

VJC 2018 Prelim GP Paper 2 Answers

From Passage 1

1. In lines 5-6, what parallel does the author draw between the movie 'A Quiet Place' and certain fairy tales and fables? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Like fairy tales and fables that dramatise cultural phobias or anxieties ...	Both blow up/ exaggerate [1] fears/ worries/ insecurities. [1] Note: 'Show', 'portray', 'depict' were not accepted as these words are too neutral. Students who mentioned that these worries were put into a 'plot', 'narrative' or 'story' were given the mark for the first point.

2. **Using your own words as far as possible**, explain why the author claims that the problem of noise 'got exponentially worse' (line 10). [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase and inference
During the Industrial Revolution, people swarmed to cities... ... roaring with factory furnaces and shrieking with train whistles	The large influx of people into densely-packed cities/ people flocked to cities in droves . [1] Cities house transportation networks and industries which produce a lot of noise . [1] Note: Students who wrote that people 'migrate' or 'move to cities' were not given the mark as the <i>quantity</i> of people is important in this context. In the second part of the answer, students were not expected to paraphrase 'factory' and 'train'. However, they should make some reference to these noise sources in their answer.

3. From lines 11-13, explain how and why people in the past thought noise affected 'thinkers' and 'stupid people' differently. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase and inference
The cacophony was seen as a torture for intellectual people... ...and thinkers argued that they needed quietness to do good work.	Noise was unbearable to the 'thinkers' but did not bother 'stupid people' [1] because 'thinkers' needed silence to be able to concentrate and work effectively whereas 'stupid people' did not need this since they do not use their brains. [1] Note: Students need to capture the pair of ideas under the sections on 'how' and 'why' to get 1 mark. In the first

	part of the answer, 'negative effects', 'punished' and 'affected' were not accepted as paraphrases for 'torture'. Those who mentioned that stupid people did manual work in noisy industries were also not credited because they were reading too much into the author's point.
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4. Explain the author's use of the word 'cocoons' in line 44. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Text	Possible inference
Content as some may feel in their ready-made acoustic cocoons, the more people accustom themselves to life without unwanted sounds from others...	<p>Just like how a caterpillar uses a cocoon to protect itself while it morphs into a butterfly [1], these products help to protect/ shield us from /block out noise from our surroundings [1].</p> <p>Note: 'Isolated' and 'entrapped' were not accepted and many missed out the reference to the caterpillar. Students should also not use other metaphors (e.g. bubbles or capsules) to unpack this one.</p>

5. In what two ways is the final sentence an effective conclusion to the author's argument? [2]

From the Text	Possible inference
	<p>The author ties back to the example of the monster referenced at the start of the passage. [1]</p> <p>He conveys his disapproval of the people who are now overly sensitive towards noise. [1]</p> <p>He provides a neat summary of his stand that the fight against noise has gone too far OR the growing culture that only accepts silence should be antagonised and not noise itself. [1]</p> <p>Note: Any 2 out of 3 for 2 marks. Students should look at the whole sentence and not just the specific word 'perhaps'. Some students misinterpreted 'quietism' as 'quietness'.</p>

6. Using material from paragraphs 3-5, summarise the efforts and measures taken to control noise and the challenges faced in doing so.

Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**, not counting the opening words which are printed below. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [8]

In the endless war on noisy people and things...

	From the text	Possible paraphrase
a	Anti-noise organisations	Anti-noise institutions/ associations
b	sprang up around the globe	emerged worldwide/ across countries. Note: International organisations not accepted.
c	...used their political clout	Politicians/ governors used their influence/ authority
d	to get 'quiet zones' established	to create noise-free areas/ demarcations
e	around hospitals and schools .	around educational and healthcare institutions.
f	Violating a quiet zone, was punishable by fine	Violators faced a monetary/ financial penalty
g	imprisonment or both.	or incarceration/ were jailed/ put behind bars
h	Cities all over the world targeted noise technologies	Governments focussed/ zeroed-in on noise technologies
i	... which was banned	outlawing them/ making them illegal/ prohibited/ disallowed.
j	launched a 'noiseless nights' campaign	They also started a 'noiseless nights' drive/ movement
k	aided by sensitive noise-measuring devices	assisted by precise noise-measuring gadgets/ technology
l	stationed throughout the city.	placed everywhere/ across urban areas.
m	Planes were forcedfactories were required	Planes had to comply with/ were made to/ mandated to
n	to fly higher and slower	fly at greater altitudes and lower their speeds
o	around populated areas	around crowded areas/ living settlements Note: 'Cities', 'urban areas' not accepted
p	while factories were required to mitigate the noise they produced.	while industries had to reduce noise. Note: 'Regulate', 'managed' not accepted.
q	Yet, legislating against noisemakers	However, punishing noisemakers according to the law
r	rarely satisfied	hardly/ barely/ seldom appeased Note: 'Never', 'could not', 'discontented' not accepted.
s	people's growing demand for quietness... OR ...to meet the demand of increasingly noise-sensitive consumers.	people's expanding appetite/ need/ requirement for less noise OR their rising aversion to noise.
t	so products and technologies emerged... OR There are hundreds of digital apps and technologies created...	So modern gadgets and software were created
u	In the early 20 th century, sound-muffling curtains, softer floor materials, room dividers and ventilators	on top of home furnishings that already existed to
v	kept the noise from coming in	stop/ block noise from entering the house
w	while preventing sounds from bothering neighbours or the police.	or going out/ disturbing others outside.
x	No matter how thoughtful the design	Even with highly intuitive/ user-centric designs,

y	unwanted sound continued to be part of everyday life. OR Unable to suppress noise...	noise was still/ persistently present/ could not be eradicated/ snuffed out.
z	disquieted consumers started trying to mask it with wanted sound OR ...noise cancellation products... rendering outside sounds inaudible .	Unsettled consumers covered noise with pleasant/ desired sounds OR used products that mute external noise. Note: 'Replace', 'substitute' not accepted for 'mask'

No. of points	Marks allocated
≥ 15	8
13-14	7
11-12	6
9-10	5
7-8	4
5-6	3
3-4	2
1-2	1

From Passage 2

7. In what ways are cities 'filthy' (line 1)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Cities do not just get filthy in the visual sense - urban spaces can often be a raging mess of sound .	They look/ appear untidy/ disorganised/ are filled with rubbish and are noisy. Note: Many students missed out the 'visual' aspect of filth.

8. What does the word 'deluge' (line 4) tell us about noise and what does the author think is its consequence? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase and inference
...can be devastating to the human psyche .	It tells us that there is an excessive/ overwhelming amount of noise [1] and that it is very damaging/ disastrous/ creates serious problems for the mind/ mental well-being. [1] Note: In the first part of the answer, students needed to show that noise is present in <i>excessive</i> quantities. It is not enough to say that noise is present in 'great quantities' or that it is 'widespread' and 'common'. For the second part of the answer, 'negative' and 'detrimental' did not accurately capture the intensity of the word 'devastating'.

9. Explain why the author thinks that noise is 'ugly' (line 25). [1]

From the Text	Possible inference and paraphrase
...means construction sites, where heavy machinery creates a fitful, ugly noise that can echo into the placid surrounding areas.	It tells us that the noise is detested/ perceived as unpleasant/ unwanted as it disrupts the peace/ tranquillity of a place. Note: Both parts required for 1 mark.

10. Why has the author placed brackets around the comment in lines 26-27? [2]

From the Text	Possible inference
	It is to comment that noise is not the only problem caused by train tracks and airports, but ground movements as well. [1] This is not central to his point on noise and serves as an additional comment. [1] Note: Many students lost the first mark because they did not specifically refer to 'vibrations and shakes'. Some also misinterpreted these ground movements to be the source of noise.

11. What contrast is found in the arguments put forth by critics and the author in lines 33-36? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [1]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase and inference
Critics may decry all this spending and attention as premature ... But solving noise pollution is a pre-emptive measure OR particularly on an issue that does not seem immediately hazardous... that can forestall bigger physiological and learning issues people may develop much later .	The critics look at the present or short term situation while the author is concerned with the long term/future impact of noise pollution OR Critics think it is too soon/ early to put money and effort into tackling noise but the author wants to take a preventive approach.

12. Matthew Jordan details the war against noise and believes that the fight has gone too far. On the other hand, Neel Patel believes that the concern over noise is a legitimate one. How serious is the problem of noise for you and your society, and how far would you agree or disagree with the views expressed in both passages? [10]

Mark Range	Descriptor
Band 1 8-10	<p>REQUIREMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students must make systematic reference to the requirements of the question, with evidence of a balanced treatment. Students must also refer to the ideas from both passages: <p><u>Points from Passage 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-noise organisations sprang up to combat get 'quiet zones' established around hospitals and schools. Planes were forced to fly higher and slower around populated areas, while factories were required to mitigate the noise they produced. Cities all over the world targeted noise technologies and launched 'noiseless nights' campaigns. Home furnishings dampened external noise and prevented sound from escaping the house. Products and technologies emerged to meet the demands of increasingly noise-sensitive consumers. Unable to suppress noise, disquieted consumers started trying to mask it with wanted sound or use technology to rendering external noise inaudible. The more people accustom themselves to life without unwanted sounds from others, the more they become like the family in 'A Quiet Place.' To hypersensitive ears, the world becomes unbearably noisy and hostile. <p><u>Points from Passage 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise pollution can wreak havoc on human health and safety. High noise levels can worsen a plethora of other medical conditions and aggravate other health issues. These health effects, in turn, can lead to social handicap, reduced productivity, decreased performance in learning, absenteeism in the workplace and school, increased drug use, and accidents. Solving noise pollution is a pre-emptive measure that can forestall bigger physiological and learning issues people may develop much later. <p>EXPLANATION Shows <u>a good or very good understanding</u> of the terms and issues in both passages.</p> <p>EVALUATION Students makes very convincing evaluation by making judgements and decisions and by developing arguments to logical conclusions, and includes elaboration and support through personal insight and apt illustration of Singapore.</p> <p>COHERENCE Very clear shape and paragraph organisation and cogent argument.</p>

<p>Band 2</p> <p>4-7</p>	<p>REQUIREMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students cover requirements of the question adequately but not necessarily a balanced treatment. 2. They identify ideas from the passage, possibly with minor misrepresentation of the points. 3. They raise issues, but discussion is limited or superficial. <p>EVALUATION</p> <p>Student attempts to evaluate the extent to which the ideas are an accurate reflection of the situation in Singapore, but the evaluation is always convincing, and tends to be superficial with limited development of ideas, and is not as thorough in support.</p> <p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>Shows adequate level of understanding of terms and issues raised in the passage (which may include minor distortion).</p> <p>COHERENCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paragraphing is sometimes helpful. 2. There is a recognizable overall shape to the answer. 3. Arguments are generally cogent.
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<p>Main Arguments & Explanations</p> <p>From Passage 1</p>	<p>Evidence / Examples</p>
<p>Anti-noise organisations sprang up to combat get 'quiet zones' established around hospitals and schools. Planes were forced to fly higher and slower around populated areas, while factories were required to mitigate the noise they produced. Cities all over the world targeted noise technologies and launched 'noiseless nights' campaigns. Home furnishings dampened external noise and prevented sound from escaping the house.</p>	<p>Agree to a large extent</p> <p>In densely populated Singapore, common amenities like shopping malls, hawker centres and playgrounds all contribute to community noise, on top of that created by traffic. To try to mitigate against noise pollution, the Government has put in place several measures.</p> <p>NEA regulates noise levels from construction sites and industrial operations based on a set of permissible noise limits. NEA has also implemented rules which prohibit work on Sundays and public holidays for construction sites located within 150m of residential premises and noise-sensitive premises. The Quieter Construction Fund, a \$10 million co-funding scheme, allows construction firms to be reimbursed for up to half of the cost of purchasing or leasing quieter construction equipment, noise control equipment and other innovative noise-reduction solutions not yet readily adopted by the industry.</p> <p>Noise emission standards for vehicles have also been set. The LTA clamps down on vehicles with illegal modifications, which include modified exhausts. It is also looking at ways to use a material on roads that can reduce the noise generated from the friction between surfaces and vehicle tyres.</p>

	<p>At MRT tracks, around 10km of noise barriers have been put up at 16 locations - including Admiralty, Marsiling, Sembawang, Ang Mo Kio, Pioneer and Yew Tee. Trains are fitted with noise-dampening wheels.</p> <p>Household appliances (e.g. washing machines and vacuum cleaners) are marketed based on the use of quiet technology.</p> <p>But some are concerned that these measures may not be able to keep pace with a growing nation. While there are no comparative studies, anecdotally, the city has become noisier over the years as it continues to develop - with more expressways, longer MRT lines and the cycle of construction and demolition playing out over and over again. The spate of en-bloc sale of private property has resulted in my construction noise as older properties are torn down and new condominiums are being constructed. The construction of numerous BTO projects around the island to cater to the housing needs of the growing population also add to urban noise.</p> <p>Due to limited land space in Singapore, the measures to combat in Singapore often involve the need to balance various trade offs and needs. For example, the Air Force has to repeatedly explain the need for it to train to ensure its operational readiness, while ensuring that the noise coming from its fighter planes do not affect the lives of those living in the North East and Western areas excessively. This involves aligning the flight training schedules with schedules such as the exam schedules of schools in the areas. In recent years, other mitigating efforts include the relocation of Paya Lebar Air Base and the commissioning of a noise study by the National Environment Agency (NEA) to guide the planning of new residential developments around the expanded Tengah Air Base.</p>
<p>Products and technologies emerged to meet the demands of increasingly noise-sensitive consumers. Unable to suppress noise, disquieted consumers started trying to mask it with wanted sound or use technology to render external noise inaudible.</p>	<p>Agree to a large extent</p> <p>Dropnoise, which produces noise reports for residents and condominium managements, has seen business boom since it started the monitoring service last year. Its reports can be used in court action against noisy neighbours, or submitted to regulatory bodies as proof of noise pollution. It also specialises in the sale of numerous noise conditioning products that moderate the noise level in an environment.</p> <p>According to Channel News Asia, a new noise cancelling device is being developed by researchers from Nanyang Technological University (NTU). When mounted onto window grilles, the device can reduce up to 50 per cent of noise from the surrounding environment - even when the windows are wide open. This is particularly helpful in Singapore where population density is so high and it is inevitable that one finds himself or herself in the vicinity of construction works which are necessary as the city seeks to ensure it stays relevant and revitalise its infrastructure.</p>

<p>The more people accustom themselves to life without unwanted sounds from others, the more they become like the family in 'A Quiet Place.' To hypersensitive ears, the world becomes unbearably noisy and hostile.</p>	<p>Agree to a large extent</p> <p>As privacy becomes increasingly important to people as our city gets increasingly dense, it is likely that people are increasingly becoming hypersensitive to noise and finding ways to insulate themselves from the noise. But these efforts usually come at a premium. For example, houses in tranquil areas tend to be more expensive, while houses located near MRT tracks are less appealing and priced lower.</p> <p>Agree to a small extent</p> <p>Singaporeans are not hypersensitive to noise and there are good reasons why more needs to be done fight noise pollution. A new study from the National University of Singapore (NUS) found that Singapore's average outdoor sound level throughout the day is 69.4 decibels, which is equivalent to the noise made by a vacuum cleaner. This exceeds the National Environmental Agency's recommendation of no more than 67 decibels averaged over an hour, and is a whisker shy of the World Health Organisation threshold of 70 decibels a day.</p> <p>Given our high population density, it is a necessity to accustom ourselves to some levels of noise instead of being hypersensitive to noise. Moreover, as Singapore is a multi-racial country, management of noise from cultural activities has to take into consideration cultural sensitivities. Failure to do will cause unnecessary social tension. For example, the Police acted swiftly to clarify why events like Lion Dance and Malay weddings do not need to be licensed.</p>
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Main Arguments & Explanations From Passage 2	Evidence / Examples
<p>Noise pollution can wreak havoc on human health and safety. High noise levels can worsen a plethora of other medical conditions and aggravate other health issues.</p>	<p>Agree to a large extent</p> <p>Singapore's Ministry of Manpower recognises the health impact of noise pollution in the workplace and has put in place the Workplace Safety and Health (Noise) Regulation to protect workers exposed to excessive noise from hearing loss. One example is the mandatory use of ear plugs and ear muffs in work such as air traffic control.</p> <p>Doctors in Singapore have also said residents should be more aware of ways to protect their hearing. These include the use of hearing protection, such as ear plugs and ear muffs, as a temporary solution, said the head of Singapore General Hospital's (SGH's) otolaryngology department, Dr Barrie Tan.</p> <p>Agree to a small extent</p>

	<p>Interestingly, many Singaporean youth enjoy listen to music at very high volume and tend to ignore the health warning on possible hearing loss, thinking it would not happen to them. A study conducted by biomedical engineering students in Temasek Polytechnic found that 1 in 6 young people are at risk of suffering from noise-induced hearing loss due to their use of personal music players.</p>
<p>These health effects, in turn, can lead to social handicap, reduced productivity, decreased performance in learning, absenteeism in the workplace and school, increased drug use, and accidents.</p>	<p>Agree to a large extent</p> <p>Noisy environments are not conducive for studies and many students choose to do their homework and revision in the quiet public libraries, especially approaching exam season. Students from low-income families often lack quiet study areas at home and this can affect their studies. Schools near expressways or major roads find that LTA's efforts to change the materials used on roads to reduce noise pollution has had little effect on mitigating noise pollution from the roads.</p> <p>Psychologist Nishta Geetha Thevaraja from the SGH department of psychiatry said personal and work relationships can be affected by irritability and anger issues brought about by noise pollution.</p>
<p>All these factors (automobiles, increased development, train and air traffic noise) are exacerbated by poor city planning and community zoning</p>	<p>Agree to a small extent</p> <p>In land scarce Singapore, there is only so much the government can do. The government has done much, for instance, by shifting the airport from Paya Lebar to Changi in the 1990s and situating heavy vehicle parks away from residential areas.</p>

Comments: Stronger candidates were able to consider the trade-offs when it came to the issue of noise, arguing that in multi-cultural and religious Singapore, tolerance and acceptance of some noise (related to festivities or traditional practices) is necessary to preserve harmony in society OR/AND that to progress holistically as a nation, noise is inevitable. On the other hand, the responses from weaker candidates contained a mix of these problems:

1. Picking ideas to evaluate that do not relate to the overarching argument of the author (i.e. that the fight has gone too far and that noise is a legitimate problem)
2. Evaluating the author's overarching argument and not the reasons that lead up to the author's conclusion
3. Evaluating ideas that were clearly not made by the author (e.g. the point on intellectuals and stupid people, and marketing efforts in Passage 1)
4. Lack of evaluation of the effectiveness of measures taken to mitigate noise in Singapore OR lack of evaluation of how serious the problem is
5. No reference to personal experience