

Name of Candidate	Civics Group	General Paper Tutor



MERIDIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

General Certificate of Education Higher 1 Level

GENERAL PAPER
Paper 2 Question Paper

8806/02
 2 September 2008

1 hour 30 minutes

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.
 No additional materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your **name**, **civics group** and **GP tutor's name** in the spaces at the top of this page.

Answer **all** questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question.

The insert contains the passages for comprehension. This Insert need **not** be handed in.

(Note that 15 marks out of 50 will be awarded for your use of language.)

For Examiner's Use	
Content	/35
Language	/15
TOTAL	/50

Read the passages in the insert and then answer all the questions which follow below.

Note: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.

Questions on Passage 1

1. 'the automotive *pinball game* that is your daily commute played at *breakneck speeds*.' (lines 3-4). Explain two features that characterize our daily commute, paying close attention to the italicised words. *Use your own words as far as possible.*

.....
, [1]

2. What is the author implying about Americans' attitudes toward flu vaccinations as indicated in his use of the word 'cajoled' (line 12)?

..... [1]

3. From the example given in lines 14-16, identify the word that suggests that there is a contradiction in how humans assess risk. Explain this contradiction *in your own words as far as possible.*

.....

, [3]

- 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.*

Risk assessment should be easy for humans because

[8]

5. Explain *in your own words as far as possible* why our ancestors were willing to 'take risks and even suffer injury in pursuit of':

- a) prey
b) a mate (lines 26-27)

a)

b) [2]

6. How does the writer suggest we can become 'sharper risk handicappers' (line 43)? *Use your own words as far as possible.*

.....

.....

..... [2]

Questions on Passage 2

7. *In your own words as far as possible*, explain what the author means by 'The most beaten paths are certainly the surest, but do not hope to start much game on them' (lines 14-15).

.....

.....

....., [2]

8. From paragraph 3, give reasons why it is foolish to give up freedom. *Use your own words as far as possible.*

.....

.....

....., [2]

9. What is the author's point in referring to Aesop's *Fable of the Great and Little Fishes* (lines 31–32)? *Use your own words as far as possible*

.....
..... [1]

10. Give the meaning of the following words as used in Passage 2. You may write the answer in one word or a short phrase.

- (a) beset (line 4)
- (b) folly (line 10)
- (c) counter-productive (line 12)
- (d) open (line 18)
- (e) immunity (line 30) [5]

How far do you agree with the views of both authors? Using ideas from both passages, critically evaluate the world's response to risks.

[illegible]

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JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
GENERAL PAPER (8806/02)
Paper 2 Insert

This Insert consists of 2 printed pages.

Passage 1: Jeffrey Kluger writes...

- 1 It would be a lot easier to enjoy your day if there weren't so many things trying to kill you before sundown. The problems start before you are even fully awake. There is the fall out of bed that kills hundreds each year, the automotive pinball game that is your daily commute played at breakneck speeds. Other dangers stalk you all day long: will a cabby's brakes fail when you are on the crosswalk? And then there are the risks that are peculiar just to you: the family history of heart disease that claimed your father and grand-father in their fifties and could be shadowing you as well. 5
- 2 Trailed by danger the way we are, we would like to think we have become pretty good by now at distinguishing the risks that are likeliest to do us in from the ones that are statistical long shots. After all, we do pride ourselves on being the only species that understands the concept of risk. Unfortunately, this is not so. We agonize over avian flu which has killed only a small handful of people around the world so far, but have to be cajoled into getting vaccinated for common flu, which claims the lives of 36,000 Americans each year. We too have a confounding habit of looking askance at so benign a thing as spinach for fear of *E. coli*¹ infection, while at the same time filling our shopping carts with fat-sodden doughnuts and salt-encrusted nachos. 10 15
- 3 Rational calculation of real-world risks should not be a multi-dimensional math problem that sometimes seems entirely beyond us, but it is. Although we may be living in a predator-free environment today, in which most of the dangers of the wild have been pushed away and sealed out, we are still moving through this modern world with what is, by many measures, a very primitive brain. As far as our slowly evolving central nervous system goes, this relative safety is a very recent development, and our perception of risk is still automatically emotional, rather than thoughtful. 20
- 4 This natural timorousness pays evolutionary dividends, keeping us mindful of dangers and thus likelier to stay alive and pass on our genes. That timidity, however, is at constant war with an equally adaptive adventurousness - a willingness to take risks and even suffer injury in pursuit of prey or a mate. Our ancestors hunted mastodons, risking being trampled; males advertised their reproductive fitness by fighting other males, willingly engaging in a contest that could mean death. 25
- 5 All of this has left us with an admirably well-tuned ability to anticipate and weigh very clear, very short-term dangers. But across the entire spectrum of risk, things are often far more complex than that. For one thing, particular perils do not always spring at us from particular spots — a kind of unpredictability that makes avoidance learning hard. The blissful inability to contemplate such novel possibilities keeps lower animals from worrying, but can also get them eaten or shot. Our more highly evolved talent for anticipating new scenarios allows us to take precautions against them, but also keeps us wringing our hands about all of the ones we may not have considered. 30 35 40
6. What's more, in a media-saturated world, where one should feel safer with all that amount of information on threats, you do not even have to dream up new dangers on your own, since newspapers, television and government exhortations to be vigilant

¹ *E. coli* is a family of bacteria, most varieties of which do not cause disease in humans. A rare form of *E. coli* bacteria can cause serious gastro-intestinal infections and other complications, but can be eliminated easily through thorough hygienic cooking practices.

against terrorism do it for you. This gives us plenty of opportunity to overthink – or underthink – the problem, and this is where we really start to botch things up.

- 7 We need to become sharper risk handicappers. There is reason to be critical of experts, but not to replace their judgment with lay people's opinions. The residual bits of our primitive brains may not give us any choices beyond fighting or fleeing. But the higher reasoning we have developed over millions of years gives us far greater – and far nuanced – options. Political and corporate leaders can help; officials who provide hard, honest numbers, together with a citizenry that takes the time to understand them would mean not only a smarter nation, but a safer one too. 45

Adapted from, *Why do we always worry about the wrong things? Misled by fear*

Passage 2: A.C. Grayling writes...

- 1 According to the *Panchatantra* – an ancient collection of Sanskrit tales written to teach good conduct to princes – 'safety is the greatest gift in the world, better than the gift of a cow, of land, or of food'. Most would agree, thinking how dangerous a place the world seems, beset as it is by acts of terrorism, by natural and man-made disasters, and by the fatalities of war. For people in quarters of the globe usually as peaceful as they are rich, it is something new to have perils and threats pressing so close, distorting the contours of a psychological landscape that once seemed pleasantly familiar and comfortably safe. However, as Friedrich Schiller once said, 'Our safety lies not in blindness, but in facing our dangers.' 5
- 2 It is rational to take thought for one's safety. 'It is folly to bolt a door with a boiled carrot,' 10 says the English proverb. But too much concern with safety – too little preparedness to accept that the very act of living is risky – is counter-productive in too many ways. To make everything yield to considerations of safety is to invite a different risk: that of living without opportunity, progress, or growth. The most beaten paths are certainly the surest, but do not hope to start much game on them. This applies to personal life, not to such matters as airline safety, where no risks are acceptable. In personal life, risks exist at every checkpoint, especially in emotional and intellectual respects. To love is to risk, to try new ideas and methods is to risk, to be open to new friendships, new experiences, new challenges and changes all involve risks. The costs are occasional failure and the likelihood of suffering; but the prizes at the end of the journey are great. 15 20
- 3 Governments which, in response to threats against the liberties and securities of the state, diminish the state's liberties in the hope of increasing its securities, thereby give a partial victory to the threateners. The view that it is foolish to give up freedom is best expressed by Benjamin Franklin, who once acidly remarked that 'they that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety'. It is 25 better to live a trifle more dangerously to live freely, than to live safely in a locked room made of fears and restrictions – not least when the liberties in question have been hard won over long stretches of history and are precious.
- 4 If small countries and quiet nations – places and peoples on the sidelines – are safe from terrorism, it is because they owe their immunity to their marginality. The same 30 applies to individuals. In his *Fable of the Great and Little Fishes*, Aesop has the latter say, 'Our insignificance is often the cause of our safety.' Some therefore embrace insignificance. But safety is almost its only merit.

Adapted from, *Safety*