

Nanyang Junior College
JC 2 Preliminary Examination 2014
Answer Scheme

1. What does the writer mean by the “robotic moment” (line 10)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

[2010, Q3, Q4]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|---|---|
| the next stage, she says, is to accept machines as companions. Soon, robots will be employed in " caring " roles, entertaining children or nursing the elderly, filling gaps in the social fabric left where the threads of community have frayed . (lines 10-13) | <p>The robotic moment is that phase/time in mankind's history</p> <p>(A) when humans resort to/see machines as friends.</p> <p>(B) Before long/A little while later/Shortly after that, machines will also be relied upon to carry out the function of looking after children and the elderly</p> <p>(C) because our existing ties/relationships between people are not so strong/weakened.</p> <p>1-2 pts= 1m 3 pts = 2m</p> |

2. Explain how ‘The Shallows’ and ‘The Net Delusion’ are examples of “cyber-sceptic literature.” (line 28) . **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|---|---|
| ...Nicholas Carr's The Shallows, warning that our cognitive faculties decay as we skim distractedly from one webpage to another, and Evgeny Morozov's The Net Delusion, which rebuts fashionable notions of the web as a tool for advancing democracy. (lines 29 -31) | <p>The examples highlight the cynicism/doubts about the benefits of the internet.</p> <p>(A) The Shallows does so by illustrating the deterioration of our critical thinking abilities over time because we are easily side-tracked from page to page and therefore speed-read instead of processing information and analysing what we read on the Internet.</p> <p>(B) Similarly, The Net Delusion, debunks the popular belief that the Internet promotes freedom of expression.</p> |

3. Why does the author make reference to the religious term ‘evangelists’ in line 33. [2]

| From the Text | Inferred |
|--|--|
| These are correctives to what Turkle calls the "heroic narrative" of the internet – the effusions of digital evangelists who confuse technological advance with human progress . (lines 31 – 33) | <p>A) The author makes reference to the religious term to highlight/emphasise that just as evangelists are over-zealous in spreading their religious beliefs and converting people to their beliefs, [1] B) similarly, digital evangelists are over-zealous about spreading their belief that the wonders of technology pave the way for mankind’s future development/success [1] ...</p> <p>NB: The answer should include the attitude of the author, which is, disapproval of the digital evangelists (example: “over-zealous”)</p> <p>A + B = 2m A or B = 0m</p> |

4. Why is the word “alone” (line 39) in inverted commas? [1]

| From the Text | Inferred |
|---|---|
| Scientists developing the latest robots report feelings of pseudo-parental attachment. They hate leaving the machines "alone" in empty laboratories at night. (lines 38-39) | <p>Feelings of loneliness are the preserves of living creatures, and yet, an inanimate object is described as harbouring such feelings.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Machines cannot feel this sense of being on their own, but it is humans who have projected human emotions onto machines.</p> |

5. **Using your own words as far as possible**, explain the irony which the author describes in lines 58-61. [2]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|--|--|
| We start with the illusion that technology will give us control and end up controlled . We get Blackberries to better manage our email, but find ourselves cradling them in bed first thing in the morning and last thing at night. (lines 58-61) | <p>(A) We believe that we are in charge of technological devices, [1]</p> <p>(B) but they end up causing us to be over-reliant on them/ but they end up causing us to lose the ability to take charge of our lives as we become over-reliant on them. [1]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(A) We expect to be able to harness technological devices for our benefit,</p> <p>(B) but we end up being enslaved by them because we become over-reliant on them and lose the ability to take charge of our lives.</p> |

6. Why are teenagers 'morbidly afraid of the telephone' (line 64)? **Use your own words as far as possible**. [2]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|--|---|
| They find its immediacy and unpredictability upsetting. A phone call in "real time" requires spontaneous performance; it is "live". Text messages and Facebook posts can be honed to create the illusion of spontaneity. (lines 64-66) | <p>Teenagers are morbidly afraid of the telephone because</p> <p>(A) the need to give almost instant responses [1]</p> <p>(B) and the uncertainty of not being able to craft their responses / uncertainty of how the conversation would proceed makes telephone conversations an ordeal [1].</p> |

7 Explain why the author uses the word “lurking” (line 72).

[1]

| From the Text | Inferred |
|--|---|
| Teenagers perform on the digital stage , suppressing anxiety about who is lurking in the audience. (lines 71-72) | <p>The author uses the word ‘lurking’ to emphasise the danger of exposing one’s private details in the web to all, including strangers with perverse/sinister intentions who are hidden from sight.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The author uses the word ‘lurking’ to indicate that there are sinister/perverse individuals hidden from sight who have easy access to information in the web. Therefore, it is dangerous for teenagers to expose their personal details online.</p> |

8. ‘... calls can be diverted, emails blocked, Facebook friends “unfriended”’ (L74-L75).

Why are these referred to as symptoms of “emerging roboticism” (line 75)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|---|--|
| From that anxiety flows ever greater reliance on technology to mediate human relations. Human beings can be needy, capricious, threatening, but at least calls can be diverted, emails blocked, Facebook friends "unfriended". (lines 72-75) | <p>They are symptoms of emerging roboticism because</p> <p>(A) they reflect / manifest people’s increasing dependence on technology</p> <p>(B) to handle social interactions, which is seen as a difficulty to be dealt with</p> |

9. What does the phrase ‘gloss over’ in line 80 suggest about Turkle’s research? [1]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|--|---|
| She tends to revel in the more neurotic cases among her subjects and to gloss over happier experiences of technology (lines 79-80) | It suggests that the research is biased as it dismisses the positive effects of technology. |

10). What point is the author making in the last sentence (lines 84-86)?

Use your own words as far as possible.

[2]

| From the Text | Paraphrased |
|--|---|
| It is the decision we make to put our faith in technology as the antidote to human frailty, when acceptance of frailty is what makes us human. (lines 84-86) | (A) We believe technology will help us overcome our human weakness and be perfect (B) when we should actually be embracing our human weakness as imperfection is what makes us human OR (A) We have the mistaken notion that technology will make us perfect human beings (B) when it is the imperfections that make us humans. |

11. Using material from paragraphs 3-6 of the passage (lines 16-55), summarise what the author has to say about the impact of the reliance on technology on man's behaviour. 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]

The reliance on technology

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | can humanity transform the way it communicates (lines 18-19) | has changed the way humans interact/connect with one another (can lift 'human') |
| 2 | without altering, at some level, what it means to be human?(line19) | so much so that it changes our human identity/ the essence of being human. (can lift 'human') |
| 3 | technology is doing peculiar things to us (line 20) | Technology has a strange/odd impact on us |
| 4 | The average American teenager sends thousands of text messages every month (lines 20-21) | because it results in young people transmitting a deluge/profusion/hundreds and hundreds/voluminous number of text messages (can lift 'send' and 'text messages') |
| 5 | spends hours each day on Instant Messenger, MySpace and Facebook. (lines 21-22) | and devoting a lot of time on social media. |
| 6 | Adults are matching the pace of digitisation set by their children (lines 23-24) | Adults are keeping stride with their children in the use of social/digital/online media |
| 7 | eking out proxy lives on blogs, in multi-player games and chatrooms. Millions of us appear to find simulations of life more alluring than life. (lines 24-25) | by leading virtual lives that they find more appealing/attractive than real life. |
| 8 | We are training ourselves to fear a world unmediated by computers. (line 26) | People are becoming wary of the real world /a world without technology/computers (Can lift 'computers') |
| 9 | our cognitive faculties decay as we skim distractedly from one webpage to another (lines 29-30) | Our critical thinking skills/abilities will atrophy/deteriorate as a result of a lack of focus/in-depth processing/study/analysis of information. |
| 10 | rebutts fashionable notions of the web as a tool for advancing democracy. (line 31) | The internet does not encourage free speech/freedom of expression/ does not provide opportunities to voice opinions. |
| 11 | digital evangelists who confuse technological advance with human progress. (lines 32-33) | Over-enthusiastic/over-zealous proponents of technology have mistaken developments in technology to be the equivalent of/the same as the development of mankind/betterment of the human race (can lift 'human') |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 12 | Universally, a bond is formed. (line 36) | Humans develop a close-knit relationship/tie with machines/robots. (can lift 'robots') |
| 13 | More sophisticated models provoke deep emotional connections. (lines 37-38) | The more complex the machine, the more intense the relationship between man and robots/machines becomes. |
| 14 | But people have always had an extraordinary capacity to project human traits on to inanimate objects. (lines 41-42) | Humans have often given inanimate objects/non-living things human characteristics/qualities (Can lift 'inanimate objects') |
| 15 | start projecting consciousness (line 43) OR Instead of exposing the program's weaknesses, everyone pandered to its strengths. They wanted the computer to be lifelike and manipulated the test to help it succeed. (lines 48-49) OR Engineers now know that the machine only needs to act clever and people will play along.(lines 54-55) | to make them seem like real humans with human-like sentiments |
| 16 | difference between playing with a doll and playing with a robot is the difference between pretence and belief(lines 43-44) | because we are convinced that they are alive. |
| 17 | Even when a replica behaves implausibly, we compensate, filling the gaps in its repertoire with imagined feelings....'the Eliza effect'(lines 44-46) | When inanimate objects do not perform/react as expected, humans would make up for it by ascribing the expected human reactions/sentiments. |
| 18 | ... how close we are to putting this effect into mass production.(line 50) | This trend of giving machines human-like reactions/sentiments is the basis of manufacturing robots with human-like qualities on a large scale. |

Allocation of Marks:

1-2 points = 1m

3-4 points = 2m

5-6 points = 3m

7-8 points = 4m

9-10 points = 5m

11-12 points = 6m

13-14 points = 7m

15-18 points = 8m

AQ:

12. In this article, Rafael Behr describes some issues around the subject of our use of technology. How applicable do you find his observations to yourself and your own society? [10]

| | | Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--------|--|------------|--|
| Para 2 | <p><u>We outsource the role of caregiving to robots</u></p> <p>the next stage, she says, is to accept machines as companions. Soon, robots will be employed in "caring" roles, entertaining children or nursing the elderly, filling gaps in the social fabric left where the threads of community have frayed</p> | | <p>Not applicable in Singapore – pet robots are not replacements for real relationships as children still care for elderly parents – HDB 3-Generation flats popular.</p> <p>Still a conservative society where we place more emphasis on human bonds than robots. Even when children are unable to care for their parents directly, there is a greater likelihood to turn to domestic helpers instead of robots. This is facilitated by the relatively low cost of employing caregivers.</p> <p>Costs as little \$450/month to hire a full time live-in maid [excluding levy] (expatliving.sg)</p> |
| Para 3 | <p><u>Both adults and children alike are drawn into the virtual world and spend an excessive amount of time on such sites, so much so that they prefer the simulations of life to real</u></p> | | <p>Though Singaporeans, old and young, do spend a significant of time on virtual platforms (74% use social media regularly & social media penetration rate is 62.2.%.), the highly pragmatic</p> |

| | | Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--------|--|--|--|
| | <p><u>life</u></p> <p>The average American teenager sends thousands of text messages every month, and spends hours each day on Instant Messenger, MySpace and Facebook.</p> <p>Adults are matching the pace of digitisation set by their children</p> | <p>Singaporeans also spend a significant amount of time on virtual platforms. 74% use social media regularly. Social media penetration rate is 62.2.%. (Source:http://infographics.sg/?portfolio=social-media-usage-statistics-for-singapore-static-infographic)</p> | <p>nature of our society prevents us from being so immersed in the virtual world that we prefer it to the real world. Given that online platforms have become the main mode of communication today, we use it because of its convenience but not to the point of being over-reliant on it.</p> |
| Para 5 | <p><u>People have always had the tendency to ascribe human qualities onto inanimate objects</u></p> <p>But people have always had an extraordinary capacity to project human traits on to inanimate objects. It only takes a bit of interactivity before our minds go a step further and start projecting consciousness.</p> | <p>Singaporeans have shown affinity to electronic/digital pets such as the Tamagotchi (Japanese handheld digital pet) and Neopets (virtual pet website). The trend to replace the companionship of real-life pets with digital ones reflects our over-reliance on technology.</p> | |

| | | Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--------|--|---|---|
| Para 6 | <p><u>We use machines as companions for the elderly</u></p> <p>Pet robots are already available to comfort lonely residents of care homes. Mechanical nurses are on the way...</p> | <p>This trend of relying on pet robots to motivate the elderly to engage in therapy exercise is evident in Singapore through the introduction of ERIC (Elderly Rehabilitative Interactive Companion) invented by Singapore Poly students [Source: The Straits Times, 14 Jan 2013]</p> | |
| Para 7 | <p><u>Technology has led to addiction</u></p> <p>The second half of the book deals with our addiction to the web; more familiar terrain, but equally disquieting. Turkle has interviewed people of all ages and from a wide range of social backgrounds and finds identical patterns of compulsive behaviour. We start with the illusion that technology will give us control and end up controlled.</p> | <p>Young people in Singapore display similar patterns of compulsive behaviour, especially with regard to gaming addiction. It is not unusual for gamers to spend huge amounts of time to try and get better in the online games they play. Nearly 9% of young people in Singapore are 'pathological gamers' – addicts who spend 37.5 hours a week playing video games (Source: The Straits Times, 13 Dec 2010). Excessive gaming tends to take up a large portion of the gamer's time, thereby affecting their health, hygiene, commitments (e.g. school work) and relationships (Source: Media Literacy Council).</p> <p>The presence of cyberwellness programmes in Singapore points to the need to address the overreliance on</p> | <p>Singaporeans use apps and technological tools as a means to gain control over their lives and not as a crutch. Savvy tech and mobile users in Singapore have the ability to leverage on what these tools have to offer to organise their lives. Examples of these apps include diet and exercise trackers e.g. travel apps such as gothereSG, mapmyride/ mapmyride, strava; food apps i.e. chope, hungrygowhere. There are even apps that allow people to control their home appliances more efficiently i.e. Control4 MyHome App. This shows that we use technology to improve our lives and we are not controlled by it.</p> |

| | | Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--------|--|---|----------------|
| | | technology that has led to addiction (Source: TOUCH Cyber Wellness) | |
| Para 7 | <p><u>Teenagers are afraid of spontaneous communication because of its immediacy and unpredictability; and prefer the security of planned responses</u></p> <p>Turkle interviews teenagers who are morbidly afraid of the telephone. They find its immediacy and unpredictability upsetting. A phone call in "real time" requires spontaneous performance; it is "live". Text messages and Facebook posts can be honed to create the illusion of spontaneity</p> | <p>This anxiety over real-time communication can be seen through the fact that more than 40% of 600 university and polytechnic students in Singapore spend more than four hours a day glued to their mobile phones in a country where there are now 1.4 mobile phones per person, most of them web-enabled. This dependence on their mobile phones has also arguably resulted in 88 % of them preferring to communicate through technology over face-to-face chats.</p> | |
| Para 8 | <p><u>Technology encourages users to share every detail of their lives</u></p> <p>This digital generation also expects everything to be recorded. In any social situation, there are phones with cameras that relay personal</p> | <p>Local online personalities such as Xiaxue, Dawn Yang and Hong Qiu Ting embody such traits narcissistic traits. Xiaxue for instance uses her personal blog to highlight triumphs in her life such as her wedding and the birth of her son. She also posts her 'humiliations' online such</p> | |

| | | Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| | triumphs and humiliations straight to the web | as the hate comments people posted on her Facebook page. She even turned her humiliation into a triumph by exposing the personal information of the netizens who posted derogatory comments about her supporting the PAP. | |

