

1. The ancient region of Mesopotamia has fascinated, enthralled, and perplexed historians and scientists for thousands of years. Unlike the ancient empire of Greece, or even Egypt, it was not a united nation. ----. It is perhaps thanks to this variety that Mesopotamia gave birth to what we recognise as civilisation today. Mesopotamia was home to the first ever cities, writing took form there and the oldest wheeled vehicles in the world were found in Mesopotamian ruins. Animals were domesticated, humanity came on leaps and bounds in agriculture, innovative new tools were crafted, and swords were forged. Mesopotamians were the first people to study the night sky, track the Moon and declare that there were 60 minutes in an hour, and 60 seconds in a minute.

A) With its kings, taxes, and trade, it was a triumph of human's ability to conquer and thrive, and it set the blueprints for countless cities, countries and empires that followed

B)* Made up of a vast collection of varied cultures, city-states and beliefs, Mesopotamia was a land of multiple empires and diverse civilisations

C) In many ways they were ahead of their time, as women were regarded as individuals in their own right, free to own land, file for divorce and run businesses

D) The position of women in Mesopotamia was higher when compared to other societies

E) Ancient Greece was also pivotal for the development of Western culture and society

2. An artificial intelligence (AI) tool may help develop universal vaccines capable of combatting virus variants before they emerge. At the heart of every vaccine is an antigen – a small, safe molecule based on part of the pathogen, which triggers the protective immune response. However, most vaccine antigens are based on a single pathogen component such as the spike protein of the COVID SARS-CoV-2 virus, which curbs their effectiveness and ability to cope with new variants.----. The distinct vaccine design algorithm offers hope with its wider scope. This system draws on genomic, epidemiological, immunological, clinical and evolutionary data to create blueprints for antigens capable of responding to a particular pathogen in its current form as well as likely variants that may arise in the future.

A) The COVID pandemic has reminded us that infectious diseases aren't going anywhere, so we urgently need to develop a system and the next generation of vaccines to help protect us all followed

B)* Scientists have developed a new vaccine and a remarkable algorithm-based system capable of creating antigens containing all the parts of the pathogen

C) There is a drawback to many vaccines that hampers stimulation of immune response against new variants

D) The newly developed system makes use of various relevant inputs apart from behavioural medicine

E) Each and every vaccine includes an antigen, a small molecule and their antigens are subject to only one pathogen component

3. The Beatles phenomenon was born of affluence and optimism, a product of the buoyant economic growth and booming teenage markets in the early 1960s. It was fitting, then, that the band broke up at the moment the economic and political skies were darkening. In retrospect, the Beatles were probably doomed as early as 1968, when the four members began to quarrel about musical and business issues. Both Lennon and Harrison were keen to try new individual ventures and by early 1969 the former's new wife, Yoko Ono, was proving to be a destabilising influence. By that autumn, the band was effectively dead. ----. Today it is often said that the dissolution of the Beatles was the moment the sixties ended. Certainly, as the seventies dawned, their sound – daring, confident, youthful, experimental – appeared the product of a bygone era. Within just a few years, economic growth would come grinding to a halt, with oil shock pushing the western world into recession.

- A) So, if the Beatles had stayed together, perhaps they would have struggled to find a place in the uneasy world of the 1970s
- B) Therefore, theirs was the music of youth and hope, a reminder of a vanished age of utopian idealism
- C) However, in Britain, public life took on a harsher edge, typified by strikes, inflation, terrorist atrocities and political breakdown
- D)* But it was not until the following April, when Paul McCartney issued a statement that he had no plans to work with the Beatles again, that they formally broke up
- E) They also tried to alleviate tensions within the band and improve the quality of their live sound, but their fame and success started losing the market share to their foreign competitors

2. Within the turbulent past few years, the idea that a person can be “cancelled” - in other words, culturally blocked from having a prominent public platform or career - has become a polarizing topic of debate. The rise of “cancel culture” and the idea of cancelling someone coincides with another familiar pattern in fact. A celebrity or public figure does or says something offensive. ----. Then come the calls to cancel the person - that is, to effectively end their career or revoke their cultural cachet, whether through boycotts of their work or disciplinary action from an employer. To many people, this process of publicly calling for accountability, and boycotting if nothing else seems to work, has become an important tool of social justice - a way of combatting, through collective action. On the flip side of the coin, some pundits have increasingly embraced the argument that cancel culture, rather than being a way of speaking truth to power, has spun out of control and become a senseless form of social media mob rule.

- A) Nothing happens as the comments written under fake internet personas are never taken seriously
- B) Some have proclivity for violence and cruelty, especially when their views are challenged.
- C) They also believe destroying a person's career or reputation is an effective way to combat social inequalities.
- D) According to them, it is a movement to remove celebrity status or esteem from a person based on offensive behaviour or transgression

E)* A public reaction or backlash, often fuelled by politically progressive social media, ensues