenance: military hardware and training
- US sent troops into Afghanistan to provide military aid after Sep 11 attacks
- Arc of containment
- US increases support for Taiwan, China threatens to fight back
- President Trump also threatened to slash foreign aid to countries unable to stop drugs flowing into the US (Foreign aid as a leverage)

BUT foreign aid is not a final solution to everything!

Many of these long-term issues are complex in nature
Foreign aid does not address the root cause of the issue, it's merely just alleviating it on a short-term superficial level-> For instance, what if the extreme poverty in a country was because of corrupt politics? The Government being corrupt but foreign aid doesn't address this root issue!

Reducing extreme poverty: Through investment in infrastructure and systems like roads, schools and health

Most of the capital for development in the agricultural sector will come from private sector investment, especially from farmers. However, public investment in agriculture is essential in attracting private-sector investment

National investments in irrigation, research and rural infrastructure, technology generation and dissemination, natural resource conservation and standard setting and monitoring are necessary to increase productivity, reduce transaction costs and improve the competitiveness of agriculture in developing countries

Improvement in literacy: On 25 Sep 2015, 193 world leaders committed to Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Goal 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all, including specific targets for universal youth literacy by 2030.
Builds on the improvements made under the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), global literacy rate rose up to 91%
Promotion of education: girls' education: the number of girls in Afghanistan's receive schooling has increased from 0 in 2002 to 3.5 million in 2016

Most of the foreign aid comes with conditions attached, which could work against the long-term objectives of foreign aid.

Most of these foreign aid come with STRINGS attached!
The need to make interest payment on the aid, which may be eventually more than the initial aid provided
Recipient countries have to use business firms tied to donor countries (Jobs and wealth not really created for the recipient economies)
Political indoctrination and the political agendas that political leaders have, how they can **radically change** the education system.

In addition, sometimes these textbooks are controlled by the Government only to **teach the youth one-sided/radical perspectives and ideologies that are favoured by the Government**-> Education is used as a form of **propaganda and political indoctrination** (IDEA OF CONFORMITY TO ONE IDEOLOGY)-> cultivating students who are biassed and limited in their thinking For example, British History textbooks would talk about what a great man Robert Clive of India was. However, Indian History textbooks would highlight Clive's villainy in India for all the atrocities he had committed.

How far should countries aim to be self-sufficient?

In a way, it is impossible to be truly autarkic and be truly self-sufficient given globalisation- and how countries are becoming increasingly more interconnected than ever

Due to the **spillover effect too! A problem that originates from one single country could either directly or indirectly pose problems to another country such that root problem altogether becomes a transnational issue in the end DUE TO THE SPILLOVER EFFECT!** A prime example of this would be COVID-19 pandemic which was originally a health issue in China but ended up affecting the country's economy which in turn affected the economies of other countries since major trades were disrupted.

Hence, due to the transnational nature of the issue where many, if not all countries are affected, countries should work together and cooperate to solve this one massive problem- rather than being self-sufficient and failing to solve their individual problem themselves. **It would make more sense/there would only be more incentive to combine collective efforts to tackle a transnational/ global issue anyway!**

Autarky: countries which are economically independent
Pariah
Recalcitrant
There is a fine line between seeing self-sufficiency as an indicator of sovereignty and legitimacy, and being a hermit kingdom
Today's pariah states are laughably unable to preserve their hermit status, making their dodgy state of affairs nothing but an idea listed misnomer because they mostly succumb to trade relations

One cannot help but notice that those countries striving to be rid of international relationships with others are the persona non grata of their time: North Korea under Kim ill Sung's Juche idea, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, Afghanistan under Taliban. The **inability of such regimes to keep the state functioning normally and to protect the dignity of their population provides clear testimony for countries to reconsider adopting such a ridiculous approach to governance.**

Countries should at least attempt to attain a reasonable level of self reliance and welfare for their populations as it is the most basic indicator of the state's sovereignty and legitimacy in the international community. Filed states like Somalia,

In circumstances of mass atrocities, the state itself **cannot be trusted to be run as a sovereign country because it has forfeited its right to govern by committing such crimes against humanity**

It is **not conceivable for countries to aim for self sufficiency under the context that they have failed on the most basic front to prove that they act in the interests of the population**

Smorgasbord of international cultures and the surge of international information exchange interacting within a homogenous urban setting

On the basis of accumulating social capital and economic potential to attract global elites and transnational companies

There's a moral and practical imperative for countries to straddle their sovereign legitimacy and their roles as contributors to the global economy and security.

GOOD FOR FATALISTIC/DEFEATIST ATTTITUDES! There will always be Xxxx, yyy, zzzz people…. But let us hope for a world where…

Soft power:

International politics and relations

International cooperation

Need international cooperation to solve global issues. Global issues need global power. Better for soft power and building diplomacy but this optimism is not grounded in practicality. A show? Global cooperation proves ineffective because it **erroneously shifts individual/ national responsibility towards global responsibility**-> **easier to shirk national responsibility in sovereign countries.**

Jingoism/Ultranationalism: My country is superior and dominates other countries-> dangerous mindset because **historically the root cause of many wars,** WWI cos Germany had the strong belief that it was their right to rule and is superior to other countries.

Reasonable Nationalism and **patriotism** is a much <u>viable and healthier alternative.</u> Nationalism vs globalism (Not globalisation which is the interconnectedness of the world): The belief that events in one country affects all countries

Global Governance (**Efforts by the countries to rule the world together)** : WHO, UN, World Trade
World Government: the idea that one day all humankind is united under one common authority

Nationalism is not innate to all humans; it was constructed to enable humans to confront challenges that could not solved by a single clan/group

Morphs into chauvinistic ultra-nationalism too extreme

The nuclear challenge

The ecological challenge
Biodiversity/climate change
Overfarming/overfishing/exploitation of certain resources which threatens our ecology
'Tragedy of the commons' phenomenon when something is available for everybody to enjoy
The sea! No one country can claim its just theirs! People overindulgence in it and use it without concern, overtime it depletes

The technological challenge
The rise of AI and genetic engineering
We need global norms and global rise to prevent the creation of a superAI that will gain consciousness that will wipe out all of humanity
Global consensus

We must globalise politics
Actively caring about what's happening in other countries! Spillover effect!

UN the leading instituitions
International Monetary Fund loans money to developing countries for development, **World Bank**

EU/ASEAN/NATO

Not legally-binding but still impt again: UDHR by the UN

- On **6 March of 2023**, in an attempt to **improve the strained relations** between **South Korea and Japan** caused by World World 2, South Korea imposed a plan to **compensate South Korean victims of Japan's forced wartime labour.** This was done (as a **political move, with an economic agenda** sighhhh) in a bid to i**mprove trade and military cooperation between the 2 countries.**
- While this was **welcomed by the Governments** of both countries, South Korean victims **criticised** **the plan since it falls short of their** **demand for a full apology** from Japan and **direct monetary compensation** from the companies involved.

Governments still have the most power over its citizens

- **Peter Kaluma**, a member of parliament of **Kenya's supreme high court, opposed** Kenya's recent rule to legalise homosexual relations(LGBTQ). He is allied to the opposition, and even vowed to **table a bill in parliament** to **prohibit homosexuality**

and impose stiffer penalties, including life in prison for those engaged in same sex liaisons.

But you must also consider that despite the Government being arguably the largest institution with the most power and resources to transform a country, the Government may lose support and trust from its citizens if it fails to meet the interests of these people and A WELL-FUNCTIONING GOVERNMENT STILL REQUIRES TRUST AND SUPPORT FROM ITS PEOPLE! SO does the Government TRULY have the MOST power? There are still instances when people have more power than the Government itself!

In all honesty, democracy is the most impt.

Religious fundamentalism

Israel-Palestine conflict
Religious conflict, **motivations for the war/territorial of their land stem from religious beliefs**

Detach themselves from mainstream society, rejecting the world's views and aims to create a country of **religious certainty by imposing a state of religion**
Danger when Governments themselves get involved in religion

Gov responsible for protecting state religions and stop heretics
Responsible for **safeguarding traditions from influence of liberal western world**

Alter educational system to **revolve** around religion

Religious leaders have responsibility
Don't accept anything beyond their religious texts
Shun homosexuals and treat them as heretics
Penalty from being homosexual can range from being stoned to death or the national death penalty

Oppression of religious minorities and opposers to the state religion, leading to conflicts

Bills and policies more in line with the religion of the country

How far do you agree that religion is a unifying force today?

1. **Under dire situations, extreme views stemming from religion leads to religiously-motivated terrorism and violence, which exacerbates fault lines between different groups in society.**

EG: **ISIS- extremist group where members cannot accept anything beyond their religious scriptures** and strive to eliminate individuals who do not agree with their religious Beheading videos of people
genocide against Yazidis and Christians on a historic scale, systematic persecution of Shia Muslims its videos of beheadings and other kinds of executions of soldiers, journalists, and aid workers; as well as its destruction of cultural heritage sites.

beliefs. **Al-Qaeda, an Islamist terrorist** network striving to **undermine U.S. influence in Muslim countries and keep the state 'pure'**, the 9/11 attack anti-American terrorism

2. **The difference in religions is an avenue that creates clash/ conflict between the vastly different ideological beliefs, which creates divisions among people in society.**

Many differences in people's Ideological beliefs stem from their religions-
Christians who are anti-abortion and anti LGBTQ
Evangelical Christians who deny their children healthcare as they believe that faithful healing/mere prayers work
Different religions also have different conceptions of the afterlife- an avenue for ideological conflicts among people
Different religions obey different gods

3. **Religion leads to religious profiling, people are stereotyped based on their religions**

4. **However, it is ironically because of the very differences in people's religion which leads to increased unity among people, since people become more conscious of the importance of religious harmony in a society filled with a diversity of religions. Religion ironically becomes a unifying force.**

SG- multi religious country, different temples, churches, monastery- support
Importance emphasised because people do not want to experience religious conflicts and tensions in order to maintain national harmony and security.

5. **Also- at its very core, many mainstream religions espouse virtues and values that promote unity among people. Religion is meant to be a moral arbiter and for people to live in harmony.**

Certain religions-> Christianity emphasises love and forgiveness
Buddhism- compassion and respect for all forms of life

Sovereignty and independence; the need for borders?

Small nations like SG tend to emphasise **internationalist principles**, upholding **international law**
• SG + UNCLOS, taking Pedra Branca to ICJ for arbitration
• Upholds principle of territorial integrity / sovereignty, holding intl community
to account

A trading nation like Singapore BECAUSE WE LACK NATURAL RESOURCES!, in particular, <u>thrives on a relatively predictable global environment</u>. International legal rules help to foster such an environment.

There still exists a <mark style="background:cyan">**practical need for countries to maintain national boundaries in order to protect the sovereignty, interests and identity of its people., and also to protect the niche cultures and values that belong to a sovereign state/country. SO national boundaries are still very much relevant**</mark>
Eliminating national boundaries could help with the formation of cohesive communities. Making national and even international borders less relevant

As communities start to find commonality and resonance with other neighbouring communities, in their norms and beliefs, **<u>transnational groups</u> could begin to form, with spheres of influence that transcend conventional political boundaries.**
Ex: Countries England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland come together to form the UK.

Obliterating national boundaries is thus a cultural adaptation that affirms the coexistence of a <mark style="background:cyan">**regional identity, leading to greater cooperation and efficiency within.**</mark>

BECAUSE THE NATURE OF MANY ISSUES- many issues are no longer solely bound to the country where the issue originated from due to the spillover effect such these issues eventually become transnational-> so getting rid of national boundaries would affirm a regional/global identity and lead to greater cooperation and even expedite the process of solving these problems! Streamlining our actions to achieve greater speed and efficacy.

Economic boundaries are justified on grounds of economic pragmatism, especially for nascent economics.

In 2019, the Netherlands called for the suspension of this abused right of visa-free travel for another Schengen country, Albania. Albanian nationals recently ramped up organised crime in the Netherlands and exploited the porousness

Justice system

Capital punishment

The Death penalty

The retributive function that the Death penalty serves
Physical violence in corporal punishment is increasingly rejected as a disciplinary tactic when modern science finds it increasingly counterproductive.

- According to the **American Psychological Association**, parents who hit their children are warned that this may inadvertently **impart the lesson that physical aggression solves problems, since children are highly impressionable and might mimic their parents in using force to fix behavioural problems.** Spanking can even worsen said behavioural problems when children come to resent their disciplinarians or fight back against this perceived abuse.
- In April **2018, the nation raged over the brutal gang rape and murder of 8 year old girl in Kashmir**, India's cabinet **introduced the death penalty.**
- Our consistent outpouring of emotions at every instance of human brutality is telling: We have the innate desire for social justice to be served and for perpetrators to receive their punishments rightfully. But at the same time we abhor it

Singapore executed 11 people last year for drug related offences- known for its draconian laws, criticised around the world for its laws

Death penalty: **2014 Oklahoma state prison incident about how the prison warden injected lethal drugs into the tissues of the prisoner instead of his bloodstream, causing the inmate to writhe in pain and agony for an excruciating 43 minutes.** The <u>potential brutality of death penalty is what drives the detractors of the death penalty</u>

And also 1944 14 yr old black boy- youngest to ever be given the death sentence- death by electric chair

From this example, we can tell that opponents of the death penalty see capital punishment as a **barbaric and inhumane punishment that does not cohere with collective human values.** It **violates a human's fundamental right to life** and also **infringes on the sanctity of human life**. It's just teaching society to tolerate the loss of another life. It is nothing more

than a **state-sanctioned murder**. If the state is prohibited from torture methods like water boarding/ physical abuse then why is the death penalty valid?
DOES NOT ALIGN WITH THE **VALUES OF A PACIFIST AGE** AND THE **LEGAL CONVENTIONS OF MODERN GOVERNANCE IN SOME** COUNTRIES (Iincreasing number of countries that are abolishing the Death Penalty)

It infringes the fundamental human right to life and violates the sanctity of life- goes against article 3 of the UDHR which decrees that every human being has the inherent right to life liberty and security of person

Human rights are sacrosanct and inviolable! As long as individuals continue to enjoy these rights, the Death penalty cannot exist alongside the valorised ideals of human rights.

Death penalty **runs counter to the principle of rehabilitating criminals, which is a key tenet in the modern justice system, so it cannot be justified.**
Human society does not just exist merely for the functional, utilitarian purpose of economic advancement but also because we believe that there should be an **aspirational quality to our institutions and codified norms.**

The **deliberate act of sentencing someone to death is commonly perceived as a form of inhuman treatment** that breaches the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.** It is also, arguably, **a violation of the UN Convention Against Torture.**
Death penalty runs **counter to the principle of rehabilitating criminals, which is a key tenet in the modern justice system.**

The death penalty is also banned in numerous countries
At the **end of 2022, 165 countries had abolished the death penalty in law** or are classified by the United Nations as abolitionist de facto. Such countries include **PAPUA NEW GUINEA, the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, and ZAMBIA. New Mexico, US states like Colorado are also abolishing the death penalty.**

The **numerous number of countries that are against the death penalty illustrates the socially-progressive climate that we live in.** This **reflects our increasing abhorrence towards extreme penalties** sanctioned by the state simply because the deliberate act of taking away a life is **inhumane in the eyes of many.**

It's how we keep our drug abuse rates one of the lowest in the world- zero-tolerance
Proponents of the death penalty argue that capital punishment is the **most effective crime deterrent** since it is an **irreversible punitive measure**. However, this view is **highly flawed** when one takes into account that such drastic measures are **not effective in targeting the root cause of crimes in the first place, given that the death penalty is a blunt instrument in nature.** Instead, I suppose more people favour a rehabilitative system that **seeks to rehabilitate criminals and empower them with the skills required to self-actualise.**

Only then can we help potential lawbreakers to break free from the intergenerational cycle of poverty, discrimination and inequality that perpetuates these crimes in the first place.

The death penalty can be justified in instances **of grievous harm, because the justice system should not ignore its purpose of serving social justice and retribution.** The death penalty **brings the victims of heinous crimes some degree of closure** knowing that the perpetrator has been **duly punished and dealt with by the law. That is the ultimate function of the law anyway! It is to protect its citizens' rights and punish crimes in a fair manner!**
In today's social progressive climate.

For egregious crimes that cannot be justified with rehabilitation!
Ted Bundy's case! Saddam Hussein's case
Punitive actions need to be taken against individuals who deliberately cause extreme harm/pain In doing so, a reasonable balance between rehabilitation and retribution is stuck. **In addition, criminal law frequently practises the law of proportionality.** In **criminal law,** the **principle of proportional justice** is used to describe the idea that the **punishment of a certain crime should be in proportion to the severity of the crime itself. Saddam Hussein** was given the **Death Penalty in the US in 2003** for the **massacre of 2000 Kurds in 1998.**

The death penalty has a **deterrent effect, it deters people from committing crimes.** Singapore's **zero tolerance stance on drug use**- mandate that drug users are dealt with the death penalty. And the state has the **moral and legal obligation to protect its citizens, ensure national security/harmony and maintain peace and order in society**.
Singapore's level of **drug use among the youth is one of the lowest in the world, such punitive measures are indeed an effective deterrent!**

Most effective crime deterrent- countries have the **legal and political obligation** to **protect their citizens and maintain peace and order in society.** It is **hard** to achieve peace and order in a country that is **rifled with murders and crime.**
In Singapore, the Government is known for its **zero tolerance of illegal drug smuggling.** Drug smugglers who are caught are **automatically sentenced to the death penalty.**

While the **consequence** of death may **scare and deter potential drug smugglers**, such an **inhumane** sentence still does **not address the root of the problem.** Many studies have shown that a major reason that constitutes why individuals resort to drug smuggling in the first place is **poverty and addiction**. Drastic, irreversible measures like the Death penalty **cannot address these root causes,** which tend to be complex systemic issues in society.

The recent execution of drug trafficker Tangaraju s/o Suppiah sheds light on the fact that he had been using drugs since the age 12, indicating that he has shown signs of drug addiction since young.

Killing him **won't solve the issue of drug addiction** among people/ alleviate the struggles of people who use drugs to cope. Such issues can only be best tackled with **rehabilitation**, rather than **punitive measures with irreversible effects.**

Hence, such a punitive measure is not effective in tackling the root cause of crime in the long run, so the death penalty **cannot** be justified.

Conclusion: **COMPARISON QUESTIONS ARE THE HARDEST AND MOST DEMANDING cos u need to actively compare both sides and use a yardstick TRY TO AVOID IT** Ultimately **different** states come to **different conclusions** about where the line between **retribution and rehabilitation should be drawn**. Certain countries that are more **progressive** would decide to take on the **humanitarian** approach and focus more on **rehabilitation/ prioritising intrinsic human dignity and worth above all else, while other countries take a more pragmatic approach toward crime and punishment.** If implemented in a legally proportionate manner, and carried out responsibly to minimise potential barbarism. There will always be proponents of the death penalty, citing that it is the most effective deterrent to crimes and those who view the death penalty as an avenue of justice for victims of heinous crimes, but let us hope for a world where people accord criminals the opportunity to rehabilitate and integrate back into society.

Sometimes crimes exist because some people are **so trapped in an intergenerational cycle of poverty, racism or inequality**. In dealing with these systemic issues that lead to crimes in the first place, a **rehabilitative approach might be more suitable in reducing the crime rates in the long run. (Now considering how effective this tackles the root cause of crime to justify it)**

Rebuttal
Topic Sentence
(To the first argument about how inhumane it is to kill offenders because of our socially-progressive climate: Something along the idea of- if people are now more socially progressive and abhor punitive measures like the death penalty, won't they also sympathise with the victims who went through much trauma too? We would normally side with the victims if there are involved like SG 2017 case where SG couple abused a flatmate who is disabled waitress Annie Ee to death and the public was outraged at how the couple got away with imprisonment for life instead of the death penalty-> Attorney General Chambers of SIngapore was forced to make a statement to justify why this sentence was sufficient.)

While it is true that our socially-progressive climate reflects our increasing abhorrence towards extreme measures, one must concede that there is also a greater desire for social justice among individuals and this is where the Death Penalty fills its role.

TWO Examples

2018: The nation's rage when an eight year old girl in India was gangraped and murdered in Kashmir- **India's Cabinet introduced the Death Penalty for child rapists** which was supported by the majority of citizens who were horrified by the heinous crime in 2018.

Our outpouring of emotion at every instance of human brutality is very telling: we desire social justice for the victims and punishment for the perpetrator. This explains why we feel a sense of conviction when we see wrong-doers get punished even for a crime that has got nothing to do with us.

2017: The **2017 case of a couple who tortured disabled waitress Annie Ee to death which caused public outrage when the judge charged them with manslaughter instead of the Death Penalty. More than 35000 people signed a petition for harsher punishment and Attorney-General Chambers** was forced to make a public statement to explain why the courts deemed 30 yrs of imprisonment a **fitting punishment in the first place.**

2014: case Oklahoma State Prison ward mistakenly injected a lethal drug in the tissues rather than the bloodstream of a prisoner on death row, causing to
1944 14 yr old boy- the youngest boy to be ever given death sentence by electric chair, exonerated (declared innocent) 70 years later by a circuit judge - the egregious flaws of our legal system in the first place

Supporting Argument 1

Topic Sentence

While capital punishment does not effectively address the underlying root of the issue, it is still arguably the most effective deterrent of crimes. Only then can we deter potential lawbreakers from committing crimes and disrupting peace and order in society. Besides, it is the responsibility of legal institutions and the Governments to maintain internal security and public order- ensure crime rates are as low as possible due to the social contract theory, and these judicial systems to convict criminals and punitive measures put in place like penal codes of a country are just a way- a deterrent to dissuade people from committing crimes. **As callous as it sounds, an irreversible punitive measure is the most effective deterrent of crime. THOUGH it is a superficial deterrent at best, since it cannot address the root cause of crime.**

Severe capital punishment may scare people into not committing crimes. Plus, given that maintaining peace and order in society is the greater good, we should have these 'guardrails' in place to warn people not to disrupt the peace and order in society. Deterring crimes would produce the greatest good for the highest number of people in society.

TWO Examples

Singapore's zero tolerance stance on drug use- mandate that drug users are dealt with the death penalty.

Singapore's level of drug use among the youth is one of the lowest in the world

In the previous year, SG had a total of **11 people got the death sentences- most of which were drug related offences- SG's zero-tolerance of drugs**
The recent execution of drug trafficker Tangaraju s/o Suppiah

Supporting Argument 2
Topic Sentence
The death penalty can be justified in instances of grievous harm, because the justice system should **not ignore its purpose of serving social justice and its retributive function.**

Punitive actions need to be taken against individuals who deliberately cause extreme harm

Only by doing so, the scales would be proportionally balanced.

TWO Examples
Importance of proportionality under the law.

In criminal law, the principle of proportional justice is used to describe the idea that the punishment of a certain crime should be in proportion to the severity of the crime itself.

Saddam Hussein was given the Death Penalty in the US in 2003 for the massacre of 2000 Kurds in 1998.

Corporal punishment

Singapore's legal system- Judicial caning is applicable to only male convicts under the age of 50 for a wide range of offences under the Criminal Procedure Code, up to a **maximum of 24 strokes per trial.** Crimes which make one **liable to caning include Culpable homicide (Section 304), voluntarily causing grievous hurt (Section 325), kidnapping and abduction (Section 363, Section 363A), rape (Section 375(2)), robbery (Section 392).**
All of the above crimes listed under the penal code are severe as they either cause harm to a victim or disrupt order in society. Singapore's strict laws on corporal punishment .

Does the state have the right to punish?

YES
Legal systems of the state have the legal and moral obligation to serve its retributive function to perpetrators of crime.
- (though I would rather apply it later) Law of proportionality practised in criminal law: the punishments given to an offender should be proportional to the severity of the crime itself.
- 2018 India's Cabinet introduced the death penalty for child rapists after an 8 year old girl was gangraped and murdered.
- A bunch of SG laws that make sense- criminalises assault to protect its citizens

- In 2003, Saddam Hussein was given the death penalty for committing the brutal massacre of 2000 kurds in 1998.

In light of our **socially-progressive climate**, there is **more public pressure on states to serve social justice through punishing perpetrators** so they do have the right to punish.
- SG 2017: A couple was charged for manslaughter after torturing a disabled waitress, Annie Ee. The public was outraged at the decision because the couple could escape the Death penalty. 35000 people signed a petition demanding for stiffer punishments to be imposed on the couple and the Attorney-General Chambers was forced to make a statement to justify why imprisoning the couple for 30 years was justified over the death penalty.
- Increasing public pressure on states to deliver social justice and serve its retributive function

From a **utilitarian standpoint, punishments imposed by the state are arguably the most effective deterrent of crime**, which would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people. AND the Gov itself has the moral and legal obligation to maintain national security/ peace and order in society.
SG's laws which criminalises assault
2 men were arrested in 2020 outside Great World Shopping complex for being engaged in a brawl- even if the fight was mutually agreed, it is still illegal to disturb public peace by fighting.
Ensure SG is safe for its citizens.
In particularly dire situations where rehabilitation is no longer a viable option and other measures have been seriously exhausted, punishment (okay mainly the death penalty is justified). (kinda a subset of the previous point)
- Ted Bundy- serial killer and rapist of 30 women
- Initially imprisoned for life
- Escaped prison and committed more atrocities along the way
- Left no choice but to impose the death penalty because dead criminals commit no murder.
- Greatest good for the highest no. of people

In addition, **sometimes certain crimes committed are simply too egregious in nature that punishment is the only option, (making rehabilitation is not a fair or viable option**.) No justice! Or **some people are just irredeemable.**
Law of proportionality practised in criminal law: The sentence of an individual must be proportional to the severity of the crime itself.
Ted Bundy and Saddam Hussein.

NO
The **fundamental flaw in punishments sanctioned by the state is that it is ineffective in addressing the root cause of crimes in the first place, since it is a blunt instrument by nature/ making it a superficial deterrent at best.**

Sometimes crimes take place because some people are just trapped in an intergenerational cycle of poverty, discrimination and oppression- punishments would not be effective in addressing/targeting these systemic flaws in society and may even potentially perpetuate it.

SG's death penalty for drug use.
Giving someone the death penalty for using drugs may be an effective deterrent but it doesn't holistically solve the fundamental issue of drug addiction!

In addition, when it comes to corporal punishment, the basis of it is the violence but violence is ineffective in teaching individuals- American Psychological Association warns against the use of violence as a disciplinary tactic- if its not effective for teaching children, why use it for adults? Punishments on the basis of violence are ineffective since they are a blunt instrument by design and so states should be focusing on more rehabilitative measures that seem more promising in teaching criminals.

It also goes against the core tenet

In addition, the punishments **enrolled by the state may be flawed** since they may be **entrenched in misogyny/ perpetuate the marginalisation of minorities in society.**

SG before repealing 377a- sure imprisoning someone for homicide seems fair but imprisoning 2 homosexual men for being in a mutual, consensual relationship doesn't quite make sense. These legislations were still under the influence of a SG during its colonial times
MAKE CONNECTIONS!
In addition, some legislations should punish but don't! Idaho's laws exempt dogmatic faith healers from prosecution. (FLAWED LEGISLATIONS! Valid legal systems?)

Evaluate the claim that the justice system is fair to all.

You'll need extensive
Not always-
The Justice system is run by humans and humans are inherently biassed and have all sorts of stereotypes and prejudice ingrained in them. In fact, it is because of this that it is IMPOSSIBLE to be fair

Good-looking people have lighter sentence- appearing more innocent

How effective are prisons in **addressing the problem of crime**? Is there an alternative that you can suggest is better?

Nice but you NEED to substantiate with examples and are you sure you have sufficient examples/ a diversity of examples?

Crime root cause-> Many interwoven cultural factors at large, caused by an intergenerational cycle of abuse, trauma and poverty– all of which cannot be solved by simply trapping someone in an enclosed space.
Solving and addressing these root issues may alleviate and address the problem better
Most criminals have had troubled pasts and childhoods
Prisons strip criminals of their rights- won't be compelling/convincing for them to improve in such harsh, inhumane conditions?

Prisons could encourage criminals to reflect on their behaviour, encourage self-retrospection (though that is not always an absolute guarantee)
With nothing much left to day, they are left reflecting their deeds and actions
Ted Bundy escaped prison and committed even more atrocities on the run.

But prisons are deterrents of crime! Deter potential law breakers from committing crimes since they are aware of the consequences and limited rights they have if they commit crimes, a superficial deterrent at best
Only effective in deterring crimes on a superficial level and not addressing the root cause of it
But we need whatever we can to reduce the crime rates as far as possible

History

Forget the past!

Reminders of the past are not productive since it could impede us from moving on in the present, which would stifle progress and development that is crucial for the future, since it is best forgotten.

If countries' political leaders were too uptight and continued to bear grudges against other countries, there would be absolutely no avenue for countries to at least heal the rift between them. This would result in substantially less global economic trade, less global cooperation and a more divided world. This doesn't benefit anyone.

Political leaders of Korea and Japan: While there still lies **underlying tensions among both countries' leaders**, the Governments of both countries have come a long way in **overcoming the animosity between them by establishing diplomatic relations.** One way to do so was by **engaging in trades with one another, boosting the economies of both countries**. In addition, both countries <u>agreed to resume intelligence sharing at their first summit in 12 years since they eased trade tensions.</u>

However, under exceptional circumstances, the damage done is far too sheer and cannot be simply forgotten, especially when the perpetrator refuses to apologise or attempt to make up for their wrongdoing. Hence, the past is not best forgotten.

By simply just forgetting the past, it would do no justice to victims who still suffer in the present as a result of past events. Hence, forgetting the past is not the best approach.

TOO EGREGIOUS! How to forget?
The **Korean comfort women under the Japanese occupation who have yet to receive a proper apology from the Japanese Government who turned a blind eye to the atrocities that the Japanese soldiers of WWII had committed.** While it may **seem easier and even beneficial for Korea to just forget about these horrific events** and try to rekindle a diplomatic relationship with Japan, the sheer damage done is far too astronomical. **Coupled with the Japanese Government's lack of contrition expressed to the victims, the Korean victims still currently suffer from the trauma and lack of social justice.**

The **1937 Rape of Nanking was one of history's most notorious cases of mass murder and rape carried out by the Japanese army.** Surviving victims of Nanjing recall the atrocities and absolute barbarism exhibited by the Japanese army. Historical revisionists and nationalists in Japan have been accused of minimising or denying the massacre. As of now, the Japanese government **refuses to issue an official apology for the Nanjing Massacre.**

In addition, recalling the past is important so the past is not best forgotten because only then can we learn from past mistakes which is crucial in enabling us to avoid potential pitfalls in the present and the future. It is only through this that the collective human race can learn and advance as one.

Colonialism and black slavery in European countries, a particularly **dark** period in history which revealed the **absolute horrors of white imperialism and systemic racism.** While it is unpleasant to recall the events, the past is still crucial to **ensure such notorious abuses of power do not occur again**.

Hence, the past fundamentally serves as a **check-and-balance** in the present. This creates a **more morally-sound and united world.** Or another example would be the deteriorating side effects of the **1945 atomic bomb in Hiroshima is still prominent in the present.** Through recalling this event, we are reminded of the **wide scale debilitating effects of nuclear weapons and how it should not be carelessly handled.**
Physicians for the prevention of nuclear war
This is why **South Korea strongly condemned North Korea's nuclear missile** launches in **2022** (the present), after which the **U.N. Security Council resolutions banned any ballistic activities by North Korea.** The lengths that South Korea and U.N. went to **condemn North Korea for abusing its nuclear power** is only due to knowledge of past events and its effects. We learn mistakes from the past so that we don't repeat it in the present to ensure our future is stable.

Economy

The 2008 Global financial crisis and the resulting bailout were largely caused by reckless spending, lending and exorbitant risk-taking in the absence of government regulation. The failure to curb outsized risk taking has resulted in severe consequences- some US 1 billion in customer money remains missing and thousands still do not have nearly even a third of their funds.

Could produce shallow bravado, encouraging a gambling mentality. It will threaten one's quality of life. These traits would hinder one from exercising good and rational judgement crucial in risk-taking.

Taking intelligent, <mark>not mindless risks would prevent economies and the human brain from stagnating</mark> and ultimately produce powerful and tangible results.

Definition of economic growth: an increase in the amount of goods and services, and therefore an increase in the nation's wealth overtime.

The key economic indicator to measure economic growth is GDP. GDP is the total value spent on goods and services, the total wages and profits earned, and the total value of final goods and services produced. GDP is a measure of a nation's wealth.

Steve Jobs- the genius behind Apple and how his product revolutionised the tech industry- his conference was a watershed moment in the mobile phone industry. The advent of touchscreens! And the removal of the static keyboard. He took a risk by introducing a product that was never seen before in the industry- overwhelming success

If u experiment too much without any consideration, won't bode well for u either
Florida juice company- change their logo and packaging- dumb. Sales plummeted because people couldn't recognise their old iconic packaging.

How far should firms be allowed to limit their workers' rights when profits are at stake?

Relationship power balance between firms and workers
The employer controls a person's pay/working hours
But workers and labourers have power from the law, Ministry of Manpower

Profit motive: The desire for financial gain as an incentive in economic activity

Usually part of a **capitalist system**

Rights are **sacrosanct**, **fundamental and inviolable for all human beings.**
Justification qn type because of the word should
Context: when profits are at stake
Grappling the **tension** between rights and profits MUST BOTH be addressed!
SHOW the tension in **BOTH paragraphs!**

Acceptable? Enjoy certain powers or privileges? Reasonable or not?-> all paraphrases of the justification question type

From a **moral and legal standpoint**, curtailing workers' rights is **not** the right thing to do. They are **fundamental labour rights, which should be maintained notwithstanding firms' profits being endangered.**
Ministry of Manpower SG. An employee is entitled to work not more than 8 hours daily, or 44 hours weekly. The Employment Act also deems that employees cannot work for more than 6 hours without a break.

International Labour Organisation part of the UN

Limiting workers rights does not actually solve the problem of a shortfall in profits and in fact does more harm than good- workers with less rights would be **less productive** at work.

Cutting back on workers rights is justifiable insofar as it is the **only way to ensure the company's survival and also these workers' livelihoods in the long run.**
Make your language sound very SEVERE- no choice/severe and desperate situation

The **short-term curtailing of workers rights, in the face of profit instability, <u>could drive innovation and competitiveness</u> in the long run.**
These positive effects will inevitably trickle down to a company's stakeholders, including their workers.

International organisations:

Examples of I.O:
- Red Cross Society, Human Rights Watch, UN World Food Programme, World Health Organisation, World Wide Fund for Nature, International Monetary Fund
- ASEAN, EU, NATO, Arab league

I.Os are the key actors of global governance, play a multitude of functions
- focused on promoting international peace and security. The mandate of the UN, that works to prevent conflicts and promote stability worldwide.
- Focus on economic development, International Monetary Fund promotes global macroeconomic and financial stability, providing policy advice to aid countries in building and maintaining strong economies.
- WHO seeks to defend everyone's right to health, World Food Organisation aims to eradicate hunger and malnutrition.

Strengths/successes of IO:

1) **Forums of exchange, contention and cooperation** on social policies, bringing **multifarious actors together** to **solve** the most **pressing global issues today.**
2) IO **intervention** brought **temporary/lasting peace to intense conflicts.**
3) IOs provide **humanitarian support to** communities **ravaged** by various circumstances such as natural disasters, wars, famines.

1) **Forums** of exchange/collaboration
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals were adopted at the UN sustainable Development Summit in New York, USA in 2015
- The

The United Nations

UN Charter maintains international peace and security by developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples
Cooperates in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in attaining these common ends.

Honestly, a lot of times, these big countries will come together to discuss certain issues in the hopes of resolving them but most of the time, changes are not enacted so readily/ changes are often opposed. Even Donald Trump famously tweeted how the United Nations was merely 'just a club for people to get together, talk and have a good time. So sad!'

While the UN lacks the tools and the willpower to actively intervene in many cities, having that stage for international diplomacy is invaluable. It can still provide legitimacy to a nation's efforts and publicly confront a nations' actions as illegitimate.

UN's response to the Rohingya crisis

In 2021, in response to the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar, 9 ASEAN leaders and general Min of Myanmar agreed to 5-point consensus which called for an immediate cessation of violence and an inclusive political dialogue. Despite this, General Min oversaw a brutal nationwide crackdown. According to the Assistance Association for Polticial Prisoners, the junta has arbitrarily detained more than 15700 people and killed at least 2000.

None of the SEA countries imposed sanctions on an increasingly violent Myanmar. Many countries opted to play a diplomatic role instead. China played an active, mediating role by hosting Trilateral meetings with Myanmar and Bangladesh. India signed several partnership agreements in 2017 to assist Myanmar in developing the Rakhine state.

The handling of the Rohingya crisis through the diplomatic 'ASEAN' way demonstrates the ASEAN nation's inclination to abide by the ASEAN Way, which are informal, non-confrontational and consensus driven deliberations at the level of intergovernmental cooperation.
All members must agree on any action ASEAN takes, with an increasing difficulty of taking decisive actions on sensitive or controversial issues ten-fold.

ANYWAYS THE CONCLUSION ON HOW EFFECTIVE?
The ASEAN organisation was effective in bringing together key stakeholders in meeting, came up with the 5-point consensus, did practice diplomacy and eventually reached an agreement to implore the Myanmar military to stop violence against the Rohingyas. However, it was not effective in stopping the violence that Rohingyas still face! Outcome was not fully achieved.

Economy:

A strong economic performance gives states allowance for investing in merit goods, such as public infrastructure, education, healthcare and defence.

Singapore's defence spending rose from $8.11 billion to $9.98 billion in the same timeframe. Funds the acquisition and upgrading of hardware which are critical to counter-offensive operations offline and online.

MOF also reported an increase in social spending, which almost doubled from $20 billion in 2010 to $37 billion in 2019.

Continuously improving economic outlook has enabled higher Government expenditure on subsidies for housing and infrastructure. The benefits that accompany robust economic growth are filtered down to the citizens. With more monetary power in the hands of the state, the quality of life would be improved.

Media

Misinformation vs disinformation
Thinks its true when it is not (sharing something cos u think its true when its not) (under false impressions)
You know it's not true but u say it anymore (scams) (spreading false rumours about a politician that is fake)
Is the news still reliable?

Pew Research study- ¼ of journalists have unknowingly included false info in their reports
AI generated new anchors in China, can work 24 hours a day and report news 24 hours
How to ascertain that the AI would present news in an unbiased manner as expected of a news anchor
Deepfake Ukrainian president
AI replacing jobs OR the abuse that's possible with these AI anchors
AI influencers- very likened to influencer personalities, real life celebs, posts will be very similar to the celebrities
Jenner-ative AI
Can communicate with the AI
Form parasocial relationships with a celebrity, non existent relationship. Attached to this person, forming a close relationship that is not real
Meta 28 celebrities got their rights for 5 million and above to use their faces
Human influencers build off of authenticity,
AI can only mimic but there's no genuinity behind it
Influencer economy
Can generate content more quickly, no need for human influencers anymore? Cost effective too! Livelihoods are at stake
Parasocial relationships
One sided relationships on the social media platform
A lot of unhealthy behaviours, stalking of the celebs
Problematic

Attempts to regulate new media never truly effective

Good to consider the Dark Web- largely untouched, uncontrolled by corporations and Gov simply because it's so difficult to access it.

The sheer expanse of new media has made it next to impossible to govern the near infinite media landscape.
It's evolving all time, at unprecedented speed. **Any legislative attempt to regulate it will never truly be able to keep up with the rapid rate at which the media is evolving.**
Enforcement of regulation is essentially near to impossible. Not well versed with how near media is changing

There's also no core authority.

How far is the digital age a level playing field?

Levels the playing field-> reduces inequality/unfairness in society
Could also be applied to education- being a solver of issues in today's world

It is largely a level playing field when it democratises information access to most members of society, even those traditionally excluded from the education system

However, it is **not** a level playing field when **digital technologies fail to overcome existing obstacles to equality when digital technologies create new inequalities, adding a new dimension to the divide.**

The digital age serves as a much needed recourse to counteract the unjust disadvantages afflicted on the systematically disenfranchised, on the grounds of social justice.

Wikipedia, a digital encyclopaedia aims to create a world in which all knowledge is freely available to everyone (with an internet connection). This vision aligns with the claim that the digital age is largely a level playing field, insofar as participants have access to technology. **Alas, this quixotic ideal does not manifest for** many when digital technology fails to overcome the existing inequalities or creates unfair situations of its own.

Apple elitism- snobbery at its finest. **Apple perceived as the dominant brand in the mobile phone market- look down on people using other brands**

Technology vs ethics

Technology is so advanced that ethical concerns are left behind.
YES
✅**As more individuals are preoccupied with the glitzy world of technology and its innovative creations/limitless potential, there has been a rise in ethical concerns being left on the backburner. Advancing at such a rapid rate that ethical concerns have been left behind**

The current technology that individuals are so preoccupied with is space research- it's the very **COST-PROHIBITIVE NATURE and the HIGH OPPORTUNITY COST**. Musk wanting to colonise planets because 'If there's something terrible that happens on Earth, either made by humans or natural, we want to have, like, life insurance for life as a whole," **Musk** said during a virtual Mars conference on Aug 31 on his plans of colonising Mars + how countries are locked in a space race to gain political dominance.The 3 billionaires that **paid 55 million dollar ticket** to an 18 day trip to space under SpaceX. All the money that went to developing space technology could have been allocated to solving global, pressing issues on earth related to ethics! Rather than allocating funds to solving hunger and the global food crisis which is a pressing ethical concern, it has been left in the backburner by the glitzy world of technology and its unlimited potential.

In 2020, it was found that the **total sum of funds allocated to space research by countries over the world amounted to approximately 200 billion USD** in the year alone. **UNWFP** estimated that approximately 20 billion would be needed per year to solve global hunger by 2030.

Might not use the above as an argument because it sounds more peripheral, not a direct violation of ethics

Also a lot of elitism in the tech space - apple elitism, perceived superiority in the mobile phone market- snobbery at its finest.

While it may seem like a small detail, the green bubble has become a symbol of exclusion and status, with some iPhone users going so far as to refuse to communicate with people who use Androids or other non-iPhone devices.

Status and Identity. At the heart of the **green bubble vs. blue bubble debate** is the way in which Apple has positioned itself as a **luxury brand.** From its **sleek** design to its **high price point**, the iPhone has become a **status symbol** in our society. While there are certainly other high-end smartphones on the market, Apple has managed to **create a sense of exclusivity around its products.** As a result, the **blue bubble has become a symbol of membership in an exclusive club.** It is a visual representation of the fact that the person you are communicating with is also part of the Apple ecosystem.

Divides more than it unites.

With how **technology is irrevocably intertwined with one's financial strata**- and how **rampant class inequality is in the world**, technology exacerbates these class differences even further.

✅**The advancement in technology has led to** <mark>massive infringement of privacy in citizens,</mark> **where legal bodies deliberately bypass ethical concerns. Privacy is a fundamental human right which individuals are rightfully entitled to, so technology leading to the breach of privacy is unethical.**

Also a lot of <mark>state surveillance efforts</mark> that are linked with technology:

Article 12 of the UDHR

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

NSA utilised intelligence and technology to controversially tapped onto the private phone calls and messages of citizens- outraged at such a massive breach of privacy.

China's social credit system- Orwellian state, you know it.

China's sharp eyes project- IHS Market estimates that there are approx. 540 million cameras countrywide in China / China aims to achieve 100% camera coverage nationwide- monitor citizens.

National Security Agency in US is a governing body that received critical opprobrium when it was found that they were controversially tapping onto the private phone calls of people Rebuttal- it was for a **good cause** actually, it was precisely because the Gov **didn't want another recurrence of 9/11 case/ terrorism** because of the extensive damage and grief it had caused. Of course, the very method of it was unethical since it did infringe citizens' fundamental right to privacy but the plan was overall conducted for an ethical reason. Also these **technology-induced state surveillance efforts deter crimes and help to maintain public order and safety- net increase in safety for the public, achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people**. **ETHICAL** in this case! Though technically you would argue that states have the right to monitor their citizens insofar as they do not violate human rights

Technology now is so advanced that mass data collection is now possible, which could ==irrevocably lead to the abuse of personal information, highly unethical.==
TT Token- contact tracing and mass data collection to contain the spread of the virus and expedite the quarantine process. When 2 tokens come into contact, the tokens would exchange the encrypted information of the 2 individuals and the information is only decrypted when one of the patients are tested positive, for contact tracing essentially. HOWEVER, in **2021** it was found that the patients information was being used to solve a murder investigation when the government had previously promised that personal information collected by TraceTogether would only be purely for containing the pandemic-> severely eroded public trust and it was an unethical abuse of private information!
Lucie Krahukova, director of Australian privacy watchdog, commented that the **worst case scenario of eroding public trust would be a decrease in the efficiency/efficacy of health responses in the future.**

✅**Technology is a tool that is ==increasingly being weaponised by authoritarian== Governments to ==subjugate== its citizens, unethical.**
China's ==social credit system== conducted in villages-> criticised by former US president as an Orwellian state. Essentially impose control and subjugate the actions and choices of its citizens
North Korea- massive censorship and monitor the content of citizens- severe punishment for being caught watching foreign content
China distorts the motivations of Hong Kong anti-extradition bill protestors

✅**The advancement in technology has led to the ==birth of dangerous inventions that pose severe risks to mankind/ or are just simply unethical. / Technology leads to the birth of ethically suspicious inventions that could…. Destabilise…. / lead to ethical quandaries..==**
Be careful of the ==fine line== between ==Science and technology==
Study to prove that nuclear weapons clearly lead to debilitating health consequences:

1986 Chernobyl power plant disaster- 2006 International Physicians for the prevention of nuclear warfare found a link between birth defects and deformities among residents living within the vicinity of the site. /1945 Hiroshima bomb to end world war

Current case

The **development of nuclear technology in North Korea**- fire nuclear missiles in South Korean sea- The increasingly volatile landscape has also brought about another danger associated with nuclear technology- the creation of nuclear weapons that could potentially threaten security in the world / weaponized by belligerent nations.

It could lead to the **surreptitious development of nuclear weapons** (surreptitious precisely because of the unclear agendas of countries who develop nuclear power! North Korea..) The world today is **becoming increasingly volatile.** The pursuit is still far from desirable as it opens doors to belligerent nations and extremist groups to exploit the technology for nuclear warfare, which is highly unethical because of the numerous health risks.

Can also say **cryogenics (people to potentially be immortal)** /CRISPR technology (people play god and decide which traits deserve to exist, alter the gene pool?)/**machine-assisted suicide in Switzerland for those w terminal illnesses suicide pods**

But you can use this example better for later, on your

Also just make it very clear what kind of technology it is, if it does overlap with Science- since a lot of Science is only made possible with technology sure

Gene technology: Dr He JianKui's gene editing case which received **critical opprobrium from the Science community.** Gene editing and **artificial reproductive technologies** which allows couples to create designer babies by altering the genetic makeup of their child, which is highly unethical since it enables individuals to **'play god' and decide which traits are allowed to exist. Designer babies!**

CRISPR technology is a revolutionary gene editing technology that allows couples to manipulate the genetic make-up of their child, deliberate selection of alleles - resulting in the formation of designer babies!

NO

The rise in technology has brought more ethical concerns to light due to the massive public outreach that the media has.

Technology enables online activism to be possible because of the massive public outreach that social media has.

Canadian YouTuber Shawn Ahmed used his platform to raise funds to rebuild school in Bangladesh after it was destroyed by a cyclone

Greta Thunberg amassed 15.7 million followers on Instagram, galvanising a generation to join her in her online crusade to pressure Governments to prioritise environmental concerns.

#MeToo movement - validated the experiences that victims of sexual harassment went through and brought numerous concrete political changes like the banning of public non disclosure agreements

Black Lives Matter movement online galvanised people to condemn police brutality and brought many minority voices to the fore, sparking debates on the innumerable majority-minority tensions that continue to wreck society.

It is precisely because of the advent of technology which places firms/businesses under heavy public scrutiny which makes it hard for them to sidestep ethical considerations.
Exposure of Shein online! Led to many consumers to boycott the brand!

Identify the **false dichotomy at the last body paragraph!**
In addition, it is illogical to conclude that the rise in technology directly leads to ethical concerns being forgotten because certain technology-induced inventions are created with the intention to address these ethical issues!
Paro robot created by Japanese doctor, Dr Shibata a therapeutic robot that provides comfort and company to the patient

Does violence in the visual media portray reality or encourage the unacceptable

Violence : physical force with the intention to harm or cause damage
VISUAL media: tv/movies/films/live action/ CAN be drawings and photographs too! Can be graphic novels, illustrations and paintings! As long as you can see something it is considered visual media! **SEE**

The **power of visual media** lies precisely in its **power of depiction**-> <u>ingrained in human mind for a longer time</u>, <u>compel</u> us to have <u>thoughts</u>/ to <u>perform a certain action</u>

Joe Sacco- a cartoonist and journalist
'It's a visual world and people respond to visuals'
Deduce the power of visual media
A mirror which reflects reality and compel us to respond in good or bad ways

More often than not, **violence** in the visual media purely reflects an **accurate depiction of bloodshed in our immediate society. It mirrors current events that are violent like wars, terrorist attacks etc.**

When visual media is used in **news reporting**- <u>**wartime journalism**</u> is **violent** in nature but it is still a **depiction of reality** - to <u>**expose the violence and barbarism that transpired in the real world.**</u>

However, violence in the visual media does **not** usually portray reality- may be **exaggerated and sensationalised to elicit feelings** of sympathy in the audience/ **galvanise actions!**

Even when portrayed in a **mature and responsible fashion,** violence in visual media can be wrongly interpreted easily because it is visual media that is **up to one's interpretation-> easily encourage unacceptable actions** With power of depiction can **compel acts of violence via imitation**. In addition, it is even worse when young children are exposed to violent media because they are impressionable- prefrontal cortex not fully developed from a biological standpoint and some psychologist study???

CHATGPT

It's not infallible haha, very prone to error! Had a 97.1% accuracy rate in identifying that 17077 is a prime number- not very consistent!

The **idea/ presence of competition** being **desirable** because it could push competitors to **maximise their fullest potential, which results in technological/Scientific advancements and breakthroughs.**

Eg: The competition between the **2 technological powerhouses** of the world in the **mobile phone market**- Apple and Samsung have been competing in sales in the mobile phone market for decades. With the determination to be the top brand in the mobile phone market, they have evolved and changed mobile phones, constant progress in technological innovations like the advent of facial and fingerprints recognition, virtual assistants (Siri, Bixby), AR etc.
Conversely, the absence of competition between Internet Service Providers in the US has caused the US to fall behind in internet speed ranking despite the US being the prime architect for Internet Service.

Likewise, in the Science world, Scientists that strive to win the Nobel Peace Prize would naturally push themselves to make personal sacrifices for their research, which would inadvertently result in numerous crucial Scientific breakthroughs and advancements.

(Example honestly touched more on the sacrifice portion)
Eg: Marie Curie in her research for the element Uranium. While much of her research had caused her health to deteriorate due to the radioactive nature of Uranium, it is undeniable that her sacrifices had enabled us to know more about uranium…. Know how to utilise it in labs.. etc.

Link technology to art

1) **Enable an artist to reach new heights in their creative expression/ provides more room for them to exercise their imaginative capacities and reimagine how art can be transformed from traditional art on mere paper to ... .more contemporary forms of art that are less static and stationary. Back in the 19th century, most forms of art were paintings/on paper but in modern years, technology has been incorporated into art (3D printing, VR light installations etc)**

2) **Establish a space (on the internet) where art enthusiasts can come to discuss, appreciate and celebrate art virtually, where this community exists beyond the bounds of space or time.**

3) **Increases the accessibility of art to a wider group of people. With the rise of technology, anyone with a technological device and a stable Wifi connection can view artworks online.**

Functions/Impacts/Benefits/Detriments (All overlap)

A word about fiction

Basically, the idea is that fiction is a **conduit** in which creators of it use to convey something **much deeper**. Why fiction? Because it can **circumvent censorship for potentially sensitive issues**, and it can also use the **power of poignant stories** to **resonate** with readers and **engender very visceral reactions which help change perspectives.**

Shape social norms/ individuals' perspective on various matters (A more fancier term is "Agents of Socialisation"

- Young individuals learn **societal values** and what society expects of them
- portrayal of familial relationships, the treatment of minorities and women and views on religion has a **powerful influence on people's attitudes and worldview.**
- When done successfully, media can be used to **empower groups** in societies, one large group being minorities. There is **more representation of minorities/those marginalised in society** on social media which **validates their existences and experiences= Empowering**
- **Dove campaign** which celebrates the natural physical differences personified by all women and encourages them to feel confident in their own skin. Nancy Etcoff, a Harvard psychologist who examined the campaign then and now, found that more women today describe beauty on a wider variety of qualities outside of just looks, such as confidence.
- However, there are detriments listed below too about the **over reliance on media stereotypes and negative portrayals of minorities.**
- Many people's **perceptions** of others with different identities and with whom they have **limited interaction**, is strongly influenced by media depictions and

longstanding cultural stereotypes. The media perpetuates demeaning images and stereotypes about assorted groups of minority, such as ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, the disabled, and the elderly. Media has the ability to perpetuate thinking through **advocating discriminatory sentiments through repetition**

- ***Lack of contact** between groups can lead to **reliance on media stereotypes** when formulating ideas of a certain group erasure and **negative portrayals of minorities** can **reinforce biases** that reside in the subconscious
- (UK, 2015) **The British Parliament** published its "report of the all-party parliamentary inquiry into anti-Semitism" that revealed that social media is increasingly being used for the spread of anti-Muslim and antisemitic sentiments. According to the report, Muslims were three times and Jews were eight times as likely to be a victim of religious hatred from a Christian.
- Technology-induced toxic masculinity, technology enabling men to project their control over women by the **'male gaze'**- objectifying women to a larger degree. The popularity of the concept rose quite recently.
- Under **feminist theory**, the male gaze is a **sexualized way of portraying women**. By objectifying women, the male gaze depicts women through the sexual desires of heterosexual male viewers. By objectifying women in such a manner, it erroneously suggests that a woman's sole purpose is to look visually-appealing/visually-presentable to a man.
- Visual media that respond to masculine voyeurism will tend to sexualize women for a male viewer as well as the male characters being depicted on the screen.

Technology in this case **exacerbates the objectification of women** and continue to **widen the perennial gap**/inequality between men and women

Entertainment

- Mass media must appeal to the mass audience. This ultimately results in media content being **designed** in such a way that it **appeals to the lowest common denominator of taste** (Figure of speech which means the most basic, least sophisticated level of taste, sensibility, or opinion.)
- Reality television (Sado-maso TV) where participants have to accept humiliation and satisfy lower human instincts such as voyeurism and gloating for their moment of TV fame
- **Violent video games**: Psychologist Craig A. Anderson concluded in a 2010 review that exposure to violent video games is a causal risk factor for increased aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition, and aggressive effect, and for decreased empathy and pro-social behaviour.

A powerful bringer of social and political change (Makes online activism possible)

In a world where people **value their individual voice**, social media is assumed to **remove barriers to constructive dialogue** since it allows **more voices to participate.** However, it is precisely this deluge of cacophonous voices that drown out logic, thus posing more of a hindrance. Opening up the conversation to all may also invite bad actors to share their **controversial opinions and sway impressionable readers to their questionable cause**.

Social media users tend to resort to **sensationalism** or **disinformation** to influence others, **muddying the waters in what was supposed to be a constructive discussion.**

False claims by conspiracy theorists like Iris Koh of anti-vaccine group, Healing the Divide, circulated widely sowing seeds of doubt and confusion among the public as they speculated that vaccines were unsafe. **Others piled on, which fuels further scepticism and mistrust among social media users during a period when cooperation with Government directives was crucial.**

The promotion of unverified claims overshadowed the voices of experts and authorities, hindering a balanced and factual discussion regarding the vaccines' safety and efficacy.

(similar to Donald Trump and his claim that hydroxychloroquine was a possible cure for COVID and Dr Anthony Farci who is the former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious DIseases debunked this and warned people of the veracity of Trump's claims- became the target for vitriol cos Trump did not want to seem feckless at a time of crisis)

- The **massive public outreach** that social media has, it is able to gather a large global audience easily <-> A PLATFORM FOR ACTIVISM, for individuals to gain traction to support a particular movement/cause" BLM etc.
- It is an i**deal springboard in being the first step to** concrete political change.
- The **#MeToo movement** started on social media: It not only validated the experiences that victims of sexual harassment and **empowered** them, it also **raised awareness of the severity of the issue of workplace sexual harrassment** and eventually brought concrete political changes like the **banning of public non disclosure agreements.**
- A change of **such a magnitude** would probably not have been possible had it not been for the **existence of social media!**
- The **Black Lives Matter movement** used social media as its main platform to raise awareness of th**e egregious issue of systemic racism** against black individuals and highlighted the **severity** of America's police brutality. Individuals from all around the globe showed **support** to the cause, Singaporeans condemned police brutality despite being oceans away from America.
- At just 15 years old, Thunberg put her adolescence on hold and assumed the mantle of environmental champion, **initiating the "Fridays for Future" school strike outside the Swedish parliament.** Moreover, Thunberg has expertly harnessed social media to spread her word, amassing a staggering 5.7 million followers on Twitter and **14.7 million followers on Instagram. Her online presence has been pivotal in galvanising a generation to her aid, who similarly join the online crusade for the environment.** Her work and dedication has displayed passion and wisdom beyond her years, and sparked a green wave among her peers - all this while bearing the brunt of criticisms from her elders for being a "foolish" teenager.
-
- (REBUTTAL) Detractors may contend that it is not the media that should be given credit for bringing about these changes but rather the individuals behind the changes themselves. However, one must critically consider that **a change of such a magnitude may not have been possible had it not been for the existence of**

social media. It is precisely because of **social media's useful ability to gain a massive outreach of people which contributes to the success of these causes.** Social media in this case, too should be given credit for bringing positive changes to society.

Bridge between Government and people/Serves as an intermediary between the Gov and people

- **facilitates the democratic process by interpreting and commenting** on political news for the **layperson** to understand. Enables individuals to keep up with political matters so that they can **actively be involved in political matters.**
- The fourth estate, being the news media, contributes greatly and is used as a tool for the **unbiased dispersion of news**. **Addressing important information** that may often showcase the dark side of political parties or corporations. The press serves as an **external watchdog for political action.**
- **Mediacorp's "Talking Point"** invites economists and politicians to comment on **policy decisions like Heng Swee Keat plan** for HDB 99 year lease
- **vTaiwan**; it's a system/online platform that Taiwan uses to **crowdsource information during the lawmaking process.** The **different stakeholders** such as the Government ministries, elected representatives, civil society organisations and citizens come together to help lawmakers **implement decisions with a greater degree of legitimacy**. **Crowdsourcing of suggestions** from the general public and **implemented to real policies**-> **influenced the alcohol sales law** in Taiwan so that it would be impossible for a child **to surreptitiously get hold of alcohol. Social media and the internet are used as a platform to firstly** bridge the gap between the lawmakers and general public, henceforth bringing **concrete changes to the policies of the country** which would **lead to the betterment of the country** and its **people.** Shows the extent of how **important** social media is in playing its **role** as an **intermediary** between the Government and its people.

Social media/media is increasingly being used as a **tool weaponised by totalitarian states to reduce political dissent** and **legitimise their political authority**.

In most cases, social media/media is increasingly being used
The Chinese government **distorted the motivations** of the Hong Kong Anti-Extradition protestors so that Chinese mainlanders would not understand their reasons for protesting. North Koreans are unable to access news sources from around the world- they're not even aware that they are being abused.

Heavy censorship in totalitarian states- North Korea
Heavy penalties for being caught with foreign media content

Fact-checking site-> verification of news sources and viewpoints

- Online community is composed of members from **all over the word with access to a variety of sources of information** available for readers and consumers to **evaluate** against one another; enabling the **representation of a great variety of perspectives**
- Small news sites/blogs serve as a <mark>useful check on the established viewpoints or dominant biases that would otherwise dominate the media</mark>
- The rise of new media makes the <mark>gathering, analysing and verification of information far easier, faster, and objective.</mark> The online community is composed of members from all over the world with access to a variety of sources of information available for readers and consumers to <mark>**evaluate against one another**</mark>**; enabling the representation of a great variety of perspectives** small news sites/micro blogs serve as a <mark>useful check</mark> on the established viewpoints or dominant biases that would <mark>otherwise dominate the media</mark>
- **Wenzhou bullet train crash (2011)**: authorities attempt to cover up and have a speedy investigation of the train crash. In light of the rail's shoddy construction and the authorities' attempt to cover up the incident, many Chinese citizens were angered. Social media in this case acted as <mark>informal newswires</mark>

Voice for the marginalised and oppressed -> Effective change

- Underprivileged groups can effectively contest their marginalisation. The democratisation of social media
- **The media can be used as an avenue to spread awareness of the innumerable injustices that the marginalised and the oppressed go through in our society thus validating their experiences** and thereby **Empowering them.**
- **(Use this more for the point on social media being a powerful bringer of social and political change) #MeToo** started by women who were powerless against Hollywood figure Harvey Weinstein. This started a whole chain of women who started speaking up about the sexual harassment that they've faced in their individual workplaces. This revealed the **prevalence of sexual harassment and raised awareness about the severity of the problem**-> AN **EFFECTIVE FIRST STEP to change** since this movement sparked <mark>MANY concrete improvements</mark> like how <mark>states ban public non-disclosure agreements that cover sexual harrassment.</mark>
- This one is more about raising injustices around the world- brought certain societal issues to light
- **(More used for the point on social media providing a voice for the marginalised) Black Lives matter**, against police brutality and discrimination of African Americans. Though a <mark>mainly American issue</mark>, <mark>Singaporeans</mark> took to social media after the unjustful death of George Flyod to <mark>condemn police brutality and racism</mark> <mark>**despite being oceans away from the USA (Racial harmony is not a**</mark>

dream, there are concrete steps being made to make sure it becomes less of a dream)

- even if failing to directly bring immediate change, have been overwhelmingly significant in **bringing minority voices to the fore**, **validating their concerns and warranting greater discussion of the innumerable majority-minority tensions wracking society**
- Due to voting regulations, youths, often regarded as unimportant and peripheral by political decision-makers. The youths of today have been empowered on both the individual and collective levels;
- The September 2019 climate strikes is one inspired by youth activist Greta Thunberg who ditched school to protest outside the Swedish parliament. The movement soon went international, with students all over the world protesting for more to be done for the environment (Are youths always misjudged? Some political figures saw Greta Thunberg as a rebellious upstart)

Media **perpetuates mob mentality** due to the **overwhelming** flurry of information on social media. The spread of **inaccurate** information which could lead to **disastrous outcomes.**

- Speed = inaccuracy. We spread things at such a fast speed, want to report at same time, live. A misrepresentation of the actual events, distorted without fact-checking
- Accessibility to new media is a double-edged sword
- The speed and expediency of technology has overwhelms us, rendering us **unable to use our critical thinking skills** and **retreat to our superficial human instincts**
- This could also be the consequence of the over sensationalism of news due to blind greed of these news agencies. The Sun daily?
- Coupled with our human inability to recall historical trends, **we accept what we see as the truth.**
- Author of Factfulness, Hans Rosling found that **70% of the people he surveyed** thought that violent crime rates had actually increased, and only 10% knew that the number of people dying from natural disasters has more than halved in the past 3 decades. It's due to the availability heuristic, the more vivid/dramatic details we remember of a particular incident, the more we associate these events with higher frequency- and with how media tends to dramatise/hyperbolise/sensationalise incidents- our perception of the world gradually becomes distorted and we become more paranoid than we should.
- Some may contend that more news sources scattered on the internet, coupled with netizen's **tendency to hop onto the bandwagon/adopt the view of the majority blindly w/out fact-checking the reliability of the sources [Humans tend to retreat to their more superficial instincts when there is an overwhelming amount of information on the internet, and hop onto the bandwagon and adopt the dominant perspective THE MOB MENTALITY**-> disastrous outcome where we have a flurry of false information spread and **consequences** as a result
- After all, it is **human nature to adopt the common perspective that dominates the media as a result of mob mentality**. Social media only perpetuates this mob

mentality, which may seem harmless but actually has disastrous outcomes if the dominant perspective is based on a false story.

- (SG, 2017) Singapore's netizens enraged by a video of a young couple bullying an elderly man at Toa Payoh hawker centre. Within less than 24 hours, the Internet identified the lady as "Cherry Tan". More details were uncovered, including her workplace and her picture, shared among people who wanted to see justice done. Eventually, it was discovered that she was not the lady in the video, although the reputations of Tan and UOB had already been **dragged through the mud**
- **[REBUTTAL] However, detractors of this perspective would contend that global literacy rates have increased, suggesting that more individuals would be more discerning of news. OECD reports that 50% of the population in DCs have sme form of tertiary education. After all, it would only make sense for highly educated individuals to have the prerogative to verify and be critically discerning of their sources. However, reality suggests otherwise: A study which analysed more than 126,000 retweets on Twitter found that a falsehood reaches a group of 1500 individuals at a rate that is 6 times quicker than a true story does.**
- **Due to the rapid spread of false information on the internet exacerbated by mob mentality, it seems that we cannot really trust online news anymore.**

You can ALSO REBUT and say that "It is important to discern that it is not the existence of the internet/ social media that leads to the spread of false information but rather the way users use social media- it is the very fault of these individuals and how they optimise social media. It's the human using the device at fault, not the device itself.

You can ALSO say that there are also numerous points on the internet (Microblogs etc) where users can **verify** information (Your point on how social media enabled the gathering, analysing and verification of information far faster, easier and more objective. It is very very hard for individuals to get false information or something.

Sensationalism + commercialisation of media + Blind corporate greed + Over reliance on a particular news site that panders towards a specific audience + confirmation bias + circular reporting (News site A publishes misinformation-> News site B to publish misinformation and the chain continues) -> Skewed perceptions (But I feel like this is more to do with the reliability of news these days: Whether these news outlets can be trusted)

- **The exponential rise of new media** which places heavy emphasis on number of clicks and main revenue being from ads, has resulted in **a decline in journalistic integrity as companies aim to maximise profit**
- Sensationalism: Presenting news in a way to provoke audience/ capture their attention at the expense of accuracy of the news
- **Pandering to a specific audience/Partisan bias in media** (Fox News to **conservative, right-wing Americans**. The **damaging role that Fox News plays in American media**: Researchers found that what CNN viewers saw was **largely**

coverage about the coronavirus pandemic and Trump's failures on limiting the virus's spread. On Fox, however, the main coverage was about how the **left embraced** an **"extreme" racial ideology and downplaying the pandemic**. Much of what Fox News showed was <u>exaggerated or untrue.</u>

- Fox News engages in partisan filtering coverage. An audience that over relies on Fox News would learn news under a biassed perspective.
- This promotes **confirmation bias:** The tendency to seek out, favour, and use information that confirms what you already believe. Ignoring new information that goes against their preconceived notions.
- **Echo chambers** (An environment where an individual only receives or hears opinions/notions that reinforce their own: heavily determined by the social media platform's **algorithm**)
- The incessant **exaggeration** of reports not only **clouds the judgement of the readers but also trivialises many important news.** It should be acknowledged that <u>mainstream media does also tend towards sensationalism</u> and 'excessive coverage' in order to **sustain the viewership and generate sufficient profits**.
- The **lack of journalistic integrity** points to the need for some type of control over the information which is presented to the public, to **prevent the false propagation of information**, especially for news media as people ought to feel reassured that they need accurate news.
- In addition, it seems that these news outlets also can choose what they want to air/cover! Which again, has an effect on how we perceive the world!
- Phenomenon on the **availability heuristic** and plane crashes and car crashes. Apparently, plane crashes make better news and these news outlets choose to talk more about plane crashes even though car crashes occur much more frequently (Use the example of Hans Gosling's Factfulness: 10 Reasons why we're about the world where 70% of the individuals he interviewed thought that crime rates were increasing although reality showed that it had decreased from 14.5 million to 9.5 million from 2012 to 2017)

Is the news still reliable?

The democratisation of news opens up a realm of challenges in distinguishing fact from opinion/fiction
The urge to report news in real-time, especially during the unfolding of a crisis, can sometimes override the need to verify information. However, if a piece of misinformation gets spread to official news channels, news organisations could proliferate the misinformation to a large degree, since many would rely on these organisations.
Pew Research Study found that ¼ of journalists have unknowingly included false information in their news reports, despite 71% being confident in their ability to identify falsehoods
This statistic is found in reality especially during the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing- the name 'Sunil Tripathi' circulated like wildfire by online vigilantes in an attempt to expedite the police search for suspects of the bombing. However, it was

found that the name of the suspect was derived purely from conjecture and not factual information. Journalists who added fire to the fuel by spreading misinformation like Politico's Dylan Byers. **Due to the misidentification of the suspect and being falsely accused, Sunil Tripathi** went missing before it was found that he committed suicide- caused **great deal of distress to his family cos he was innocent.**
The dangers of misinformation - and it does not help that news sites are the ones that proliferate misinformation! Our deeply misguided world today

Disinformation of news using AI
The world's first AI generated news anchors by the Chinese state news agency Xinhua- first to air an AI generated newscast- could deliver news and work 24 hours a day and cut down production costs
Such seemingly innovative creation **opens doors to bad actors with ill intentions**- who exploit such technology to deliberately spread disinformation
Spamouflage, a pro Chinese propaganda campaign utilised the technology to create AI news anchors to criticise US, HK and Taiwan.

The rise in deepfakes- with technology, it is now possible to program face models of real people and programme their voices so that it looks like they said something Facebook had to recently take down a video containing a deepfake of Ukrainian president urging citizens to stop resisting the Russian Invasion.

Issue of online falsehoods and its effects: FAKE NEWS!
- Online falsehoods can "p**rogressively erode the harmony and cohesion** between different communities".
- Online falsehoods can be used to **"undermine the credibility and trust in institutions, including the media".**
- Online falsehoods could "**affect free speech and public discourse, drowning out other voices, stirring emotions and causing harm to individuals**".

Issue of people believing these fake news themselves!!

2019 POFMA (Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act)
Individuals or establishments that post factually inaccurate information would receive a correction direction and be ordered to take down the inaccurate information and issue a statement to correct the false information posted. It's either that or the establishment appeals in court.
POFMA aims to protect Singapore's security, public health, safety

Overall it is largely true that Singaporeans behave like sheep and believe whatever news media tells us, exception of sceptics

Singaporean readers are indeed led to believe everything the media says after decades of **paternalistic governance instilled trust in the veracity of the news**. Since independence, critics observe that Singapore has been administered as a nanny state, wherein the government interferes unduly in the lives of the common person.

Political institutions have made it easy to trust local news when it is so deeply intertwined with the state itself. Streamlined for us
Logical equivalence

Government is intrinsically linked to the media, and since we trust a lot in the Government, we would naturally trust media! Government also has the ability to control narratives, we don't really question whether they are true or not, STATE MEDIA! ALL THE SAME! If all different source corroborate with one another, surely what they are saying is true? (Nice rhetorical qn)

It is true that Singaporeans are susceptible to believing anything the news tells us due to the low level of critical thinking and media literacy skills across the populace. All booksmart but not critical thinking.
Memorising model answer, rote learning, don't think outside of the box, being unconventional where we are penalised for it
How can we really discern other or even our own opinions?
Little experience in developing our own beliefs and critically evaluating if what other says have merit.

Also worrying that we use dubious sources for fact-checking.
2019 Institute of Policy Studies Survey showed that
When IPS manipulated a news article citing false authorities and included mutliple grammatical errors, more than 2/3 respondents fell for it, with 49.6% being younger Singaporeans with tertiary education fell for it. Social media and instant messaging apps were also the main channels of misinformation-60% reported seeing fake news on instant messaging apps. Social media feeds exist in echo chambers that result from the algorithm.

A 2019 survey of over 2000 respondents where most verified information by asking their friends and family

However, the rise of intellectually sceptical and cynical Singaporeans who do not take news stories at face value proves an exception to the norm

As we navigate the digital age and the post truth world where fake news is rife, a growing portion of readers question what we are told, now that we knows things are we,don as they seem in this complex media landscape.
Oversensationalisation of news
Partly attributed to the critical thinking skills imparted through the education system.
In O level English, purpose of a visual text
In History, source based studies for people to infer what is being said- train people to tackle the media landscape better, amp up their media-literacy skills
Distinguish between fact and opinion

Cretes cynical readers enough to question the things that we see, we don't out 100% of our faith in everything we see
Good enough that we don't believe everything!

The Streisand effect

Cynical readers able to discern what's real from what's false, know shouldn't believe in every single thing
New media landscape, way too complicated and complex to understand
Easier to believe than doubt
Issues discussed are more nuanced, a lot more opposing perspective, hard to be experts on all topics
Gonna trust everything that people are reading
How we should regard British colonialism, after the passing of Queen Elizabeth
Anti colonial critics vs pro colonial critics
Multitude of arguments brought up
So multifaceted that it is easier to be intellectually lazy and believe whatever people say rather than form your own beliefs
Infinite no. Of beliefs in the world today, just look and take it at face value
Deepfakes and scams!
Taught the adage that seeing is believing
Not our fault that we fall prey to whatever the news tells us
Singaporeans are poor in media literacy, still hopeful that everyone believes whatever the media tells them.

The issue on censorship on media

It violates a human right- the fundamental human right to knowledge and news! People should be given ACCURATE knowledge on current affairs and what's happening around them. Censorship of news?
Article 19 Every human has the right **"to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."**

But at the same time, is it ever truly effective? Are the attempts to regulate new media ever truly effective? **The sheer expanse of new media has made it impossible to govern, as there is no existing method or body of personnel that exists now which can impose any measure of control over the infinite media landscape.**
16 Yr old radicalised boi buying a machete off of carousell - went undetected, can buy dangerous weapons 2021 planned a terrorist attack
The dark web and its programming layers
Playstation/ XBox live chat functions to recruit ISIS members/ plan for shootings
ANd basically it's very difficult to detect EVERY single suspicious activity online what

New media also changes, adapts and evolves so quickly that any legislative attempt at regulation will always be lagging several steps behind the current state of media development

Firstly some sentences that resonate with me:
- Freedom of speech should be exercised with the caveat that its use should be preceded with sufficient ethical responsibilities.
- Censorship should be something that people and businesses choose to do on their own, for their own reasons. The media should never be allowed to censor anything, because it is their job to provide information, not hide it. However, you must again consider the impacts of not censoring certain media:
- We have explicitly seen how certain media has detrimentally impacted individuals: The exposure of extreme ideologies has led to the **radicalisation** of individuals to **support an extreme political ideology that does more harm than good** + **offensive** content which only **deepens the divide** between the concerned parties in society, content/perspective which is heavily biassed against a certain group in society and how this group in society suffers as a result (**Asians being the victims of Asian hate crimes in America because of the distorted claims that they caused the coronavirus pandemic: Singaporean student attacked by a group of locals in London, it was found that the reason for the attack was cos of the coronavirus**). All of these because of the democratisation of media and how quickly it's able to disseminate information, whether that media is beneficial or not.
- It must be noted that censorship serves as a **protective mechanism**, a set of **training** wheels that is meant to be a temporary measure to protect the country until it is confident enough to deal with a truly free society.
- The control of information and ideas would only **stifle progress** and **perpetuate ignorance** and hence, censorship may not be relevant or necessary in today's **modern context**.
- However, some argue that **media literacy rates have increased** over the past few years with more individuals becoming educated, it should be expected that a literate

population is able to apply critical thinking to information and narratives provided by the media, and form their own opinions. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) reports that **more than 50% of the population in developed countries have some form of tertiary education.** While increasing literacy rates may suggest a population that is more inclined to think critically, reality suggests otherwise. A study published in 'Science', which analysed more than 126,000 tweets on Twitter, found that a falsehood reaches a group of 1,500 individual users at a rate that is 6 times quicker than a true story does. So… a more educated populace does not obviate the need for some form of control and regulation of media.

- However, we must concede that there are certain instances where it is imperative that censorship be present to **serve as a moral guide or compass/ a protective mechanism** of sorts

- A **more well-educated populace may not necessarily obviate the need for any form of control over the dissemination of information to the public.**

FOR CENSORSHIP

https://www.theknowledgeloft.com/gp-essays/gp-essay-28-is-censorship-justifiable/

All have in common that this particular media is censored for the purpose of maintaining political stability + social order Censorship serves to be a form of protective mechanism. After all, if certain content is left uncensored or unregulated, it could lead to numerous disastrous outcomes.
And they are impressionable, non fully developed prefrontal cortex, still trying to navigate their way in a world, still building beliefs
16 SG male was self-radicalised, motivated by a strong antipathy towards Islam and a fascination with violence. He watched the live streamed video of the terrorist attack on the two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 15 March 2019, and read the manifesto of the Christchurch attacker, Brenton Tarrant (Tarrant). He had also watched Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) propaganda videos, and came to the erroneous conclusion that ISIS represented Islam, and that Islam called on its followers to kill non-believers. Bruh he bought a machete from carousell tf Explaining how the 16-year-old was self-radicalised, ISD said he had a fascination with violent materials, and frequented sites and forums specialising in gore. BRUH the need for censorship is here

- When a media content has **racially-insensitive/ racially-offensive content** with the **potential to undermine political stability/ religious harmony** and lead to a further rift/divide between the concerned parties in a country. "Red Lines: Political Cartoons and the Struggle Against Censorship" banned in Singapore as it contained offensive religious content as cited by Minister for Communications & Information Ms Josephine Teo. Hate speech and offensive content has the potential to easily **be normalised and lead to deep social divides if left unchecked.**To preserve racial and religious harmony in Singapore, the Government takes a firm stance on such content regardless of their purpose of publication.

- The **Charlie Hebdo** incident, which is a **satirical** magazine which mocked the Prophet Mohammad, experienced severe backlash for its **inappropriateness and insensitivity to Islam**. Suffered the consequence- shooting. While the arts can promote freedom of expression, it is to be noted that art in this pretext should be <u>**closely regulated in order not to disrupt social cohesion and promote social strife.**</u>

- When a media content contains sensitive material which could **threaten national/ internal security** (SG, 2014) The movie "To Singapore, With Love" by director Tan Pin Pin was banned from airing in Singapore. It tells the story of the lives of 9 Singaporeans who fled Singapore during the backdrop of communism in its nascent years and features, what the government claims to be, "untruths and deceptions about (Singapore's) history"// The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye by Sonny Liew presents **a compelling alternative narrative of SG** so its funding was stripped 1 day **before its release at Kinokuniya as the National Arts Council deemed it could undermine political stability of a country**

- Certain content has the potential to lead to **extremist views and sentiments/ radicalisation.** (Anti-XXX views, anti-government views). In extreme cases, individuals exposed to this media could be radicalised and this could have serious consequences on a country's political stability and social order. SG 2017, female infant care teacher taken by extremist political cause of terrorist group ISIS and was radicalised online. // 2023 MOE teacher detained under the Internal Security Act after authorities discovered that he had plans to join the militant group in Palestine against the Israeli military. He is a palestine sympathiser and wanted to deliver social justice to the Palestinians who faced social, economic and political discrimination under Jewish law.
- Mass anti-government protests that could undermine social order
- Hence, censoring these types of content <mark>**COULD CURB EXTREMIST VIEWS**</mark> that could <mark>**potentially undermine political stability, national security and social order.**</mark>

- Due to corporate greed, certain news outlets tend towards sensationalism in a bid to sustain viewership and generate advertising revenue. Certain information tends to get blown out of proportion like the release of a report on carcinogenic processed meat by the World Health Organisation. The incessant exaggeration of reports not only **clouds the judgement of the readers but also distorts and trivialises many important news.** The **lack of journalistic integrity** points to the <u>**need** for some type of control over the information which is presented to the public</u>, to <mark>**prevent the false propagation of information**</mark>, especially for news media as people ought to feel reassured that they need accurate news.

AGAINST CENSORSHIP

- **Abused** by **totalitarian** Governments in order to legitimise their political power and social standing, reduce political dissent. Obvious example is North Korea. North Koreans are not even aware that they are victims of human rights abuses. **China distorts the motivations of the Hong Kong anti-extradition bill protesters online so that mainlanders would not understand their true motivations for protesting, leading to the further divide between China and Hong Kong.**
- **Would only continue to stifle the freedom of expression- a violation of a fundamental right that every human should be rightfully entitled to. Quote the UDHR 19: Every human has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.**
- **Censorship could stifle the progress and development of the country and promote ignorance to issues existing in society. If the video had not been censored, it would have warranted more discussions of the innumerable majority-minority tensions that exist for society to come to a conclusion about what is racism** and the role that satire plays in public discourse. But now people can't come to a balanced and well-informed conclusion because of the censorship of the video.
- In certain cases, individuals are deprived of the knowledge that they rightfully deserve to know by totalitarian Governments. China's manipulation of the media to **distort the motivations of the Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Bill** protesters disabled mainlanders from truly understanding their motivations, leading to the further divide between Hong Kong and China.
- Internet is a useful check to verify the dominant perspectives/bias that would otherwise dominate the media

Freedom and order: Is freedom and order mutually exclusive?

I fervently believe that the world needs ==greater social and political freedoms in order for the human race to progress and flourish==. However, I do not feel that an **increase in freedom necessitates a disruption of order**- far from it.

While some may think of **freedom and order as being polar opposites** of each other, I believe that a **healthy dose of order** can in fact **bolster freedoms and help a society to progress and flourish.**

Despite concerns about national sovereignty, it is **vital for supranational institutions to snuff out the ==ever-present threat of rogue nations to ensure global stability.==**

The freedoms that people enjoy such as freedom of speech can often be **abused** in such a way that **endangers the well-being of society.**

Greater social and political freedoms also play the **instrumental role of improving societal wellbeing** by allowing people to have a say

Social Media Activism (Most important is to link how these movements have resulted in successful political/social change)

Social media could be seen as **an ideal springboard in being the first step** to bring about **effective social/political change/ powerful bringers of social change/ catalyst** for revolutionary changes. The power of social media lies in how it **moves** many people and **incentivises** them to help out and **make a difference towards a certain cause.**

#MeToo campaign, Black Lives Matter campaign,
The **#MeToo campaign** revealed the prevalence of sexual harassment in workplaces and raised awareness of the severity of the problem-> Not only did it inspire more individuals to speak about their experiences and uplift/empower others who had similar experiences, the movement was also the **first step in effectively bringing concrete political changes in banning public non disclosure agreements that cover sexual harrassment cases.**

Canadian actor Shawn Ahmed used YouTube as a tool to raise funds to rebuild a school in Bangladesh that got destroyed in a cyclone. The school initially only had enough funds to rebuild the roof but when viewers saw his video, many of them had immediately sent money to help rebuild the school. He had acquired enough funds to not only rebuild the school, but to also procure studying supplies for the students and donations for single mothers.

It is important to note an achievement of **such a magnitude** would have likely been impossible without social media. It is precisely because of the **ability of the media to gain a wide public outreach which makes a change of such a magnitude possible, making media a powerful bringer of change.** Activism could rebuild life

==SLACKTIVISM:== The lack of need for physical action, social media activism lacks in inspiring people to actually take concrete action themselves.

Sceptics would undermine the effectiveness of social media activism, citing that it **does not encourage one to take concrete, physical actions to bring about change**. This is a phenomenon termed **'slacktivism'**. After all, it's so easy to share an article about climate change with just a click on your phone and **feel like you've contributed tremendously** to the issue. However, it does not bring about concrete change that contributes to solving the egregious issue at hand. Social media causes individuals to **overrate** their own actions when there had been minimal effort.

6 days into lockdown during the coronavirus pandemic, actress Gal Gadot, along with other celebrities, released a video of herself doing a cover of John Lenon's 'Imagine' to bring hope and encouragement to those affected by the coronavirus. In a pandemic that hit the poor and

People will believe whatever the news tells them. How far do you agree based on ur society?

Singaporeans tend to take state-affiliated media as a proxy for the Government itself- and many comply with the Government. The way the education system has functioned has raised generations of Singaporeans to be unequipped to think independently.

Singapore readers are indeed led to **believe everything the media says after decades of paternalistic governance instilled trust in the veracity of the news.** Critics observe that the Singapore Government **interferes unduly with the lives of the common people**- one prominent way is by restricting the media content available to us.
Singapore Press Holdings, which publishes the most-read newspaper in each official language, has historically had close ties with the ruling People's Action Party. MediaCorp dominates the radio and television landscape while being owned by Temasek Holdings, the holding company of the government of Singapore.
The government retains the ability to control the narrative across various news channels. When mainstream media stories all sing the same tune and match the official position of the Government, many would not pause to question its veracity. If different sources all corroborate one another, surely what they are saying is true? Political institutions have made it easy to trust local news when it is so deeply intertwined with the state itself. Trusting the government has led to the logical equivalence of trusting what state media tells us. By this logic, the populace is inclined to have genuine faith in the government and by extension, trust what the state media publishes.

Due to the low level of critical thinking and media literacy skills across the populace. A rigorous and grades-focused education system- Singaporeans are unequipped with the skill of thinking independently for themselves.
Trained via rote learning, copying corrections and memorising model answers, also answering answers in a specific PEEL format- those whose answers fall outside the margins of what is allowed tend to be penalised. Singaporeans have been constrained to replicating correct answers that have been fed to us by our educators This is grounded in reality where IPS statistics about our worryingly low media literacy rates.

However, the rise of intellectually sceptical and cynical Singaporeans who do not take news stories at face value proves an exception to the norm.

Apart from the problems that lie with people, modern news topics are becoming much too complex for the average reader to dissect, so it is much easier to believe than doubt.

Now that the Internet has made a dizzying array of statements easily available, it is much harder to sift the wheat from the chaff. Even for the highly educated, it is exhaustively difficult to be an expert on any, let alone all, news alone.

Does social media hinder or facilitate constructive dialogue in your society?

Social media is assumed to remove barriers to constructive dialogue since it allows more voices to participate, however it is precisely this **deluge** (overflow/overwhelm) of (loud, noisy, dissonant; inharmonious) cacophonous voices that drown out logic, thus posing more of a hindrance than facilitation
Hindrance and facilitate BOTH very clearly seen in the same TS

Opening up the conversation to all may also invite bad actors to share their controversial opinions and sway impressionable readers to their questionable cause
Social media users frequently resort to sensationalism or disinformation to influence others
Unfounded claims by **conspiracy theorists like Iris Koh of anti-vaccine group Healing the Divide** circulated widely, sowing seeds of doubt and confusion

Koh and others speculated that the vaccines mandated by the Government were unsafe, sharing their **personal anecdotes and isolated incidents to bolster their claims.** Others piled on by insinuating that they experienced severe side effects, questioning the transparency and integrity of the vaccine approval process, further fuelling scepticism and mistrust in the Governments, during a period when cooperation with the Government was CRUCIAL

With this, attention was diverted from official sources and health guidelines
Overshadowed the voices of experts and authorities, hindering a balanced and factual discussion regarding the vaccines' safety and efficacy
Social media became a battlefield of conflicting opinions and theories, making it challenging for people to engage in constructive dialogue

The democratic intention to facilitate a wider conversation might inadvertently make meaningful dialogue challenging due to the noise created by a plethora of voices and opinions, especially by those who intentionally create chaos to further their dubious agendas

- In our culture, the communications media hold an influential place in disseminating information, forming attitudes, and motivating behaviour.
- The more our culture has moved away from acceptance of objective truth, the more it has moved towards a culture of opinions.
- Media and public opinion has always been connected, as the media plays a significant role in mass communication and reflects the greatest concern to a particular society.
- The **nature** of the news is likely to distort people's views of the world because of the **availability heuristic.** (Sensationalism/ the existence of corporate greed) **Cognitive bias is caused by the existence of the availability heuristic**. In the instance when an **accident of a similar nature** is reported, people will start perceiving the accident to be more
- Far from being better-informed, heavy news watchers become **miscalibrated**. They **worry more about crime, even when rates are falling.**
- The massive outreach of social media is the main contributor to the success of social media activism. Social media is an **ideal springboard, an ideal first step in bringing concrete social changes.**
- The **international** nature of social media enables information of happenings around the world to **transcend national boundaries**
- As such, social media has indeed **attained its intention of being a catalyst of social change**, whatever its scale.
- While sceptics of social media activism claim that its effectiveness is undermined by the lack of need for physical participation, one cannot deny that the outreach of social media allows it to capture a massive audience (of some will certainly be incentivised to take concrete action)

Nice rebuttal! (The highest level of rebuttal is to use a notion of the opposing view itself to support your own view)

OV: The media can no longer be trusted as outlets of information due to the existence of corporate greed, seen in the profit-driven nature of these outlets. Their profit-driven nature would mean that they are willing to propagate mistruths and distort/hyperbolise certain news by sensationalising it just to gain readership.

REBUTTAL: However, one must concede that it is precisely because of their profit-driven nature that they are forced to stick to the truth as jeopardising their credibility could cause readers to turn to other credible sources which ends up threatening their revenue.

(See it?)

Marketing and Advertising

Beauty firms spend next to nothing on research and innovation but billions on advertising and promotion. Even then, they market and boast of their products that are filled with 'miracle ingredients' even though testing these 'miracle' ingredients are no better than the ingredients in regular supermarket brands. Yet, people fall for it almost all the time because of the superfluous, exaggerated marketing and promotion tactics espoused by many brands in the beauty industry.
People easily fall for gimmicks without concrete proof
People are attracted to superfluous marketing tactics easily

Art

Reminders

- Remember, if the question does not limit you, explore as many examples of art forms- there's not just paintings, there's also music, dance etc.
- Art is also linked to **culture**!! Don't forget culture too!!!
- Agreeable that art and culture are not 2 completely separate entities!!! So is the **Media**!! In fact, a lot of media questions are interlinked with art. Media depicts cultures, media is a vehicle which educates society on different cultures.
- Art is related to advertising as well!!!
- Freedom of speech/expression too!!
- Magazines/books/novels
- Films/movies
- POEMS, Literature (Literary art)
- Dance (Performative art)
- BTW, did you know that the term 'censorship', if not restricted by the question, could be applied to news, films, books and art pieces? Take advantage of the question if there aren't any restrictions.

Ai Wei Wei- destroying ancient Chinese urns that dates back to the Han Dynasty- of great cultural, historical significance as performative art - his intention was to create a performative art that went along the themes of destruction and transformation, death of the old to bring in the modern, was harshly criticised while others saw value in his art form

'We should abolish state funding for the Arts.' How far do you agree that this should be the case?

Implicit in this essay question is that the state funding could be put to better use elsewhere- but it's not so straightforward, is it?

YES
(In desperate situations) When **resources are limited and much is at stake**, state funding towards the Arts should be abolished given that it **could be projected towards more practical fields** that would **reap more tangible benefits**.
Art is a **luxury** and public money should be allocated towards **alleviating more pressing issues**. Instead of public money, have private donations used in acquiring works of art.

The arts are a mere luxury that cannot be afforded in the face of these pressing, burgeoning issues that deserve more funding.

The nation's <mark>burgeoning problems of poverty and rapid ageing</mark>. **While wanting to inspire artists is well-intentioned, would it not be better to** <mark>allocate more funds to solving these perennial, pressing issues first</mark> since doing so would <u>achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people?</u>
In addition, the high opportunity cost incurred is just not worth it.
Many of the working poor would not have the luxury or time to enjoy public art.

The **Public Art Trust Initiative started in 2015**, contributes to almost **80**% of arts and cultural funding.

The Straits Times revealed that the Singapore Government spent a **whopping 595 million SGD in 2017 alone to grow the Singapore Arts Scene.** <u>High opportunity cost</u> that could be better allocated for **solving these burgeoning, pressing perennial issues** in SG first!
In 2020, this was a whopping 480 million- amid the COVID_19 pandemic

Good counter:
It is even **more crucial** as Singapore finds herself in a time **where her identity is even more in question** amidst **increasing cultural diversity**. Could find a **cohesive narrative that could unite SIngaporeans for many generations to come** is money that is well-spent and offers a promising solution to the **crisis of identity** that many Singaporeans face.

In addition, the arts are a rather niche area of interest, it may not necessarily resonate with everyone so not everyones' interests lie in it–it would not be fair to project state funding to a field that is **not within everyone's interests.**

NO
Without state funding, **the arts cannot survive which could make the country seem more dull and monotonous without a vibrant arts scene, especially in countries that emphasise economic pragmatism.**

The arts could generate more revenue, the state funding would be a calculated decision. The arts would **boost Singapore's reputation globally** which would translate to **tangible benefits- increased tourism revenue**. There is reason to believe that these investments resulting in **tangible benefits can appease even pragmatic naysayers.**

Relevance of art in today's society

Qn: 'For the majority of people, the Arts are irrelevant to their daily lives.' How true is this <mark>of your society</mark>?

For the **risk-averse Singaporean state** and its citizens, the Arts represent a **risky and expensive pursuit**, let alone a career pathway, as **economic stability and prosperity** continue to take top priority in their everyday lives. - not guaranteed but with a stem degree and the increased demand in this field

Setting aside the litany of alternative professions available to hardworking Singaporeans, it is true that the life of an artist in Singapore is challenging. Only some artists ever get recognised enough to make it a profession-most artists and their companies in Singapore **subsist on state funding due to a lack of interest and, consequently, a viable market for their work.**

This is exacerbated by the fact that the National Arts Council sets Key Performance Indicators for its' award and funding recipients, which makes it restrictive for them to pursue it. The knowledge of these challenges is a **daunting barrier to entry for any budding career artist**, and many find that these <mark>ambitions are far more palatable</mark>

as side pursuits rather than full-time commitments. As a result, while an encouraging number of Singaporean adults take part in artistic activities on the weekend, many choose to **forgo them entirely in favour of simpler and more practical hobby alternatives.** More revealingly, a Ministry of Education census in 2022 revealed that the **number of students taking up arts subjects such as literature and history had been steadily declining in the twenty-first century as young people are being raised on a strict diet of meritocracy and pragmatism.** These subjects are traditionally low-scoring due to their subjectivity and cannot be relied on to provide the stellar grades that universities covet.

Arts and technology- bane or boon?

Question: To what extent does technology have a negative impact on the arts? (RI Common Test 2018)

Technology establishes a whole new unparalleled dimension for the arts, by enabling artists to create masterpieces on the digital medium which provides an unrivalled number of exciting possibilities for the Arts.
Google's Tilt Brush, people can draw in the air, without considering gravity
OF course procreate, firealpaca in ipads, wacom intuos tablets- a plethora of different technological devices to suit different artists' preference and comfort.

Technology also transcends physical limitations by enabling individuals around the world to appreciate it regardless of their physical location, making the arts more accessible to a larger group of people

Technology also undermines the established standards of artistic excellence, by taking away attention from worthy art.

The rise in AI generated art also threatens artists and their livelihoods since they would have to compete with technology to produce art that is on the same calibre as AI generated art.
Illustrators sued many AI companies because they used their artworks in AI training.
Can replicate their style of art and profit off of their own art.
But arts have always to adapt to different forms of technology, if ur truly an artist, u should be able to adapt and upskill and improve their art skills by fully maximise the technology available

Art is <u>democratised</u> for all! Virtual museum tours during the pandemic, exhibitions
Google Arts and culture collaborated with many different museums and artists
Completely removed barriers to entry for art to the point where artistic skill and even
creativity has lost almost all of its value
Performative art can be readily accessible to everyone

Technology also enables artists to offload basic, rudimentary work allowing them to focus on higher order planning as well as finesse instead of base execution. It allows those with disabilities or a lack of eptitude to engage in art.
Christie's auction sold its first AI generated art piece for 432000 USD
AICAN tool, trained on the 100,000 artworks of celebrated artists- Rembrandts, Monet, Van Gogh to produce imitated paintings

Tokenisation
Can buy a painting to own the paintings together
The value of paintings and art creations will shoot up, many collaborators to buy in on a painting at the same time, reap fuller rewards for their hardwork

[Topic sentence] Owing to the proliferation of social media platforms, ==the **line defining genuine artists is becoming increasingly nebulous.** This **undermines the established standards of artistic excellence, leading to an adverse influence on the Arts.**==

[explanation of TS] Social networking platforms serve as the best way for us to express ourselves, with little to no barrier to entry to promote one's content. Within these digital arenas, the **expanse for articulating personal sentiments, predominantly through artistic mediums, is boundless.**

[example 1] A case in point is the emergence of **'Insta-poets' like Rupi Kaur, Lang Leav**, and Tyler Khot Gregson, who have **capitalised on the vast reach of Instagram to amass substantial audiences.** Notably, Rupi Kaur's initial poetic anthology, **'Milk and Honey', released in 2015, has since witnessed sales surpassing 4.5 million copies** and has been translated into 40 languages. Despite her success, art critics **lambast her poems as overly simplistic, or lacking any depth or substance**.

[example 2] This stands in stark juxtaposition to **Louise Glück's oeuvre**. The 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate's **"Faithful and Virtuous Night" (2014), despite its prestigious accolade of the 2014 National Book Prize for poetry**, saw a modest sale of **20,000** copies in its **inaugural** year.

[explanation] This **implies that technological advancements, epitomised by social media's omnipresence, facilitate an influx of artists into the spotlight.** However, the works of many such 'Insta-poets' are often **criticised for lacking the genuinity or the raw emotion intrinsic to poetic expression and are disparagingly labelled as 'inferior art'.** Poetry on these platforms **risk diluting the ethereal essence of the medium, challenging our conventional perceptions of its true nature.**

It's more so how mediocre art keeps getting proliferated because of the **massive outreach that social media has like I said- BOUNDLESS and this unwittingly undermines the established standards of artistic excellence- an increased appreciation for mediocre art? Diluting the ethereal essence of the medium.**

[link] Consequently, the essence and significance of art risk dilution amidst this technological surge. This prompts introspection on our artistic benchmarks, often making us more discerning, even dismissive, of emerging artistic endeavours.

oeuvre: a work of art, music, or literature
nebulous: vague or ill-defined (concept)
disparagingly: in a critical or unkind way that shows you do not respect someone or something
ethereal: extremely delicate and light in a way that seems not to be of this world

Technology establishes a whole new dimension for the arts, by enabling artists to create masterpieces on digital mediums which provides an unparalleled number of exciting opportunities for art to grow.
New potential for art now that we have technology to support artists' capabilities
Google's tilt brush- headset which enables artists to paint in 3D space with visual reality, ignoring gravity .

Technology transcends physical limitations, removing antiquated barriers of class and income from the world of art, making the reach of art truly limitless, democratising it for all.
Google virtual tours

Technology has removed barriers to entry for art to the point where artistic skill and creativity has lost almost all its value
Artists sue DeviantArt for using their artworks in AI training without permission or compensation.
AI generated art by AI mimicking the artworks of artists- artists who put in the time and effort to create art- seem meaningless

Does the arts always <u>need</u> to be useful to society?

A very unconventional but very nice way to start an essay! Suggest a hypothetical situation to the marker and drive home your point.

Imagine a vase that was given to a person by their loved one who has passed on. Would it be fair to judge its value solely by the way one utilises it? Let's say that it's left unused and put on display in memory of their loved one. Does this now mean that the vase is devoid of its value? Of course not. There are many aspects of an object that gives it its value and looking at it solely from a utilitarian standpoint completely disregards these other aspects.

Remember, it's about the NEED, not whether the arts are useful to society or not! Of course!
From a utilitarian standpoint, is it paramount that the arts are useful to society since a large portion of society's funds and resources are directed to it which would be otherwise wasted if the arts did not produce productive/worthwhile/tangible results.
SG allocated approximately 480 million Singapore dollars to the Arts and heritage sector in 2020, a staggering amount to keep the arts scene alive. Tax payers money! During the COVID_19 Pandemic, the arts industry was surveyed to be the most non-essential job to SIngaporean society.
It's always with the notion in mind that taxpayers' money and the country's financial reserves can always be allocated to solve more pressing primary issues in the country rather than the arts which has been regarded as secondary. So it is only logical that the arts is useful to society since everyone contributes their money to it!

You can challenge it by considering the stakeholders- Does the arts need to always be useful to society or can it be useful to an individual?

At its core, art is a tangible medium through which an individual can express themselves, and reap the benefits of it which is still useful to them even if it is not necessarily useful to society. Hence, the arts need not always be useful to society
Or it is more so hailed for its intangible value rather than its practical value- being a medium through which people can attain catharsis from

In addition, the arts are more so an escape from society, rather than a medium to be of use to society! The arts need not be another avenue that gets caught up with the mundane, cyclical nature of life and instead, becomes a form of relaxation, a transient space that provides an escape from the harsh realities of society.
"Cats" the musical is a fun, whimsical and mindless musical that lacks a concrete storyline but rather focuses on the musicality and the theatrical aspects, a spell-bounding experience that is pleasant to the audience. Okay pragmatists may argue that this musical was created to generate revenue, reap economic benefits but the main purpose was to still provide an escape from life.

The Arts can also serve the simple function of providing aesthetics and pleasure for the world. The timeless nature of aesthetics and pleasure provided by arts, while not necessarily useful to society, still serves a beautiful purpose. Colouring the dull, grey canvas of the world one stroke at a time.

In addition, a beautifully written point:
While the power of arts can be harnessed to be useful to society, bringing about social and economic benefits, AT ITS CORE, ==art is ultimately an escape: a different realm that need not serve tangible, substantial purpose to the world. That is the purity and the beauty of the arts that society should learn to appreciate, rather than be overly critical of its lack of usefulness.==

FURTHERMORE, CONSIDER THIS UNCONVENTIONAL BUT VERY INTERESTING POINT!
The arts need not be useful as creating art for the purpose of having to be of some use to society taints the purity and freedom of the arts, defeating its intended purpose in the first place which is to be an escape from reality rather than be of use to society!!

If art were only made with the intended purpose to be useful to society, it would feel forced and lose that sense of **escapism and beauty which is what makes art beautiful in the first place!** Certain arts would not exist if art was only created in the attempts to bring about tangible change such as economic benefits and social change. And if all art ever does is attempt to **reiterate reality back to us, art no longer becomes an escape and loses its value.**

A nice way to conclude: **Furthermore, such an ultra utilitarian stance shows a very myopic view and understanding of the arts and its primary intended purpose at its very core. To attach value to only things that are useful to society would be too pragmatic and narrow minded of a view, and simply sap the joy of life. This would only fuel society's consumerist and capitalistic behaviour, making our future look bleak. Hence, one must take off the lens that consumerism and capitalism have clouded our vision with, to truly see the value of the arts that may not necessarily be of use to society!**

Public money

IN YOUR SOCIETY, to what extent is it acceptable to use public money for the acquisition of works of art?

Art is a luxury and public money should be allocated towards alleviating more pressing issues. Instead of public money, have private donations used in acquiring works of art.

The arts reflect our cultural and colonial roots.

They are rich in cultural and historical value. By acquiring these works of arts, we are essentially **preserving and immortalising our colonial and historical backgrounds** which could enable us to **build a more cohesive society**
These artworks **celebrate our progress and strengthen national identity.**

There is potential in **connecting Singapore's diverse multi-ethnic communities and building a more cohesive national identity.**

Merlion and sculpture of Sir Stamford Raffles are Visual and TANGIBLE reminders for Singaporeans of their **mythical and colonial roots respectively.**
Chong Fah Cheong's playful First Generation sculpture of children playing by the SIngapore River is a tangible reminder of how far the nation has progressed from a third world country since its independence to today's glittering, modern metropolis.

Art can be a tool weaponised by political authority/ FOA in a country to unscrupulously achieve their political agendas.
The monuments of the leaders of North Korea- citizens and tourists are expected to bow in respect/ show their reverence to these FOA (Sculptures and monuments)

Political activists may **fear** that the very use of public money to acquire artwork may also become a **tool for government propaganda**. This may **create an artistic climate which disproportionately favours pro-government artists.**
The Government may unilaterally acquire works of art that are pro-establishment.
The art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye which provides a compelling, alternative narrative of Singapore's background. The National Arts Council claimed that such a work could potentially undermine the authority of legitimacy of the Government and its public institutions, therefore breaching its funding guidelines.

The aforementioned example illustrates how art can be used as a political tool to legitimise the authority of Governments. Since many concerned citizens view the notion of arts being weaponised as problematic, it does not make sense to be using taxpayer's money to fund these arts.

Concerned citizens view such favouritism as benign state censorship, believing instead that **artworks surfacing dissent can better reflect the needs of the people and pressure the government into action.**

Local art is an under-funded public good which would require public funding to survive.
The responsibility of providing an avenue for those who consciously pursue art should rest on the shoulders of the government.

FROM A UTILITARIAN STANDPOINT: The nation's burgeoning problems of poverty and rapid ageing. While wanting to inspire artists is well-intentioned, would it not be better to allocate more funds to solving these perennial, pressing issues first since doing so would achieve the greatest good for the highest number of people?

In addition, the high opportunity cost incurred is just not worth it.
Many of the working poor would not have the luxury or time to enjoy public art.

The **Public Art Trust Initiative started in 2015**, contributes to almost **80**% of arts and cultural funding.

The Straits Times revealed that the Singapore Government spent a **whopping 595 million SGD in 2017 alone to grow the Singapore Arts Scene.** High opportunity cost that could be better allocated for **solving these burgeoning, pressing perennial issues** in SG first!
In 2020, this was a whopping 480 million- amid the COVID_19 pandemic

Good counter:
It is even **more crucial** as Singapore finds herself in a time **where her identity is even more in question** amidst **increasing cultural diversity**. Could find a **cohesive narrative that could unite SIngaporeans for many generations to come** is money that is well-spent and offers a promising solution to the **crisis of identity** that many Singaporeans face.

Another good counter:
Acquiring these acclaimed works of arts would **boost Singapore's reputation globally** which would translate to **tangible benefits- increased tourism revenue**. There is reason to believe that these investments resulting in **tangible benefits can appease even pragmatic naysayers.**

7.8 million visitors to the Louvre museum in 2020 -> generate revenue

Utility/functions

==EXAMPLES== to support the utility/functions of art (often judged by how practical art is) can be categorised as below:

- As a means to communicate a political/ moral message
- **[NOVEL] George Orwell's 1984** educates the readers on the manipulation of language, media, tyranny and truth. This book has been commonly referenced by opposition parties when political actions are reminiscent of the dystopian world. Arts can shed light on the **pressing, egregious issues in the world** and the **underlying corruption that exists** in Governments- George Orwell's 1984 mirrors China in its **social credit system**- described as an **'Orwellain state' by a former US president. Hence, art/literature/books could be used as a powerful first step to bringing change**
- **[NOVEL] Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand:** Atlas Shrugged depicts a dystopian US where irrational government officials work with greedy socialist corporate heads to impose draconian regulations and taxes on those who have achieved success through hard work and natural talent. Her brand of free-market fundamentalism and advocacy of a philosophy she called "the virtue of selfishness" has garnered support from many conservatives. As Republican speaker of the US House of Representatives, Paul Ryan was known to give every new member of his staff a copy of Rand's gargantuan novel

- **[FILM] Dying to Survive: The film** is based on the real-life story of a Chinese leukaemia patient who smuggled cheap but unproven cancer medicine from India for 1,000 Chinese cancer sufferers in 2004. The film sparked debates about the cost of medical care among Chinese people. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang cited the film in an **appeal** to regulators to "speed up price cuts for cancer drugs" and "reduce the burden on families" in his Governmental campaign. **While not bringing immediate political change, art in this case** could be **seen as a powerful first step towards potentially bringing political change in the country as the film highlights the egregious political flaws of the country**

- **[SONGS]** (Don't forget about arts in **YOUR** society, have local examples too!!) In Singapore, **songs such as "Home" by Kit Chan evoke a sense of patriotism/ establish a national identity and sense of belonging among Singaporeans, and successes by Singaporean singers abroad such as JJ Lin and Stefanie Sun are often referenced. Art is essential in** ==establishing our national identity.== **The** deaths of those conscripted into National Service (NS), such as the most recent case of Aloysius Pang, often spark public outrage and the spread of poems regarding the matter. One example is "Singaporean Son" by Low Kian Seh. The film "Ah Boys To Men" by Jack Neo is important in reinforcing the cultural identity and national belonging of Singaporeans.

- **[PLAY]** "**Mrs Warren's profession" A play by George Bernard Shaw** confronts the issue of traditional societal perspectives on prostitution by portraying the protagonist's mother as one who was forced into prostitution by her financial circumstances rather than by choice. Art **seeks to challenge the status-quo and conservative mindsets, which is integral in building a more liberal society.** (Art is **integral in the moralistic and holistic development of individuals**)

- **[SCULPTURE] Terracotta Army** is a form of a **funerary art** which is a collection of terracotta sculptures of soldiers that served the Yellow Emperor of China. These terracotta sculptures were buried with the Yellow Emperor and this symbolises the soldiers protecting and guiding the Yellow Emperor in his afterlife. The terracotta Army conveys how well-respected and revered the Yellow Emperor was in his lifetime. Art in this case can be seen as a ==powerful educational tool as it offers us meaningful historical insights.==

- **[SCULPTURE] Mansu Hill Grand Monuments which features statues of former North Korean leaders Kim il Sung and Kim Jong II.** Art can be used as a ==political tool to reinforce the political legitimacy of these leaders. This is controversial of course.==

- ==**First Generation sculpture by local artist Chong Fah Cheong**==**-> The 5 boys jumping into Singapore River shows the lighter side of everyday life around the river in the past. Also emphasised the pivotal role that the Singapore River played in developing the economy of the country (How far we have come in developing ourselves from a third world nation to the glittering metropolis that we are today)-> Art, especially local art, can reflect the trying times of the country in its developmental years and for locals to cherish and appreciate the struggles that their predecessors gone through to make the country that they live in today. Art as a microcosm and reflect the country**

- **Famous local art that was rejected because it undermines political structures: The graphic novel by local author** ==**Sonny Liew- The art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye**==**-> A** ==grant of S$8,000 was initially given for the creation of the novel by==

the National Arts Council, but was revoked on 29 May 2015, ahead of the 30 May official book launch at Kinokuniya Singapore Bookstore due to "sensitive content" which sparked controversy. The National Arts Council responded in a newspaper forum that the graphic novel "potentially undermines the authority of legitimacy of the Government and its public institutions and thus breaches our funding guidelines. -> Not outright censorship… but still. Artists are given little freedom/space in their craft

It's about art bettering people's lives through intangible forms

- Well-respected because of its **profundity.** The Arts are therefore vital in promoting the **intangible** aspects of human health, **acting as a source of catharsis** through providing a medium of **unrestricted expression** for people to indulge their stress in and further **strike a compromise between the work-life balance among stressed workaholics in Singapore.**
- **[SOCIAL/MORAL]** PROFUNDITY: Contributes to our **moralistic and ethical development of people** in society and engineering strong notions of value and culture. Art **shapes one's moral discernment**
- **[INDIVIDUAL/ EXPRESSION]** PROFUNDITY: Art can be a **creative reconstruction/ a creative reinterpretation** as it could be a way for artists to communicate their views on a particular subject. This enables the viewer of the art to **see the subject/world in ways that may have been previously unnoticed.**
- **[SOCIAL]** PROFUNDITY (BREAKING THE STATUS-QUO): It prompts us to question traditional values and conservative views and perspectives. Art can be seen as a vital component in building a progressive society. The example on "Mrs Warren's Profession". Art can be used to criticise the Government and society; test the boundaries of society. **Provoking thoughts towards social issues-offers meaningful moments of individual introspection to reflect on the egregious social issues and political flaws of mankind-capable of bringing tangible social changes** though? **Activism through art?**
- **[SOCIAL]** Alleviates the mental and emotional stresses of daily lives: The process of making art in itself can be cathartic, relieves/ cleanses/purges emotions. The process of viewing art is evocative- When we see certain art, we are evoked to feel certain emotions: nostalgia, anger, indignance. Likewise for the viewer, art is also a source of catharsis because art could alleviate the emotional and mental stresses of daily lives.
- **[EDUCATIONAL]** Art acts as a lens through which one can view___, illuminating **historical, religious and personal narratives.** It captures the essence or the importance of certain historical narratives to enlighten the viewers. Art offers us moments of meaningful introspection to ponder about___
- **[POLITICAL]** Art as political propaganda, having political agenda: It could also convey a persona of heroism, thereby elevating their power. (North Korea Kim's monuments) Ensures the political legitimacy of these leaders.
- Art as **cultural capital**?- Apparently citizen's accessibility to art is the gauge to the global reputation of the city? After all, an aspiring city or country that wants to acquire the status of a cultural hub has to demonstrate the level of commitment and pump in massive funding to promote art. Doha's Museum of Islamic Art Guggenheim Museum, NY

- **[IDENTITY]** Build national identity/reinforce the cultural identity and national belonging to one's native country. "Ah Boys To Men" film by Jack Neo
- **[ECONOMIC]** Contributes to the economic and financial development of the country: Generate revenue through attracting tourists and patrons to come see the works (Especially prominent in European countries) SO the next time anyone contends that art contributes little to the economic and financial progress of the country is proven wrong.
- **[INDIVIDUAL + ECONOMIC + EDUCATION]** **Develops creative thinking whereby this skill is transferable** to other fields in the economy such as design and entrepreneurship. In essence, art teaches one to adopt valuable skills (creative thinking, broadens one's imaginative capacities..more) that could be applied in other fields and eventually come handy in the future, so one cannot say that art is completely useless. (Qn: Is the subject art important for a well-rounded education?) **It is essential in ensuring the survivability of businesses and sustaining economy of the country**
- **[CULTURAL BUT LIMITED]** Art can also be used to preserve heritage and culture
- **[COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC/BUSINESS]** art is important in media design: In recent years, companies have realised the importance of designing their products in ways that is visually-appealing to their target audience. 30% of businesses reported that their sales revenue had increased after improving their product packaging.

However, how can one truly define what is art? Certain instances of art can be dismissed as **mere acts of vandalism. In other instances, certain art has been censored because it could potentially undermine national security.**

Shows that in certain instances, art is not really seen as useful because of how offensive/ of a nuisance it could be.
In 2012, Samantha Lo added amusing stickers to traffic light buttons, labelled with phrases like "Press until shiok", "Press to time travel", "Press for Nirvana" and "Press to teleport". She also painted the words "My Grandfather Road" on Robinson Road and Maxwell Road. Her case was ruled as vandalism by the Supreme Court

[CENSORSHIP OF CERTAIN ART]
The Charlie Hebdo incident, which is a satirical magazine that mocked the prophet Mohammed, experienced severe backlash for its inappropriateness and insensitivity to Islam. Hence, the arts, while on the pretext of **enabling freedom of expression**, should be **closely regulated in order not to endanger social cohesion and promote internal strife.**

"To Singapore, with love"

"Red lines: political cartoons and the struggle against censorship"

"Comedian" is a 2019 work by Italian artist Maurizio whose work consisted of a banana affixed to the walls of the Art Basel Miami Beach by duct tape. It was sold for

an astonishing 120,000 USD. Art critics and netizens have expressed their bafflement at the work, dismissing it as 'simplistic'. The baffling high value of the work even raised the question in the art community as to what truly defines art.

Link technology to art

4) **Enable an artist to reach new heights in their creative expression/ provides more room for them to exercise their imaginative capacities and reimagine how art can be transformed from traditional art on mere paper to ... .more contemporary forms of art that are less static and stationary. Back in the 19th century, most forms of art were paintings/on paper but in modern years, technology has been incorporated into art (3D printing, VR light installations etc)**
5) **Establish a <u>space</u> (on the internet) where art enthusiasts can come to discuss, appreciate and celebrate art virtually, where this community exists beyond the bounds of space or time.**
6) **Increases the accessibility of art to a wider group of people. With the rise of technology, anyone with a technological device and a stable Wifi connection can view artworks online.**
7)

Language under art (Literature)

Nice art phrases

- Since time immemorial, the Arts have always been regarded as one that was secondary to that of meeting the basic needs as iterated under Maslow's hierarchy of needs. However, in an increasingly affluent and stressful world, the importance of arts can no longer be undermined because of the innumerable benefits it brings to mankind.

Sports

The commercialisation of sports has led to more harm than good on the mental health of athletes since commodifying such a practice places an immense amount of stress on them than eliciting a positive effect on their mental health which is expressed at a smaller scale.

Commercialisation of sports poses more benefits than harm in the long run since doing so would give athletes an avenue

It's influence

The influence of sports cannot be denied.

In 2018, 12 young football boys and their coach were trapped in a cave in Thailand. Despite being in a dire situation, the boys were still asking for World Cup updates, highlighting Sport;s role as an entertainment source. Football players and associations around the world voiced messages of support, such as FIFA, and the Japanese men's national team, and Cristiano Ronaldo proving that sports does indeed unite people without boundaries.

" Participation is more important than competitions in sporting events"
The tension between:
    (A) Recognising that every participant should be recognised for their effort in participating BUT
    (B) NOT at the expense of those who seriously work hard to get 1st place
Both have their merits
But to what degree do they hold their merits? Is there an additional perspective to be considered, a grey area? (Yes)

- Competitions hold **merit in maximising one's potential in the sporting world because it is ONLY through competitions THEN will they be motivated**/have that drive to actually put in the effort/work hard to win. Compared to if everyone just found merit in participating and thus lose the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.
- Manchester United Football Club is known for their great feats in the Soccer world.
- When their former manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, was asked what made his team so successful, he simply just replied "We can't handle coming second"
- They pushed the physical and mental boundaries of training to make sure that they are better than their competition because of their competitive spirits. That is what made them so successful. It's the ambitious element? Of competitions which enabled these sportsmen to reach their fullest potential and eventually succeed. This illuminates that competitions hold merit in maximising one's full potential
- However, does the score on the board simply means your whole world? Is your rank in sporting events the be-all and end-all? Is competition so highly valued that we do not even consider the efforts of those who have also participated?
- It is IMPORTANT to be able to distinguish that this is not the case. It's not completely always competition> participation.
- It is RATHER the will to win/the competitive spirit which arises from competitions that is important; NOT merely just the score on the board.
- Because ultimately, as my aforementioned point above, having the spirit to WANT to win is what will enable sportsmen (or anyone in general really if this

question was phrased differently and did not have sporting as its specific context) to ==reach their fullest potential.==

Instances where winning <u>is everything</u> in sports:
Dayron Robles, a cuban track and field athlete, was disqualified in the 110m hurdle race in the Roil World Athletics Championship after obstructing Chinese representative Liu Xiang at one point of the race, using his hands to subtly push the Chinese contestant, to gain leverage and get first place.
You get $60,000 if you get gain medal eh
Based on a statistic by Statistica, as of 2020, the number of Olympic medals stripped in athletics varied by type. A total of 14 bronze medals, 23 silver medals, and 22 gold medals had been taken away from athletes due to anti-doping violations. This text provides general information.

Winning isn't everything fellas, **sportsmanship** is here!
When Russian skier Anton Gafarov, found himself with a broken ski in the middle of the Sochi Winter Olympic Games. Canadian ski coach Justin Wadsworth's team was already out of the race, but he had an extra ski to spare. He gave it to Gafarov so the latter could continue on.

The pressures and stress of winning is attributed to (which could be what led to cheating/the desperate desire to win):
Being the face/ambassadors of brands: Usain Bolt being the face of Puma and Cristiano Ronaldo having signed a lifetime contract with Nike to be Nike's ambassador.
The high stakes involved and reputation involved-> More pressure to do well in sporting competitions -> justifiable to cheat

The political agenda that is often associated with sports. Rivalry between countries have been transformed through a less obvious form which is sporting competitions (and no longer wars). Competitions tend to deviate from promoting sportsmanship to attaining political aims.

When ==**sporting accomplishments are coupled with national pride**==, political agenda is often involved. 2011 London's Olympics- Chinese badminton team purposely tried to lose against America, which is match-fixing in an attempt to win more medals to proclaim their superiority over America. This silent competition between the 2 superpowers of the world ==destroyed the sense of fairness in the sporting world.== The pressure to do well would prove the notion that ==winning is everything.==

 There has been a rivalry and animosity between South Korea and Japan for the longest time because of the previous events of wars.

Rivalry between Kim Yuna, a South korean figure skater and Mao Asuda, Japanese figure skater. 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, Yuna's win was celebrated by Koreans as they perceived the win as victory over Japan. This would only exacerbate the rivalry between countries (so Sports do divide more than they unite)

Given how today's world is capitalist-driven, it makes more sense why a sportsman may prioritise winning above displaying true sportsmanship and fairness. There is a justification. It makes sense, the stakes are very high and all that hardwork and effort put in is because athletes believed that they had a chance to win.

For example, a gold winner for Team USA would clinch $37,500 for their efforts while their counterpart in Singapore would receive $737,000 — nearly 20 times more.

Or Dayron Robles Example: You get $60,000 for a gold medal!

Much of what sports entails is inextricably tied with huge sums of money. Sports today involve major corporations investing millions of dollars in the sport and athletes. That being the case, winning ought to be regarded as crucial, to the extent that certain sportsman-like characteristics need to take a backseat in order for profits to be reaped and losses to be avoided for corporations. Athletes also need to ensure that wins come their way, no matter the cost, in order to uphold 'their end of the bargain', to act 'responsibly',and justify their price tag and salary. (Show this awareness to give that edge)

Cost opportunity is involved: Most of these athletes have devoted a significant portion of their time to train in the hopes of attaining an award, some have even devoted their childhood to train.

Sport competitions are never always fair when political agendas and economic implications are involved

2008 Beijing olympics Michael Phelps had a LZR racer swimsuit developed by Speedo which reported to reduce drag on a swimmer's body by 10% and improve oxygen efficiency by 5%. He had that slight edge and advantage in that aspect.

2008 Beijing Paralympics Kim Vunna- Cambodian runner was donated artificial limbs not meant for competitive running and he fell in the last place in the finals. Developing countries are unable to afford the same efficient facilities, equipments to

Environment

How far have we gone with environmental activism?

Carbon negative countries- Bhutan, Panama, Suriname

Carbon neutral countries like Comoros, Gabon, Guyama

Singapore

- **SG's green mark scheme for buildings- Award** given to buildings that run on renewable **sources of energy/ made with sustainable materials-> a celebration of the deliberate efforts that have gone into companies being more environmentally-conscious.**
- Our New Recycling Mascot: Bloobin!
- Launched by the National Environment Agency (NEA), the Recycle Right campaign aims to motivate Singaporeans to recycle more and recycle right, and to reduce contamination in recycling bins and chutes. The issue also lies in how not that many people know how to recycle right!
- "Treat Bloobin Better" is a rallying call for the campaign. It features an online game and bite-sized educational videos on the proper way to recycle.
- Zero Waste Master Plan and the Singapore Green Plan 2030: aim to achieve a 70% overall recycling rate by 2030.
- According to NEA's 2023 Survey on Household Recycling:
- 72% of households recycle in 2023 vs. 64% in 2021
- **BCA Academy-> Zero Energy building**: a building in SG whose **source of energy is literally from the solar panels situated on the building itself.** The exterior of the whole building is covered with **solar panels**
- Singapore generated **an estimated 600 tonnes of food waste in 2020**, that is **equivalent to wasting 1 bowl of rice per citizen per day in a year.**
- **The 2017 Inaugural Smart City Index by Institute for Management Development which is a Swiss Business School** which ranks cities based on how they utilise smart technology to **improve living standards and quality of life. Singapore was**

- **ranked 7th top smartest city.** It fared well in areas such as **access to quality education, green spaces and also access to healthcare but it fared poorly** in **cultural activities and recycling culture**
- Given Singapore's an island where **⅓ of its area is only 5m above sea levels,** Singapore is **highly vulnerable to the rising sea levels exacerbated by climate change**. Singaporeans <u>should</u> be **more concerned about the environment.**
- Singapore's **consumerist culture and love for discounts and sales** where they **purchase products on sale** regardless of whether they need them or not : **2 million Shopee downloads and in the first quarter of 2022**, the number of **monthly visitors to the Singapore online marketplace Shopee amounted to approximately 15 million**
- **The <u>advent of fast fashion online retail stores like Shein</u>! Notorious for not only its poor workers rights/inhumane and unethical treatment of its workers but also it**
- **The dilemma on the construction of Cross Island Line-> In the end, the LTA decided to construct the <u>Cross Island Line</u> passing through the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve rather than around it because doing so would reduce the cost and reduce the travelling time for commuters. Economic profits and convenience are prioritised over the environment since building the MRT line passing through the nature reserve would destroy habitats, pose ecological risks etc.**
- **SINGAPORE GREEN PLAN 2030: Plant 1 million more trees + Quadruple solar energy deployment by 2025 + Reduce the waste sent to landfill by 30% by 2030 At least 20% of schools to be carbon neutral by 2030 + All newly registered cars to be cleaner-energy models from 2030**
- **Greener building designs. The utilities bill is reduced: City Square Mall system that reduces water consumption by collecting rainwater to water plants on its premises + malls at 313@Somerset are installing more expensive energy-efficient air-conditioning systems to reduce electricity consumption, thereby reducing the usage of electricity. SO utilities bills are reduced and individuals and corporations alike can achieve <u>cost savings by adopting more environmentally friendly technologies like LED light bulbs and solar water heaters.</u>**

Are our environmental efforts to fight climate change seriously doomed? Is it all talk and no action?

In the global scene, the successes that we have had thus far in previous projects to fight climate change **testified that we are certainly close to addressing it** as we are one **step closer to eradicating the issue with every subsequent success**. However, there are **always flaws in said projects which seem to reverse whatever success we have had, making us still very far from achieving success.**

Given the **nature** that climate change is an **irreversible** problem that is i**mpossible to realistically eradicate**, we will **always be far from being successful in addressing it.**

We are **tragically still very far from any meaningful progress** at the level of **international climate agreements as they are all bark and no bite**, resulting in **scant concrete change**

The commitment and understanding gap between research findings and on-the-ground execution is largely responsible for the overwhelming information available on environmental conservation being met with little to no concrete action from individuals.
(The inundation of information on the media is very very overwhelming)
The **United States Environmental Protection Agency** is amongst the **leading organisations in the world, in terms of conducting and researching the necessity of environmental conservation.** However, as the layman is largely disinterested and poorly equipped to understand these findings, the information gets largely ignored.

The idea of **environmental watchdogs** also can
The **PRESENCE of environmental watchdogs** which would **account the concrete actions** that corporations and politicians take to save the environment.

Also this ironic example of a company being well-intentioned/having the right intentions but their actions just do not cut it because they are ineffective.
Starbucks removed their plastic straws by making strawless lids but these strawless lids require the use of more plastic to manufacture…. Wanting to save the environment and reduce wastage is the right intention but these initiatives have the opposite effect/ goes against the intended aim in the first place
Also Apple company which aims to reduce e waste by removing all its accessories other than the charging cable from the package sold to consumers, citing that many consumers have already possessed these accessories from previous phone model iterations. However, they have provided a cable that was incompatible with any past iterations of Apple's adapters, many had to buy an adapter on top of the new product, extra shipping, extra costs and extra carbon footprint.

Environmental problems, the responsibility of the Government or the individuals?

Individuals

Collective action can amount to significant change.
The masses should be responsible for rescuing the Earth as they far outnumber government officials and thus wield the critical mass needed to effect significant change.
Broad based grassroots movements can also exert immense pressure on the government to force the latter to rescind policies that harm the Earth. We possess strength in numbers to

drive green campaigns forward. The masses should take charge of saving the environment since they are more dependable than a government that has little political will to undermine their backers from pollutive industries. It is unwise to trust the Government to save the earth as the Machiavellian nature of politics condones unscrupulous measures- in return for political gains. While often dismissed as naive, the psyche of a youth environmentalist is exceptionally determined. Statistically, they will have to endure more years on this degrading planet than middle-aged politicians, hence they have a bigger personal stake in preserving the environment for their future, especially when politicians cannot be trusted to act in Mother Nature's best interest anyway.

Governments

Even the sum of individual efforts pale in comparison to the effects of structural change. Governments and big corporations need to be spearheading environmental efforts as they are in a better position to make change. Governments wield the legislative power to pass laws that compel industries to operate sustainably

Many of us have come to **perceive the government as complicit with pollutive industries in the name of economic progress**, and would scarcely trust them to solve environmental problems. It is preferable for the populace to shoulder the task ourselves when we have **purer intentions** and the **sheer size of the masses** can **galvanise green policies**. Nevertheless, it is **counterproductive to cut Governments out completely** as they can provide **valuable resources and lend legitimacy to policies** that no private citizen can. Governing bodies should be responsible since they **possess the means and abilities to effect large-scale change more readily than the populace can.**
A **top-down approach** by a **governing body with ample resources** at its **disposal** can **compel a plan into being**, but **individualised responsibility relies too much on uncertain variables like the goodwill and coordination of a large population.**

Governments wield the legal authority to pass laws and enforce penalties to protect the environment. A firebrand activist, on the other hand, cannot command the right to rule over others.

Beijing city officials have been combating air pollution via legislation. The glut of cars is believed to have cause about 30% of the city's air pollution- the fault of some 5.91 million civilian vehicles whose drivers insist on driving. The Government instated a license plate lottery in 2011 with a low acceptance rate to drastically reduce the number of vehicles approved for use on Beijing's roads. Within a decade, CO2 emissions had fallen by 8.32 million tonnes, a sign that the government's efforts had paid off.

The government also controls significant financial resources to implement green resources to implement green policies that are too expensive for provate individuals or even activist groups to afford. Saving the planet is a monumental task hat often comes with a hefty price tag, after all.
The Singapore Green plan 2030 for sustainable development

Synthesis (<mark>A FALSE BINARY</mark>)

Ultimately, both the people and their Governments should be responsible as they each possess beneficial qualities that are mutually complementary for a comprehensive eco-solution. A more holistic approach to saving the environment should involve the government supplying resources and ensuring compliance and the people providing momentum on the ground.

Presenting a false binary: The question presents a false binary; involving the populace does not automatically absolve the Government of its responsibilities nor nullifies its importance. Having seen both sides' merits and shortcomings, the optimal solution would be one that leverages everyone's strength to maximise positive outcomes.
The state could start the ball rolling, as was the case in South Korea where recycling programmes are heavily supported/funded– boosts recycling culture in S. Korea, one of the highest in the world

Hence, it would be heavily misguided to have only one party responsible for saving the earth as both sides bring something unique to the table. At the rate in which the Earth is being desecrated, we would need all hands on deck to alleviate the environmental crisis.

Individual efforts
For instance, the global environmental movement has been spearheaded in recent years by the youthful exuberance of one Greta Thunberg. At just 15 years old, Thunberg put her adolescence on hold and assumed the mantle of environmental champion, initiating the "Fridays for Future" school strike outside the Swedish parliament. Moreover, Thunberg has expertly harnessed social media to spread her word, amassing a staggering 5.7 million followers on Twitter and 14.7 million followers on Instagram. Her online presence has been pivotal in galvanising a generation to her aid, who similarly join the online crusade for the environment. Her work and dedication has displayed passion and wisdom beyond her years, and sparked a green wave among her peers - all this while bearing the brunt of criticisms from her elders for being a "foolish" teenager.

Climate change issue: ==ECONOMIC INTERESTS, BY AND LARGE, **SUPERCEDE** THE INTEREST TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.== The need to protect the environment and fight climate change is often overshadowed/ eclipsed by the need to meet other demands in the country. // Protecting the economic interests of the country always seems to overshadow protecting the environment.

Of course, ex. On the cross island land in SG + its consumerist culture
"Social justice is climate justice. **Climate change is a human rights issue as the climate crisis exacerbates inequalities**," said environmental human rights defender, multimedia journalist and film director, Sophia Li. The environment is inextricably linked to social justice and human rights, apparently! YES THINK ABOUT POLLUTED AIR–

Breathing clean, ideally unpolluted air is a universal, fundamental human right, correct? Well, for countries like **China that have rapid economic growth**, they experience **significant environmental trade-offs** where their **factories and power plants emit unchecked levels of pollutants, resulting in the egregious issue where only 1% of the population breathe air that is considered safe by EU standards.**
==**The major price that a country has to pay for prioritising the economy over the environment.**== Since human rights are **sacrosanct and inviolable, prioritising economic growth over the environment is not justified!**

==**"States that fail to protect individuals under their jurisdiction from the adverse effects of climate change may be** <u>violating their human rights under international law</u>==," said **Hélène Tigroudja, member of the** Human Rights Committee, the UN body that oversees **States' compliance with the** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Climate change is a human rights issue especially for the Indigenous individuals living in the forests/coastal regions.

Indigenous Australians have been living in four small, low-lying islands in the **Torres Strait region**. For the past 2000 years, these islands have been the **home of indigenous peoples who had been living in harmony with the ocean.** They said **changes in weather patterns have direct harmful consequences on their livelihood, their culture, and traditional way of life.** <u>Severe flooding caused by the tidal surge in recent years has destroyed ancestral burial sites, and heavy rainfall and storms have degraded the land and trees, reducing the amount of food available from traditional fishing and farming.</u>

A group of indigenous Australians complain about **Singapore DBS bank for being part of a multibillion-dollar Barossa gas project built by Australian gas.**
In 2019, the Singapore Government has committed over 100 billion over the next century to combat climate change-> How seriously the SG Gov takes climate change. (also SG Green

plan 2030). This money **will be invested in engineering solutions to protect our coastlines and infrastructures.**

The construction of a **second pump house on the opposite end of Marina Barrage**. The barrage houses would **move water out of the Marina Reservoir**. This is to combat the small increases in sea levels that could have **devastating consequences for a low-lying island nation since ⅓ of the nation is only 5m above the sea level.**

Also climate change needs to be duly dealt with because it could result in egregious natural disasters which pose risks to the lives of individuals!
2011 Tohoku Earthquake and tsunami- all these natural disasters are a result of the climate change and the aftermath is devastating. We are already experiencing the adverse impacts of it which is why it is a serious issue + since we inhabit the same planet, every country is susceptible and vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change so what we need is GLOBAL COOPERATION AS IT IS A GLOBAL ISSUE AFTER ALL! Though, national efforts on a smaller scale may perhaps be more effective in keeping a nation accountable than in the grand scheme of plans involving the entire world. Since a sovereign country can craft plans that are more specifically tailored to its own country and goals, it may be more so a national effort after all.

- The High Seas Treaty aims to place 30% of the seas into protected areas by 2030, signed in the UN headquarters in New York on 4 March 2023. This treaty aims to safeguard and recuperate marine nature.
- According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, nearly 10% of global marine species were found to be at risk of extinction.

Government's **responsibility to combat climate change because it has the most resources/authority and power** + it has a legal and moral obligation to protect its citizens from the adverse effects of climate change- or at least any good Government should aspire to do so.

The **Biden administration proposes first regulations to improve greenhouse pollution from existing power plants**, capping an unparalleled strengthening of climate policies-> could substantially reduce USA's greenhouse gas emissions.
Regulations to cut tailpipe emissions by **speeding up transition to electric vehicles**, curb methane leaks from oil and gas wells and
Should replace more policies on large corporations and encourage them to promote environmentally-friendly products to consumers.

Stakeholders: The individual, corporations, nations.

A shift in mindsets among individuals, moving away from their personal, current, short-term wants and needs towards sustainable living of humanity
Environmental activism is becoming an increasingly popular trend, it's becoming mainstream
Green consumerism has increased in visibility and accessibility

Environmental concerns can be **economically beneficial to the individual- they may switch from cars to cycling (active travel)- environmental concerns and economic growth are not mutually exclusive, there is a way for them to coexist**

Peer to peer renting platforms - local Lendor app
Collaborative consumption
Reduce excessive consumption and waste which is a win for the environment and the individual as well since they do not need to $$
Over Consumerism exists, customers have a habit of living in excess and **self-gratification**
Most of these **movements do not address the root cause of the issue**
Individuals sometimes just **prioritise their self-interest, to them, self-preservation is their utmost priority**
A **National Climate change Secretiat's climate change public response survey in 2016 found that over a third of respondents in SG believed that their individual actions would not make a difference to climate change-> These mindsets are deeply-ingrained and it's gonna be very hard to engender positive changes to the environment**
Greater priority and interest in self-preservation
There is also social stigma associated with being environmentally-conscious- associated with being hippie or feminine. The social stigma associated could bring shame, insecurity or discrimination
Vegan activists vilified with public stunts by pro-meat eaters, defiant public carvings of deer legs, snack on raw squirrels
Research shows that vegans feel that vegetarians are hypocritical- **vegans believe that they have the higher moral ground as they totally abstain from animal products**

Value-driven consumers vs purpose-driven consumers

Corporations
Greenwashing- environmental **gimmicks that give the perception of being green through** advertising and marketing, <u>rather than actual investment in environmentally sound practices and products</u>
Sometimes corporation's profit motives do not align with environmental concerns- cannot forego their self-interest for environmental concerns for the greater good
Economic concerns and environmental concerns cannot co exist
In order to **meet regulatory standards and appease value-driven customers who care about the environment, certain companies engage in 'greenwashing'**
Environmental gimmicks - perception that the company is bein green but there's no real investment in environmentally friendly products/ materials
The effort to be environmentally-conscious is merely just a **pretence**
Corporate social responsibility- go beyond lip service and greenwashing

Lego is the only toy company to be named a **world wildlife Fund Climate Savers Partner,** marking its pledge to reduce its carbon impact. By 2030, the toy maker plans to use **environmentally-friendly materials to produce all of its core products and packaging. It is unsurprising that this brand is committed to a sustainable future for the younger generation and thereby build brand personality and loyalty for years to come.**

Singapore Green plan 2030

There is a global recognition that environmental issues are transnational concerns. Conventions serve as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote sustainable development.

The context lies in the **world trend** where the <mark>demand for energy is always increasing</mark>. When it comes to the efforts that **large corporations** or the **Government** put in to bring positive changes to the environment, it's always this <mark>tension</mark> between being <mark>innately selfish and profit-driven by using cheaper, non-renewable sources of energy</mark> (E.g commonly *burning fossil fuels*.) as compared to <mark>investing in more expensive but renewable alternatives that emit significantly less GHGs.</mark> (*Geothermal energy, hydroelectric power to harness energy* etc.) ALL AT THE <u>EXPENSE OF THE ENVIRONMENT</u> as these forms of harnessing energy often pollutes the environment.

- This raises the question of whether factories involved in the mass-production of goods would be willing to cut emissions by employing green technology, but at the expense of their profits. The answer, more often than not, tends to be a strong, resounding 'No' because of the <u>innately-selfish nature of these corporations</u> for financial gains.
- In addition, there have also been debates about whether it is the <mark>individual's role or the Government's role to bring changes to the environment</mark>. Despite how selfish large corporations or the Government may be for economic gains, it's still pertinent to recognise that the Government <mark>plays a pivotal role in mitigating environmental problems.</mark> After all, they <u>possess the **most authority on a national level**</u> to <u>implement laws</u> and <u>regulations to bring concrete changes</u>. They also bear<u> the most responsibility for educating</u> their citizens/persuading their citizens to be <u>more environmentally conscious</u>. They could also implement policies and laws to influence businesses to adopt more green/ environmentally-friendly alternatives/ ways.
- The **EU** has a set of strict regulations on the **efficiency of motor vehicles** and the permitted emissions. Carmakers seeking to enter the <u>European market have to meet these requirements,</u> which has forced car brands like **Ford** and **Toyota** to innovate **new technology** to <u>increase the efficiency of their vehicles and reduce emissions.</u> Since cars of the same manufacturer need to be **consistent to ensure product consistency, the overall regional emissions have decreased.**
- However, it is also a given that the Government will naturally make decisions that, by and large, **protect the interests** of the country and in certain instances, <mark>protecting the economic interests of the country is elucidated to be **more important** than protecting the environment. **2017** Donald Trump announced that the <u>US will be withdrawing from the Paris Agreement</u> and he stated the reason being to **protect the economic interests** of the country, thereby <u>elucidating</u> that the economic state of the country overshadows/eclipses the state of the environment // **elucidating the overwhelming disproportionate amount of priority devoted** to the economy of the country.</mark>
- <mark>Similar local example would be the **Cross Island Line**: grappling the **tension** between **prioritising the economy and the environment.**</mark>
- Besides, anyone concerned about the earth's state would want to support a group of leaders with far-reaching influence in their efforts to make changes happen in addition to the everyday efforts of individuals.

Protecting the economic interests of a country/business overshadows the need to protect the environment.

In a volatile and capitalistic world where a business needs to generate sufficient revenue to survive, it is little surprise that numerous corporations tend to be **profit-driven at the expense of the environment-** ultimately rendering our (the individual's) efforts to control climate change futile. The blind greed

Major corporations have assembling factories that emit a ton of greenhouse gases, polluting the environment.

Many corporations and business tend to be profit-driven and desire economic gains at the expense of the environment, which is sensible for them so that they can continue to survive in a capitalistic society. The very existence of corporate greed at the expense of the environment makes attempts to control climate change futile.

Thesis: Despite many politicians' attempts to control climate change, many solutions fail to achieve their full efficacy as they continue to be profoundly undermined by politicians and businessman who are driven by economic growth.

For climate change + global warming: In 2018, Amazon purchased about 20,000 delivery vehicles, none of which were the more environmentally-friendly option being electric cars, despite Amazon being a successful company. (because gas cars emit more greenhouse gases)

For protecting the environment: Nestle made appeals to local authorities to syphon more than 1.1 million gallons of water per day from the Suwannee River, considered vulnerable by the Suwannee River Authority.

- Furthermore, the **decades of polluting the environment** has caused **climate change to spiral disastrously and exponentially** to the point where any attempt to improve climate change remains futile.

Covid- Numerous businesses have been shut down because of the pandemic, which highlights the **ever vulnerable nature of businesses in the modern world. In order to survive in the ever-changing, volatile and capitalistic landscape that is the world today, it is little surprise that many businesses/companies are profit-driven at the expense of the environment.**

Economic growth enables citizens to prosper and afford a better standard of living, while the presence of green spaces improves our quality of life and both our physical and mental health.

Or you could also argue that **economic gains are short-term** but the **devastating impacts on the environment are long-lasting and could permanently influence the landscape of our futures.**

The cross island MRT line example could also be used to **highlight the struggle** that the Gov faces in **meeting the demands of the various stakeholders in society**- In a country

that has **limited natural resources and manpower**, there is bound to be <u>competing demands and interests</u>, and it is **impossible** for the Government to satisfy EVERYONE.

- **In the construction of the <mark>cross island line</mark>, SG gov has to grapple the <mark>tensions to balance competing demands</mark>. SG gov has to choose between a shorter route that passes under** The Central Catchment Nature Reserve **that could <mark>potentially cause irreversible damage to SG's ecology</mark> and a <mark>longer route that will increase commuters' travel time by 6 minutes, the relocation of many residents and businesses and incur an additional cost of 2 billion to build.</mark> In this case, the Gov does** consult the various stakeholders and release the Environmental Impact Assessment online to facilitate a public discussion**, taking into account the <u>viewpoints of the stakeholders</u>. SHOWS the Gov's** desire **to balance both needs. -> The pivotal role that Governments play in mitigating climate change: They have the most authority and influence on a national level.**

- There are certain situations where the demands of the economy and the environment **do not conflict**- there are also <u>economic benefits that arise from protecting the environment</u>. <mark>Greener building designs.</mark> The <mark>utilities</mark> bill is reduced: **City Square Mall system that reduces water consumption by collecting rainwater to water plants on its premises + malls at 313@Somerset are installing more expensive energy-efficient air-conditioning system to reduce electricity consumption**, thereby <u>reducing the usage of electricity</u>. SO utilities bills are reduced and **individuals and corporations alike can achieve cost savings by adopting more environmentally friendly technologies like LED light bulbs and solar water heaters.**

- **The EU has rolled out <mark>regulations</mark> on the emissions of motor vehicles. Carmakers seeking to enter the European market must meet these regulations. This inadvertently caused Toyota and Ford to be forced to develop <u>new technology to meet these regulations</u>. These regulations are applied to vehicles from the same manufacturers sold in other countries for product consistency, <u>thus reducing worldwide emissions</u>. Regional cooperation is far more effective in bringing about environment change than international cooperation (Global treaties etc.)** A change of such a magnitude was only possible because of the authority that the Government possesses.

- Cosmetic filtering when it comes to fruits and vegetable produce: Produce suppliers tend to **discard these edible but visually-unappealing vegetables due to the misconstrued perception that visually-appealing vegetables are more tasty**. - Disposal of almost <mark>⅓ of all free produce at the Pasir Panjang wholesale market which is equivalent to almost 30,000kg of food per day.</mark> A lot of these produce sellers **<u>prioritise their personal economic gain even at the cost of environmental devastation.</u>**

- The **September 2019 climate strikes** is one inspired by youth activist **Greta** Thunberg who ditched school to protest outside the Swedish parliament. The movement soon went international, **<mark>with students all over the world protesting for more to be done for the environment</mark>** (Are youths always misjudged? Some political figures saw Greta Thunberg as a rebellious upstart)

The Kyoto Protocol (But I would prefer to use the Paris Agreement just because it's more recent and also Donald Trump makes the US leave the Paris agreement in 2017.)

- Out of 36 developed countries which signed the protocol, almost half of them failed to reach their respective targets of greenhouse gas emissions.
- International cooperation is less effective than regional cooperation when it comes to environmental change.
- International treaties/ Efforts to save the environment are merely just empty promises.

Iceland harnesses geothermal energy to power 80% of their homes.
The rapid advancement in technology has enabled us to turn to other green methods to satisfy our energy needs.[ENVIRONMENT 🌿🌱🌍]

Climate Activists Celebrate Wins Against Big Oil
In a single day, several of the world's oil industry giants suffered blows (Politico) that revealed the growing power of climate concerns in courts and the mainstream business community.

Exxon Mobil's shareholders, most notably the world's largest asset manager, BlackRock, elected two new board members who call for the oil and gas company to become carbon neutral by 2050 (WSJ). At Chevron, a shareholder resolution passed that would force the company to cut its greenhouse gas emissions. And a Dutch court ruled that Shell must cut its emissions by 45 percent by 2030, much earlier than it had planned (FT). The decisions came as the United Nations' World Meteorological Organization announced there is a 40 percent chance the Earth reaches an average annual temperature that is 1.5°C above preindustrial levels in the next five years (BBC), though it could take another one or two decades for the change to become permanent.
Analysis
"This signals a new era for the role of corporations in climate change and a new era for corporate governance," the University of Michigan's Erik Gordon tells the New York Times.

"At the heart of [Big Oil's] power was one iron-clad macroeconomic rule of the last half-century: the developed world's thirst for energy was growing, and Big Oil had it. But in the past decade, the U.S. shale revolution and the climate movement disrupted that trend from the supply and demand sides, respectively," Bloomberg's Kevin Crowley writes.

Laws and regulations put in place in order to combat climate change that proves our attempts to control climate change is indeed effective: The Government **plays a pivotal role in mitigating environmental problems.** After all, they **possess the most authority on a national level** to implement laws and regulations to bring **concrete** changes. They also bear the most responsibility for educating their citizens/persuading their citizens to be more environmentally conscious. They could also **implement policies and laws to influence businesses to adopt more green/ environmentally-friendly alternatives/ ways**. + could even potentially implement laws to push for businesses to venture out for alternatives that are eco-friendly.
- Many countries such as **Kenya and Taiwan** have recently drafted laws to **phase out single-use plastics by 2030**

Practical options to replace existing practices that are no longer sustainable:

- In southern France, construction of ITER, a thermonuclear experimental reactor, is set to be finished by 2025. Its construction is an effort to harness nuclear fusion—the process that powers stars and potentially is an almost limitless source of carbon-free energy.
- Thermo-depolymerization; turning carbon-based waste into oil through heat and pressure
- technology reduces environmental damage, it can also reverse environmental damage through means like solar geoengineering, which releases particles into the atmosphere that reflects sunlight, cooling the planet.

All of these open a door of infinite possibilities with vast potential.

The only issue is that:

- Developing nations (LDC, 3rd world nations) are **unable to afford** such expensive technology
- 50k to build solar panel roofs
- Not all countries have available land or resources to develop alternative sources of sustainable energy
- AND EVEN THESE ATTEMPTS can be **undermined by the self-serving corporations** and businesses who are **driven by blind greed. USA, the world's 2nd largest producer of carbon emissions, pulled out of the Paris Agreement in 2017, Donald Trump states the reason for this was to protect the economic needs of the country, thereby elucidating the self-interests of a country overshadows/ eclipses the greater good.**

Each country faces unique challenges, unrealistic to expect green technology to become new norm

Consumerism

When consumerism rises where Earth's resources are concerned, over (and mindless) consumption could lead to a depletion in the Earth's natural resources, spelling dOOM.
- More resources are naturally required to be devoted to producing consumer goods to the point where finite resources aren't given time to regenerate
- The popularity of convenient foods in the form of canned tuna and other fish-related products has led to overfishing.
- according to the **Pacific Fisheries Commission**, tuna populations have fallen to just 2.6% of their mid-20th century levels
- The **exponential rise in popularity** of **online** shopping sites like Shoppee, due to its convenience and low prices, continue to fuel the consumerist habits of SGPs.

Also this **ironic** example of a company being well-intentioned/having the right intentions but their actions just do not cut it because they are ineffective.

- Starbucks removed their plastic straws by making strawless lids but these strawless lids require the use of more plastic to manufacture…. Wanting to save the environment and reduce wastage is the right intention but these initiatives have the opposite effect/ goes against the intended aim in the first place
- **Also Apple company which aims to reduce e waste by removing all its accessories** other than the **charging cable** from the package sold to consumers, citing that many consumers have already possessed these accessories from previous phone model iterations. However, they have provided a cable that was **incompatible** with **any past iterations of Apple's adapters**, **many had to buy an adapter on top of the new product, extra shipping, extra costs and extra carbon footprint.**
-

The **debilitating effects** that overconsumption has on our **Earth's finite natural resources**.

The rise in demand in the technological market.
There is such thing as **planned obsolescence**
- Largely used by tech companies, major technological company Apple CEO Tim Cook having admitted to doing it as well
- **Non-recyclable nature of the main components**, such as circuit boards, this strategy causes an <u>excessive demand for raw materials such as gold and rare earth metals</u>
- **rapid, large-scale excavations** in remote locations results in **pollution** due to poorly managed runoff from mines as seen in China, and destruction of local ecosystems as seen near gold mines in South Africa and Zimbabwe

Generates waste
Often non-biodegradable in nature
One of the hallmarks of consumerism is the number of plastic bags we use, since shops often give them out free of charge
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the United States estimates that 31 million tons of plastic waste, mainly plastic bags, are generated each year, yet only 2.55 million tons are recyclable
Irresponsible disposal causes plastic waste to end up in oceans
Sea creatures can accidentally ingest them and suffer from internal injuries

Nice environment phrases:

- The **<u>decades of polluting the environment has caused climate change to spiral disastrously and exponentially</u>** to the point where any attempt to improve climate change remains **futile**. **No amount of metal straws, LED lights** or XXX will be able to **<u>reverse the collateral damage</u>** that has been done to the environment.

- Attempts to mitigate climate change are **<u>doomed to be perennially ineffective</u>** because these effects have **already drastically escalated way out of hand.**
- When conditions have already escalated to such <mark>catastrophic</mark> conditions, it is difficult to imagine how our efforts to control climate change can be effective.
- "A love of nature keeps no factories busy." - Aldous Huxley
- It is ultimately <u>up to humankind</u> <mark>**not to lie supine in the face of the environmental doom**</mark> **that awaits our planet**
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Interesting arguments:

Is the elimination of global poverty a realistic aim? (A-Level 2009)

Interesting thought/argument:
"Functionalists argue that all parts of society—even those that do not seem to serve a constructive purpose such as poverty, crime, and undocumented immigration—contribute in some way to maintaining some existing social order. In fact, functionalists argue that a part would cease to exist if it did not serve some function. Thus, functionalists strive to identify how even seemingly problematic "parts" contribute to maintaining a social order. Consider one function of poverty: Poor people often "volunteer" for over-the-counter and prescription drug trial tests. Most new drugs must eventually be tried on healthy human subjects to

determine their potential side effects (for example, rashes, headaches, vomiting, constipation, and drowsiness). The chance to earn money motivates subjects to volunteer for these clinical trials. Because payment is relatively low, however, the tests attract a disproportionate share of low-income, unemployed, or underemployed people as subjects.

This function of poverty shows why a part of the society that everyone agrees is problematic and should be eliminated remains intact: It contributes to the stability of the pharmaceutical and medical systems. A functionalist would argue that without poverty, these systems would be seriously strained to find human subjects to test out new medical procedures and pharmaceutical products."[Media 📰🌐 Regulation/Freedom/Misinformation/Social Media]

Facebook has lifted its ban on posts claiming the coronavirus was man-made. A statement recently published on the company's website reads, "In light of ongoing investigations into the origin of COVID-19 and in consultation with public health experts, we will no longer remove the claim that COVID-19 is man-made or manufactured from our apps." Facebook began removing posts that claimed the virus might have escaped the Wuhan Institute of Virology in February.

ANALYSIS: ⭐
This example may make us question the nature of what is "true" or "false"—what was once easily dismissed as misinformation is suddenly taken seriously in this sudden reversal.

What implications does this have on regulations on misinformation?

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Roman Protasevich, a 26-year-old Belarusian dissident journalist, was detained in Belarus on Sunday, after the government sent a military jet to intercept the Ryanair flight on which Protasevich was aboard.

Nice phrases:

- Detractors of this perspective of….. put forth the contention that/postulate that …..However, such a cogent and seemingly impregnable argument rests precariously on the flawed assumption that….. (aid from other countries directly channelled to improving standard of living for people)
- It is myopic to deny that….
- However, we must concede that….
- This argument, unfortunately fails to depict the world in holistic terms.
- While …. May suggest that…., reality suggests otherwise.
- Notwithstanding the fact that… (A fancier way to say Despite…..)