

Passage 1

1. Explain what the author means when he describes the default response of people to be “a boast disguised as a complaint.” (lines 3-4) [2]

From the passage	Inferred
Context Disguised complaint Boast	He means that a) People claim to be unhappy about how busy they are OR People grumble that they are busy b) In actuality/reality, they are proud/ arrogant about being so. <i>Award only if</i> - understanding of 'disguised' and - context of busyness <i>must be present.</i>

2. Why does the author put quotation marks round 'encouraged' (line 10)? [1]

From the passage	Inferred
It is almost always people whose lamented busyness is purely self-imposed: work and obligations they have taken on voluntarily, classes and activities they have “encouraged” their kids to participate in.	The author does so because parents did not encourage but forced children to take part in such activities instead. <i>Context must be present: who forced whom?</i> <i>Award simply for contextual meaning of 'encouraged'</i>

3. Explain why the author uses the word 'even' (line 16). [2]

From the passage	Inferred
Even children are busy now, scheduled down to the half-hour with classes and extracurricular activities.	It is used a) To emphasise the extreme busyness of society [1] b) as children are normally not expected to be busy but they are now also busy. [1] <i>Answer must show</i> a) How extreme and pervasive the busy lifestyle b) How children are not spared from this lifestyle <i>Award only if A is present.</i>

4. Identify one word in Paragraph 5 that suggest the harm of being busy. [1]

From the passage	Inferred
What she had mistakenly assumed was her personality — driven, cranky, anxious and sad — turned out to be a deformative effect of her environment. It is not as if any of us want to live like this any more than any one person wants to be part of a traffic jam — it is something we collectively force one another to do.	Cranky Anxious Sad Deformative <i>Award 1 mark for any of the above</i>

5. Why has the author placed the sentence about dating in New York (lines 29-30) inside brackets? [1]

From the passage	Inferred
<p>(She once ruefully summarized dating in New York: "Everyone is too busy and everyone thinks they can do better.")</p> <p>Answer must show link to dating / love life.</p>	<p>It is to give readers the additional information of how dating was not possible in New York for her friend when she was staying there.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>It is to provide insight / emphasise / reinforce to readers how her friend was unable to date given the beliefs of New Yorkers and it was not entirely her friend's fault that she was unable to find a boyfriend.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>It is to highlight the girl's bitterness over not being able to find a date given the beliefs of New Yorkers.</p>

6. 'a lazy ambitious person' (line 34)

Explain why this is a contradiction. [1]

From the passage	Inferred
<p><i>A paradox is a logical contradiction.</i></p> <p><i>Students must show how being ambitious and the laziest at the same time are contradictory.</i></p> <p><i>However in the context of the passage, these two words make for a logical contradiction.</i></p>	<p>One would normally not expect an ambitious person to be lazy.</p> <p>However in this context, the author describes himself as an ambitious person who is lazy.</p> <p>Answer must show logical contradiction.</p> <p>Award even if answer simply negates or states 'it is the opposite'.</p>

7. What does the word 'insidiously' (line 40) suggest about being too busy? [2]

From the passage	Inferred
<p>But just in the last few months, I have insidiously started, because of professional obligations, to become busy. For the first time I was able to tell people, with a straight face, that I was "too busy" to do this or that thing they wanted me to do.</p>	<p>It suggests that becoming too busy might be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) something that gradually occurs to a person without him or her realising it [1] b) and this makes its effects severe / serious / detrimental / harmful. [1] <p>Answer must show</p> <p>(a) the idea of being unaware and</p> <p>(b) the impact of harm</p> <p>Award only if A is present.</p>

8. What is meant by 'it is as indispensable to the brain as vitamins are to the body' (lines 54-55). **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Inferred
<p>Idleness is not just a vacation, an indulgence or a vice; it is as indispensable to the brain as vitamins are to the body, and deprived of it we suffer a mental affliction... It makes you wonder whether the world's great ideas, inventions and masterpieces are the products of idle people rather than hardworking ones.</p> <p><i>Point a = Explanation of 'vitamins to the body'</i></p> <p><i>Point b= Explanation of idleness being indispensable</i></p> <p><i>Context must be present.</i></p> <p><i>Understanding of 'indispensable' must be shown.</i></p> <p><i>Accept lifting of 'idleness' and 'vitamins'</i></p>	<p>a) Just as supplements / minerals are / nutrition is necessary to promote good psychological / physical health, using an analogy, [1]</p> <p>b) the author argues how essential / critical / crucial / vital / fundamental free time is for a person's emotional / mental well-being. [1]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>a) Just as supplements / minerals are / nutrition is essential / necessary to promote good psychological / physical health, [1]</p> <p>b) the author argues that it is imperative for people to be free in order to have a healthy emotional / mental well-being. [1]</p>

9. Why does the author write that 'the space and quiet that idleness provides is a necessary condition' (lines 55-56)? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [3]

From the passage	Inferred
<p>The space and quiet that idleness provides is a necessary condition for</p> <p>a) standing back from life and seeing it whole,</p> <p>b) for making unexpected connections and</p> <p>c) waiting for the wild summer lightning strikes of inspiration.</p>	<p>He does so as</p> <p>a) we are able to see the big picture/ have a macro perspective,</p> <p>b) form links between unrelated ideas and</p> <p>c) think creatively.</p> <p><i>Each point = 1m</i></p>

10. In paragraph 11, what reasons does the author provide to justify his decision to choose time over money? **Use your own words as far as possible.** [2]

From the passage	Inferred
<p>My own resolute idleness has mostly been a luxury rather than a virtue, but I did make a conscious decision, a long time ago, to choose time over money, since I have always understood that</p> <p>a) the best investment</p> <p>b) of my limited time on earth was to</p> <p>c) have one more beer with my friend, another long talk with my wife, and one last good hard laugh with my son.</p>	<p>a) It is more worthwhile for him,</p> <p>b) given the short / scarce amount of time he has,</p> <p>c) to spend with his peers and family members.</p> <p><i>Point A + B = 0m</i></p> <p><i>Point A + C = 1m</i></p> <p><i>Point B + C = 1m</i></p> <p><i>Point A + B + C = 2m</i></p> <p><i>Accept lifting of 'friend' if attempted to paraphrase one of the three people identified</i></p> <p><i>Award Point A if there is an understanding of preference of time over money.</i></p>

People are busy because...

	From the passage	Inferred
	People are busy because	
a	Work and obligations they have taken on voluntarily (line 9)	Occupation / tasks assigned at work and responsibilities are adopted willingly / freely by adults. (Award if work + willingly adopted by adults)
b	classes (line 9) OR scheduled down to the half-hour with classes (line 16) and activities they have " encouraged " their kids to participate in (line 10) OR and extracurricular activities (line 17)	School lessons OR additional / unnecessary / supplementary programmes OR additional / supplementary programmes are forced upon children. (Award if classes/activities + forced upon children)
c	Anxious (line 11) OR Anxiety (line 12) OR Dread what they might have to face in its absence (line 14)	One feels unease / restless / uncomfortable / agitated/ fearful being free (Award if Point E is present / attempted)
d	guilty (line 11)	and embarrassed / shameful / remorseful (Award if Point E is present / attempted)
e	when they are neither working nor doing something to promote their work (line 11-12)	when they are not at work OR performing / undertaking a task that would support / help their work OR when they are not doing anything (Award if Point C or D is present / attempted)
f	Their own ambition (line 12)	They have a personal desire/drive to work / keep busy OR They wish to pursue their personal goals
g	They are addicted to busyness (line 13)	They are habitual to / hooked to / dependent on being busy / occupied
h	They schedule in time with friends the way top students make sure to sign up for community service (lines 14-15)	They have squeezed in activities during every free time they have (Accept similar logical inferences)
i	it is something we collectively force one another to do. (line 34)	They are pressuring each other to keep busy OR It is a communal practice to pressure one another to remain occupied.

	The benefits of having free time are... <i>(Signal marker is necessary.</i> <i>For example: Free time allows us to do this, that, etc OR A benefit of free time is this, that, etc.)</i>	
j	all of which provided me with important skills (lines 21-22)	Everything conducted during one's free time provides vital / essential / necessary abilities / talents
k	and insights . (line 22)	And understandings / acumens / knowledge
l	that remain valuable to this day	that continue to be worthwhile / valued/ relevant / treasured up to today/ now. <i>(Award if Point J or K present / attempted)</i>
m	happy (line 26)	One feels content / joyful / pleased
n	and relaxed for the first time (line 26)	And at ease / calm / stress-free.
o	She still gets her work done (line 26-27)	Being able to complete one's assignment / tasks <i>(Award if Point P OR Q is present)</i>
p	but it does not consume her entire day (line 27)	but the completion does not take forever / take up the whole day <i>(Award if Point O is present / attempted)</i>
q	and brain (line 27)	and mental ability / mind <i>(Award if Point O is present / attempted)</i>
r	she has a big circle of friends who all go out to the cafe together every night, (line 27-28)	Social relationships are maintained / preserved / gained OR Being able to spend times with friends <i>(Accept similar logical inferences)</i>
s	and she has a boyfriend again. (line 28)	As are personal / intimate / romantic relationships too. OR and have dates OR and be involved in a relationship <i>(Accept similar logical inferences)</i> <i>(Award if element of romance hinted)</i>

Points	Marks
14+	8
12-13	7
10-11	6
9	5
7-8	4
5-6	3
3-4	2
1-2	1

Application Question

Sample A – 5m

One clear argument that is evaluated + attempted balance

Sample B – 4m

1st paragraph has deviated from the argument identified

2nd paragraph has some validity given references to Singapore but evaluation is based on assertions.

It considered some activities children are involved in and how competitive parents are pushing them to be busy.

Sample C – 3m

1st paragraph has focused on how we are choice-less because of the meritocratic system in SG coupled with a few red herrings. Evaluation is based on assertions and hypothetical examples, which did not follow through with the argument, which is on busyness.

2nd paragraph has identified a benefit of free time but it has not been evaluated appropriately given the misinterpretation.

- Limited degree of understanding
- High incidence of misinterpretation
- Unbalanced treatment
- Thin illustration
- Recognisable overall shape to answer

Sample D – 5m

Both paragraphs have been evaluated but not convincing.

The AQ response lacks balance.

Sample E – 5m

Only paragraph 2 is coherently evaluated and developed.

1st paragraph is incoherent given how the examples are not proving her stand.

Sample F – 5m

- 1st paragraph is balanced in its evaluation
- 2nd and 3rd paragraph are incoherent and irrelevant

Note:

Free-writing = 1m

Most arguments identified have been misinterpreted = 2m

Restatement of arguments = 3m

Superficial + relevant illustration = 4m

Illustration = concrete examples and/or personal anecdotes

Language

Sample A – 11m

- very good to excellent linguistic ability, few slips
- sustained attempt to rephrase
- apt vocabulary
- varied vocab and sentence structures

Sample B – 8m

- good to very good linguistic ability
- moderate command of language
- varied vocab and sentence structure
- noticeable attempt to avoid text language

Sample C – 7m

Sample D – 10m

Sample E – 9m

- lifting in SAQ
- double negatives used is confusing
- wrong word used at some points

Sample F – 6m

Note:

Lifted throughout – no more than 8m