
THINKING SKILLS

9694/42

Paper 4 Applied Reasoning

October/November 2014

1 hour 30 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

Answer **all** the questions.

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

This document consists of **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

- 1 Study the information and answer the question that follows.

Medical research has shown that eating saturated fat is one of the biggest risk factors for coronary heart disease, which kills large numbers of people, particularly in Western industrialised countries.

A food manufacturer promoted one of its snack products on the basis that each snack contains only 1 g of fat. The unstated inference the company hoped the consumer would take away is that their snack is a healthier option than those of their competitors.

Make **five** criticisms of the information provided by the food manufacturer and/or the inference that the snack is healthier than those of their competitors. [5]

Questions 2, 3 and 4 refer to Documents 1 to 5.

- 2 Briefly analyse Globe-trotter's argument in Document 1: *Respect for Other Cultures*, by identifying its main conclusion and main reasons, as well as any intermediate conclusions and counter-arguments. [6]
- 3 Give a critical evaluation of the strength of Globe-trotter's argument in Document 1: *Respect for Other Cultures*, by identifying and explaining any flaws, implicit assumptions and other weaknesses. [9]
- 4 'We should fight prejudice by making it a crime.'

To what extent do you agree with this statement? Construct a well-reasoned argument in support of your view, commenting critically on some or all of Documents 1 to 5, and introducing ideas of your own. [30]

DOCUMENT 1**Respect for Other Cultures**

Why do we get so uptight when we have for neighbours human beings from other countries whose way of life seems so oddly different from ours? My dictionary defines prejudice as “preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience”. Prejudice is really hatred of humanity, and those who feel prejudice against others are likely to commit hate crimes. In its most common form prejudice is a feeling of dislike of cultures which are different from one’s own. Cultures are not random but constantly evolve from beliefs and practices that have worked in the past. Those cultures that did not work were based on false premises and died out. Thus all long-surviving cultures are good cultures. Attempting to modify other people’s cultures carelessly means destabilising stable structures that you don’t understand and may not be able to replace with anything near equal.

As a host country we should not expect people who come here from other countries to change their cultures and assimilate. Culture is important to individuals, to create a sense of group-belonging. Usually, people who abandon their own culture and adopt a different one have an unpleasant life. Their own people are not happy with them – they don’t fit anywhere. People call them a ‘nobody’ – which is a very grave insult. They become aimless individuals who have lost their identity.

The world has changed and multi-cultural societies are the norm these days. This calls for a great deal of broadmindedness in societies that have been traditionally more or less mono-cultural. It is only natural that people of host countries view the incoming cultures as intrusions. When a mono-cultural society is bombarded with immigrants, various prejudices, misunderstandings and xenophobic attitudes come to the fore, contributing to tensions.

However, civilised people should be able to guard against such tensions. Prejudiced people harbour negative feelings, which come about as a reaction to cultural differences they feel scared of or undermined by. These people often turn those feelings into actions with damaging consequences. The way forward is to replace this ignorance with understanding of others; then there’s no room for those negative reactions.

While various cultural practices, ranging from eating sushi to practising yoga, have been appreciated and adapted by other cultures, there are other features that defy assimilation, much less understanding. We cannot be expected to understand all cultures completely – nor is there any rule stating that we should. What should be the rule is that we put up with those aspects that we do not understand. A multi-cultural society can exist peacefully only when there is acceptance and tolerance of all those cultural practices that defy understanding. So we need to tolerate culturally different neighbours and their oddities. If that is a difficult thing to do, try to realise that it is quite possible that there are aspects of your own culture that others might find it hard to get their heads around.

Globe-trotter

DOCUMENT 2

Curry worth fighting for?

We are Singaporeans, and we love our curries, so don't you dare restrict us when we want to cook one! First of all, let me state that I love my curries and, yes, they are pungent, often overpoweringly so. Curries are essential to my identity as a Singaporean.

Thus it came as a surprise when I read in the newspaper about a neighbourly dispute between a family from mainland China and a local family. According to media reports, the mainland Chinese family sought out the services of Singapore's Community Mediation Centre, as they could not stand the smell of the curry coming from the home of their Singaporean neighbours. The mediator facilitated a conclusion that the Singaporean family should agree to cook curry only when their Chinese neighbours were not at home.

The crux of the matter is this: a meal of curry is part and parcel of Singaporean culture. Restricting it would be no different than restricting the burning of incense and joss sticks, or any other ethnic practices. Couple this with the fact that Singapore has always prided itself on being a multi-racial country, where different races and ethnicities mingle freely.

In response, netizens have started a tongue-in-cheek, island-wide "Cook and Share a Pot of Curry!" movement on Facebook – currently more than 55 000 strong – urging families to cook and share a pot of curry to "celebrate curries as part of our way of life, and to share this celebration with those who are new to our shores."

Singapore's Minister for Law, while acknowledging that it is important for Singaporeans to affirm and protect their identity, has urged, "Let's not turn this into a xenophobic attack on foreigners in general."

Xenophobia is an easy term to wave around when there may be a deeper issue at hand. The perception is that the government is unfairly favouring its new immigrants and treating its own people as second-class citizens. Going on some of the comments posted, the matter has enraged many:

"Gees, you're in Singapore! We eat curry, we cook curry, we love our curry! And it's our right to do so whenever we choose. Be respectful of the culture even if you're averse to blending in." – RL

"What is wrong with these people? When they came to live in Singapore, did they not realise this is not China and there are many different people living here! These people must assimilate or they should go back to China. Seriously!" – SA

A Malay proverb posted by the Facebook group states, "Di mana bumi dipijak, di situ langit dijunjung." The direct translation is, "You should hold up the sky of the land where you live." In other words, you should respect the country in which you choose to live.

Charlene Fang
August 2011

DOCUMENT 3

Rich is Right

The Chinese nouveaux riches* complain that people who “hate the rich” are stupid and unreasonable, but they should take a good look at their own behaviour. Last week, a campaign to recruit ‘brides’ for billionaires was launched in some big cities in China like Guangzhou and Shenzhen. It’s really shameful for the rich to show off their money by recruiting brides in this way, like ancient Chinese emperors selecting their consorts. Recently a Shanxi coal mine boss spent 70 million yuan (\$14 million) on his daughter’s wedding, even paying celebrities to attend. Such ostentatious behaviour understandably angers many people.

Following a fatal accident in Singapore on May 12, in which a speeding Ferrari driven by a 31-year-old Chinese expatriate ran a red light and smashed head-on into a taxi, killing both the Singaporean driver and the Japanese passenger, there was an outpouring of anger against Chinese expats on Singaporean Internet forums where they were described as “rich locusts”.

Chinese people, either as new immigrants or part of the foreign workforce, have contributed no less than people from other countries to the development of Singapore, and they don’t deserve such hostility because of the reckless behaviour of one individual. Nevertheless, we have to acknowledge that anti-Chinese sentiment and terms such as “rich locusts” have not appeared overnight as a result of a single car accident. The animosity has developed over time because of the bad image ‘exported’ by China’s nouveaux riches.

The past few years have seen the dramatic rise of China as a source of outbound tourists, and, according to the World Luxury Association, Chinese people spent \$7.2 billion overseas on luxuries during the week-long Spring Festival holiday this year. It indicates that the country’s newly rich are eager to flaunt their wealth by snapping up clothes, watches, jewellery and anything else with a luxury-brand logo.

Wealthy Chinese have also been buying expensive properties overseas in recent years. Some wealthy Chinese have been on hunting sprees in Africa and North America, spending huge amounts to buy quotas to kill as many wild animals as possible, and some rich Chinese students change their luxury cars whenever the mood strikes them. Such behaviour has not only created a bad image of newly rich Chinese overseas that bears little relation to their fellow countrymen back home – including the 100 million that live in poverty – but it has also endangered ordinary Chinese people living or travelling abroad. For instance, there have been growing concerns for the safety of Chinese students studying abroad after a number of violent incidents in which they had been targeted.

When a fatal crash involving an expensive car and a reckless Chinese driver can trigger such loathing, it is time for China’s newly rich to do some soul-searching about their lavish lifestyles and try to earn respect rather than buy it, both at home and abroad.

* nouveaux riches: French term for the newly rich

Gao Zhuyuan

Asia News Network, May 2012

DOCUMENT 4

What Can be Done About Prejudice?

Are you prejudiced? Or rather, to catch you out, are you not prejudiced? I don't like admitting it, but I am. If you can say that you are not, you must be practically unique. But if for example you dislike Roman Catholics, or think that all Maoris are generous, then I'm afraid that you must join the countless ranks of offenders. No-one escapes the tentacles of prejudice. It may be towards race, colour, nationality, religion, class, beliefs, or even towards other tribes within your own race. Whatever is involved, whether it be trivial and harmless or serious and pernicious, it is prejudice.

When someone's ideas and beliefs are prejudiced, he is incapable of forming impartial opinions on the subject concerned. When he acts on these distorted judgments, he is showing unfair discrimination. Thus, when A says he doesn't like Maoris because they are dirty he is prejudiced, but when A refuses to rent his house to a Maori because of his opinion of Maoris, he is discriminating.

Economic Factors

One reason for prejudice is to be found in the economic gains which often follow prejudice. In the nineteenth century Maoris were generally regarded as inferior to the white settlers, and this was felt to be an excuse for depriving them of the asset reserved only for more civilised and worthy people – land.

Political Reasons

Political stability and ambition may also be a cause of prejudice; the success of some political parties has depended largely on their ability to carry out programmes of domination and repression of a minority race. Hitler's success in Germany rested largely on his ability to indoctrinate Germany with racial pride.

Subconscious Feelings

A people may be prejudiced towards another in order to disguise a sub-conscious feeling of jealousy and envy; they see the other race being maybe too happy, care-free, spontaneous, uninhibited, or even as a group superior in such activities as music or athletics. So they prefer to ignore these strengths which they themselves lack, and to emphasise the weaknesses which the other groups may possess. Another factor is that most people seem to need to feel superior to someone else. This seems to be human nature. Some interracial attitudes have been moulded in very recent times, but many are of ancient origin.

Insofar as human nature is responsible for this mental distortion, we cannot cure it. We can take certain steps to prevent it: we can guide, and teach a rational approach; but we cannot suppress or stamp out a person's way of thinking. The ultimate decision lies within each person.

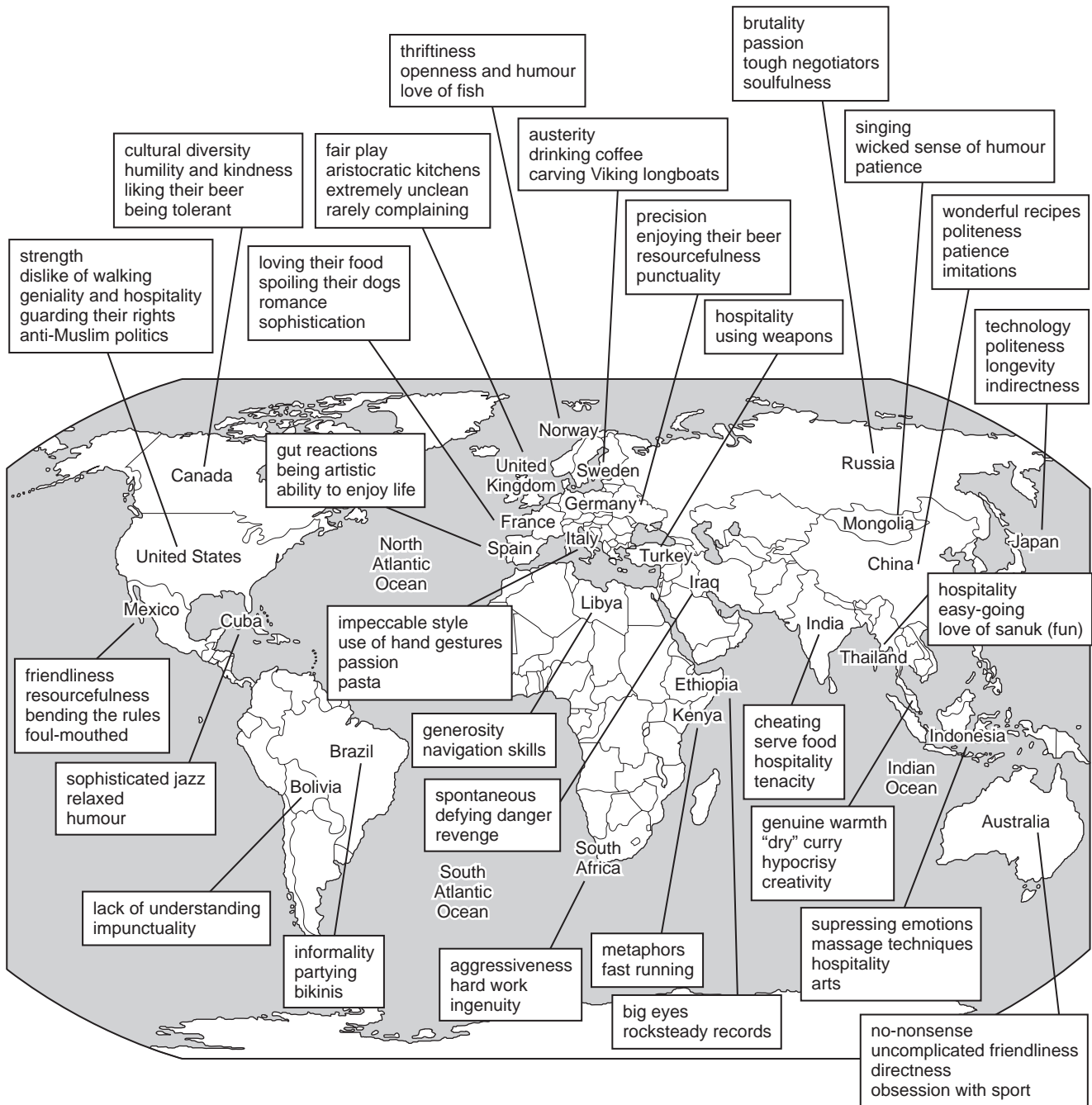
Kenneth C. Gartner

Maori Magazine, 1965

DOCUMENT 5

The Prejudice Map

Compiled in January 2006 by asking Google what different cultures "are known for".



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- Document 2 © Charlene Fang; *Singapore curry debate on the nose*; <http://www.cnngo.com/singapore/life/charlene-fang-much-ado-about-curry-267551>.
Document 3 © Gao Zhuyuan; *My Paper*; China Daily/Asia News Network; 30 May 2012.
Document 4 © Kenneth C. Gartner; *Te Ao Hou*; The Maori Magazine; <http://teaohou.natlib.govt.nz/journals/teaohou/issue/Mao52TeA/c4.html>;
No.52, September 1965;
Document 5 © <http://kottke.org/06/01/a-world-map-of-cultural-prejudices-compiled>;
<http://blogoscoped.com/archive/2006-01-11-n83.html>.

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