

Hwa Chong Institution
2025 General Paper Preliminary Examination
Paper 2 Suggested Answers

From Passage 1

1. How does the author illustrate their view that ‘the struggles of individuals across time and space are not so unique after all’ (line 4) ? [2]

Passage	Answer (1 mark per point to a max. of 2 marks)
A song FROM 1972 describing RIO DE JANEIRO’S RAINIEST MONTH seems incongruous for a movie about A YOUNG NORWEGIAN’S TURBULENT LIFE IN 2021 , but it illustrates the scene perfectly. <u>The struggles of individuals across time and space are not so unique after all.</u>	<p>a) A song/music can evoke/convey the feelings/emotions of a protagonist who lived in another era and society</p> <p>b) showing that the same/similar issues take centre-stage/happen today.</p>

2. How does the use of language in paragraph 2 support the author’s view that the 1970s was ‘a golden age for Brazilian culture’ (lines 5-6)? [3]

Passage	Answer (1 mark per point to a max. of 3 marks)
Songs such as “Águas de Março” BLOSSOMED in Brazil in the 1970s, a <u>golden age for Brazilian culture</u> when poets, musicians and producers CROSS-POLLINATED international ideas with local traditions to create a national identity. As various genres THRIVED , it became apparent that these risk-takers were doing more than creating art: at a time when songs had to be submitted to the censors and the dictatorship was known to imprison hostile artists, they still made political satire their mission and EXCITED the public with their ARTISTRY .	<p>a) ‘Songs such as ... <u>blossomed</u> in the 1970s’ means that well-composed/moving music was produced then.</p> <p>b) ‘<u>Cross-pollinated</u> international ideas with local traditions to create a national identity’ reveals how the right/best mix has been put together to produce Brazilian uniqueness.</p> <p>c) ‘As various genres <u>thrived</u>’ shows that national identity was developing well.</p> <p>d) If the artistes ‘<u>excited</u> the public with their <u>artistry</u>’, their output must have been of an outstanding/superior quality.</p>

3. From paragraph 3, suggest why musicians in the United Kingdom recorded a silent album. [2]

Passage	Answer (1 mark per point to a max. of 2 marks)
Instead, they may recognise more easily the GRIEVANCES of the 1000-odd UK artistes who released a silent album entitled “Is This What We Want?” to PROTEST AGAINST proposed legislative changes that ALLOW COMPANIES TO USE MATERIAL FOUND ONLINE TO TRAIN THEIR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, WITH NO REGARD FOR THE LIVELIHOODS OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNERS .	<p>a) The musicians are making a complaint about/criticising ill-advised lawmaking.</p> <p>b) As the proposed law fails to safeguard their financial interests/allows businesses to not pay them, they might as well not make any music.</p>

4. State **three** reasons why the author believes that music's ability to transform society is 'debatable' (line 22). [3]

Passage	Answer (1 mark per point to a max. of 3 marks)
While it is an infinitely creative tool with which to chart the ebb and flow of political and social trends, <u>music's ability to transform society or solve problems is debatable</u> . In the overcrowded music scene, songs with a message NEED A BIG NUDGE FROM CELEBRITIES TO EVEN BE NOTICED . Instead, CATCHY TUNES ABOUT HEARTBREAK, ANGST AND PARTIES BECOME VIRAL EARWORMS . Moreover, with digital natives permitting streaming services to curate their playlists, the ALGORITHMS MAY NEVER RECOMMEND SOMETHING THAT GIVES THEM PAUSE . Besides, WHY WOULD THE YOUTHFUL LISTENER WANT TO REVISIT THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS DOMINATING THE NEWS AND REAL LIFE? Knowing their fans CRAVE SHOW BUSINESS AT ITS BEST , 'live' performances by best-selling artistes are exultant singalongs punctuated by sharp choreography, flashy costumes and light-hearted patter.	<p>a) There are so many choices to listen to that meaningful songs do not receive the attention they deserve.</p> <p>b) People are more readily drawn to songs that resonate with their experiences rather than songs on serious matters.</p> <p>c) People are too reliant on technology to tell them what to listen to and hence are unlikely to chance upon meaningful songs.</p> <p>d) They are already encountering so many troubling situations that they want to listen to something light-hearted/have enjoyable music experiences.</p>

5. What is 'poignant' about the situation in lines 32-33? [1]

Passage	Answer (1 point for 1 mark)
Set against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement IN THE LAST CENTURY , the song REMAINS a <u>poignant</u> statement of UNFULFILLED HOPES in America TODAY .	a) The appeal to eradicate racism has been highlighted for so long, but, sadly, nothing has changed/little progress has been made .

From Passage 2

6. Summarise the benefits of music. Write your summary in **no more than 120 words**. [8]

No. of Points	0	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10/10+
Mark Allocation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Passage	Answer
<u>Paragraph 1</u> Music allowed [the Italians] to NOT FEEL MAROONED ON ISOLATED ISLANDS during the [Covid-19] lockdown.	1) Music can be a conduit to demonstrate that we are not alone/we have the company of others .
<u>Paragraph 2</u> Indeed, music's ability to OFFER (2) HELP AND (3) SOLACE DURING EMERGENCIES is well-documented. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina two decades ago, for instance, a devastated New Orleans organised a benefit (2) CONCERT , an unsurprising move given that it is, after all, the birthplace of jazz. Not only did the concert (2) RAISE FUNDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION , but it also (3) BOLSTERED MORALE . Similarly, music-themed events like the Glastonbury Festival in the United Kingdom (2) CHANNEL MILLIONS	<p>2) The monetisation of music performances can bring about financial support for those dislodged/forced to move by disasters.</p> <p>3) Being able to enjoy music also boosts optimism/comforts them.</p>

<p>TO THOSE DISPLACED BY CALAMITIES every year, reinforcing the idea that (2) MUSIC CAN BE USED TO SUPPORT THE WORLD'S MOST VULNERABLE.</p>	
<p><u>Paragraph 3</u> Music is also valued for its power to (4) REDUCE THE ANXIETY the ailing feel as they cope with their illnesses. As (5) A MEANS OF EXPRESSION, it is especially useful for patients frustrated by their inability to VERBALISE THEIR DISCOMFORT. Other patients claim that listening to music (6) DISTRACTS THEM FROM THEIR INJURIES.</p>	<p>4) Music alleviates the worry/fear that afflicts patients.</p> <p>5) It offers a way for the ill to talk/communicate about their pain.</p> <p>6) It diverts patients from the suffering caused by their wounds.</p>
<p><u>Paragraph 3</u> In other arenas, (7) MUSIC CAN BE A ROUSING FORCE when the right notes are hit. We observe this most commonly at sport competitions. When team anthems are played, it strengthens both the players' and fans' (8) AFFILIATION TO THE TEAM. When national anthems are sung after a hard-won victory, (8) A SIMILAR SENTIMENT is palpable.</p>	<p>7) Music energises/motivates people who are in a tense situation.</p> <p>8) Singing the same song boosts their group identity.</p>
<p><u>Paragraph 4</u> Just look at how Beyoncé and Lamar used their voices to PLANT SEEDS OF CHANGE in fellow Americans; Lamar's album "Alright" was a RALLYING CRY for the Black Lives Matter movement, while Beyoncé's "Lemonade" SHONE A SPOTLIGHT on black identity.</p>	<p>9) Music ignites conversations about social issues. <u>OR</u> Music can encourage listeners to improve the human condition.</p>
<p><u>Paragraph 5</u> It does not matter if we prefer different genres; our love of music allows us to (10) CONVERSE AND BUILD UNDERSTANDING WITH ONE ANOTHER. Music thus (11) UNIFIES PEOPLE who might (*) OTHERWISE NOT HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON.</p>	<p>10) Music can be the talking point between individuals *who are very different.</p> <p>11) As *they get to know each other, they are brought closer.</p> <p>Note: (*) can be attached to either (10) or (11).</p>

From all the passages

7. Passage 1 states that 'it remains unclear whether music can solve real-world problems' (line 12). Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 that can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

Passage 1	Passage 3	Answer
<p>Crippling crises and bungling leaders ensure music endures as a means for artistic expression, <u>but it remains unclear whether music can solve real world problems.</u></p>	<p>Take Lady Gaga's recent concert in Rio de Janeiro for instance; it was sponsored by the city to revitalise its economy, but after considering the logistics – 50,000 police officers, drones, surveillance technology and a post-event clean-up – one wonders whether Rio turned a profit.</p> <p>Adding salt to the wound were the doubts cast by a crowd density expert on the claim that 2.1 million fans had attended the free concert.</p> <p>In addition, instead of the inclusivity Lady Gaga is</p>	<p><u>Identification</u> [1] a) Whether the free concert made any material change to the city's economy is debatable.</p> <p><u>OR</u> Some used the opportunity to wreak havoc.</p> <p><u>Justification</u> [1] b) The idea demonstrates how music is not a reliable tool with which to alleviate a problem.</p>

	renowned for, the authorities had to counter hate speech online and even foil bomb threats.	
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8. Passage 2 states that music ‘unifies people who might otherwise not have anything in common’ (lines 27-28). Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

Passage 2	Passage 3	Answer
Music thus <u>unifies people who might otherwise not have anything in common.</u>	<p>Albert also laments that inequitable access to music has worsened the social divide. Consider classical music, which has long been the preserve of the privileged. Families struggling to pay rent and medical bills cannot afford the piano lessons that the affluent deem a necessity. Neither can they attend glitzy concerts and exclusive musical performances that are common leisure pursuits for the latter.</p> <p>Shaped and segregated by their experiences, the privileged find it hard to interact, much less extend a helping hand to the disadvantaged in pressing times.</p>	<p><u>Identification</u> [1] a) Albert thinks that music can separate/split people into different groups.</p> <p><u>Justification</u> [1] b) Since the idea illustrates the way people’s musical experiences push them apart/mark their differences, it undermines the idea that music can unify.</p>