NCHS PRELIM 2023 P2 ANSWERS

Section A [5 marks]

Refer to the online banner (**Text 1**) and the social media post (**Text 2**) on page 3 of the Insert for Questions 1–4.

1 Look at Text 1. Tick (√) the most effective title for the image in this advertisement.

☐ The **dawn** of good leadership - means 'Start of', but this photo already shows the effects of good leadership. 'Leadership' is also not an idea that is shown in the image.

☐ Reflect on **past** achievements - the photo shows current achievements, and the focus of the photo is not on the water

☑ Illuminating **possible** success - **caption** says "building" government capacity and good leadership = future-looking

[1]

2 The online banner states that 'good governments are the foundation of flourishing, prosperous communities and nations'.

What do you think the word 'foundation' suggests about the way 'flourishing, prosperous communities and nations' can be achieved?

It suggests that a country needs to have a good government first. / good governance comes first.

Accepted: (with reference to governance)
- **(underlying) basis, base, beginning, start with, principle**
- **build on** (not considered figurative language as it is part of the actual dictionary definition of 'build' than an actual metaphor)

Rejected: can only be achieved with, most important, basic building block (figurative answer)

[1]

3 Identify the phrase in Text 2 which suggests that Singapore has risen above Finland by a small margin.

It is 'edging out (Finland)'.

Reminder: The phase 'edging out' → is still not a complete sentence! Need 'IS (verb)'.
(draw carrot to remind students, but give the mark)

[1]

4 Look at Texts 1 and 2 and statements (a) and (b) below.

Decide whether the statements refer to Text 1, Text 2, both texts, or neither text.

Circle the answer you have chosen for each statement.

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(a) Readers are addressed directly by the writer.

Text 1 / **Text 2** / Both / Neither

(b) The tone suggests the writer and reader are of the same status.

Text 1 / Text 2 / Both / **Neither**

[2]

Text 2: 'How they do it is super amazing and you should really check it out too'
'should' – imperative = different status
'super amazing… really' - emphasis = strengthens imperative

Section B [20 marks]

Refer to **Text 3** on pages 3-4 of the Insert for Questions 5-14.

5 In Paragraph 1, what was Maureen feeling that was 'strange'?

She stopped feeling tensed after starting the race. / The tension she felt in typical races was gone.

Accept:
- **antonym of tensed - relaxed, at ease**
- **any idea of 'no tension' e.g. 'The tension eased'**

Reject: wistful → does not refer to 'strange feeling' in Para 1

[1]

Section B

Text 3

The text below is the account of a long-distance runner at her first marathon when she was just thirteen years old.

Read the text carefully and answer Questions 5–14 in the Question Paper.

1 It was a strange feeling for her. In typical races, the tension doesn't cease after the starting gun goes off. Your legs fire off the line. You can't relax, your muscles burn. You begin to breathe hard. You can't speak or smile or wave.

2 Maureen was doing all three in the first miles. She'd never felt so wistful and at ease during a competition before. Even though this was Maureen's first marathon, *5* she felt like she could run forever. She was happy to be away from the starting line. A thirteen-year-old girl did stand out after all among the twenty-eight or so grown men. And she was finally doing what she loved to do. She was running, albeit running really, really slowly. For her, that is.

no link to 'strange'

6 Referring to Paragraph 2, give **two** reasons why Maureen 'was happy to be away from the starting line' (line 6-7). Answer **in your own words**.

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(i) PW: A thirteen-year-old girl did stand out after all among the twenty-eight or so grown men

She was noticeable as a girl among grown men.

Accepted: idea of 'easily seen/noticed' - conspicuous, visible, obvious, stick out (it's an idea, not a real metaphor)**, attracted more attention, prominent**

Reject: centre of attention, different, odd one out (stronger idea of 'different'), exception

[1]

(ii) PW: And she was finally doing what she loved to do.

She could run at last, something she loved.

Accepted: ultimately

[1]

7 **(a)** Identify a phrase in Paragraph 3 which suggests that running pace can be easily affected.

It is '(with the) smallest adjustment'.

Reminder: The phase 'smallest adjustment' → is still not a complete sentence! Need 'IS (verb)'.
(draw carrot to remind students, but give the mark)

[1]

(b) From Paragraph 3, give **one** example of something that can affect running pace.

It is how hard one's/ Maureen's/ her foot strikes the ground. /
It is how quickly breath is sucked into one's lungs and blown out of one's nose. / It is how quickly one breathes.

Note: question does not refer to context, 'one' is preferred

[1]

8 In Paragraph 4, Maureen's 'nervousness from the start line had completely melted away' (line 17). What does this description suggest about how she felt in this moment?

She felt (very) calm / relaxed / at ease.

Accepted: composed, at peace

Rejected:
- carefree/ confident – not linked to nervousness

[1]

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9 Referring to Paragraph 4, explain **in your own words two** things Maureen likes about running.

PW: the repetitive bounce of moving forward

She enjoys the consistent action of springing on.

Accept: rhythmic motion of moving upwards, consistent rebound

Reject:
- repetitive → continuous, repeat / repeated, constant
- bounce → footsteps

PW: the whispering caress of the wind

She likes the feeling of the wind touching her face gently/ lightly.

Accepted: (gently) brushing past/across her skin, lightly touching her face/body (literal sense of touch),

Dictionary definition of 'caress (noun)': gentle touch (noun)
Dictionary definition of 'brush (verb)': touch lightly while moving close
'caress'/touching → from the wind's perspective (the wind having the agency of action). Your answer needs to capture the wind's agency in a literal way.

Reject:
- 'felt' → from Maureen's perspective (hence not an accurate capture of meaning)
- the gentle touch of the wind (personification of the wind)
- faint brush of the wind (personification of the wind)
- gentle wind/breeze (alone) → just means slight breeze with no meaning of 'agency'
- soft (does not describe 'whispering' as an adjective to an action)
- adjectives that describe sound for 'whispering'

PW: a mind free to roam as she leapt onward

She likes the opportunity to think about anything. / limitless thoughts

Reject: let mind wander, free of worries, lost in thought, empty mind

Any two [2]

10 **(a)** What does the writer do to emphasise that Maureen was very confident of maintaining the pace in Paragraph 5?

The writer repeated 'had not' to show that she did not consider failure to do so.

Note: use of a single simile/ statement is not a strong way to emphasise something

[1]

(b) How do you think Maureen was feeling when the news hit her 'like a slap' (line 32)?

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She was feeling shocked / very surprised / astonished / stunned.

Accepted: in disbelief, astounded

Reject: offended, annoyed, puzzled, startled (mild), horrified (too strong), dumbfounded (= unable to speak, but she did speak right after that)

[1]

11 Why do you think the writer describes the twenty-fifth mile of a marathon to be 'a disorienting place' (line 35) for runners?

The writer wants to show that it is where runners tend to give up / give in to temptation.

Accepted: emphasise how difficult completing the 25th mile is, show that the 25th mile is physically and mentally draining

Note to students: Why do you think the writer describes = writer's intention question!
PW: Why bother when you can't beat the time you wanted anyway? -> give up
PW: … ignore the voice and try anyway. -> not giving up

[1]

12 In Paragraph 8, Maureen thought that if 'she wasn't going to break a world's best time, she could at least prove she was capable of finishing a marathon' (lines 41-42).

(a) What is your impression of Maureen from this detail?

She is (very) perseverant / relentless / resolute / determined / unrelenting.

Accepted: strong-willed, has strong willpower, tenacious, does not give up easily, driven

Ok = optimistic / positive / flexible (no answer for b)

Reject:
- resilient (dictionary definition) - able to recover quickly after something unpleasant → 'recover' is about recovering from setback, but the focus of the statement is on the goal itself of 'finishing the marathon'.
- goal-oriented (vague → versus people-oriented?)

[1]

(b) Identify **one** word in Paragraph 8 that supports this impression of Maureen.

It is 'single-mindedly'.

Note: if answer for (a) is wrong, only can give the mark for (b) if there is a trace of a relation between (a)'s answer and 'single-mindedly'.
E.g. **(b) mark is awarded if (a)'s wrong answer is 'resilient'** → because 'single-mindedly' can describe an aspect of resilience

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[1]

13 The writer suggested that Maureen was 'fiercely competitive' (line 39). Explain how this suggestion is supported with reference to **three** pieces of evidence from Paragraph 8.

Dictionary Definition of 'competitive' (alone) → trying very hard to be better than others
Need to explain common wrong quotes?
- changed gears
- knew only one thing
- at least prove she was capable of finishing a marathon

'(accelerated like you would in a) sports car on an empty freeway' suggests that she ran without a care for anything around her to complete the race. **Accept:** **… she ran with a disregard for potential obstacles / limitations** Note to students: (high) speed =/= competitive Dictionary definition of 'competitive': trying very hard to be better than others
'zeroed in (on it single-mindedly)' suggests that she had only one focus, which was to complete the race. **Accept: any idea of one/single/complete focus/aim/target/objective/goal** **E.g. 'focus on it entirely'** Dictionary definition of 'zero' (verb): set the sights of (a gun) for firing Note: 'single-mindedly' is a postmodifier of the **main idea of 'zero in'** → hence the **idea of one focus/aim** is needed Reject: 'locked on and focussed' (figurative answer) 'shows her focus' → no idea of 'one' focus 'fixated' → contains idea of' unreasonable (focus)'
'using every ounce of gas left in the tank' suggests that she was determined to expend all her energy to complete the race. **Accepted: best effort, all her might (meaning 'energy'), all her effort** Reject: 'using every ounce of gas left in the tank' - give her all, give everything (hyperbole/exaggeration, non-specific) 'push past limits' → she stayed within her limits - she used only 'gas in the tank', not beyond

14 The structure of the text reflects Maureen's role at different stages during the race. Complete the flow chart by choosing one phrase from the box to summarise her role at each stage during the race. There are some extra phrases in the box you do not need to use.

Maureen's role at different stages

overcoming a new challenge sustaining prolonged effort maintaining a challenging standard

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experiencing surprising ease joining in to provide support coming to an unexpected realisation powering over temptation

Paragraphs 1-2:	**(i)**	experiencing surprising ease

Paragraphs 3-4:	**(ii)**	sustaining prolonged effort Reject: maintaining challenging standard → the pace normally wasn't challenging for her. *'she usually missed that time by less than a second', 'she knew that with the smallest adjustment…. she could change her pace.', 'nervousness… completely melted away', 'felt less like a race and more like everything she had come to love about running'*

Paragraphs 5:	**(iii)**	coming to an unexpected realisation

Paragraphs 6-8:	**(iv)**	powering over temptation Reject: overcoming a new challenge → only covers paragraph 8. Your answer needs to cover all the stated paragraphs.

[4]

Section C [25 marks]

Refer to **Text 4** on pages 5-6 of the Insert for Questions 15-24.

15 With reference to Paragraph 1, why did the ancient Egyptians specially love cats?

They admired their hunting abilities. [1]

Accepted:
- **They admired the cat's / cats' hunting abilities**
- **Cats had good hunting abilities** (highlighting a positive trait can be a direct answer to the question)

Reject: cats hunting abilities (missing apostrophe)

16 What does the word 'fixture' (line 2) tell you about the cat's position in ancient Egyptian society?

The cat had a permanent/ secure position in ancient Egyptian society. [1]

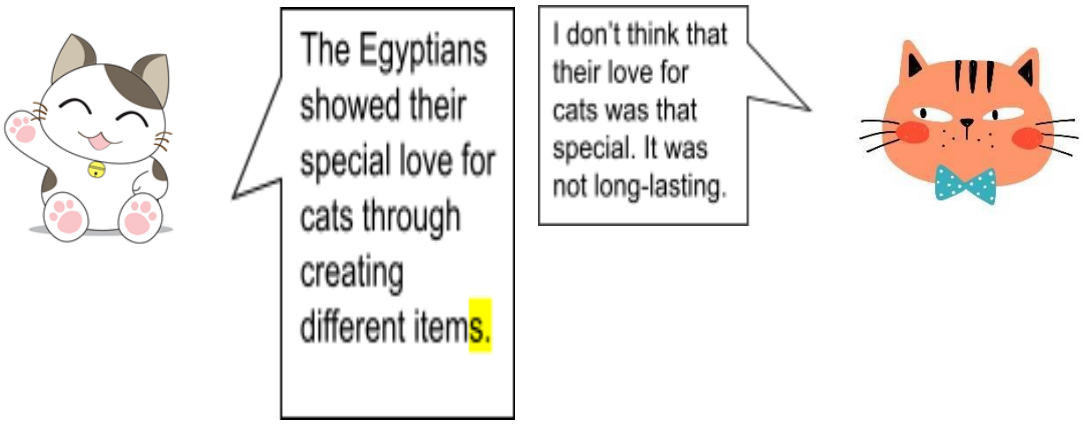
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Accepted: inseparable, never change (negative form = less desirable)

Dictionary definition of 'fixture': 'things fixed in a house' (e.g. your toilet bowl or sink)

Reject:
- exalted/high – not directly linked to meaning of 'fixture'
- essential/ important/ irreplaceable – one unnecessary inference away from the correct (direct) answer
- stable - not a literal answer

17 Here is part of a conversation between two friends, Neko and Mau, who have read the article.



Neko **Mau**

(a) Give one piece of evidence from Paragraph 1 to support Neko's view.

- **Lavish tomb paintings,**
- **lofty statues,**
- **intricate jewellery**

all show the Egyptians' great fondness for cats.

At least 2 items for [1]

Reject
- all other answers in Paragraph 1 as they don't convey 'different items'
- … created for cats → the cats were not the recipients!

(b) With reference to Paragraph 2, give one reason which supports Mau's opinion.

With the arrival of Christianity, the cat lost her (preeminent) position. [1]

Accept: reasonable phrasing of 'the cat lost her position', for eg. no longer revered, no longer love the cat

Note: must be phrased properly, not simply copied with the wrong emphasis.

Reject: 'Only with the arrival of Christianity…' □ changes the focus of the sentence to how strong the ancient Egyptians' love for cats was

Additional explanation for different meaning caused by including 'Only':

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- **'Only with the arrival of the ambulance did she stop administrating CPR.'** □ she didn't stop until the last minute □ focus on her sustained effort/ perseverance.
- vs. **'With the arrival of the ambulance, she stopped administrating CPR.'** □ when the ambulance arrived, she stopped □ focus on how practical-minded she was.

18 With reference to Paragraph 2, give **one** piece of evidence which shows that cats maintained their exalted position for centuries.

Regime changes did not diminish the feline's position /
People in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt continued to revere the cat. [1]

Reject:
- 'For centuries, cats in ancient Egypt maintained their exalted position' □ just a restating of the question, not a piece of evidence
- People from 305 BCE to 30 BCE loved the cat. (referring to everyone on earth)

19 With reference to Paragraph 3, give **one** benefit that the Nile River brought to ancient Egypt.

It brought arable land. [1]

Accept: 'arable land (main idea) **and, THUS, food surpluses** (post-modifier)

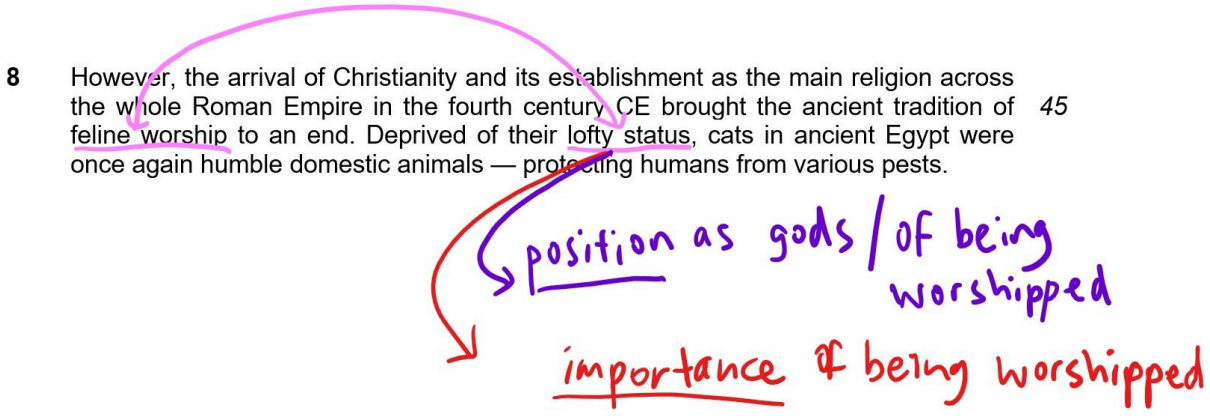
Reject:
- arable land and food surpluses □ question is asking for only 1 benefit – which is mainly 'arable land'
- food surpluses (only) □ food surplus is caused by arable land, not the River Nile
- 'flooding' □ not a benefit unless explained as 'arable land'
- fertile → too strong. 'Arable' just means suitable for farming

20 What does 'lofty status' (line 46) refer to?

It refers to their position as gods/ objects of worship. [1]

Accept: divine / sacred / them being worshipped (inherent meaning of 'position' of being worshipped)

Target passage's phrase: 'feline worship' (line 46)



Note: Answer needs to refer to either position of importance

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Reject:

- any synonym of 'exalted' status. This is a 'refer to' question, not asking for meaning of the phrase.
- revered → =/= divine, just 'admire/respect very much'
- feline worship' → is just the name of the phenomenon, focussed on neither 'position' nor 'importance'
- _____ status → cannot repeat quote's word as answer
- _____ reputation → is people's opinion of you, not actually a 'position' you hold

21 Why does the writer refer to 'countless memes, Instagram photos, and YouTube videos' (line 52) in Paragraph 9?

The writer wanted to emphasise/ show *(any other suitable verb that signals writer's intent)* **the (wide) extent / scope / variety / range of the cat's influence/presence on the internet. [1]**

Accept: widespread influence

Note: 'memes, photos, videos' are 3 **very different** mediums hosted on **very different** internet platforms. Therefore the writer's emphasis is on the scope/extent of cats' influence on the internet.

Reject:

- "The writer wants to show that cats have taken over the internet" → vague
- any figurative answers e.g. → 'taken control of the internet'
- show the importance/ significance/ popularity - vague about the scope
- large influence → =/= wide variety

22 What does 'cousins' (line 53) refer to?

It refers to

- **catS /**
- **the cat's descendants/ relatives /** (*general cat*)
- **cats' descendants/ relatives.** (*plural cat*)

Any one [1]

Accept: modern cats

Reject:

- cats in Egypt / that have taken control of the internet - achievements of cats also include travelling to space and Antarctica
- domestic / domesticated cats
- punctuation mistakes for possessive

23 In Paragraph 9, the writer says '…but their modern cousins' achievements is something that they should definitely be proud of' (lines 53-54).

What is the writer's tone in these lines?

Words in passage that signal approval: ***should definitely be proud of***

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