

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL



YEAR 9 (13+) SCHOLARSHIP for entry in September 2020

GENERAL PAPER

Your Name: _____

Your School: _____

Time allowed: 1 hour (including 10 - 20 minutes reading time)

Equipment needed: Pen, pencil, lined paper, eraser.

Information for candidates:

1. Write your name and school on this page.
2. Write your answers on the **separate paper** provided. Please put your name on all the sheets of paper you use.
3. There are two questions, answer both of them.

THE JOY OF **B**ORED**OM**

Boredom is good for you, a new study claims. Far from dulling the mind and leading to a lack of productivity, boredom can inspire people to seek out ways of being creative, altruistic, empathetic and to engage in sociable tasks.

"Bored people feel that their actions are meaningless and so they are motivated to engage in meaningful behaviour," said Wijnand van Tilburg, co-author of the paper, *Bored George Helps Others: A Pragmatic Meaning-Regulation Hypothesis on Boredom and Prosocial Behaviour*.

"Past research has associated boredom almost exclusively with aversive correlates, yet closer inspection suggests a much richer array of potential consequences that may well go beyond merely negative outcomes, such as prosocial behaviour."

People who are easily bored typically score highly on so-called "dispositional measures of sensation seeking". This may, says Van Tilburg, at least partially explain the positive relationship between proneness to boredom with aggression, anger, and hostility.

But when people feel meaningless, Van Tilburg found that they are more likely to engage in behaviour they believe will re-establish their sense of meaningfulness.

"Boredom can paradoxically be a very strong motivator for people to seek out unpleasant yet meaningful tasks, such as blood donations, against meaningless but pleasant behaviour," he said.

The paper has been welcomed by author Adrian Savage. "Being bored turns your mind inward and encourages reflection. When you're rushing about, there's no time to think. When you're bored, there's nothing else to do but think," he said.

"Boredom is nearly always essential to creativity. It isn't true that creativity is mostly sparked by having a specific problem to be solved. It's far more likely to arise because the person is bored with the way something has been done a thousand times before and wants to try something new," added Savage. "Boredom stimulates the search for better ways to things like nothing else does."

QUESTION 1

What do you think of the argument above? What do you think are the positives and negatives of being bored? When were you last bored, and what did you do?

QUESTION 2

Answer ONE of the following questions.

1. You wake up one morning and the Internet has stopped working worldwide. How does this affect your day, your week and your year?

2. Here is a joke: Q: Why don't you ever see hippos hiding in trees?
A: Because they're so good at it.

If you think it's funny, explain why you think it is.

If you don't, explain why it isn't.

Is there anything that all jokes have in common?

3. Your Head Teacher allows you either to add one rule to the School Rules or to take one away. What do you do?
4. Describe your favourite toy or game from when you were younger. What was it about that particular toy or game you liked? Do you still like it now? Do you think you will like it in ten years' time?