GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8004/11
Paper 11

Key messages

Content

Assimilate exactly what the question requires, rather than writing, generally, everything you know about a topic.
Introductions should neither be a reiteration of the question nor a review of what is going to be discussed. They should indicate the shape of the essay to come and promise a developed argument.
A conclusion is not a review of what has been discussed, but rather a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
If there are, as is often the case, two sides to a question, do not fail to evaluate to indicate where you stand on the issue in question while mentioning opposite views. Mastering a few judiciously chosen discourse markers, e.g. conversely; however; on the other hand; at the same time; could help
Remember to express a judgement.
Engage with the key wording of any question in order to avoid potential patches of digression and tangential areas.
Link examples and illustrations to the wording of the question to avoid being merely descriptive.

Use of English

Students need to acquire the simple habit of using 'who/whom' for people, reserving 'that' for everything non-human
'off of' was frequently used instead of 'from' or 'on'
A formal register is preferable to a conversational one (e.g. 'items' rather than 'stuff')
US usage is just as correct as UK English
Try to use 'as' not 'like' with a clause, so 'as I already mentioned' rather than 'like I already mentioned'.
The following clumsy construction was commonly seen: By ... it ... e.g. By having a computer in the classroom it helps a student look up … The by and it are redundant
Capital letters should not be used randomly
Vary paragraph lengths and ensure that paragraphs are seamlessly linked and structured

General comments

The vast majority of the responses showed a lively engagement with the topics to be explored. Question 3 on addiction was, inevitably, popular. Many mentioned substance abuse but went on to consider other forms of addiction in the contemporary world. This is a question where the danger of anecdote replacing analysis is high; this did not happen. Question 10 on the use of horrific real events as the basis for a film or a play was also popular.

Question 1 on leadership clearly called for specific examples and contemporary leaders of nations to put under scrutiny. Many candidates, however, chose to applaud the leadership of their own contemporaries, both in school and the local community. A few compared great leaders from the past, usually unfavourably, with leaders today. This question offered many avenues of exploration and many took advantage of this. Question 11 was almost as popular as Question 10, appealing, as it did, to the 'selfie' generation. Many, assuming the dismissive attitude of an older generation, wrote impassioned and detailed justifications for the 'selfie' as an art form. However, knowledge of portrait painting was often limited.

There was an increase in rubric errors. A fair number of candidates chose two questions from one section of the paper. This meant that only the highest mark of the two could be awarded.

There were only a few brief responses.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was a fairly popular question and was answered moderately to well by most candidates. Better answers acknowledged that there are many enterprises that require leadership though only a few chose to define leadership. The leadership provided by role models was well argued for. The question invited comparison with the past and this was a feature of many responses. What was lacking in too many essays, however, was an international perspective. While successful candidates were able to extend their discussion of leadership beyond the political sphere, only a few of these focused on those leaders who have made a real difference to the lives of many. One candidate argued successfully that it is unfair to compare today's political leaders with those from the past since today's leaders rarely have absolute power and must contend with national legislatures. Weaker answers were merely descriptive, offering no more than an account of what a leader did, for good or ill. The time focus specified in the question required attention and this was sometimes lacking. Where candidates recognised that a single instance of a good leader today falsifies the assumption inherent in the question, they did well.

Question 2

There were some clear and interesting arguments put forward in answer to this question. Arguments usually focused on the influence of Europe on the countries that the students themselves live in, whether in the United States or elsewhere. There were comments on important figureheads, learning from past situations in Europe and how Europe was the 'centre of the world' in the past. Other comments focused on how other parts of the curriculum were much more important and, therefore, something from the past was not important, to study now. Some were a little too assertive or simply focused on what should be taught in school, ignoring European history, in their answers. A few excellent responses took into consideration global issues, for example slavery. A few discerning candidates stressed the importance of learning African and Asian history as much as European. There was more of an international 'feel' to the answers than might have been expected. Those who argued for the teaching of European history discussed Europe's contribution to the shaping of the modern world through culture, science, industrialisation, exploration and colonisation, organisation of society and governance. However, it was heartening to read the essays of those who made a case for world history for all students.

Question 3

This was the most popular question on the paper. Answers were not confined to drug and alcohol addiction. Many candidates discussed other addictions and addictive behaviours from the use of cell phones and the social media to video gaming and over eating. A problem with some of the responses was the straightforward description of the damage caused with no attempt to 'explore the reasons' for addiction. Candidates would have done well to underline the key words in this question; 'high risk', 'damaged', and 'reasons'. There were several quite personal responses to this question and where anecdotal material was used, to illustrate the discussion/exploration, candidates could do well. A few argued that while addiction is a problem there are plenty of opportunities, both in school and in the community, for young people to address addiction issues and their attendant risks. Some even pointed out that it is not only the young who are afflicted by addiction. These answers did not avoid the actual question; they provided added thoughtful context. A few candidates mentioned positive addictions such as exercise or reading.

There were several interesting references to celebrities who influence the young positively and negatively. Many of these responses cited lyrics that encourage the young to experiment with harmful substances. Strong candidates were able to examine society's role, the legalising of marijuana and how banning the advertising of some substances has shifted such advertising onto social networks.

Question 4

This question was attempted by a few candidates. Most of the responses were informed and thoughtful. The more successful were able to pick out specific countries where women have or have not been educated in order to assess whether the wellbeing of the country has been in any way affected by women being or not being educated. The importance of educating women was linked to the impact of women on the economy and on social values. The benefit to a nation's wellbeing by controlling birth rate, by educating women on matters such as sexual health, contraceptives, and STDs, were considered in good essays.

The implicit reference to gender inequality sometimes triggered a semi-relevant response dealing with women's rights. There were, however, many insightful responses. Malala Yousafzai was often cited, as was Michelle Obama. Several candidates appreciated that the culture and customs of certain nations have a major influence on the situation.

Question 5

There were only a few responses to this question. Some determined that 'calculating' meant the use of calculators while others recognised the skill in relation to approximation. The majority were able to explain why Mathematics is important as a subject. However, only one or two candidates considered the interesting idea that because of 'devices' we may have moved on to a new world where concepts and their applications are more important than the actual arithmetical processes of calculation. Very few considered the implications for teaching, contenting themselves with the common assertion that 'Mathematics is boring'.

Question 6

Those that were more successful here looked at one or two scientists and named them. They then explored what they had done and why they had contributed to human progress. There were a number of very descriptive, biographical responses that did not necessarily answer the question in relation to 'human progress'. A common weakness was describing the contribution of scientists rather than evaluating it.

The wording of this question gave candidates an immediate structure to follow and a few took advantage of that. One of the stronger candidates discussed how scientists have not helped 'human progress' through the splitting of the atom and current work on the genetic code.

Question 7

This was a fairly popular question. A few candidates focused only on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki explosions but better answers referred to the Cold War, the concept of mutual self-destruction and the benefits of nuclear power stations. Candidates were very well versed on the project, itself, but only one or two mentioned Oppenheimer. Nearly all, however, referred to Kim Jong-un.

Fortunately many had specific knowledge and they weighed the devastation in Japan against the huge but unknown number of lives saved by the quick end to the war. These candidates also offered nuanced accounts of where responsibility truly lay and considered the various by-products of the scientists' work. It was surprising, however, that the most recent nuclear disaster in Japan was rarely used for illustration with candidates preferring to refer to Chernobyl instead.

Question 8

This proved to be a very popular question and the better responses were able to recognise that learning can take place in a variety of ways and could understand and articulate the issues which the use, or abuse, of computers create. There was some confusion as to why certain schools do not have computers, whether this was due to funding issues or a conscious choice. Most opted for the former explanation but a few considered, in depth, the advantages of a computer free education. One candidate had heard of the schools in Silicon Valley where computers are not used in the classroom until the students turn fourteen. The demise of libraries and books for use in completing projects and research was frequently mentioned. A number of students expressed their concerns about distraction, plagiarism, the loss of interactive teaching and the squeezing out of creativity. The obvious advantages of the computer were always acknowledged but there was a good deal of sympathy for the idea that all students still need to learn to read and write using pen and paper and books.

Question 9

This question was not particularly popular. However, there were some really interesting and clearly expressed answers. 'Visual art' could be correctly defined in many ways as the candidates demonstrated. They gave a range of examples of album covers, costumes for concerts, videos used to promote songs, and how detailed images/costumes reflect the artist and the type of music played. Examples ranged from the iconic lips on a Rolling Stones album, Bowie's image and Michael Jackson's videos to more modern examples such as Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, and Justin Bieber. One outstanding response selected modern classical music and gave a fascinating account of how visual art plays a role in both performance and product. Most of the responses proved to be both absorbing and enlightening for the readers.

Question 10

This was a very popular choice of question. Memorable responses were wide-ranging and sensitively argued with the focus on the word 'justifiable' in a variety of contexts; war, persecution and many types of disaster. Many offered examples to underline their argument and these were not confined to 'Titanic' and 'Saving Private Ryan'. Credit was given to the latter, which though fictional, is based on a real event. Plays were rarely mentioned though there were a few very illuminating references to Miller's 'The Crucible'. Solid answers focused on the value of lessons learnt from the horrors of the past and there were several poignant references to films that feature The Holocaust such as 'Schindler's List'.

Others commented on how films can fictionalise or glamorise events and people. To do so was relevant. For example, a few candidates questioned the justification of films based on terrorist activity since 'terrorist groups love the attention devoted to their horrific acts'.

The few who wrote about horror films could not do well as they had missed the point of the question.

Question 11

A few candidates realised that the question is about the conception of what is meant by 'Art'. All of the candidates were well versed in matters relating to 'selfies' and how they can be artistically doctored, but only a few had any knowledge of portrait painting. However, the 'Mona Lisa' and Van Gogh were mentioned as examples together with one rare example of the painter Frida Kahlo. Some, unfortunately, conflated the term 'portrait painting' with painting in general. Credit was given, however, to those who were able to argue a case for 'selfies' being under the umbrella of art. These answers stressed self-expression and the use of angle, filters and background to raise the profile of a 'selfie' to the level of art. Some prefaced their defence of the 'selfie' as artistic by pointing out that since photography has been accepted as art, 'selfies' should be too, with likes on social media replacing art galleries and the thought and effort put into celebrity 'selfies' making those, especially, works of art.

Question 12

Only a few attempted this question. Successful responses thought about individual examples and explored why it was a good idea or not to rename or remove memorials, statues flags, buildings and place names. These examples included arguments about flying the Confederate flag from public buildings. Other examples considered were from Germany in the post-Third Reich area and, less commonly, post-apartheid South Africa, post-Franco Spain and post-colonial areas of the former British Empire. One candidate commented on historical sites being destroyed in Iraq and another on the preservation of sites in Jerusalem out of tolerance and respect for different religious traditions.

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Key messages

Content

Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
An introduction should immediately address the key words and show understanding of the question.
After making a main point, develop it and then introduce an example.
Use solid details/examples and avoid vagueness.
Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.
Ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.
A clear communication of the argument does engage the reader.

Use of English

Basic errors need to be checked and corrected. Typical examples are listed below:

Subject/verb non-agreement
Incorrect use of prepositions
Frequent incorrect use of definite/indefinite article (the society)
Omission of apostrophes
Confusion between their/there, to/too, your/you're
Incorrect comparative forms
Missing endings on plurals
Incorrect use of vocabulary
Sometimes attention is needed to check word order (syntax) to ensure clear meaning.

General comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework using an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

More successful responses answered the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points of the essay. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing and engaging thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details. On occasions anecdotes were the only content of the response.

When the set question demands it, candidates should focus on aspects of their own country; if this is not the prompt then a broader focus is required. Stronger responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points. Sometimes candidates were either unfamiliar with the question topic or only understood one aspect of it. Time should be spent studying the wording of all questions and then to choose those which are best understood and with which there is sufficient knowledge to write 500–600 words.

Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce two clearly structured essays of around the recommended length. Introductions may have been long at times but a majority did attempt to

address the question and this was reflected in the remaining response. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written.

Rubric infringements were rare and there were very few unfinished essays. The quality of the Use of English was variable and depended on whether grammatical errors disrupted the fluency or not. Consequently, some candidates need to work on forming secure, grammatically correct sentence structures and to leave time at the end to check for basic errors. A thorough and systematic checking could greatly improve the standard as well as clarify the content.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was popular but responses sometimes generalised about animal welfare issues (meat-eating, animal testing, zoos), ignoring the key words of 'hunting' and 'justified'. More successful responses considered different types and purposes of hunting, usually with examples, in order to reach a measured conclusion, usually that hunting for fun or of endangered species were less justifiable than for control and/or survival.

Question 2

This was quite popular but most responses argued from a purely theoretical and economic perspective, not always clearly referencing the key words of the question. More successful responses were able to consider consequences and contexts beyond the individual, for example the wider effect on the family, but also considering businesses and countries. Usually a pessimistic and didactic tone was adopted but perceptive comments did emerge which examined the possible longer-term benefits of investment and speculation, or overspending being a need rather than a frivolous choice, for example as a student or in the purchase of a house with a mortgage.

Question 3

Responses tended to just describe what makes an individual 'great' or 'not great'. More successful responses did define the term 'great', considering it in relation to various political and social viewpoints and concluding that the term is relative and subjective. The best responses considered both heroic leaders from history (Alexander the Great) and humanitarian/principled characters (Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Gandhi). Here, it was seen as a more dubious and controversial term if historians referred to specific leaders as 'great' rather than allowing people to form their own opinions based on a character's actions and lifetime accomplishments.

Question 4

This was popular with many responses describing the problems and benefits of immigration in general but without specific reference to refugees. Examples included Syria, Bhutan, Myanmar and Afghanistan with assertions of what should be done to help. More successful responses did address 'refugees' and had some understanding of the reasons for them leaving their homelands. The best ones focused on 'responsibility', as to whether it should be the host country, those escalating conflicts or nearby neighbours, often reaching the conclusion that ultimately responsibility should be to resolve on-going conflicts to allow refugees to return home.

Question 5

This was quite a popular question with many responses describing disasters (Nepalese earthquake, Aceh tsunami) but without sufficient reference to the key words of the question (i.e. whether such places should be inhabited or not). More successful responses balanced the need to inhabit (been there for generations, access to livelihood, upheaval of moving) against the dangers (repetitive destruction, perpetual homelessness, human and financial cost). A distinction was often made between levels of devastation (urban or rural, monsoon or earthquake) and whether it was just a matter of risk assessment and being well-prepared (earthquake proof housing, early warning systems - citing Japan as an example). Often it was concluded that people knew the risks so it was a question of personal choice and freedom.

Question 6

This was very popular but not always particularly well done. Many responses focused on tourism in general (economic and cultural benefits) with just passing reference to environmental issues. Sometimes there were descriptions of a number of types of environmental pollution, often focusing at a local level on such issues as littering, land clearance for hotels or damage to popular beauty spots. More successful responses did consider broader issues such as air travel, effect on wildlife, global warming and did link to tourism as a global activity. The best responses focused on what tourism could do for environmental awareness and protection with considerations of sustainability and ecotourism but only a few suggested what this might look like in practice. Some responses did attempt balance but usually concluded that tourism needs to be encouraged for the sake of the local economy even if that resulted in environmental damage.

Question 7

Many responses focused on either mathematics or reading but with little comparison. There tended to be both descriptions and assertions of what could be gained in daily activities by both, with the notion that reading was initiated early in education to provide an essential life skill and mathematics was there for basic calculations, beyond which it was only needed for specific qualifications or career choices. More successful responses considered the idea of 'acceptable' and attempted to make a comparison, suggesting that 'not reading' is synonymous with illiteracy and not being educated hence preventing progress and meeting with disapproval and derision. However, 'I can't do maths' just suggests a lack of interest in a specific subject and an unwillingness to pursue if further. Some responses considered the necessity of mathematics in later life (e.g. understanding interest rates) but with little development.

Question 8

Many responses made general assertions about men and women, their roles in society and how this may have changed. More successful responses did link to science, especially equality of education with 'appeal' depending on culture and a degree of encouragement from family and society. There were references to the achievements of Marie Currie, but very few broadened the discussion. Some did conclude that women will always be drawn to certain sciences like biology or psychology and the medical profession. However, some pointed out that 'appeal' and 'opportunity' do not always go together.

Question 9

This was very popular. References to 'escape from reality' were often implicit as some responses just described specific television programmes and criticised viewing habits, although often suggesting that it was a relief from the pressures of the day. More successful responses questioned the inference that escaping reality was necessarily negative and/or discussed ways in which television either brought reality closer or distorted it, using 'the news' as an example. Such responses did use a range of examples to provide a balanced discussion and a few examined 'anything more than this' with an analysis of the nature of reality provided by documentaries and reality television. Some did conclude that, in the end, television has a range of functions and 'escape from reality' was just one of these.

Question 10

Most responses generalised about comedy suggesting that its only role was to entertain and that it should avoid using any material which could cause offence. Some examined the concept of offence with little reference to comedy. More successful responses named specific comedians, sketches or plays (Twelfth Night was mentioned several times) but only a few focused on 'be taken seriously' with reference to irony, satire and ridiculing the pomposity of authority figures (only one response did this).

Question 11

This was popular with responses acknowledging that the improved quality of mobile phone cameras had made this both a popular activity and a trend. Most responses were able to consider both sides of the debate and addressed contexts in which a professional might still be sought (usually weddings) whilst recognising that things were changing (technology could now edit and enhance mobile phone images and professional photographers were expensive). More successful responses were aware of some of the technical specifications relating to quality of picture, as well as to artistic considerations such as composition. Convenience and portability of mobiles also featured as benefits of the selfie trend but some did conclude that in certain circumstances, where people wanted the perfectly composed picture, professional photography would still be in demand.

Question 12

Most responses described arts and crafts in general terms, often without specific examples but referencing architecture or festivals. More successful responses related their chosen examples to 'important' and were more analytical. The best responses made reference to the differing values placed on such artefacts and traditions by the old or young, urban or rural populations and acknowledged that the situation might change with time (depending on tourism, whether traditions can survive in the modern world and the attitude of the younger generation).

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GENERAL PAPER

Key Messages

Content

Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
An introduction should immediately address the key words and show understanding of the question.
Support your main points with appropriate examples.
Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
Use solid details/examples and avoid vagueness.
Ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.
Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.
A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.

Use of English

Leave time to check your English thoroughly to avoid basic errors.
Concentrate on using appropriate vocabulary so expression is fluent and precise.
Basic sentence structure/grammar needs to be accurate to ensure clear communication of content.
Paragraphing accuracy is essential if there is to be a clear structure.
Avoid using a casual/informal style.
Conversational English is inappropriate in a formal examination context. The correct tone needs to be found for a discursive essay.

General Comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework, using an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

More successful responses answered the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points of the essay. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing, thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details.

When the set question demands it, candidates should focus on aspects of their own country; if this is not the prompt then a broader focus is required. Stronger responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points as well as presenting an informed, persuasive debate. Sometimes candidates chose questions where they were unfamiliar with the topic or did not understand all aspects of the question. Candidates need to spend time studying the chosen question to make sure they understand what is being asked.

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Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce two clearly structured essays of around the recommended length. Introductions may have been long at times but a majority did attempt to address the question and this was reflected in the remaining response. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written.

Rubric infringements were rare but there were a few occasions when only one question was answered or two were taken from the same section. Sometimes too much time was spent on the first response so the second one could appear unfinished. Usually sentences were grammatically correct and punctuation accurate but often sentences lacked variety or vocabulary was unambitious or colloquial. However, a substantial number of candidates had acquired a wide-ranging English vocabulary but needed to be more precise when phrasing.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Generally this was well understood although sometimes there was confusion with tourists. Most responses were balanced and considered it essential to mix with the indigenous community and learn its language, values and laws while still maintaining cultural identity and traditions. More successful responses used examples, sometimes personal, and extended the debate to consider whether problems of discrimination and radicalisation could be solved by integration. Certainly there was support for cultural exchange but many concluded that success was also dependent on whether the community welcomed foreigners in the first place.

Question 2

This was a very popular question. Many responses used anecdotal evidence to support the discussion. Whereas some focused on causes rather than consequences most did provide some balance (negative effects on children but positive if there was bullying or abuse in the family). Often there were descriptions of scenarios to support 'consequences' and sometimes scope could have been widened. Several discussions considered 'separation' through death or military commitment with the common ground of all forms of separation forcing negative emotions. More successful responses focused on 'always' extending the debate to include 'custody battles', 'releasing tension by starting a new life' and the isolation caused, especially if a third party was involved or only one was the 'breadwinner'. Most concluded that negative or positive consequences depended on personal circumstances and whether there was support from outside the immediate family.

Question 3

There were not many responses to this question with many discussing the election process rather than referendum. A few referred to same-sex marriage in the US, gun law and abortion, emphasising the importance of everybody having a vote on major issues but most referred to the recent presidential elections. There were often detailed discussions about the role of the Electoral College with an attempt to link to 'popular vote'. More successful responses related referendums to subsequent legislation and considered the dangers of prejudice and ignorance inherent in the process, a few using Brexit as an example. Some concluded that there was value in empowering elected and more knowledgeable people to decide on such matters.

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Question 4

Many responses cited North Korea and Syria as tourist destinations but tended to just describe the situation in both places. Cuba was seen as an example of a destination with endless tourism potential in the absence of a US embargo and a change in regime. More successful responses used historical examples (Japan after the Second World War) to highlight that recovery was possible but took time. Also tourism in countries like Egypt and Tunisia was considered irreparable in the context of a pervasive global terrorism threat. The conclusion here was that, as a result of this, such countries would be faced with inevitable economic collapse.

Question 5

Many responses demonstrated useful knowledge, and were able to discuss the merits or otherwise of such searches, and whether the costs could be justified in the light of present problems on Earth. More successful responses were balanced and used a range of examples from both Earth and space in order to evaluate whether such a search for habitable planets was wasteful of resources. Some argued that the destruction of Earth was inevitable so an alternative needed to be found, highlighting the scientific benefits along the way (faster transportation). However, it was seen by some as an impossible task considering the distances involved and the known facts of planets in our own solar system (the toxic atmosphere on Mars). Some concluded that the search would happen anyway and that a solution would be found in the distant future.

Question 6

This was a very popular question. Most responses referred to Haiti, choosing the USA as an example of a richer country with the resources to help a poorer country. Also there were suggestions that such help could create alliances and improve reputations. More successful responses presented a range of responses (Aceh in Indonesia) and discussed the moral imperatives of helping people in distress whose governments lacked the necessary resources, as a part of global humanitarianism. National self-interest was often discussed as a reason for responding, together with expressions of isolationism along the lines of 'When did they ever help us?' The best responses also considered that it was more important for external agencies to respond (U.N., charities, global media appeals) with the conclusion that countries could take years to recover.

Question 7

Some responses described how to become a donor and repeated, in different ways, that there were not enough donors to meet the demand. Many looked at the more obvious implications of unnecessary suffering and death, and some of the difficult decisions to be made by families and medical professionals. More successful responses were able to go further looking at, for example, the selling of organs, other methods of treatment such as the use of animal organs and organs created by 3D printers. Some did consider the implications of the illicit trading of organs and the bribery and corruption that might be encouraged if there was a shortage. Most concluded that this would become a serious issue in the future and considered the morality and validity of enforced donor cards.

Question 8

Most responses did show some understanding of how mathematics could have both scientific (measurement and equations) and artistic value (musical patterns and scales/architecture). More successful responses argued that maths was also a 'pure' subject in its own right enabling relationships between numbers, and citing calculus as an example. Overall most content did show knowledge and was generally well done.

Question 9

Many responses considered the value and usefulness of blogs in general describing them as records of personal experience, observations or opinions available on the internet. Literary value was considered only in terms of whether they were of interest to specific readers, many suggesting that they were too informal and transient to be classed as literature. More successful responses gave examples of authors, poets or newspaper writers who used blogging to make their work available to a wider audience although some considered this as nothing more than advertising. One response concluded that blogs could have style, purpose and register where language was used for effect so could well have literary value but pointed out that such a term is highly subjective anyway.

Question 10

Most responses had some understanding of language being selected for its appropriateness in context, for example school essays, job interviews, conversations with friends. More successful responses gave examples and explored slang as something which helps the speed and intimacy of conversations, something which can be unique to a specific language, dialect or teen culture. Some mentioned that it was acceptable in writing as a feature of dialogue in novels, as a way of creating realism. In the end conclusions suggested that modern methods of communication, such as social media or emails, encouraged colloquialisms and abbreviations in writing, as a way to speed up the process so slang could become more acceptable in other contexts as well.

Question 11

This was a very popular question. Less successful responses were either generalised or just considered sporting performers with biographical details of individuals, and repeated assertions that talent would only get you so far and that practice was vital for success. More successful responses broadened the scope to include musicians and actors with some notion of 'formal training' involving a trainer guiding the development of skills; the best responses were able to go into some detail about what this might involve in particular professions.

Question 12

Most responses had difficulty understanding what an experience of the past might mean or how it might be provided. Often there were discussions of historical events, the role of the museum being to exhibit artefacts from that event. More successful responses were able to quote specific museums and their approach, and to make some assessment of how successful they were. Modern technology was considered useful in re-creating the atmosphere of a specific experience (a bombing raid in the Second World War). However, it was concluded that an authentic experience was difficult to re-create and could turn museums into theme parks, although this might create greater interest and increase visitor numbers. A hands-on approach could be encouraged but perhaps museums were more successful as just recorders of the past.