

1. What does the word “rousing” (line 1) tell you about the purpose of the call? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
“Be different! Be bold!” The rousing call to individualism is trumpeted everywhere today, from advertisements in the media to lessons in schools and even in dating advice. However, our current obsession with standing out from the crowd needs to be reined in. Conformity has gained a bad reputation and unfairly so.	The purpose of the call is to galvanise/inspire/spur/fire the enthusiasm of people to be unique.

2. Why might the author refer to prehistoric man in paragraphs 1 and 2? [1]

In the days of the Caveman, conformity may have been of survival value when interacting with other tribes of cavemen: by acting as the group did, the individual may be seen in a better light and therefore be accepted by the group, bringing benefits such as protection, food, and companionship. ...When the cavemen congregated in their groups, they would have had group norms similar to some of the laws we have today such as not to murder or even to pilfer.	She does so to show/emphasise a) how deeply embedded/entrenched conformity is in human beings.  OR b) that conformity has been essential to our continued survival//has played a crucial role in our continued survival.

3. In paragraph 4, explain how increasing diversity in behaviour encourages conformity. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

the more diversity there is in behaviour, the more likely people are to copy the majority as the increasing number of available options creates more uncertainty – and in such circumstances, a majority sends an even stronger signal as to the right thing to do.	It encourages conformity because a) people are less sure about the correct course of action to take,  b) and when a larger part of the population/most people this course,  (c) it indicates more clearly//shows more evidently that it is correct.  1point = 1 mark 2-3 points = 2 marks

4. Explain the author's use of the phrase 'of course' in line 34. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

**- Vocabulary Inferential**

From the passage	Suggested answer
Of course, mindlessly following the herd is not something to be encouraged but resisting conformity by being different for the sake of being different can have disastrous consequences, which is why the rise in individualism today is a worrying trend.	The author uses the phrase a) to qualify/ concede to something that is obvious [1]  b) that conforming without thinking is not something good/to be promoted/advocated [1]

Q5: Summary

**Summary (From Passage 1):**

Using material from paragraphs 5-7, summarise what the author has to say about **the harm individualism brings to the individual and to society**, and **the benefits of focusing on the group rather than on individuals**.

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.**

Individualism may be harmful because ...

	From the Passage	Suggested Paraphrasing
1	The idea of individualism should be seen along a continuum of sorts - and perhaps we have moved a little too far to the extreme...  OR  Our individualism has run amok.	Today it is uncontrolled/gone beyond what is reasonable
2	... that may inflate our narcissism as a society	it may swell people's/society's excessive self-love.
3	We praise our children for being unique...	Parents laud/commend their children's individuality,
4	... and create a sense of expectation that they can rise above the masses...	making them think/assume they can outclass/better others.
5	...and "be noticed" because of their uniqueness.	and stand out for being different
6	But they have all the same fears, sorrows, joys, and pains as everyone else...	But the children's emotional experiences are just like others'
7	... and the chance of rising above the masses is miniscule in probability	and the likelihood/probability of bettering/outdoing others is minute/slim/impossible

	OR  we dangle a carrot that they can rarely reach.	
8	The “you are special” message does not match their reality...	as they are not actually unique
9	... and striving sets in.	so they end up struggling// trying too hard
10	We want to [...] rise above the others in our uniqueness or individuality regardless of the means of getting there: ...	People want to be special no matter how//by whatever method//whatever it takes // OR People will do anything to be special
11	...attention from the masses validates our arrival.	as it is public acknowledgement/recognition that confirms/affirms their achievement/success. OR as their sense of achievement/success depends on/is reliant on public acknowledgement/recognition
12	This is also true at the work place, where employees wanting to stand out and be noticed may do so at the expense of organisation culture and norms...	In workers, wanting recognition may jeopardise/endanger/threaten company ethics and standards
13	..., thus running the risk of destabilising the work environment and practices.	possibly upsetting job processes and procedures.
14	This desire to fight conformity to impress others backfires when we are not true to ourselves,	In individuals, not being who you really are//putting on a facade
15	which would end up hurting personal relationships...	damages close/intimate ties/bonds
16	and being insultingly labelled as “trying too hard”, “fake”, or “weird but not in a good way”.	and the individual being demeaningly/derogatorily described as artificial/not natural
17	When we try too hard to be different...	Excessive effort/struggle at uniqueness
18	...at the expense of our core beliefs and values...	which comes at the cost of essential/integral ways of thinking//principles/standards/morals
19	...we lose sight of ourselves...	leads to the lack of self-knowledge//forget who we are
20	...and the bigger picture.	and (lack of) an entire perspective of a situation
21	When we focus on the group rather than on individuals,  ...- as a society - may be able to live with greater equanimity...	Focusing more on the group  may see a community that is calmer/more composed
22	...and shared humanity.	and benevolent/kind/merciful/compassionate towards one another

No. of points	Marks	SAMPLE SUMMARY
≥ 14	8	<i>Individualism may be harmful because</i> uncontrolled, (1) it may swell people's excessive self-love. (2) Parents laud their children's individuality, (3) making them think they will outclass others (4) and stand out.(5) But the children's emotional experiences are just like others' (6) and they are unlikely to do so (7) as they are not actually unique, (8) so they end up struggling. (9) In workers, desiring acknowledgement for uniqueness may jeopardise company ethics and standards, (12) possibly upsetting job processes and procedures. (13) In individuals, not being who one really is (14) damages close ties. (15) Excessive effort at uniqueness (17) which sacrifices essential principles (18) leads to the lack of self-knowledge (19) and an entire perspective of a situation. (20) Focusing more on the group than on individuals may see a community that is calmer (21) and benevolent towards one another. (22)  (118 words)  (Points 10, 11 and 16 not included)
12-13	7	
10-11	6	
9	5	
7-8	4	
5-6	3	
3-4	2	
1-2	1	

6. Using your own words as far as possible, explain the irony which the author describes in line 10.

[2]

- Irony

From the passage	Suggested answer
<p>We just need to realise that the best in the field are outliers not just in their accomplishments, but also in their habits and routines. They are willing to be different even if it earned them rebuke or censure. We instinctively think we are above average and we certainly do not want to be average. Yet ironically, we want to be <i>normal</i>; we want to have the same interests as most people do. We do not want to be different for fear of sticking out like a sore thumb. Having the same interests, routines and habits as everyone else ensures that we stay in the majority and are hence part of the 'in-group'. But by design, we are setting ourselves up to be average.</p>	<p>[Expected Outcome]  a) One would expect/assume that since people refuse to be mediocre/ordinary/unexceptional, they would desire/not mind standing out (1m)</p> <p>[Actual Outcome]  b) Instead, they wish to be like everyone else to gain acceptance from the rest. (1m)</p>

7. In paragraph 3, what distinction is the author making between people with “statistically average performance” and those who “choose to be average” (lines 15-16)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

**- Direct Paraphrase**

From the passage	Suggested answer
So what is the problem with average? While there is nothing wrong about having a statistically average performance, the problem arises when we <i>choose</i> to be average – to be just like everyone else – because it means choosing to be mediocre. Being like everyone else is a guarantee that an individual will never fully develop his innate talents and strengths and by extension, will never be the best version of himself. That all but guarantees mediocrity.	She is making a distinction between a) people who are ordinary/unexceptional/ merely satisfactory relative to the rest // not on purpose/their own volition [1]  b) and those who opted to be unexceptional/ordinary by conforming to the rest. [1]

8. In lines 20-23, the author describes the consequences of conformity for various groups. Identify **two** such groups and explain the consequence that conformity brings to **each** of them. **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

**- Direct Paraphrasing + Inferential**

**- Any two points for two marks**

From the passage	Suggested answer
Indeed, conformity is the reason why many potential geniuses’ creativity never finds an outlet,	a) 1. The first group of people are those unrealised prodigies.  2. Conformity stifles/represses the expression of their innovation/inventiveness/individuality
why many “misfits”, in a constant effort to conform, end up depressed instead of proud of their uniqueness,	b) 1. The second group are those that seemingly do not belong //are maladjusted. 2. The continuous/persistent attempt to conform (because of this label) makes them dejected/despondent /lose hope/lose motivation.
and, most importantly, why so many social and political catastrophes with huge human costs happen over and over again.	c) 1. The third group are countries/societies. 2. Conforming to a prevailing political or social ( <i>inferred</i> ) trend// <i>unscrupulous leaders blindly/even when it is wrong</i> leads to ( <i>can be directly paraphrased from passage</i> ) repeated disasters/tragedies with devastating impact on the country/society.

9. Why has the author placed brackets around the comment in lines 25-26? [2]

**- Punctuation**

From the passage	Suggested answer
The desire to have the perfect image is another way that we try to conform to what society says is normal. It is why plastic surgery (which is still major surgery, make no mistake about that) has become as commonplace today as having your teeth cleaned.	<p>a) This is an additional comment to warn/remind us that (F)</p> <p>b) plastic surgery is not the trivial/routine procedure that people think it is/take it to be (C) OR people are wrong when they treat plastic surgery as a trivial/routine procedure</p> <p>c) It is a complex/risky/dangerous/serious medical procedure</p> <p>1-2p=1m 3p=2m</p>

10. In paragraph 5, why does the author see communal conformity as “a simple form of mind control” (line 39)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

**- Direct Paraphrase**

From the passage	Suggested answer
The worst societies thrived on communal conformity because it was, ultimately, a simple form of mind control. You were made to feel that there was something wrong with <i>you</i> if you did not think, look like, or act the same as others.	<p>She sees communal conformity as a simple form of mind control because</p> <p>a) people were brainwashed/persuaded into thinking [1]</p> <p>b) that they were abnormal/ flawed//that the mistake lies with them [1]</p> <p>c) if their outlook/perspectives, appearance and behaviour were not like/identical with the rest of society. [1]</p>

11. AQ

Susan Smalley thinks conformity is beneficial for individuals and society whereas Kristen Houghton thinks otherwise.

With which of the two authors are you more in agreement, relating your arguments to your own society? [10]