



EUNOIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 Preliminary Examination 2025  
General Certificate of Education Advanced Level  
Higher 1

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## **GENERAL PAPER**

**8881/02**

Paper 2

**29 August 2025**

INSERT

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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### **READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Insert contains the passages for comprehension.

**Passage 1.** *An author presents the benefits of embracing uncertainty.*

- 1 Life is unpredictable. From career decisions to personal relationships, we are constantly faced with uncertain situations that can lock us in moments of anxiety and stress. However, when we approach uncertainty as an invitation to discover and explore, we will be able to manage ourselves better. It enables us to test our ability to regulate negative emotions and to identify other psychological strengths that may need further development — uplifting us in all aspects of our lives. In other words, learning to live with insecurity is the only way to feel truly secure. 5
  
- 2 Uncertainty is often accompanied by ambiguity, and when we are faced with ambiguity, we are forced to think critically and creatively. Caught in a maze of unfamiliarity, we come to a slow realisation that the usual methods and strategies that we use in known and predictable situations no longer achieve anything. We come to accept the need to adapt to new situations, and this requires thinking outside the box and coming up with creative solutions. 10
  
- 3 Fortunately, such a shift in mindset often brings positive developments, even if we may be far from anticipating these during our moments of discomfort. Embracing uncertainty and being flexible can broaden our understanding of the world around us, fostering compassion and a deeper appreciation for the richness of human experience. In 2015, Germany ventured into murky waters by opening its borders to over a million refugees despite political and social risks. While this policy has recently been faced with controversy, anyone capable of deeper reflection cannot deny that it has opened important conversations about the plight of others and urged us to reflect on our shared responsibility towards those who are suffering. 15 20
  
- 4 While it may not happen smoothly, embracing uncertainty makes us more resilient over time, allowing us to adapt and recover from unexpected challenges. This was clearly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when communities quickly adjusted to public health measures and developed remote work solutions. Ultimately, a society comfortable with uncertainty is less likely to succumb to panic and thus makes better decisions. This fosters stronger social cohesion and reduces collective anxiety by accepting that not everything can be fully prepared for. 25
  
- 5 In professional settings, the willingness to step into the unknown is an asset. In today's fast-paced business environment, change is inevitable, and companies that are able to adapt quickly instead of holding on to rigid plans are more likely to succeed. Above all, this can help companies stay ahead of the competition and remain successful over the long term, even when facing unprecedented disruptions. An unmistakably transformative example of embracing uncertainty is Netflix, which pivoted from thriving DVD\* rentals to uncharted streaming. Today, Netflix boasts a staggering yearly revenue of over \$9.4 billion dollars. Evidently, choosing innovation over a tried (and tired) business model allowed Netflix to stay ahead of the curve. 30 35
  
- 6 As John Allen Paulos contends, "Uncertainty is the only certainty there is; knowing how to live with insecurity is the only security" — it is in these moments of uncertainty that we often discover our true capabilities and unlock our potential for success. Let us strive to cultivate a mindset that embraces uncertainty as a catalyst for personal, societal and professional growth, knowing that it can lead us to new horizons and brighter possibilities. 40

\*DVD: A DVD (Digital Versatile Disc) is an optical storage medium used to store and play back digital data such as movies, software, or files.

**Passage 2.** *Another author presents the benefits of planning as a way to reject uncertainty.*

- 1     In a world filled with unpredictability, to plan is to plant roots — so we may bend, not break, when the winds of change arrive. Choosing to plan is a conscious decision to reject the chaos of uncertainty. Rather than leaving outcomes to chance, planning empowers individuals to shape their own destinies with clarity. The benefits of having a well-thought-out plan in fact extend far beyond just feeling in control of one’s destiny; they provide a roadmap for the road ahead. 5
  
- 2     One of the most significant advantages of planning ahead is that it enables us to preserve a high quality of life whatever the economic climate. This degree of security comes not from anticipating challenges, but from preparing for them. Planning for retirement, for example, allows individuals to build a nest egg that will support them in their later years. For institutions, forward-thinking strategies — such as developing robust five-year plans — help ensure long-term sustainability. In the words of the world-renowned investor, Warren Buffett, “Predicting rain doesn’t count, building the ark does.” 10
  
- 3     It is well known that uncertainty breeds anxiety. Uncertainty heightens anxiety by impairing an individual’s ability to anticipate and manage future events, leading to increased psychological distress as the mind attempts to make sense of ambiguous or incomplete information. In contrast, preparing for all possible outcomes can mitigate stress. Instead of feeling overwhelmed by uncertainty, individuals who break down larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks are more likely to remain more driven to work towards success in the long run. 15 20
  
- 4     In addition, effective time management establishes the core framework that guides our daily routines and decisions. When we consciously plan our time and stick to it, we defend against distractions and time sinks, guaranteeing a certain level of productivity, whatever happens. By creating schedules that prioritise tasks and activities based on their importance and deadlines, we can optimise our energies, even when faced with a deluge of new scenarios and requests. 25
  
- 5     Ultimately, planning allows us the luxury of time to make informed decisions at critical junctures, which is crucial when we navigate in uncharted waters. As Benjamin Franklin aptly remarked, “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail” — a timely reminder that foresight today is the surest compass for tomorrow’s journey. 30

**Passage 3.** *A meditation teacher reflects on living with uncertainty.*

- 1 Even if we think we know what is going to happen, life often throws in a wild card and suddenly everything changes. That is the nature of life. However, when we throw caution to the wind, the randomness of life might render us feeling powerless and in the worst circumstance, cause us to put off our aspirations “temporarily”. Consequently, we like to make plans and preparations because it makes us feel safe. 5 When we plan, we are forced to reflect on our values, goals, and available resources, which gives us a sense of being in control.
- 2 The upside of uncertainty is that it holds possibility and potential, as well as threat and danger. If you think about it, most of our fears about uncertainty are about all the dreadful things we assume will happen, rather than about the uncertainty itself. We project our worst scenarios onto the uncertainty. But on its own, uncertainty can contain delightful possibilities as well as terrifying dangers. It all depends on how we hold it – as a danger or as an opportunity. Can we see the proverbial glass as half full and half empty at the same time? 10
- 3 We always have a choice. This is great news because it means we can change the way we see life. And this, in turn, means that we can cope with whatever happens. In other words, as the Serenity Prayer says “Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” 15

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