

Tampines Meridian Junior College
2024 JC2 General Paper Preliminary Examination Paper 2

From Passage 1

1. Explain the author's use of the phrase 'Of course' in line 4. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
But for today's generation, information floods our senses constantly – a child marriage in Chad, a drought in Delhi, a mine collapse in Mongolia ... Of course , this excess of information is often criticised for fuelling anxiety (line 4).	<p>(a) The phrase "Of course" suggests that the statement is expected / obvious/ emphasise his agreement (Function) (1)</p> <p>(b) In this context, an abundance/ surplus of distressing/dreadful news/is expected to/ lead to/ be blamed for causing angst/ tension/ unease. (Context) (1)</p> <p>[Function (a) – 1m] [Context (b) – 1m]</p>

2. In paragraph 2, how has the internet become the 'great equaliser' (line 6)? [3]

From the passage	Suggested answer
(1) No longer is the power to inform solely in the hands of a privileged few. Social media platforms, with their algorithmic feeds and viral content, have made (2) information more widely available to everyone. To give just one telling example, note how ferociously the Arab Spring swept through the Middle East in a series of revolutions. Information in the hands of the many is a powerful thing. (3) The internet has levelled the playing field for ordinary youths in these countries, empowering them to transcend borders and coordinate protests, share grievances, and mobilise support through social media platforms- a feat unimaginable in the face of the information blackouts of previous generations.	<p>(a) The ability to communicate is not exclusively controlled by a select group of individuals (1)</p> <p>(b) Information is accessible to a broader audience. (1)</p> <p>(c) The common man/ young (collective noun) can now take serious actions to address injustices. (1)</p> <p>No action mentioned = 0 (the youngsters are given a voice to be heard)</p>

3. In paragraph 3, how does the author support the idea that 'global consciousness fosters empathy that in turn, prompts collective action' (lines 14–15)? [3]

From the passage	Suggested answer
What matters is that this newfound global consciousness fosters empathy that in turn, prompts collective action. The heart-wrenching image of a starving child in a war-torn nation, once confined to a blurry black and white photograph on a forgotten newsreel, now stares back at us from our smartphones in full, agonising colour, cultivating empathy worldwide. This sensitivity towards suffering enables us to channel our emotions to constructive acts such as donating to relief efforts or raising our voices in protest.	<p>(a1) (How) The author uses the example of a well-defined/ sharper picture of a malnourished/suffering child in a conflict zone. (1) (as long as (a) is not just a picture instead describes the example- high-resolution/heart-breaking)</p> <p>(a2) How) The author uses the example of smartphones to show how the images of those suffering are more accessible to all of us (1).</p> <p>(b) (Empathy feeling) To make the pain/suffering more real/vivid to the people around the world (1)/ (Empathy feeling) This serves as a constant reminder of the existence of pain/suffering (1),</p> <p>(c) (Empathy to do something) Prompting them to help out of compassion/ to help the people who are suffering (1).</p>

4. In line 20, the author states 'This multitude of information comes with challenges.' What are **two** solutions to these challenges? [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
This multitude of information comes with challenges. In particular, we fall for misinformation more easily since fake news travel faster and more widely online than facts. But here too, awareness is the key in detecting misinformation. The internet has birthed a generation of fact-checkers and critical thinkers , essential players in a world saturated with information. By staying vigilant and knowledgeable about the means and methods of misinformation , individuals can better discern truth from falsehood.	<p>The solutions are to</p> <p>(a) be alert/ remain watchful/ careful (b) to verify information for accuracy/ check validity (c) question assumptions/ examine and think deeply (d) and well-informed</p> <p>about the ways by which fake news is spread (Any 2 for 2 marks)</p>

5. Why does the author end the passage with a contrast between the response of our grandparents and the current generation to news? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Our grandparents might have preferred to act like the proverbial ostriches who stuck their heads in the sand to avoid danger . But we are not them. We can no longer afford to turn the page or switch off the radio when the news does not suit us . What we are doing instead is dissecting the noise to do what is necessary . Who knows? The rest of us may be emboldened to take similar actions to benefit the world we are living in.	(a) (Function) To reinforce the contrast he sets out in the introduction where he states that compared to the grandparents, the younger generation is taking active steps to change the world . (Link to the intro) OR (b) (Function) To give everyone the courage to take steps/ endeavours/ initiatives to better the world/positive impact to the world (Any 1 for 1 mark)

From Passage 2

6. Summarise how the media has desensitised society today and the impact this has on us. Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**. [8m].

From the passage	Rephrased
1. constant exposure to graphic images (line 3) / 24-hour news cycle repeatedly shows violent incidents, natural disasters and human suffering (line 4)	<u>Frequent encounters / intense contact with explicit content/ gory visuals</u>
2. As the shock value diminishes , the audience may start to view these occurrences as routine (lines 5-6)	<u>As the impact / outrage fades/ it becomes less alarming</u> , the audience might begin to see these events as <u>commonplace/ a norm</u> . (The process of lessening shock must be captured)
3. thereby reducing the emotional impact and urgency that should accompany such news (lines 6-7).	<u>Lessening/ decreasing</u> the emotional response and <u>sense of importance/ immediacy</u> that such news should evoke. (Awarded for either 'emotional impact' OR 'urgency')
4. media's tendency to prioritise sensationalism over sensitivity , often focusing on the most shocking aspects of a story to maintain viewer engagement and ratings (lines 8-9)	The media <u>emphasises the dramatic / startling elements</u> over thoughtful reporting to keep viewers engaged and boost ratings (Must show the idea of sensitivity in contrast to sensationalism)
5. extends beyond individual emotional responses; it influences societal attitudes and behaviours (lines 10-11)	<u>it shapes/ affects/ impacts how society thinks and acts</u> . (Awarded for either 'attitudes' OR 'behaviours')
6. When people become accustomed to seeing violence and suffering	<u>They might become less understanding / caring / sympathetic and more unconcerned</u>

without a corresponding emotional response, there is a risk that they may become less empathetic and more apathetic toward real-life situations (lines 11-13).	<u>/ uninterested in what is happening around them.</u> (Awarded for either 'less empathetic' OR 'more apathetic')
7. decreased willingness to engage in social or political action aimed at addressing these issues (lines 13-14).	<u>There may be reduced inclination to participate in community / civic efforts/ movements/ causes to tackle these problems.</u> (Concept of collective action is required)
8. lead to a society becoming more accepting of these conditions as part of the status quo (lines 16-17).	<u>Which can result in a society that increasingly condones / endures / tolerates these problems / challenges as the norm.</u> (Active verb with society as subject is required to award mark)
9. Over time, this desensitisation may make individuals more susceptible to experiencing psychological stress because they no longer have the same emotional barriers in place to protect themselves from the effects of traumatic content (lines 19-22)	<u>Continuous encounters with distressing material may make people more vulnerable to mental strain / pressure as people are not equipped / have the defences to cope with complex emotions.</u>
10. Additionally, the constant barrage of negative news can create a sense of fear or helplessness , contributing to overall psychological distress (lines 22-23).	<u>This may result in feelings of powerlessness / insecurity / agitation / vulnerability/ anxiety, leading to difficulties managing their mental well-being.</u> (Awarded for either 'fear' OR 'helplessness')
11. particularly alarming for children and adolescents, who are more impressionable and may not have the emotional maturity to process such information appropriately (lines 23-25).	<u>This is especially worrying for children and teenagers, who are more easily influenced and may lack the emotional readiness/ competence to handle such information effectively.</u> (Awarded for either 'impressionable' OR 'may not have the emotional maturity')
12. individuals become so overwhelmed by the volume of distressing information that they emotionally shut down, becoming less likely to help those in need (lines 26-28).	<u>People emotionally withdraw / disconnect from others and not want to assist others.</u> (Reference to others is required)

Points	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Marks	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m	8m

Summary sample:

One way is through frequent encounters with explicit content (1). As the impact fades, the audience see these events as commonplace (2), lessening the sense of importance that such news should evoke (3). The media also emphasise the dramatic over thoughtful reporting (4). Media desensitisation shapes how society thinks and acts (5). When individuals are desensitised, they might become less understanding and uninterested in what is happening around them (6). There may be reduced inclination to participate in community efforts to tackle problems (7), which results in a society that increasingly condones these problems as the norm (8). Continuous encounters with distressing material may make people more vulnerable to mental strain as people are not equipped to cope with difficult emotions (9). This may result in feelings of powerlessness (10). (120 words)

From all the passages

7. Passage 1 states that 'Information in the hands of the many is a powerful thing' (line 10). Identify one specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
<p>[Quote 1] On the optimistic side, the sheer volume and accessibility of health information has empowered patients in a way I would not have imagined even a decade ago (line 5-6).</p> <p>[Quote 2] This democratisation of information allows individuals to take charge of their well-being, a shift that can dramatically improve health outcomes (lines 10-12).</p>	<p>Identify: The specific idea from Passage 3 that supports the statement is that the</p> <p>[If Quote 1]: (a1) huge amount OR (a2) easy availability of information has given everyone the ability to make better health decisions today (1).</p> <p>[If Quote 2]: (a) ... everyone now has equal/ fairer opportunities to obtain/attain data on their health, which results in their having more in control of their welfare.</p> <p>Context of health must be provided in Identification and Justification.</p>
<p>Justify: This idea supports the statement because this enables them to (b1) find out more about diseases (b2) connect with others facing similar health issues (b3) take better care of their health (b4) gives people the means to be in an excellent physiological state/ have a healthier life (1).</p> <p><i>*Accept any logical justification even without the paraphrase of the statement.</i></p>	

8. Passage 2 states that ‘The 24-hour news cycle repeatedly shows violent incidents, natural disasters, and human suffering, which can lead to viewers becoming indifferent to these events. (lines 3–5). Identify one specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
The relentless barrage of information, particularly graphic visuals and emotionally charged reports, can create a constant state of anxiety (13-14).	<p>(a) The specific idea from Passage 3 that undermines the statement is the intense bombardment of news as well as explicit details of what we see in the media has created a continuous stream of unpleasant feelings of tension/ apprehensive thoughts (1).</p> <p>(b) This idea undermines the statement because the statement suggests that people are (b1) less likely to feel shocked or distressed from overexposure to such news but in fact people are (b2) concerned / fearful / alarmed by them (1). (b1+ b2 are required to show undermine)</p> <p><i>*Accept any logical justification even without the paraphrase of the statement.</i></p>

9. The reading passages cover a range of views on how the media today changes the way we think and behave.

How far do you agree or disagree with the view that the pervasive influence of the media benefits everyone in society?

Support your answer with reference to:

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