

**VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2024  
HIGHER 1**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8881/01**

**Paper 1**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

---

**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.

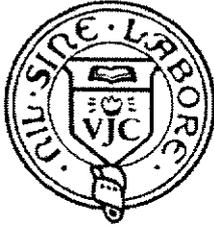
---

This document consists of **2** printed pages

[Turn over]

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

- 1** 'In this global age, national boundaries are no longer relevant.' Discuss.
- 2** Assess the view that the arts do not contribute to social change.
- 3** To what extent should we be concerned about artificial intelligence developments today?
- 4** Consider the effectiveness of your country's education system in preparing students for the future.
- 5** Examine the claim that social media worsens human relationships.
- 6** 'Public health campaigns have been successful in combating lifestyle diseases.' How far is this true of your society?
- 7** 'Society has lost its trust in public figures today.' Do you agree?
- 8** How important is it for countries to invest in sports infrastructure?



**VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE  
JC2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2024  
HIGHER 1**

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8881/02**

**Paper 2  
Insert**

**1 hour 30 mins**

---

**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 fluid.

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.

---

This document consists of **10** printed pages and **1** blank page.

[Turn over]

**Passage 1**

*The writer writes about the possible benefits of hobbies.*

- 1 At some point in our collective experience, the term 'hobby' became nearly interchangeable with 'coping mechanism'. Whether it was the myriad of pandemic hobbies adopted to distract us from an unprecedented global crisis or binge-watching Netflix to find solace from the political upheavals of contemporary society, hobbies have always been around. 5
- 2 Historically, hobbies have indeed evolved from the past, where it used to be the exclusive domain of the aristocracy who had much wealth and leisure at their beck and call, to being part and parcel of the lives of the bourgeoisie due to their growing wealth. The rise of capitalism further accelerated this trend of extending the reach of hobbies into the lives of the everyday man. This was due to how businesses are quick to leverage the emergence of new trends and markets and entice people into taking up unbeknownst activities in the name of leisure. Crass commercialism aside, the undeniable fact remains that hobbies continue to offer something more to individuals. 10
- 3 The benefits of hobbies are derived not from particular types of hobbies but from what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi theorised as 'flow', a cognitive state where one is completely immersed in an activity. Hobbies cause the brain to release feel-good chemicals that provide instant gratification. Additionally, hobbies can alleviate the stresses of daily responsibilities, even when time and energy for recreation seem scarce. For example, a study examining the relationship between long working hours, depression, and well-being found that while excessive work negatively impacts mental health, hobbies help mitigate these adverse effects. 15 20
- 4 Investing in hobbies is also a long-term investment in oneself. A 2023 meta-analysis of data from over 93,000 older adults revealed that those with hobbies—defined as activities done for pleasure during leisure time—reported higher levels of health, happiness, and overall life satisfaction. Conversely, individuals exhibiting signs of depression were less likely to engage in hobbies. In other words, hobbies bring about psychological benefits that include both immediate mood improvements and long-term enhancements to resilience and self-perception. Social benefits from hobbies can combat social alienation and hone social skills, while behavioural benefits can help establish healthy routines and habits. Unsurprisingly, empirical evidence aligns with intuition: humans require recreational time. 25 30
- 5 Even those who do not currently have a hobby they thoroughly enjoy can benefit from the pursuit of finding one. Trying new activities is associated with increased happiness. Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore new interests—everyone deserves a hobby they love, simply for the joy it brings. 35
- 6 One final note on the benefits of hobbies: avoid forcing them. A review of four related studies indicated that attitudes towards leisure significantly affect enjoyment. Viewing leisure as a waste of time can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, ultimately diminishing the pleasure derived from hobbies. 40

**Passage 2**

*The writer highlights the difficulties that hobbies can bring.*

- 1 "What are your hobbies?" Many people can easily rattle off answers to this question — crocheting, pottery, fishing, gardening, birdwatching or whatever entices them. But for others, no acceptable responses seem to come to mind.
- 2 A lot of times, labels like the word 'hobby' can have the propensity to evoke anxiety in people. In actuality, contrary to popular belief, it is normal for one to feel like one does not have any hobbies or that one's personal interests do not qualify as actual hobbies. Moreover, in this age of stress and burnout, the idea of having any free time to pursue passions can seem like a distant fantasy even though hobbies are often touted as panacea for stress. 5
- 3 Regardless of what one's exact quibbles might be, a hobby at its core is an activity that one enjoys in their spare time. By definition, hobbies do not have to be 'productive' or involve specific benchmarks of improvement or progress - even though it is perfectly fine if someone else's do. In our work-oriented 'hustle culture', the last thing one should feel compelled to is to turn his hobby into a 'side hustle', like selling the sweaters one knits on Etsy. Rather than feel the pressure to foster a suitable hobby in the eyes of others, it is more productive to think about the activities that bring about enjoyment. 10 15
- 4 When people talk about having a hobby, it is traditionally associated with something that is relaxing, can be readily picked up and that we always have the resources for. However, key to this being actually true are the assumptions that we always have the physical space, spare time and financial means to do so – assumptions that are not necessarily correct, especially in this day and age of rising property prices, extremely long working hours and stagnating wages. Viewed from such a perspective, the previous perceptions of hobbies become an archaic one, where hobbies are yet another indulgence for those who are well-off to pursue. The rest of us will continue to toil away on the daily grind, with the most respite we have being passive digital distractions, with some spiralling into addictions. 20 25
- 5 We live in a society that is obsessed with constantly squaring people against each other; and in turn, it makes people feel angst that their lives are 'not enough'. Just as we cannot help but hold up our clothes, bodies, homes and parenting experiences to what we see on Instagram, the things we do for pleasure have also become fodder for comparison. From impressive crafts to sumptuous baked goods to wild rock-climbing feats, there are countless images of people showing off their hobbies and denigrating people without hobbies. 30 35
- 6 The key lesson amongst all of this is not to dive into a hobby just for the sake of it. At the end of the day, we need to take advantage of the opportunity to do things that feel good for us; our guiding light should always be our internal compass and reflective insight.

**Passage 3**

*The writer presents the various views on hobbies.*

- 1 People often worry that being too obsessed with having hobbies can lead to stress, shallow interests, and feeling left out. But looking closer, there are actually a lot of benefits to diving into hobbies, even with full enthusiasm, for hobbies give you a break from the daily grind.
- 2 The idea that being super into hobbies leads to shallow involvement is not really true. When you're passionate about something, you often get really good at it and appreciate it more. For example, if you spend a lot of time learning a musical instrument or a craft, you end up mastering it and gaining a deeper understanding. This intense focus can actually help you grow as a person and feel accomplished. So, rather than being shallow, a strong interest in hobbies can really enrich your life. 5 10
- 3 Focusing on hobbies can also help you live a more balanced and fulfilling life. It pushes you to try out different activities and find what you genuinely enjoy. This exploration can make you a more well-rounded person, help you make new friends, and boost your happiness. In a world that's all about being productive, hobbies remind us to take a break and enjoy life, promoting a healthier work-life balance. Sure, not everyone has the same resources for hobbies, but the internet has resulted in the democratisation of hobbies. This inclusivity can bring people together and create a sense of community. 15
- 4 In the end, while being obsessed with hobbies might have some downsides, the benefits for mental health, personal growth, and social connections are way more significant. Embracing hobbies with enthusiasm can lead to a richer, more balanced life, full of joy and connections. 20

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ (     )

Content	/35
Language	/15
<b>Total</b>	<b>/50</b>

Answer all questions

Your answers should be:

- written in **your own words as far as possible**. Where you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it.
- written in **continuous prose**.

**From Passage 1**

1. How does the author illustrate the ability of hobbies to serve as a 'coping mechanism' (line 2)? [2]

---

---

---

---

2. From lines 7 to 9, in what ways were hobbies 'exclusive'? [2]

---

---

---

---

3. What does 'quick to leverage' (line 11) suggest about how businesses respond to new trends? [1]

---

---

4. Explain what the author means by the phrase 'long-term investment in oneself' (line 23). [2]

---

---

---

---

5. What does the author mean by 'empirical evidence aligns with intuition' (line 32)? [2]

---

---

---

---

6. Explain how 'Viewing leisure as a waste of time can create a self-fulfilling prophecy.' (line 40). [2]

---

---

---

---



**From all the passages**

8. Passage 1 states that 'hobbies can alleviate the stresses of daily responsibilities' (lines 18-19). Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 that **supports** this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

---

---

---

---

9. Passage 2 states that hobbies are a form of 'indulgence for those who are well-off to pursue' (lines 25-26).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 that **undermines** this statement. Justify your answer.

[2]

---

---

---

---

10. The reading passages discuss the benefits of hobbies and some problems associated with them. How far do you agree with the views presented?

Support your answer with reference to:

- the ideas and opinions from **at least** one of the reading passages
- examples drawn from your experience and that of your society

[This area contains horizontal lines for writing the answer.]

[Illegible text]

[BLANK PAGE]



**VJC 2024 General Paper JC2 Prelim Examination  
Answer Scheme**

**From Passage 1**

1. How does the author illustrate the ability of hobbies to serve as a 'coping mechanism' (line 2)? [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Whether it was the myriad of pandemic hobbies adopted to <b>distract</b> us from an unprecedented <u>global crisis</u> or binge-watching Netflix to <b>find solace</b> from the <u>political upheavals</u> of contemporary society.	Hobbies were used as a means to <b>divert our attention</b> from an unparalleled <u>international calamity</u> in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic [1m]  as well as a <b>source of comfort</b> from the <u>political turbulences</u> of modern society. [1m]
<p><b>Markers' comments:</b> Students should pay attention to the specific contexts in which hobbies can serve as a form of 'coping mechanism'. While the context does not have to be paraphrased, the correct context must be included. For the first mark, there is a need to relate to the idea of a global crisis, i.e. lockdown, COVID-19, global emergency. For the second mark, there is a need to relate to the specific idea of political problems.</p>	

2. From lines 7 to 9, in what ways were hobbies 'exclusive'? [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
...used to be the exclusive domain of the aristocracy who had <b>much wealth and leisure at their beck and call</b>	In the past, only those who <b>were very rich / affluent</b> and had <b>plenty of free time</b> [1m]  <b>at their disposal/readily available</b> [1m] could afford to indulge in hobbies.
<p><b>Markers' comments:</b> Most students were able to get the first mark. However, quite a number of students did not paraphrase the idea of 'beck and call', highlighting the need for students to pay closer attention to what needs to be paraphrased in the passage. To demonstrate an understanding of the phrase 'at their beck and call', it is not enough to merely have the idea of 'a lot' but it is necessary to have the idea of 'being readily available' to be awarded the second mark.</p>	

3. What does 'quick to leverage' (line 11) suggest about how businesses respond to new trends? [1]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
This was due to how businesses are <b>quick to leverage</b> the emergence of new trends and markets and entice people into taking up unbeknownst activities in the name of leisure.	Businesses <b>react very fast to new trends in order to earn profits</b> [1m].
<p><u>Markers' comments:</u>            This is an inference question. Students are expected to move beyond just paraphrasing the phrase 'quick to leverage' and think about what such an ability says about these businesses. To get the full mark, the answer needs to demonstrate inference by showing how the speed in which businesses react to new trends is reflective of their nature, in this case, being profit-driven.</p>	

4. Explain what the author means by the phrase 'long-term investment in oneself' (line 23). [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Investing in hobbies is also a <b>long-term investment in oneself</b> .	Just as how investments <b>necessitate some effort/resource in order to gain something in the future, spending/setting aside time</b> to engage in hobbies [1m] results in <b>benefits</b> for the person <b>over time</b> . [1m]
<p><u>Markers' comments:</u>            For the first mark, the context of how hobbies can be seen as an investment where time is deliberately set aside needs to be identified.             For the second mark, students need to incorporate the idea of how setting aside time for hobbies is beneficial for the individual in the longer run.</p>	

5. What does the author mean by 'empirical evidence aligns with intuition' (line 32)? [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Unsurprisingly, <b>empirical evidence aligns with intuition</b> : humans require recreational time.	<b>Hard data/statistics or scientific findings</b> support [1m] what we <b>know instinctively</b> , [1m] that <u>hobbies are good for us</u> .
<p><u>Markers' comments:</u>            This is a vocabulary question. For students who do not know the meaning of 'empirical', they can use the context at the start of Paragraph 4 (description of the meta-analysis of data) to infer the meaning.             Attempts to paraphrase 'intuition' as logical thinking or reasoning were inaccurate.</p>	

6. Explain how 'Viewing leisure as a waste of time can create a self-fulfilling prophecy.' (line 40). [2]

From the Text	Possible paraphrase
Viewing leisure as a waste of time can create a <b>self-fulfilling prophecy</b> , ultimately <u>diminishing the pleasure derived from hobbies</u> .	When one has the <b>perception</b> of leisure as a <b>chore or of little value</b> [1m], he will not engage in the hobby meaningfully. As a result, he will <b>derive/enjoy little value/benefit from leisure</b> [1m].
<p><b>Markers' comments:</b>            To get the first mark, answers need to refer to the <b>perception</b> that people have of leisure as a waste of time. Some students erroneously assume that hobbies are factually 'a waste of time'.</p> <p>To get the second mark, answers need to refer to how having such a perception led to a particular outcome in <b>reality</b>. The use of appropriate signposting such as 'as a result', 'hence', and 'actual' will be helpful.</p>	

### From Passage 2

7. Summarise the problems associated with hobbies and how we should approach hobbies instead. [8]

No	From the passage	Suggested Answer
1	propensity to evoke <b>anxiety</b> (lines 4-5)	Tendency to arouse feelings of <b>worry</b>
2	In actuality, <b>contrary to popular belief</b> , it is <b>normal</b> for one to feel like <u>one does not have any hobbies</u> (lines 5-6)	<b>As one may be made to feel atypical/an aberration/ an abnormality if one does not have any hobby</b>
3	own's personal interests <b>do not count as actual</b> hobbies (lines 6-7)	<b>or dismiss</b> one's personal interests as not being <b>legitimate/recognised</b>
<p><b>Markers' Comments:</b>            To be given credit, Points (2) and (3) need to be phrased as either as problems associated with hobbies or how we should approach hobbies instead.</p>		
4	having any free time to pursue passions can seem like a <b>distant fantasy</b> even though hobbies are often touted as panacea for stress. (lines 8-9)	<b>Being able to afford time can be seen as a remote dream/unattainable wish</b>
5	Hobbies <b>do not have to be 'productive'</b> or involve <b>specific benchmarks of improvement or progress</b> (lines 11-12)	Hobbies <b>do not require results/upgrading ourselves</b>
6	the last thing one should feel <b>compelled</b> to is to turn his hobby into a <b>'side hustle'</b> (lines 14-15)	<b>Coerced into monetising</b> one's hobby/make it <b>profitable/earn additional income from one's hobby/ turn one's hobby into a gig</b>

7	feel the <b>pressure</b> to foster a <b>suitable hobby in the eyes of others</b> (lines 15-16)	<b>Need to conform</b> to <u>others' expectations/social norms</u>
8	assumptions that we always have the <b>physical space</b> , (line 21)	Not everyone has <b>room/the venue</b>
9	<b>spare time</b> (line 21)	<b>leisure</b>
10	and <b>financial means</b> to do so (line 21)	<b>money/privilege</b>
11	<b>passive digital distractions</b> (line 27)	<b>sedentary/mindless digital/online activities</b>
<b>Markers' Comments:</b> Very few scripts had Point (11) as there was a lack of sensitivity to the key idea of 'passive' (a problem associated with these digital hobbies).		
12	<b>Addictions</b> (line 28)	<b>Compulsive activities, obsessions</b>
13	<b>fodder for comparison</b> (line 33)	<b>Reinforces/fuels</b> the need to <b>measure up to others</b> OR Becomes <b>yet another benchmark</b> for others to <b>judge us/for competition</b>
14	From impressive crafts to sumptuous baked goods to wild rock-climbing feats, there are countless images of people <b>showing off</b> their hobbies (lines 33-35)	<b>boasting</b> about their hobbies
15	<b>denigrating</b> people without hobbies (line 35)	<b>disparage/belittle</b> people without hobbies
16	not to <b>dive</b> into a hobby <b>just for the sake</b> of it (line 36)	We should not <b>plunge</b> into a hobby/ take up a hobby <b>impulsively/without much thought</b>
17	we need to <b>take advantage of the opportunity</b> to do things that <b>feel good for us</b> (lines 37-38)	<b>Seize the chance</b> to do what we <b>enjoy</b>
18	our guiding light should always be our <b>internal compass</b> and <b>reflective insight</b> (lines 38-39)	Our <b>morality/ethos/value system</b> should guide our hobbies

<b>No. of points</b>	1-2	3-4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
<b>Marks allocated</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

### General Comments on the Summary

Students should plan and organise their points clearly into 'problems' and 'approaches' before writing. Some scripts lacked clear flow of ideas when the points were disparate and not coherently strung together.

Most students were able to paraphrase the key ideas, though some words/phrases like 'comparison' and 'do not count' were more often lifted.

Some paraphrases resulted in inaccuracies and distortions of the author's points. For example, to not to feel 'compelled to turn a hobby into a side hustle' is not the same as 'one should not turn one's hobby into a money-making venture'. The key idea is not to be coerced, rather than this is something that one should or cannot do. **Precision and accuracy of meaning is critical in scoring for the summary.**

Use formal language. Avoid colloquial and informal expressions such as 'flexing', and 'showboating'.

The summary response should be written in continuous prose, in 1 paragraph. Quite a number of students omitted words like the definite article, 'the', as well as other words, making their sentences ungrammatical. Remember that language marks are awarded based on the summary and AQ answers.

Students should pay attention to the word limit of 120 words. Any additional words beyond the word limit will not be awarded any marks. Some script flagrantly exceeded the word-limit by 20 words or more!

### Summary: Student Sample

Hobbies are problematic as they can cause severe unease in people, appearing as a far-fetched dream, despite being promoted as a cure for mental fatigue. Hobbies are often measured by their utility, or levels of improvement. We should ignore the expectation to have a hobby that others find appropriate as it is more useful to have hobbies that bring joy. Hobbies require available area, leisure time, and monetary resources which some lack, resulting in inequity where only the rich can afford it. Hobbies are used as a means for comparison, where people flaunt their hobbies and mock those without. Hence, we should not engage in hobbies frivolously, and should choose one based on our internal values and knowledge of self.

#### Markers' Comments:

11 points; 8 marks; 120 words.

Coherent response with precise and accurate paraphrases. Overall, the response demonstrated mastery of language and a clear link back to both elements of the summary question (the problems and the approach).

**From all the passages**

8. Passage 1 states that 'hobbies can alleviate the stresses of daily responsibilities' (lines 18-19).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 that **supports** this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

<b>Valid ideas from Passage 3</b>	<b>Possible paraphrase [1 mark]</b>	<b>Justification [1 mark]</b>
Hobbies give you a <b>break from the daily grind</b> . (lines 3-4)	Hobbies are good for our mental well-being as they make us take <b>some time off from our day-to-day/routine work or duties</b> .	Taking some time off work will help people <b>take their minds from their work and hence feel less stressed by their work</b> .  Or  This is good for mental health because humans are <b>not robots and cannot be working all the time or they will suffer from burnout</b> .
<b>Markers' comments:</b> To be awarded the first mark, answers need to paraphrase BOTH ideas of 'break' and 'daily'.  To be awarded the second mark, answers need to explain why or how taking a break from everyday tasks alleviates stress. The reason for this is any logical inference based on the valid ideas from Passage 3.		

9. Passage 2 states that hobbies are a form of 'indulgence for those who are well-off to pursue' (lines 25-26).

Identify **one** specific idea from Passage 3 that **undermines** this statement. Justify your answer. [2]

<b>Valid ideas from Passage 3</b>	<b>Possible paraphrase [1 mark]</b>	<b>Justification [1 mark]</b>
the internet has resulted in the <b>democratisation</b> of hobbies (lines 17-18)	The internet has made it <b>easier</b> for people to <b>access/engage</b> in hobbies.  OR  The internet has made it <b>possible for everyone/the masses</b> to engage in hobbies.	The internet has made it <b>easier to access/find/ the knowledge/ materials</b> necessary for specific hobbies.  OR  The internet has made it <b>more affordable for people to access/find the materials</b> needed for specific hobbies.
<b>Markers' comments:</b> Quite a number of students incorrectly paraphrased or explained the idea of "democratisation" of hobbies as there being more hobbies being created with the Internet.  To be awarded the second mark, answers need to explain why or how the internet makes it easier for the masses to access or engage in hobbies. The reason for this is any logical inference based on the valid ideas from Passage 3.		

10. The reading passages discuss the benefits of hobbies and some problems associated with them. How far do you agree with the views presented?

Support your answer with reference to:

- the ideas and opinions from at least one of the reading passages
- examples drawn from your experience and that of your society

[12]

**Possible points for discussion**

<p><b>From passage 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Hobbies cause the brain to release feel-good chemicals that provide instant gratification.' (lines 17-18)</li> <li>• 'Additionally, hobbies can alleviate the stresses of daily responsibilities, even when time and energy for recreation seem scarce' (lines 18-20)</li> <li>• 'hobbies bring about psychological benefits that include both immediate mood improvements and long-term enhancements to resilience and self-perception' (lines 28-30)</li> <li>• 'Social benefits from hobbies can combat loneliness and sharpen social skills, while behavioral benefits can help establish healthy routines and habits' (lines 30-32)</li> </ul>
<p><b>From passage 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'the word 'hobby' can have the propensity to evoke anxiety in people' (lines 4-5).</li> <li>• 'the idea of having any free time to pursue passions can seem like a distant fantasy' (lines 7-8)</li> <li>• 'some spiralling into addictions' (lines 27-28)</li> <li>• 'become fodder for comparison' (line 33)</li> <li>• 'countless images of people showing off their hobbies and denigrating people without hobbies' (lines 34-35)</li> </ul>
<p><b>From passage 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'for hobbies give you a break from the daily grind' (lines 3-4)</li> <li>• 'Focusing on hobbies can also help you live a more balanced and fulfilling life' (line 12)</li> <li>• 'It pushes you to try out different activities and find what you genuinely enjoy. This exploration can make you a more well-rounded person, help you make new friends, and boost your happiness' (lines 12-15)</li> <li>• 'the internet has resulted in the democratization of hobbies. This inclusivity can bring people together and create a sense of community' (lines 18-19)</li> </ul>

**Suggested approach:**

<p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefly introduce the topic in the context of your society by making references to a few broad relevant characteristics that will be further unpacked later in the body paragraphs.</li> <li>• Explicitly state your stand in relation to the question.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Body Paragraphs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid merely rehashing material from the passages.</li> <li>• For a thorough evaluation, use TIP to evaluate the selected point. For instance, in the following sample paragraph, you will see how various stakeholders (government, ground-up initiatives and interest groups) enhance the social benefits of hobbies for specific groups (the elderly, hobbyists) in various ways (infrastructure, programmes and platforms such as Telegram).</li> </ul>

- Another way to demonstrate thorough evaluation is to evaluate the effectiveness of measures meant to promote hobbies.

Text Reference	Explanation and Evaluation
<p>'Social benefits from hobbies can combat social alienation' (Passage 1, line 30)</p>	<p>In an ageing society like Singapore, these benefits hobbies can bring to the elderly are very important in helping our society mitigate the common downsides of an ageing society such as ill-health and strain on the healthcare system. Hence, senior activity centres, such as the Telok Blangah SCEC Active Mind Club, provide the elderly with the space and equipment to engage in hobbies together, such as playing mahjong. The government also encourages the elderly to engage in hobbies by improving the existing infrastructure to make it easier for the elderly to pursue their hobbies. These improvements include the installation of exercise equipment suitable for the elderly at fitness corners and setting up of Silver Zones in residential areas with high proportion of seniors such as Bukit Merah View to make it safer for them to access the various facilities within their neighbourhoods with the imposition of a lowered speed limits for vehicles. Apart from infrastructural improvements, the government also encourages ground-up initiatives that engage the elderly in hobbies regularly. For instance, 'Lao Peng You Pa Pa Zao' (PPZ) is a ground-up initiative by local director Jack Neo that attracted many of the elderly to take part in mass walks and was endorsed by ministers like Health Minister Ong Ye Kung.</p> <p>Even for hobbies that are usually done in solitude, there are many ground-up interest groups in Singapore that help to facilitate a sense of camaraderie. For instance, there are many interest groups on Facebook or Telegram for hobbies such as the Singapore Fishing Community on Facebook. Apart from fostering camaraderie, these groups also make it easier for individuals to engage in these hobbies regularly through the regular meetups they organise.</p>

**Conclusion:**

- Briefly highlight the most significant trends relating to hobbies in your society.
- Briefly discuss what could be done next.

**Markers' comments:**

Most students were able to demonstrate the reasons why hobbies were needed in the context of Singapore and supported their reasoning with valid examples. To improve, students need to deepen the quality of the evaluation either by using TIP to demonstrate conceptual understanding or elaborating further on the characteristics of Singapore that resulted in them taking a particular stand. For instance, evaluation can be achieved by considering different stakeholders and social groups in Singapore and how they engage with and perceive hobbies. Students can also critically evaluate the effectiveness of the measures aimed at promoting hobbies among Singaporeans, instead of merely describing these measures. Effective evaluation is absent in many scripts with most merely repeating what was already mentioned in the passages.

When characteristics of Singapore society were used, they tend to be repetitive across different points, for example 'fast-paced', 'competitive', and 'meritocratic'. These traits are valid, but they should be explained in a way that is relevant to the specific point and example about hobbies. A number of scripts described how there was a general shift in societal mindset to prioritise rest and leisure time. However, it would be better to not just describe the trend but explain why this shift in mindset came about and how this relates to hobbies.

The quality of examples can be improved by selecting apt examples of notable or common hobbies that are pursued. These should be supported with specific details that help demonstrate the significance of the argument selected. Some students had very general and vague examples which did not meaningfully support the points. Students should also note that not all hobbies require the same amount of time and resources.

Students should rely on examples of measures that are clearly intended to encourage hobbies. For instance, Home-Based Learning (HBL) Days and Skillsfuture are not meant to encourage people to pursue hobbies. There were a number of students who erroneously thought that the policy intention of HBL days was for students to pursue hobbies. Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) were often cited and while this could potentially be relevant, the explicit link to hobbies was not always clear. CCAs are not in and of themselves meant as hobbies. Some CCAs are clearly not (e.g. uniformed groups). The chance to engage in, and enjoy these activities and skills in one's spare time and even after one has left the educational institution would show a clearer link between hobbies and CCAs.

Some students did not have a concluding paragraph for the AQ response which affected the overall coherence of the response, which comes under the language mark. While many students had an introductory paragraph, students ought to be cautioned against introductions that were far too lengthy as that limited the time they would have for a thorough evaluation in the body paragraphs later on.

### **Application Question: Student Sample**

As you read the sample, identify possible questions the candidate might have asked to develop thorough evaluation.

Sample Student Response	Comments
<p>In the fast-paced lives of Singaporeans, stress is undoubtedly a common and universal feeling that we all have to deal with. For many, the most obvious solution to escaping from the constant burden of stress is to take up a hobby. In my opinion, hobbies are generally beneficial to Singapore's population as hobbies have the capability to reduce stress and lead to a more balanced and fulfilling life. Hence, I disagree with the author's claim in Passage 2 and agreed with the claim in Passage 3.</p> <p>In Passage 3, the author claims that the idea of having any free time to pursue passions can seem like a distant fantasy, a claim that I disagree with. Instead, I would argue that today, it is more possible than ever to set aside time to be dedicated to our hobbies, a reality that is true in Singapore's context. Naysayers would object, saying that with the average Singaporean's lifestyle there is practically no room for leisure. The complaint that the life of a Singaporean is always focused on work is true to some extent. Singapore, being a pragmatic society, places heavy emphasis on economic progress and meritocracy, which leaves virtually no time for recreation. However, this mindset is not applicable to all. Within the younger generations, there is an increasing trend in younger office workers choosing to prioritise a healthy work-life balance over working overtime. More and more people are making the active decision to value their mental health and recognise the value of hobbies and leisure time. In response, there has been an increase in small businesses and companies trying to cater to their growing need for hobbies that are readily accessible. For example, nestled in the heart of the Central Business District are a line of small shops such as pottery studios, painting studios and gym pods which cater to the population of office workers who want to indulge in their hobbies after a long</p>	

day of work. The close proximity to their workplaces makes it very accessible for workers to pop in and engage in their hobbies during their lunch breaks or on the way home from work. Hence, it has become increasingly accessible to pursue hobbies.

In Passage 3, the author claims that focusing on hobbies can help people to live a more balanced and fulfilling life, an opinion that I agree with. Hobbies have been proven to release stress and act as a source of motivation for some. However, besides the benefits individuals reap, one's hobby can indirectly benefit others. For example, a large proportion of people in Singapore enjoy long-distance running in Singapore. In addition to the physical and mental benefits one reaps from running, there are also numerous charity runs that people can participate in. For example, the proceeds from CIMB's local 5-kilometre race go to raising funds for cancer research. Engaging in hobbies that benefit the community as well, brings about a sense of fulfilment that even while engaging in hobbies, they have the ability to make an impact in their community. This can be said for other hobbies as well, such as crocheters who sell the crocheted stuffed animals they make in order to raise funds for the SPCA. Being able to serve the community leads to a more balanced life due to the satisfaction one gains. Although some hobbies may not lead to one being able to positively impact other communities, hobbies make up a part of our identity. Hobbies can serve as a common identity allowing us to connect with others online, by bonding over a common interest. For example, in Singapore, there is a small community of people who dub themselves as 'train otakus' and are fascinated with the way the railway system in Singapore works. Although this may seem bizarre and unusual to most, these people have found kindred spirits with the same unique interest. Hobbies connect people from all walks of life. Being able to meet different types of people leads to a more balanced and fulfilling life.

In conclusion, hobbies are greatly beneficial to use and are extremely important to Singaporeans who greatly need a form of escapism from what would otherwise be a dreary and monotonous life.

Markers' Comments:

11marks.

Overall, the response is rich in evaluation in terms of the reasoning and contextualising the arguments in the Singapore context. The response also demonstrated conceptual understanding of the experiences of the younger generation and how hobbies provide a sense of identity. There is a range of examples with relevant details provided and these examples are adapted to clearly support the arguments made.