

2025 EJC JC2 General Paper Preliminary Examination
Paper 2 (Uncertainty)
Suggested Answer Scheme

From Passage 1

1. In paragraph 1, what does the author suggest are ways we can develop self-management when we ‘approach uncertainty as an invitation to discover or explore’ (lines 3–4)? [2]

Question Type: Literal Paraphrase	
From Passage	Suggested Answer
However, when we approach ambiguity 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 <u>psychological strengths</u> that may need further development — uplifting us in all aspects of our lives.	<p>(a) we can assess/challenge how well we manage <u>negative emotions</u></p> <p>(b) recognise other areas of our <u>psychological well-being</u> that could be improved/ recognise how we can build on areas where we already possess <u>psychological well-being</u></p> <p><i>For (b), accept any reasonable response as long as the candidate shows understanding of either abilities [e.g. resilience, adaptability], or existing strengths that we want to improve on</i></p> <p>1 mark each</p>

2. Using paragraph 2, identify how ambiguity forces people to ‘think critically and creatively’ (line 9). [2]

Question Type: Literal Paraphrase	
From Passage	Suggested Answer
<p>(a) ‘we come to a slow <u>realisation</u> that the usual methods and strategies that we use in known and predictable situations no longer achieve anything’ (lines 10–11)</p> <p>(b) ‘come to accept <u>the need</u> to adapt to new situations’ (line 12)</p>	<p>a <u>Dawns upon them</u> that the orthodox/status quo is not productive anymore</p> <p>1 mark</p>
	<p>b Reached the conclusion/ Stop resisting that it is essential to adapt to new situations</p> <p>1 mark</p>

3. In paragraph 3, how does the example of Germany support the author’s claims that embracing uncertainty can ‘broaden our understanding of the world around us’ (lines 16–17) and foster ‘compassion’ (line 17)? [2]

Question Type: Literal Paraphrase	
From Passage	Suggested Answer
Anyone capable of deeper reflection cannot deny that it has opened <u>important conversations</u> about the <u>plight of others</u> and urged us to	<p>(a) The example of Germany shows that embracing uncertainty has created space for communities to have significant discussions about the <u>predicaments of others</u> / has triggered crucial discussions about the <u>sufferings of others</u> and</p>

reflect on our shared responsibility towards those who are suffering.	(b) think about what our collective roles are when we see people in pain .
	1 mark each

4. In lines 35-39, explain three ways in which the author uses language to convey his approval of embracing uncertainty. [3]

Question Type: Inference [Writer's Craft]	
From Passage	Suggested Answer
An example of the unmistakably transformative power of embracing uncertainty is Netflix, 'which pivoted from thriving DVD* rentals to the new frontier of 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 .	<p>a1) 'unmistakably (transformative)', to convey his conviction that Netflix's embrace of uncertainty was key to its ability to thrive today/ undeniable/ irrefutable ability to thrive today</p> <p>a2) 'transformative' = to highlight that embracing uncertainty was the main reason why Netflix was able to thrive / changes the game</p> <p>b) "pivoted" – <i>the metaphor</i> shows the agility that being ready to embrace uncertainty conferred to Netflix as they made a sharp move away from the old ways of doing things</p> <p>c) 'the new frontier' – metaphor for exploring a new form of video streaming which suggests a willingness to explore uncharted territory</p> <p>d) 'boasts' – the author used the word 'boasts' to emphasise that Netflix can be proud of the immense revenue it has gained through being willing to embrace uncertainty</p> <p>e) "staggering... \$9.4 billion" – <i>positive connotations</i> highlight how Netflix's massive annual revenue underscores the extraordinary rewards that can come from embracing uncertainty</p> <p>f) 'evidently' – the author used the word 'evidently' to emphasise that it is apparent/obvious that embracing new ideas can be an effective way to ensure a business's long-term sustainability</p> <p>g) "tried (and tired)" – <i>critique the current status</i> by labelling the safe and certain way as something worn out, and thus showing approval for Netflix's innovative way of doing something fresh</p> <p>h) "stay ahead of the curve" – <i>idiomatic use</i> shows by embracing uncertainty, Netflix can become a leader</p> <p>Any 3 for 3 marks</p>

5. Identify **two** ways in which the first sentence in paragraph 6 provides an effective conclusion to the author's argument in paragraph 1. [2]

Question Type: Inference	
From Passage	Suggested Answer

<p>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.</p> <p>Paragraph 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 ambiguity as an invitation to discover and explore, we will be able to influence events and turn them in our favour. 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.</p>	<p>The final paragraph is an effective conclusion through...</p> <p>(a) [Bookending] Reiterate/Using the same idea of learning to live with insecurity as the only way to feel truly secure, which mirrors the opening sentence/ to give a sense of completion to the passage.</p> <p>(b) [Thematic unity] Paragraph 1 mentions the dangers of not embracing uncertainty, namely being locked in anxiety and stress. The conclusion references this same metaphor by stating how we can unlock our potential if we choose to embrace uncertainty.</p> <p>(c) [Personal pronouns] Repetition of the personal pronouns “we” and “our” multiple times which shows an attempt to include the reader, which is linked to the use of “us” and “we” in Paragraph 1.</p> <p>(d) [Quoted another person] The author quoted another person who corroborate with his view that John Allen Paulos (renowned person), to show that there are others who also agree with him</p> <p>(e) [Problem-Solution] Infer from “we often discover true capabilities” The author spells out the benefits of uncertainty, which shows how uncertainty can help us with the problems that have been raised in the introduction.</p> <p>(f) [Hopeful note] Infer from “unlocking our potential for success” The author offers an optimistic viewpoint, which is linked to the concept of uplifting our lives present in Paragraph 1.</p> <p>Any 2 points for 2 marks</p>
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From Passage 2

6. Summarise what the author has to say about the benefits of planning ahead.

Write your summary **in no more than 120 words**.

	Main Idea	From the Text	Suggested Paraphrase
a	Sense of stability / adaptability	to plan is to plant roots—so we may bend, not break , when the winds of change arrive (lines 1–2)	provides stability / develop adaptability <i>(accept any relevant sense-for-sense paraphrase)</i>
b	Control over our destinies	empowers individuals to shape their own <u>destinies</u> with clarity (line 4) feeling in control of one’s <u>destiny</u> (lines 5–6)	enables us to determine our <u>own pathways</u> with confidence

	Main Idea	From the Text	Suggested Paraphrase
c	A path to success / sense of direction	provide a roadmap for the road <u>ahead</u> (line 6) compass for <u>tomorrow's journey</u> (lines 31–32)	giving us a guide for <u>achieving our goals / sense of direction</u> for the <u>future</u>
d	Comfortable lifestyle in whatever financial situation	enables us to preserve a high quality of life <u>whatever the economic climate</u> (lines 7–8)	ensure that we can enjoy a comfortable lifestyle <u>regardless of the financial situation</u>
e	Retirement support	allows individuals to build a nest egg that will support them <u>in their later years</u> (lines 10–11)	Allows people to have financial security <u>when they grow old</u>
f	Sustainability for institutions	<u>For institutions</u> , (forward-thinking strategies — such as developing robust five-year plans —) help ensure long-term sustainability (lines 11–12)	Forward-looking <u>companies</u> are equipped to withstand challenges during turbulent times / to survive into the future
g	Mental health	[protect individuals from] increased psychological distress (inferred from line 17) mitigate stress (line 19)	Reduces anxiety
h	Motivated to work towards success	likely to <u>remain more driven</u> to work towards success in the long run (line 21)	having <u>greater levels/ maintaining a high</u> level of motivation
i	Provides important structure	establishes the core framework that guides our daily routines and decisions (lines 22–23)	provides crucial structure in our lives
j	Defends against distractions	defend <u>against distractions</u> (line 24)	Helps us <u>stay focused</u>
k	Guaranteed productivity	<u>guaranteeing</u> a certain level of productivity , whatever happens (lines 24–25)	<u>Ensuring</u> a consistent degree of output no matter what
l	Optimise energies	can optimise our energies (line 26)	Can help us direct our efforts in a more efficient way
m	Gives us more time to make informed decisions	allows us the luxury of time to make informed decisions at <u>critical junctures</u> (lines 28–29)	we have the space to respond thoughtfully / act with clarity whenever we meet <u>new challenges</u> / we have the bandwidth to make considered choices at <u>key moments</u> <i>Accept gift of 'time'</i>

Points	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	≥10
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Planning ahead provides stability and enables us to confidently determine our own pathways, giving us a plan for achieving our goals. It can ensure that we can enjoy a comfortable lifestyle regardless of the financial situation and allows people to have financial security when they grow old. Forward-looking companies can withstand challenges during turbulent times, and on a personal level, planning reduces anxiety and increases the likelihood of having greater levels of motivation. It also provides crucial structure in our lives, helps us stay focused, and ensures a consistent degree of output. Moreover, it can help us direct our efforts in a more efficient way, so that we can respond thoughtfully and act with clarity whenever we meet new challenges.

[120 words]

From all the passages

7. Passage 1 states that 'embracing uncertainty makes us more resilient' (line 23).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

From Passage 3	Paraphrased idea	Justification
the randomness of life might render us feeling powerless and in the worst circumstance, cause us to put off our aspirations "temporarily". (line 3-4)	Uncertainty might make us feel like we do not know how to get out of the situation / vulnerable / helpless and possibly give up	As people feel overwhelmed/not in control/fearful due to the randomness of life, they give up instead of persevering and becoming more resilient.

8. Passage 2 states that 'planning empowers individuals to shape their own destinies with clarity' (line 4).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

From Passage 3	Paraphrased idea	Justification
a) When we plan, we are forced to reflect on our values, goals, and available resources which gives us a sense of being in control. (line 6-7)	When individuals plan, they are forced to think deeply about their priorities and abilities, it gives us an impression that we are in charge.	This helps them distinguish between what is important and what is merely urgent or distracting. / By prioritizing effectively, they can allocate time and energy wisely, which increases the likelihood of meaningful progress and personal fulfillment. / When we have a strong sense of identity and purpose, we may be more emboldened / confident about controlling our fates.
b) We can change the way we see life (line 15 - 16)	We can view our circumstances differently.	We have the power to control our experiences and hence decide our future through well-informed and well thought through choices.

Question 10 (Application Question)

Application Question: The reading passages cover a range of views about responding to uncertainty. How far do you agree that uncertainty should be embraced?

Unpacking the question requirements:

- Candidates are required to choose arguments related to **how people, societies or companies respond to uncertainty** (either embracing it or rejecting it by sticking to rigid plans).
- As with any AQ, candidates needed to relate their arguments to that of their society. This could look like examples/observations explained with reference to deeper underlying societal characteristics (i.e. 'chasing the whys').
- "How far do you agree" is an invitation to consider the logic of the arguments, beyond just whether the claims are applicable in the societal context or not.
- Better responses would have a **balanced** discussion of the authors' views and provide an **overall position** on all the passages.