

CJC 2014 Prelim Exam Paper 1
Suggested Answer Scheme (Updated)

1.To what extent does cinema prepare the viewer for the challenges of modern life?

Claim

- Cinema readies the viewer/audience for the various challenges that they might face in the 21st century.

Belief

- Cinema like some other art forms with its range of storylines and themes and cinematic techniques used to replicate a certain type of reality that viewers can experience, provides them an insight into the potential challenges they might face, thus making it educational - preparing them to deal with what might come.

Assumptions

- Cinema is effective in re-creating various scenarios that could reflect current challenges that individuals/society faces / predict future challenges that individuals/society will face and hence is an effective educational tool in preparing them for these challenges.
 - Viewer is a thinker and reflectively makes sense of and internalises what they view onscreen with reference to their own society & the realities of everyday life.

Contrasting Pairs

Benefit/Harm

Ideal/reality

Power & control

Requirements to Pass

1) Appreciation of the keywords 'prepare', 'challenges of modern life'.

- To be 'prepared' is to be made ready for something that one might be doing or something that one might/might not expect to happen.
 - Candidates need to show an understanding of the role of film and its ability to ready the viewer for the various difficulties or problems that might be unique to today's context
 - Candidates need to show a nuanced sense of what a 'challenge' is, focusing on the macro (i.e. linked to global or societal problems or issues), instead of the micro (i.e. daily stresses)

2) Attempt to show balance

- Candidates are required to challenge the claim and to evaluate the role of the cinema in effectively preparing the viewers for the challenges of life today

Characteristics of Good Scripts

- Scripts would reflect a nuanced idea of 'challenge'
 - Students will be able to characterise challenges in various areas Eg. workplace etc.
 - Good scripts would focus on the concept of cinema

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

- 1) Such scripts would tend to focus on the role and function of cinema instead of assessing its ability in readying the viewer for such challenges.
- 2) The challenges identified for discussion would likely be trivial or common stresses faced by society and the individual.
- 3) Example-driven paragraphs that focus on various movies and how it has made an impact on their lives.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Cinema prepares the viewer

1) Use of cinematic techniques and elements of film to engage the viewer at a deeper level

- Film can engage viewers not only visually, but intellectually and emotionally. This might lead to viewers responding in a way that the producers/directors wish them to such that viewers might identify with/ feel for an issue and reflectively form opinions and respond to an issue.

2) Film as an educational tool highlighting current and potential issues that are faced by society

- A lot of research is carried out before a film is made and this adds to the realism and accuracy of information provided for the viewer, which provides the viewer with an insight into what could come, potential problems that might arise and possibly solutions and responses that could be made to address certain issues. This raises awareness and the level of preparedness in facing/ managing these issues at different levels

Cinema does not prepare the viewer: The level of preparedness is determined by -

1) The intent / purpose of watching a film

- Many cinema goers watch a film with the intention of being entertained by the plots/ sights / dramatic effects or to be with company of friends instead of seeking to learn something about the challenges of life etcetera. Hence the level of reflection and learning taken away after the film might prove minimal and insignificant in terms of its application to life and the future.

2) The film-makers' purpose and intended goal of the film

- Many films are produced with the intention to make a profit/entertainment (humour, violence, adult films etc.)/ make use of the latest cinematic techniques and technology to engage the audience's visually, no real learning or message might be taken away at the end of the film.

3) Film as fiction and an exaggerated reality

- Films do not always reflect reality and are often fictional/ exaggerated to raise its entertainment value. Hence, such films have little educational value as it cannot be applied to current or future realities even if at some level, these films do enable viewers to reflect on current issues (e.g. sci-fi films)

2. To be an effective leader, one needs to be tough and ruthless. Discuss.

Claim

Effective leadership cannot be soft - it requires an individual to make difficult decisions, the ability

to separate the decisions about policies from sentiment, even to the point of being cruel/merciless (ends justify the means)

Belief

- Leadership requires certain key defining traits. Other traits/qualities may not bring out the best in a leader.

Assumptions

- A severe leadership is essential in attaining results for a team/community/organisation/country.
- Other qualities are not important in making one an effective leader.
- Effectiveness is about having an impact, being able to achieve results/growth. The ability to accomplish what you set out to achieve.

Contrasting Pairs

- Idealism vs Pragmatism
- Cause and Consequence
- Power & Authority
- Soft power vs Hard power

Requirements to Pass

1. Understanding of Context

Candidates must be able to evaluate the various contexts in which toughness and ruthlessness are valuable and necessary in leading a team/organisation/community/country to attaining success.

2. Appreciation of Keywords

Candidates must be able to address and explain the key terms “effective”, “tough” and “ruthless” - i.e. effective in asserting control, strategic planning, policy making, upholding laws, rules and regulations.

3. Must show balance in discussion

- examine what could be the drawbacks or problems that will emerge if leadership is tough and ruthless (in spite of the success attained). OR consider other trait or qualities of effective leaders with a higher degree of compassion and willingness to work in consultation with the followers/people.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Able to critically evaluate the impact (political, social, economic and cultural) of a leadership that exhibits those mentioned traits.
2. Consider a wide range of leadership other than **political** - community/business/religious or spiritual/society leaders; also consider examples from both male and female leaders; show a contrast between effective leaders who are or are not ruthless
3. Able to show how these traits determine effective leadership both in the past and present (modern societies)
4. Able to distinguish between hard and soft power.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Example-driven/descriptive essays.

Emphasis on the use of examples of leaders/leadership that exhibit those traits.

2. Narrow scope of argument

Considers only Singapore's perspectives or consideration only for political leadership.

3. Simplistic and reductionist ideas or representations of leadership.

Possible Areas for Discussion

To be an effective leader, one needs to be tough and ruthless

1) To sustain political and economic survival in the long term, one needs to be resilient as well as be cold and calculated in order to be able to lead the community, organisation or country with robust policies.

2) In an unpredictable political, economic, and social landscape, it is extremely important for leaders to be unafraid to make major decisions and tough calls on difficult issues. i.e Singapore govt's decision to build integrated resort/casinos was met with strong opposition from the community, but the government proceeded with their decision in the interest of long term economic growth.

3) History has shown that toughness and ruthlessness are some of the traits that leaders like LKY and Thatcher, also referred to as the Iron Lady, has shown in order to develop an entire country.

To be an effective leader, one does NOT need to be tough and ruthless

1) These qualities are viewed negatively - toughness and ruthlessness can be destructive and dangerous to society/people. Policies or decisions made by a leader that does not show compassion can be futile and may lead to unfavourable opinions of the leader.

2) With the emphasis on protection of human rights and dignity, a tough and ruthless leader may not be an effective one if he/she chooses to ignore fundamental rights to life and liberty. Oppressive regimes and governments have not achieved much political and economic growth. Eg: Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's regime's strict control of human rights and liberties (i.e. the right to free expression, association and assembly, discrimination of women and ethnic minorities in Syria, imprisonment of human rights activists and govt critics - resulting in armed rebellion, protests and civil uprising.

3) Today's current reality - Millennial generation's view of an effective leaders – as one who is able to, foster behaviours such as showing consideration for others in order to produce desired outcomes for employees of all generations. Critical for effective leaders to provide support and show compassion to subordinates and an ability to empathise with the demands of the modern world. Hence, a leader who is tough and ruthless may not be able to sustain the respect and command of subordinates.

4) Effective leaders need to be able to influence and show charisma in their leadership. Leads to the impression of a reliability and establish trust.

5) In order to deal with modern challenges and pressures, an effective leader should be team-oriented and emphasise on participation - leaders need to help their subordinates or teams to work together and deal with conflict as a team, and in consultation with others. Emphasis on . cohesiveness, collaboration and consensus.

3. Is the knowledge of history still essential to progress in the world today?

Claim

An understanding of/ knowledge of the past is a key contributor to global development
The knowledge of history is essential/important to progress in the world today.

Belief

- Knowledge is the key driver of change & development.
- With the rapid pace of change and the rate at which events unfold, knowledge of the past is still relevant in providing solutions/directions/acting as a guide.

Assumptions

- An understanding and knowledge of past events can alter people's perceptions and lead to progress.
- History has been and will always be relevant/useful to aid in the development of the world

Contrasting Pairs

Change/continuity
Promise/Threat

Requirements to Pass

1. Appreciation of the concept of historical knowledge its role in helping the world progress

- Candidates must be able to define what progress is, i.e. a positive change/development in the world. Reference should be made to different areas of progress such as technology, politics, values, global issues etc.
- Candidates need to consider whether history does provide the necessary insight/ solution/ guidance to address the global issues that are present today, such that progress can be made

2. Appreciation of the absolute term 'still' in the question

- The absolute term 'still' invites candidates to question the belief that knowledge in history is key to the world's progress and signals that a comparison needs to be made between the recent past and the current age

3. Attempt to show balance

- Students must assess the role of history and consider whether it plays a necessary and important OR limited role in the development of the world. Students need to decide on a clear stand that they are going to take throughout the essay
- Students need not make outright comparisons, but have to evaluate their arguments to recognise the limitations of their claims and to engage with the opposing viewpoint.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

- Such scripts would approach history as a concept and focus on history as a discipline (e.g. History of ideas, History of Science etc.) rather than of history understood as a subject.
- Better scripts will be able to evaluate the value term 'still' to argue whether history has ever been

essential / argue whether history will continue to be essential.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

- Such scripts would have a limited focus, touching on the purpose and functions of history.
Examples of the progress that might be made with history would also be limited.

Possible Areas for Discussion

History is still essential to progress

1) History has traditionally been used as a guide in the past and continues to be used by various leaders/stakeholders for progress

- History is like a 'report card' of events that have taken place and allows society and leaders to assess the progress or failures that have been made.
- Too often, decisions are made without considering what has or has not worked in the past, and although there is no such thing as a perfect historical analogy, there are certainly experiences and lessons from the past that are applicable today which has led to governments attempting to/ implementing measures and solutions to avoid a potential build up to the current crises.
- History thus acts as a guide/reference point to the world/society and its leaders, on what should be emulated or avoided to ensure the progress of the country.
- History, particularly economic, political, and military history are especially important as "applied" or "practical" humanities that can be used for informed decision making by business, government, and military leaders.

2) The study of history is still seen as essential/ relevant and taught to provide individuals a reference point to understand the world

- History represents the cumulative store of human experience that sustains wisdom and helps us understand why things happen in our world the way they do, from the past to the present.
- Although technology, music, and fashion have changed considerably, the nature of greed, lust, and power have not. A study of history can give us insight into human nature, which can be extremely valuable for those who aspire to be leaders, allowing them to understand the nature of current problems/issues.
- "If you read your history you will have an experience, a breadth of knowledge, a wisdom far beyond anything you can get on your own in your lifetime that permit you to make quality, substantive judgments about human behavior."

History is not essential/ not as essential to progress today as...

1) Events of the past are not directly relevant to the present or the future because of paradigm shifts

- With the current age of instant information and rapidly changing technologies, the wisdom of History is not enough to help us succeed. These new technologies have led to unprecedented events occurring and history offers little / few solutions to remedy the problems and crises faced at present.

2) History never really worked effectively as a guide and to some extent acts as a hindrance to progress

- Historical information might be deemed biased/ the so called 'Truth' that it espouses has been and still is a source of conflict today (e.g. the Holocaust/ the atrocities committed by Japan/ Israel

Palestinian conflict etc.), preventing countries/societies from moving forward their relations.

- Much of history/ the historical baggage has hindered the progression of societies and is more often than not, a cause of current global problems. It is better to address the current crises and be forward looking instead of dredging up a past that might complicate matters.

3) History has not helped mankind progress at present and would do little for future progress.

- Governments/leaders/people find different answers out of the same set of historical facts, and continue to make mistakes over and over as individuals and nations as evidenced from the various societal/economic/political crises/problems that we face today (e.g. war, violence, discrimination etc.)

4. Does popular art have any real merit?

Claim

- Popular art has merit in its own right
- Popular art (such as: dance, theatre, music, literature, paintings, calligraphy, manga comics) is slowly losing its value in modern society.

Belief

- Popular art is an essential aspect of modern human society. It is relevant to identity and human culture more than mere 'classic' arts forms that are remote and tied to a bygone age.
 - Although, popular art forms still appeal to a niche group of individuals (like art majors, critics, museum curators, etc) who admire these pieces for their aesthetic value/beauty, they are gradually being displaced by the expansion of science and technology.

Assumptions

- (i) With the advent of modern technology, scientific inventions and pharmaceutical research are currently at their peak. Gone are the days when an Art degree was considered a lucrative/purposeful degree to major in.
- (ii) Individuals who dabble in artistic pursuits are not as highly regarded by the general populace and society is also undergoing a paradigm shift where the notion of physical art is losing its significance and appeal.
- (iii) Popular or modern art forms are considered to have value on a purely subjective basis, are complex or even high-brow for some, thus scientific endeavours are preferred since formulas (or various other scientific terminology) are universally recognised/standardised.

Contrasting Pairs

- Aesthetic beauty / functionality (or modernity)
- Probability / Certainty
- Pragmatism / Idealism

Requirements to Pass

- Students must be able to understand and explain whether popular art has any appeal and intrinsic worth.
- students should be able to state clearly examples that represent the popular art they are trying to

discuss.

- Candidates must also be able to explore the notion of 'merit' and be able to list some common forms of incentives that artists/performers are bestowed with.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

- Candidates should be aware of the fact that 'popular art' comprises different mediums (apart from the typical ink on canvas type of art pieces) and must be able to expound upon the varied art forms (ie: dance, theatre, music, etc).
- Candidates must also be able to explore the notion of 'real merit' (with finesse, accuracy and precision) and not focus primarily on monetary gains/fame for the artist.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

- Scripts that lack sufficient scope, depth and insight.
- Superficial understanding of popular art forms. These may only consider one or perhaps two art forms and are likely to have a very poorly defined sense of definition.
- Omits the key words, 'real merit' and focuses instead on the purpose/function of modern art. Such 'function-based' essays will ignore the main claims of the question and are likely to provide clumsy lists of the benefits or problems brought by popular art.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Yes, popular art has merit in its own right.

1) Art forms (eg: paintings and calligraphy) are **valued for their aesthetic qualities, complex techniques which are employed into the creation of the specific art piece** (ie: portrait of Mona Lisa)

2) **Popular Art is able to shape our ability to refine judgement (brought about by thought-provoking popular art) - this brings about the merit of discrimination.** Many modern writers are able to raise our awareness of social and ethnic as well as gender concerns through their texts.

E.g. Street artists like Banksy are able to 'open our eyes' to a more critical and often satirical view of our world through graffiti or films with political messages.

3) **Historical impact and continued relevance in modern context** - Popular art forms have had an impact upon society over the last 100 years and continues to do so. Evolution of art forms have made society more vibrant and added cultural importance and relevance (eg: Music forms like jazz, which ran counter to mainstream culture when first introduced, but is now a popular genre.)

4) **Some values that can be discussed in relation to impact of popular art on the individual and societal** - recognition and showcasing of the craft, maintaining cultural traditions and social values, source of unity through shared cultural work, promoting different social causes. reinforcing group identity.

Counter: No, popular art is gradually losing its value/merit in today's society.

1) Although, the cultivation of popular art (such as dance, theatre or drama) is seemingly important for both social and cultural development, it can be argued that these art forms **hold little pragmatic value for the participants**. For instance, many local artistes such as, Benjamin Kheng, Taufik Batisah and Hady Mirza must rely on regular day-time jobs to supplement their monthly income, as these performers are only paid a nominal fee for their occasional gigs/product endorsements.

2) **Due to the advent of modern technology and the state's predominant focus on economic and scientific endeavours**, stem-cell research and pharmaceutical studies are two key areas that many undergraduates are now keen to explore. Gone are the days when an Arts subject (ie: Literature or English Linguistics) was considered a lucrative or purposeful degree to major in. Nowadays, individuals who dabble in artistic pursuits tend to be stigmatised and they are generally not as well received by the public.

3) Some forms of popular art (ie: avant garde sculptures, paintings that depict surrealism/cubism) **tend to be very abstract, subjective and can even be considered too complex or high-brow for some**. Thus, scientific pursuits are preferred since formulas (or various other scientific terminology) are universally recognised/standardised. Little merit can be gained from something that is seen as contentious.

5. Is the fear of foreigners a myth or a reality in your society today?

Claim

- The perception that foreigners in Singapore are a threat in some way is a reality/justified.
- The view that foreigners in Singapore pose a challenge/threat is a perception that is exaggerated and unfounded.

Belief

- Foreigners (people of a different nationality) bring along with them different cultural practices that oppose and destabilise Singapore's current cultural norms.
- Fear stems from ignorance, a recognition of the unknown and being unable to define/predict the changes that the unknown brings with it.
- Manifestations of fear can range from quiet hostility (being unwelcoming) to active persecution (Eg. Government policies to protect locals, collective public rejection/opposition to foreigners' practices).
- Fear and anxiety is not limited to particular class.

Assumptions

- There is a fear of foreigners in Singapore. Foreigners are viewed as threats.
- Singapore has developed a distinct cultural climate that can be defined.
- Singapore has existed for a sufficiently long enough duration for people to define a 'Singaporean' in terms of their locality of birth, creating a clear distinction between 'Singaporean' and 'foreigner'.

Contrasting Pairs

Perception/Reality

Knowledge/Ignorance
<p>Requirements to Pass</p> <p>1. Appreciation of Keywords</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripts will be able to define 'fear' as being more than an emotion but in terms of a series of actions/behaviour. • Scripts show an ability to define 'reality' clearly - as a sentiment that has manifested in behaviour / actions undertaken. • Scripts need to show an understanding of 'myth' as hearsay or perceptions which the general population of Singapore has not reinforced. • Scripts must recognise that the subject in the question is the 'fear of foreigners' and not just 'foreigners' alone. <p>2. Shows Balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates must acknowledge both aspects of 'myth' and 'reality' in the scripts. • Candidates should evaluate the extent to whether it is truly a myth or reality. • Scripts need to take a stand as to whether it is a myth or reality.
<p>Characteristics of Good Scripts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scripts show depth and a nuanced understanding that 'fear' can range from sentiment to legislated policies. 2. Scripts might show an understanding of Singapore's growth as a nation that gives rise to some fear of foreigners. 3. Scripts are able to demonstrate sufficient scope.
<p>Characteristics of Weak Scripts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scripts tend to lack scope depth and insight. 2. Example-driven scripts that list various incidents of mistreatment of foreigners / resentment against foreigners. 3. Superficial understanding of 'fear' or 'myth'. 4. Scripts that may simply discuss the concept of discrimination without linking it to the Singapore context.
<p>Possible Areas for Discussion</p> <p>Fear of Foreigners- Myth or Reality?</p> <p>1) <u>Claim: There is an increasing tension in terms of how foreigners are treated and discriminated against/ strained relations between foreigners and locals.</u></p> <p><u>Myth:</u></p> <p>- Tension and conflict are not evident in everyday life with few incidents reported of strained relations or conflict taking place. This fear stems from a false collective belief used to justify the need to isolate and reduce the number of foreigners in Singapore. Singapore is highly cosmopolitan and multicultural and this adds to the vibrancy of the country.</p> <p><u>Reality:</u></p> <p>- Increasing reports of conflict locals becoming agitated and assigning blame to foreigners whenever unpleasant incidents occur. There appears to be an increasing volume of online vitriol</p>

criticising and abusing foreigners online (particularly on STOMP), reflecting a tension that was not as evident 10 years ago. (e.g. Anton Casey, criticism of planned Philippines Independence Day Celebration at Ngee Ann City which was later cancelled as a result of the complaints)

2) Claim: There is a perception that foreigners are gaining an unfair advantage at the expense of Singaporeans.

Myth: In terms of policies and opportunities, Singaporeans are given access to assistance (i.e. financial aid) to provide them with leverage in the fields of business and education.

- Eg: The government has plans to expand the university sector (creation of a fifth university i.e. the Singapore Institute of Technology and full-time degree places in SIM (UniSIM) to diversify education opportunities and better prepare Singaporeans for the future workforce. The Continuing Education and Training (CET) - a degree upgrading pathway for those who entered the workforce after diploma and A-levels - has been created to ensure that there is increasing financial support for adult learners (eg: MOE bursaries, Study and Tuition fee loans), encouraging industry to provide more scholarships, improving access to part-time degree programmes by recognising work experience and alternative qualifications.

Reality: There is a clear distinction between 'Singaporean' and 'foreigner' today and there is an expectation that foreigners should become citizens if they wish to obtain the same/certain privileges. There was much anger when it was made known that some well-to-do foreigners were able to gain certain advantages at the expense of locals. This led to policy changes so that a clear line is drawn highlighting that it is a privilege to be a citizen. (e.g. P1 registration, hiring locals first, rise of property prices as a result of foreigners being able to park their money investing in properties etc.)

3) Claim: Fear of being overrun but a dominant population of foreigners and losing the Singapore identity (having more foreigners than locals)

Reality:

- The population has increased dramatically in recent decades thanks to an influx of foreigners, who now make up around two out of five residents. This has put a growing strain on jobs, housing and infrastructure, and raised fears about the dilution of the Singaporean national identity.

- This has resulted in an angry backlash, with many taking to social media to disparage foreign workers, from highly paid "foreign talent" to heavily exploited laborers from China and the Indian sub-continent. A protest was also held Hong Lim Park against the initiatives laid out in the Population White Paper. The abuse is often so vicious that in his 2012 ND Rally speech, PM Lee noted the proliferation of posts "tormenting and berating" foreigners and that very few people stand up to repudiate that. The berating of foreigners continue to exist, particularly online, with emphasis on highlighting any misconduct committed by them.

Myth:

- It must be noted however that overwhelmingly when polled in a ST survey to gauge the sentiments of Singaporeans towards foreigners, Singaporeans accept foreigners being allowed in to work, but at a slower pace, an indication that Singaporeans are fundamentally open to diversity and are not anti-foreigners, but that the anxiety and fear over immigration is about government policies and not the people.

6. Free speech is more of a curse than a blessing in social media. Comment.

Claim

Freedom of expression in the context of social media (blogs, social networking sites, wikis,...) is a bigger liability than an asset.

Belief

- The loosely regulated world of social media feeds on the flow of free speech.

Assumptions

- Social media is an equal access platform for all in terms of information and opinion sharing.
- It encourages people to be honest and spontaneous.
- If one can speak freely, it can cause harm to an individual and society/national unity

Contrasting Pairs

Freedom / Control

Convergence / Divergence

Wisdom of the crowd / Expert opinion

Requirements to Pass

1. Argument shows balance

- Scripts must illustrate how it is both a blessing and a curse and evaluate whether it is more of a blessing or a curse.

2. Show an Appreciation of Keywords of 'curse' and 'blessing'

- Understand that 'curse' refers to something as seriously harmful/unfortunate
- Understand that 'blessing' refers to something that provides great benefits to an individual/many

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Candidates will be able to evaluate 'blessing' and 'curse' and take a stand as to whether it is more a blessing or a curse.
2. Able to show a good range of social media

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Scripts that are descriptive/merely highlighting instances of abuse of free speech on social media.
2. Scripts that do not explain/provide sufficient reason as to how free speech can be considered a 'blessing' or a 'curse'.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Free speech is more of a curse than a blessing in social media

1) *Free speech encourages the 'anything goes' behaviour shown on social media:* When free speech is unhampered by any form of restraint or moderation (e.g social norms or etiquette / shared history etc), it encourages a degree of recklessness or thoughtlessness (acts of 'flaming', trolling or bullying). It could degenerate into abusive behaviour and possibly physical violence.

The issue of control of the boundaries of social media is a real one. Governments find it difficult to manage social media because of its wide content.

- The sharing of highly sensitive and controversial content that is hard to police due to the reliance on users to flag out inappropriate content (i.e. pornography, violence, criminal activity) eg: Twitter's dilemma of removing gruesome images and videos of the execution of James Foley, the journalist who was killed by ISIS.
- Harassment on Social media - using online platforms to intimidate others.
- Unpopular posts or comments that garner negative attention - self-righteous majority may adopt a mob mentality against users who show extreme opinions.

2) *Free speech hidden behind the veil of anonymity (offered by social media) means that others may have limited avenues to respond* : It means that people may offer unsolicited and extreme views and opinions (knowing that their actual identities can be masked) that might lead to disastrous repercussions. Despite attempts to ban or prevent these groups from attaining a platform to air their political, economic or social agendas, social media has little control over the spreading and sharing of such material.

- Facebook allowing the videos of the execution of James Foley for the purpose of condemning the violence, but this intention was condemned as it allowed minors to have access to the content.
- Cyberbullying and other forms of harassment or smear campaigns via social media eg. the Megan Meier or Lord McAlpine case.

3) *Those who 'shout' the loudest are heard*. Free speech means that a multitude of opinions (both sound and unsound) on issues are heard, but that also means those who 'shout' the loudest get the most attention and that may be only the views of a minority. This could undermine people's confidence about what is expressed.

- Those who are most passionate about their causes tend to engage the most with social media. This can give rise to a skewed view of what is happening in the real world.

Free speech is more of a blessing than a curse in social media

1) *Free speech on many issues is encouraged as social media is seen as a lightly regulated forum of expression* : Free speech is the oxygen that keeps social media alive and growing especially with the perceived light regulation by most governments. Social media offers easy access for users to share any form of content.

- Governments, and operators of social media generally do not interfere much with the content generated on social media. The perceived laxity encourages all sorts of groups to spawn, where like-minded people can gather to discuss and act on their interests in food, politics, music and so on.

2) *Democratic platform that is open to anyone*: People can contribute their thoughts and opinions on any issue that is contentious. All inclusive nature of social media means that no one should be excluded as long as one is able to express their views.

- No age, gender or racial barrier for participants in social media.
- Malala Yousafzai and her campaign for Afghan girls to be given access to schooling.

3) *Free speech in social media is a possible means to bring about positive change* : An arena for like-minded people to exchange views, affirm their solidarity and maybe change the system for the better. E.g. the Arab Spring or the aftermath of the flawed 2009 Iranian election which was a tool used to exercise their right to be free from oppression and bring democracy to the people.

7. Consider the view that young people today are too indifferent to care about making a difference.

Claim

Young people today do not show enough concern or are apathetic towards making a difference or making a change in their society.

Belief

- Young people have the capacity (energy and time) and are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to contribute to society through participation in social causes/advocacy.

Assumptions

- They are not bothered to make a change/difference because the youths of today are too caught up with external commitments like CCAs, supplementary classes, etc.
- Moreover, young people are not motivated to make a change because there are more distractions in modern society (ie: television, movies, internet, social media) as compared to the past.
- Young people are too self-centered and inward-looking to be interested/care about the community around them.

Contrasting Pairs

- Idealism vs Pragmatism
- Change vs Continuity
- Tradition vs Modernity

Requirements to Pass

1. Show Appreciation of Keywords

Candidates must be able to address the key words and value terms, particularly the claim that young people are “too indifferent” to care about contemporary issues/causes.

2. Takes a stand

Scripts show the extent to which young people are nonchalant in wanting to make a difference.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Able to critically evaluate the extent in which young people in modern societies (not just in Singapore) are too indifferent to care about making a difference. Able to provide a broad definition of the term ‘making a difference’ - not just about helping the underprivileged, but pushing for political, social, economic changes.
2. Able to substantiate arguments with current examples of young people who are charting ways to change the lives of others who need assistance/underprivileged.
3. Be specific, accurate and precise when discussing about the different fractions of youths (ie: teenagers, young working adults, etc) who partake in social/charity work around the world, and not focus solely on pupils who are still schooling (ie: secondary/tertiary institutions).
4. Able to adopt a more global approach

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Descriptive scripts, especially those that list a range of activities that young people do to contribute to society.

2. Narrow scope of arguments and examples - focusing only on Singapore and Values-In-Action (VIA) programmes or Service Learning Programmes (SLP/OSLP)

Possible Areas for Discussion

Yes, young people are too apathetic in making a difference to society:

1) Young people are so caught up with their academic pursuits and personal lives to bother about making a difference to the society.

In most contemporary societies, many young people are so caught up with their academic pursuits and personal lives to bother about making a difference to themselves and their community. In product-driven / goal-oriented countries like China, Japan and South Korea, the intense desire to excel in one's studies has resulted in an overwhelming demand for tuition centres and enrichment classes. In Singapore, a similar trend is also evident as most enrichment centres now cater to children as young as 8 months old (ie: MindChamps, Leap Schoolhouse, etc). With a plethora of private learning institutes and supplementary lessons to choose from, it is no wonder that the youths of today are simply too nonchalant to concern themselves with meaningful activities (like volunteering, championing for change, etc).

2) The improved quality of life and sustained economic stability has led to an increased sense of complacency amongst youths. Thus they are too indifferent to care about making a difference.

Improved quality of life and sustained economic stability has led to an increased sense of complacency amongst youths (that typically reside in developed / affluent countries). The term, 'strawberry generation' reinforces the common perception (or popular belief) that youths are now getting too accustomed to their comfortable and sheltered lifestyles, that they lack the tenacity and fervour to achieve greater things in life.

3) Further evidence to show that youths are less bothered to make a difference or concern themselves with current affairs/politics.

In 2011 *The New Paper* published worrying statistics which indicated that 2 in 5 Singaporeans (aged between 21 and 35) would not bother to vote if the process was not mandatory. Vikram Nair believes that young people are politically apathetic and display a general lack of interest in making a difference (to the lives of others), because many teens deem socio-political issues to be boring and irrelevant to their lives.

4) Other factors that prevent young people from making a difference lies in the failure of governments or those in power to provide sufficient political, economic and social support to youth (i.e. education, homes, employment opportunities).

- civil war, poverty and underdevelopment, oppressive governments that prevent young people from having access to their basic rights and not having the opportunities to fulfill their potential.

Counter: However, there are also cases of promising youths who demonstrate the desire to make a difference in their society:

1) Willingness to put their young lives at risk to champion and fight for fundamental rights/to challenge oppressive governments or authority, thereby pushing for institutionalising change/shifts in society.

Example 1: In the case of Malala Yousafzai, she campaigned for the rights of women to be educated in Pakistan (Swat valley), at a time when the Islamic Militant organisation (Taliban) was

banning young girls from receiving formalised education in schools. She was shot by the Taliban but survived the assassination attempt. Her courage at standing up for what she believed in, won the admiration and respect of different individuals around the world. Speech delivered in the UN calling for worldwide access to education.

2) Pushing for alternative causes or causes that are still being viewed as a social stigma/taking risks to change or break tradition or conventions - that society views as deviant or controversial.

Example 2: Tom Daley has also made headlines recently by being one of the youngest Olympic divers to openly declare his sexual orientation on national television. Although, detractors assert that Daley is only doing this as a publicity stunt to garner more fame and media attention. The young olympic diver has since published an autobiography which exposes the deep-seated and underlying homophobia that is still prevalent within the sporting profession. Daley's unyielding desire to provide a voice for aspiring LGBT athletes, won him the support and adoration of even more fans.

8. The answer to environmental damage is not to be found in technology but by leading a simpler life. How far do you agree?

Claim

- Damage to the environment is a direct result of technological progress linked with human greed and a materialistic existence.
- The only way to respond to such greed is to forego the 'pleasures' of the modern world.

Belief

- In order to counteract environmental damage, we now need to turn away from a materialistic existence and revert to the lifestyle of our ancestors. This would be considered more 'environmentally friendly'.
- Technology brings nothing but harm to our environment and it is essential to address this to halt the damage incurred.

Assumptions

- That man's progress can be halted/slowed/reversed
- That people can find satisfaction in 'the simpler life'
- That 'the simple life' is an easily defined concept and is a life that is easy to revert to.
- That technology does nothing to address environmental damage

Contrasting Pairs

Idealism/Pragmatism
Change/Continuity

Requirements to Pass

1. Shows an Appreciation of Keywords

- Ability to identify key concept terms in the question ("answer", "found", "simpler life", "environmental damage"). In particular, students should be cognizant of the fact that the question is suggesting an absolute answer rather than a factor contributing to an

<p>improved environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should construct a response that <i>effectively explores the concept of environmental damage and its causes</i> without presenting lengthy lists and descriptions of cause/effect based examples. In particular, it is important to distinguish between “damage” and “problems”. Students should not trivialise the extent of damage. Students must be able to express what they would expect from a ‘simpler life’ rather than assume that we share a common understanding. <p>2. Able to make a comparison between ‘technology’ and ‘simpler life’ and take a stand. Need to show a conceptual understanding of a “simpler life”.</p>
<p>Characteristics of Good Scripts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope of environmental damage would be explored. At least one specific example or area of environmental damage should be considered.. Better scripts will show clear understanding of the core concepts and the debate between a somewhat idealised view of living a more simple existence with the ‘hard fact’ that modern life provides certain things that are extremely difficult to relinquish. Therefore, the answer should evaluate the various pros and cons of taking such a view of human existence. Ultimately, better scripts are likely to reach ‘compromise’ conclusions that are able to give weight to both a modern, technologically driven world and the ability for people to reflect on the true (rather than imagined) ‘essentials’ in life. Spirited defence of extreme arguments (such as “we should go back to the life of our grandparents etc etc”) <i>can</i> be credited if the reasoning is clear and well-substantiated (e.g. by considering the trend in many countries, especially the US, for individuals to go “offline” and opt out of mainstream society - more extreme examples like survivalists and doomsday preppers could be considered here too but would require very sophisticated reasoning). Strong, meaningful and authentic examples of a range of environmental issues leading to significant damage should be considered along with supporting evaluation of how this would differ if a ‘simpler life’ were adopted. Some sense of ‘philosophy’ would help the student to discern priorities in human society and therefore consider what is to be gained/lost by adopting a simpler approach to life.
<p>Characteristics of Weak Scripts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As with most essays, lengthy ‘rants’ about the doom and gloom of development and technology with little or no sophistication should not be rewarded. Similarly, rose-tinted descriptions of the wonders of the modern world should be regarded with deepest suspicion. - These scripts are likely to carry little or no real evidence and substantiation and may dwell in the depths of the speculative zone. - Students who are unable to be specific about the nature of environmental damage, the ways in which we have attempted to address such threats and an evaluation of the success of these efforts should not pass well if at all. - Students who only focus upon minor or trivial environmental issues rather than genuine and significant ones should similarly receive little credit as they are not addressing the wording of the question.
<p>Possible Areas for Discussion</p>

Agree - The answer to envt damage is NOT to be found in technology but by leading a simpler life.

1) It is not pragmatic to rely on technology because of the cost/impact of technology. The same technology cannot be evenly distributed to resolve damage occurring at a global scale.

- The reality of a more complex, commercially and technologically driven world has resulted in a draining of natural resources. The use of one form of technology to solve a problem often creates problems of its own. Depending on technology to resolve or alleviate environmental damage might incur the use of already depleting resources i.e. dependence on more energy supplies to fuel/power technology. Going back to simpler means to mitigate environmental damage would be a wiser and cost-effective measure, particularly for developing countries.

2) The damage done is so severe that technology cannot solve it and a simpler life would be more effective in dealing with environmental damage.

- Modern living is at the heart of environmental damage and degradation.
- Modern life encourages a wasteful approach to resources and suggests a 'myth' of almost limitless potential. Resources are finite and spread unevenly across the planet and this means uneven distribution and access.

3) The solution is to address the root cause, which is our/Man's desires and needs that fuel/lead to environmental damage.

- Damage caused by overfishing/poaching (to meet growing global demands for exotic foods), global warming, air and water pollution/depletion of resources (due to increasing consumerism and materialism), loss of biodiversity (due to building of cities and megapolises) point to the complexity of our demands.
- increasing awareness of the need for sustainability and changing the habits of people i.e. encouraging paperless offices, taking public transportation, using second hand clothing and adopting a way of life that is altogether less concerned with consumption is the only way forward.

Disagree - The answer to envt damage is to be found in technology but NOT in leading a simpler life/a balanced approach is needed to solve envt damage i.e. technology + a simpler life.

1) The solution lies in the individual in taking ownership of the environment.

- The root cause of environmental damage is society's desires/greed/wasteful behaviour (modern demands + development). If the individual does not wish to play an active role in resolving the damage, no amount of technology or alternative simpler lifestyles will work.
- technology can be used thoughtfully and responsibly - we do not have to resort to adopting a 'simpler life' if we are not careless or wasteful when using technology. Controlling the use of technology is vital in ensuring that we alleviate the damage or reduce further harm to the environment - after all, technology is a crucial aspect of modern life.

2) Both solutions in isolation are not completely effective - cannot rely on one solution over the other.

- Technology exacerbates the problem and sometimes there are no technological solutions to resolve the current crisis.
- Difficult to adopt a simple lifestyle in our complex, technologically driven world - the scale of the problem is too big and can only be alleviated or slowed down. This will take a long time, political

and individual will and resolve, and hence, a balanced approach might be more practical.

3) **A 'simpler life' does not necessarily contribute to alleviating or eliminating envt damage.**

- There are millions of people in the global population who live extremely impoverished and 'simpler' lives and yet who contribute to environmental damage such as deforestation, slash and burn agriculture etc.

4) **Getting a global response in changing lifestyles is impossible.** Hence, technology might be the most effective, immediate and accessible solution especially as the developed world would find it almost impossible to 'turn the clock back'. The answer to alleviating the effects of environmental damage could also be found/proven in green technology/cleaner forms of technology/renewable energy sources i.e. solar and wind technology. Hence, we can rely on it as the only viable and necessary option available compared to adopting the 'simpler life' which would have only a moderate (possibly minimal) impact on the already significant levels of environmental damage.

9. 'Morality is the voice of authority in disguise.' What is your view?

Claim

Beneath the surface, Ethics (consisting of rules for living arising from rival ethical systems) amounts to an anonymously concealed power structure of ordered procedures of conduct that expediently determines our lives according to whichever ideology is adopted. Appropriate views and acceptable values are therefore dictated by the people in power/authority. Put simply, Ethical concepts are merely 'tools' to be used by those in power to make the population easier to lead.

Belief

Contrary to the conventional belief in an epistemically objective and sacred moral realm of right and wrong transcending and independent of the ways of man, ethics **is** politics - a dimension of power politics determining and dictating codes of behaviour through invisible, normalizing policies and state agencies (such as schools) to mould character and conduct as these politicized power structures designate and see fit. Whereas in some societies the traditional source of that authority was the Church, it is now the State. (In the case of the authority of Church - divinely inspired ethics is its disguise);

Assumptions

Implied traditional assumption - that there is one timeless, transcendental, meta-ethical episteme - knowable to and governing all humankind; (the statement in question challenges that assumption);

Assumes a hidden agenda as opposed to openness and transparency;

Contrasting Pairs

Relativism and Absolutism

Dogmatism and Rationalism / Pragmatism

Sacred and Secular

Value Realism and Value Constructionism

Requirements to Pass

1. Demonstrate an appropriate appreciation of keywords and concepts: 'morality', 'voice of authority', 'in disguise'
2. Able to formulate a thesis and effectively articulate it in a way that demonstrates awareness of and reflects the unconventionality and complexity of the issue in question in the current climate opinion and global state of affairs;

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Demonstrates a critical and insightful appreciation of the key concepts, their complexity, and fluidity more particularly where the notion of morality is concerned;
2. Able to reflect an insightful understanding of the polarized perspectives in the statement in question; re the intelligent manipulation of people's mores by unseen mechanisms of society through which minds are moulded to adopt the desired moral outlook and practice;
3. Proceeds to present a sensible, sustained, logically consistent, substantial and balanced argument, using maturely well chosen and noteworthy reasons, examples, and counter-arguments;
4. Conclusion will need to show awareness of the open-endedness of the issue;

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Such scripts are likely to lack a full grasp of the questions set. This will include sweeping generalisations about the source(s) of morality.
2. Key words in the question, such as "disguise" are likely to be overlooked/ignored and therefore the nature of the argument will be overly simplistic
3. Scripts are likely to lack sound examples of ways in which an authoritative force could influence human behaviour and attitudes. Alternatively, some students may revert to considering 'propaganda' techniques as means of forcing people to do things without adequate discussion of the place of morality in human society.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Yes, Morality is the voice of authority in disguise.

1) Morality and Religion (Traditional Authority of Ancient Sacred Texts)

Historically, the religion of the state has been inseparable from the administration of the state. Therefore, for example, morality related to stealing and property is merely a construct of a group of people in power designed to help them maintain their economic advantage over others - students could cite numerous examples of the privileges of the church/state relationship over the lot of the common man/woman.

2) Morality and Secularism - the authority of the state

Even in secular states, there emerges a 'moral ethos'. Patterns of behaviour that are 'approved' by the state and therefore rewarded whilst other behaviour patterns are seen immediately as "immoral". In secular states, such things as a strong work ethic and lack of dependence on social welfare would be regarded as 'morally good' whilst the opposing attitude might be perceived as 'morally abhorrent'

3) Morality and Post-Modernism: Morality that is imposed on us by an ever-changing state

An area that could be considered is the concept of morality that is not fixed (based on tenets and scripture etc.) but which is more flexible. Here, there is a sense that yesterday's morality is not necessarily the same as today's. This can be a more problematic concept for students and is likely to be seen in fewer scripts. In such cases, the thesis would rely on the idea that we are 'unaware' of the morality imposed upon us by an ever-changing state.

Morality is not the voice of authority in disguise

1) Morality and Transcendental Perspectives

By far the easiest position to argue but one that also has problems as it is likely to produce very partisan and 'absolutist' arguments

2) Morality and Biology via Evolutionary Psychology

3) Morality as Rational Pragmatism and necessary aid to human survival

- Authority is altruistic and informed by rational deliberation and empirical verification.
- seen in environmental based ethics, engineering ethics and other rational based ethics such as medical ethics

10. How far do you agree that sport divides the world rather than unites?

Claim

Sport can drive a wedge between nations and communities.

Belief

That sport is a competition with a zero sum outcome.

Assumptions

Sport is linked to communal identity (national, within classes etc)

Sport is an extension of traditional warfare where it enables fighting to take place in a more civilised manner.

Contrasting Pairs

Idealism / Pragmatism

Victory / Defeat

Requirements to Pass

1. Show an understanding of what 'divide' means - creates segregation, causes tension
2. Compare whether sport divides or unites.
3. Evaluate the extent to which it causes a divide and take a stand.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Shows that the impact is on a global level rather than on a national level.
2. Able to evaluate the extent to which sport unites or divides at various levels throughout the essay.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Makes little or no reference as to how sport can either divide or unite and the focus is only on the the purpose and value of sport.
2. Discussion is merely an exposition of how sport unites or divides and does not address the value term “rather than” to show an evaluation of the issue.
3. Discussion is limited to specific sport and focuses on the unity / division it brings to the fans of that particular sport without considering it at a national or global level.
4. Focused on sport personalities at the expense of other attributes of sport that are relevant to the question.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Sport divides the world rather than unites

1) *Sport is identified with some form of affiliation* : When one plays under the national banner, i.e sanctioned by the government or its agencies. And by that token, is already a form of division. And when winners are crowned, losers by default walk away with much less or nothing.

- At international tournaments like the World Cup or the Olympics, all participants compete under their national flag, there are no independent competitors. A loss or a win is associated with the nation.

2) *At another level sport also accentuates the class divide at the global level* : polo or yachting are associated with the elite, whereas soccer is associated with the masses.

- Expensive club membership for golf (eg SICC) or membership in the Polo Club.

3) *Violence, on and off the pitch, is but a reflection of emotions stemming from a sense of division* : When supporters and fans run are unable to accept the results of the matches and riot after the matches.

- The 2012 Port Said stadium riot in Egypt following a game between Al Masry and Al Ahly.

4) *Used as a tool to express political sentiments etc.*

- The boycotts of the Moscow and Los Angeles Olympics Games.

5) *As an extension / proxy of struggles in another context.*

- The attempted disruption to the 2008 Olympic torch relay when it was hosted by Beijing; The Munich massacre.

6) *As a sanitised version of battlefield warfare.*

- Nationalist pride in rugby matches between Scotland and England or England against Wales.

Sport unites the world rather than divides it

1) *Granted that national pride may be involved, the spirit of sportsmanship transcends such petty distraction to focus purely on the human endeavour to overcome his own physical limitations.*

- The Olympics Games as an expression of human attempts to overcome some of their own physical limitations.

2) *The act of coming together to compete gives everyone a chance to focus on friendly rivalry played according to an agreed set of prescribed rules that all abide by.* There may be national variations in the rules a sport abides by. At the international level, all national variations are set aside for a common set of rules.

3) *Used as a balm to heal the wounds inflicted by history or as an expression of solidarity across divide.*

- Tokyo Olympics 1964 ; the post apartheid multiracial South African rugby team; Mixed team 2014 Youth Olympics

11. Is democracy in crisis?

Claim

- The belief in democracy as a political system is being destabilised.
- The confidence in democracy as an effective and desirable political system is not under threat.

Belief

- Democracy is the best of all political systems and is expected to be the desired political system.

Assumptions

- Democracy is only currently being threatened whereas it has at least in the past few decades been viewed as a stable and uncontested system.
- The problems with democracy that people have identified have only recently been surfaced / are recent developments.
- The very survival of democracy is being threatened.

Contrasting Pairs

Idealism/Reality

Requirements to Pass

1. Appreciation of Keywords

- Students must define democracy as a political system accurately.
- Students must be able to state various reasons that have resulted in the destabilisation of democracy as a political system.
- A clear sense and extent is shown.

Scripts are able to show a nuanced understanding of what it means to be 'in crisis' - threatened, being challenged, lost faith/confidence in, and does not merely define as 'problems'.

2. Show Balance

Scripts must not adopt an unobjective stance and merely list points that answer the question i.e that fail to consider how democracy is NOT in crisis.

Scripts must show a clear sense of the extent to which it is in crisis.

Characteristics of Good Scripts

1. Scripts show a good range of worldwide examples.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

1. Scripts tend to merely list the different problems with democracy as a political system without being able to give reasons/explain how these problems have arisen.
2. Scripts tend to be example-driven.
3. Scripts may simply focus on Singapore and the loss of faith that some Singaporeans may have in its political system.

Possible Areas for Discussion

'Is In Crisis'

- 1) Tyranny of the Masses

The belief in democracy as a fair political system is being questioned due to the case of decisions being made by a majority which could discriminate against the minority/place minority groups/individual in positions of disadvantage.

2) It is the first time since the cold war that democratic constitutionalism has stopped. Eg. Military coup in Thailand, it's unclear whether the generals will allow democracy to take root in Burma, several democratic institutions are unstable like Zimbabwe, Mali.

3) The faith in democracy as an effective political system has also been diminished as democracies when underpinned by populist policies which merely serve the interests of specific groups without solving long-term problems
Eg. Populist policies in Thailand result in the people perceiving these policies as merely short-term solutions to public needs

4) Disillusionment with democracy due to deadlock

Democracy is no longer perceived as an effective political system as decision-making processes are seen as slow and cumbersome. The presence of too many opinions have created inefficient governments where important and necessary decisions/policies take too long to be decided upon, resulting in a failure to make decisions/implement policies.
Eg. Obamacare

5) Distrust in the government

People increasingly distrust democratic politics because promises may be unfulfilled. Eg. Claims to protect the freedom of citizens often end up in increasing the state's powers of surveillance.

'Not In Crisis'

1) This discontent with democracy is not really a sign that it is in crisis. Instead, one may view this discontent as necessary for improving current democratic practices.

2) Some argue that the overthrow of authoritarian regimes during the Arab Spring are indicative of how the desire for democratic institutions still prevails and is even gaining strength. The prevailing belief in elections as the only source of legitimate government affirms the power of self-governance and the central principle of democracy.

12. 'Optimism without realism is just a pleasant delusion.' Discuss.

Claim

Having an irrationally positive, hopeful, wishful thinking, desert island, sugar-candy mindset about the course and outcome of situations and events without factoring in the contingency and complexity of our individual and collective current and future challenges and crises facilitated and reinforced by self-deception and social myths to make life more congenial and tolerable is self-serving stupidity.

It is wishful thinking to be able to have an optimistic, idealistic worldview without having some awareness of the realities of life.

Belief

There is no point in believing and hoping for the best possible outcome for any serious situation without taking stock of the world as it really is - its randomness and raw reality - nature, including human nature as 'red in tooth and claw.' Having agentive ameliorative aspirations for optimizing the world unchecked by the reality on the ground is fairy-tale fiction;
As powerfully illustrated and argued in Nassim Taleb's deservedly celebrated book 'The Black Swan' - his metaphor for unpredictable, seemingly highly improbable, massive impact events like 9/11;

Assumptions

- Assumes we can know and differentiate between appearance and reality;
- Assumes that optimism is necessarily irrational if it does not take cognizance of the characteristics of the actual world;
- Assumes that daring to dream of transforming the world for the better, regardless, amounts to wishful thinking;
- assumes that with the advancement of science and technology we have greater power and control over our lives, people of the world at large; and our planet;

Contrasting Pairs

Idealism / Utopianism and Realism; Dream on / Get Real
Contingency and Necessity
Actuality and Possibility
Critical thinking and wishful thinking

Requirements to Pass

1. Show an acceptable degree of understanding of the issue in question arising from a basic sense of the meaning of the key words and concepts - 'optimism' 'delusion' 'realism';
2. Evaluate the degree to which we need either optimism or realism and formulate a thesis;

Characteristics of Good Scripts

Good scripts will formulate an effective thesis and proceed to defend it on the basis of intellectually mature, reasoned and balanced argument; and at the same time demonstrate keen awareness that there are many levels and degrees of the concept of optimism - from the 'fairy-tale' infantile forms, to those characterized by a more sophisticated, sapiential / philosophical outlook and temperament that draws on knowledge and insight from world history; world literature; philosophy and science; and all the better if it includes new branches of learning that actually specialize in the study of unpredictability, randomness, uncertainty; as well as studies giving us an insight into likely future developments and outcomes.

Characteristics of Weak Scripts

Weak scripts will be more one-dimensional, less aware of the complexity and contradictions characteristic of the human condition through whichever lens it is considered, less measured, more simplistic in approach, treatment and scope; perhaps overly reliant on the personal and the anecdotal with examples of a less wide-ranging, superficial and parochial nature.

Possible Areas for Discussion

Optimism without realism is just a pleasant delusion.

- 1) Utopian World Politics (Francis Fukuyama's End of History)
- 2) A world of democracy, equality, justice and human rights
- 3) A world free from sickness and disease; safer and healthier environment.
- 4) Technology (the High-Tech Fix) as the panacea for all our problems

Counter: need to factor in reality checks such as

- 1) New Global Conflicts post Cold War (given the nature of man, contra Fukuyama) as represented in Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations - already evident post 9/11;
- 2) Morally better world? New and deadlier ways to be mean and nasty; brutal and destructive;
- 3) Technology - as with any Science - is a double-edged sword;
- 4) New challenges from extreme weather to new, the threat of global epidemics and deadlier strains of disease resistant to current drugs.