

**ACJC General Paper Department**  
**JC2 Preliminary Exam 2022 Paper 2 Answer Scheme (Post-Exam Package)**

Common errors:

- Wrong: Use of 'amount' for countable nouns - 'amount of people' // Correct: 'number of people'
- Illegibility, marked out as spelling errors, often severely impeded understanding of students' responses.
- Weaker students did not use the present tense in referring to the author's intention or when referencing the author.
- Many students exceeded the stipulated word limit for the summary. Some students even went as far as lying about their total word count.
- In an attempt to optimise the word count, many students compromised on the grammatical accuracy of their answers, e.g. dropping articles ('the', 'an', 'a'), run-on sentences, and artificial combination of sentences with different subjects.

1. How does the author's use of illustration in lines 4–6 show that anxiety is all around us? [1]

From the passage	Inferred
Anxiety is, in 2020, ubiquitous, inescapable, an ambient condition. Anxiety is the topic of pop music (Ariana Grande's <i>Breathin'</i> ), the country's best-selling graphic novel (Raina Telgemeier's <i>Guts</i> ), and a whole cohort's sense of humour (Generation Z's seemingly bottomless appetite for anxiety memes). (lines 3-6)	The author uses examples from different media platforms/ fields to show that everyone is talking about anxiety. OR The author's use of examples shows that anxiety is prevalent/ a dominant theme/ commonly discussed in popular culture.

Question type: *Inference (Use of Example)*

*Examiners' Comments:*

Many students provided generic answers without considering the specific context of popular culture. Weaker responses misinterpreted this as a literal question and merely paraphrased lines 3-6 wholesale.

2. Explain the author's use of the word 'even' in the phrase 'even toddlers are not immune' (line 7). **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Inferred/Paraphrased
Anxiety is on the rise in all age groups, such that even <b>toddlers are not immune</b> . (line 7)	<p><b>Function</b>          The author uses the word 'even' to emphasise the extremity/ severity/ pervasiveness/ great extent of the problem, such that/ so much so that/ to the point that (<i>idea of 'extensiveness'</i>)          OR          The author uses the word 'even' to emphasise how it is surprising that (<i>idea of 'surprising'</i>)</p> <p><b>Context</b>          very young children are also not spared from/ are also affected by anxiety.          OR          toddlers who we do not normally expect to suffer from anxiety also suffer from it.</p> <p><i>NOTE: The subject and significance of 'toddlers' must be accurately captured and explained</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For option 1: Students cannot lift 'toddlers' – Must reflect the fact that they are <b>VERY young</b></li> <li>2. For option 2: Allow for lift of 'toddlers' because the focus here is on what's unexpected regarding them specifically</li> </ol>

Question type: *Use of Vocabulary*

*Examiners' Comments:*

Many students were not sensitive enough to the significance of the toddlers' age group, instead merely thinking that only a paraphrase of 'toddlers' is required. Weaker responses were incomplete, either missing the function or the context. Other students did not contextualise their answers when stating the function. Some students misread the passage and provided answers such as 'toddlers did not experience anxiety in the past'.

3. What does the author's use of the phrase 'Yet far too often' in lines 10-11 suggest about our response to anxiety? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Inferred
Yet far too often (lines 10-11)	The phrase suggests that parents are in many/ most instances/ frequently not reacting to anxiety correctly/ appropriately. OR The phrase suggests that parents should be reacting to anxiety in a particular manner but in many/ most instances, they are not doing so. OR The phrase suggests that parents are over-reacting to anxiety in many/ most instances.
It is a universal and necessary response to stress and uncertainty. (lines 9-10)	While anxiety as a reaction to stress and uncertainty is applicable/relevant in all cases/ widely accepted and is essential/ crucial/critical,
However, anxiety itself is not something to be warded off. (lines 8-9)  Yet far too often, we insulate our children from distress and discomfort entirely. (lines 10-11)	parents instead shield/ protect/ shelter their children from anxiety.

(1-2 points = 1m; 3 points = 2m)

Question type: Use of Vocabulary

*Examiners' Comments:*

Many answers did not reflect an understanding of 'too often'. Better students were able to identify what anxiety was supposed to do (positive traits), before going on to state that parents more often than not, shelter their children from it.

4. Explain two ways in which the author supports her claim in paragraph 6 that females suffer more from anxiety. Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Paraphrase/ Inferred
Research shows that women are twice as likely as men to develop one (line 50)	The author provides evidence/ proof about how women have a higher possibility/ greater propensity/ increased tendency to develop anxiety disorders.
and women's illnesses generally last longer (lines 50-51)	The author provides evidence/ proof about how women suffer from anxiety for a more extended duration/ the duration in which women suffer from anxiety disorders is more than that of men.
have more severe symptoms, and are more disabling (lines 51)	The author provides evidence/ proof about how women have a more debilitating/ critical/ grave/ acute condition/ experience due to anxiety. (allow for lift of 'more')
To my mind, the most convincing theory as to why women end up more fearful and inhibited than men is that when we were kids, adults responded disparately to our fears. When girls are anxious, adults are more likely to be protective and allow them to avoid scary situations. Boys are told to 'suck it up'. (lines 53-56)	The author provides her personal hypothesis/ opinion/ explanation that OR The author shares a real-life experience/ anecdote about how overprotected girls end up becoming more anxious in the future OR (inferred) girls are not taught how to manage their anxiety <i>NOTE for all 4 options: 2-part answer (both technique and context)</i>

(Any 2 points for 2m)

Question type: Literal & Inferential

*Examiners' Comments:*

Many students used vague sentence structures which did not clearly show two distinct ways used by the author. Several students did not state a technique explicitly or accurately when referring to lines 53-56.

5. What is the author's purpose in describing some of the therapists as sounding 'like members of a cult with a sadistic bent' (line 65)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Inferred
I was struck by how many clinicians talked about the importance of learning to endure emotional <b>upset</b> as well as physical <b>distress</b> and even pain. This message was so consistent, in fact, that some of the therapists started to sound like <b>members of a cult with a sadistic bent</b> . (lines 62-65)	<p><b>Function</b> The author is using an analogy/ a comparison/ a simile/ a parallel to highlight how</p> <p><b>Context ('members of a cult', 'bent')</b> the therapists have an unyielding/ obsessive belief regarding how OR Psychologists are determined/ have a strong/ relentless tendency/ desire/ inclination to impose their view that</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Award mark if students reflect the idea of either 'cult' or 'bent'</li> <li>- A literal definition of 'cult' (e.g. 'unthinking') is unacceptable</li> <li>- Need to reflect the intensity of being like a 'cult' – e.g. 'chorus-like' is inaccurate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Context ('sadistic')</b> children/people should experience suffering OR suffering is good for children/people</p>
	<i>(1-2 points = 1m; 3 points = 2m)</i>

Question type: Use of Linguistic Device

**Examiners' Comments:**

Most students identified the function correctly and demonstrated a good understanding of the idea of 'sadistic'. Some students did not accurately reflect the intensity of being like a 'cult'. Several students lifted 'upset', 'distress' and/or 'pain'.

6. In paragraph 8, what are the author's predictions about how teenagers will turn out? Use your own words as far as possible. [3]

From the passage	Paraphrased
...will create a particularly toxic combination: teenagers with a <b>deficit of life skills</b> ... (lines 69-70)	According to the author, teenagers will end up having a shortage of/ not enough abilities/ competencies needed for survival/ existence
and a <b>lack of practice in weathering the frustrations</b> to which that deficit may lead (lines 70-71)	and having insufficient/ inadequate experience/ training in/ lacking proficiency in  enduring/ withstanding/ overcoming difficulties/ obstacles/ hurdles OR enduring/ withstanding/ overcoming vexation/ exasperation
while having the <b>means to retreat and distract themselves</b> from those frustrations. (lines 71-72)	while also having the methods/ ways to avoid/ escape/ run away from/ divert their attention from those difficulties.  <b>NOTE: Award the mark for either 'retreat' or 'distract'.</b>

Question type: Literal

**Examiners' Comments:**

Several students did not do a close reading of lines 70-72, and wrongly omitted a paraphrase of 'a lack of practice' (for box 2) and 'having the means' (for box 3). Weaker students misinterpreted the passage and used lines 67-68 as contextual clues for their answers.

7. In paragraph 9, what does the author imply by using the words 'surrender' (line 75) and 'resigned' (line 78) to describe the plight of parents? [1]

From the passage	Inferred
Another reason is that some parents surrender to demands for technology because they cannot tolerate either their own kids' anger or peer pressure from other kids' parents. Finally, having difficulty limiting their own device use, which weakens their feeling of authority on the matter, many parents have resigned themselves to their children's unfettered device use. (lines 75-79)	The author implies that parents are helpless/ powerless in controlling their children's device use. OR The author implies that parents have lost the ability/ authority to control their children's device use.  <i>NOTE: The idea is that parents are UNABLE to do anything about their children's device use.</i>

Question type: Inferential (Use of Vocabulary)

Examiners' Comments:

Quite a number of students merely paraphrased either or both 'surrender' and 'resigned', showing a misunderstanding of the question requirement. Several students did not mention the context (i.e. controlling children's device use).

8. Why does the author place inverted commas around the word 'protect' (line 86)? [2]

From the passage	Inferred
However, it sometimes seems like the more overwhelming the world gets, the more adults try to 'protect' children. (lines 85-86)	<p><b>Function</b> The author thinks that it is inappropriate/ wrong to use such a term. OR The author is expressing her disapproval towards what parents are doing. OR The author is using the word in an ironic way/ a sarcastic manner.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Not accepted – 'unconventional', 'not in its original meaning'</i></p>
	<p><b>Context</b> Parents think that they are protecting their children but they are in fact harming/ hurting them (by avoiding difficult conversations).</p>

Question type: Use of Punctuation

Examiners' Comments:

Weaker responses did not indicate the grammatical function of the inverted commas. Several students also did not explicitly explain what parents actually do, and instead merely said that 'parents do not protect their children'.

9. In what two ways are the last two sentences an effective conclusion to the author's overall argument? [2]

From the passage	Inferred
Good parenting can help make a difference. Start now before it gets too late. (lines 90-91)	<p>The second last sentence reiterates the author's argument about how good parenting/ parents not being overprotective alleviates anxiety in children. OR In the last sentence, the author gives a call to action, underscoring the urgency of changing the current parenting approach. OR The last two sentences prompt people to take action by creating a sense of hope that the problem is solvable/ that there is still time to make changes.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Accept any reasonable answer.</i></p>

(Any 2 points for 2m)

Question type: Inferential

Examiners' Comments:

Several students did not focus on the last two sentences even though this was explicitly stated in the question, instead offering answers such as 'the author's use of the pronouns 'we'....'. Stronger responses offered other reasonable answers such as, "The author uses short sentences in an abrupt manner to show a tone of finality, emphasising the importance of good parenting.

10. Using material from paragraphs 3–5 only (lines 15–47), summarise the factors affecting today's parenting style and how this parenting style gives rise to anxiety in children. 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]

**One factor affecting today's parenting style is...**

From the passage	S/N	Paraphrased
...treated parents as rational actors, however extreme some of our actions might be (lines 15–16)	1	(inferred) that they are mistaken/ misperceived as being logical/ sensible/ sound
...in reaction to the surrounding conditions... (line 17)	2	Parents are responding to worrying/ threatening circumstances/ situation ( <i>Note: must reflect negative connotation</i> )
...hover over our children... (line 16) ...too hyper and too vigilant... (line 20) ...helicopter parenting... (line 21) ...adults are always on high alert (line 23)	3	Parents are constantly/ perpetually surrounding/ monitoring/ checking on their children OR Parents are excessively/ overly involved in their children's life
...more overprotected (lines 21–22)	4	Children become more mollycoddled/ over-shielded/ over-sheltered
...more leery of adulthood (line 22) ...looking fearfully at the world around them... become anxious adults... (lines 25–26)	5	more doubtful/ wary/ suspicious of growing up (allow for lift of 'adulthood') OR being apprehensive/ frightened/ uneasy of their surroundings
...more in need of therapy (line 22)	6	and have a greater demand for/ are more likely to require professional help/ medical treatment
...school and family systems both have a baseline level of stress – when adults are always on high alert (lines 22–23)	7	(inferred) Schools and families perpetually/ perennially/ constantly contribute to parents experiencing pressure/ tension
[when adults are always on high alert] kids do not get a chance to rebound (lines 23–24)	8	Children are denied an opportunity to get back on their feet after a disappointment OR Children are denied the prospect of picking themselves up after failure
...and so they resist taking on the sorts of natural and healthy risks that will help them grow (lines 24–25)	9	and hence they are hesitant/ refuse to engage in/ put themselves through common/ regular/ expected/ wholesome/ beneficial/ benign challenges/ obstacles/ trials ( <i>Note: either 'natural' or 'healthy'</i> )
...[children] do benefit greatly from parents who can serve as a non-anxious presence (line 27)	10	(inferred) Parents themselves are distressed/ fearful/ worried
If the instinct to protect a child leads many of us into the trap of overparenting (lines 30–31)	11	The predisposition/ natural inclination/ innate desire to protect a child ensnares/ tempts/ lures parents into overdoing it.
...time pressure keeps us there (line 31)	12	Overparenting continues/ persists due to time constraints/ restrictions/ limits (allow for lift of 'time')
time pressure can be compounded by guilt... the guilt that, as a working parent, I missed X, Y, Z (lines 32–33)	13	exacerbated by a sense of reproach/ remorse in working parents/ parents who missed important milestones in their children's life ( <i>Note: must have the correct subject or context</i> )
harder to follow through with an unpleasant behavioural intervention (lines 33–34)	14	making it more challenging/ difficult to discipline their children/ correct their children's misconduct
[enduring discomfort now can] make you more resilient later (line 36)	15	(inferred) and so children become weak-willed/ feeble-minded/ helpless.
many of our parenting strategies trade short-term gain... for long-term pain (lines 39–40) ...cut corners... (line 41)	16	Many parenting strategies prioritise/ give precedence to immediate/ fleeting/ temporary benefits while incurring enduring/ extended/ protracted suffering
(that we would cut corners in this way) inevitable (line 41)	17	given how parents have no other choice/ given how unavoidable it is for parents.
...in a country that lacks adequate parental leave (lines 41–42)	18	There is a shortage of / are insufficient/ not enough provisions for parents to be excused/ relieved from/ take time off from work (allow for lift of 'parental')
[lacks] quality, affordable childcare (line 42)	19	or of childcare which is cheap/ inexpensive/ reasonably priced and excellent/ of good calibre (allow for lift of 'childcare')
...school and employment schedules are misaligned (lines 42–43)	20	Parents and children have incompatible/ mismatched/ differing/ conflicting timings (allow for lift of 'school and employment')
...work culture expects employees to always be on (line 43)	21	Employers demand/ require/ compel employees to be perpetually/ constantly contactable/ working
a permissive streak in American child-rearing, one that has simultaneously indulged children (line 44)	22	There is a systemic problem/ recurrent issue of parents being overly obliging/ too accommodating/ excessively lenient ( <i>Note: must capture the negative connotation</i> )
Parents are actually doing more for their kids and many kids are doing less for themselves (lines 46–47)	23	(inferred) Parents are in fact preventing children from being independent/ autonomous/ managing their own lives.

**Mark allocation:**

No. of Points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10-11	12-13	14 & above
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

11. Kate Julian discusses how modern parenting style has given rise to anxiety in children. How far would you agree with her observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society? [10]

#### Requirement

Students should

- explain the circumstances affecting parenting style, which may then lead to anxiety in children
- explain the impacts of anxiety in children while they are still young and/or when they grow up
- show understanding and engage with the ideas and views raised in the passage
- support their views with relevant examples from their own society
- consider points of agreement and disagreement with the author's views in the context of their own society

#### Explanation

Students should show understanding and discuss some of the following issues raised by the author:

- What are the different attitudes and actions observed in parenting?
- What are the effects of parenting (as described in the passage) on anxiety in children?
- What are the consequences of children having or growing up with anxiety?

#### Evaluation

Students should develop arguments to logical conclusion by supporting them with apt illustration and evidence.

Consider some of the following:

- Do parents in Singapore overprotect their children? Are girls the only ones to be overprotected, or at least more so?
- Do children in Singapore become ill prepared to deal with difficult emotions and the challenges they face?
- To what extent has helicopter parenting led to risk aversion in children?
- How have overprotective parents led to an underwhelming sense of personal competence among Singaporean children?
- Are working parents overcompensating for the guilt they feel for the time spent away from their children? How does this affect the development of their children?
- Has permissive parenting taken root in Singapore? Why or why not?
- Are parents powerless in managing their children's use of technology? What are the effects of such powerlessness? How might other actors be able to step in to help mitigate the problem?
- Do parents in Singapore avoid difficult conversations with their children? Why or why not? What are the implications on children when there is such an avoidance?

#### Coherence

Students should

- adopt a consistent viewpoint
- argue logically
- organise answers into cohesive, themed paragraphs
- link paragraphs to show continuity and direction of argument
- maintain relevance to the task in everything they write
- end with a summative or concluding paragraph or sentence

#### Examiners' Comments:

- *Introductions were often functional. Weaker responses had negligible relevance to the question and simply provided a laundry list of Singapore characteristics or merely summarised the author's key arguments.*
- *Weaker responses referenced the author by her first name, instead of her last name.*
- *References: Several students made poor choices in their selection of references. Many chose to discuss generic ideas about parenting, when there are clearer and more specific ones in the passage. Many students focused on the author's examples in various parts of the passage, such as ones regarding parents' fears of the chances of their children being kidnapped (line 17) and/or children not having summer jobs or not walking themselves to school (line 68), without realising these are merely manifestations of parental fears and/or without linking these general observations to how or whether they lead to anxiety in children.*
- *Explanation & Evaluation: Many students only offered a simplistic understanding of the passage and the local context. Weaker responses offered dismissive responses to the author's points by giving factually accurate policies and programmes, but not highlighting the effectiveness of such proposed solutions.*
- *Examples: While it might be difficult to evaluate some references using specific examples, students are still encouraged to use as many local details to illustrate a general trend or phenomena in Singapore. Yet, this was hardly the case in many instances. Weaker students talked too generically, or offered a template list of Singapore characteristics without showing their relevance to the selected references and examples.*

11. Kate Julian discusses how modern parenting style has given rise to anxiety in children. How far would you agree with her observations, relating your arguments to your own experience and that of your society? [10]

References	Guiding Questions	Applicable	Less/Not Applicable
<p><b>Helicopter parenting leads to children being risk-averse and so become ill-prepared for adulthood</b></p> <p>"Yet far too often, we insulate our children from distress and discomfort entirely. Children who do not learn to cope with distress face a rough path to adulthood, experiencing difficulty with the hurdles and humiliation of life in a deeply competitive culture, one with a narrowing definition of success and a rising cost of living." (lines 10-14)</p> <p>Parents are "too hyper and too vigilant" (line 20)</p> <p>"...helicopter parenting is counterproductive, kids today are perhaps more overprotected, more leery of adulthood, more in need of therapy" (lines 21-22)</p> <p>"...when adults are always on high alert, kids do not get a chance to rebound, and so they resist taking on the sorts of natural and healthy risks that will help them grow." (lines 23-25)</p> <p>"...a generation of anxious kids, looking fearfully at the world around them, growing up to become anxious parents." (lines 25-26)</p>	<p>Do parents in Singapore completely shield their children from the hard knocks and hardships in life?</p> <p>Why do Singaporean parents act in this particular manner (whether they do overprotect or not)?</p> <p>How has helicopter parenting led to risk aversion among children in Singapore?</p> <p>To what extent are Singaporean children risk-averse?</p> <p>Are parents, schools or the government doing anything to alleviate this?</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Living in a highly competitive society and given that high-stakes examinations and activities are unavoidable, many parents feel a necessity to help their children gain a better footing than their peers. The corresponding low tolerance level for failure ('kiasu' culture) also leads to a tendency to stick with tried-and-tested methods in Singapore, such that many parents do not allow their children to take risks (e.g. not allowing them to choose Arts subjects) or find it hard to bear with slow improvements. It may be said that parents are trying to behave rationally to the incentives – the exams, selection systems, entry requirements – of our meritocratic education system. When problems arise, these parents look for quick solutions and deny children the chance to learn how to manage struggles on their own, which however ends up preventing their children from developing the necessary problem-solving skills essential for life. The anxiety comes about especially when they enter adulthood which offers more freedom and varied options.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> Some research in Singapore have found that helicopter parenting affects children's learning and development, resulting in childhood anxiety. Children of authoritarian and permissive parents also report poorer academic adjustment. And according to the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), there is a rising number of young people seeking help for their mental health conditions, with academic stress being one of the common causes. Partly as a result of helicopter parenting, tuition becomes a go-to solution when children struggle academically. Helicopter parents are quick to send their children for multiple tuition sessions, as they fear that they would fall too far behind, even if that might not actually be true. (Even when the Singapore Ministry of Education announced the removal of some examinations for particular levels, many parents became worried and tried looking for alternative replacements.) This can cause some children to either become overly anxious about tests and grades, or pick up the bad habit of relying on others or quick solutions, which can eventually hurt them when they become adults who cannot manage difficult situations on their own. This can be seen in employers in Singapore complaining about millennials having no practice in adaptability and lacking independence.</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> While helicopter parenting may be a thing in Singapore, it could instead 'backfire' and cause some children who find their parents overbearing, to endeavour to try different activities and routes on their own. While this may only apply for children who have the ability to make some autonomous decisions, it does mean that helicopter parenting does not always lead to children becoming risk-averse. Furthermore, hard knocks and natural consequences in a society where life is fast-paced and unforgiving, form the basis of the 'School of Hard Knocks' where circumstances may compel suffering or difficult lessons that can cultivate grit and resilience in the process.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> Overprotected children, in particular teenagers, may find themselves lacking the necessary social skills when in school. They are then almost forced to overcome these growing pains by developing coping mechanisms in order to survive. While some learn these skills and acquire resilience because they yearn for friendship and success in other areas, others may continue struggling. A recent survey show Singapore school children depend on one another more for social support than on their parents. The School of Hard Knocks clearly motivates children to develop some resilience for survival, in school now and in life as an adult.</p> <p><b>(EV)</b> In fact, it may be the case that as a result of parents always hovering around, some children (though the rare minority) may actually feel as if parental support is ever-ready and so instead become encouraged and confident enough to take risks and try new things. Similarly, there are also parents who are beginning to adopt what may be called helicopter parenting 2.0 (HP2.0), where they set high expectations for their children and guide them towards achieving them, while acting as a resource in case the children have questions while making decisions for themselves. This could partly be in response to a realization that the economy will only become more volatile, and children must grow up learning how to be adaptable.</p>

References	Guiding Questions	Applicable	Less/Not Applicable
<p><b>An intense work culture causes working parents to overcompensate for not spending more time with their children, who hence do not learn to endure discomfort and so do not grow in resilience.</b></p> <p>"...time pressures keep us there. And for mothers, especially, time pressure can be compounded by guilt. ...as a working parent.... it is a lot harder to follow through with an unpleasant behavioural intervention. [However] enduring discomfort now can make you more resilient later." (lines 31-36)</p> <p>"...many of our parenting strategies trade short-term gain for long-term pain." (lines 39-40)</p> <p>"...That we would cut corners in this way is maybe inevitable in a country that lacks adequate parental leave or quality, affordable child care; one in which school and employment schedules are misaligned and in which our work culture expects employees to always be on." (lines 41-43)</p> <p>"a permissive streak in American child-rearing" (line 44)</p>	<p>Are working parents in Singapore overcompensating for the guilt they feel for the time they spend away from their children? Why and how is this happening?</p> <p>What are some unique features of permissive parenting in Singapore?</p> <p>How does this affect the level of anxiety in the next generation of Singaporeans?</p>	<p>(EV) In Singapore where costs of living are increasing, dual-income families are a norm, and even if there is only one stay-at-home parent, their schedules may not and often do not match their children's timetables. This may cause both categories of parents to feel guilty about not spending enough time with their children, and hence relent on indulging in whatever requests the children make or feel hesitant to correct any mistakes they might observe, for fear of further straining their parent-child relationships. Such a tendency to be indulgent (misperceived by younger parents themselves as being 'loving') might also be due to them wanting to be different from their parents (from the boomer generation), who on retrospection are now thought of as being overly strict and controlling. This however can deprive children of opportunities to be corrected, and so they also do not learn to respond appropriately to feedback which they may deem less positive. In a similar vein, parents may even choose to externalize the problems, teaching children the wrong lesson about how the issues are always the fault of others. This can mislead children into thinking that they will always be in the right and forever be protected by their parents, such that they do not learn to be receptive to advice and to strive towards success when they face obstacles.</p> <p>(EG) It is not uncommon to see many parents over-pampering their school-going children by ensuring their comfort as they travel to and from school, even though they might be old enough to take care of themselves. For working parents who are unable to set aside time regularly or sufficiently for their children, they may overcompensate by giving in to all kinds of demand so long as it is within their means, especially in the financial sense. For instance, in shopping malls one can frequently observe parents relenting and buying whatever toys or devices their children ask for, as they find it difficult to reject their requests. As these children grow up having everything their way, never having to deal with rejections or enduring discomfort, resilience becomes barely acquired.</p>	<p>(EV) While it may be true that there is an intense work culture in Singapore which may compromise the amount of time parents get to spend with their children, many of them seem to have found an alternative means or platforms to raise their children, or are supported by other parties who play crucial roles in a child's development. Nowadays, enrichment activities also include the development of life skills and soft skills such as emotional resilience, whether through teaching them to manage difficult situations in real life or guiding them through simulated experiences.</p> <p>(EG) Hiring foreign domestic workers to care for one's children and/or sending children to structured after-school programmes or centres are both fairly common practices in Singapore. While the parents may not be able to spend much time with their children, they "outsource" the need for any unpleasant behavioural intervention to others, such that the children do not simply continue with bad behaviour without being corrected.</p> <p>(EG) In recent years, the Ministry of Education started providing more opportunities for Outdoor Education (OE) experiences, with the aim of cultivating rugged and resilient youths. This includes a new five-day expedition-based camp for all Secondary 3 students from 2020 onwards.</p>

References	Guiding Questions	Applicable	Less/Not Applicable
<p><b>Girls are overprotected more than boys.</b></p> <p>"There is no greater risk factor for anxiety disorders than being born female. Women are twice as likely as men to develop one and women's illnesses generally last longer, have more severe symptoms, and are more disabling." (lines 49-51)</p> <p>"To my mind, the most convincing theory as to why women end up more fearful and inhibited than men is that, when we were kids, adults responded disparately to our fears. When girls are anxious, adults are more likely to be protective and allow them to avoid scary situations. Boys are told to 'suck it up.'" (lines 53-56)</p>	<p>Are girls more overprotected than boys today?</p> <p>Does this lead to less resilience in girls?</p> <p>Do boys necessarily become more resilient than girls as a result of being made to face their problems?</p> <p>Are girls more likely to suffer from anxiety?</p> <p>Are the effects of anxiety worse for girls than for boys?</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Due to gender stereotyping in Singapore, there is a cyclical gendered approach to parenting. Girls are seen as the weaker gender and thus requiring greater protection. Parents having been ingrained with such a mindset then perpetuate this belief when they raise their own children and this results in girls generally being more protected than boys. As a result of such parenting, it reinforces gender stereotypes and how the supposed more docile female is more useful in a domestic sense while men should focus on their careers. To exacerbate the matter, given the high cost of living in Singapore, women are expected to work but still be the primary person dealing with domestic chores. All these increased expectations while having been taught that females are weaker only serve to increase the likely of anxiety in women when they become adults and have to juggle multiple commitments.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> A research done by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) showed that 60 per cent of married women were employed in 2020. Although working, a majority still helmed the bulk of domestic chores and responsibilities at home, including that of taking care of the children. The research showed that women experienced heightened anxiety, especially with rising work expectations, disruptions from on-and-off closure of schools and childcare facilities due to COVID and having to appear to be the main domestic overseer. With a more protective upbringing that led to them being seen as more domestic in nature, the new expectations on top of all aforementioned has greatly increased the anxiety in women.</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Given how there is a lot of pressure to conform to societal norms in Singapore, many Singapore parents place pressure on their boys to project a more masculine image based on society's perception and preference. Boys need to be 'manly' and 'tough it out' while girls are given more leeway to show vulnerability and can be expected to be protected. This however, does not mean that the propensity for anxiety for girls is significantly higher or more severe as compared to boys.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> A research done by AWARE showed that while boys were taught to conform to a more mentally masculine image, the rate of anxiety is only marginally lower than girls despite girls being protected more. In fact, AWARE noted that men who were forced to conform to such stereotypes from young were more likely suffer from more severe forms of anxiety because all of it is internalized and they are not allowed to show any form of weakness. Hence, while it is true that girls do register a higher number of anxiety cases, the severity of the cases faced by men due to such parenting can be much more incapacitating. AWARE is also skeptical about the number of anxiety cases for men, because given the need to conform, the numbers are likely to be underreported as well. While there appears to be less protection for boys, that lack of protection actually increases the likelihood of anxiety for boys when they grow up.</p>

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<p><b>Overprotective parents prevent their children from developing a sense of personal competence</b></p> <p>"Doing chores and getting oneself where one needs to go also provide another more obvious benefit: a sense of personal competence." (lines 66-67)</p> <p>"teenagers with a deficit of life skills and a lack of practice in weathering the frustrations to which that deficit may lead, while having the means to retreat and distract themselves from those frustrations." (lines 70-71)</p>	<p>Do parents' overprotection necessarily lead to children not developing a sense of personal competence?</p> <p>Are overprotective parents the dominant reason why children lack a sense of personal competence?</p> <p>Does this lack of personal competence actually increase anxiety in children?</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> In a society where success is still narrowly defined to only include good grades and lucrative jobs in fields that are considered respectable, helicopter parenting is borne out of a desire in those who wish to enhance the chances of such success for their children. Yet ironically, over protecting children prevents them from acquiring the values and experience that will set them up for future success. Even if children go on to achieve great results, they may suffer from a chronic lack of self-confidence and think they are never good enough, or they may lack the social skills or resilience to thrive in an increasingly complex world.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> Several primary schools in Singapore have taken steps to discourage parents from overprotecting their children from the consequences of their tardiness. Some have placed signs at school gates urging parents to refrain from delivering forgotten items to their children so that their children will have the experience of learning to deal with the frustration and solve the problems that come with their inaction. The problem of overprotective parents is so severe that Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam has called for an evolution of Singapore parenting so that children will grow their senses and their individuality that will help them be more resilient in dealing with various life stresses even as Singapore attempts to broaden its education system.</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Overprotective parenting may not be the main reason for children's lack of personal competence. A large proportion of teenagers who experience chronic anxiety typically grew up in a conflict-ridden household where arguments among family members are the norm or experienced some form of trauma as a child. This is particularly the case in traditional Asian households in Singapore, where young children buckle under the pressures of strict hierarchical structures and social expectations in an environment that is also far from nurturing. The resultant lack of resilience and extended anxiety are borne out of their premature exposure to sustained sources of emotional abuse before they even have the chance to even cultivate resilience and grit.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> With divorce becoming more commonplace in Singapore, there has been heightened concern about the impact of divorce on children caught in their parents' divorce. A recent government survey showed that children with divorced parents had long-term adverse effects on their academic qualifications and earning power. The assumption made here is that the lack of resilience and grit borne out of their traumatic experience in childhood or a lack of stable household to nurture and hone their emotional adaptability has very tangible negative consequences in their lack of personal competence, both perceived and real. The government is increasing social support for children with divorced parents as a result, in the hope that such intervention would minimise the negative impact on these young lives and hopefully help them cultivate personal competence, resilience, grit and other necessary life skills in the process.</p>

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<p><b>When parents feel powerless to control their children's device use, technology becomes the default means of distraction for children, which prevents them from learning life skills and this leads to them becoming less resilient and more likely to develop anxiety.</b></p> <p>"The need for a distraction partially explains why over the past five years, the age at which most kids get a smartphone has continued to tick downward. For kids of all ages, screens are cheap and reliable babysitters." (lines 73-75)</p> <p>"some parents surrender to demands for technology because they cannot tolerate their own kids' anger..." (lines 75-76)</p> <p>"Finally, having difficulty limiting their own device use, which weakens their feeling of authority on the matter, many parents have resigned themselves to their children's unfettered device use." (lines 77-79)</p>	<p>Are Singaporean parents permissive about their children's screen time? Why is that so?</p> <p>Is it realistic in today's society not to be reliant on technology to distract children?</p> <p>Can other actors, such as schools, effectively do anything to curb children's demands for screen time?</p> <p>Does children's uncontrolled device use increase their likelihood of developing anxiety? How does the age of a child factor in?</p>	<p>(EV) Rising disposable income levels in Singapore have led to more comfortable lives, with many households owning multiple electronic devices. This ubiquity of technology cuts across many facets of life in Singapore. When coupled with fatigue from a demanding work culture, it is almost too easy for parents to resort to using iPads and other mobile devices to quell their children's tantrums by distracting them with videos and games. Some just simply do not have any bandwidth at the end of a long and hard workday to have the patience to work their children through a tantrum or engage them in meaningful play interaction. Furthermore, parents may themselves be unable to regulate their use of devices so they may feel they lack the moral authority to control their children's device use. Yet this resultant lack of parental attention removes the informal channels by which parents may equip their children with life skills ranging from emotional moderation to a secure attachment. This may in turn lead to a lack of resilience and heightened general sense of anxiousness.</p> <p>(EG) Surveys confirm the extent of this powerlessness that parents feel about limiting screen time, even revealing a general lack of awareness. In a survey conducted by Singapore's only paediatric-specialist hospital, more than half of the parents wrongly overestimated the recommended durations of time for recreational screen use. The guidelines recommend no screen time for infants under 12 months and toddlers up to 18 months. Toddlers aged 18 months to three years should get less than one hour. Instead, the survey found that 30 per cent of infants were given one hour of screen time a day. As for toddlers under 18 months, 70 per cent of them viewed screens for half an hour on weekdays. This figure rose to 80 per cent on weekends. The survey results helped to inform new early childhood guidelines developed by the KKH-led Integrated Platform for Research in Advancing Metabolic Health Outcomes of Women and Children (IPRAMHO). The fact that KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) saw it necessary to provide guidelines and launch a public education campaign point to the severity of the issue and a fear of the social and emotional consequences on the children if parents resort to screen time on devices too easily.</p>	<p>(EV) Despite great pressure to conform, an increasing number of parents in Singapore are single-minded in their approach in religiously enforcing limits on screen time and/or not giving their children their personal devices for as long as they can help it. Educated and aware of the perils of excessive screen time for children, these Singaporean parents certainly do not feel powerless and must surrender to the easy way out. These parents are anxious that their children grow up to become dysfunctional adults who lack the basic resilience to cope with setbacks in life because of reduced socialization in their childhood.</p> <p>(EG) By doing so, they make sure their children are engaged in activities that hone their minds and other skills but also more crucially face-to-face activities that foster social skills. By also not typically rushing to "rescue" their precious children and encouraging them to figure things out for themselves, these parents are intentionally fostering their children's ability to fend for themselves and channel their emotions towards constructive outcomes. In so doing, these Singaporean parents are building their children's emotional and social resilience by eliminating technological devices as the default means of distraction for their children, just like many Big Tech founders and entrepreneurs routinely do for their offspring.</p> <p>(EG) Even when these parents use technology, they are focused squarely on building the resilience of their children. Mobile applications such as KidCoach provide daily thought-provoking question prompts that help parents facilitate meaningful conversations with their children that are aimed at fostering resilience and building healthy parent-child relationships. There are others, such as FOCUS On the Go! that help families with young children understand feeling words, problem solving, and telling their story though fun and engaging games and cartoon characters.</p>

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<p><b>Parents are avoiding engaging their children in difficult conversations, which would have otherwise desensitised them to inevitable problems they will face as adults. This increases their propensity to become anxious when they eventually face these problems.</b></p> <p>"There is a widespread hesitancy to talk about depressing concepts with kids. Despite being more educated, parents are still ignoring the benefits of graduated exposure to things that frighten their children." (lines 80-82)</p> <p>"However, it sometimes seems like the more overwhelming the world gets, the more adults try to 'protect' children.' (lines 85-86)</p>	<p>Are parents in Singapore avoiding difficult conversations with their children? Why or why not?</p> <p>Have Singaporean parents tried to outsource such difficult conversations to other actors?</p> <p>Is becoming anxious an inevitable outcome of a lack of brutally honest conversations between parents and their children?</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Given the more traditional Asian mindsets of many parents in Singapore, parents do not have open communication with their children, and so neither have honest conversations about sensitive subjects nor openly share their feelings and struggles. As this has been the default practice in many families, children do not discuss any matters with their parents and parents find it harder and harder to hold any form of conversation with their children as this lack of need to talk has become a habit.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> In 2020, a survey done on parents revealed that only about half of parents are able to discuss difficult and sensitive matters with their children. Singaporean parents find it difficult to talk about the complexities of relationships and sexuality with their children because when their children were young, having conversations was never the norm. As such, even though parents acknowledge the importance of such conversations, parents find it awkward and difficult to start such conversations. Many children are thus thrust into these issues later in their lives trying to figure things on their own and feeling anxious because they do not know what to do or understand that these situations and issues are natural, inevitable and actually solvable.</p>	<p><b>(EV)</b> Many young parents had to muddle their way through adult life and found the experience harrowing. While these young parents understood the difficulties their own parents had in initiating these conversations as traditional conservative parents, these young parents hope to change the way parenting is done so that their own children do not have to go through a similar experience.</p> <p><b>(EG)</b> There is an increasing trend of young parents wanting to be more of a friend to their child as opposed to the conventionally understood distant parent. This has been encouraged both by research and by parents simply wanting to have a more positive relationship with their children. Forums for parents such as Mamahood, Kiasuparents and Mummysg have seen huge increases in the number of queries regarding this parenting style. These forums also regularly post articles on the benefits of parenting in this manner. Given how there is a big increase in the interest and research in this area showing that open discussions help to build more confident adults in the future, many parents are making this way of parenting their preferred mode. Parents are encouraged to talk about all aspects of life including work, the harsh realities of life and relationships in the hopes that children understand these are problems they will eventually face. Even without concrete solutions being discussed, the simple act of having such conversations helps children to be mentally prepared for future challenges, thus helping to reduce the probability of anxiety.</p>