
Analysis of Answers for GP Paper 2 Practice (‘Perfectionism’)

1. The writer starts with a personal anecdote to serve as a hook to engage readers’ interest: **that by depicting** her own experience with perfectionism, it will highlight the ills of perfectionism and set the context for the rest of the passage.

**Useful points to take note of:*

2. The phrase tells us that perfectionists are uncompromising in their pursuit of perfectionist objectives. **This also highlights that** the nature of perfectionism is detrimental as it causes excessive anguish to perfectionists who are trapped in a cycle of self-blame.

**Useful points to take note of:*

3. The writer uses brackets **to provide additional information** that perfectionists feel pressurised to improve themselves even in minor aspects of their lives, **thus reinforcing** the absurd extent that perfectionism has become.

**Useful points to take note of:*

4. (See Summary Question Exercise later)

5. The example of Steve Jobs supports the argument **by demonstrating that** we tend to view perfectionism as a positive work ethic when in reality it is not. **This is because** perfectionists like Jobs fixate on all aspects of a task to the point of being obsessive **and** such behaviour is ultimately meaningless and futile.

**Useful points to take note of:*

6. Firstly, the writer is **emphasizing** that some people believe that perfectionism leads to impressive outcomes, but she believes that it is inaccurate to think so. Secondly, she is **mocking** the people who think this way **by** deliberately exaggerating the flawed perspective.

**Useful points to take note of:*

7. The writer is implying that perfectionism is so pervasive in our society **to the extent that** there is no aspect of our lives where it does not influence.

**Useful points to take note of:*

8. The author means that contending to be at the top of the hierarchy is now the core attribute of every education institution, **similar to how** someone's genetic makeup determines his or her characteristics.

**Useful points to take note of:*

9. (a) *Social media users are demoralised* by seeing other users post flawless photographs of themselves which showcase their enviable lifestyles.

(b) The online behaviour of social media users perpetuates a vicious cycle of compulsive comparison and competition in repeated attempts to surpass the achievements of others. **This reinforces** the feelings of inadequacy within them **as** they are made to feel deficient in some way or another in comparison.

**Useful points to take note of:*

10. The author claims this because **it requires much effort** to persuade perfectionists to be less extreme as they ignore the fact that 'perfect', successful people had to overcome numerous challenges and undergo intense suffering to become who they are. **Additionally**, perfectionists are accustomed to denigrating their own achievements regardless of the significance as they are deluded by their stubbornness of being perfect which is unattainable in the real world.

**Useful points to take note of:*

4. Summary Question (ANSWERS)

#	<i>Points from the Passage</i>	<i>Paraphrased Points</i>
1	It has made us excessively demanding of ourselves and others. (l.20)	We become too / overly tough / insistent / exacting on high / unreasonable expectations / standards
2	perfectionism is a self-defeating way to navigate the world (l.21)	Perfectionists sabotage / thwart / foil their own aspirations / hopes / dreams / render their desired outcomes impossible
3	pursuit of perfection sows discord within our families as (l.24)	It also plants / spawns / generates tensions / arguments / disagreements with our kin / relatives / loved ones
4	it consumes our leisure hours and (l.24-5)	Perfectionism occupies all our spare / free time / idle hours We have no time for relaxation
5	squeezes the enjoyment out of all our activities. (l.25)	Perfectionism drains the fun / pleasure / satisfaction / gratification from all pursuits / experiences / endeavours
6	The thought of not succeeding distresses us so much that we develop a more exacting routine to cope. (l.26)	Fear of failure upsets / troubles / torments / disturbs us to the extent that we cultivate / acquire / take on a more punishing pattern / regime / we make further gruelling / harsher demands on ourselves
7	In fact, this behaviour becomes so ingrained that it degenerates into an addiction. (l.26-7)	This action / conduct becomes entrenched / deep-seated and worsens / deteriorates into an healthy / dangerous compulsion / obsession
8	Multiple studies have also found a correlation between perfectionism and performance anxiety. (l.28)	There is a connection / association / link / relationship between the inability to execute a task under pressure and perfectionism
9	In sports, perfectionist athletes tend to deliver second-rate performances regardless of their talent (l.29)	Perfectionistic sportsmen put up average / mediocre / lacklustre showings / presentations
10	When such athletes equate performance to self-worth, they do not just feel disappointed when they fail to meet their sporting goals (l.30-1)	They regard their results / showings/ presentations as a measure of their personal value / self-esteem and when they are unable to achieve their objectives / targets / aspirations, they are demoralized / disheartened / discouraged
11	they are mortified (l.31)	to the point that they feel ashamed / humiliated / feel they have let themselves down
12	Their pursuit of perfection traps them in a repeated pattern of self-induced setbacks, (l.31-2)	and are locked / caught / ensnared in a vicious cycle / recurring sequence / loop

13	disproportionate expectations and (l.32)	of unattainable / unrealistic hopes / aspirations
14	inordinately rigorous training regimes (l.32)	and excessive / undue / unwarranted / gruelling/ exhausting routines / schedules / practices
15	Their critical inner voice that chides them to be "swiftest, highest and strongest" always leaves a bitter sense of dissatisfaction and (l.33-4)	Perfectionists relentlessly berate / scold / find fault with themselves for not being the best which invariably results in feelings of discontentment / disgruntlement
16	inadequacy, even in times of victory (l.34)	and incompetence despite their successes / triumphs / achievements
17	...ignores achievements as long as they fall short of perfection (l.37-8) <u>Or</u> when success is not as instant nor as tangible as they wish (l.40-1)	Perfectionists overlook / disregard their accomplishments if they are not flawless / impeccably executed <u>Or</u> when their accomplishments are not as immediate nor substantial as hoped
18	Perfectionists are adroit at stirring a squall into a snowstorm and whipping a brief ill wind into a category-five hurricane (l.38-9)	They are adept at over-reacting / exaggerating the depth / level / magnitude of difficulty / hardship / suffering they face
19	Inept at handling failures, they boil with self- rage (l.40) <u>Or</u> which can then spiral into constant self- recrimination (l.43)	They are poor at tackling / dealing with disappointments / flops and become consumed with / seethe in / overcome by anger / fury <u>Or</u> escalates / degenerates / worsens into incessant / unending self-blame / self-reproach
20	or slump into melancholic despair (l.40) <u>Or</u> They might even develop depressive symptoms over perceived failures (l.43) <u>Or</u> a total depreciation of self-worth (l.44)	or lapse into / give in to gloom / wallow in hopelessness / depression / despondency <u>Or</u> result in psychiatric / mental / psychological disorders / problems <u>Or</u> and a complete / full destruction / obliteration of self-esteem / confidence / self-respect
21	To make matters worse, perfectionists are also unlikely to verbalise their need for help as they cannot admit that they are less than perfect. (l.41-2)	They will not ask for assistance / support / aid as they cannot acknowledge their shortcomings / flaws / limitations