



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2021
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
Higher 1

GENERAL PAPER

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Paper 2

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INSERT

1 hour 30 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the passages for Paper 2.

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Passage 1. *L.F. Carver argues that there are benefits to keeping pets.*

- 1 There is a growing global trend to consider pets as part of the family. In fact, millions of people around the world love their pets, enjoying their companionship, going for walks, playing and even talking to them. And there is evidence suggesting that attachment to pets is good for human health and even helps build community.

- 2 More and more often, animals are included in family events and become important to all members of the family. This can be particularly significant in single-parent families, where a pet can be an important companion to children. Children with pets may have higher levels of empathy and self-esteem compared to those who do not have pets. Thinking of pets as family members can actually make the chores associated with pet care less stressful than they are for those who consider pets as property. Spending more time caring for a pet increases attachment to that animal which in turn reduces stress in owners. In fact, pet owners in Germany and Australia were found to visit their doctor 15 per cent fewer times annually than non-pet owners. 5
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- 3 The bond between humans and animals is not just good for human health, it can also help build community. Social networks that are developed based on shared concern over the welfare of animals can lead to increased human-human interaction through activities involving pets (for example, dog-walking clubs). Walking a dog gets people out of private spaces, which can be isolating, and into public areas where interactions with neighbours and other walkers are possible. 15

- 4 As pets play an increasingly important role in our lives, societies create laws and institutions to protect companion animals from cruelty and neglect. In most jurisdictions, regulation of shelters and pounds has not evolved to reflect the beloved status of many pets, and instead consider pets as property. If a lost pet is not reunited with an owner within a few days it can be sold to a new family, to a research lab, or be euthanised. However, some countries, such as India and Italy, have legislated against the euthanasia of healthy shelter animals. 20
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- 5 The strength of the human-animal bond has resulted in the creation of not-for-profit animal rescues whose mission is to 'pull' lost and abandoned animals from shelters before they are euthanised or sold for research. For example, Underdog Railroad in Toronto, Ontario, rescues dogs and cats from high-kill shelters as well as those offered "free to a good home" online. In addition, animal rescue organisations like Elderdog provide older adults with help to care for their pets, and The Humane Society International — Canada assists in sterilisation programmes as well as advocating for and rescuing animals in the international dog and cat meat industries. They closed three South Korean dog meat farms and two slaughterhouses in 2018, rescuing 512 dogs, many of whom found homes in Canada and the USA. 30
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- 6 Mohandas Gandhi understood the importance of the human animal bond. In his autobiography he said, "Man's supremacy over the lower animals meant not that the former should prey upon the latter, but that the higher should protect the lower, and that there should be mutual aid between the two." Recognising the ways that companion animals enrich human lives, and understanding the depth of the affection between many humans and animals, may be the key to not only better health, but to improving the welfare of society as a whole. 40

Passage 2. *Corey Lee Wrenn raises ethical issues about keeping pets.*

- 1 According to the United Kingdom veterinary charity The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, half of Britons own a pet. Many of these owners view their pets as family members. But although we love them, care for them, celebrate their birthdays and mourn them when they pass, is it ethical to keep pets in the first place? Some animal rights activists and ethicists, myself included, would argue that it is not. 5

- 2 The institution of pet-keeping is fundamentally unjust as it involves the manipulation of animals' bodies, behaviours and emotional lives. For centuries, companion animals' bodies (particularly dogs, horses and rabbits) have been shaped to suit human fashions and fancies. And this often causes these animals considerable physical harm. Particular breeds, for instance, are highly susceptible to painful and frequently fatal genetic defects. Highly prized physical features – such as small and large stature or pushed-in noses – can cause discomfort and difficulty in breathing, birthing and other normal functions. 10

- 3 Even those animals who are not purpose-bred often face bodily manipulations which impede their comfort and safety. This can include confining clothing, painful leashes that pull at the throat, and declawing, which involves the severing of the first digit of each toe in cats. Pets are also often constrained in their daily movements, sometimes crated or caged, and regularly kept indoors – always at the whim of their human owners. 15

- 4 Pets also symbolically reinforce the notion that vulnerable groups can be owned and fully controlled for the pleasure and convenience of more privileged and powerful groups. And this has implications for vulnerable human groups. For instance, sexism is partially maintained by treating women linguistically as pets – “kitten”, “bunny” – and physically by confining them to the home to please and serve the family patriarch. Social workers further recognise the powerful link between pet abuse and the abuse of children and women in domestic settings. The idea that it is acceptable to manipulate the bodies and minds of a vulnerable group to suit the interests of more privileged groups is consistent with the cultural logic of oppression. 20
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- 5 Through this forced dependency and domestication, the lives of companion animals are almost completely controlled by humans. They can be terminated at any time for the most trivial of reasons – including behavioural “problems”, for belonging to a stereotyped breed, or the owner's inability (or unwillingness) to pay for veterinary treatment. 30

- 6 In the mid-20th century, sociologist Erving Goffman introduced the concept of a “total institution”. This sees inhabitants cut off from wider society under a single authority in an enclosed social space. Sociologists typically study prisons, asylums and other physical spaces as examples. But I believe pet-keeping constitutes a sort of dispersed “total institution”. This is because non-human animals are unnaturally forced under human authority, restrained, and re-socialised. True consent is not possible under such conditions. Animals are groomed to participate and those who are unable to follow the rules of human social life are likely to be punished – sometimes fatally. 35

- 7 This is not in any way to suggest that dogs, cats and other species cannot express love and happiness as “pets”. But it is important to recognise that this is entirely manufactured (sometimes quite cruelly) by humans through behaviour “corrections” and the manipulative process of domestication itself. Ultimately, companion animals, by their very position in the social order, are not and cannot be equals. The institution of pet-keeping maintains a social hierarchy which privileges humans and positions all others as objects of lower importance – whose right to existence depends wholly on their potential to benefit humans. 40
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