



VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2022
HIGHER 1

GENERAL PAPER

8807/02

Paper 2

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your C.T. group, index number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction tape.

Answer **all** questions.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **10** printed pages.

[Turn over

- 1 The longevity of The Rolling Stones' megahit "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" — No. 2 on *Rolling Stone* magazine's original list of the "500 Greatest Songs of All Time" — has a lot to do with a deep truth it speaks. Satisfaction — the joy from fulfillment of our wishes or expectations — is evanescent. Satisfaction is the greatest paradox of human life. We crave it, we believe we can get it, we glimpse it and maybe even experience it for a brief moment, and then it vanishes, and we are left feeling... unsatisfied. But we never give up on our quest to get and hold on to it. "I try, and I try, and I try, and I try," Jagger sings. 5
- 2 Satisfaction is one of the core "macronutrients" of happiness, required in large amounts for everyday life. Yet time and again, we have fallen into the trap of believing that success and its accompaniments would fulfill us. Everyone has dreams, and they beckon with promises of sweet, lasting satisfaction if we achieve them. But dreams are liars. When they come true, it is ... fine, for a while. And then a new dream appears. The Stones' song should really have been titled "(I Can't Keep No) Satisfaction." It is almost as if our brains are programmed to prevent us from enjoying anything for very long. 10
- 3 In fact, they are. The term *homeostasis* was introduced by a physiologist named Walter B. Cannon, who showed that we have built-in mechanisms to regulate our temperature, as well as our levels of oxygen, water, salt, sugar, protein, fat, and calcium. But the concept applies much more broadly than that: to survive, all living systems tend to maintain stable conditions as best they can. Homeostasis keeps us alive and healthy. But it also explains why drugs and alcohol work as they do. While that first dose of a new recreational substance might give us great pleasure, our previously naive brain quickly learns to sense an assault on its equilibrium and fights back by neutralizing the effect of the entering drug, making it impossible to get the first feeling back. 15 20
- 4 The same set of principles works on our emotions, whether happiness or sadness. When we get an emotional shock—good or bad—our brain wants to re-equilibrate, making it hard to stay on the high or low for very long. This is especially true when it comes to positive emotions. It is why, when we achieve conventional, acquisitive success, we can never get enough. If we only measure our happiness based on success—money, power, prestige—we will run from victory to victory, initially to keep feeling good, and then to avoid feeling awful. The unending race against the headwinds of homeostasis has a name: the "hedonic treadmill." No matter how fast we run, we never arrive. 25 30
- 5 Scholars argue over whether our happiness has an immutable set point, or if it might move around a little over the course of our life due to general circumstances. But no one has ever found that immediate bliss from a major victory or achievement will endure. As for money, more of it helps up to a point—it can buy things and services that relieve the problems of poverty, which make us *less unhappy*. But forever chasing money as a source of enduring satisfaction simply does not work. Men are condemned to live on a hedonic treadmill, to seek new levels of stimulation merely to maintain old levels of subjective pleasure. 35
- 6 Yet even if we recognise all this, getting off the treadmill is hard. It feels dangerous and we feel like we are lagging behind. Our urge for *more* is quite powerful, but stronger still is our resistance to *less*. The wealthy keep accumulating far beyond anything they could possibly spend, and sometimes more than they want to bequeath to their children. This harks back to the saying by the great 19th-century philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, "Wealth is like seawater; the more we drink, the thirstier we become; and the same is true of fame." 40

- 7 Scholars have shown that our acquisitive tendencies persist amid plenty and regularly exceed 45
our needs. This owes to our vestigial urges—software that still exists in our brains from ancient
times. Competing with rivals for mates helps explain our weird fixation on social comparison.
When we think about satisfaction from success (or possessions or fitness or good looks), there
is another element to consider: success is relative. Satisfaction requires not just that we
continuously run in place on our own hedonic treadmill, but that we run slightly faster than 50
other people are running on theirs. The urge to have and be more than others tugs at us
relentlessly. We might not like the hedonic treadmill, but Mother Nature likes watching us strive
to achieve an elusive goal, because strivers get the goods—even if they do not enjoy them for
long.
- 8 The insatiable goals to acquire more, succeed conspicuously, and be as attractive as possible 55
lead us to objectify one another, and even ourselves. When people see themselves as little
more than their attractive bodies, jobs, or bank accounts, it brings great suffering. Self-
objectification is associated with a sense of invisibility and lack of autonomy, and physical self-
objectification has a direct relationship with eating disorders and depression in
women. Professional self-objectification is a tyranny every bit as nasty. We become heartless 60
taskmasters to ourselves, seeing ourselves as nothing more than *Homo economicus*. Love
and fun are sacrificed for another day of work, in search of a positive internal answer to the
question *Am I successful yet?* We become cardboard cutouts of real people.
- 9 In truth, our formula, *Satisfaction = getting what you want*, leaves out one key component. To 65
be more accurate, it should be *Satisfaction = what you have ÷ what you want*. All of our
evolutionary and biological imperatives focus us on increasing the numerator—our *haves*. But
the more significant action is in the denominator—our *wants*. The modern world is made up of
clever ways to make our wants explode without us realising it. Even the Dalai Lama, arguably
the world's most enlightened man, admits to it. "I really love to see supermarkets, because I
can see so many beautiful things. So, when I look at all these different articles, I develop a 70
feeling of desire, and my initial impulse might be, 'Oh, I want this; I want that.'"
- 10 We give ourselves a chance to lead more satisfied lives by managing what we want instead of 75
what we have. Lately, there has been an explosion of books on minimalism, which all
recommend downsizing our lives to get happier—to chip away the detritus of our lives. But it
is not just about having less things to weigh us down. We can, in fact, find immense fullness
when we pay attention to smaller and smaller things. Each day, I have an item on my to-do list
that involves being truly present for an ordinary occurrence, such as taking a walk with no
devices, listening only to the world outside. These are truly satisfying things.
- 11 Each of us can ride the waves of attachments and urges, hoping futilely that someday, 80
somehow, we will get and keep that satisfaction we crave. Or we can take a shot at free will
and self-mastery. It is a lifelong battle against our inner caveman. Often, he wins. But with
determination and practice, we can find respite from that chronic dissatisfaction and
experience the joy that is true human freedom.

Candidate's Name: _____

Candidate's Civics Class: _____

Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

Paper 2 (50 marks)

Read the passages in the insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

Note: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passages for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passages.

From Passage 1

- 1** Identify and explain the 'greatest paradox' (line 4) of human life. **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[2]

- 2** Why does the author quote the lyrics in line 7?

[1]

- 3 Why does the author use the phrase ‘core “macronutrients”’ to describe satisfaction (lines 8-9)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[2]

- 4 What is the author suggesting in his use of the three dots (...) in line 12?

[2]

- 5 According to the author in lines 21-23, why is it ‘impossible to get the first feeling back’? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[2]

- 6** Using material from paragraphs 4-6 only (lines 24-44), summarise the author's views on why happiness is difficult to achieve.

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.**

Happiness is difficult to achieve because...

[illegible]

7 In lines 45-46, what have scholars shown about our 'acquisitive tendencies'? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

[2]

8 Explain the author's use of the phrase 'cardboard cutouts' in line 63.

[2]

9 In paragraph 9, explain why the author cites the example of the Dalai Lama.

[1]

10 What does the phrase 'chip away the detritus' (line 74) imply about the process of downsizing our lives?

[2]

11 In what way is the final paragraph an effective conclusion?

[1]

[illegible]

[illegible]

End of Paper