

2022 Topics and Questions

THE 36TH JOE BERRY AWARD



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How to choose a topic

NEW FOR 2022 – OPTIONAL TOPIC QUESTIONS

2022 Topic and Question ‘changes’

This year the rules for submitting a Joe Berry Award essay have changed a little. Those changes are:-

- ▶ The Word-count has been dropped to a maximum for the whole document of 2000 words.
- ▶ The Topics allow you to choose the direction you would like to take by providing 3 question-options for each topic, A, B and C.
- ▶ There is a “Freestyle Question” option where you can devise your own question and direction.
- ▶ A WORD template is provided for your essay which you will need to use for your submission. The template also provides a guide to layout and spacing of your essay.

Step 1: choose your topic

- ▶ There are four (4) Topic selection from which you can choose your preferred essay question.
- ▶ These Three Topics:
 1. Supply Chain Automation or
 2. Sustainability and Accountability or
 3. Importance of Data

Each has three optional (3) Questions – you select only one question for your essay.
- ▶ The Fourth Topic is Freestyle – you choose the retail related Question that appeals to you.

Topic #1 – supply chain automation

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- ▶ The combination of COVID-19 disruptions and the accelerating growth of eCommerce has amplified the focus on supply chains. Major retailers are looking at robotic automation to help lower supply chain costs. Suppliers are re-designing their manufacturing processes to improve reliability and lower their production costs. Stores are being remodelled to meet supply innovations.

Q1-A Automation of online fulfillment: Retailers globally are searching for the most effective online fulfillment models. Some are embracing larger, fully automated, customer fulfillment-centres, others are more focused on proximity to the end shopper. What are the merits of the various fulfillment models used in online retailing globally and which are likely to be the most effective in Australia?

Q1-B Supply chain security: COVID-19 has increased the strain on supply chains locally and globally. How should suppliers and retailers rethink their supply chains to maintain efficiency while ensuring they have continuity of supply? Can automation of production provide a superior outcome in creating supply chain security? Does automation improve transactions on the shop floor?

Q1-C Supply chain automation in distribution centres: Coles and Woolworths are embarking on a major capital investment program to automate their distribution centres over the next three years. This will reduce the cost per-case in handling goods but will also have a ripple effect across the entire industry. What are the benefits and risk associated with DC automation for Australian suppliers and retailers?

RULES: Select only one of the above questions, A, B, or C, for your essay & research.

- Use the provided essay template as a guide and for submitting your work.
- Keep your writing to the 2000-word limit and be punchy and precise, lets hear your opinion.
- These questions can relate to any part of the retail industry.

Topic # 2 – sustainability and Accountability

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- ▶ Sustainability in the Retail Industry is a topic that has rightly gained momentum in recent years. Our industry, in ways that are economically viable, is finding new methods through processes and systems to reduce pollution, conserve energy and resources and to protect the needs of future generations. All areas of our industry, including consumers, play a role in contributing to this goal.

Q2-A The Retailer's Role in Sustainability Initiatives: There are so many avenues as an industry, to review our environmental impact. From supply chain to eCommerce delivery efficiency, food wastage, packaging, supplier interactions and impacts on running a store or warehouse such as power. What would you select as an aspect of retailing that, if adjusted, could have a significant impact on our industry efforts to achieve sustainability? Outline how and why this should be changed.

Q2-B Suppliers Reducing Their Environmental Footprint: Manufacturing a product with the least impact on the environment is the focus of our supplier community. There are many aspects that suppliers can take into account here to reduce this footprint, from packaging in sustainable materials, to more efficient factory processes, reducing transportation requirements and supporting local communities are a few areas to consider. Choose an area that our supplier community should focus on to have the most impact. How should they go about these changes? Give examples of the impacts this would have and indicate how it is both sustainable and economically viable to do so.

Q2-C The Long-lasting Impacts from COVID-19: There is no doubt that the last 18-months has changed how we work, live and interact as a community. Many changes have benefited us environmentally. As businesses assess how they will operate into the future, reductions in business travel and general commuting to work are obvious changes. What aspects do you think will permanently change and where do you think businesses should be focusing? What are the counter arguments to this evolution that businesses need to consider to retain culture and growth of employees, while reaping the sustainability rewards?

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Topic # 3 – the importance of data

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- ▶ Our industry is living in an age of seemingly unlimited data and information. Data covering all aspects of retail, shopper insights, sales information, supply chain, stock levels, inventory management etc. The list at times feels endless. Harnessing the power of this data though will be critical to success. Technology and intelligent analytics to fuel decision making by distilling the data into insight will lead to successes and efficiency moving forward. Ensuring our personnel are equipped for this and our processes and systems ready to adapt to this evolving world will also be crucial.

Q3-A Data and Customer Loyalty: What is the biggest impact that data and analytics can play in driving retailer success in retaining customers and driving sales? With the evolution of omni shopping, to drive success for both manufacturers and retailers, how do we use data to understand customers and where and why they shop?

Q3-B Using Data for Better Supply Chains: Supply challenges experienced through COVID-19 highlighted the need to think differently about our manufacturing, protection for production and how we plan for the future. Thinking about future proofing our supply, how can data analytics improve our production to meet the needs of consumers into the future? How can retailers work more effectively with supplier partners to drive successful outcomes for both parties through the use of this data?

Q3-C Attracting Talent to Harness Data: The explosion in data and broad-based usage across the industry has introduced new skills required in the industry. How do we support the industry to attract, retain, train and grow talent to ensure we can use data and information to its maximum power for whole industry? On what areas we should focus, what are our deficiencies in skills and where are we capitalizing well in talent/data management?

RULES: **Select only one** of the above questions, A, B, or C, for your essay & research.

- These questions can relate to any part of the retail industry.
- Use the provided essay template as a guide and for submitting your work.
- Keep your writing to the 2000-word limit and be punchy and precise, let us hear your opinion.

Topic # 4 – freestyle – your choice of question

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- ▶ When a choice from the first three topic selections is not where your passions lie, we still want to know what your opinion.
- ▶ For the first time in the Joe Berry Award history, you can devise your own Topic-Question, as long as it is not the same or similar to the questions posed in Topics 1-3.

Q4 What I Want for the Retail Industry: Create a question about the industry that is of great interest to you. Highlight the section of the industry that it will affect the most and present your findings and conclusions.

Keep your question simple so that you can write with a focus on the value of the question and the value of the opinions that you raise in your essay. Make sure that you can bring your chosen question to an impactful conclusion.

- ▶ (As you will need to introduce your question to the judging panel you will be allowed an extra 40-words for this purpose. (I.e. Topic-4 2040 words max.)

RULES: Select only one questions for your essay & research.

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The Berry on the Cake!