



**VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2021  
HIGHER 1**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/01**

**Paper 1**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

An answer booklet will be provided with this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **ONE** question.

Note that up to **20** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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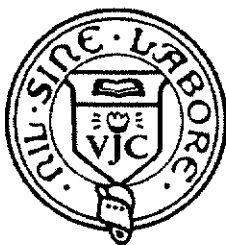
This document consists of 2 printed pages

[Turn over

**Answer one question.**

**Answers should be between 500 to 800 words in length.**

1. 'Small countries are always disadvantaged compared to large countries.' Comment.
2. Is modern technology the best solution to climate change?
3. To what extent is it accurate to describe the world today as a disrupted one?
4. Examine the view that the government should care only for the weak in your society.
5. Should criminals always be given a second chance?
6. 'Just as social media shapes the young, so do the young shape social media.' To what extent is this true?
7. Should the rights of individuals be more important than the interests of their society today?
8. Do major sporting events really bring people together?
9. How far do you agree that where one is born determines one's future?
10. 'With the rise of the Internet, books have lost their value.' What do you think?
11. 'People today need to be more resilient than ever before.' How true is this of your society?
12. 'In a world where instant success is celebrated, hard work is no longer important.' Is this a fair comment?



**VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE**  
**JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2021**  
**HIGHER 1**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

**Paper 2**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your C.T. group, index number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction tape.

Answer all questions.

Note that up to **15** marks out of **50** will be awarded for your use of language.

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

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This document consists of **10** printed pages.

[Turn over

**Passage 1.** Matt Davis discusses the benefits of humour

- 1 Mark Twain once said that "Humour is the great thing, the saving thing after all. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments flit away, and a sunny spirit takes their place." He is certainly not wrong. Humour may very well be *the* great thing as it touches upon nearly every facet of life. Studies suggest that 90 per cent of men and 81 per cent of women view a sense of humour to be the most important quality in a partner. It is also deemed a crucial quality for leaders, and has even been shown to improve cancer treatments. There is no doubt that humour is a life skill that everybody needs. But how do we define humour and can it be taught? 5
- 2 The best way to kill a joke is to explain it, but psychologists have tried to do so anyway. There are three main theories about what humour is and where it comes from. Relief theory argues that laughter and humour are ways of blowing off psychological steam. That is why jokes told at funerals are often met not with the silence that a sombre occasion like that would merit, but with uproarious laughter instead. Superiority theory explains a specific kind of humour: why we laugh at other's misfortunes. In this theory, humour is a means of declaring one's superiority over others. If you are looking to cultivate a sense of humour to improve your leadership skills, this is not the kind you want to acquire. Incongruity theory argues that humour arises when two contrasting, distinct ideas are merged. Humour often subverts expectations, and punchlines are often the result of an unexpected reversal. The quote by Oscar Wilde, "Work is the curse of the drinking classes" is funny because it both reverses a common phrase, and because it subverts a more conventional way of looking at the world. 10
- 3 Being funny is possibly one of the best things you can do for your health. You can almost think of a sense of humour as your body's and mind's immune system. When people who are at risk for depression reframe a negative event in a humorous light, they are less prone to a depressive episode because humour acts as an emotional filter. Furthermore, humour does not just guard against depression, it also improves people's overall quality of life. Researchers have found that people who score highly in certain types of humour have better self-esteem, greater confidence in their own abilities, more control over anxiety, and better performance in social interactions. 15
- 4 Aside from improving your health, laughter can be a productivity tool as well. A study from Northeastern University found that volunteers who watched a comedy were markedly better at solving a word association puzzle that relied on creative thinking as compared to control groups that watched horror films or quantum physics lectures. This is because laughter lights the area of the brain that is associated with attention and weighing between options. 20
- 5 The benefits of a good sense of humour are so profound that colleges like Stanford are offering business courses on humour in the workplace. They aim to teach the power and importance of humour to make positive change in the world, and also – surprise – to achieve business objectives, build more effective and innovative organisations, cultivate stronger bonds, and capture more lasting memories. 25
- 6 Every human has an innate sense of humour, of course, but it is also evident that not everybody has a *good* sense of humour. Learning about theories of humour, while interesting and insightful, does not guarantee that one's ability to deliver a punchline will improve to any measurable degree. It would be distressing to learn about humour's many benefits only to discover that it is entirely a product of genetics. 30
- 7 Fortunately, psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait. There is no such thing as a completely humourless individual since comedy is a fundamental part of human nature. In the past, we believed that only some cultures developed humour, but this belief has changed as no culture has ever been found to be devoid of laughter and comedy. So, if you want to improve your sense of humour, trying to look on the funny side of life would not hurt. The worst-case scenario is that you will laugh a little more. 35

**Passage 2.** A group of experts argues that negative humour has detrimental consequences.

- 1 You may have enjoyed a good laugh at jokes created at the expense of certain groups. It usually feels good to chuckle and to feel “in on” the joke. But while all comedy has an overt meaning, much of it also delivers a hidden, negative message, one we may not consciously recognise or realise we are sending. Our joking at someone else’s expense, even if they are not present, sends a strong message defining “insiders” and “outsiders” within an organisation. And if we happen to be a member of the group being targeted, such humour can undermine our sense of self-worth, commitment to the organisation, and performance. 5
- 2 This subtle art of intimidation and one-upmanship is prevalent in companies and society at large. Schisms between new hires and “old-timers” are not uncommon in companies and are equally common in large groups. It does not take long for derogatory terms that put down the other group to surface or to use those terms as shorthand to slam others. Over time, polarisation and bitterness can increase, and the two groups often fail to capitalise on any potential synergies that their collaboration may yield. 10
- 3 What are the roots of negative humour? Some might argue that they lie in American-style individualism, which pits one person against the other in a race to be the best, first, fastest, or smartest. Part of the “winning” strategy is to best others by discounting them and their qualities. When we “zing” a group of people based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, weight, or other characteristics, we feel superior to them. And when others laugh at our “zingers,” we feel affirmed and justified. 15
- 4 What is the result of this tactic? When we are the targets, we may pay the price in lowered self-esteem, self-doubt, anxiety, and loss of energy. In many instances, the offended person also falls into the double bind of being insulted and then told not to feel insulted. In fact, the retort “Can’t you take a joke?” implies that one is overly sensitive. This puts the labeller in control and the labelled as unworthy of a valid complaint. To make matters worse, after being subjected to such a situation repeatedly, some targets become the next perpetrators of negative humour. 20 25
- 5 And even when we are not the intended victim of a mean-spirited jibe but rather someone on the sidelines listening and observing, we may feel that our personal integrity has been eroded. If we laugh at negative humour, we are tacitly agreeing with the joke teller and are equally responsible for the trash talking. If we do not laugh, we risk being excluded or the butt of the next joke. Although it may seem like harmless fun, negative humour can be emotional bullying or verbal abuse in its most cruel form – even if we are not the targets. Over time, it can strip us of our sensitivity, empathy, and compassion. 30
- 6 It is easy to be a critic; it does not take much talent to find fault with others. Responsible dialogue, on the other hand, takes great skill, energy, intelligence, and insight. We must have the ability to hear meaning beyond the words, to empathise with others, and to move beyond personal positions, biases, and life experiences. To be playful and humorous within the context of respectful dialogue is an art form that reveals the highest sense of character, intelligence, and emotional well-being. It is a goal worthy of all our efforts to attain. 35

Content	/35
Language	/15
Total	/50

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Civics Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**Paper 2 (50 marks)**

Read the passages in the insert and then answer **all** the questions which follow. Note that up to fifteen marks will be given for the quality and accuracy of your use of English throughout this Paper.

Note: When a question asks for an answer **IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE** and you select the appropriate material from the passages 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 passages.

**From Passage 1**

1 Why does the author start the passage with the quote from Mark Twain (lines 1-2)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [1]

2 Why did Mark Twain describe humour as 'the saving thing' (line 1)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [2]

- 3 In paragraph 2, explain why the author suggests that humour as 'a means of declaring one's superiority' (line 13) is not the kind that leaders want to acquire? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

- 4 What is the author implying by the use of 'surprise' in line 33?

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[2]

- 5 In paragraph 7, why does the author consider it fortunate that 'psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait' (line 41)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]





**From Passage 2**

7 Why have the authors written 'winning' in inverted commas (line 16)?

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[1]

8 In paragraph 3, how does negative humour reinforce the feeling of superiority felt by those who engage in such humour? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

9 In paragraph 4, why do the authors say that a person offended by a joke falls into a 'double bind' (line 22)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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[2]

**10** Explain the irony in the last sentence of paragraph 4.

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[2]

**11** According to the authors, 'it does not take much talent to find fault with others (line 33). Suggest a reason why this might be the case.

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[1]

12 The author of Passage 1 believes in the benefits of humour while the authors of Passage 2 argue that negative humour has detrimental consequences.

How far do you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed in these **two** passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society.

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[10]

**End of Paper**

## VJC 2021 GP Prelim Paper 2 Answer Scheme

### Passage 1

1. Why does the author start the passage with the quote from Mark Twain (lines 1-2)? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Mark Twain once said that "Humour is the great thing, the saving thing after all. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments flit away, and a sunny spirit takes their place."	He includes the quote to introduce the topic of the benefits of humour. OR pique interest in the topic of humour.

2. Why did Mark Twain describe humour as 'the saving thing' (line 1)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments flit away,  and a sunny spirit takes their place.	a. When humour occurs, we stop feeling annoyed/angry/frustrated/disgruntled/bitterness/agitation [1]  b. And instead, we start feeling cheerful/happy/joyful/light-hearted. [1]

3. In paragraph 2, explain why the author suggests that humour as 'a means of declaring one's superiority' (line 13) is not the kind that leaders want to acquire? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
a means of declaring one's superiority	a. Leaders should be empathetic/approachable/ be able to build rapport/uplift and encourage [1]  b. And should not portray themselves as being better than others/put others down/humiliate/belittle others. [1]

4. What is the author implying by the use of 'surprise' in line 33? [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
the power and importance of humour to make positive change in the world, and also – surprise – to achieve business objectives,	1a. Humour is typically/usually considered to be frivolous/informal OR something without tangible/concrete benefits. [1]

	<p>1b. So when humour can help companies/firms/corporations achieve their goals/aims, it is something unexpected/astonishing/unanticipated. [1]</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2a. The author is being sarcastic [1]</p> <p>2b. as it is not unexpected that a business course would teach students about achieving business objectives [1]</p>
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5. In paragraph 7, why does the author consider it fortunate that 'psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait' (line 41)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Fortunately, psychologists are divided about whether humour is an innate or learnable trait.	<p>a. It is good/lucky as it means that people <u>may</u> still be able to/have a chance to pick up/hone a sense of humour [1]</p> <p>b. and so reap its many advantages/fruits. [1]</p>

6. Using material from paragraphs 3-5 only (lines 19-35), summarise what the author has to say about the benefits of humour.

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.

*Humour is beneficial because...*

Pt.	From the passage	Suggested answer
A	Being funny is <b>possibly</b> one of the <b>best</b> things you can do for your <b>health</b>	it is arguably /may be /perhaps /could be the most ideal /important for one's well-being.
B	You can almost think of a sense of humour as your <b>body's</b>	It provides /offers physical /physiological...
B1		It improves well-being (accepted if no distinction is made between physical & mental well-being)
C	and <b>mind's immune system.</b>	...and mental /psychological defence /protection /resistance to illness/ improves mental well-being.
<p>[Context: When people who are more likely to get depression /feel sad /down /low...] Context applies to points D, E &amp; F. Accurate representation of the context is needed for credit for point D.</p>		

D	When people who are at risk for depression <b>reframe a negative event</b> in a humorous light	...consider /view an upsetting /adverse /unfavourable situation in a funny way /manner /perspective,
E	they are less <b>prone</b> to a depressive <b>episode</b>	they are less /not as likely/susceptible /vulnerable to feel sad /down /low
F	because humour acts as an <b>emotional filter</b>	as humour helps process feelings /takes away negative feelings.
G	Furthermore, humour ... also <b>improves</b> people's overall <b>quality</b> of life	Humour also makes people feel happier /more satisfied /more fulfilled.
H	Researchers have found that people who score highly in certain types of humour have better <b>self-esteem</b>	...have higher self-worth /value themselves more highly
I	<b>greater confidence</b> in their own <b>abilities</b>	have more belief /faith in their capabilities /what they can do /achieve
J	more <b>control</b> over <b>anxiety</b>	better manage their fears /worries /concerns /unease /uncertainties
K	and better <b>performance</b> in social <b>interactions</b>	improved skills in communicating with people /others OR are more socially adept /less socially inept
L	laughter can be a <b>productivity tool</b> as well	Humour can make us more efficient /enhance efficacy /help us work better.
<i>[Context of benefits of humour when solving puzzles is needed for points M, N, O &amp; P]</i>		
M	A study ... found that volunteers who watched a comedy were <b>markedly</b>	Research shows that people who watch comedy /funny shows /shows that make one laugh were significantly /noticeably
N	better at <b>solving</b> a word association <b>puzzle</b>	more adept at finding answers /answering questions /quizzes /word games
O	that relied on <b>creative thinking</b>	based on out-of-the-box /innovative /imaginative concepts
P	as compared to control groups that watched horror films or quantum physics lectures.	More so than people who watched (shows of) other genres.
Q	This is because laughter lights the area of the brain that is associated with <b>attention</b>	Humour activates the portions of the brain that deal with focus /concentration
R	and <b>weighing</b> between <b>options</b>	And decision-making
S	colleges like Stanford ... aim to teach the <b>power</b>	<i>[partially inferred]</i> Humour can/ has the ability /capability /might /strength to improve /enhance the world
T	and <b>importance</b> of humour to make <b>positive change</b> in the world	and is significant /crucial /essential for it (improving /enhancing the world).
U	to achieve business <b>objectives</b>	Humour can help businesses /corporations /companies to attain /reach aims /targets /goals,
V	build more <b>effective</b>	become more successful/well-functioning/productive
W	and <b>innovative</b> organisations	and creative /imaginative (businesses /corporations /companies) OR come up with fresh /new /novel ideas
X	<b>cultivate stronger bonds</b>	develop better /improved /enhanced ties /relationships

Y	and capture more lasting memories	and create more enduring recollections /remember things for a longer period of time.
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## 26 possible points

No. of points	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	≥15
Marks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

## Passage 2

7. Why have the authors written 'winning' in inverted commas (line 16)? [1]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Part of the "winning" strategy is to best others by discounting them and their qualities.	The authors <u>do not agree</u> with the strategies used to claim victory/gain an advantage <u>because they are dishonourable/underhanded/despicable/demonstrate undesirable/deplorable qualities.</u> OR The authors <u>do not agree</u> with the strategies used to claim victory/gain an advantage <u>because they hurt others/ victory is gained at the expense of others.</u> OR The authors <u>do not think that</u> anyone really wins <u>as the organisation loses in the end</u> from such a strategy.

8. In paragraph 3, how does negative humour reinforce the feeling of superiority felt by those who engage in such humour? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
Part of the "winning" strategy is to best others by discounting them and their qualities.  And when others laugh at our "zingers," we feel affirmed and justified.	a. We outclass/outdo/beat others by undermining/belittling/mockng/deriding their traits/features,  b. and when people react positively to the jokes, we feel that they endorse/validate/legitimise our opinions.

9. In paragraph 4, why do the authors say that a person offended by a joke falls into a 'double bind' (line 22)? Use your own words as far as possible. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
In many instances, the offended person also falls into the double bind of being insulted	a. Firstly, a joke was made at the expense of this person/this person was hurt by the joke/mockng/made fun of/ridiculed.



and then told <b>not to feel insulted</b> . In fact, the retort "Can't you take a joke?" implies that one is <b>overly sensitive</b> .	b. In addition, they may be criticised as being <u>too</u> easily upset/for not being able to take the humour in their stride.
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10. Explain the irony in the last sentence of paragraph 4. [2]

From the passage	Suggested answer
To make matters worse, after being subjected to such a situation repeatedly, some targets become the next perpetrators of negative humour.	<p>a. We <u>would expect</u> people who are constantly made fun of to not make similar jokes at others' expense/to not do the same to others.</p> <p>b. However, <u>in reality</u> they sometimes perpetuate a vicious cycle by making cruel jokes at others' expense.</p> <p><i>Note: 0 or 2 marks</i></p>

11. According to the authors, 'it does not take much talent to find fault with others' (line 33). Suggest a reason why this might be the case. [1]

	Suggested answer
	<p>We might be used to other people (e.g. parents, teachers) finding fault with us, so we learn to mimic their behaviour.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>To feel superior /better about ourselves, we may instinctively focus on other people's weaknesses.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>We each have our own quirks /preferences, so we may naturally be put off by other people's behaviours that offend us.</p>

12. The author of Passage 1 believes in the benefits of humour while the authors of Passage 2 argue that negative humour has detrimental consequences.

How far do you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed in these **two** passages? Support your answer with examples drawn from your own experience and that of your society. [10]

Marks	Descriptor
<b>Band 1</b> <b>8-10</b>	<p><b>REQUIREMENTS</b> Students must make systematic reference to the requirements of the question, with evidence of a balanced treatment. Students should refer to the authors' views and give reasons to support their stand.</p> <p><b>EXPLANATION</b> Shows a good or very good understanding of the terms and issues.</p> <p><b>EVALUATION</b> Students should make very convincing evaluation by making judgements and decisions and by developing arguments to logical conclusions. They should also include elaboration and support through personal insight and apt illustrations.</p> <p><b>COHERENCE</b> Student demonstrates clear paragraph organisation and cogent argument.</p>

#### From Passage 1: Key ideas

<p><b>From Paragraph 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One of the best things you can do for your health</li> <li>● Improves overall quality of life i.e. better self-esteem, greater confidence in their own abilities, more control over anxiety, better performance in social interactions</li> </ul>
<p><b>From Paragraph 4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Laughter can be a productivity tool as well</li> </ul>
<p><b>From Paragraph 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive change in the world</li> <li>● Achieve business objectives, build more effective organisations, cultivate stronger bonds, capture more lasting memories</li> </ul>

#### From Passage 2: Key ideas

<p><b>From Paragraph 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sends a strong message defining "insiders" and "outsiders"</li> <li>● If we are members of the "outsider" group, such humour can undermine our sense of self-worth, commitment to the organisation and performance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>From Paragraph 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Derogatory terms surface that put down the other group or used as short-hand to slam others</li> <li>● Over time, polarisation and bitterness can increase</li> <li>● Both groups fail to capitalise on any potential synergies that such collaboration can yield</li> </ul>
<p><b>From Paragraph 4: <u>When we are the targets (context)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We pay the price in lowered self-esteem, self-doubt, anxiety and loss of energy.</li> <li>● The offended person is labelled unworthy of a valid complaint.</li> </ul>
<p><b>From Paragraph 5: <u>When we are someone on the sidelines listening and observing (context)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feel that our personal integrity has been eroded</li> <li>● If we laugh at negative humour, we are tacitly agreeing with the joke teller, and equally responsible for the trash talking</li> <li>● If we do not laugh, we risk being excluded or the butt of the next joke</li> <li>● Over time, it can strip us of sensitivity, empathy and compassion</li> </ul>