Common Errors

- Topic sentences were unclear or did not answer the question.
- Example-driven or descriptive paragraphs instead of constructing arguments based on reasons.
- Lacking balance; one-sided arguments.
- No reference to today's context when the question required it.
- Hijacking the question by discussing unrelated issues.

1.	How far should the government be involved in the private lives of its people?

Question Requirements

Key words:
- How far should: the extent to which is desirable
- Government: the body which enforces state policy; the authorities
- Involved: the idea of intervention, interference or attempt to modify behaviour by law or policy
- Private lives: the personal lives of the people (marriage, relationships, religion, interests, hobbies, etc) as opposed to their public or professional lives.
- Its people: students should write about how a government deals with its own citizens, rather than with people from other countries.

Expectations:
Students should state the extent to which the government should be involved in the private lives of its people, either to a large extent or small extent. Students should also consider a variety of situations and scenarios where governmental intervention is either necessary or superfluous. Examples from different countries should be used.

Stand: The government should be involved to a large extent

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
This is true when the personal actions of citizens affect the security of the state.	• The government's role is to protect the people from harm. In this age where acts of terrorism and violence occur far too often, the government sometimes has to put in place laws to interfere with the private lives of its citizens. • Eg. Gun-control laws in Singapore versus the ease of acquiring guns in USA, although many pro-gun groups argue that is an unalienable right to carry arms to protect themselves as well for recreational shooting. (Sandy Hooks shooting, shooting at a nightclub in Orlando, Florida) • Eg. National Security Agency (NSA) in USA keeps track of phone activity of its people. Despite protests about violations of privacy, the White House has responded, saying that the collection of US telephone records was "a critical tool in protecting the nation from terrorist threats."

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
This is true when government intervention / involvement is meant to be for the good of the country in the long run.	• While citizens wish to lead their own lives and make their own decisions in their private lives, sometimes, this can be at odds with the government's overview of the situation. In such cases, governmental involvement may be necessary to change behaviour or create desirable outcomes which are for the good of the country. • Eg. Singapore faced a situation of over-population in the 1970s. The government came up with policies to encourage couples to have only two children ('Two Is Enough' advertisements, fine for having three or more children, cash incentives for women who voluntarily underwent sterilisation).There was governmental involvement and intervention in a very private decision. Some felt that it helped to overcome over-crowding, while others resented the pressure from the top. • Contrast this with China's one-child policy where babies were forcibly aborted, even at very late stages of gestation. Some may argue that involvement up to a reasonable extent is acceptable, but certain policies are too harsh, even if it is for the benefit of the country as a whole.

Argument For #3	Explanation/Examples
The government should be involved in the private lives of its people when the actions of citizens can potentially cause harm to themselves or others intentionally or otherwise.	• State intervention is needed to uphold justice and protect the vulnerable, especially when it comes to the issue of abuse. • Domestic helpers, minors, women • Tackling issues of moral hazard and negative externalities. • E.g. mandating the use of seatbelts, limiting access to unhealthy food options to prevent obesity, banning texting while driving, drawing of yellow boxes for smokers in Singapore's public areas to prevent the effects of second-hand smoke, banning drinking in public areas beyond 10.30pm.

Stand: The government should not really be involved

Argument Against #1	
In issues which are deeply personal, the government should not be involved.	• There are many aspects to private life which are deeply personal. The government should not really be involved in these as it infringes of the rights of the individual to choose how he or she wants to live his or her life. From a political perspective, it may also result in resentment towards the government which may cost it votes. • Eg. Marriage. Of course, there are issues like legalising same-sex marriages which involve social and cultural norms of societies as well. For example, Malaysia does not allow same-sex marriages. • Eg. Religion. In China, there are state-sanctioned Protestant churches which are seen as less authentic by many Christians. However, the Bangladeshi government has started monitoring sermons in mosques after the Dhaka bombings to counter terrorism.

Argument Against #2	Explanation/Examples
Governments should not be involved to a large extent as it would be a waste of resources.	• The concept of 'private lives' covers a wide range of things, from hobbies to relationships. It would be quite a waste of time and resources for the government to try and be involved in every area of life, especially when it should be focused on other more pressing goals like boosting the economy and security issues. • Eg. The government in general gives its citizens free rein over choices like relationships, hobbies and even careers. It assumes that market forces will sort these out to achieve some sort of reasonable equilibrium. The Japanese government does not micromanage its citizens, resulting into a colourful society where the citizens come up with original hobbies and interesting careers. Instead, it is focused on tackling its problems of an ageing population and a declining economy.

Markers' Comments

- Poor definition of terms. Some were very vague about the idea of 'involvement' and said that the government should 'know' the people better or be their friends. This didn't quite address the concept of intervention. Others didn't seem to grasp the nature of 'private lives' and talked about rather public domains of censorship and social media which were not always clearly about personal lives.
- There was too much attention paid to the issues of terrorism and national security. These are not the only key issues that need discussing. Breadth of argument is important, too.
- Many essays tended to be descriptive, with example-driven paragraphs. The paragraphs should be anchored on REASONS instead, for a better discussion of the question.

2.	Is Science and technology advancing too quickly for the good of mankind?

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Science and technology- The study and application of science
- Advancing too quickly- Developing at a rate that surpasses our ability to tackle and deal with its possible consequences; posing a threat; endangering our lives; providing us a reason to fear it.
- Good of mankind- survival, prosperity and peace among humans

Expectations:
Students should not list the benefits and detriments of science and technology without addressing whether its current pace of progress will result in threat to the survival of mankind. Students should refer to modern-day inventions and question if these pose a danger to our species.

Stand: Yes, it is advancing too quickly for the good of mankind.	
Argument For #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Morals and ethics have not kept up with the unbridled progression of science and technology.	• This progress has resulted in the pushing of ethical boundaries, creating more moral dilemmas and questions that mankind seems to be ill-prepared or not ready to answer. Eg. The creation of autonomous killer machines and self-driving cars raises the question of whether machines should be given the power to make moral decisions concerning death. 'Organic' drones and robots also raise questions of whether it is ethical to take away the full autonomy of an animal and use it as a plaything or a tool to fulfil our selfish agendas. • Since laws are based on what society decides to be moral and ethical, the falling behind of these standards will only result in a subsequent lack of regulation and increase the possibility of science and technology being misused.
Argument For #2	**Explanation/Examples**
We do not have the know-how to contain and manage the effects of science and technology and uncertainties will always remain.	• Technology is never as predictable as we think they are and dangerous technology cannot be perfectly be contained. Accidents will happen despite scientists or inventors expressing confidence in their innovations and risk-management strategies (Eg. Three Mile Island reactor, Fukushima). • True artificial intelligence, if realised, may pose a danger that exceeds every previous threat from technology – even nuclear weapons – and that if its development is not managed carefully, humanity risks engineering its own extinction. • In some areas such as geoengineering, human germline modification and gene drives, a lack of containment is necessary and precisely the point. Geoengineering only counts if it takes place at a planetary scale. Gene drives are designed to redraw the DNA of whole populations (of, for example, mosquitoes) as they breed uncontrollably. The lack of predictability and containment may result in side effects and ramifications that escape the imaginations of scientists themselves, leaving us ill-equipped to handle the fallout of such innovations.
Stand: No, it is progressing at a comfortable rate OR there is in fact room for it to move faster.	
Argument Against #1	**Explanation/Examples**
There is no reason to fear the rapid advancement of science and technology as, given time, we will be fully capable of dealing with all the possible implications.	• Humans are naturally suspicious of advances in science given their disruptive nature and our preference for rules, regulation and order. Yet, science has always disrupted society and society has always adapted. Thus, there is no reason to expect otherwise when considering the current advancements in science and technology. Eg. Eugenics, selective breeding, GMO food created a lot of controversy when the concepts were first introduced. However, they are now widespread and people have come to accept them.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
There are sufficient checks and balances to ensure that science and technology advances at a pace that is comfortable to man.	• Scientists and research institutes are heavily regulated by the state to ensure that their inventions do not cross moral and ethical boundaries. Eg. World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), Bioethics Advisory Community in Singapore. • Scientists are no longer the ones bearing the full burden of responsibility when it comes to questioning the purpose of an invention. More and more people e.g. social scientists, ethicists, religious groups and even the broader public are being involved in discussion pertaining to scientific research and its application. This prevents the development of science and technology from spiralling out of control.
Argument Against #3	**Explanation/Examples**
Science and technology should progress at an even faster rate as there is still so much more to	• Solutions to many pertinent problems faced by man have yet to be found and science and technology needs to progress at an even faster rate if we intend to

discover and explore about our world and ourselves.	flourish as a species. (Eg. Cures for Parkinson's disease or cancer, preventing natural disasters, reversing environmental degradation.) • Science and technology needs to advance even faster to satiate our innate curiosity and thirst for knowledge. (Eg. The existence of extraterrestrials and how large portions of our universe remain undiscovered).

Markers' Comments

- Many students did not pay enough attention to the words 'too quickly', choosing instead to merely describe the boon and bane of advancements science and technology. There is a need to discuss if the rate or pace of development is something beyond our means to handle. If there was no such reference to the pace of development, students will score no more than 13 marks for content.
- Responses were also very example-driven, with many choosing to organise their points around GM food, clean energy sources, and advancements in medicine/ healthcare. This meant that there were frequent overlaps in argument. Students should remember that they ought to structure the essay around arguments/ideas/reasons instead of examples.
- Some students also did not refer to modern developments in science and technology, choosing instead to feature things like small pox vaccinations and the development of modern railways. This limited the effectiveness of their response.

3.	**"There has never been a better time for the elderly in your society." Discuss.**

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Never been a better time: the present is the best time; the past was worse.
- The elderly: the focus is on the aged in society, usually those who are more than 60 years of age.
- Your society: students should specify the society they will be discussing.

Expectations:
Comparisons between the past and the present are needed to prove that the present is the best time for the elderly or otherwise. Students should discuss the issue in reference to their specific society (policies, social mores, economic development, culture, etc).

Stand: There has never been a better time for the elderly in your society (Singapore)

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
In Singapore, there have been a slew of policies to ensure that life is more secure for the elderly. This is a result of a prudent fiscal policy that has enabled Singapore to have healthy reserves to spend on these areas.	• To acknowledge the efforts of the pioneer generation who helped to build Singapore to the first-world nation it is today, the government introduced the Pioneer Generation Package in 2014 for elderly citizens who met the criteria. This provides them significant medical subsidies which allay their fears about the high cost of medical treatment. There is also the Disability Assistance Scheme where cash assistance is given to the disabled elderly annually to help them cope. There are also Medisave top-ups to help with hospitalisation bills. • For the elderly who belong to the lower-income group, there is the Silver Support Scheme where they receive quarterly payouts. • The retirement age has also been extended to enable the elderly to continue to support themselves if they choose to. •

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
In Singapore, the elderly have the opportunity to have a better quality of life. The key idea is that there is a plethora of choices available.	• The People's Association encourages active ageing by organising health screening, physical activities and social activities for the elderly. This helps them to stay healthy physically and emotionally. • A good number of the elderly receive financial support from their children or have their own savings or income. With the power of the silver dollar, events are specially organised for them, such as special tours which cater to the needs of the elderly. They are able to spend their retirement years in relative comfort, pursuing a variety of interests at community clubs, religious organisations and other social organisations. • The destitute in welfare homes also receive more support and better care as the government looks into standardising treatment.

	• HDB has a number of schemes to make life better for the elderly. There is a programme to install lifts on every floor in HDB blocks, the installation of elderly-friendly fixtures in the flats and the sale of studio units to cater to those who want smaller units which are easier to manage.

Stand: Things were better for the elderly in the past (in Singapore)

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
Nowadays, the elderly are seen as infirm and weak, whereas in the past, they were viewed with more respect.	• Life in Singapore tends to be fast-paced and hectic. People often rush from place to place for appointment after appointment. There is thus less time to spend with the elderly members of the family who are usually an afterthought. Although Singapore is a small country, some families do not take the trouble to visit their elderly relatives, citing the lack of time and other commitments as reasons. Singaporeans tend to be not take the time listen to the elderly speak and when they do so, it with impatience as they feel that the elderly have little wisdom to offer them in this new and changing world. • This is different from what life was like in the past for the elderly who may have been shown more respect. The experience of the elderly was prized in the past due to the focus on a certain trade and craft. Their wisdom was more highly regarded. Also, it was more common for multi-generational families lived together in the past, resulting in more time spent with the elderly in conversation and daily interaction.

Argument Against #2	Explanation/Examples
Nowadays, the elderly have to cope with many changes in society, and this may be too much for them to take, unlike the sedate and slower pace of life in the past.	• Nowadays, in Singapore, technology often drives a lot of the systems in place, from transport to purchases to signing up for activities. This can be rather confusing for the elderly who are not tech-savvy. • This is exacerbated if the elderly are not conversant in English, which is the predominant language used in the marketplace in Singapore. This may result in life being rather stressful for them as they are unable to cope with the rapid changes. • In the past, life may have been easier as the rate of change was a lot slower. The elderly could operate in their comfort zones and manage their lives more easily as there were systems they were familiar with, such as buying items from familiar shops and actually being on site to carry out transactions. • Also, the common mode of communication was pasar Malay which people of different generations at that time spoke. This helped facilitate understanding and communication.

Markers' Comments (Singaporean context)

- Students seemed unaware that the elderly in Singapore are by no means a homogeneous group. There is a group which is illiterate, non-English speaking and in need of financial assistance. At the same time, there is another group which is educated, tech-savvy and fairly well-off. The discussion should have taken these differences into account instead of making generalisations.
- A number of scripts merely argued that life in their society today is good, rather than how there has never been a better time for the elderly. The latter, which is the actual question, requires comparison with the past to prove the point.
- Some gave arguments which were not specific to the elderly but were relevant to the entire population instead. For example, they stated that the elderly in Singapore suffered in the past because of the Japanese Occupation and the social unrest. However, it is more accurate to say that everyone suffered under those conditions in the past, so this approach doesn't quite answer the question.
- Many cited the Central Provident Fund as an example of how the elderly are well provided for. The fact of the matter is that the elderly did not really benefit from the CPF scheme as they were working in an era when their wages were low.

4.	Should countries encourage migration today?
Question Requirements	

Key words:
- Countries –nations, states
- Encourage – actively promote, boost
- Migration –movement of people within a country as in rural-urban migration, urban-rural migration, or between countries as in immigration or emigration. Such movements may or may not be permanent.
- Today – discussion must in the context of what is current or contemporary so some reference to globalisation, technological transfer and geopolitical issues is necessary.

Expectations:

In deciding whether migration should be encouraged, students should consider the political, economic and social implications of migration and recognise that there are both positive and negative effects that arise from such movements. Whether migration is to be encouraged or not depends very much on the different needs and nature of different countries and governments often have to play a balancing act in the implementation of policies. A good answer should therefore include legislation and policies implemented by governments to address possible problems in integration and assimilation.

Stand: Migration should be encouraged

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
Migration will help with economic growth in modern economies that require diverse and specialised talent. Eg. highly-skilled workers in different industries.	• The migration of highly qualified foreign talent from developed countries will contribute to economic growth as they bring in skills and expertise necessary for specialised sectors. Eg. Singapore relies much on highly skilled foreign talent to boost its economic growth and lower skilled workers for the construction and manufacturing industries. It is interesting to note that out of a population of 5.69 million, over a million are non-Singaporeans.

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
Migration will help to increase the population in countries that are under-populated today and contribute to the demographic dependency ratio, overall labour force and market size. Rural-urban migration will bring in people from the rural areas to urban areas to provide the labour needed in industries. Conversely, governments may wish to decentralise urban areas which are overpopulated and encourage movement to the suburbs.	• The migration of the lower skilled is needed to fill in the positions that local people may shun e.g. blue-collar jobs such as construction work is taken up by the Bangladeshi and Chinese; domestic work is commonly taken up by Filipinas and Indonesians. This is important to countries that are suffering from a decline in population due to low birth rates leading to a shortage of human resources for industries and possibly defence. Eg. Singapore has a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 1.9 only. To address this problem, the government has introduced the PWP Population White Paper, which encourages migration and the employment of foreign workers. • Eg. In China, the waves of immigrants flowed from the small towns and villages to the factories in the cities contributed towards the Chinese miracle of stupendous growth, high savings and investments, although at the same time, income inequality. • This will alleviate crowding and congestion problems in the city and at the same time, develop the suburbia. Suburbanites also enjoy a better quality of life in these satellite towns. Eg. Tijuana in Mexico. Many cities in the USA and Europe have seen this shift.

Stand: Migration should not be encouraged

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
With the current trend of globalisation, migration can give rise to political and economic problems which arise from the difficulties faced by governments in balancing the needs of foreigners with locals.	• Migration will result in a surge in population which need to be looked after, educated, employed, housed etc. all of which places a strain on infrastructure, services. It also increases the tax burden on native income earners to fund healthcare and education. A country's resources have to be channelled to and shared with migrants even when they may not have contributed significantly towards the economy e.g. the large migrant population in European countries like France, Germany and Belgium. Migrants can also undermine wages for lower-skilled workers, bids up local housing prices e.g.in south west America. • The migrant issue can create political rifts in a country e.g. Brexit, and the impending Presidential elections in the USA.

	• Governing a country with a multicultural population is challenging especially when having to deal with religious and cultural differences and practices e.g. the banning of the burqa in France.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
Social problems and social instability can arise due to assimilation issues and xenophobia, especially with the suspicion shown towards foreigners due to the rise of terrorism in recent years.	• Migrants who do not assimilate may settle in enclaves and continue to live their lives as they would in their own country, resulting in the host country being socially divided. • Misunderstanding and intolerance towards the values and practices of migrants. Eg. the treatment of women, the wearing of veils and burqas, can lead to tension and conflict. • Assimilation and integration problems can create social instability in host countries and security issues. Eg. the sexual assault on local women in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2015 by asylum seekers, the increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Europe. Eg. Brussels Airport and Nice, the French Riviera. • When the migrant population increases, an imbalance in demographics result which does not bode well for the host country. It can lead to a dilution of the culture of the host country and a problem with national identity. • Closer to home, many Singaporeans attribute the Population White Paper (PWP) as the cause of overcrowding, failing transport system, increasing property prices, suppressed wage level, increasing competition for jobs especially for PMET, income inequality, etc.

Markers' Comments

- Many students interpreted 'encourage' loosely to mean 'accept' – better students were able to see that it implied actively invite, embrace.
- Many scripts were merely a discussion of the benefits and problems of migration.
- Some included points that were not very appropriate in this case e.g. encourage migration to increase diversity in culture, to reduce population and unemployment problems, for humanitarian reasons (e.g. refugees). These arguments were accepted depending on how compelling the students were in their explanation.
- Few students referred to legislation and policies implemented by governments in their evaluation.

5.	**To what extent can education solve the problem of poverty?**

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Education- formal learning that takes place in school or learning institutes. Public education and media campaigns to generate awareness can be included in the discussion.
- The problem of poverty- issues related to financial impoverishment and the state of destitution.

Expectations:
Both absolute and relative poverty can be considered. Examples can range from global poverty in the Third World to social levels of poverty in communities in the developed world.

Stand: Education can solve the problem of poverty	
Argument For #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Education can help to solve the problem of global poverty. Education provides people with the power of knowledge and awareness.	• People in developing countries need to be equipped with the basic tools of survival, which can come from education. Essential knowledge about contraception and family planning, as well as health guides, can provide the poor in African nations with the necessary information to escape from a life of poverty. Half of sub-Saharan Africa's total primary school population – 61 million children – will reach adolescence without the basic skills needed to lead successful and productive lives (*Africa Learning Barometer* created by the Centre for Universal Education at Brookings). *Education Africa* is a non-profit organisation that provides children in South Africa with learning opportunities. • Having knowledge about human rights will prevent the poor from a life of abuse and exploitation (e.g. media attention on global poverty).

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
Education can provide individuals with the necessary skills to break out of the poverty cycle.	• Education provides people with the necessary job skills that will enable them to find employment. For the low income workers who are unable to find jobs in a competitive and globalised world, governments can provide skills training to help them to upgrade their skills. • They can then be gainfully employed and contribute to the economy. (Eg. SkillsFuture initiatives to help the poor to develop the necessary skills for the global economy).

Stand: Education cannot solve the problem of poverty

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
Education alone is insufficient to solve the problem of poverty. The people must also be able to find gainful employment to get out of the poverty cycle.	• Regardless of educational qualifications, individuals will not be able to find jobs if jobs are unavailable. Consider the role of the government in ensuring jobs for the people. Governments will need to implement policies for job creation and boost trade and investment to stimulate economic growth. • Problems of structural unemployment will need to be addressed. Only then will the poor have the opportunity to find jobs good to support themselves. Eg. South Korea, Spain, etc, where unemployment rates are high.

Argument Against #2	Explanation/Examples
While education may be available, the quality of education is also very important in determining whether it can help solve the problem of poverty.	• Workers also need to have the correct skill sets to be employed in the new economy. Too basic an education or the study of irrelevant subjects may not help the poor be employed as what they learn is not relevant to the potential employers. • Eg. In rural areas of India, the quality of education may not be as high. While basic literacy and numeracy may not be a problem, the students may only be able to find menial jobs if they are unable to cope with the technological demands of the new economy. This is unlikely to help them break out of the poverty cycle as they will still be living from hand to mouth due to the low pay.

Markers' Comments

- Students need to consider other factors that are equally as important as education in tackling the problem of poverty, to provide a balanced approach to the discussion.
- Many responses did not refer to education as the key factor of consideration, either as a reference or a point of comparison with other relevant factors.
- The lack of access to education is not a strong point to explain why education cannot solve the problem of poverty. The premise is that education, despite its availability, may not be able to eradicate poverty.
- Scripts which did not link their ideas to education as a key factor would only score a maximum of 13 marks for content.

6.	'Not enough has been done to tackle discrimination in the world today.' Do you agree?

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Not enough- current efforts are insufficient, ineffective.
- Discrimination- The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, gender, ability, background.
- Today- Relate to current issues of the day

Expectations:
Students should have a clear awareness of what has been done to address the problem of discrimination both in the developing and developed countries. In doing so, they ought to evaluate the effectiveness of current measures and decide of the implementation of more concerted efforts is required to tackle discrimination. Students should not only refer to one type of discrimination but include a spread in their response.

Stand: Not enough has been done.

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples

Measures are ineffective and inadequate.	• Discrimination is still the order of the day in many developing and developed nations. E.g. The harsh treatment of women in Middle Eastern States, racial discrimination in America (police shootings, inequalities in distribution of public goods) and Malaysia (government policies favour the Malay majority and those of bumiputra status). Ageism and the marginalisation of the disabled in most nations. • Despite good intentions, the techniques employed to tackle discrimination may not be effective. E.g. Direct attempts at persuading people to recognise and change their attitudes have been known to be ineffective and often have unintentional negative effects. Diversity training in particular risks backfiring by reinforcing minority ethnic stereotypes, necessitating group categories and drawing attention to differences and inequality. • Politicians and lawmakers pay lip service to equal treatment. E.g. In response to the outcry over the high incidences of rape in India, the Indian government responded by toughening its rape law and creating fast-track courts to speed prosecution of rape cases and other crimes against women. But these courts have proven to be ineffective due to delays and strikingly low conviction rates.
Argument For #2	**Explanation/Examples**
Root causes and mind-sets have not been tackled.	• The issue has only been tackled superficially. Cultural and traditional beliefs are still very deep-seated in these societies and little has been done to change the debilitating aspects of culture and tradition. E.g. Honour killings are still carried out in countries like Pakistan. The caste system still exists in India. Certain forms of discrimination have also been fuelled by largely inaccurate social beliefs (E.g. how aging means decline, dependence and dementia or hoe disability equates to being a burden and liability.)
Stand: Enough has been done.	
Argument Against #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Some current policies have largely been effective and discrimination is no longer a pertinent issue.	• Interventions which facilitate positive intergroup contact and encourage perspective-taking or empathy-induction have proven to be effective. In education, cooperative learning and the use of curriculum which embeds positive messages of intergroup contact have also been promising. • The Yellow Ribbon Project has been increasingly successful in integrating convicts back into society and changing the attitudes of Singaporeans towards them. • The LGBT group has been accorded more equal rights in the liberal Western countries and are no longer denied civil liberties.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
Doing more will result in more harm than good.	• Reverse discrimination may occur if we were to do more. E.g. In pushing for more rights for women or the elderly, we may end up neglecting the welfare of men or the young, resulting in them being at the receiving end of discrimination.
Markers' Comments	
- Responses to this question tended to be very example-driven. Students organised their responses according to the different types of discrimination instead of looking at the larger reasons. This limited the scope of discussion, affecting the content marks. - To tackle this question well, students needed to examine the effectiveness of measures to combat discrimination before coming to a conclusion as to whether more needs to be done.	

7.	'Much appeal but little value.' Is this an apt description of tourism in the modern world?
Question Requirements	
Key words:	

Much appeal - Generating a lot of attraction and excitement; entertainment; fun and enjoyment.
Little value - tangible benefits and positive effects; both tangible and intangible rewards.
Tourism - travel for pleasure; the business of attracting, accommodating, and entertaining tourists.

Expectations:

Students need to consider the impact of tourism in today's world. They should consider if tourism today is purely about entertainment and enjoyment with no tangible rewards for the tourist and society, or whether the tourist and society can benefit from such travels. Good answers should analyse the reasons for the value of tourism, while considering if such positive effects can be achieved through tourism.

Stand: This is an apt description of tourism in the modern world

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
Superficial enjoyment and entertainment of mass tourism.	• Lack of educational experiences for tourists. Many tourists travel to destinations to enjoy the scenery and surroundings with no real appreciation or understanding of the country's culture, traditions and history. • Mass tourism, especially, emphasises the importance of packing in a large number of activities into a tight schedule without sufficient time for the visitors to fully understand the life and culture of locals and indigenous tribes.

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
Tourism brings about harmful effects on tourists and their countries of visit.	• Tourists may visit a country for experiences that are considered undesirable and harmful to the tourist and also to locals. They may visit casinos, brothels and indulge in various vices that have a negative impact on their lives. • Locals may also suffer from exploitation as part of the sex and gambling industry. Crime rates may increase as a result of such increased tourist arrivals. Eg. Child labour; Gambling industry in Macau; Thailand and the recent attempts to eliminate the harmful impact of the sex industry, which has much appeal to certain unsavoury types of visitors.

Stand: This is not an apt description of tourism in the modern world

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
Tourism provides much value in terms of education and awareness. Increasing trend of authentic travel experiences available to tourists.	• Tour itineraries often include visits to museums and arts festivals for visitors to be immersed in the culture and heritage of their country of visit. Visitors will be introduced to aspects of the nation's history, and be able to empathise with the experiences of the natives and locals. Eg. Indigeneous tribal groups, aborigines and their suffering during historical times. Some groups still face discrimination today. The Australian Human Rights Commission report reported that racial discrimination, vilification and social exclusion still affected many aborigines today, and for some people was a constant feature of their daily lives. There is more awareness of the plight of these marginalised groups in society. • Tourists are increasingly interested in niche travel experiences. They expect authentic experiences when they visit other societies. This can take the form of homestay opportunities. Information on such travels is made available through online platforms and social media, as well as new lodging platforms such as Airbnb. Peer reviews through travel websites increase the opportunities for travellers to truly understand the locals and their lifestyles.

Argument Against #2	Explanation/Examples
Tourists can help to preserve traditional cultures and sustain traditional lifestyles.	• Visits to rural villages and ancestral lands can provide incentives for traditional groups to maintain their age old practices. Tourists can purchase merchandise produced by locals to sustain their culture livelihood. The presence of visitors who continually praise Balinese art and culture has given locals confidence and pride in their art, and made them truly believe that their culture is glorious and thus worthy of this praise and therefore justly admired. This realisation removed any possibility in the people's mind that their art was in any way inferior to the art of advanced nations, and plays an important role in conserving and developing the art in general.

There are also economic benefits of tourism for the country.	• Tourist arrivals to entertainment and recreation facilities are very lucrative for businesses e.g. restaurants, shopping malls and entertainment outlets. There is much benefit to economic growth and development of infrastructure with increased tourist arrivals. Eg. The San of Namibia and southern Africa and the aboriginal peoples of Australia have recently regained ownership of traditional national park lands and conservancies, operating eco-lodges and serving as guides and rangers while maintaining their heritage.

Markers' Comments

- Many students were able to provide insightful examples to illustrate the variety of cultures from around the world.
- The key idea of how tourism has 'much appeal' needs to be clearly referred to in the discussion.
- Students may consider why mass tourism, despite the problems that it is associated with, continues to be a popular choice for many visitors.
- Several responses only considered how tourism provided visitors with much value without examining the problems that it brings to both locals and tourists.

8.	**'The value of sports is overrated.' Is this true today?**

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Value – importance, merit, worth.
- Overrated – appraised too highly; overestimated; exaggerated.
- Today – context of modern society where sport occupies a very significant place, largely due to its increasing importance as a leisure activity as well as a profession.

Expectations:

There is an underlying assumption in this question that too much attention, emphasis, time, money, etc, is given to sports today, to the point that it may have become excessive and its value overrated as a result.

Students are therefore to discuss the value of sports by considering its physical, social, emotional and even economic and political benefits (to the individual, society, the nation, the world) and question whether sports is truly beneficial and worthy of the time and money that is invested into it, and if there are negative implications arising from this. There should be some reference to how sports has evolved from an activity engaged in for enjoyment to the serious business it is today.

Stand: Value of sport is not overrated

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
Sports has always offered numerous benefits to the individual - mental, physical and social.	• There is a lot of emphasis on sports today – by governments, by society, in schools, at work etc. but sports' value is not overrated because it is necessary for good health and fitness, not just physically but mentally as well. This is especially important today because of our sedentary, affluent and stressful lifestyle. • Sports has become an integral part of our social life and many social activities revolve around sports. Eg. friends having friendly soccer, basketball matches and working out in gyms. It has become fashionable to be sporty and to look fit and toned. • Sports helps develop social skills and give people opportunities to play together which is good for bonding and camaraderie • Sports also develops character e.g. perseverance, discipline, resilience etc. Sporting greats are can be exemplary role models for people to emulate e.g. Pele, Michael Jordan, Michael Phelps, Roger Federer • Competitive sports is great entertainment and adds colour to one's life.

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
Sports offers economic and even political benefits today, and therefore is worth the investment.	• Despite governments investing a lot of money into sports through sports education and programmes, building of physical amenities and infrastructure, and supporting sporting talent and hosting international sports events, there are benefits to be reaped. Hosting sporting events such as the Olympics and the World Cup raises the

	profile of a country and gives it a prominent place on the world stage (Beijing Olympics, Rio Olympics, Youth Olympics & SEA Games in Singapore).
	• The commercialisation of sports generates huge amounts of revenue for a country (Broadcasting rights- Eg. BBC (UK), Fox (USA),Mediacorp (Singapore); MNCs which design and manufacturer sports equipment, apparel – Nike, Adidas; and creates career and employment opportunities for people (professional sportsmen, sport agencies, coaches, therapists)
	• Sports is powerful in uniting people especially during international sports events. Eg. how Singaporeans supported its swimmers, paddlers, etc, in the Olympics, and when a medal is won, the whole nation celebrates e.g. when Joseph Schooling won a Gold in the Rio Olympics. Such national solidarity is especially important in today's globalised society where the sense of belonging to a nation can become diluted.
	• In times of crises (political, economic, etc) sports can boost the morale of a people. Eg. Brazil which is currently suffering from economic woes.

Stand: Value of Sport is overrated

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
The value of sportmanship is undermined by the commercialisation of sport today, when the focus of sports becomes directed at fortune and fame.	• Today, sports is taken at a competitive level and has become increasingly commercialised, managed like a business; monetary gains and profits, personal fame and national glory become a goal, all of which affect the ideals and spirit of sportsmanship. The fun and enjoyment may be taken out of sport especially when professional sportsmen lose their autonomy to agents who control their decisions and their life and the pressure to perform and win is tremendous. • Professional / competitive sports can bring out the worst in people because of the high stakes involved, and encourages unsportsmanlike behaviour such as cheating, substance-abuse, foul play etc. Indeed, there has been an increase in the number of cases of sportsmen over the years who use banned substances intentionally (Lance Armstrong) or non-intentionally (Maria Sharapova). • Sports played between nations can bring out the worse in people (players, spectators, coaches) especially when national pride is at stake. Fans behaving like hooligans and becoming violent during the Euro 2016 when England fans were ambushed by French ultras is just one of numerous incidents. • Too much time and money can be wasted on developing sports as the resources could have been channelled into more important areas such as education, healthcare and housing, especially for less developed countries. The sports-related cost of the Rio Olympics is likely to be $4.6 billion, and this comes amid one of the worst economic recession in Brazil. • There is no real/ significant contribution to society except for its entertainment value and even that can be considered to be a waste of time and money. • Sports may no longer be accessible to ordinary people because it has become too expensive to play or even to watch live. Tickets to live matches are exorbitantly priced, private coaching lessons are terribly expensive.

Argument Against #2	Explanation/Examples
Given the constant call to exercise by various bodies like the government and the mass media, too much emphasis on sports can be harmful to an individual's mental and physical health.	• The benefits of sports can be exaggerated leading to sport and exercise being carried out in excess, which can be counter-productive. • Sport injuries to knees, hips, elbows, etc, are common, and it is not unusual to hear of people collapsing after pushing themselves too hard during marathons. • Sports can become an addiction, and this obsession can lead to adverse consequences on relationships and resources.

Markers' Comments

- Key word is 'overrated' so the students must show that the investment that goes into sport is justified. Most students were able to see this and gave current examples to substantiate their arguments.
- Weaker students simply discussed the benefits and problems of sport today without showing explicitly how the value of sports is or is not overrated.

9.	**Are ethical practices the key to a successful business?**

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Ethical practices- procedures and operations that are considered to be morally good.
- Key- crucial, essential.
- Successful business- a company that thrives and earns lots of profits; enjoys a large consumer base.

Expectations:
Students need to consider whether it is crucial for companies to be ethical in order to be successful and profitable. Reasons need to be provided to explain why ethics is a key consideration to a profitable business. Other factors that determine the success of a business need to be considered in relation to ethical practices.

Stand: Ethical practices are the key to a successful business

Argument For #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Ethical business practices will encourage wider consumer support.	• Consumers increasingly expect businesses to be ethical in their business practices. Social enterprises that give back to society will find it profitable to adopt an ethical perspective. • Eg. The Ethisphere Institute is an American firm that released a list of ethical businesses in 2011, including Gap Inc., Colgate-Palmolive, illycaffe spa in Italy and Brazil's Natura Cosmeticos. • Companies that support community trade and improve the livelihood of the low income workers will benefit from a larger consumer base.
Argument For #2	**Explanation/Examples**
There is greater governmental support for businesses to contribute to society in ethical ways, which will likely aid their success.	• Government funding and subsidies will incentivise businesses to develop business models that are centred on ethics. • Having such government support will provide a conducive environment for businesses to thrive. Eg. shareholders and investors will have the confidence to support government accredited businesses. • Eg. accreditation procedures which have legal implications/backlash for unethical businesses.

Stand: Ethical practices are not the key to a successful business

Argument Against #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Companies that only emphasise ethical practices may not be sustainable. They may not have the resources for long term survival in a competitive environment.	• Businesses need to be profitable to enable workers to remain employable and receive competitive wages. • In a globalised economy, companies that are unable to improve their sales and marketing strategies will not have the necessary financial means to survive in the industry. As business and operations costs escalate, firms will find it increasingly challenging to succeed without an emphasis on profits.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
Other factors are equally important or more important in determining the success of a business.	• Technological investments to raise the level of productivity and efficiency of a firm. • Corporate structure that affects the effectiveness of business operations and employee well-being/satisfaction. • Competitive pricing of goods and quality of services to increase consumer support. Quality remains the main influencer of choice regardless of whether a product or service is ethical (Ethical Living Research conducted in the UK by YouGov, and replicated by Guardian News & Media). • Advertising to reach out to consumers and provide incentives for consumer spending.

Markers' Comments

- Students who attempted this question frequently discussed the importance of ethical businesses without addressing the issue of whether ethics was 'the key' to their success.
- Some responses approached the issue in terms of how ethics was the only determinant of a successful business.
- Students should consider other factors that are equally important or just as important in determining the success of a business.
- Several examples given by students were more about best practices in business rather than ethical business practices. Examples need to be linked to the issue of ethics.

10.	'Clothes make a man.' Do you agree with this view?

Question Requirements

Key words:
- Clothes – what we wear.
- Make a man – contribute to how we are regarded, perceived by others / society as well as how we perceive ourselves, too.
- The idiom essentially means that that people are judged according to the way they are dressed.

Expectations:
In addressing this question, students have to argue whether one's clothes determine how one is perceived by others and how one perceives oneself. A good answer should attempt to analyse why people are judged in different ways according to how they dress and whether this is justified. Students should go on to consider the implications of such perceptions and how they can affect one's eventual accomplishments in life, rather than simply give a list of examples of stereotypes.

Stand: Yes, clothes make a man

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
What we wear can determine how we are perceived by others because our clothes reflect our tastes, preferences, attitudes, values and even character. This means that our image is constructed through our clothes. Clothes carry a symbolic meaning and hence may also determine how we perceive ourselves which translates into our conduct and behaviour.	• When we dress neatly, we give the impression that we bother about how we look and are likely to be meticulous and organised and meticulous. It could also suggest that we are proper and boring. If we are shoddy in our dressing, we give the impression that we are likely to be careless and disorganised. It can also suggest that we just cannot be bothered with appearances, and hence free-spirited, independent, confident. Eg. job interviews on Wall Street versus creative agencies. Modest dressing reflects conservatism while dare-to-bare clothes may indicate vanity or even promiscuity. Expensive designer garb shows extravagance and perhaps ostentatiousness, while simple clothes show thrift and practicality. • Because such first impressions matter, it is important that we dress appropriately for different occasions so as to elicit the appropriate reaction. Eg. be offered a job, get special service, attract the opposite sex, etc. • According to psychologists, we think not only with our brains but with our physical experiences as well, so if we want to exude confidence, we should wear business suits; if we want to show power and authority, we should wear uniforms, etc. Our dressing therefore affects the way we behave.
Argument For #2	**Explanation/Examples**
How we dress also reveals information about our position in society - what we do, our profession as well as our socio-economic status, our culture, our background. Clothes can thus make us more powerful, depending on the situation.	• What one wears can also indicate one's status or station in society (expensive, well-tailored clothes as opposed to cheap, mass-produced ones). Uniforms are a good indication of what one does for a living. Eg. a pilot, a nurse, a police officer, a navy captain, etc. and these in turn give some indication of how much one earns.

Stand: No, clothes do not make a man

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples

Clothes are simply part of one's outward appearance, and do not make us who we are. Our character is more accurately reflected in our attitude and behaviour, our manners and also the quality of conversation.	• According to image consultants, we may be largely assessed by how we look, but once the initial impression wears off, how we act and what we say matters. Good manners, courtesy, and a high EQ, never fail to charm and impress. Nothing turns people off more than rude and boorish behaviour, a lack of consideration for others and a lack of awareness of our surroundings. • When one is well-spoken and knowledgeable, one would impress more. The ability to hold a decent conversation will make one a more interesting person and one's knowledge of and interest in world affairs makes one appear intelligent and well-read. These form more lasting impressions than our outward appearance.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
We used to be judged according to the way we were dressed but not anymore as we move towards a minimalist culture where 'less is more' and practicality rules; and what we do and achieve has become more important. Clothes no longer 'make or break' us.	• The modern society is a free society and there are so many choices available to everyone. It is no longer possible to accurately judge a person based on what he wears. Many wealthy people and highly accomplished people dress simply. Eg. Steve Jobs was always in a black polo shirt and jeans. Mark Zuckerberg is always in a grey T-shirt; he admits to wearing the same clothes to work every day, claiming that it makes him focus on important decisions at work and being more productive. • It seems that today, people who dress up are seen to be stuffy and pretentious, and the minimalist look is in. Casual Friday or dress-down Friday which is a western trend, is observed in many workplaces today. • Because there is freedom to dress in whatever we like due to the choices available to us, people no longer place too much importance on clothing. In fact, one's achievements and accomplishments have become more important in the success and achievement oriented society of today.

Markers' Comments
• Few students attempted this question. Those who did often did not address the quote in their answers beyond referring to it in the introduction. They merely discussed the functions of clothes without making a deliberate link to how clothes 'make' us. • There were few strong examples offered. A lot of it was descriptive of general observations without concrete evidence. • There was also the discussion of how other things 'make man' instead of clothes, which meant that the students were no longer answering the question.

11.	Is the library redundant in today's world?
Question Requirements	

Key words:
- Library- A building that contains a collection of books, periodicals, music and film for use or borrowing of the public or members of an institution.
- Redundant- Irrelevant, of no value.
- Today's world- Modern society.

Expectations:
Students will need to refer to characteristics/nature of today's world and evaluate if physical libraries are indeed valuable. Examples should not be restricted to Singapore and should come from a range of countries.

Stand: Yes, it is redundant in today's world.	
Argument For #1	**Explanation/Examples**
The dawn of the digital era has rendered the physical library obsolete as knowledge and literature can be stored online in digital copies.	• The proliferation of web-browsers makes it possible to store vast amounts of information online. There is no longer a need to keep bulky books and old records in a physical library anymore. This in fact is not an economical use of space especially for land-scarce countries.
Argument For #2	**Explanation/Examples**

The pervasiveness of the Internet also offers increased access to the vast wealth of knowledge online and this makes libraries redundant in a world where time and convenience are of the essence.	• The pervasiveness of the Internet, broadband coverage and mobile access have made it possible for people to acquire and access vast amounts of information that rivals what libraries can provide. Visiting a physical library and searching for information in contrast is inconvenient. People are also able to gain access to e-books, which reduces the need for a physical library. • For this reason, state funding for libraries in the USA was reduced by about 40 percent in 2012. In the same year alone, 200 public libraries were closed in the United Kingdom.
Argument For #3	**Explanation/Examples**
There are many other competing forms of entertainment present in today's world, making libraries redundant.	• Reading is on the decline as people today prefer other more tantalising forms of entertainment or are looking to other things to past time (e.g. theme parks, movies, video games, cable television). The rising level of affluence also opens up the range of entertainment choices available to individuals.
Stand: No, it is not redundant in today's world.	
Argument Against #1	**Explanation/Examples**
Libraries are constantly reinventing themselves to keep up with current trends and stay relevant.	• Libraries are now providing digital libraries where citizens can borrow e-books. People also have access to a huge database of e-resources. • Librarians have also been experimenting with ways of expanding the idea of learning. Eg. Opening 'maker spaces' in areas where bookshelves have been cleared out to collect old and new technologies like sewing machines and 3D printers. Patrons are encouraged to develop and share skills that cannot be practiced over the Internet. The National Library Board in Singapore also organises exhibitions to increase awareness of Singapore's history, cultural heritage and arts scene. In the Iowa City Public Library, librarians lease recordings from local artists and offer them online to cardholders for free. • Mobile libraries which increase the convenience of borrowing books are also gaining popularity among office-workers hard-pressed for time.
Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
It still provides a place of refuge for citizens who are hard-pressed by the hectic demands of the world. It is also egalitarian in nature, allowing people of all backgrounds, social statuses or age to feel welcomed in a society increasingly stratified according to levels of wealth and power.	• The library is still a place of peace and quiet, where one can contemplate, find comfort and solace in books. It is a place where the imagination is stretched, where one is sheltered from the consumeristic tendencies of modern societies which are more concerned about the material displays of wealth. • People are able to borrow books for free. This allows anybody to have access to a wealth of knowledge.
Argument Against #3	**Explanation/Examples**
Libraries still have cultural appeal and historical significance today. Physical libraries are aesthetically pleasing and appealing compared to the drab and uniform landscape of today's world.	• They are often referred to as cathedrals of knowledge and promote life-long learning which is essential in a world in flux, where people have to be adaptable and informed. • People bemoan the demolishment of these iconic buildings which served as important heritage landmarks and helped people form a collective memory of history or a place. Eg. The demolishment of Singapore's old National Library created much dissent among the people. • Both classic and modern libraries offer a striking architectural focal point within a city, most appealingly when in an accessible central location. Some libraries (Eg. the Austrian National Library, Trinity College Library in Ireland, and The Library of El Escorial in Spain) are incredibly beautiful. They are monumental, architectural wonders that display intricate forms of artwork on their walls and ceilings.
Markers' Comments	

- There was a range of responses. While most students acknowledged that libraries were affected by the rise of the digital age, very few were able to discuss how libraries have changed to make themselves more relevant to the communities they serve.
- The better students were also able to bring up salient arguments pertaining to the cultural and social significance of libraries. Weaker students, on the other hand, raised superficial arguments, with the most popular being how libraries are air-conditioned for comfort in hot and humid Singapore, and how they provide a conducive space (and electronic points) for students to study and charge their electronic devices.
- Weaker scripts also paid little attention to 'today's world', missing out on an important aspect of the question. There was also a tendency among weaker students to just talk about good and bad qualities of books in general. These students need to recognise books are but just one thing that the library offers/loans out.
- Range of examples was limited, with students not providing concrete examples and referring mainly to Singapore.

12.	Is it fair to say that the arts do nothing to solve the problems of your society?

Question Requirements

Key words:
- The arts: performing arts (dance, theatre, music), visual arts (painting, sculpture, installations), literature, etc.
- Do nothing to solve: This is an absolute phrase. It suggests that the arts add absolutely no value to the situation and do not help solve the problems at all.
- The problems of your society: student have to be able to pick out the various problems faced by their specific society

Expectations:
- Students have to assess the problems faced by their society and analyse if it is fair to say that the arts have contributed nothing to the solutions. Of course, as the statement is an absolute one, students should usually state that it is not a fair comment.
- Students should discuss their society in particular, showing awareness and sensitivity to the problems faced.

Stand: It is not fair to say that the arts do nothing to solve the problems of your society (Singapore)

Argument For #1	Explanation/Examples
The arts have helped to raise awareness of problems in Singapore.	• Being a densely populated society, Singapore has its fair share of social problems. Sometimes, as we are so busy and caught up with various activities, these problems are ignored or allowed to fester. The arts allow for the problems to be raised and then discussed. This encourages the audience to react to the issue, often sympathetically and empathetically, and has helped to alleviate the situation. • Eg. 'Falling', a play by theatre company Pangdemonium dealt with autism in the Singaporean context. • The late playwright Kuo Pao Kun's monologue 'The Coffin Is Too Big For The Hole' was about the mindless adherence to bureaucracy in Singapore.

Argument For #2	Explanation/Examples
The arts have helped to form and crystallise the Singaporean identity which many have struggled with, as we are a relatively new nation.	• As a young nation, we sometimes do not feel secure about our identity as a nation. This leads to the feeling that Singapore is culturally bereft and lacking in traditions which would help to root its people. Singaporean literature and music have helped to paint familiar Singaporean scenes and characters, which help Singaporeans develop an affection for the country. • Eg. Catherine Lim's short stories have painted pictures of life in Singapore. It has helped us to recognise that there are certain cultural traits and norms we share as a people, and these make us Singaporean. ('Or Else, the Lightning God', 'Little Ironies: Stories of Singapore') • Eg. We take pride in local bands like The Sam Willows and Gentle Bones.

Stand: However, the arts have not always been able to solve the problems in your society (Singapore)

Argument Against #1	Explanation/Examples
There are some problems which need systemic solutions, which the arts cannot help to solve.	• Singapore is facing several major problems such as the fight against terrorism, economic slowdown and unhappiness among its citizens because of the increase of foreigners in the country. All these problems may need to be dealt with through

	governmental agencies and policies need to be put in place to ameliorate the situation.
	• The arts may only be able to help with the people's emotional response to these threats as they tend to evoke a cathartic response, but they may be unable to actually help solve these problems as a more targeted plan of action from the various agencies and organisation is needed instead.
	• Eg. The Ministry of Manpower moved to reduce the number of foreign workers in Singapore by increasing levies and requiring foreign workers to meet more stringent criteria.
	• Eg. To counter terrorism, Singapore has set up special units like the Singapore Special Operations Force and groups like inter-racial confidence circles.

Argument Against #2	**Explanation/Examples**
Most Singaporeans are not very interested in the arts, which diminishes their ability to reach out to the public and address problems.	• In Singapore, not much attention is paid to the arts unless one is a practitioner or part of the arts community. Most people accept the arts as part of society but are not actively involved in either performing or as a member of the audience. This means that no matter how well thought out the arts are in trying to solve problems in Singapore, they actually reach a small part of the population, so there is little impact made.
	• Many Singaporeans do not attend concerts or performances or visit art galleries on a regular basis. If they do, they often choose those which are entertaining to them on a personal basis and may not opt to watch those with social messages.
	• Eg. Popular singers like Jay Chou often have sell-out concerts whereas plays with strong themes and messages by Drama Box make do with smaller audiences.

Markers' Comments

- Most students who attempted this question were well prepared with examples. There was a good range of artistic programmes mentioned in the essays.
- However, there was the tendency to describe the various artistic endeavours instead of explaining how this showed that the arts solve problems in Singapore.
- Another approach was to discuss the problems faced by Singapore separately in each paragraph and suggest the solution found in the arts. This meant that there was a lot of repetition of arguments. A better approach would have been to tease out the reasons for why the arts can solve problems in general before moving on to the specific examples.
- While students could state the solutions to prove that the arts contribute to problem-solving, they could have gone one step further to assess the effectiveness of the solutions. That would have been a deeper and more thoughtful response.