



NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE  
Senior High 2 Preliminary Examination  
Higher 1

<b>Name</b>	
<b>PM Class</b>	

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**General Paper**

Paper 1

**8807/01****23 Aug 2019**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

**1 hour 30 minutes**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your name and PM class on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

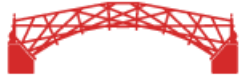
Answer **one** question.

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

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together  
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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This document consists of **2** printed pages.



## 2

Answer **one** question.

Answers should be between 500 and 800 words in length.

- 1 'Children no longer get to enjoy their childhood.' Is this true of your society?
- 2 'Artificial intelligence is more dangerous than useful.' Do you agree?
- 3 How far, in your society, are efforts to preserve cultural heritage merely superficial?
- 4 Do all criminals deserve a second chance?
- 5 'Scientists are too preoccupied with whether they could, instead of thinking whether they should.' Is this a fair comment?
- 6 'Corporations, rather than individuals, should be blamed for harms done to the environment'. Discuss.
- 7 'Geography is destiny.' Discuss.
- 8 Assess the view that good leaders are defined by how well they champion human rights.
- 9 'Censorship undermines the arts.' Comment.
- 10 'E-sports is not real sport.' How far is this true?
- 11 Given the competitiveness of international firms, how important is it to support local businesses in your country?
- 12 'Choice is an illusion.' Discuss.



*Eva Wiseman writes about the wave of kindness in today's world.*

- 1 When Britain had just voted to leave the European Union, the author Rachel Cusk wrote an essay about rudeness which she felt was "rampant". "People treat one another with a contempt that they do not trouble to conceal," she said. At the airport, she noticed strangers looking suspiciously at one another, not sure what to expect of this new, unscripted reality, wondering which side the other person is on. However, as our new "reality" has bedded in, something is changing. Today, kindness is not only fashionable, appearing in a flood of news stories about everyday heroism; it is also profitable. 1  
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- 2 On online platforms, hashtags highlight small acts of kindness witnessed in public, and GoFundMe campaigns raise thousands for people in need. The publishing industry is calling the trend for kindness "up lit" – as in, illuminated from below, to expose one's best angles. After a year of dark thrillers, today they are investing in feel-good stories of empathy and care. Literary agent Juliet Mushens welcomes this move towards hopeful stories. "My feeling is that given the constant depressing news cycle, people are looking for a way to escape into fiction, and into more hopeful narratives. These stories can be political in their own way. They can inspire the audience to fight for change on a personal level, and remind us that the individual choices we make can have a wider impact." 10  
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- 3 When Piers Wenger became the controller of BBC drama commissioning in 2016, he announced his intention to bring a lightness back to entertainment. "I would love a Sunday night show which examines heroism and what it means to be a hero." Note that the preface "super" is missing. To be a hero today is simply to be a person who leans into the vulnerability that comes with seeing other people's problems. Being a hero today requires no expert skills, no powers of flying or invisibility – in fact, one of the things that has helped devalue kindness over the past 30 or so years is the fact that we all know how to do it. We have done so since we were children, but as a mark of our power and importance, choose not to. Being a hero today is to not look away. 20
- 4 Heroic storytelling extends to the news media too. *The New York Times* features a column called 'The Week in Good News', right there on page two. "The intention," explains columnist Des Shoe, "is to provide an antidote to what can seem like an endlessly heavy news cycle." Her column presents a curated selection of good news, including regular stories about "average people doing good work for others". "I think people are yearning for good news because in the age of push notifications, the crush of stories about tragic things happening in the world can seem overwhelming." We want a reminder that, despite the swamp of death and poverty we scroll through, all is not lost. This "yearning" means there is a market for more. "People want good news. They spend time on good news, they seek it out and they look for more. Our readers have asked for much more of this type of coverage." And stories of kindness lead to clicks. 25  
30
- 5 The move towards kindness mirrors the rise of "happiness" pursuits earlier this decade, when a political interest in the value of happiness coincided with academic studies, a self-help movement towards joy, and the relentless counting of one's blessings. In his book *The Happiness Industry*, William Davies reported that a growing number of corporations were employing chief happiness officers, while Google had its own "jolly good fellow". Soon, however, happiness as a movement began to be questioned. It was pointed out that the political push for happiness grew as cuts in benefits and healthcare deepened. It coincided with a huge rise in prescribed antidepressants. Notions of happiness relied on a fuzzy vagueness: there was the suggestion that this noisy push for happiness was a way to displace attention from the causes of unhappiness itself. 35  
40



- 6 While society views happiness and kindness as undoubtedly linked, it also recognises the difference in that happiness is passive, while kindness is active. At Springwell, a special school in England, where many students have suffered abuse, neglect or poverty, teachers have vowed to approach every child with what they call “unconditional positive regard” – or, as the principal Dave Whitaker says, they “batter the children with kindness”, and it seems to be working. Like happiness, kindness is difficult to quantify – we have no way of knowing whether people are becoming kinder, no apps to mine for data – but we can count the stories of kindness that proliferate, often in tandem with those of the effects of austerity. 45 50
- 7 Kindness is not new. It is old, pretty old. Aristotle said: “It is the characteristic of the magnanimous man to ask no favour but to be ready to do kindness to others.” Kindness is mankind’s “greatest delight,” said Roman philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius. And yet, for a long time it has been seen as sort of suspicious. As religion’s hold on our culture has weakened, and with it the insistence upon loving thy neighbour, a certain selfishness has come to be expected. To be kind is also to be weak, unfocused on achievement. Kindness is seen as a nostalgic throwback to simpler times, or worse, a con. A man who throws his coat over the puddle is a man who onlookers suspect must be protecting something valuable in the mud. To go out of one’s way to be kind suggests an ulterior motive. Who has time to look up from their phone, let alone expose themselves to the discomfort of empathising with a stranger? 55 60
- 8 Cynics claim that kindness is camouflaged egoism, and society has reduced kindness to a covert selfishness. They make the case that, due to these suspicions, we are all battling against our innate kindness. It must be said, however, that kindness unlocks something deep within people. Reading about kindness seems to perform a similar function. Perhaps we are seeking stories of kindness in order to practise the action in our head before performing it – seeing these people in need, stretching the muscle memory required to offer a hand? Kindness has so many benefits. When we are kind to someone, it does not just help that person; it is scientifically proven to improve our own physical and mental health as well. So, at a time when rates of depression and anxiety seem to be skyrocketing, kindness could be a very simple but powerful antidote. 65 70
- 9 Perhaps this is the key to the new wave of kindness. We perform kind deeds in response to darkness and, in turn, our lives are improved. Rather than being an old-fashioned or altruistic notion, kindness is as modern as it gets. Is it rising, not just because in cold times we are compelled to offer scarves to those shivering, but because taking part makes us feel more successful? Well. Small steps, gently. 75



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

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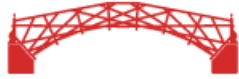
*NOTE: When a question asks for an answer IN YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE and you select the appropriate material from the passage for your answer, you must still use your own words to express it. Little credit can be given to answers which only copy words or phrases from the passage.*

- 1 What is the change in people's attitude towards each other because of our "new 'reality'" (line 5)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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- 2 According to Juliet Mushens, why are people drawn to "more hopeful narratives" (lines 13-14)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

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- 3 According to the author in paragraph 3, what does it mean to be a hero today? **Use your own words as far as possible.**

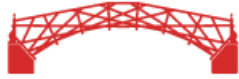
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- 4 What is implied by the word "swamp" (line 31)?

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- 6 How does the author support her claim that “Kindness is not new” (line 52)?  
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- 7 In paragraph 7, how does the author support the perception that kindness harbours “an ulterior motive” (lines 59-60)?  
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- 8 Explain what is meant by “kindness could be a very simple but powerful antidote” (line 70). **Use your own words as far as possible.**  
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- 9 What does the author imply about “modern” kindness (line 73)? **Use your own words as far as possible.**  
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- 10 Why does the author end the passage with “Small steps, gently” (line 75)?  
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.....[1]

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