

NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE
2023 SH2 Preliminary Examination
Paper 2 Answer Scheme (Teacher's Copy)

1. From the examples of Bill Gates and Beethoven in Paragraph 1, what do the authors suggest about rituals? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

	Lift	Paraphrase
1	"more idiosyncratic",	They are implying that rituals practised by successful people are (extremely) unique/ peculiar quirks/ habits/ preferences/ differs from person to person
2	"very particular", "counted exactly"	The precision/ specificity of rituals
3	"power his composing"	[Inference] primes/motivates/helps people to achieve their goals. DNA: successful
Any 2 points for 2m. Inference should be made from the entire chunk of text including pt 3.		

2. In lines 12 - 14, why does the brain "attribute success to something as arbitrary as" rituals? Use your own words as far as possible. [1]

	Lift	Paraphrase
1	The brain is constantly looking for associations between two events . OR While it is mostly correct, it sometimes mistakes coincidence for causality .	The mind is always seeking connections between two occurrences/ happenings. OR But occasionally, the mind erroneously/wrongly assumes that one random event led to the other/ what happened by chance/incidentally is the actual reason for another occurrence.

3. Using materials from paragraphs 3 - 6 only (lines 19-60); summarise what the authors have to say about the benefits of superstitious learning and why people adopt them.

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. [8]

Superstitious learning is beneficial because

	Lift	Paraphrase
	[Benefits of superstitious learning]	
1	By giving us a sense of self-determination ... (line 20)	it can make us feel like we have autonomy over our lives
2	...can help us to overcome anxiety (line 22) (related idea) We often rely on such rituals when we are anxious (lines 24-25)	and can conquer any unease OR when we are nervous
3	and may even bring about a noticeable boost in performance. (lines 22-23)	resulting in a recognisable enhancement/rise/increase
4	which in turn can improve our performance (line 27)	in achievements/ accomplishments/ overall effectiveness [Idea of improvement can be credited in EITHER pt 3 or 4. Do not double penalise.]
5	It offers psychological benefits that logic and science cannot always provide (lines 23-24)	better emotional/mental well-being/ wellness.
6	...a sense of control (line 24) ...produce an illusion of control (line 26)(which in turn can improve our performance - pt4)	feeling of power/ that we can take charge in our lives
7	and a sense of meaning (line 24)	and purpose DNA: value
8	We (often rely on such rituals when we are anxious or) want to perform well (lines 24-25)	Rituals are helpful when we desire to excel/ be successful
9	enhance self-confidence (line 27)	We trust ourselves more/ believe in ourselves more/ have greater faith in ourselves / bolsters our self-belief <i>Accept 'self-esteem', 'self-worth'</i>
10	and thus indirectly affect our fate (line 28)	and inadvertently influences our destiny DNA: outcome, results
	[Why people adopt rituals]	

11	implicit learning - the brain's ability to non-consciously pick up patterns – <u>can explain why some people are more likely to form superstitious habits</u> (lines 32-33)	As our brain automatically/unintentionally identifies trends/repetitions Accept lift for 'consciously' (including sub-consciously, unconsciously). DNA: tendency
12	<u>Creative tasks are especially rife with uncertainty</u> (line 36) ... adopted to get their thoughts flowing (line 38)	[Inferred] Performing rituals allows for assurance/ peace of mind/ sense of stability , allowing for <u>greater focus on the process of creating/ so that ideas can come smoothly</u> . <i>Context of creativity must be present.</i>
13	... often find fallacious reasons for their <u>successes and failures</u> . (line 42)	People frequently make false inferences/ draw illogical associations for their achievements and downfalls,
14	They will then pass on that advice to their colleagues and students - meaning that others will start to adopt the same arbitrary rules when preparing and submitting papers (lines 43-45)	influencing others/ sharing their rituals/ and learn rituals from each other
15	humans are social creatures; we are primed to look to people of higher status for advice (lines 50-51)	because we are predisposed to seek guidance from individuals of elevated standing .
16	we have a tendency to "over-imitate" when we learn from others, copying every action they perform , (lines 52- 53)	We exhibit a propensity/an inclination to excessively replicate/ mimic during the learning process/ every action they undertake,
17	even if there is no obvious logical reason for a particular deed (line 53)	despite there being no apparent rationale/ rational justification for a specific action.
18	we simply do not even question the reason for doing something - (line 54)	We blindly accept the need for performing an action, without even considering the rationale behind it, DNA: purpose
19	we just assume it must have a purpose (lines 54-55)	taking for granted the objective/ and presume/ suppose it has meaning DNA: reason
20	Given this tendency...we are tempted to take on their idiosyncratic <u>rites and rituals</u>	With this inclination , we feel enticed to adopt the habits/ customs of successful people,
21	in the hope that we can somehow achieve the same success (lines 55-58)	wishing that we can potentially attain similar accomplishments.

22	without recognising how many other factors - including sheer chance - would have played a role in their achievements. (lines 58-60)	causing us to be blind/ little acknowledgement of various/multitude of other factors , including pure luck, that could have contributed to their accomplishments.
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1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15 and above
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

4. What do the authors imply by using the word “religiously” (line 64)? [1]

	Lift	Inference
1	One 2020 study of Swedish biotech companies found that two CEOs who had come to associate certain marketing strategies with success religiously repeated the same steps in their new start-ups - even though there was no logical reason to think that the specific approach could work again.	The authors imply that the two CEOs had replicated the marketing strategies that they assumed were associated with the achievements of other new companies consistently/ habitually / conscientiously
2		blindly// without questioning the process/options/reasons.
<i>Both parts needed for 1m.</i>		

5. In line 68, why does Nordman suggest that we should “remain suspicious” when making decisions? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

	Lift Paraphrase	Inference
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1	"when spurious associations influence high-level decision-making... "	When we make crucial/difficult decisions according to/ affected/ guided by our own unsubstantiated line of reasoning/ without rationale... DNA: "important" (lift) Allow lift: "decision"
2	"...superstitious learning may be costly. "	This could result in larger implications and consequences / the price we pay could be high.
3	"even though there was no logical reason to think that the specific approach could work again. "	The same method will not allow us to succeed again.
Any 2 points for 2m.		

6. Explain the authors' **use of** parenthesis in lines 69 - 70. [1]

	Lift	Inference
1	Often, however, the rituals that we acquire take very little effort. (There's no real harm, after all, in counting your coffee beans, apart from a slight waste of time.)	Function: The authors are adding/ including their opinion OR The authors are using the parenthesis to indicate an aside/ sidenote DNA: emphasise/ elaborate/ illustrate (These refer to the function of the words within the parenthesis, rather than the parenthesis itself.)
2		Context: <u>that counting of coffee beans</u> is indeed an insignificant activity/ does not take much effort/ indeed has no detriment/negative impact. OR to make light of the coffee bean counters.
<p><i>Note: The function of the authors' use of parenthesis must be included. It is insufficient to simply say that "the words in the parenthesis are not part of the main argument".</i></p> <p><i>Both function and context required for 1m.</i></p>		

7. What do the authors imply about people who do not "divide their life into chapters" (lines 74-75)? [2]

	Lift	Inference
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1	Many wise people divide their life into chapters ,	Characteristic: <i>Between what wise and unwise people do:</i> The authors imply that people who <u>do not</u> think of their lives as being made up of different stages/ milestones/ who see their lives as a whole OR The authors imply that such people are not enlightened/ lacking foresight/ foolish DNA: unwise/ lack wisdom (same root word)
2	and they focus on the big question of what this chapter is for.	[Inferred] Implication/ why they lack the foresight: and therefore they only think about the ‘now’/ not reflective/ unable to see the big picture/ unable to appreciate the overall purpose of actions they engage in/ plan ahead/work towards their life goals/ and how the life stage is significant for the rest of their lives/ links to other parts of their lives.
Unpacking of “divide their life into chapters” is meant to provide context to understand WHY they are unable to see the big picture.		

8. According to the authors in lines 70 -76, what are **three** benefits of engaging in rituals? Use your own words as far as possible. [3]

	Lift	Paraphrase
1	...the very act of performing the routine could help you feel more focused and determined.	Engaging in the regular practice itself might contribute to an enhanced/greater/increased sense of concentration and resolve,
2	Rituals provide comfort because they remind us we are not alone. Billions of people have done this before as part of the timeless passages of life.	offer solace by telling us that/ serving as a prompt that we are not solitary.
3	Rituals also force a pause.	Rituals make us stop /take a break
4	Rituals encourage you to be <u>more intentional about life.</u>	and motivate/ prompt us to approach life with greater purpose and deliberation.
Any 3 out of 4		

9. Why do the authors compare the act of engaging in small rituals to the “placebo effect in medicine” (line 86)? [2]

Lift	Inference
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1	In some ways, it is a bit like the placebo effect in medicine – the sense that you are doing something positive can itself change the outcome.	<u>Just as how</u> consuming medicine regardless of its actual effectiveness can sometimes make a person feel better simply because we are psychologically duped into believing that we are doing what needs to be done to feel better,
2		engaging in small rituals <u>can have a similar effect</u> , as it brings us a false sense of security that we are making the right steps towards achieving success.
<i>1m for explanation of 'placebo effect', 1m for reason. Answers need to recognise the relationship (similarity) between the 'placebo effect in medicine' and 'engaging in small rituals'.</i>		

10. Explain why the authors assert that “we need not be embarrassed by the little rituals that pepper our days” (lines 88 - 89). Use your own words as far as possible. [3]

	Lift	Paraphrase
1	We need not be embarrassed by the little rituals that pepper our days;	[Inferred] Despite the fact that the rituals we engage in may be illogical/ irrational/ peculiar
2	if the action costs nothing	if/ provided that/ on the condition that the ritual has no dire consequences
3	and helps you to feel a bit more in control of your day,	and (if) it actually gives you a sense of direction <i>Recognition of the conditional “if” must be present either in pts 2 or 3 ONCE. No double penalty.</i>
4	it is perfectly rational to continue.	it is reasonable / acceptable to keep doing it
5	your arbitrary rituals may just push you a little a bit closer to the success you seek.	for these rituals help us achieve our dreams/goals.
Any 3 for 3 marks.		

11. David Robson and David Brooks outline why people engage in rituals.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with their observations? Illustrate your answer by referring to the ways in which you and your society regard rituals.