



**NANYANG JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2022**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/2**

PAPER 2:

Monday 29 August 2022

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

**READ THIS INSTRUCTION FIRST**

*This insert contains the passages for Paper 2.*

**Passage 1: Nick Chater argues that it would not be practical to live in a world without rules.**

- 1 Our relationship with rules seems to be unique to humans. Many animals behave in highly ritualistic ways — for example, the bizarre and complex courtship dances of different species of bird of paradise — but these patterns are wired into their genes, not social rules invented by past generations of birds. And, while humans establish and maintain rules by punishing rule violations, chimpanzees — our closest relatives — do not. Chimps may retaliate when their food is stolen but, crucially, they do not punish food stealing in general. ~~No, it's~~ It is humans ~~whom-who~~ have forged this unique ability to create and agree on rules, both written and unwritten. 5
- 2 We all feel the oppressive presence of rules. Public spaces, organisations, dinner parties, and even relationships and casual conversations are rife with regulations and red tape that seemingly are there to dictate our every move. We rail against rules being an affront to our freedom and argue that they are 'there to be broken'. However, it is not really rules, norms and customs in general that are the problem — but the unjustified ones. The tricky and important bit, perhaps, is establishing the difference between the two. 10
- ~~Lots-A lot~~ of the norms of everyday life perform precisely the same function as the rules of games — telling us what 'moves' we can, and cannot, make. The conventions of 'pleases' and 'thank yous' that seem so irksome to young children are indeed arbitrary — but the fact that we have some such conventions, and perhaps critically that we agree what they are, is part of what makes our social interactions run smoothly. And rules about driving on the left or the right, stopping at red lights, queueing, not littering, picking up our dog's deposits and so on fall into the same category. They are the building blocks of a harmonious society. 15
- 3 Of course, there has long been an appetite among some people for a less formalised society, a society without government, a world where individual freedom takes precedence: an anarchy. 20
- 4 The trouble with anarchy, though, is that it is inherently short-lived — humans spontaneously generate new rules governing behaviour, communication and economic exchange, and they do so as rapidly as old rules are dismantled. A few decades ago, the generic pronoun in written language was widely assumed to be male: he/him/his. That rule has, quite rightly, largely been overturned. Yet it has also been replaced — not by an absence of rules, but by a different and broader set of rules governing our use of pronouns. 25
- 4 The Nobel Prize winner, Elinor Ostrom, observed the same phenomenon of spontaneous rule construction when people had to collectively manage common resources such as land, fisheries or water for irrigation. She found that people collectively construct rules about, say, how many cattle a person can graze, where, and when; who gets how much water, and what should be done when the resource is limited; who monitors whom, and which rules resolve disputes. These rules are not just invented by rulers and imposed from the top down — instead, they often arise, unbidden, from the needs of mutually agreeable social and economic interactions. 30
- 5 The urge to overturn stifling, unjust or simply downright pointless rules is entirely justified. But without some rules — and some tendency for us to stick to them — society would slide rapidly into pandemonium. Indeed, many social scientists would see our tendency to create, stick to, and enforce rules as the very foundation of social and economic life, where we are able to learn the hugely complex systems of social norms without asking too many questions — we simply absorb 'the way we do things round here'. Indeed, our ability to latch onto and enforce arbitrary rules is crucial to our success as a species. 35 40

**Passage 2: Anubhuti Matta discusses the reasons for breaking rules.**

A popular saying goes, 'Rules are meant to be broken.' But ... why? Actually, rules are made to be broken because if everyone travels within the bounds of given rules, no horizons will ever be expanded. We, as a society, have the task of constantly challenging the rules and making sure we step outside of them when we mean no harm and act in the advantage of our fellow man. That does not mean we should break the rules for the mere goal of breaking them. We should only break rules to better society.

But often, that is not the case. We break the same rules that are created for the betterment of society. ~~The same rules that are created, or~~ for our safety and well-being. We do not wear seatbelts while driving. We spit and litter in public places. We defile public property and jump queues. We eat and use phones in places we are not supposed to — the list of rules we break on a daily basis is endless. If rules are meant to ~~organise~~ organise our lives, and make things uniform and easier to control, why do we end up breaking them?

For starters, people break rules because it is rewarding in two ways. A cheater's high comes first. Often, cheaters and rule-breakers do not feel guilty and remorseful. Rather, rule-breakers feel smarter and more capable, along with being in an unexpectedly good mood after breaking a rule. They feel a sense of having circumvented some tedious law that the middling or mediocre follow by some unthinking, sheep-like instinct. The second reward is that in breaking a rule, rule-breakers feel a sense of freedom. ~~For instance, children parented in a very strict, authoritarian manner may defy the law because parental control is too strict for comfort. What they can't do at home finds free expression once they are outside and with friends. This is also the case for those who suffer constricting circumstances and feel a sense of liberation with petty acts of anarchy — damaging public property or being a public nuisance for example — anything to throw off the shackles of enforced orderliness. appealing, particularly, to those suffering constricting circumstances. It is no wonder many children parented in an authoritarian manner engage in petty acts of anarchy — damaging public property or being a public nuisance — in a bid to throw off the shackles of enforced orderliness.~~

Often, however, Rulerule-breaking also has less to do with people's characters, and more the situations people find themselves in. ~~Often, n~~In these, not a lot of conscious awareness goes into when or ~~to what extent how far~~ we push ethical boundaries; many a time, rule-breaking occurs in an instant of self-protection, laziness or impulse. We might break the rules under some conditions ~~and in some mindsets,~~ but not in others. Morality cannot be determined by the frequency and extent of rule-breaking.

Rule-breaking is also often associated with perceptions of power. ~~, where norm violators are perceived as having the capacity to act as they please.~~ In a behavioural experiment, researchers had respondents come to a laboratory to interact with two people exhibiting different behaviours. The first person arrived on time and acted politely. The second person arrived late, threw down his bag on a table and put up his feet. On seeing this, the respondents thought the second person had either an influential position, or was from a family of privilege. Clearly, those who violated norms of civilized behaviour are assumed to have the capacity to act as they please. Hence, while rule-breaking may inevitably invite judgement, it may also invite unconscious envy or respect. Last but not least, rRule-breaking may have another 'positive' association — ~~it may be perceived as a form that~~ of solidarity — in some situations. ~~People~~Some break rules for the sake of supporting their own tribe ~~too~~, even if the rule-breaking comes at the expense of society as a whole. If a group cheats on tests or a research team fabricates its results, then the individual is likely to support them in their lie or cover it up at the least.

All in all, regardless of why we break them, rules are made for a reason, created to suit a specific situation — which means that not all of them will apply every time, in every scenario, and thus, not all of them are meant to be followed. When we break rules, we are questioning a certain

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6 mindset. What comes after breaking a rule is important — to adapt or create new rules. Updating an old rule will only help the rule-breaker — and everyone else.