

VJC 2021 GP Prelim Paper 2 Answer Scheme

Passage 1

1. Why does the author start the passage with the quote from Mark Twain (lines 1-2)? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Mark Twain once said that "Humour is the great thing, the saving thing after all. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments flit away, and a sunny spirit takes their place."	He includes the quote to introduce the topic of the benefits of humour. OR pique interest in the topic of humour.

2. Why did Mark Twain describe humour as 'the saving thing' (line 1)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments flit away ,	a. When humour occurs, we stop feeling annoyed/angry/frustrated/disgruntled/bitterness/agitation [1]
and a sunny spirit takes their place .	b. And instead, we start feeling cheerful/happy/joyful/light-hearted. [1]

3. In paragraph 2, explain why the author suggests that humour as 'a means of declaring one's superiority' (line 13) is not the kind that leaders want to acquire? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
a means of declaring one's superiority	a. Leaders should be empathetic/approachable/ be able to build rapport/uplift and encourage [1] b. And should not portray themselves as being better than others/put others down/humiliate/belittle others. [1]

4. What is the author implying by the use of 'surprise' in line 33? [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
the power and importance of humour to make positive change in the world, and also – surprise – to achieve business objectives,	1a. Humour is typically/usually considered to be frivolous/informal OR something without tangible/concrete benefits. [1]

	<p>1b. So when humour can help companies/firms/corporations achieve their goals/aims, it is something unexpected/astonishing/unanticipated. [1]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2a. The author is being sarcastic [1]</p> <p>2b. as it is not unexpected that a business course would teach students about achieving business objectives [1]</p>
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5. In paragraph 7, why does the author consider it fortunate that ‘psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait’ (line 41)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Fortunately, psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait .	<p>a. It is good/lucky as it means that people <u>may</u> still be able to/have a chance to pick up/hone a sense of humour [1]</p> <p>b. and so reap its many advantages/fruits. [1]</p>

6. Using material from paragraphs 3-5 only (lines 19-35), summarise what the author has to say about the benefits of humour.

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.**

Humour is beneficial because...

Pt.	From the passage	Suggested answer
A	Being funny is possibly one of the best things you can do for your health	it is arguably /may be /perhaps /could be the most ideal /important for one's well-being.
B	You can almost think of a sense of humour as your body's	It provides /offers physical /physiological...
B1		It improves well-being (accepted if no distinction is made between physical & mental well-being)
C	and mind's immune systemand mental /psychological defence /protection /resistance to illness/ improves mental well-being.
<p>[Context: When people who are more likely to get depression /feel sad /down /low...] Context applies to points D, E & F. Accurate representation of the context is needed for credit for point D.</p>		

D	When people who are at risk for depression reframe a negative event in a humorous light	...consider /view an upsetting /adverse /unfavourable situation in a funny way /manner /perspective,
E	they are less prone to a depressive episode	they are less /not as likely /susceptible /vulnerable to feel sad /down /low
F	because humour acts as an emotional filter	as humour helps process feelings /takes away negative feelings.
G	Furthermore, humour ... also improves people's overall quality of life	Humour also makes people feel happier /more satisfied /more fulfilled.
H	Researchers have found that people who score highly in certain types of humour have better self- esteem	...have higher self-worth /value themselves more highly
I	greater confidence in their own abilities	have more belief /faith in their capabilities /what they can do /achieve
J	more control over anxiety	better manage their fears /worries /concerns /unease /uncertainties
K	and better performance in social interactions	improved skills in communicating with people /others OR are more socially adept /less socially inept
L	laughter can be a productivity tool as well	Humour can make us more efficient /enhance efficacy /help us work better.
<i>[Context of benefits of humour when solving puzzles is needed for points M, N, O & P]</i>		
M	A study ... found that volunteers who watched a comedy were markedly	Research shows that people who watch comedy /funny shows /shows that make one laugh were significantly /noticeably
N	better at solving a word association puzzle	more adept at finding answers /answering questions /quizzes /word games
O	that relied on creative thinking	based on out-of-the-box /innovative /imaginative concepts
P	as compared to control groups that watched horror films or quantum physics lectures.	More so than people who watched (shows of) other genres.
Q	This is because laughter lights the area of the brain that is associated with attention	Humour activates the portions of the brain that deal with focus /concentration
R	and weighing between options	And decision-making
S	colleges like Stanford ... aim to teach the power	<i>[partially inferred]</i> Humour can/ has the ability /capability /might /strength to improve /enhance the world
T	and importance of humour to make positive change in the world	and is significant /crucial /essential for it (improving /enhancing the world).
U	to achieve business objectives	Humour can help businesses /corporations /companies to attain /reach aims /targets /goals,
V	build more effective	become more successful/well-functioning/productive
W	and innovative organisations	and creative /imaginative (businesses /corporations /companies) OR come up with fresh /new /novel ideas
X	cultivate stronger bonds	develop better /improved /enhanced ties /relationships

Y	and capture more lasting memories	and create more enduring recollections /remember things for a longer period of time.
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26 possible points

No. of points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	≥15
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Passage 2

7. Why have the authors written 'winning' in inverted commas (line 16)? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Part of the "winning" strategy is to best others by discounting them and their qualities.	The authors <u>do not agree</u> with the strategies used to claim victory/gain an advantage <u>because they are dishonourable/underhanded/despicable/demonstrate undesirable/deplorable qualities.</u> OR The authors <u>do not agree</u> with the strategies used to claim victory/gain an advantage <u>because they hurt others/ victory is gained at the expense of others.</u> OR The authors <u>do not think that</u> anyone really wins <u>as the organisation loses in the end</u> from such a strategy.

8. In paragraph 3, how does negative humour reinforce the feeling of superiority felt by those who engage in such humour? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Part of the "winning" strategy is to best others by discounting them and their qualities .	a. We outclass/outdo/beat others by undermining/belittling/mockng/deriding their traits/features,
And when others laugh at our "zingers," we feel affirmed and justified .	b. and when people react positively to the jokes, we feel that they endorse/validate/legitimise our opinions.

9. In paragraph 4, why do the authors say that a person offended by a joke falls into a 'double bind' (line 22)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
In many instances, the offended person also falls into the double bind of being insulted	a. Firstly, a joke was made at the expense of this person/this person was hurt by the joke/mockng/made fun of/ridiculed.

and then told not to feel insulted . In fact, the retort “Can’t you take a joke?” implies that one is overly sensitive .	b. In addition, they may be criticised as being <u>too</u> easily upset/for not being able to take the humour in their stride.
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10. Explain the irony in the last sentence of paragraph 4. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
To make matters worse, after being subjected to such a situation repeatedly, some targets become the next perpetrators of negative humour.	<p>a. We <u>would expect</u> people who are constantly made fun of to not make similar jokes at others’ expense/to not do the same to others.</p> <p>b. However, <u>in reality</u> they sometimes perpetuate a vicious cycle by making cruel jokes at others’ expense.</p> <p><i>Note: 0 or 2 marks</i></p>

11. According to the authors, ‘it does not take much talent to find fault with others’ (line 33). Suggest a reason why this might be the case. [1]

	Suggested answer
	<p>We might be used to other people (e.g. parents, teachers) finding fault with us, so we learn to mimic their behaviour.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>To feel superior /better about ourselves, we may instinctively focus on other people’s weaknesses.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>We each have our own quirks /preferences, so we may naturally be put off by other people’s behaviours that offend us.</p>

12. The author of Passage 1 believes in the benefits of humour while the authors of Passage 2 argue that negative humour has detrimental consequences.

How far do you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed in these **two** passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society. [10]

Marks	Descriptor
Band 1 8-10	<p>REQUIREMENTS Students must make systematic reference to the requirements of the question, with evidence of a balanced treatment. Students should refer to the authors' views and give reasons to support their stand.</p> <p>EXPLANATION Shows a good or very good understanding of the terms and issues.</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>COHERENCE Student demonstrates clear paragraph organisation and cogent argument.</p>

From Passage 1: Key ideas

<p>From Paragraph 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the best things you can do for your health Improves overall quality of life i.e. better self-esteem, greater confidence in their own abilities, more control over anxiety, better performance in social interactions
<p>From Paragraph 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laughter can be a productivity tool as well
<p>From Paragraph 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive change in the world Achieve business objectives, build more effective organisations, cultivate stronger bonds, capture more lasting memories

From Passage 2: Key ideas

<p>From Paragraph 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sends a strong message defining "insiders" and "outsiders" If we are members of the "outsider" group, such humour can undermine our sense of self-worth, commitment to the organisation and performance.
<p>From Paragraph 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derogatory terms surface that put down the other group or used as short-hand to slam others Over time, polarisation and bitterness can increase Both groups fail to capitalise on any potential synergies that such collaboration can yield
<p>From Paragraph 4: <u>When we are the targets (context)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We pay the price in lowered self-esteem, self-doubt, anxiety and loss of energy. The offended person is labelled unworthy of a valid complaint.
<p>From Paragraph 5: <u>When we are someone on the sidelines listening and observing (context)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel that our personal integrity has been eroded If we laugh at negative humour, we are tacitly agreeing with the joke teller, and equally responsible for the trash talking If we do not laugh, we risk being excluded or the butt of the next joke Over time, it can strip us of sensitivity, empathy and compassion