



# AS English General Paper Assignment Three

Complete BOTH sections of the assignment.

## SECTION ONE: COMPREHENSION

Read Text A and Text B and answer the questions that follow.

### Text A

Text A is an opinionated column in a UK right-wing broadsheet newspaper.

1 Retrieved from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/11630643/A-critics-plea-stop-all-arts-funding-now.html>

### 3 A critic's plea: stop all arts funding now

4 *In twenty years I can't think of one publicly funded show that was any good - while every day*  
5 *commercial world creates amazing things without help*

6 By Douglas McPherson  
7 10:00AM BST 28 May 2015

8 Just the threat of the Tories forming a majority government was enough to start those in the arts  
9 squealing about cuts. Well, those living rich on state handouts would panic, wouldn't they? But as a  
10 theatre critic, I have a simple plea for culture minister Ed Vaizey: stop all public funding of the arts,  
11 now!

12 I don't say that because I believe the burden should be transferred to corporate sponsorship or  
13 American-style philanthropy. I say it having just come back from the Norfolk and the Norwich  
14 Festival where I sat through a show called What Will Have Been - an awful mix of contemporary  
15 circus and dance that **could only exist through state funding**.

16 The show was described as "ground-breaking," as such shows always are, but it had much in  
17 common with every other piece of dreary, pretentious, self-consciously "arty" subsidised theatre  
18 that I have seen in 20 years of reviewing for The Stage and the former What's On In London.

19 Looking back, I can't think of one funded show that was any good, while every day the world of  
20 commercial entertainment throws up work that is new, vibrant, creative and exciting without any  
21 need for government help.

22 I'm all for encouraging creative people, but **the most democratic way would be through tax breaks**.  
23 Letting people keep more of the money they make is a very different incentive to giving them hand-  
24 outs, as it puts the onus on becoming self-supporting.

25 Arts funding, on the other hand, creates a culture of long term state dependency where companies  
26 are more focused on securing healthy salaries through grants than on producing work the public  
27 might actually want to see.

28 [...]

29 No artist or impresario was ever put off their vocation by the lack of a guaranteed wage.

30 You don't need a grant to write a West End smash. You just need talent, dedication and something  
31 worth saying. Those with the right qualities will work on their craft unpaid, in their spare time, while  
32 supporting themselves with day jobs as waiters or whatever, until they produce a saleable script, just  
33 as artists always have, sustained either by the dream of one day hitting the big time or simply by  
34 their own creative drive.

35 [...]

36 Historically, many great talents have come from impoverished backgrounds without any government  
37 help and achieved fame and fortune in a commercial world that rewards artists for what they can do  
38 rather than where they come from. In that respect, the commercial world is actually more  
39 democratic than the subsidised arts. You need the right background and education to work the  
40 public funding system.

41 Of course, there is a cultural elite that argues the commercial sector only caters to the lowest tastes,  
42 but that view is based on pure snobbery, directed more at audiences than artists.

43 The music industry, Broadway, Hollywood and commercial television produce their share of cultural  
44 junk food. But there are also plenty of pop songs, movies and West End shows that scale great  
45 artistic heights, provide insight into the human condition, make political points and do all the other  
46 things that the supposedly higher arts claim to do. The difference is, they touch many millions more  
47 lives by virtue of being accessible and popular.

## Text B

Text B is a USA report about art funding benefits by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

48 Retrieved from: <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/files/83/en/US-WhyGovSupport2010.pdf>

### 49 What the Research Says

50 Research has documented numerous economic, educational and civic benefits of investing in the  
51 arts. This catalog offers a succinct summary of those research findings.

### 52 Economic Benefits

53 The arts help communities to prosper. The arts are part of a well-diversified 21st-century economy.  
54 Along with nonprofit arts organizations, creative enterprises make significant contributions to state  
55 and local economies, generating employment and tax revenues and providing goods and services in  
56 high demand by the public. (Sources: National Governors Association; Americans for the Arts)

57 The arts put people to work. By investing in the arts, the public sector is fostering a skilled work  
58 force of creative occupations that contribute to economic productivity. The arts employ artists,  
59 managers, marketers, technicians, teachers, designers, carpenters and workers in a wide variety of  
60 other trades and professions.

61 [...]

The arts attract tourism revenue. Cultural tourism is a huge market, comprised of some 118 million cultural travelers—people who include arts and heritage in their trips each year. Furthermore, cultural tourists stay longer and spend 36% more at their destinations than other kinds of travelers. (Sources: Garrison Keillor Mandala Research, Travel Industry Association of America)

### **Educational and Work-Force Benefits**

Students engaged in the arts perform better academically. Numerous longitudinal research studies have documented that students who receive arts education exhibit improvements in their performance in other subjects, including reading and math achievement, and on standardized test scores. (Sources: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies / Arts Education Partnership; The College Board; University of California at Los Angeles)

The arts help kids to succeed in school and life. Students who receive arts education have stronger social skills, improved motivation to learn and more esteem for themselves and their peers. Arts education helps to create a positive school environment in which learning and human development can occur. (Sources: “If we are going to be on the cutting edge of a global economy, we need well rounded citizens who use their imagination to solve our world’s problems. Arts are one way to insure that America remains an Imagine Nation.” National Association of Secondary School Principals National Assembly of State Arts Agencies; University of California at Los Angeles; Arts Education Partnership; National Assembly of State Arts Agencies / Arts Education Partnership)

### **Civic Benefits**

The arts contribute to community vitality. A growing body of research points to the arts as an engine for civic renewal. Citizen engagement in the arts creates a strong shared identity and instills pride in a state’s cultural heritage. (Sources: The Community Arts Network; Social Impact of the Arts Project / The Reinvestment Fund; The Urban Institute)

The arts bring public spaces to life. Artworks and arts activities make public spaces livable, attractive and distinctive, engaging residents in the creation of welcoming and sustainable places to live, work, play and raise families. (Sources: The Community Arts Network; Social Impact of the Arts Project / The Reinvestment Fund)

The arts foster civic participation and a strong democracy. The arts enhance our ability to illustrate viewpoints, to dramatize issues, to inspire action and to see things through the eyes of others—all necessary components of a thriving democracy. Americans who engage in the arts are more likely to engage in other aspects of community life, such as voting and volunteering. The arts also enhance civic dialogue, capturing the American experience and giving voice to our joys and aspirations and the conscience of our communities. (Sources: National Conference of State Legislatures National Endowment for the Arts, Americans for the Arts)

The arts contribute to wellness and healthy aging. According to a national medical study, seniors who participate regularly in the arts report better health, fewer doctor’s visits, less medication usage, less dementia, better mental health and higher rates of social engagement. (Sources: George Washington University Center on Aging; National Endowment for the Arts)

### SECTION ONE: COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the two extracts (Text A or Text B) is a more reliable source of information about arts funding? Explain your reasoning. (5 marks)
2. What is meant by 'groundbreaking' (line 16)? (2 marks)
3. Summarise each article in your own words and in no more than 60 words per article. (4 marks)
4. What do you think is meant by the following phrases?
  - a. 'Civic Benefits' (line 80) (2 marks)
  - b. 'longitudinal research studies' (line 67) (2 marks)
  - c. 'cultural junk food' (lines 43-44) (2 marks)
5. Why do you think that 'Arts education helps to create a positive school environment in which learning and human development can occur'? Use the information from the text (lines 73-75). (2 marks)
6. Find three points raised in Article A that could be disputed and explain why. (6 marks)

(Total 25 marks)

### SECTION TWO: ESSAY WRITING

*You are advised to write an essay of 600–700 words. Use examples to support your arguments.*

**Task:** John Lennon once famously said, 'Music is everybody's possession. It's only publishers who think that people own it.' To what extent do you agree?

(30 marks)

**TOTAL FOR ASSIGNMENT 55 MARKS**