

**2016 MJC JC2 Preliminary Examination
Paper 2**

1. What are the author's purposes of using the example of David Cameron in her introduction? [2]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (inferred)
One Monday morning last September, Britain woke to a depraved news story. The prime minister, David Cameron, had committed an "obscene act with a dead pig's head". (L1-4)	The author wishes to: -capture the attention of readers [hook] [1] - to show that even a prominent figure can be a victim of false / questionable / controversial reporting. [1] [nature of eg + argument]

2. What is the author implying when she says that it was an "unusually brazen" defence? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the of passage	Accepted Answers (paraphrased)
Oakeshott went even further to absolve herself of any journalistic responsibility : "It's up to other people to decide whether they give it any credibility or not." (L8-10) (A) An unusually brazen (B) defence, it seemed that journalists were no longer required to believe their own stories to be true, nor, apparently, did they need to provide evidence. (L10-11)	The author is implying that Oakeshott's defence was: - exceptionally shameless / too bold / too daring (paraphrase of unusually brazen) (B) -courageous/ brave (0) as it is/ because it is: - unacceptable / objectionable behaviour for a journalist / she disapproves of such a behaviour (what author is implying/ inferred) (C) - because she had released herself of accountability by leaving it up to readers to decide whether the report was true (reason / paraphrased answer) (A) 3 points = 2m

3. Explain what the author means by "we are living through a period of dizzying transition" in paragraph 3. Use your own words as far as possible. [3]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (paraphrased)
it is clear that we are living through a period of dizzying transition. (L13) Now, we are caught in a series of battles: -between truth and falsehood ; - the connected and the alienated ; - between an informed public and a misguided mob. (L16-18)	She means we are faced with a time of perplexing/ confusing change (1m) Where we are caught between <u>All 3pts from below = 2m; 1-2 points = 1m</u> -between fact and fiction/ lie (accept 'real or fake') -between those who are in the know/ supported by others and those who are isolated -between the people who are knowledgeable and those who are confused and merely propagating the wrong beliefs/values

4. From paragraph 7, explain how the author illustrates the idea of a “filter bubble”. [2]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (Paraphrased)
<p>Facebook’s news feed.. designed to give us more of what they think we want -- in particular Google’s personalised search function (L41-42)</p> <p>which means that the version of the world we encounter every day in our own personal stream has been invisibly curated to reinforce our pre-existing beliefs (L42-43)</p> <p>means that we are less likely to be exposed to information that challenges us or broadens our worldview, and less likely to encounter facts that disprove false information (L46-48)</p>	<p>She gives the examples of personalised/ customised/ selected information on Facebook or Google (at least 1 example must be given)</p> <p>that merely strengthen ideas we are familiar with/ know / merely confirm / validate our views</p> <p>such that we are insulated against / kept away from ideas that are different from our own / people will then hardly come across views that provoke them</p> <p>3 points for 2m, 1-2 points for 1m</p>

5. Explain the contrast between what had been “originally envisioned” (line 53) and what has happened in the world wide web. Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (inferred)
<p>(L50-53) The closed space of a chat app which teenagers, especially, spend more and more of their time on is even more restrictive. As the pioneering Iranian blogger Hossein Derakhshan wrote, the “diversity that the world wide web had originally envisioned”</p> <p>has given way to “the centralisation of information” inside a select few social networks (L54)</p>	<p>The vision was for a world wide web that enabled (context)</p> <p>openness to a range of ideas, greater freedom for ideas to co-exist / everyone is able to contribute their ideas (idea of diversity/ variety) (1)</p> <p>but instead this has morphed into monopoly/control by / restriction to a small number of online companies (centralisation) (1)</p>

6. What does the phrase ‘vain hope’ (line 57) suggest about the author’s views on attracting clicks and advertising? [1]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (Paraphrased)
<p>many news organisations have steered themselves away from public-interest journalism and towards junk-food news, chasing page views in the vain hope of attracting clicks and advertising</p>	<p>She does not think that news organisations will succeed in attracting clicks and advertising / news organisations/ are still unlikely to attract clicks and advertising (vain) [1]</p>

7. What does the author suggest about news organisations when she says “like junk food, you hate yourself when you have indulged in it” (line 58)? [2]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (inferred)
<p>(L56) Many news organisations have steered themselves away from public-interest journalism and towards junk-food news, chasing page views in the vain hope of attracting clicks and advertising (or investment) -</p> <p>but like junk food, you hate yourself when you have indulged in it.</p>	<p>The author suggests that news organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -succumb to promoting popular but trivial/ false content for quick gains/ profit -but feel disgusted/ regret it/ feel guilty -knowing that it ultimately harms them/ reputation/ credibility. (3=2m; 1-2=1m) <p>Parallels junk food offering immediate satisfaction but ultimately harmful.</p>

8. From paragraph 10, what are the differences between false reporting today and in the past? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (inferred)
Of course, journalists have got things wrong in the past, more often unintentionally , but these were rejected by the majority who preferred accurate news. (L65-67)	False reporting in the past was often not done on purpose / not deliberate/ due to error but is done deliberately today. [1]
But what is new and significant is that today, rumours and lies are read just as widely as facts – and often more widely, because they are wilder than reality and found by news companies to be more exciting to share . (L67-69)	While false reporting in the past did not get much attention from people who wanted the truth , today false reporting is greatly embraced / enjoyed by many people [1] pts of difference (0m if not in pairs): -reason behind false reporting -people's receptivity to false reporting

9. Suggest why there is more of a need than ever for public interest journalism today (line 80-81). [1]

From the passage	Accepted Answers (Inferred)
<u>Possible clues from text which need more contextualisation:</u> (L81-83) It helps <u>keep the powerful honest</u> ; it helps people <u>make sense of the world</u> and their place in it. Facts and reliable information are essential for the functioning of <u>democracy</u>	Accept logical answers linked to realities today . -Today there are many dishonest corporations/ corrupt governments that need to be pressured to be more transparent/ act ethically. - Abuse of power is still occurring in many states today and this needs to be checked. -There is still lack of awareness on global issues so individuals need the awareness to offer help. -Many countries today are democracies – need such journalism to make informed decisions, or to vote. -There is a lot of conflicting information today so accurate information is needed to offer clarity.

10. From paragraphs 4 to 6, summarise what the author has to say about the perception of truth in the past and today and the ways in which false information is spread today.

In the past, people perceived truth as....

From the passage	Paraphrase
1. (past) what was printed felt like the truth Words on a page nailed things down (L19, L20)	the published/ written information / what they read/ the text in newspapers/ press
2. At least until... update or a correction (L20-21)	unless a modification / an alteration / adjustment was subsequently made .
3. We all shared a common set of facts (L21)	People have access to the same information / knowledge
4. often fixed in place by an establishment (L21)	released / provided by the government / authority .
5. (today) people distrust much of what is presented as fact (L24-25)	Today, many have doubts / misgivings / are suspicious about what is published as the truth
6. particularly if the facts in question are uncomfortable (L25)	especially when it makes them feel uneasy / apprehensive / worried (controversial ideas)
7. out of sync with their own views (L25-26)	and are not aligned with their opinions / beliefs
8. This does not mean that there are no truths today. (L27)	Truths still exist but
9. It simply means there is no consensus on the truth (L27)	We are unable to come to an agreement on what they are
10. and with no way to achieve it ..(L28)	And it is impossible to do so
11. What counts as a fact is merely a view that someone feels to be true (L28-29)	The truth is simply what one believes is so / based on one's opinions / theory
12. (spread of false info today) technology has made it very easy/ in the digital age (L29)	The internet/ technology has made it very convenient / simple to spread false information
13. to circulate with a reach that was unimaginable (L30)	as it can be widely distributed ,
14. quickly shared (L32)	rapidly / swiftly shared
15. taken to be true (L33)	and assumed to be true
16. as we often see in emergency situations (L33)	especially in times of chaos
17. when news is breaking (L33)	when we do not have complete information yet/ news is freshly updated.
18. Sometimes rumours... spread by deliberate manipulation , in which a corporation or regime pays people to convey their message (L34)	False information is also shared intentionally , when specific firms or governments hire people to spread news about them
19. people forward on ... even if the information is misleading or incomplete (L36-37)	Even though the posts and news are inaccurate, people still share them
20. because they think they have learned something valuable (L37-38)	as they feel that they have been educated / enlightened.
21. This cycle repeats itself with unstoppable momentum (L38)	This is never-ending in the spread of false information.

Marks	1m	2m	3m	4m	5m	6m	7m	8m
Points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10-11	12-13	>= 14

11. Katherine Viner discusses the ways in which the digital age has changed the nature of news. How far would you agree with her observations? Relate your opinions to your own society.

From passage: Ways in which the digital age has changed the nature of news	Agree (+ why/ give reasons for your view)	Disagree (+ why/ give reasons for your view)
<p>Now, people distrust much of what is presented as fact – particularly if the facts in question are uncomfortable, or out of sync with their own views (L24-26)</p>	<p>The digital age facilitates this skepticism as people can easily cite information online that contradicts the news. But apart from the ability of the Internet to empower, there is also an increase in the number of better educated people who are opinionated and ready to challenge any injustices. E.g. People have criticised the Straits Times for being biased/ “mouthpiece of the ruling party”. E.g. popularity of websites such as TOC (The Online Citizen), TR Emeritus, Mothership.sg as alternatives to mainstream news.</p>	<p>People do not distrust a news source that is reputable or positively regarded. E.g. ST is the highest-selling local newspaper, appreciated for promoting social cohesion.</p> <p>There is wariness in my society about the motives of alternative news websites e.g. shutting down and lawsuit against founders of TRS (The Real Singapore). It is difficult for alternative voices to thrive as they rely on donations and must be careful not to incite any ethnic, racial, religious hatred or intolerance or lose its license.</p>
<p>-there is no consensus on the truth and with no way to achieve it, chaos soon follows. (L27-28)</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>The Internet has made it easier to check the credibility of a news report through cross-referencing with other online news sources, especially more reputable news agencies. There is no need for a consensus on the truth as the individual should decide this.</p>
<p>In the digital age, it is easier than ever to publish false information, which is quickly shared and taken to be true (L32-33)</p>	<p>Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp make it easier to share information.</p>	<p>There are repercussions. Any publication, online or otherwise runs the risk of facing a defamation suit or be shut down. All socio-political websites in SG need to be registered with MDA, be licensed and put up a performance bond of \$50,000. They would not thus wilfully publish false information so as to continue offering an alternative voice.</p> <p>E.g. The Real Singapore (TRS) is a painful reminder of how the founders of a socio-political website faced jail time after pleading guilty to gaining from advertising revenue by inciting ill will and hostility and fanning anti-foreigner sentiment in Singapore.</p>

Algorithms such as the one that powers Facebook's news feed are designed to give us more of what they think we want – which means that the version of the world we encounter every day in our own personal stream has been invisibly curated to reinforce our pre-existing beliefs OR “filter bubble” (L41-43)	<p>Indeed this happens.</p> <p>Negative effects: Makes people more closed-minded, less challenged and less knowledgeable which is the opposite of the wealth of knowledge the Internet promises.</p> <p>Positive effects: Deepens and extends knowledge in one's area of interest. Examples needed.</p>	
<p>Many news organisations have steered themselves away from public interest journalism and towards junk-food news, chasing page views in the vain hope of attracting clicks and advertising (L56-58)</p> <p>..creation of fake news farms, which attract traffic with false reports designed to look like real news, and are therefore widely shared on social networks. (L59-61)</p>	<p>Many are critical of such forms of journalism as they do not have deep or wide impact on the community. E.g. ST's STOMP invites stories of infidelity, public scuffles, unacceptable behaviour as part of 'citizen journalism'.</p> <p>E.g. There are news stories with headlines such as “Bankrupt Singaporean made \$X million” or “25-year-old Singaporean makes \$XXXXX a month”. However, people are savvy enough to ignore these unreliable stories after reading a few of them.</p>	<p>These are argued to be of interest to people and are educational for the public (behaviours to avoid). Actually, what defines 'news' today is difficult to pin down or agree on.</p> <p>News organisations such as SPH maintain their integrity by striking a balance between public interest journalism and more frivolous news on their digital news sites as the concern is with breaking news and they are unsure of how the story will develop.</p>
The shift to digital publishing has been a thrilling development for journalism – it has meant new ways to get stories – from our audience, from data, from social media. It has presented new ways to tell stories – with interactive technologies and now with virtual reality. It has given us new ways to find new readers in surprising places; new ways to engage with our audiences, opening ourselves up to debate. (L76-80)	<p>Indeed. Journalism that is relevant today keeps abreast of latest developments from varied sources and perspectives. Journalism today cannot ignore the strong presence of technology. Quality journalism still has an important role to play in informing people but it needs technology to facilitate its dissemination.</p> <p>E.g. STOMP gets stories from contributors. Some of these stories end up making it to print media the day after. Posts that go viral on Facebook or Twitter are also sources that are tapped on by news companies (e.g. viral meme of gold or blue dress reported in ST)</p>	

Application Question Band Descriptors

Band 1 8 – 10	1 REQUIREMENTS: Systematic reference to the requirements of the question with evidence of a balanced treatment.
	2 EXPLANATION: Shows a good or very good understanding of terms and issues.
	3 EVALUATION: Makes very convincing evaluation by making judgements and decisions and by developing arguments to logical conclusions, and includes elaboration and support through personal insight and apt illustration.
	4 COHERENCE: Very clear shape and paragraph organisation and cogent argument.
Band 2 4 – 7	1 REQUIREMENTS: Covers requirements of the question adequately but not necessarily a balanced treatment.
	2 EXPLANATION: Shows an adequate level of understanding of terms and issues (which may include minor distortion).
	3 EVALUATION: Evaluation is attempted but is not always convincing, and tends to be superficial with limited development of ideas, and is not as thorough in support.
	4 COHERENCE: Paragraphing is sometimes helpful and there is a recognisable over-all shape to the answer; arguments are generally cogent.
Band 3 1 – 3	1 REQUIREMENTS: An incomplete and/or unbalanced treatment of the requirements.
	2 EXPLANATION: Shows very limited degree of understanding and a higher incidence of misinterpretation.
	3 EVALUATION: Tends to be a mere summary of restatement of the text with a few simple and undeveloped judgements, with very thin support.
	4 COHERENCE: Paragraphing and organisation are haphazard; arguments inconsistent or illogical.
0	Nothing in the answer meets any of the criteria.

Use of English (15 marks)

- Assessment must be based on the individual candidate's performance across the whole paper.
- Generally, look for sentence length, the range and variety of vocabulary, and the incidence, range and severity of the following types of error: spelling, vocabulary, tense, number, sentence construction.
- Apply the 'best fit' principle when not all the descriptors of a single band are found within a script.

Marks	Descriptors
Band 1 12 – 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good to excellent linguistic ability: very few serious errors; only a few slips or minor errors. <input type="checkbox"/> Assured command of language: it is clear, fluent, effective and appropriate throughout. <input type="checkbox"/> Answers are cogent, concise and well organised. A wide variety of apt vocabulary is used and sentence structure is inventive, developed and appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a sustained attempt to rephrase the text language for all the answers.
Band 2 8 – 11	<input type="checkbox"/> Good to very good linguistic ability: a number of errors of various kinds but they do not seriously impede the flow of the writing. <input type="checkbox"/> Competent command of language: the Candidate usually writes in convincing and idiomatic English, with some positive merits. <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary and sentence structures are varied and appropriate but not necessarily outstanding. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a noticeable attempt to avoid the text language for all the answers.
Band 3 4 – 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory / mediocre linguistic ability: errors of various kinds are frequent but the English is for the most part intelligible. <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate command of language: the English is at times halting, repetitive and generally insecure. <input type="checkbox"/> Misuse of vocabulary and/or breakdown of syntax or grammar. Only simple statements attempted successfully. <input type="checkbox"/> There are recognisable but limited attempts to rephrase the text language in the answers.
Band 4 1 – 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Weak linguistic ability: frequent and serious errors of various kinds, rendering the English muddled or unintelligible at times. <input type="checkbox"/> Very poor command of language. <input type="checkbox"/> Widespread misuse of vocabulary; sentence linking is inappropriate or haphazard. <input type="checkbox"/> Answers mostly comprise wholesale copying of the text language. Any attempts to use own language are limited to single word expressions.