

ACJC General Paper Department
JC2 Preliminary Exam 2013

From Passage 1

1. What is the purpose of the ellipsis (three dots) before 'constant whining' (line 3)? (1m)

From the passage	Inferred
A tragic phenomenon has swept the modern world. Every day, miserable souls feel themselves the victim of great injustices. The world is simply not as it should be, and the only way to adequately cope with that reality is...constant whining. (lines 1-3)	(inferred) It is to create suspense / build-up / anticipation / expectation. OR It is to create an anti-climax.

Notes

Question type: punctuation/inferential

2. What is the author suggesting with the list of complaints in lines 3-5? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

From the passage	Paraphrased/Inferred
"I'm so hungry. I'm so full. I overslept today. I never get enough sleep. I'm bored. I have too much to do. I have no control at work. I have too much responsibility at work. Whatever the circumstance , there's something wrong with it. (lines 3-5)	Regardless of/ irrespective of the situation/ conditions/ plight , we will still complain/ we are never satisfied. OR (inferred) We will complain about everything .

Notes

Question type: inferential/paraphrase

3. **Using your own words as far as possible**, explain the irony in lines 7-9. (2m)

From the passage	Paraphrased/Inferred
the gods of our own private universe, entitled to the exact conditions we desire.. (lines 7-8)	As gods, we feel we should have supreme authority/be sovereign/ in total control. OR As gods, we are supposed to get everything we want. (1m) <i>Note: subject must be people, not gods.</i>
- gods who happen to spend the bulk of each day griping about things over which we have absolutely no control. (lines 8-9)	(inferred) Yet/However/But , we have power over none of the things we want/we are not in control. (1m)

Notes

Question type: irony

4. Identify and explain the author's tone in the use of the word 'bravo' (line 16). **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2m)

From the passage	Inferred/ Paraphrased
Bravo. (line 16)	(inferred) The author is mocking / being sarcastic / condescending / patronising .
And sometimes they become a pitiful kind of competition , (line 14)	<i>She feels that complaints become a...</i> pathetic / wretched / dismal rivalry,
...where the person with the most trying set of complaints wins, and gets the satisfaction (line 14-15)	...where one celebrates in / derives glee/contentment/delight from
...of having proven that his situation is the hardest to deal with . (line 15-16)	...a situation that is the most miserable / most difficult / most challenging .

1-2 pts= 1m

3-4 pts= 2m

Notes

Question type: literary device/tone question

5. What does the author mean by the phrase 'the classic trump card of all complaints' (line 18)? (2m)

From the passage	Inferred
...the classic ... (line 18)	She means it is a commonly used / frequently cited / stereotypical / overused / age-old ... (1m)
... trump card of all complaints (line 18)	...and the most convincing/effective rebuttal/criticism/retort to any complaint. (1m) <i>Note: must contain a superlative, not merely an intense degree</i>

Notes

Question type: vocabulary

6. What is the author's intention when she uses the illustration of 'a simple Google search' (line 25)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

From the passage	Paraphrased/Inferred
The countless similar search results are at least enough to indicate that if you are the frazzled... you are far from alone (lines 27- 29)	The author's intention is to show the pervasiveness/ widespread nature of the problem (of complaining/whining) . <i>Note: Do not accept "complaining/whining is pervasive" as this does not indicate that complaining is something people see as problematic/needing a solution. We will accept "the problem is pervasive".</i> OR The author's intention is to show that many people are also having the same/common experience/ experiencing the same problems with regard to/ concerning parenting. <i>Note: The answer must include the context of similar problems or experiences. Eg. Do not accept: "many people have made similar searches online."</i>

Notes

Question type: inferential/paraphrase

7. What is meant by the term 'pocket-sized dictator' (line 28)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2m)

From the passage	Paraphrased/Inferred
If you are the parent of a pocket-sized (line 28)	Although children are tiny / petite / small in size , (1m)
(pocket sized) dictator (line 28)	(inferred) ...they exert much power / control over their parents. OR ...they insist on getting their way. (1m) <i>Note: subject must be the child, not the parent</i>

Notes

Question type: *paraphrase/inferential*

8. Why does the author say that 'we seem perfectly happy to tolerate the same bellyaching tendencies among adults' (lines 31-32)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2m)

From the passage	Inferred/Paraphrased
The bizarre thing is... (line 31)	(inferred) The author is pointing out the double standards/ hypocrisy of parents, who... OR (inferred) It is ironic/contradictory that parents
We seem perfectly happy to tolerate the same bellyaching tendencies among adults In fact, we relish them (lines 31- 32)	on the one hand enjoy/delight in/revel in the act of complaining to fellow adults OR put up with/stand/accommodate the complaining of fellow adults
For parents the clear problem is whining and the desired outcome is silence...Just after the exhausted parent tries and fails to get her whiny child to pipe down...(lines 32-33)	...but refuse to accept/put up with/ bear with the tantrums of children.

1-2 points = 1m
3 points = 2m

Notes

Question type: *inferential*

9. Why does the author call our complaints 'self-fulfilling prophecies' (line 41)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (2m)

From the passage	Paraphrased
Therein lies the problem: by so speaking our discontent readily, we turn our grievances into self-fulfilling prophecies. (lines 40-41)	(a) This is because by articulating/grumbling/moaning/whining/ranting voicing our displeasure/dissatisfaction , <i>Note: Answer must contain aspect of discontent, but discontent will not be counted as a lift.</i>
We give them power over us, and they shape our beliefs about our realities , (lines 41-42)	(b) we lose control/are overwhelmed by these [negative] sentiments. OR (b) we allow these [negative] sentiments to control/influence our thought about our situations.
causing us to grouse all the more . The resulting depression and anxiety come not from outside of us, but from <i>within</i> . (lines 42-43)	(c) Doing so exacerbates /leads to more / increased / intensified / misery / agony / angst / grief / sadness / moodiness within ourselves. (c) Doing so leads to more complaining / moaning/ whining . <i>Note: Points (a) and (b) must capture the negativity of the situation.</i> <i>Students are not required to paraphrase 'more.'</i>

1-2 points = 1m

3 points = 2m

Notes

Question type: 3pts 2m, literal/paraphrase/process (cause-link-effect)

From Passage 2:

10. Identify an adverb in lines 9-10 that accurately reflects the use of complaints as described in Passage 1. (1m)

From the passage	Inferred
...and we can do so petulantly, aggressively, calmly, pointlessly or constructively.	The adverb is 'petulantly' OR 'pointlessly.'

Notes

Question type: vocabulary/two-passage comparison/thematic summary

11. Using material from paragraphs 2-6, summarise the various perceptions of complaints. 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. Complaints are perceived as...**

No	Possible Points	No	Possible Paraphrase
1	At the root of every complaint... (line 8) OR ...the precondition for complaint...(line 15)	1	something that arises from/is built upon
2	...is a sense (line 8) OR ...is a belief (line 15)	2	the feeling/conviction that...
3	... that things are not as they ought to be (lines 8-9) OR ... that things are not as they should be , (line 15) OR ...the changes they brought about all began with a complaint that the status quo was wrong (line 30)	3	something is not meeting expectations/ not satisfactory/ that there are imperfections/ failings/faults in existing norms/circumstances. (Note: Point 2 is awarded for the feeling whereas Point 3 is awarded for the imperfections/ non-meeting of expectations)
4	To complain is to speak out against this (line 9) OR ...even if that something is no more than articulating the fault. (lines 13-14) OR ...but simply to describe . (line 19) OR Likewise, a committed pessimist may also like frequently to comment on what's wrong with everything (lines 19-20)	4	Complaints are a way to voice/express/declare our opinions on certain issues. OR For many people, complaints are merely an observation/a diagnosis/critique .
5	petulantly, aggressively, calmly, pointlessly or constructively (lines 9-10)	5	(inferred) ...there are many ways to complain. OR We can complain positively or negatively . (Note: only accept as a literal paraphrase if all 5 adverbs are included. For "people complain childishly" award point 19 only.)
6	It does not even matter whether we are truly upset by what we perceive to be wrong. (line 10)	6	Complaints do not depend on our actual feelings towards the problem. (Note: a more literal paraphrase is acceptable)
7	Many people are never happier than when they get the opportunity to complain (line 11)	7	Complaining can even be satisfying/ pleasurable/ enjoyable .
8	Complaint occurs when we refuse to accept that things are wrong and try to do something about it , (lines 12-13) OR ...but again this is not really complaint because it lacks a non-acceptance of what is wrong. (line 20)	8	The author perceives true complaints as a means to address/take action against a problem. (Note: students must express what non-acceptance is, i.e. action taken.)
9	...while others are deeply unhappy with how things are, but just accept it . (line 12) OR For example, a stoic may believe that it is important to accept the imperfection of the world, and so to recognise that things are not as they ought to be, would for her, be not to complain... (lines 15-18)	9	(inferred) Some people perceive complaints to serve no purpose/ to be useless/ futile .
10	You don't just complain <i>about</i> something, you complain to someone or something ... (line 22)	10	We expect a third party/ a person ...
11	...hurling our rage about it into the empty air, as though someone should be listening and taking note . (lines 26-27)	11	... to acknowledge/ give some attention to our complaints
12	...as a criterion for identifying genuine	12	Real complaints are sometimes indistinguishable

	complaints, this is hard to apply, (line 23) OR ...can be hard to identify . (line 25)		from fake ones...
13	...because often what we direct our complaints to is entirely abstract : God, the fates fortunes or just the universe. Such generalised directedness... (24-25)	13	...as our complaints are often directed to an intangible/ vague entity.
14	All major social advances have started with a complaint (line 28) OR It has driven human society forward ... (line 35) OR ...the status quo was wrong and needed to be changed (lines 30-31)	14	Complaints can precipitate civil/communal/societal progress . OR Complaint has also propelled/ advanced/ improved mankind OR Complaint has corrected/ redeemed/ improved society. (Note: focus of this point is on general change for the better or progress.)
15	The act of complaining is hence not what is fundamental to complaint: it is a symptom, not the disease itself. Just as the severity (p16) of a medical complaint should be measured (p15) not by how loudly it draws attention (p16) to itself but by the extent to which the body really is damaged, so we should not mistake (p15) the loudness (p16) of a complaint for its seriousness (p16). (lines 31-34)	15	(inferred) Complaints do not necessarily reflect/ signify/ express/ indicate/ suggest ... OR Complaints are often misread as signifying ...
16		16	grave/grim/trying/challenging circumstances.
17	Complaint has a noble history (line 35)	17	The act of complaining has a glorious/distinguished/respected past
18	...and led to the abolition of systemic injustice (lines 35-36)	18	which has led to the removal/ end of (deep-seated) iniquity/inequality/unfairness
19	...it is now primarily associated with inconsequential moans and frivolous litigation (lines 36-37)	19	(although) it is now characterised by/ correlated primarily with insignificant/ unimportant grumbles/grouses OR trivial/petty/paltry/trifling arguments, (Note: this point is distinct from point 5 "pointlessly" as it emphasises the perception of how complaint is predominantly employed now.)
20	...the grievance culture that infects America and Britain is just the latest and most striking example of how complaint can go wrong. (lines 37-38)	20	giving rise to an unhealthy societal trend of griping/grumbling/objection in America and Britain OR (inferred) Complaints today undermine/harm/threaten society .

No. of Points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10-11	12	13+
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

12. What is the author's meta-complaint (line 39)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** (1m)

From the passage	Paraphrase
What I'm offering is a kind of meta-complaint: that people tend to complain about the wrong things for the wrong reasons ...and that, as a result, complaining has been debased .	People complain about issues that do not matter . OR Complaining has been degraded/ corrupted/ spoilt/ incorrectly used/ misused/ abused . <i>Note: Accept any reasonable paraphrase of "wrong things for the wrong reasons." For the first option, do accept answers that use the word "things."</i>

13. In Passage 1, Katherine Boyce argues that complaining is not constructive, while in Passage 2, Julian Baggini supports the use of complaints for progress. With reference to the ideas raised by the authors, consider the use of complaints in your society. (10)

Requirement:

Students should

- a) consider if the authors' observations are applicable to their society
- b) support their views with reasoned arguments
- c) show understanding of the ideas and views raised in the passage

Explanation:

Discuss some of the following in relation to their own society –

- a) Is there a tendency for people to engage in unconstructive complaints?
- b) Are there instances of situations where complaints serve an important purpose?
- c) Does the act of complaining allow for progress in your society?
- d) Does your society have specific avenues to channel these complaints beneficially?
- e) Does your society take its strengths and comforts for granted and complain about seemingly trivial issues?
- f) Can the act of collective complaint strengthen the fabric of the nation?
- g) Is complaint the most effective way of providing leaders with feedback?
- h) Does the act of complaining perpetuate negativity and discontent?

Evaluation:

- a) Offer reasons for their arguments, giving insight into their society's characteristics (context).
- b) Give examples from their society's experience in support of their views.

Coherence:

- a) Adopt a consistent viewpoint.
- b) Argue logically.
- c) Organise their answers into cohesive, themed paragraphs.
- d) Link paragraphs to show continuity and direction of argument.
- e) Maintain relevance to the task in everything they write.
- f) End with a summative or clearly concluding paragraph/sentence.

13. In Passage 1, Katherine Boyce argues that complaining is not constructive, while in Passage 2, Julian Baggini supports the use of complaints for progress. With reference to the ideas raised by the authors, consider the use of complaints in your society.

Passage 1: Katherine Boyce argues that complaining is not constructive.

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Constructive	Not constructive
<p>Claim: Whining is commonplace and an unpleasant and sorry habit of the modern man.</p> <p>“A tragic phenomenon has swept the modern world. Every day, miserable souls feel themselves the victim of great injustices. The world is simply not as it should be, and the only way to adequately cope with that reality...is constant whining.” (lines 1-3)</p>	<p>Is whining an epidemic in your society? Do people in your society overestimate how legitimate their complaints truly are?</p>	<p>There is general consensus amongst Singaporeans that we are a people who are quick to lament about/criticise an array of issues ranging from the trivial/personal to that of national concerns. That being said, these utterances are not unfounded and many of which points to social concerns that warrant attention and improvement. E.g. transportation (SMRT failure), cost of living (ERP charges, housing, medical care etc.)</p>	<p>The frequency and prevalence of such a culture may only perpetuate frustration, angst and displeasure if no further action is taken by both the people and authorities.</p>
<p>Claim: Human beings need to assert control on their circumstances. Acts of complaining are an extension of/ manifestation of that desire to be in control.</p> <p>“We feel ourselves the gods of our own private universe, entitled to the exact conditions we desire...” (lines 7-8)</p> <p>“There is truly nothing sillier than complaining about what we can't change.” (lines 9-10)</p>	<p>How do people in your society seek control in their lives? Is there evidence of such behavior expressed through complaints of all types and intensities?</p> <p>Do people in your society complain about things which they cannot change?</p>	<p>In this age of technology and greater connectedness, more Singaporeans are taking to social media to voice their displeasure/grouses or seek redress to their queries and doubts E.g. Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, blogs etc. With the ‘comment’ function, it is possible for like-minded individuals to find a community to rally attention for their cause or discontent. E.g. The recent haze situation saw online users come together to organize themselves to distribute N95 masks to the poorer households and construction workers.</p>	<p>In many cases, the complaining spirit can be impulsive and emotional, and not always met with constructive action. In their attempt to vent their frustration, angered, derogatory and hurtful words can be used irresponsibly. Coupled with exaggerated or twisted facts, the complaints can potentially be socially irresponsible and divisive.</p>
<p>Claim: Many people see complaining as a helpful expression of discontent / articulation of grief and unhappiness, to gain attention, sympathy etc.</p> <p>“The purpose of these complaints is not to change anything at all, but simply to vent” (lines 11-12)</p> <p>“...acts as a cathartic outlet for the pent-up strain and anxiety...” (line 12)</p> <p>“sometimes they become a pitiful kind of competition, where the person with the most trying set of complaints wins, and gets the</p>	<p>How do people in your society express their grief? Do people in your society complain merely to “vent”? How prevalent is this culture of venting in your country?</p> <p>What are existing channels for complaints/critical feedback to be aired and heard? How effective are these channels?</p> <p>Can complaining be used as a kind of bragging/to gain attention or sympathy?</p>	<p>E.g. online appeal to rally support for the recent MDA revised regulation to tighten control on online blogs</p> <p>E.g. Government officials, political leaders from both the ruling PAP and the Workers’ Party have Facebook accounts to ‘connect’ and establish ground-feel and ‘hear’ from their constituents.</p>	<p>E.g. Amy Cheong’s Facebook post on the noise generated from the customary void-deck setting of Malay weddings</p> <p>E.g. STOMP users’ trigger-happy snapshots of unaware members of public, in the name of citizen journalism to draw awareness to disgraceful public misconduct, which often bear no consideration to the individuals whose privacy may be intruded without their knowledge</p> <p>E.g. Even with the attempts by leaders and politicians to reach out, the genuine intent can be met by mud-slinging, defamatory slurs thrown by malicious online users, meant only to cause hurt, embarrass, and sadly offer no concrete constructive advice (i.e. some netizens in “The Online Citizen”, “The Real Singapore” groups).</p>

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Constructive	Not constructive
satisfaction of having proven that his situation is the hardest to deal with..." (lines 13-16)			
<p>Claim: The validity of the complaint is dependent upon the relative circumstances of one's life.</p> <p>"...contentment is a matter of relativity. (One) should never measure (one's) lot against what (one) wish it was, but consider instead what a horror it could have been, and luckily isn't." (lines 19-20)</p>	<p>Relative to other nations, do Singaporeans have cause to complain?</p> <p>Are there moments and situations where people in your country are humbled/embarrassed by the shallowness of their discontent when compared to other societies and nations? Consider this at various levels of society (individuals/groups/communities etc.)</p>	<p>Again, in an increasingly connected world, the online media has allowed the news and events of other countries and societies to enter the consciousness of Singaporeans instantaneously. E.g. suffering, hunger, poverty/financial challenges, social injustices, civil and political unrest (Middle East nations: Egypt, Syria); economic turmoil: Spain, Portugal etc. Third World nations in Africa etc.</p> <p>Comparing to these nations and situations, Singaporeans seem much better off in their daily experience and thus, can/may/should be humbled by such knowledge and perhaps be more appreciative and content. As such, even as Singaporeans observe imperfections in our systems, our privileged position should inspire us to be more constructive in seeking change for the betterment for our people when other nations are still saddled with more rudimentary survival and infrastructural issues.</p>	<p>It is an individual's prerogative and choice to decide how one feels and reacts to information. Having knowledge of other social realities may not impact many Singaporeans at all, as they feel themselves too removed from these concerns in other parts of the world, Such apathy, indifference and even ignorance by choice might then translate into continued griping, lamentation and cynicism.</p>
<p>Claim: Complaining is part of human nature/human condition.</p> <p>"Maybe it is human nature to complain." (line 25)</p> <p>"It seems we do not grow out of our penchant for whining." (line 35)</p>	<p>Is complaining more affected by nature or by one's environment/circumstances?</p>	<p>Singaporeans/people of all cultures and backgrounds complain often due to the sense of injustice, discomfort, and displeasure in specific matters, circumstances or about certain issues. These moments may not be long term and can improve with time.</p> <p>'E.g. haze, inconvenience caused by malfunction of services, minor disruption etc.</p> <p>More often than not, peace and order are restored with conciliatory adjustments and compromise made by the parties involved.</p>	<p>Nonetheless, there are people of more critical and bitter disposition and temperaments who may overindulge their sense of personal justice. Their threshold for accepting differences and injustice is very low. Hence, complaining can be sadly, a way of their lives and this may well perpetuate a vicious cycle of negativity, possibly leading to isolation, social awkwardness and anti-social behavior.</p>

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Constructive	Not constructive
<p>Claim: The problem is not people's circumstances, but rather our negative outlook/attitude towards life.</p> <p>"The tragedy is not the things we face, but the fact that we seem so unable to just face them." (line 23)</p> <p>"...it is that no matter the circumstances, we will complain." (line 40)</p>	<p>Is Singapore characterised by people who are predisposed to complain, no matter what?</p> <p>Do Singaporeans have legitimate tragedies to face?</p>	<p>While there are citizens in Singapore who have a tendency to lament cynically, this may be beneficial to the nation's progress as leaders (in politics or organizational sectors) are kept alert and do not become complacent in the pursuit of sustained excellence.</p> <p>E.g. Singapore's national blue-prints for the future – White Paper 2030, revision to educational policies (PSLE grading & Primary 1 entry criteria), development and reorganisation of the urban space (Changi Airport, Paya Lebar Airbase and the Tanjong Pagar Container Ports)</p>	<p>Vapid and petulant complaining and whining in Singapore hinder the progress of the country while perpetrating a myopic culture of distrust, angst and lacking of gratitude for all that the nation has achieved and offered thus far.</p> <p>To these bitterly skeptical Singaporeans, their own emotional and psychological well-being may also be further compromised by the perceived sense of despair, hopelessness and fatality.</p> <p>E.g. increasing trend of Singaporeans migrating to other 'greener pastures' given their perceived imperfections in the country; young couples choosing not have children as they are jaded by the stress levels of the education system and work-life imbalance</p>
<p>Claim: We are responsible for creating/perpetuating our own depression.</p> <p>"by speaking our discontent so readily, we turn our grievances into self-fulfilling prophecies." (lines 40-41)</p>	<p>To what extent are we responsible for our own depression?</p> <p>Does Singapore's culture of expressing discontent perpetuate an unhappy culture/ a culture of cynicism?</p>		
<p>Claim: The key to overcoming discontent is not to complain at all, but to change our outlook/attitude to one of strength and positivity.</p> <p>"...Perhaps joy is not a feeling at all, but a response and a mind-set. Such a stable attitude equips us with an appetite for the realities of life just as they come, instead of how we feel they should." (lines 45-47)</p> <p>"...if we can only learn to escape the dissatisfied psychology... and learn instead to steadily and resiliently take things just as they are." (lines 48-49)</p>	<p>To what extent are we responsible for our own happiness?</p> <p>Consider the alternatives to complaining as a means of handling life's difficulties.</p>		

Passage 2: Julian Bagгинi believes that complaining can bring progress.

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Useful for Progress	Not Useful for Progress
<p>Claim: The current culture of complaint is often about insignificant/unimportant matters.</p> <p>“Think of the word ‘complaint’ and you are likely to conjure images of moaning, whining rants about mainly trivial matters” (lines 1-2)</p> <p>“Complaining has become a pastime of the resigned and the nostalgic. It has even become something of a leisure activity.” (lines 3-4)</p> <p>“Complaining has become synonymous with moaning.” (line 7)</p>	<p>Do Singaporeans complain about issues that do not matter/ are seemingly trivial?</p> <p>Is complaining the norm in Singapore? Do we see moaning as something that we do for fun regardless of whether a situation is trivial or serious in nature?</p> <p>Has a culture of complaint permeated your society? Do people tend to complain about seemingly inconsequential matters?</p>	<p>The culture of complaining, while being focused primarily on inconsequential things, is actually collectively powerful and helpful in bonding society together as a whole. It is a form of social commiseration which brings people together.</p>	<p>There may be a generational difference in the way in which complains are perceived, more so as the older generation have lived through the struggles of war and the establishment of national identity, as opposed to the younger generation who have not faced similar situations.</p> <p>The older generation might also be indulging in a meta-complaint, when they label the younger generation a “strawberry generation,” who resort to constantly complaining because they are not as resilient as their predecessors.</p> <p>Complaining as a thoughtless activity may not be useful if it breeds a culture of couch critics and arm-chair intellectuals. Hence treating the act of complaining as a casual act could be very passive and regressive, as opposed to embracing change or actively seeking solutions to problems. (Eg. rants on blogs, online forums)</p>
<p>Claim: The ultimate purpose of complaint is to seek change and improvement.</p> <p>“Complaint occurs when we refuse to accept that things are wrong and try to do something about it, even if that something is no more than articulating the fault.” (lines 12-13)</p> <p>“Complaint is doubly transitive: You don’t just complain about something, you complain to someone or something.” (lines 20-21)</p>	<p>Does the act of complaining rectify errors?</p> <p>Do Singaporeans use complaint as a means to improve matters?</p> <p>Are there specific organisations/avenues which one can approach with specific complaints? Are these complaints actively rectified and do they affect society at large?</p>	<p>Complaints can definitely be used to address and rectify certain perceived social failures and evils, especially if they are channeled in the right direction, for example, if they are voiced to people who have the power to implement change.</p> <p>E.g. The outcry amongst Singaporeans after the major MRT breakdowns in December 2011 as well as subsequent failure of the system was seen as a wake-up call for SMRT as well as SBS Transit.</p> <p>E.g. Singapore’s ongoing campaign of “National Conversations. (One Singapore Conversation)” is a prime example of constructive complaining, as complaint takes on the form of feedback to and fruitful dialogue with the Government. This might lead to raising awareness about a plethora of problematic issues which might then be</p>	<p>There might be those who feel that without rectification, a complaint is just a useless whine, and mere articulation might lead to a domino effect, with everybody just piling on to the list of complaints, without any attempt at seeking out solutions.</p> <p>Citizens have a legitimate right to complain about valid issues, but there might be times when this venting might degenerate into nit-picking for the mere sake of it, to create problems for the leaders.</p> <p>E.g. Complaints may be pointless when there are no solutions in sight, such as the land space in Singapore, though land is being reclaimed to expand territory.</p> <p>E.g. In the wake of the recent haze situation, complaining would have been pointless, owing to the fact that it was something which</p>

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Useful for Progress	Not Useful for Progress
		acted upon (e.g. giving Singaporeans priority for housing and educational scholarships). Hence, this form of complaint may be vital for the survival of a democracy, as the voices of the citizens are heard.	the leaders of the nation had little control over. The situation needed to be handled with constructive solutions, and not complaints.
<p>Claim: Complaints do not necessarily have to be loud and sensational.</p> <p>“The act of complaining is hence not what is fundamental to complaint: it is a symptom, not the disease itself... we should not mistake the loudness of a complaint for its seriousness.” (lines 32-34)</p>	<p>Are there some complaints in Singapore which have taken the limelight by dint of being the loudest?</p> <p>Do these eclipse or overshadow more important, yet quieter, complaints?</p> <p>Are our complaints always valid?</p>	<p>Perhaps the people who complain about seemingly trivial matters see real potential for danger in these apparently small issues. Maybe they wish to protect their national culture and heritage, which they feel might be diluted owing to the excessive influx of foreigners.</p> <p>E.g. Events such as candle-light vigils, protest marches, Pink-Dot project, suspension of online sites during recent protest against MDA’s revised regulation of online news-sites. Also, the use of blogs, and other social networking sites to address social issues</p>	<p>Sometimes excessive complaining by large crowds of people could create a situation of unnecessary and harmful panic, and this could adversely affect the morale of a nation, owing to the ‘power in numbers.’</p>
<p>Claim: The act of constructive complaint can serve as a catalyst to large-scale social changes.</p> <p>“All major social advances have started with a complaint.” (line 28)</p> <p>“It has driven human society forward and led to the abolition of systematic injustice.” (lines 35-36)</p>	<p>Consider instances where complaint has revealed deeper concern leading to a positive change in your society.</p>	<p>Some forms of complaint do unify the fabric of a nation and reinforce certain values which Singapore holds dear. Racial harmony is a defining feature of Singapore’s national fabric, and it is important to complain against words or actions which threaten to de-stabilise this notion.</p> <p>E.g. There was wide-spread complaint against Amy Cheong, who passed racist remarks about a particular community on Facebook. The complaints against her strengthened Singapore’s forte as a multi-cultural society based on mutual respect and harmony.</p>	<p>One could well be labeled as a “rebel without a cause” if one develops a tendency to rant about each and every issue, and this would trivialise the act and reflect poorly on one’s prioritisation skills.</p>
<p>Claim: Complaint has an honourable legacy.</p> <p>“Complaint has a noble history.” (line 35)</p>	<p>What are some instances of complaint’s noble histories in Singapore?</p> <p>Are complaints in Singapore ever used for malicious or ignoble agendas?</p>	<p>Complaint might be a valuable platform for addressing a host of social ills and it empowers citizens with a voice and engages with government leaders about key issues.</p> <p>E.g. Voicing views on the Government’s White Paper, voicing concerns about the high housing prices and demands, giving</p>	<p>The nature of complaints can become very abrasive and corrosive sometimes, and genuine concerns can degenerate into racism, narrow-mindedness and Xenophobia.</p> <p>E.g. Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew once cited the example of Japan, while addressing NTU students, of how Japan had let its</p>

References (Key Ideas)	Guiding Questions / Discussion Issues	Useful for Progress	Not Useful for Progress
		<p>feedback on civic amenities.</p> <p>E.g. Complaining about major issues such as income inequality might bring the plight of segments of society to the notice of government leaders.</p>	<p>society stagnate by refusing to accept foreign integration into their nation. An issue such as foreign talent might be looked upon negatively owing to the increased competition for jobs and resources, but through only complaining, we might miss out on the benefits of this synthesis.</p>
<p>Claim: Complaining is an essential part of human nature.</p> <p>“I hope to demonstrate that complaint can be constructive. Indeed, our ability to complain is part and parcel of what makes us human.” (lines 41-42)</p>	<p>With reference to Boyce’s argument on complaining as a negative inherent quality of human nature, consider whether complaining is instead a positive aspect of being human.</p>	<p>While Boyce sees complaining as stemming from human cynicism, they could also be born out of a fundamental human desire to analyse and question for progress. There are different stages to the act of complaining; the same person could take an act of complaint further.</p> <p>Complaint aids us to assert our opinions, our personalities and our ideologies. In that way, it does indeed render us human, because it shows the world and indeed ourselves what we stand for, which values are vital to us and what we dislike.</p> <p>E.g. Those who are passionate about preserving local food culture might complain against the rapid proliferation of Western fast food chains in Singapore, often referred to as “McDomination/McDonalised.”</p> <p>E.g. The pet lovers who are active campaigners for the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), humanitarian aspects are upheld on behalf of the species that have no voice to raise concerns.</p>	<p>While the act of complaining might be necessary to assert our opinions on matters, people might reveal certain prejudices and extreme viewpoints, through it. This might not lead to harmonious outcomes.</p>