

Section II    Question II    c)

c) Here I am, sitting at my desk. Books open, Papers everywhere. What am I doing? Studying for the dreaded HSC. Every now and then I have flashbacks of what life used to be before year 12 started. ~~Parties~~ <sup>Parties</sup>. Movies. Going out with friends... Those were the good ~~at~~ old days. Well, no time for that now. It's time to get serious and study. These exams are going to determine the rest of our lives. 12 years of study and hard work all come down to just seven or so exams so I better do well. I have high expectations to live up to. My parents want me to be a lawyer. My grandma wants me to be a doctor. The school expects me to make them proud and all my friends think I'll get close to 100%. But they don't know how much work it takes to be the best. They don't know how much stress all this pressure can have on some body. It's not easy to be the best. It takes a lot of hard work. I have to... What am I doing? I'm talking to myself. Come on Richard. Concentrate. Study. A transaction processing

system (TPS) collects, stores, modifies and retrieves the transactions of an organisation. A transaction is... A transaction is... Damn! Why can't I remember? I need a break. Maybe some fresh air will clear my mind.

~~I get up from my desk~~

I get up from my desk leaving all my papers behind. I go outside and start pacing around my backyard trying to calm down and relax but all I can think about is definitions and formulae. I don't know how I'll get through this. There's just too much ~~sitting~~ at stake on only a few exams. What if I get sick? What if I get the cold? Or an allergy? What if my alarm doesn't go off tomorrow morning or what if I miss my bus? ~~later~~

I have to calm down. Come on. Relax. I'm sure it will be fine. I guess I better go back to study.

A transaction is... I know! A transaction is an event that generates or modifies data that is eventually stored in an information system. Yes!

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One week later - Third HSC exam. IPT.

The main objective of normalisation is to reduce data redundancy. That was easy. I thought it would be much harder than this. I am almost dissapointed.

I mean, after all that study and I get questions like these? I guess the HSC is not so bad after all.

Its just another exam like the hundreds we did so far. And to think I was so stressed and so worried. The exams will soon be over and then I can have my life back. But then again, I guess this is part of life and everybody has to do it so I don't need my life back. I already have it. And its a good life too... I'm drifting again. Come on. Concentrate.

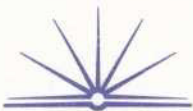
It would be a shame to spoil it now. ~~Next~~ Next question. What's a transaction processing ~~system~~ system?

Easy! A transaction...

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Two years later.

Here I am. Sitting at my desk. Books open. Papers every where. What am I doing? Studying for the



end of year exams at university. The HSC passed and yes, I did do ~~g~~ well. I made everyone proud. I'm not doing medicine or law. I have decided to do what I want so I chose software Engineering. It is challenging and there are lots of exams but am I worried? No, because that's life. There are so many exams now that it's like doing the HSC twice every year but nobody stresses anymore. Not even me. What I said before about the HSC determining your life? Well that's wrong. After ~~I~~ I finished it I realised how insignificant it was. It doesn't mean much at ~~all~~ all. Life goes on and people move on too. There are so many choices to make and so many paths you can take. ~~Hopefully you~~ Those of you who were in year 10 and are reading this now when I left are preparing to sit for your HSC. Try hard and do your best but don't get stressed. No matter what happens life goes on. ~~I wasn't this~~ I have changed a lot since I was in your shoes. I hope you do too.