



General Paper Bulletin 2022(JC 2)

Welcome to the first issue of TMJC's GP Bulletin for 2022! We bring you a selection of the essays written by your schoolmates during the recent JC 2 March Block Test. We would like to express our thanks to the students who have contributed their essays.

While these essays are not perfect or model essays, there is a lot of merit in them, and they are clear evidence that good quality writing is possible!

While reading these essays, you may find some of the content useful for application to other questions; do be judicious in using such information in a manner that is relevant to the question you are answering. Pay extra attention to the comments on the right column, which corresponds to the marking rubrics on which essays are assessed. Lastly, you should not attempt to copy and hand them in as your own.

We wish you all the best in your upcoming Mid-Year Examinations.

Editorial Team

**Mdm Aslindah
Ms Jacqueline Tan
Mrs Annie Clayton
Mr Max Cheong**

Contents

Q4: 'For young couples today, having children is neither appealing nor practical.' How far is this true of your society?	2
Q4: 'For young couples today, having children is neither appealing nor practical.' How far is this true of your society?	5
Q6: Are influencers paid too much?	8
Q8: 'In today's world, a country's domestic issues are never just its own.' Discuss.	12

Q4. 'For young couples today, having children is neither appealing nor practical.' How far is this true of your society? (TMJC JC2 MBT 2022)

Sample Essay	Marker's Comments
<p>In today's society, the idea of buying a home with your significant other, or having children with them has become something that is rare. The widely perpetuated 'American Dream' has transcended different societies and time, yet it has been challenged countless times in the past few decades as its idealistic goals and outcomes can rarely come into fruition in the present economy. It remains nothing more than an outdated belief, amongst the many other conservative ideals that failed the test of time. In the present, young couples define what they call home, or a family differently. Hence, there has been a stark decline in birth rate, as they rethink the pros and cons of having children. Hence, I agree to a large extent that for young couples in Singapore, having children is neither appealing nor practical.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Clear and relevant context of the current, modern world is highlighted: the idea that some conservative beliefs simply cannot stand given the changes in our present time</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Might need to clarify the idea of 'American Dream', what it entails, and to better link it to the context of Singapore.</p>
<p>Firstly, having children is neither practical nor appealing due to the high monetary costs in the present decade. The general cost of living has risen exponentially, as compared to the 1970s – 1980s, where the older generation who were then young adults would experience better economic opportunities as well as higher wages. In the present, it is harder to gain a job that pays well, with just a degree and no experience. Having a bachelor's degree, for instance, has become quite commonplace amongst candidates applying for a white-collared job, with about 33 per cent of the workforce in Singapore holding a university degree. As such, the young adults themselves are already struggling to earn a liveable wage, and have barely enough disposable income to sustain their living standards and habits. If they were to raise a child, they would have to take into account the inflated costs of diapers, formula milk, clothes and other necessities. These all can easily cost up to about S\$400 a month, excluding the possible visits to the paediatrician in the event of complications that may occur during childbirth. In addition, if they choose to adopt a child, the costs would be even higher, and the process of child-rearing would be even more tedious and complex. Hence, this shows that they are not prepared to take on this financial burden, as they do not have financial stability, which would be an important foundation for child-rearing, as the amount of money one has may determine the child's early development and health. Therefore, this reinforces the point that it is neither practical nor appealing for young adults to have children in Singapore.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Topic sentence clearly addresses the question on practicality and appeal.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Context of the past was aptly brought in to serve as a comparison to the present context to better bring out the difficulties faced by the current generation.</p> <p>Development of the argument thoughtfully considered the cost of raising children from various aspects, even bringing out the context of child adoption as a possible consideration.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Examples are detailed and clearly linked back to the question on raising children.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Could bring out other SG characteristics which contribute to the cost of raising children. These can be used to highlight needs vs wants in child-rearing.</p>
<p>Singapore, like any other metropolitan city, is fast paced and unyielding. From trends to social issues, they arise as quickly as they go. It is unsurprising to see the young adults in Singapore emotionally drained and tired by the end of the day. They have little time where they are at home and by themselves, away from the hustle and bustle, as well as away from their pressing work obligations or societal pressure temporarily. The pressure to succeed and receive recognition from their peers is ingrained in their minds by the parents and teachers, weighing heavily in their hearts. This emotional burden hinders them from having children as it would take away their time and even progress in their career, which may have taken years of toiling to attain and get that far.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Clear SG context set to justify argument to address question requirement of 'your society'. Context clearly brings out the lack of appeal in raising children.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): SG characteristics highlighted are not only relevant but varied and the implications of these characteristics are also logically provided.</p>

<p>For working women, the opportunity costs of having children are even more than that of men. Due to the commonly held notion that women should be the caretaker of children, they are often passed up for promotions and opportunities in favour of the men in the workforce, in the event they get married and have children. This stigma against women in the workforce is subtle but persistent, with 45 per cent of female respondents agreeing that corporate culture favouring a particular gender and stereotypes are barriers in career advancement, based on a Straits Times article. Hence, young adults are more reluctant to have a child as it would potentially disrupt their climb up the corporate and social ladder in the workforce, as well as their desire for success, creating an emotional burden. If they were to have a child, this emotional burden can transform into resentment and hatred towards their child, as they just view them as a form of obstruction. Some may even project their desire to succeed on their children by pressuring them to excel academically. Hence, this perpetuates a negative generational cycle that pressurises one to succeed.</p>	<p>Showed acute awareness of the reality of working life in SG.</p> <p>Showed consideration of specific groups of people in the SG society (e.g. working women), providing insightful contextualisation to develop the argument.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Example is apt in bringing out women's concern about having children in their pursuit of career progression. This leads in nicely to the lack of appeal of having children.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: More examples can be provided to reflect the stressful and competitive nature of working in the SG society: examples which go beyond just examining women in the workforce.</p>
<p>The young adults of Singapore are also faced with an additional issue prevalent in many modern and established societies – longer life expectancy. Like most developed countries, Singapore has an ageing population, and it is increasing, while the birth rates continue to decrease. Despite efforts from the government to introduce schemes and programmes for younger parents like Baby Bonus, the low birth rate still stubbornly persists. Due to beliefs and values of filial piety being inculcated in most young adults in Singapore, youths feel obligated to take care of their ageing parents, placing them as a priority ahead of their other goals. Hence, they would have to dedicate a significant amount of money and time for their ageing parents' caretaking necessities. Despite there being quite a number of old folk homes or nursing homes in Singapore, the young adults may feel uncomfortable and uneasy about placing the responsibility on others, choosing to take care of their parents by themselves, even if they may not have the necessary capabilities to do so. This takes a toll on their finances, time and health. As a result, having children would be an unwelcomed burden, rather than a blessing, largely due to inexperience and feeling burnt out from taking care of their parents. Some may want to avoid becoming a burden as they grow old, so they may choose to not have children, and enrol themselves into a caretaking facility when the time comes.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Several relevant SG characteristics are raised to justify the impracticality and lack of appeal in having children in SG.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Arguments are qualified to recognise existing provisions made for the elderly in SG and how it is not a viable solution. Argument shows an insightful understanding of the priorities and concerns of the young which is borne out of a critical evaluation the SG context.</p> <p>An interesting and different perspective was adopted in considering how the young themselves in turn, do not want to become a burden to their children in the future as well, to explain the lack of desire to have children.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: No clear examples are provided for this point.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Could highlight the 'sandwiched generation' and better evaluate the inadequacies of the government support provided to encourage the young to have children.</p>
<p>Some critics may argue that the young adults want to have kids in order to uphold familial expectations and personal ideals, with the support of their respective families. Be it continuing the family name or upholding</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements:</p>

<p>the conservative beliefs of what constitutes a happy and successful life, they choose to have a child. Their respective families are able to financially support their living means, and provide support for the young couples so that they are able to continue their careers and their personal interests. About 15 per cent of young couples in Singapore do wish to have a family, based on a survey conducted by Channel News Asia. Since they have the means and ample support to do so, they would find having children practical and appealing.</p>	<p>Opposing view is clearly highlighted to show why some young adults might find it appealing to have children.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Recognises that the OV is hinged upon 'conservative beliefs' prevalent in the SG society.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Relevant example given and analysed.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Explain the presence of conservative beliefs in SG. Could also further develop on why such conservative beliefs still have a hold over young adults in the modern world.</p>
<p>However, even if they have financial and emotional support, as well as assistance in child-rearing, there can be conflict and difficulty in terms of how a child should be raised, or brought up. Moreover, there is a generational gap between the respective families of the young couples and themselves. The elders, who would be the most involved in assisting the young couple may feel that they have the right to decide how the child should be raised, and what values and beliefs should be instilled in them, since they are wiser and more experienced with time. Unfortunately, they may not be as attuned as the younger generations about the present societal pressures and obligations, along with the new etiquettes that one has to take note of when interacting with others. Moreover, there can be conflicting ideas in terms of the child's early development and general education pathway between the couple themselves. This inability to decide or compromise on which developmental pathway the child should take, would potentially destabilise the child's perception of the world, as he or she grows. This conflict can persist into the child's teenage years and even adulthood, hence creating a form of aversion and disdain for the traditional notions of a family, choosing not to have children. Hence, since the decisions that constitute child-rearing can adversely affect a child's worldview and creates hostility within the family, most young couples feel like it is too huge of a responsibility to undertake. It is thus neither practical nor appealing to have children.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Rebuttal does address a part of the OV raised in the previous paragraph.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Able to bring across the different perspectives and worldviews of the older and younger generation and how they affect child-rearing.</p> <p>It is evident that content knowledge in this topic is strong as implications on the child's development is highlighted.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Lack of examples in this paragraph.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Care can be taken to address the OV fully, especially the part on upholding 'familial expectations and personal ideals'. Student could highlight examples of modern parenting styles (e.g. positive parenting) which differ from parenting styles of the past and how this can lead to inconsistencies and confusion for the child.</p>
<p>Hence, in conclusion, ideals and beliefs on what constitutes a happy and successful familial life have changed over the past few decades. No longer does it mean having children or even buying a house, but rather what makes us happy in the present. The goals of the young adults in Singapore are much more realistic and even grim, reflecting the worldview our parents have crafted and imprinted on them, and their parents before for them too. Perhaps, it is understandable and beneficial for the young adults to take time to rethink decisions of whether they want to have a child, as they may be able to redesign the values and</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Effectively brings out key characteristics of the modern world to summarise main points made.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Intergenerational trauma is alluded to. Good insight/suggestion was given at the end of the conclusion, providing hope that it is possible</p>

aspirations they want to instil in their children, and their perception of the world, eventually developing the future of Singapore into a more optimistic one.	to reconcile having children with the current realities of the world.
Marker's Overall Comment: Content + Essay shows critical and deep understanding of the current context of the world and of Singapore and is able to effectively make use of the context to bring out the arguments. + Essay is also able to bring in multiple perspectives to justify the arguments. +/-Examples though relevant, can be further analysed. Language + Fluent writing to bring out the argument coherently and insightfully. + Able to qualify arguments where necessary to surface certain tensions, adding further insight into the arguments. Patricia Ananta Prajna Paramita Lim (21S306)	

Q4: 'For young couples today, having children is neither appealing nor practical.' How far is this true of your society? (TMJC JC2 MBT 2022)

Sample Essay	Marker's Comments
<p>Childbearing is supposed to be a beautiful thing yet many women today in my society feel that it is truly a 'burden'. It is seen as a 'burden' as the woman has to carry the baby in her womb for nine months, affecting her mobility, appetite, mood and so much more. Furthermore, it does not stop being a 'burden' when the baby is born as the true 'burden' takes place after birth. Living in Singapore is costly and fast-paced, hence it is not practical to have children as they are expensive and time-consuming. Having children used to be a natural, normal way of life as it was assumed that your children are to take care of you when you grow old, carrying on the family name. However, many couples today do not see it as a necessity as the mindset of couples nowadays has shifted from a traditional mindset to a realistic one, hence the idea of having children does not seem appealing to them. On the other hand, some couples still have children because they have a strong liking towards them and have a family-oriented mindset where a family is not complete without offspring.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: All the evaluative keywords in the question are captured.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): The introduction gives a good overview of the value and challenges of having children in Singapore today. A clear stand is expressed in the introduction, with a balanced argument included.</p>
<p>Firstly, having children in Singapore today is expensive and it is an additional cost to the high costs of living in Singapore. A BTO 5-room HDB flat in Clementi can cost about 800,000 SGD whereas that sum of money can buy a huge plot of land in Malaysia or Australia. It is costly to live in Singapore as it is a very small country with a high population density of about 5 million people. In addition, the cost of daily basic necessities is also expensive, with some Singaporeans even going to the extent of travelling to Malaysia or Batam in Indonesia to get hold of household products and even food as it is cheaper. The average income earned by males is about \$4,875 while the average income of females is about \$4,437. Hence taking into account their house expenses and bills, and paying off loans, the disposable income of a couple is not very high. Furthermore, Singaporeans have strong incentives to save as it is</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: This paragraph offers a clear explanation of why having children is not practical, and by extension, not appealing. This directly addresses the issue in the question.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): There is consideration of the economic costs of having children, which in turn leads to compromises in the quality of life of young couples who are just starting out.</p>

<p>habitual to save for the future as living in Singapore can only get more and more expensive. Therefore, for a couple to have children, they would need enough disposable income as baby products are especially pricey. Parents would have to get a huge range of baby products like a baby's crib, diapers, formula milk, clothes, toys etc., and the expenses do not stop there. They would have to fund the children's education wants and needs, and basic necessities, as Singaporeans are 'kiasu', meaning they are scared to lose. Parents would sign their child up for enrichment classes and tuition adding on to the high costs of raising children in Singapore. Thus, young couples today are less inclined to find it practical to have children as it adds heavily to their expenses. To them, the opportunity cost of having children is very high especially in Singapore.</p>	<p>Use of Illustrations: The examples are relevant and well-elaborated. They captured the point that raising children is costly because of the various considerations and needs of the child. There is also contextualisation of the example, with clear elicitation of characteristics of Singapore today that form the backdrop for the argument.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: While details are important, the paragraph could have been written more succinctly. A more careful selection of details to be included must be done.</p>
<p>Secondly, Singaporeans are driven to strive for excellence ever since a young age, hence some tend to strive towards having an illustrious career. Striving towards a career would mean less time for others but a lot of time spent on work and self. Young couples who are career driven would not want to waste precious time as they believe in efficiency. Raising children in Singapore today is time consuming. The amount of time and effort put into it is too underrated as children tend to not see it until they themselves become parents of their own children. As parents, one would want the best for their children hence providing and doing all they can to support their child for their happiness. Providing for another human being takes up more time than expected. In Singapore today, parents spend their weekends sending their children to attend enrichment and tuition classes, forgoing their free time to do their own things, with their lives basically revolving around the child ever since birth. Couples with a career driven mindset, or even those who value their off-work time heavily, would not find it practical to have children as it is highly time consuming as they prioritise their work and themselves.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Another relevant point on why having children is neither practical nor appealing.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): There is contextualisation in the form of concerns over career and management of time between work and raising children. The analysis is reflective of concerns of Singapore parents today.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Relevant examples given, with adequate elaboration.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Perhaps a consideration of the demands of work today, for example, working abroad, work-life balance, professional development / retraining / upskilling etc...may add value to the argument on conflicting demands between work and time for children.</p>
<p>Thirdly, some young couples today no longer find it appealing to have children as they do not see it as a necessity. In the past, having children used to be a responsibility as a woman. Women are to marry into a family, be a housewife and bear children for their husband to carry on his family name and sometimes business. Having children would mean that you have someone to take care of you when you are older. However, it is no longer seen the same today. Singaporeans today would rather depend on themselves or their spouse than children as they might have different viewpoints on what a child ought to do. In the past, children were assumed to take care of their parents when they grow up but not all children have the same mindset, especially today. There are many cases of abandonment or quarrels over money where the child has no regard for the parents and does not view them as his responsibility. As a parent, it is obviously disappointing, as after all, they brought the child up but</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Relevant point that addresses the question directly.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): There is understanding of the challenges of raising children in the context of Singapore.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Rather generic / anecdotal examples given, though relevant to the argument and reflective of parenting today.</p>

<p>their efforts are not reciprocated. Some couples would rather miss out on the 'joy' of having children than have the slightest chance of going through the heartbreak of seeing the 'selfishness' in their own children. Hence, young couples today do not find it appealing to have children as they do not see it as a necessity to do so, unlike the past.</p>	<p>Suggestions for Improvement: There could be further exploration of the reasons for the changes observed. Why have the roles of women changed? Is it because of rising educational levels and financial independence? Are parents more self-sufficient today? As a result, have they made alternative plans for retirement? Are there provisions in the form of elderly care facilities or nursing homes to provide alternatives to care for the elderly, besides depending on the children?</p>
<p>On the other hand, it is also true that some young couples today find it appealing to have children as they themselves adore children and had a happy childhood. It is only natural for humans to want to have something or someone they like. For example, dog lovers would get dogs if given the chance, burger lovers would eat burgers everyday if possible. Liking children comes from exposure to instances with children and mindsets that they have formed while growing up. Some couples have great encounters with their family hence would want to form a happy family of their own. However, it is also possible for one to have bad family experience yet yearn to have children as they want to do what their own parents did not, filling in that void in themselves formed by traumas and sad childhood. Hence, they have always felt the need to make their own child happy. It is common for children today to feel neglected and lack the feeling of warmth from their parents as being an adult in Singapore is highly stressful. As a parent, they are the breadwinners of the house, and hence have the responsibility of bringing in the money. Thus, they might often neglect the needs of their own children. In today's society, it is common to have both parents as breadwinners as it is tough to depend on one income in Singapore. However, in the past, it used to only be the father who is absent from the children's life. Hence, the presence of the mother is very much available to the children and would thus feel less negligible. Thus, the child might hold themselves accountable to be better as a parent in the future. However, until they are parents of their own children, they would then realise that the best they are doing might not be seen as best in their childrens' eyes, and the cycle would repeat itself. Therefore, young couples today might find it appealing to form a family of their own due to their past experiences as they have a strong liking towards them and have the desire to make them happy.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Relevant opposing view that comes with a concession.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): A rather belaboured argument that attempted to present perspectives, albeit in a rather meandering fashion. The paragraph would benefit from a more succinct discussion of the issues.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Rather generic / anecdotal examples given, though somewhat relevant to the argument.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: More clarity in the direction and purpose of the argument needed. Consider the cultural viewpoint? How important is it to have children in the local context of the family? Notwithstanding changes to the role of the mother and the context of the workplace, might having children still be important or appealing from the cultural perspective?</p>
<p>It is also true that young couples today would find it practical to have children of their own as they have a family-oriented mindset whereby a family is not complete unless there are offspring. Some couples believe that having a little noise in the house is what makes the house a home. As a working adult in Singapore today, allowing yourself to only have work as your sole responsibility would take a mental toll on the individual. Hence coming home to your loved ones would be more rewarding and act as a motivation to do well at work as other stakeholders are involved. In the past, the father being the sole breadwinner revolves his life around his job as they do not see family as a motivation but rather just a</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Some attempt to compare the past and present attitude towards having children.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Deeper contextualisation needed – perhaps there could be a reference to how having children is 'marketed' or 'promoted' by the government? Or perhaps there could be a discussion of the incentives – in terms of</p>

responsibility. While the past and present for some couples have the same family-oriented mindset, their challenges, beliefs and motivations are different. Hence in today's context, it is more appealing and practical for young couples to have children.	<p>monetary rewards, tax relief or leave provisions – that may encourage young couples to have children.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Rather generic / anecdotal examples given, though somewhat relevant to the argument.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: There could be a consideration of other perspectives. Perhaps the issue may be discussed from a more macro view rather than just from the perspective of young couples.</p>
In conclusion, given Singapore's low fertility rate of less than 3 per cent, it is obvious that young couples today do not find it appealing nor practical to have children as it is expensive, time consuming and they have since changed their view on children's role and responsibility as compared to the past. Therefore, the statement 'For young couples today, having children is neither appealing nor practical.' is very true of my society.	The conclusion summarises the key arguments raised in the essay.
<p>Marker's Overall Comment:</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Overall quite a relevant discussion with obvious references to your society's context. + If you can consider and integrate multiple perspectives it would be highly insightful. +/- Be mindful for the OV side not to relax your focus on 'your society', as well as bearing in mind what you have highlighted earlier in the SV arguments. <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Clearly organised and signposted. + Clean language, with some evidence of vocabulary and sentence complexity. <p>Ashley Ng Kay Ern (21S402)</p>	

Question 6: Are influencers paid too much? (TMJC JC2 MBT 2021)

Sample Essay	Marker's Comments
<p>We live in a society dominated by influencers and influencer culture. Be it the Youtubers with their constant uploads and broadcasts on the happenings of the world, or those who would rather express themselves more through bodacious dances on platforms like TikTok. Safe to say, influencers are not going away anytime soon. And with how integral they are to the world, eventually people would start to wonder – how much do they make? That is when those dwelling outside the influencer bubble are hit with the supposedly horrifying truth – that these big influencers are earning tens of hundreds of times more than they could ever dream of. As preposterous as it may seem that these 'E-Celebs' are able to rake in far more cash than the average hardworking Joe, the ideal that their income is undeserved is almost medieval in this day and age. Most influencers deserve every dime they earn and by simply observing the</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Key words have been addressed and the key idea regarding influencers being paid excessively well developed.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): The introduction gives a good overview of the arguments supporting the clear stand to the question.</p>

<p>important role they play in society, the critical thinking needed to actually earn a solid income and the fact that much like traditional celebrities their cashflow is dependent on audience reception, in my opinion influencers are most definitely not overpaid.</p>	
<p>For starters, influencers today play a massive role in society on every front and therefore deserve their high income. From entertainment to social and even political issues, they are a pivotal source of both knowledge and ideas, as well as being able to shift the cognition of the masses towards certain views and ideologies by bringing light on issues and tragedies across the world. Simply looking at their key role in society, it is clear that influencers can be on par with many high-paying jobs such as doctors and lawyers in terms of importance, and thus rightfully deserve their income. Take for instance, famous Youtuber Jimmy Donaldson, 'Mr Beast'. Amassing over 50 million subscribers on Youtube, Jimmy provides the world with entertainment through gameshow-esque videos where his friends compete for ridiculous prizes ranging from a couple of thousand dollars to a private island. But besides this, he is able to bring light to important issues as well such as deforestation and pollution. Mr Beast and his organization in 2019 hosted a charity event known as 'Team Trees' to shed light on the issue of deforestation, with every dollar donated equating to one tree planted. With help from other influencers, it was a roaring success with millions of new trees being planted, and just recently he broadened the scope of the issue to pollution of the oceans with his new campaign 'Team Seas' which aims to deal with the waste issue affecting our waters and its marine inhabitants. By just observing not only the entertainment value but also their ability to bring light and actually make change to issues affecting us, it is clear that Influencers such as Mr Beast play as vital a role in society as any politician or lawyer with a high salary and thus are not paid too much.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: This paragraph offers a clear explanation of how 'massive' the role of influencers is in today's society, and by extension, deserving of a commensurately high pay. This directly addresses the issue in the question.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Depth of argument is substantiated by the listing of influencers' roles in key and varied areas in society.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Use of example is prodigious, and linked to trend regarding other influencers makes it relevant and apt.</p>
<p>Secondly, influencers need critical thinking to actually earn any money. Most of the time the public perception of influencers is that they are lazy and simply record themselves for a few minutes every day while raking in millions of dollars. While the difficulty of the job in itself is a whole different can of worms, an important fact is usually glossed over— where exactly does this money come from? One might think it derives from the companies running the social media platforms hosting the influencers like Google and Meta, but dig a little deeper and you would realize these companies give shillings compared to the grandiose amount some bigtime influencers earn in total. So where does this money come from exactly? This is where critical thinking comes into play. Money does not fall from the sky, and these influencers raking in the millions only got their success through playing smartly and making the right moves in the hard to read ever changing environment that is social media. For example, take a look at the famous Twitch streamer, Tyler 'Ninja' Blevins. One look at the gamer from an outsider's perspective and it may seem unfair that he sits on his bum all day playing games yet earns top dollar, but dive deeper into how he actually earns money and you start to realize his success comes from nothing but his own intellect. While his Twitch channel delivers income through donations and subscriptions, the</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Linking the creative abilities of these influencers to their enormous earnings is justified clearly by the exposition of the example provided.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Depth of argument is linked to the detailed explication of the example of Blevins.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: A valid example of an outstanding influencer who earns 'grandiose' amounts.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Perhaps the paragraph could provide an evaluation of how hard work and creativity are common ingredients on the road to success for many, and it may also have involved the</p>

<p>majority of his wealth originates from merchandising and sponsorships, all achievable only because he made the right moves by promoting himself and his brand. Be it going on the Ellen Show or embarrassing himself on television by doing a dance from the game 'Fortnite' during the New York new year's countdown ball drop, everything he does is calculated to promote himself and his brand to possible investors. And in the end, this led to his success as in 2020, streaming service 'Mixer' paid Tyler to stream exclusively on their platform for an undisclosed amount of money. While we do not know how much this is exactly, Tyler himself heavily implied that the money he earned from the exchange is enough to last him for life, and his relaxed nature on more recent livestreams supports this – he is set for life. By looking at streamers like Ninja, it is obvious that to achieve success as an influencer, one needs to have vast knowledge on the social media environment and play one's cards correctly. Just like how investors are able to smartly conquer the beast that is the stock market to turn a respectable profit, influencers have to use their wit in an everchanging landscape to achieve monetary success, and thus are not paid too much and deserve their high income.</p>	<p>elements of luck and sheer personality to pull off what Blevins has done.</p>
<p>Thirdly, the amount Influencers earn is all up to audience perception, which means how much they are paid is exactly how much they deserve in the eyes of the audience. Sure, as elaborated in the previous point, they could promote themselves and their brand, but if the audience does not like you, you would earn next to nothing. After all, every aspect of an influencer's income from merchandise sales to sponsorships to simply the advertisement revenue from viewing of the content all depends on whether the public likes you and your content. An example of how the public controls an influencer's income can be clearly seen with once wealthy Sports Youtuber 'EDP445'. Bryant, as he is known by offline, was once a thriving Youtuber with countless sponsorships and enough money to afford multiple luxury cars. The netizens loved him for his comedy skits and takes on the latest football games, and his income proved that. But it all went down hill when Bryant was exposed to be a pedophile in a 'To Catch A Predator' style video where the man was made a fool, giving the sorry excuse of 'picking up a cupcake': when confronted on why he had come to meet a decoy – what he thought was a thirteen year old girl. Within days of this news, public perception towards him flipped from simply a funny comedian to an absolute menace to society and his fame and fortune came tumbling down. Netizens had his channel shut down and the once-wealthy luxury car owner now resorted to working as a private hire driver to make ends meet. This shows how it is the audience that defines how much an influencer actually earns, or if they can even earn anything at all, and therefore it is impossible to say they do not deserve their income when said income is dependent on the public.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: A perceptive point regarding worth as evaluated or imputed by the assessor (audience).</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Some depth is shown in the explanation of Bryant's fall from grace and the reasons why.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: The example illustrates the point prodigiously.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Again, perhaps the paragraph could benefit from examining if ALL influencers who suffer a fall in fortune also commensurately lose their huge earnings; sometimes negative publicity increases an influencer's popularity and thus income</p>
<p>However, some might argue that influencers are paid too much as their job is not technically a real job – meaning they do not have fixed work schedules nor do they have to comply with standard ideas of what a job is such as going to an office building to work. It is so extreme that many a times influencers are able to sneakily avoid income taxation due to the illegitimacy of their jobs, and thus this idea that being an influencer is not</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Relevant opposing view that comes with a rebuttal.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Scope is achieved in how influencers' jobs</p>

<p>a real job is a common argument against their high pay. However, I would say there is no real issue in this. From a technical standpoint their income is as legitimate as that of celebrities and stock traders who technically do not have traditional jobs yet face far less public backlash, and therefore in my opinion the claim that influencers do not deserve their income because their work does not follow the regular job norms is invalid.</p>	<p>are comparable to other jobs that are not traditional.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: A passing generalised reference to influencers whose jobs defy the traditional aspects of 'jobs' was attempted. No concrete example provided.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Perhaps more depth could be added on HOW an influencer's job is still a 'real' job.</p>
<p>Furthermore, it is also commonly said that influencers are paid too much because they are often uneducated or young, which makes the idea of them earning as much as someone with an education and life experience absurd. Even traditional celebrities which influencers are commonly compared with have extensive knowledge and studies in their respective fields, be it acting or dancing. An example of such an influencer is 'IShowSpeed', an eccentric young man in his teens who is still attending high school yet has skyrocketed to six million subscribers on Youtube in one year with a respectable income to boot. Some might say it is undeserved, but I strongly disagree. Such stories of uneducated and young influencers are no different from those about intrapreneurs who developed their company from nothing or child prodigies in fields like art and mathematics. Such influencers are less talentless and undeserving and more gifted in the field of entertainment, and their successes should be respected as much as the next 'billionaire who rose from rags to riches' story that is always circulated as such a triumph. Therefore, I feel that this claim that influencers are commonly uneducated and young proving that they are paid too much is completely false.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Another relevant opposing view that comes with a rebuttal.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Depth is achieved in the elaboration and comparison with celebrities and intrapreneurs.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: The example is well developed and shows how youth and lack of education should not be deemed barriers to earning great wealth.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Avoid claims such as 'are no different than', as they can constitute broad generalisation; if you should do so, then explain and substantiate accordingly.</p>
<p>Influencers are indeed here to stay, and like it or not the idea of being an influencer is becoming an increasingly valid job prospect. Like all jobs, influencers should be paid based on their role in society and their demand by the public, as well as of course the cards played by the brains behind the operation – the influencers themselves. Many may be bitter about the idea of the seemingly lazy influencer achieving such wealth, but it is important to step back and understand that they truly deserve every penny they have. The intelligence and public appeal needed to be an influencer is hard to come by, and it is beset we do not undermine their achievements and respect their income as nothing but valid.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: The key concepts are reiterated and the stand is clearly and persuasively restated.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: The conclusion effectively summarises and evaluates the points mentioned in the essay. However, there could perhaps be some comment/assessment on how this phenomenon of 'influencers' is just over a decade old and might evolve or change markedly in future, as might their earnings.</p>
<p>Marker's Overall Comment:</p> <p>Content</p> <p>+ Valid ideas raised and supported with a range of prodigious examples. +/- Focus could be a little sharper (a few unnecessary details).</p>	

Language

+ Language is generally clear with some strong personal flair.

Haris bin Suhaimi (21S208)

Q8: 'In today's world, a country's domestic issues are never just its own.' Discuss. (TMJC JC2 MBT 2021)

Sample Essay	Marker's Comments
<p>In today's world of increasing globalization and interconnectedness, the boundary between nations can seem to be more faded than ever before. This has prompted calls for countries' attempts at foreign aid and intervention from one country to another whenever seemingly domestic issues arise in the recipient nation. A natural question is raised from this observation. 'Can there really be problems where the causes and consequences are bounded to one single nation in this modern era?' To me, the answer to that is a resounding 'No'.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: The context of today's world is quite clearly set.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: The unpacking of 'domestic issues are never just its own' could have been expanded and not just include foreign aid or intervention OR it could have been combined with the next sentence where 'causes and consequences' are mentioned.</p>
<p>The first and perhaps most important reason in my opinion is one of the oldest acts of human civilization, trade. Though it has existed before there were nations, it was not until the first theory of capitalism developed by Adam Smith that the value of trade between nations and the foolishness of self-isolation truly hit Western political thinking. This, and numerous failures of states that limited trading with the outside world like Feudal Japan or the early era of Communist China, have resulted in a world today that is more financially interconnected than any other period in history. Now, a consumer from the United States can enjoy his 'Made in China' phone, drive his Japanese car pumped with Middle Eastern oil, to a coffee shop to drink coffee harvested in Brazil out of a cup from Canada. It is precisely how easy it is for trade to occur between nations today that has made the presence of nationally bounded domestic issues a thing of the past. As almost every country plays a part in this incredibly complex machine that is the world economy, as soon as one component starts to break down, the whole machine is affected. Whenever economic or political instability is experienced for a country that forces it to limit its exports, all those that receive its goods will face supply issues. Conversely, as the country in trouble can no longer sustain a high volume of imports, its seller will face difficulties in finding demand. Thus, the change in the volume of trade of one country can affect the whole world. Perhaps no modern example can illustrate this fact better than the economic crisis of 2008, which started with overly risky mortgages in the United States and spread as far as Europe and Japan. As buyers' confidence around the world plummeted due to insufficient demand for commodities, the economy of most countries, both developed and developing, suffered. This clearly shows that one nation's domestic problem will cause a ripple of economic effect that is felt by the rest of the world.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: 'Today's world' is clearly addressed, though the keywords 'domestic issue' is not clearly described in the example of the 2008 economic crisis.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Depth of argument is evident in the apt analogy of a machine with different parts to describe the global interdependence of trade between countries.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: Not all examples are needed. For example, the part on the consumer enjoying his life due to products from all over the world could be omitted. The example on the 2008 economic crisis is however valid and quite well explained.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Some parts are unnecessarily long or could even be omitted: the history of how the modern global trading system came about.</p>
<p>Another cause for issues not being solely and truly domestic is immigration. Recent developments in transportation technology have made traveling by air, land, and sea, more affordable than ever, even for</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Today's context is addressed, though the mention of modes of transportation and the</p>

<p>those in extreme situations, such as in the middle of a war. This has led to a rapid increase in immigration volume from countries suffering from internal issues to countries that do not. For example, violent conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa have caused huge immigration waves headed toward Europe. This is not necessarily a bad thing as an influx of workers and consumers can boost the local economy and bring prosperity to the nation. However, it cannot be denied that each country can only have so much capacity before overpopulation can be a significant issue. As limited resources start to run out, there will be tension between the local population and foreign migrants for the remaining resources. In addition, the difference in cultures can cause racism and discrimination to be widespread, prompting violent race-related crime to occur. This was precisely what happened in Germany as it adopted a fairly open policy in the face of an immigration crisis across Europe. Although the German people's initial reaction to the wave of migrants was mostly positive, as soon as the capacity limit of Germany to host so many started to draw closer, xenophobia began to overtake the political landscape as Angela Merkel's government scrambled to find a solution to the crisis. It is worth noticing that this political and racial tension in Germany was caused by a civil war in Syria, a country that has no shared border with the European nation. This has come to show how domestic problems from one nation can chase away its people to other states, causing issues in the destined countries. Thus, immigration has made it so that domestic problems are no longer bound to one country.</p>	<p>main point of immigration is not that convincing. Perhaps mentioning that borders are generally now more porous or open to migrants would be better?</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Argument is layered, with discussion on the various consequences of immigration.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: A valid example on Germany and its experience with Syrian migrants.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: The elaboration could focus more on WHY domestic issues are never truly a country's own, instead of merely describing WHAT the problems are.</p>
<p>The third reason for my answer at the beginning of this essay is the catastrophic threat of environmental issues that is felt in all corners of the world. As industrialization becomes more common in developing countries like China, India, and Brazil, the amount of greenhouse gasses, along with other forms of toxic waste, has skyrocketed. This has induced pollution and climate change on a scale never seen before. As the ice caps melt at both poles, water level rises in coastal areas, causing an increase in flooding and other natural disasters, such as hurricanes and drought, to become more frequent. This has called for a series of conventions and agreements between nations, most notably the Paris agreement, to minimize the amount of environmental damage caused by each country. Thus, as every nation is at stake when it comes to what happens to the planet Earth, environmental issues, such as pollution and excessive waste, are no longer bound to any individual country.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: Today's world is addressed but it could be better unpacked: what are the various forces or trends today that have caused such widespread environmental problems?</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Some depth is shown in the explanation of industrialization and the effects of environmental problems across borders.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: The example does not clearly show why the problems are not restricted to a country.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Again, perhaps the paragraph could benefit from explaining WHY domestic issues will be widespread in this case.</p>
<p>Of course, one cannot approach the question stated in the first paragraph without addressing the idea of sovereignty. A country's autonomy and its right to rule on its own and solve its problem the way it sees fit has always been one of the cornerstones of the idea of nationhood. Those who support this idea claim that domestic issues are the responsibilities of the host nation alone, thus belonging only to the host nation. However, while I have to agree that the idea of self-government is still relevant, the sheer</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: More could be said about the issue of sovereignty in today's interconnected world.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): A valid rebuttal to the rather idealistic-sounding opposing view on sovereignty.</p>

<p>huge impacts that each country's actions have on another have made it virtually impossible for outsiders to not interfere. For example, although the fight against the Taliban was initially an issue solely in Afghanistan, the terrorist attack on September 11th, 2001 has made it clear to the world that for highly globalized issues such as terrorism, no nation is without responsibilities. Thus, from a pragmatic point of view, as much as one may respect each country's right to manage its own problems, it would be illogical to say that the issues in today's globalized world can be bound to any one nation alone.</p>	<p>Use of Illustrations: An apt example proving how the opposing point on sovereignty is largely irrelevant in the face of global issues such as terrorism.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: Perhaps more depth could be added on WHY (poor/weak government?) a country's domestic issues are never its own.</p>
<p>One interesting point that opponents of my stand may bring up would be the cases of nations that are still resisting the trend of globalization and opting for self-isolation instead. The most famous, or rather infamous, example of this is North Korea. As North Korea has tight border controls to prevent citizens from exiting the country, it does not involve itself in trade with most other nations, and produces minimal environmental footprint. It can thus be tempting to think of North Korea as an exception and its domestic issues are truly its own to bear. However, by thinking in that way, one would be missing the nuclear threat that such a country poses to the rest of the world. Any shift in political stance in the isolated nation, whether toward or against democracy deserves reactions from other states in the world as it can mean nuclear war being more probable. Any issue in the country can also drive it closer or further away from being involved in the world's forum. Thus, despite its lack of direct impact, the potential consequences on the world are enough to make the domestic issues of a highly isolated nation like North Korea a concern for other states.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: The point is contextualised to today's world.</p> <p>Quality of argument (Depth and Scope): Depth is achieved in the elaboration of the threat posed by such isolated nations to the world.</p> <p>Use of Illustrations: The example is well developed and shows the threat posed. However, North Korea and the nuclear threat it poses is perhaps an isolated and extreme example. Are there other examples of such countries where they self-isolate but whose problems nonetheless affect other countries?</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: The concept of domestic issues could be more clearly developed. Is North Korea's nuclear threat its domestic issue? Or is it more an issue of its leadership struggling to consolidate its power (and developing nuclear weapons is just a means to that end)?</p>
<p>In conclusion, as the world becomes increasingly globalized, each country's domestic issues can cause a domino effect that spurs problems in other regions in the world through trade, the outflow of immigrants, and environmental impacts. This has made it impossible for any domestic issue to be considered to belong to any single nation, even in the face of sovereignty and for isolated nations.</p>	<p>Relevance to Question Requirements: The key concepts are repeated and the stand is clearly restated.</p> <p>Suggestions for Improvement: The conclusion merely summarises the points mentioned in the essay. There could perhaps be some comment on future trends.</p>
<p>Marker's Overall Comment:</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Valid ideas raised and supported with a range of valid examples. +/- Focus could be sharper (there are some unnecessary details). - Points are a bit area-driven though. It may be better if the issues behind the examples are teased out. 	

Language

+ Language is generally clear with some personal flair.

Le Tu Quoc Dat (21S101)