

VJC JC2 2013 Preliminary Examination

P2 Answer Scheme

Read **Passage 1** and then answer the questions below:

- 1) Explain two ways in which courage is similarly perceived by Alice Swaim and Mark Twain? *Use your own words as far as possible.* [2]

From the Text	Paraphrase
Courage is not the towering oak that sees storms come and go/ It is not the size of the dog in the fight (l.2 & l.4) It is the fragile blossom /it is the size of the fight. (l.3 & l. 5)	Both saw physical size/physical might/ physicality [1] as not significant/unimportant. Rather, strength in vulnerability/one's attitude or perseverance [1] in times of difficulties indicates courage.

- 2) What is the author's intention in his use of the phrase 'At the risk of sounding clichéd'? *Use your own words as far as possible.* [2]

	Inference
	He will still use the expression [1], despite possible critical reception to his choice of expression being commonplace/overused/hackneyed/trite [1] OR Despite knowing/ having the awareness that the expression is overused/hackneyed/trite [1], he still wants to use it to emphasise his view on courage [1].

Note: Students must explain and paraphrase the word "clichéd", instead of re-stating the word in answers. No marks will be awarded if students simply state that author wishes to emphasise his point, without explaining the implied meaning of "at the risk of sounding clichéd"

3) Why does the author use the word “miracle” in line 9?

[1]

From the Text	Inference
courage is that miracle fibre that sustains our humanity as it connects our hearts to actions	<p>The word “miracle” is used as it refers to the power of courage in enabling man to do or act on what he passionately believes to be right/what he normally would not do.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The word “miracle” is used because courage is rare as not everyone possesses such a virtue. (“Miracle” also suggests the idea of “rare occurrence”)</p>

Note: Students should not merely re-state that courage is a miracle fibre as it sustains our humanity and connects our hearts to actions. Merely stating and paraphrasing the sentence does not really express the implied inferential meaning of “miracle”

4a) According to Aristotle, what are the differences between cowards and reckless men?
Use your own words as far as possible.

[2]

From the Text	Paraphrase
Cowards are debilitated by disproportionate fear (Il.13-14)	Cowards are weakened/impaired by excessive/inordinate/too much/extreme anxiety
Reckless men take unwarranted risk with inordinate confidence in the face of peril. (Il.14-15)	Reckless men take unnecessary/unjustified chance , when endangered, propelled by their excessive belief in their own abilities

Note: The best answers must capture the four keywords to score the 2 marks here – “debilitated”, disproportionate fear”, “unwarranted risk”, “inordinate confidence”. However, in the spirit of positive marking, marks will still be awarded if “fear” and “risk” are lifted, as long as the rest of the important keywords are properly paraphrased.

Marks will not be awarded at all, if students only paraphrase the qualities of either cowards or reckless men alone without showing the comparable difference between the two. This is because the question specifically asks for “differences between cowards and reckless men”, so the answer must demonstrate the difference between the two. To at least score 1 mark, students must show the difference by capturing at least one keyword associated with “cowards”, and another keyword associated with “reckless men” to draw the comparison.

4b) How is the courageous man different from the reckless men and cowards? *Use your own words as far as possible.* [2]

From the Text	Paraphrase
The courageous man, however, perfects his balancing act between irrational fear and foolhardy recklessness . (ll.15-16)	<p>The courageous man has consummate/complete control over / is able to put into perspective/reconcile/ is able to tread a fine line between what is senseless or baseless anxiety and rash behavior</p> <p><i>Note: To score the first mark, the three keywords in bold must be captured and paraphrased. This is because the three keywords here are part of the entire argument.</i></p>
..but he endures his fear with conviction for the moral reason that (he thinks) is right (ll.16-17)	<p>He will strive on/ He withstands his anxiety because he believes in what he stands for is just.</p> <p><i>Note: To score the second mark, the two keywords in bold must be captured and paraphrased. Likewise, the keywords are part of the entire argument.</i></p>

5) Why does the author put the words 'he thinks' (line 16) in parentheses? [1]

From the Text	Explanation
	<p>The courageous man is driven by what he believes to be right or righteous hence "he thinks" refers to this belief</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Others may not necessarily agree with his point of view/it is subjective.</p>

6) In paragraph 3, what do the present-day examples tell you about courage? *Use your own words as far as possible.* [2]

From the Text	Inference
<p>'... courage need not be such a romanticized ideal that is fossilised in the victorious acts of historical statesmen and mighty warriors in the ancient past. Our modern history and socio-political trends are replete with glorious anecdotes of moral courage illuminated by remarkable politicians ... who have left indelible marks on the annals of history.' ...and with courage, the power of people is much stronger than the people in power.</p>	<p>Courage is not a thing of the past/steeped in old history/irrelevant in today's context.</p> <p>Courage is still evident or abundant in modern world or modern history/still embraced/still embodied/there are still cases of modern courage/ Courage is still embodied by ordinary people today.</p> <p>These modern acts of courage have left important legacies in our world/ such modern courage will have lasting impact on the world.</p> <p>With courage, the strength of the people can overcome those in authority.</p> <p><i>Note: There are 4 possible points here in total. 1-2 points: 1 mark , 3-4 points: 2 marks</i></p>

Read **Passage 2** and then answer the questions below:

7) Explain the irony as implied in lines 1-6. Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the Text	Inference
<p>'We find it easier, in these confused times, to admire physical valour more than moral courage ... Ironically, when an individual takes a moral stand against the abuses of power and dogma, we can be so indifferent'(Lines 1, 4-6)</p>	<p>Since we highly regard physical courage, one would expect that we would similarly respect moral courage, [1m] but it turns out that we are instead apathetic or even skeptical about moral courage [1m].</p>

Note: To score the 2 marks, students must explain the element of surprise/contradiction in the irony. Only 1 mark is awarded if students merely explain the difference between how physical and moral courage is perceived without explaining why it is ironic

- 8) Explain what the word 'scarecrows' (line 41) suggests about the netizens. Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the Text	Paraphrase
... we see young netizens having the 'courage' to trumpet their opinions on various platforms of social media. But at times their so-called vocal opinions are nothing more than empty talk as they rarely act on their convictions .(line 36 to 38).	<p>Literally, scarecrows appear to be fierce and intimidating to the birds. Likewise, in the context here, the young netizens appear strident/intimidating/full of passion in their views/powerful advocates [1m].</p> <p>BUT scarecrows merely display a fake façade as they are not real human beings. Likewise, these netizens are mere hollow vessels/merely people who distract intellectual or substantive discussions and lacking in real courage/have no substance and are mere distractions. [1m]</p> <p><i>NB: Answers must demonstrate candidates' understanding that the image the netizens project is different from what they do and who they are in reality. The best answers would clearly make references to the imagery of the scarecrow, even though answers that did not explicitly make such reference were awarded marks as long as they captured the implied characteristics of the scarecrow.</i></p>

Note: The first mark will not be awarded if students merely state that the netizens often "express/vocalize" their opinions online. This does not capture the stronger idea of "intimidating" as implied in the imagery of the scarecrow

- 9) What does the question 'or its dearth?' in parentheses imply about the author's attitude towards the current ways of education? [1]

	Inference
	<p>He is pessimistic/critical/questioning/skeptical/disillusioned about the lack of education about moral courage.</p> <p><i>NB: 'sarcastic' will not be accepted because that is not the tone of the author's writing in this paragraph. Also, students need to understand that this question specifically asks for the author's attitude, not tone</i></p>

Summary (8 marks)

Using material from paragraphs 2 and 3 of passage 2, summarise the author's views on why moral courage is withering in modern society. 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.**

The author argues that

	From passage 2	Possible Paraphrase
a	..we, as a society, have become increasingly individualistic .	We have become increasingly self-centred .
b	In a modern world where material pursuits are prized and glorified above others,	As material pursuits are prioritised/emphasised over others,
c	moral ideals and other intangible values are simply relegated to the back seat .	moral ideals and other intangible values are overlooked/ignored/disregarded .
d	... decades of good life and rich consumerism [paraphrase "good life and rich consumerism" as a whole]	Years of material luxury/ material comfort
e	have literally emasculated the character of the younger generation	have softened/eroded/weakened/destroyed the character of the young.
f	values are constantly oscillating ,	Values are constantly changing/shifting ,
g	waning	diminishing/weakening ,
h	or worse, virtually absent	or virtually displaced/missing
i	from the hedonistic lifestyles of many.	from the pleasure-driven/debauched/indulgent/decadent lifestyles of many.
j	Young people today are ...aimless, unopinionated [<i>"aimless" and "unopinionated" can be paraphrased as a whole as they share similar meaning</i>]	Young people today are disorientated/ indecisive/hesitant/ (inferred: lack moral compass)
k	easily swayed by the values preached by the media and the powerful institutions	easily influenced/wavered/ (inferred: persuaded/convinced/indoctrinated) by the values preached by powerful institutions

m	<p>the youth of today succumb to a pervasive culture of conformity and herd mentality</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The majority is always right, and such is the mantra of the moral weaklings who submit to the collective wisdom of the crowd</p> <p><i>[These two points are similar to each other. You only need to have either one of them]</i></p>	<p>The youth today surrender/give in a culture of conformity <i>[Allow culture of conformity to be lifted, as it has already been explained in the idea of “surrendering/giving in”]</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>The majority is always right and the moral weaklings choose to surrender to/subscribe to such a belief/such a norm</p>
n	<p>they fear the reproach and disenfranchisement of others</p> <p><i>[For the words “reproach and disenfranchisement” , you only need to paraphrase one of them as they share similar meanings]</i></p>	<p>They are afraid of the condemnation/marginalisation/rejection of others</p>
o	<p>for taking the road less travelled</p>	<p>for being unconventional/adventurous/</p>
p	<p>...are now being told, “Sit down, you’re rocking the boat.”</p>	<p>They are now being criticised for disrupting/violating the norms.</p>
q	<p>In Asian societies where group harmony and collective social order are still deeply honoured..</p> <p><i>[Paraphrase “group harmony and collective social order” as a whole]</i></p>	<p>In Asian societies, social hierarchy is still deeply valued.</p>
r	<p>those who exhibit moral courage risk being censured and demonised by others</p> <p><i>[For the words “censured and demonised” , you only need to paraphrase one of them as they have share similar meaning]</i></p>	<p>Those who exhibit moral courage risk being criticised/vilified/disparaged by others</p>

s	It is a risk that is far too unimaginable for many young individuals.	It is a risk that is too unthinkable for many young individuals.
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A total of 18 points

Allocation of Marks

1-2 points	1 mark
3-4 points	2 marks
5-6 points	3 marks
7-8 points	4 marks
9-10 points	5 marks
11-12 points	6 marks
13-14 points	7 marks
15 points and above	8 marks (full marks)

10. Ralph Antonio argues that there will be more expressions of moral courage in modern society, whereas Elizabeth Kellerman believes that moral courage is on the decline. Whose view is more reflective of your society's attitude towards moral courage? In your answer, develop some of the points made by the authors, and give your own views and some account of your own experiences.
[10]

Mark Range	Descriptor
Band 1 8-10	<p><u>Notes for the marker:</u></p> <p>REQUIREMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students must make systematic reference to the requirements of the question, with evidence of a balanced treatment. 2. Students must also refer to the passages' ideas. 3. They should take a stand on which view is more reflective of Singaporean attitudes providing justification in the form of substantive evidence drawn from both local trends and issues. Justification provided should be sound, directly relevant to the ideas from the passage and demonstrate mature understanding of societal attitudes towards moral courage. <p>EXPLANATION Shows a good or very good understanding of the terms and issues in both passages.</p> <p>EVALUATION Students should make very convincing evaluation by making judgements and decisions and by developing arguments to logical conclusions. They should also include elaboration and support through personal insight and apt illustrations.</p>

	<p><u>Key ideas from Passage 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Courage is not an outward show of strength (“the towering oak”). 2. Courage is having the tenacity to struggle against odds (“the fragile blossom”) 3. The intensity of human courage is essential to the survival of mankind. 4. Courage connects our hearts to our actions. 5. Courage is the mean between fear and recklessness. It is the balance between irrational fear and foolish recklessness. 6. Real courage is seeing things through despite being down at the start. 7. Courage need not be a romanticised ideal that is fossilized in the past. Modern history is full of examples of moral courage. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. We live in an era where individual courage is increasingly the dominant spirit of the times. 9. Many of us will get to exercise our choices and make our stands on issues involving us. 10. Democracy emboldens our choices and social media lends us the voice to express our courage <p><u>Key ideas from Passage 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We find it easier to admire physical valour rather than moral courage. 2. We are indifferent or apathetic when an individual takes a stand against abuses of power or dogma. 3. We are suspicious or cynical of people who go against the grain of society. 4. We have becoming increasingly individualistic. We prize materialism above moral ideals. 5. Decades of good life have emasculated the character of the younger generation. 6. Our society is founded on a morally bereft landscape, where values are constantly oscillating or absent. Young people are easily swayed. 7. Youth today succumb to a pervasive culture of conformity and herd mentality. We are told not to rock the boat. 8. In Asian societies where group harmony and social order is still deeply respected, those who exhibit moral courage risk being censured or demonised. 9. Taking a stand is an unimaginable risk for young people. 10. To be morally courageous is also a conscious choice. 11. In an age of social media, we are cocooned by the opinions of others and we have muffled our own voices while conforming to others. 12. The vocal opinions or courage of young netizens is hollow and lacks substance; they do not back up their words with actions. 13. The current state of moral cowardice raises serious questions about our ways of education.
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	<p><i>Discussion issues may address the following trends/issues in Singapore society:</i></p> <p><u>More expressions of moral courage</u></p> <p>a. The local civil society group MARUAH and social activists like Rachel Zeng and Seelan Palay speaking out against the death penalty and for the State to exercise leniency, especially in the case of young men duped or pressured into drug trafficking e.g. The ongoing Yong Vui Kong case and the 2007 Amara Tochi case.</p> <p>b. The local NGO Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2) investigates human rights abuses and labour issues in Singapore, and provides a helping hand to foreign workers who are unfairly treated or left stranded without pay. They regularly help foreign workers seek redress. They campaigned to get off days for maids and this was finally made law in 2013.</p> <p>c. The Pink Dot 2013 event which attracted 21 000 supporters can be seen as a sign that people are more willing to take a stand for their beliefs even if these beliefs are seen as unconventional. The Pink Dot event was held to call for equal rights for all regardless of sexual orientation and to encourage Singapore to do away with social stigmatisation. Pink Dot Ambassador, Ivan Heng, a famous Singaporean thespian who is gay, said in an interview with Yahoo.sg: "I had no role models as a young man. So I felt it was important for me to stand up and in some way dispel the fear, the ignorance, the prejudice,"</p> <p>d. The "Free My Internet" movement in Singapore which comprised prominent bloggers and activists such as Choo Zheng Xi, Andrew Loh and former NMP and lawyer Siew Kum Hong organised a protest at Hong Lim Park which attracted some 2000 people in June 2013. Some 162 websites (mostly Singaporean blogs or news sites) also organised a one-day blackout of their websites. The "Free My Internet" movement was to protest the Media Development Authority (MDA) of Singapore's new licensing scheme for news sites reporting on Singapore news, which they saw as having the potential to be used to clamp down on and restrict freedom of speech.</p> <p>e. Frequent civil society protests and gatherings at Hong Lim Park such as the recent 2013 protest against the Population White Paper which advocated growing Singapore to 6.9 million people (and the two others mentioned above – Pink Dot and Free My Internet), show that Singaporeans are not afraid to take a stand and come out in support of a cause.</p> <p>f. The case of Singaporean taxi driver Tong Ming Ming, who recently responded to a Facebook appeal and donated 70% of his liver to a complete stranger because he felt it was the right thing to do. A case of moral courage and doing what is right – reaching out to help others even though the cost is high.</p>
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	<p><u>Moral courage on the decline</u></p> <p>a. Prominent opposition politician Yaw Shin Leong from the Worker's Party was the subject of various rumours alleging that he had had several affairs with different women, including another member of the Worker's Party's Executive Committee, Angela Oon, which allegedly resulted in her getting pregnant. Yaw was completely silent in the face of the rumours, and he absconded from Singapore with his wife, possibly to Vietnam, where he had several business interests. The Worker's Party was forced to expel him in absentia, and many netizens and political observers criticised him for his lack of integrity and refusal to accept responsibility and admit his mistakes.</p> <p>b. Many vocal opinions on the Internet are merely "scarecrows" and lack substance or the courage to back up their opinions with actions. This could be seen from the Occupy Singapore Movement, which saw a lot of postings and comments on various alternative websites, but on the day itself, at the site of the protest (Raffles Place) not a single person came forward to be identified as a member of the Occupy Singapore movement and the reporters who covered the event waited in vain.</p> <p>Also, answers could discuss local websites like citizen journalism site Stomp Singapore and the Hardwarezone forum where many netizens frequently criticise and flame others, but do so anonymously.</p> <p>c. Amy Cheong, a former assistant director at the NTUC and a Singaporean Permanent Resident, made a racist Facebook post about Malay weddings in 2013. Shortly after, she deleted the post and fled to Australia to escape the fallout from the incident. Cheong did not stay to face possible police charges and although she apologised for her actions, the act of fleeing to Australia where she would be safe from the consequences of what she did, shows that she lacked character and moral courage.</p> <p>d. Former Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew in a 2011 pre-election speech told Singaporean voters "not to rock the fundamentals that have helped build Singapore". Singapore is sometimes seen as accepting a more conservative political culture and a "don't rock the boat" mentality because it ensures economic stability. This ties in with Kellerman's point about Asian societies prizing social order and harmony. Fiery opposition politicians like Chee Soon Juan who call for radical reforms (e.g. of HDB policies) are demonized by the establishment or conservatives.</p> <p>e. "Stomp Syndrome" is prevalent in Singapore, where passers by would rather record an event with their phones or take pictures in order to upload them on social media rather than extend help to those in trouble. This was seen in the case of the schoolgirl who was trapped in a drain for 10 minutes near St. Anthony's Primary School in 2012. A "Stomper" took a picture and posted it online but did not help. Eventually another passer by helped the girl out of the drain.</p>
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	<p>f. Civil servants in Singapore are not permitted to write in to the Forum page in the Straits Times or express political opinions. This could be seen as stifling moral courage and not giving them a chance to take a moral stand. Singapore's political culture of "Out of Bounds (OB) markers", where certain sensitive issues such as race, religion and criticism of the government are considered taboo and should not be discussed in the public sphere is also something that stands in the way of developing moral courage.</p> <p>COHERENCE Student demonstrates a very clear shape and paragraph organization and cogent argument.</p>
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Mark Range	Descriptor
<p>Band 2</p> <p>4-7</p>	<p>REQUIREMENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students covers requirements of the question <u>adequately</u> but not necessarily a balanced treatment. 2. They identify ideas from the passage, possibly with minor misrepresentation of the points. 3. They raise issues, but discussion is limited or superficial. <p>EVALUATION Student attempts to evaluate the extent to which the ideas are an accurate reflection of the situation in Singapore, but the evaluation is always convincing, and tends to be superficial with limited development of ideas, and is not as thorough in support.</p> <p>EXPLANATION Shows adequate level of understanding of terms and issues raised in the passage (which may include minor distortion) .</p> <p>COHERENCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paragraphing is sometimes helpful. 2. There is a recognizable overall shape to the answer. 3. Arguments are generally cogent. 4.

<p>Band 3</p> <p>1-3</p>	<p>REQUIREMENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An incomplete and/or unbalanced treatment of the requirements. (e.g. no illustration, no position taken on which view is more reflective even though there is a fair discussion on the issues raised in the passage). 2. Answer is marked more by restatement of the passages' ideas.. 3. They raise issues, but discussion is extremely limited or superficial. <p>EVALUATION</p> <p>Answer tends to be a mere summary or restatement of the text, with a few simple and undeveloped judgements, with very thin support.</p> <p>EXPLANATION</p> <p>Shows very limited degree of understanding and a higher incidence of misinterpretation (than in Band 2).</p> <p>COHERENCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paragraphing and organization are haphazard. 2. Arguments are inconsistent or illogical.
<p>0</p>	<p>Nothing in the answer meets any of the criteria.</p>