**A Level 2018 – Final GP Essay Preparation**

**Science and Technology**

1a) ‘Modern technology has removed the need for reading skills.’ Do you agree?

1b) To what extent have technological developments enhanced learning in today’s world?

1c) Assess the view that new technologies create more problems than benefits for your society.

**Education**

2b) ‘Travel, rather than reading, is the best way to learn.’ How far do you agree?

2c) ‘Many receive an education, but few are educated.’ Discuss with reference to situations in your society today.

**Social Media**

3a) To what extent is the media responsible for the perception of truth in the world today?

3b) Consider the claim that the purpose of the media is not simply to convey the truth, but to make it interesting.

3c) ‘We can no longer trust the media.’ Is this a fair comment?

**Reflective Issues**

4a) 'Happiness is an expensive pursuit today.' How far do you agree?

4b) ‘There is no cause for optimism today.’ What is your view?

4c) Should we always be compassionate?

**Small States (International Issues)**

5a) How far does a country’s physical size determine its relations with other countries in the world today?

5b) ‘International relationships between countries are becoming increasingly important.’ Discuss.

**Social Issues**

6a) ‘Young people today are overprotected.’ How true is this of your society?

6b) To what extent are the needs of the marginalised met in your society?

6c) ‘The rich are responsible for the poor.’ What is your view?

**Essay Question 1 [Reflective Issues]**

**'Wealth is no guarantee of a better life.' How far do you agree?**

ai) Types of Essay Structure

Type A:

* Proposition Point 1
* Extent of agreement to Point 1
* Proposition Point 2
* Extent of agreement to Point 2
* Proposition Point 3
* Extent of agreement to Point 3

Type B:

* Perspective 1 - Proposition - 2 Points
* Perspective 2 - Opposition - 2 Points
* Perspective 3 - Analysis - Extent of Agreement - Depending Factor(s)

b) Perspective Setting:

* Develop a proposition - Wealth may not guarantee a better life
* Develop reasons - Why having more wealth does not lead to better life

c) Categorization:

* Personal factors
* Social influence
* Cultural influences
* Economics
* Individuals

d) Requirements of the Question:

* Understand the meaning of the quote
  + The pursuit of a better life may include the possession of riches. Yet, it is inadequate to assume that wealth is the one and only determinant for a better life. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider other factors that contribute to a more fulfilling life.
* In doing this question, students must derive the proposition and support the argument that wealth may not guarantee a better life and provide the extent of agreement after this.
* To provide a dimensional and convincing argument, students must develop categories of discussion.

Introduction

1. Write your introduction in a paragraph

* Set the general observation: the motivation behind why people want to have a better life
* State the proposition: having more wealth may not guarantee a better life
* State that there are other considerations, such as the pursuit of personal aspirations that can also lead to a more fruitful and meaningful life, besides having more wealth
* Set your view on how we examine the issue and explain extent of agreement

Main Body

2. Write the topic sentence for each main body paragraph

* Include the linking sentence below each topic sentence
* Elaborate with phrases or clauses to show your causation
* Provide an example as supporting evidence to your argument

3. Show extent of agreement to listed point above

* Prove the limitations of the previous point
* Elaborate with phrases to show your causation
* Provide examples to support your arguments

4. Follow the requirements of the first and second paragraphs with other points from categories

* List two more points for proposition and two extent of agreements
* There are four main features of a paragraph: (i) Topic Sentence (ii) Elaboration (iii) Example (iv) Linking Sentence

Conclusion

5. Wrap up your outline with a concluding paragraph

* Show your stand on extent of agreement based on the depending on the key determinant and show why this the reason for your degree of agreement
* Provide a suggestion or reflection in view of the question description

**Essay Question 1 [Reflective Issues]**

**'Wealth is no guarantee of a better life.' How far do you agree?**

Introduction

The accumulation of wealth is a crucial aim in life as the abundance of wealth can bring extensive benefits that lead to the conventional wisdom that wealth is a guarantee of a better life. However, if we examine this issue with most rich people, it is not surprising to hear them give you an alternative opinion to this common belief. In view of these polarizing perspectives, this essay agrees to the view that wealth is not a guarantee of a better life despite the benefits it may bring to aid the life of an individual. Why wealth is a not a guarantee of better life?

Main Body

**Given View: Explain why wealth is a not a guarantee of better life**

Point 1 – I believe in the view that wealth is not a guarantee of a better as there are many aspects of life that are important in shaping a blissful life which cannot be bought by wealth,

Point 2 – Wealth can only provide us instant gratification and momentary gain which will only make our life better in tangible manner for a short duration.

**Contrasting View: Explain why wealth is a guarantee of better life**

Point 1 – However, most people are still unable to change their mindsets from this common belief that wealth is a guarantee of better life as a hedonistic lifestyle makes possible with wealth is too alluring to resist.

Point 2 – It is hard to live in a modern society where money plays a pivotal role in the distribution of goods and services that ensure our survival, comfort and conduciveness that will shape our way of life.

**Why your view is more relevant and logical?**

In view of these diverse opinions, my view is still rationale and logical to agree that wealth is no guarantee of a better life despite our reliance on materials for survival. A better life is only possible if we have taken into consideration of the intangible fabrics that make us better people and this cannot be bought with wealth. Wealth only plays a part of this pursuit of a better life and it is only an instrument, a means to an end. We can only have a better life if we put our wealth and other intangible resources like time into our life to work towards a better life.

Conclusion

In retrospect, we always strive for a better life. However, in this pursuit, many have slim and misunderstood vision of what constitutes a better life and they have inverted their energy and resources wrongly. It is important to recognize the need of wealth in a capitalistic framework as wealth will never be the only variable that determines a better life. The understanding of this notion will be a fruitful advice to make one understand well how to have a better life.

**Essay Question 2 [International issues]**

**Evaluate the claim that a more connected world has resulted in greater division.**

Introduction

**General Observation:**The advent of a technological revolution has transformed the world extensively in the 21st century. Scientific discoveries and fascinating inventions have overcome various problems, like geographical immobility and market accessibility. As such, the world has become more connected.

**Given View:** Some argue that an integrated and interlinked world can lead to disastrous consequences, such as the outbreak of social violence, geopolitical tensions and economic competition, which made the world more divided.

**Contrasting View:** On the other hand, supporters of the technological advancements have stood their ground by arguing that this global trend reduces divisive elements due to the expansion of opportunities for cooperation at the societal and international levels.

**Stand:** In view of polarizing opinions, this essay is more inclined to the view that an increasingly connected world minimizes division, given that individuals, organizations and governments have made notable attempts to resolve their differences and work together in creating a harmonious modern world.

Introduction

**Given View: Explain why a more connected world has resulted in greater division – [social] societal fragmentation/disenfranchised society**

**Topic Sentence:** Proponents of anti-globalization hold the perception that a more connected world leads to greater social division as interactions between groups of differing ideologies have led to the fragmentation of societies.

**Elaboration:** Against the backdrop of globalization, individuals from around the world now have the freedom to cross national borders and travel to foreign lands, contributing to the formation of cosmopolitan states. Over time, the influx of immigrants and foreign ideas have sparked fears and concerns, giving rise to socially-divisive responses.

**Example**: For example, the Population White Paper published in January 2013 projected the Singapore population to be at 6.9 million by 2030. Due to growing concerns over the rapid increase in immigrants that may limit the economic opportunities of the locals, many expressed their anger on social media platforms. As such, a more connected Singapore has led to the rise of xenophobia, which divided the society between locals and immigrants.

**Linking Sentence:** Hence, it is evident that a more connected world has led to greater social division that made societies more vulnerable to internal conflicts and potential violence.

**Rebuttal: Explain why a more connected world may not lead to greater division – [social] social cooperation to counter divisive xenophobic elements**

**Topic Sentence:** However, such a view lacks depth.

**Elaboration:** Although it is true that a more connected world has corresponded with the rise of social conflicts, efforts were also made to bridge these social gaps and strengthen ties. In particular, both government and non-governmental organizations have sought to counter the adverse effects of globalization by raising public awareness on the importance of social cohesion. With their persistence, there were positive developments that minimized these divisions.

**Example:** For instance, the Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2) is a non-profit organization formed in 2003 to improve the living conditions of low-wage migrant workers in Singapore. The organization is mostly manned by non-paid volunteers and a small team of regular staff to support this social movement. Notably, the TWC2 have raised awareness on the plight of the migrant workers to dispel the stereotypes, such that Singaporeans have acknowledged their contributions positively.

**Linking Sentence:** As such, it is clear that social movements and other forms of campaigns have ensured that a more connected world would shape less socially-divisive societies.

**Supporting View 1: Explain why a more connected world may lead to less division – [Political] International cooperation**

**Topic Sentence:** Advocates of a more connected world argue that there is less political division and rivalry as this development has led to the expansion of opportunities for international co-operation.

**Elaboration:** In view of increasingly complex regional and global challenges, countries have welcomed bilateral and multilateral cooperation, which led to the enhancement of diplomatic relations between countries that minimized geopolitical conflicts.

**Example:** For example, different regional organizations were formed to promote international cooperation, such as the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These regional bodies outlined critical principles that emphasized on accommodative practices to prevent the escalation of tensions.

**Evaluation:** Although geopolitical tensions persist, as observed by US President Donald Trump's aggressive rhetoric towards North Korea, Iran and China, the existence of international political frameworks have been effective in preserving the peace and security of the world.

**Linking Sentence:** Therefore, this shows that a more politically connected world has created many opportunities for countries to engage in cooperation to reduce division and maintain peace.

**Supporting View 2**: **Explain why a more connected world may lead to less division – [Economic] Less economic division due to greater cooperation**

**Topic Sentence:** From the economic viewpoint, a more connected world will lead to less division as the expansion of economic opportunities for international cooperation will boost economic development.

**Elaboration:** A more connected world is beneficially as it leads to a more conducive environment for economic cooperation that yields massive potential for the advancement of countries. As such, this benefit creates the impetus for countries to push for the integration of markets and the acceleration of economic development.

**Example:** For example, multilateral economic agreements, like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), have become a major contributor to global economic cooperation. The Brookings Institution reported that the RCEP is expected to raise global trade by 1.9%. Also, global real incomes are estimated to increase by $286 billion per year, reflecting the massive economic benefits of regional market integration.

**Linking Sentence:** From this illustration, a more connected world from the economic perspective is likely to result in lesser division as countries recognise the economic gains of international cooperation.

Conclusion

In retrospect, this essay argues that a more connected world leads to lesser social, political and economic division. While the modern world is fraught with occasional complexities that may seek to sow conflicts between nations, the consistent efforts for bilateral and multilateral cooperation have been instrumental in averting such adverse consequences.