

SAJC 2025 JC2 Preliminary Exam P2 – Suggested Answers

SAQS (11m)

Q1: In paragraph 1, explain why the author uses the term 'ideological straitjacket' (line 3) to describe woke culture. [2]

From the passage	Suggested Answers
Yet, in its extreme form, it has become something else entirely: an ideological straitjacket that stifles debate, demands ideological purity , and thrives on public shaming rather than meaningful change.	The author uses the term ' <u>ideological straitjacket</u> ' to... A [Reason / Purpose]: make a comparison / draw an analogy OR show that just as how a straitjacket constricts / constrains / traps us, OR employ imagery / metaphor of the ideological straitjacket B [Context]: <u>woke culture</u> constrains / constricts our imagination / logical deductions / ability to think

Q2: In paragraph 2, how does the author support his view that “woke culture obsessively cleanses the past” (lines 11 – 12)? [2]

From the passage	Suggested Answers
Since the police killing of George Floyd erupted into the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020, woke protesters have defaced and destroyed <u>colonial statues around the world</u> . Race campaigners have also branded the decision not to remove Cecil Rhode's (a British imperialist linked to the slave trade) statue in Oxford University as an act of institutional racism, ignoring the opportunity to learn from its history and contextualisation.	The author cites A [Technique]: the example(s) of how... B [Context]: woke activists damaged / ruined / dismantled / took down <u>colonial statues</u> during the Black Lives Matter BLM protests; OR race campaigners condemned the keeping of Cecil Rhode's statue—an emblem of <u>British imperialism</u> —at Oxford University as a manifestation of systemic racism.

Q3: In paragraph 3, what are the **three** reasons why woke culture fails to “deal with the complexity of the world” (line 21)? [3m]

From the passage	Suggested Answers
Woke culture also fails to deal with the complexity of the world by reducing individuals to groups based on race, gender and class. It turns complicated issues into simple clashes of good and evil, conferring a halo of virtue on those who pick the right side. In 2023, the Israel-Hamas war shattered this worldview that the powerless can do no wrong, unlike the powerful, and that nobody can be both. The polarised passions and viral slogans were worsened by the echo-chamber effect of social media, where many were transfixed by Hamas’s depredations or Gaza’s agony. This binary worldview is tailor-made for posturing, but it prohibits the nuanced judgments that complicated real-world issues demand.	<p>Woke culture</p> <p>A (reducing individuals to <u>groups</u> based on <u>race, gender and class</u>): simplistically / superficially <u>classifies / categorises / characterises / segregates / sorts</u> people by <u>identity markers</u> / by their <u>ethnicity, sex, or wealth/income status</u>.</p> <p>B (turns complicated <u>issues</u> into simple clashes of good and evil): presents complex / intricate / profound <u>problems / matters</u> as shallow / overly basic / binary / black-and-white. <i>Note: black-and-white is accepted due to its negative connotation, but not right vs wrong</i></p> <p>And</p> <p>C (prohibits the nuanced <u>judgments</u>): impedes / prevents a well-considered / sophisticated / in-depth <u>understanding of the world</u></p>

Q4: What does the author mean when he claims that woke culture is “performative and tokenistic” (line 30)? [2m]

From the passage	Suggested Answers
And posturing it is, for wokeism is performative and tokenistic in nature: Large corporations embracing the language of social justice continue to exploit workers; fashion brands loudly promoting body positivity still encourage excessive consumerism; technology giants championing diversity initiatives routinely ignore children’s rights.	<p>He means that wokeism / woke culture is</p> <p>A (performative): an act / insincere / superficial / virtue signalling / put on a show / symbolic <i>i.e. Showiness</i></p> <p>B (tokenistic): ineffective / not substantive / harming the cause <i>i.e. Uselessness</i> <i>For B, needs the idea of hijacking the cause, thus “harmful” is not sufficient.</i></p> <p><i>‘Merely / just’ – not A.</i></p>

Q5: In paragraph 5, explain **two** ways in which the author uses language to create a powerful impact on the reader. [2]

From the passage	Suggested Answers
<p>Coercion rather than conversation</p> <p>Black-and-white worldviews, backlash, and ultimately bitterness</p> <p>Black-and-white worldviews, backlash, and ultimately bitterness</p> <p>Like a gardener who uproots every plant that doesn't bloom immediately—eventually, nothing is left but barren soil.</p> <p>Like a gardener who uproots every plant that doesn't bloom immediately—eventually, nothing is left but barren soil.</p> <p>Will woke culture now decide whether it wants to be a force for meaningful change, or merely an instrument of moral absolutism?</p>	<p>A [Contrasts]: By juxtaposing “coercion” with “conversation,” the author highlights the <u>difference between the forceful imposition of politically correct standards and constructive dialogue.</u></p> <p>B [Strong Words / Consequential Language]: The author uses strong words like “backlash” and “bitterness” which highlight the <u>negative repercussions of relying on moral absolutism, underscoring how actions based on inflexible judgment only sow further discord and resentment.</u></p> <p>C [Imagery / Expression]: The imagery / expression of “black-and-white worldviews” further emphasises the <u>lack of nuance in the approach being critiqued, suggesting that such rigidity inevitably leads to oversimplification and division.</u> OR The imagery / expression of barren soil highlights the <u>absolute/abject outcome of a society that cancels people for their imperfections.</u></p> <p>D [Metaphor / Figurative Language]: The author uses the metaphor of a gardener to highlight that the <u>swift removal of what is not deemed perfect removes the prospect of growth, much like a gardener who destroys plants before they have a chance to flourish.</u></p> <p>E [Rhetorical Question]: The author uses a rhetorical / closing question in lines 45 to 47 to challenge the reader (and the movement itself) to <u>reflect on its true purpose, encouraging deeper thought about the consequences of such a binary, uncompromising stance.</u></p> <p><i>Any 2 points for 2 marks.</i></p>

Cross-Comparison Questions (4m)

Q7: Passage 1 states that woke culture has an ‘impulse to suppress all that dissents and offends’ (lines 5 – 6). Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to support this statement. Justify your answer. [2m] [Specific idea: dictates alternative views]

Suggested Answers	
<p>Specific idea(s):</p> <p>(i) “...woke culture is fundamentally about control. It is about watching every word, every opinion, every action, in fear that one wrong move could lead to public humiliation and cancellation.” (Para 1)</p> <p>(ii) “Social media is a minefield where people pounce on the smallest misstep. Say the wrong thing, and suddenly, you are the enemy: there is no room for questioning dominant narratives or asking an “unacceptable” question.’ (Para 2)</p> <p>(iii) “Woke culture enforces ideological conformity, policing thought rigidly. <u>If you criticise a prevailing narrative or even suggest a nuanced take, you risk being seen as a traitor.</u>” (Para 3)</p> <p><i>Idea of <u>suppression</u> has to be conveyed.</i></p>	<p>Paraphrase Passage 3 paragraph X states that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • woke culture is essentially about dictating / dominating / commanding what is acceptable, otherwise people get shamed / disgraced / discredited / deplatformed. • woke culture has given rise to a culture on social media where people immediately criticise / denounce / reject alternative views; OR people fear inquiry / self-censor / live in a climate of fear about expressing different perspectives. • woke culture imposes the same / similar thoughts / perspectives / worldviews, ensuring that <u>no one falls out of line / expresses disagreement.</u>
<p>Justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This supports the statement because woke culture perpetuates binary thinking, failing to recognise that different viewpoints may have some merit. • This supports the statement because woke culture is an aggressive / belligerent / violent movement that cares more about its own beliefs than arriving at the truth. • This supports the statement because woke culture fails to perceive its own hypocrisy that shutting down alternative views is contradictory / anti-thetical to its very own premise of advocacy. <p>Accept other wording as long as the justification is valid in relation to the correctly identified specific point. <i>Justification should explain how the identified idea supports the statement; it should offer a reason beyond just repeating the identified idea.</i></p>	

Q8: Passage 2 states that woke culture ‘fosters empathy and understanding’ (line 10). Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 which can be used to undermine this statement. Justify your answer. [2m]

[Specific idea: compassion and concern]

Suggested Answers	
<p>Specific idea(s):</p> <p>(i) “Has the need to fight for “justice” blinded woke activists to our shared humanity?” (Para 3)</p> <p>(ii) “This generational shift has made us more performative, less authentic, and more divided. We should start talking to one another, not tearing others down.” (Para 4)</p> <p>(iii) “First, it was tearing down statues and declaring the “correct” pronouns. Now, it is anti-semitism. What is the next untouchable?” (Para 2)</p> <p>(iv) “<u>Perceptions</u>, rather than intent, reign supreme — and perception is shaped by an <u>algorithm</u> that thrives on outrage.” (Para 2)</p> <p>(v) Watching every word, every opinion, every action in fear that one wrong move could lead to <u>public humiliation</u> and cancellation. (Para 1)</p> <p><i>Idea of <u>empathy</u> and <u>understanding</u> (as <u>positive dispositions</u>) has to be salient.</i></p>	<p>Paraphrase</p> <p>Passage 3 paragraph X states that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • woke activists neglect / ignore kindness / charity / compassion. • woke culture promotes criticising / putting others down / ruining others, instead of encouraging dialogue / conversations. • woke culture has made many woke activists completely intolerant / easily offended. (<i>extent should be conveyed - ‘untouchable’</i>) • woke culture is based on <u>impressions</u> on <u>social media platforms</u> that promote anger / indignation / hate. • Is criticised or embarrassed <u>in front of everyone</u> / called out <u>in society</u>
<p>Justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This undermines the statement because woke culture desensitises us to other humans, causing us to ignore their feelings. • This undermines the statement because woke culture cleaves to / insists on ideology and causes us to neglect the human element in debates. • This undermines the statement because woke culture believes in demonising ‘oppressors’ to promote justice. <p>Accept other wording as long as the justification is valid in relation to the correctly identified specific points.</p> <p><i>Justification should explain how the identified idea supports the statement; it should offer a reason beyond just repeating the identified idea.</i></p>	

Summary Question (8m)

Q6: Summarise the benefits of woke culture. Write your summary in no more than 120 words. [8]

Clarification: Context is needed for the mark, but no need to paraphrase.

Point	Lift	Paraphrase	Main idea
1	Being woke means recognising injustices and striving for fairness <i>Note: "Recognising injustices" is similar to point 3 captured below</i>	Wokeness fights / pushes for equity / equality / what is right .	Fights for equity
2	Enlightens our <u>minds</u> by developing critical thinking OR helping us to question assumptions	Broadens our <u>perspectives</u> by fostering deeper inquiry / better judgement OR enabling us to challenge preconceived notions .	Encourages Inquiry
3	It encourages us to <u>examine historical contexts</u> and recognise systemic inequalities	Urges people to <u>analyse past events</u> to identifying structural unfairness in society. <i>Note: Idea of systemic (ingrained, structural) must be present</i>	Acknowledging structural unfairness
4	Wokeness fosters empathy and understanding ...natures compassion	Encourages compassion / sympathy / care / sensitivity / deeper insight into others' experiences.	Fostering Empathy
5	Such inclusive attitudes ensure that diverse voices are valued	Encourages respect for different perspectives	Valuing Diversity
6	This builds a stronger society , OR fostering trust, collaboration and innovation	This creates more resilient communities OR by promoting solidarity, teamwork, and creativity . <i>Paraphrase all three for the mark</i>	Resilient communities OR Enhancing social cohesion
7	<u>Campaigners</u> around the world have agitated for social progress	<u>Activists</u> push for / drive / champion / catalyses change / advancement / improvement in the community <i>Note: Not enough to state "improve"; must convey degree ("agitation")</i>	Driving social change
8	<u>Individuals</u> seeking solutions through personal activism	<u>Individuals</u> driving change through their own advocacy OR Resolve issues themselves	Personal advocacy for change

9	Holding <u>companies</u> accountable by demanding ethical leadership and sustainability	Encourages <u>businesses</u> to act fairly / morally	Promoting Corporate Responsibility
10	It is about informed citizens challenging <u>governments</u> on key issues.	Cognisant citizens questioning / disagreeing with / going against the <u>authorities</u> on key issues	Challenging governments
11	Wokeness is awareness put to action	Promotes active engagement / addresses injustice, rather than just understanding it.	Active Engagement
12	Extends to environmental injustices to build a <u>more habitable</u> world OR ...even climate reparations for <u>vulnerable communities</u>	Advocates for environmental equity / fairness , ensuring greater <u>liveability</u> / <u>comfort</u> . OR ...even environmental compensation for <u>people at risk</u> <i>Note: Not about environmental sustainability, but about climate justice (refer to the social dimension of the issue)</i>	Advocating for environmental justice
13	Commitment to justice and a better future for all	Advocates for improved prospects for everyone	Promotes better prospects for everyone
14	This habit of inquiry gives us the courage to <u>challenge harmful norms</u> and make ethical <u>decisions</u> <i>(from lines 8-9)</i>	Woke culture empowers us / makes us brave / confident / mighty / strong / speak freely / stand up to <u>go against bad/current practices</u> OR make sound / wise / moral <u>decisions</u>	Bravery to go against bad practices OR Moral decisions

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No of points identified	0	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10+