

5. 'Significance' / 'Importance'

'Practical ability is just as important as intellectual skills.' How far is this true in your society? (2017)

How important is it for citizens to know about the history of their country? (EJC 2020)

'To be a good leader, character is more important than intelligence.' What is your view? (NJC 2020)

How important is it for young people to be involved in political activism? (ACJC 2020)

In a world dominated by superpowers, can small countries play a significant role on the global stage? (CJC 2019)

'Mental health is more important than physical health.' How far do you agree with this statement? (EJC 2019)

Given the competitiveness of international firms, how important is it to support local businesses in your country? (NJC 2019)

Results are more important than processes in scientific research. To what extent do you agree? (NYJC 2019)

Do you agree that it is important to know a foreign language today? (NYJC 2019)

How important is it for young people in your society to retain a sense of tradition? (SAJC 2019)

How far is it important for people to be aware of epidemics in today's world? (YIJC TA1 2020)

Common Mistakes: Students tend to provide the benefits of the action (e.g. knowing a foreign language) or subject-matter (results, character, etc.) and argue that these benefits make the action/subject-matter important. However, they do not have clear reasons for why these benefits are significant/important.

How to show that a policy/measure is 'significant' or 'important'?

After stating the benefits of the action or subject-matter, please include one of the following in your elaboration:

1. Consider the speed and scale of the benefit to elaborate on its impact (social, economic, political, etc.)
2. Use context (of world, society, human condition/nature) to emphasise the impact – The psychological stress that arises from competition will only rear its ugly head repeatedly, given that the need for social recognition, according to psychologist Abraham Maslow, is an essential human need.

Example: How far is it important for people to be aware of epidemics in today's world?

It is important for people to be aware of epidemics in today's world as such an awareness enables them to better understand extreme measures taken by authorities (benefit) to contain the situation. Public buy-in and cooperation are essential for effective epidemic management (impact). Example: The Hong Kong government took extreme measures to contain the H1N1 outbreak in 2009. This includes the complete shut down and quarantine of an entire hotel. Schools were also closed early. The cooperation of the people in coping with these extreme measures made the efforts effective. It was reported in the 2010 National Center for Biotechnology Information that these efforts helped to delay local transmission by 40 days.

6. 'Relevance' / 'Place'

'For the majority of people, the Arts are irrelevant to their daily lives.' How true is this of your society? (2014)

To what extent are museums still relevant today? (TMJC 2020)

'Museums have no place in today's world.' Discuss. (ACJC 2020)

Do examinations still have a place in today's society? (NJC 2020)

Does university education still have a place today? (MI 2020)

'Race has no place in politics today.' How far do you agree? (RI 2020)

Does humility still have a place in society? (EJC 2019)

'There is no place for the death penalty today.' Comment. (RVHS 2019)

Discuss the view that traditional families have no place in the modern world. (YIJC Promos 2019)

To what extent is the knowledge of the past still relevant? (YIJC BE2 2020)

Common Trend: Students tend to focus on presenting the benefits of the subject-matter (e.g. examinations, museums, etc.) to argue that there is still a place for the subject-matter.

How to show that something is 'relevant' / 'has a place'?

Better essays would have elaborated on how the context calls for the existence of the subject-matter. Refer to the characteristics of the modern world/Singapore and explain how the benefits brought about by the subject-matter would be more impactful or important in the current context.

Example: To what extent is the knowledge of the past still relevant?

Given the easy access to information and how anyone can be a content creator today, information about the past can be misused by parties to confuse the public and gain attention, as a way to achieve their own agenda (context). As such, knowledge about what happened in the past is still relevant today.

Evidence: Donald Trump raised questions about ex-President Barack Obama's birthplace and birth certificate on Twitter and television shows, stating that an 'extremely credible source' had allegedly told him that Obama's birth certificate was a fraud. While this was later debunked after Obama's birth certificate from the Hawaii Department of Health was released, Trump's push for this conspiracy theory helped to solidify his connection to the largely white Republican case that was instrumental in his election victory. It is evident from this example that **false information about the past can be used to help one to smear the name of another in order to gain support or public attention (context)**. This further emphasises the need to verify the credibility and reliability of information about the past so as to prevent information from being abused and history from being distorted (benefit of being armed with a knowledge of the past).

Features of Singapore's Economy	Features of Singapore's Politics
• Adaptable • Advanced • Affluent • Open (attuned to global markets) • Competitive • Dependent on human capital • Focus on Research and Development	• Consensus-seeking • Democratic • Emphasis on diversity & common identity • Rules-based • Paternalistic • Stable • Transparent
Features of Singapore's Society	Features of Singaporeans
• 'Kiasu' Culture / Competitive • A migrant society with no national roots/history • Ageing • Conservative • Consumerist, materialistic • Fast-paced • Growing emphasis on the Arts • High standard of Living • Lacking in work-life balance • Low fertility rate • Meritocratic • Multi-racial • Possibly xenophobic but moving towards a more inclusive society • Pragmatic • Wired society • Working towards sustainable development	• Digital natives • Dual-income families • Elitist • Filial • Goal-oriented • Educated • Law-abiding • Materialistic • Practical • Self-entitled • 'Strawberry generation'/lack resilience • Technologically-savvy

Modern World Features

- Competitive society: goal to be better than the rest; to be part of the elites. Loss of compassion for humanity; stressful living environment.
- Fragmented world – a world split by differences and arguments
- Award driven/importance of credentials: Importance of a track record, help to secure deals, differentiate themselves and help government secure foreign direct investments.
- Capitalistic: Profit driven and materialistic. Exploitation and injustice of the developing countries.
- Global village – an increasingly progressive, liberal world. Greater interconnectedness that is brought about due to globalization.
- Belief in Human Rights: increasingly desire to lead the way of life like we want it
- Disruptive Technologies, Big Data, Internet of Things
- Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous

