



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

8693/13

Paper 1 Passages for Comment

October/November 2010

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.



This document consists of **7** printed pages and **1** blank page.



Answer two questions.

- 1 The passage below describes the writer's exploration of the wreck of a ship called *The Moldavia*.
- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) Continue the account (between 120-150 words), basing it closely on the language and style of the original passage. [10]

This was it, my first deep dive... And not just any waters, oh no, this was doing it proper. This was the English Channel with big ships, potentially dreadful viz¹ and strong currents. This was a dive that required major technical support, a dive that would use and need all the knowledge and experience that I had built up, one that had been carefully planned. Richard and I had been practising this type of dive for this very trip but this was the real thing and potentially very different from diving in a quarry. Oh, and we were a long way from land – a very long way. 5

I was standing fully kitted and anxious on the dive platform of the dive boat *Voyager*, next to Richard Lockett, above some reasonably calm but slightly broody looking waters. We waited for the marker buoys.² They appeared quickly and this was followed by the shout of 'STAND BY' from the skipper. This was it: we were ready to go. This was the moment for which we had travelled two hours from shore in a very slightly lumpy sea (which should have been very, very lumpy if the forecasted hurricane had decided to come our way). 'GO' came the shout and we were in. What a relief that moment is when you hit the cooling water with it taking the weight of the heavy twin tanks on my back and stage cylinder slung on my left hand side. 10 15

Aaaahh, lovely. Just lovely. But, there is no time to linger, there is a wreck at the bottom of that line and we are eager to get to it. Quickly we give the signals to descend, let out the air from the drysuits and down we go. On the way we clip a tag with our names on it to a line – we will pick this up on our ascent and it acts as a signal that we have ascended. If ours is the last tag remaining then we take it and release the line. I've read about this system many times but never actually used it. It all adds to the newness and the excitement. 20

Tag done we continue our descent. The light fades as we go but our eyes adjust and then there it is, the wreck appears below us and it is huge – bigger than anything I've seen in British waters – and the amazing thing is, I can see it; for miles in fact. The viz here really is very good with at least 10m. *The Moldavia* lies on her side and we hit the uppermost starboard side at about 32m. The previous pair of divers has reeled out a distance line from an exposed metal rib and, being a luminous yellow, it is very easy to spot, all the way down to the bed in fact – the viz really is good. 25 30

A quick OK at this point (if not we can stay at this depth) with a self check as a monitor for any narcosis³ and we are over the drop and descending to our maximum depth. From here you can see into the wreck and we decide to swim along just chilling out. Using my extensive wreck diving skills I manage to identify a couple of capstans,⁴ which doesn't really impress Richard, and I also spot metal, lots and lots of metal but hey, I'm a fish freak, it's all the same to me. I do feel a little fuzzy from narcosis at this point but I relax, breathing steadily in and out and the feeling quickly passes, I'm now very ready to rock. At some point Richard spots one of the six-inch guns facing the sea bed and spends a little time looking at it – I don't recall this, I must have been otherwise engaged. In my defence it was apparently well camouflaged from all the encrustation and after all, it was metal. 35 40

As for wildlife, we see lots of fish – bib and pollack – gently swimming over the wreck and everywhere you look. And they look back at you. These aren't the slowly cautious then confident specimens I've seen elsewhere – these guys just stare back at you, a little disconcerting really...

45

We make our ascent making deep stops as we go. The line suddenly becomes very busy and, with the bubbles coming up from divers below us, it becomes very difficult to see what the hell is going on...

¹ *viz*: visibility (a diver's word)

² *marker buoys*: floating globes to show the position of the wreck

³ *narcosis*: dangerous build-up of gases in the blood

⁴ *capstans*: equipment for winding ships' cables

2 The passage below describes a boy and his imagination.

- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) The boy's mother, concerned about her son's behaviour and state of mind, writes to a friend expressing her thoughts and feelings. Write the opening (between 120-150 words) of the letter, basing it closely on the material of the original passage. [10]

He sat with a blank look on his face, pale and black and green against the vivid paper cover, blasting *Action!* and *Adventure!* and sometimes *Terror!* or *Romance!* into the atmosphere in lurid red or blue or sharp yellow lettering. He sat still. Very still. Occasionally he would turn a page, with an almost undetectable move of the thumb. He was that way for a long time, breaking his trance every once in a while quickly to exchange the comic in hand for one in the bag. He was never without an open comic book for long, dropping the used issues on the ground, where they lay swollen with vibrance on the icy concrete. 5

The daylight was dimmer when he looked up into the real world again and he blinked and shook his head quickly, like one newly awakened, shaking sleep from his mind. He rose slowly, painfully, like an arthritic. He gathered up his books and walked back past the bars, then across the tracks past the Circle K store and down the road. He passed a Chinese restaurant, its parking lot filling up for evening business. A group of young people hung around in front of it, getting out of their cars, not much older than he was. They were typical Baton Rouge youth: grinning young men in baseball caps with broad shoulders and cheeks and close-cropped hair. One had his arm around a girl with a painted face and a beautiful scraping false giggle. The boy stopped to watch them in the twilight, hiding himself in the pool of shadow by the side of the building. They shouted good-natured insults at each other in the cold, and went inside. They looked like angels. The boy walked on. 10 15 20

It was almost dark when he got to the hobby shop. It was dark when he came back out of it, carrying a plastic bag with model paints and glue.

He passed the Chinese restaurant again; the evening rush was in full swing. He took his headphones off.

The light was bright and gold through the glass door, and he shaded his face with an arm as he walked by, squinted under it as he passed. God, it looked warm. 25

It was warm, and busy. Had he walked inside he would have heard the low rumble of a thousand conversations, blending till no one word was intelligible. The sounds of people laughing, of small talk and ordering, the sounds of men telling women how beautiful their eyes were, of women telling women how all men were scum, of people complaining about the cold, of people complaining about the food, of people, people, people would all run together into a wonderful life-hum, sweet like night crickets and the rustle of leaves in the wind of summer, sweet like a woman's sigh or the warm beat of her heart. But he passed by the door in the cold and back into the dark, hearing only the wind. There was no sense in warming up if he only had to face the cold again on the way home. 30 35

He put the earphones back on; walked more quickly back past the Circle K and over the railroad tracks, through the leaf-mud on the side of River Road. The levee came into view, separating the dark road from the Mississippi river. He hurried past the entrance to a subdivision and past houses and houses, past people eating dinner behind lit windows. He took three turns (a right and two lefts) and then stopped at one of the houses. He didn't go in. He walked around the back. 40

The car-port light was on. A bicycle, more rust than dull, chipped red, sat against a moss-covered wall. It hadn't been used for months. The moss had frozen to death. He passed through it, stopped when he got to a sliding glass door in the wall. The curtains were down. He opened it and stepped into blackness. 45

He placed his purchases on the floor beside him, keeping his feet planted firmly in place as if there were things on the ground he would rather not upset. He felt the wall for a switch. Then he spoke.

He cried, "Let There Be Light!" 50

And there was.

And it shone down upon a city and countryside in miniature, a model landscape of houses and green trees spread out on foam grass and dirt over three card tables, a desk and the tops of two dressers. The light was warm and golden, and revealed incredible microscopic detail in brilliant colour, down to a tiny orange Circle K sign in front of the convenience store, down to the painted wavelets of a brilliant blue river, down to a shining red bicycle parked outside a tiny Chinese restaurant. The light shone down from a ceiling painted bright, brilliant blue, the same color as his eyes. 55

3 In the following passage, the writer records her thoughts and feelings about celebrations she witnessed in Mumbai, India.

(a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]

(b) A tourist who is staying in the same hotel as the writer has not enjoyed the festival and writes a letter of complaint to the local newspaper. Basing your answer closely on the material of the original extract, write the opening section (between 120–150 words) of the letter. [10]

The entire city of Mumbai is under attack with the sound of thousands of fire crackers exploding. The repeated boom of the threepenny banger and the bang booms of thirty feet of unrolled penny bangers interspersed with the occasional threepenny banger, lays siege to the city. It is the Diwali festival and the air is acrid with the smoke from tons of fireworks. 5

A nine-year-old girl in her sparkly Diwali costume walks onto a major road, and bends down to light a big bomberooney¹. All cars, motorcycles and the rest screech to a halt until the boom subsides. NOBODY expresses any anger about being stopped, bombed, blasted or nearly blinded by the fireworks. Traffic veers through the smoke and around the exploding fireballs. Families on scooters cover their noses with scarves and tear through. They veer around the explosions, rogue firecrackers lying in wait to explode under whatever or whomever crosses their path. I am on the third floor of a hotel building and cannot hear the television in my room. The war of good over evil is in full swing. 10

With names like Butterflies, Chut phut, crackling stars, Red force fire cracker, Delux chakree and Silver chip, hundreds of rupees are going up in smoke. During Diwali, the local newspaper prints a rate card of going prices in the fireworks market elevating them to commodity status along with gold and grain. These crackers make the Chinese celebration crackers sound like wind from vegetarian twins. 15

The big boy bomberoones are set in place and detonated by gangs of young men. Young women get in on the act but tend to deal more with the flowering type of firework and shun the banality of the 'one boom and you are gone' type. The 'Graphics' firework actually costs around 3000 rupees, and promises such as painting the sky in fire with the likeness of a gazelle are usually baseless. Nobody complains. The '180 and 200 shots' firework delivers around the said amount of burst. 20

Donations from the community fund the purchase of crackers and the more financial communities will find no sleep tonight. Neither will I, I feel. Someone has lit an entire thirty foot length of crackers out the back. The whole roll runs its explosive dominoes under a parked car. A couple of young lads have just lit a box the size of a small cooler in the middle of the road. The gathered young run for cover. Soon enough the box begins exploding comets into the sky, golden ones that whizz in a spiralling fashion into buildings; white lights that scream upwards and burst as white dwarf stars and others that flower out enough to cause two lanes of traffic to halt and wait. It takes a full minute or two for the box to discharge its magic of lights. I look back toward the hotel and the display of small oil-burning lamps around stick-on mandalas that had impressed me yesterday seem limp now. 25

There are laws. Nothing that appears to hold up in court. Yes, it is recommended that the explosions cease by 10pm but judging by last night's tossing and turning to the explosions at around 1am, I think rule number one is interpretive. Grown ups exhort their small children to keep off the road and let daddy light the dangerous cracker. I can see straight through daddy. He is back in shorts and the young boy is out! Those who are prone to asthma and have the money leave the city for the duration of Diwali. Five days of constant fireworks coat the humid city in a blanket of toxicity. Parties are on the go everywhere. On the famous Chowpatty beach, families are lighting the sky way past curfew. Police who have tried to enforce the curfew are dealt with by irate mothers and fathers. 30

At least Sunday is the quietest day of the year and I literally mean day because it is 6.30pm now and the sounds of big bomberoones and the wail of a siren blow the peace right off the street.

¹*bomberooney*: large, noisy firework

BLANK PAGE

Copyright Acknowledgements:

- Question 1 © Tim Ingmire; *Expedition with Deep Wreck Divers: Moldavia*; taken from: www.travel-dive.com; September 2008.
Question 2 © Joe Bowers; *If you Lived Here, You'd be Home By Now*; taken from: <http://fiction.eserver.org/short.if.html>.
Question 3 © Rhonda Ward; taken from: www.hackwriters.com/MumbaiRW.html; April 2007.

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

University of Cambridge International Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.