



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

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**8693/12**

Paper 1 Passages for Comment

**October/November 2011**

**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 following magazine article describes the experiences of a special search led by Marcelo dos Santos in the Amazon forest.

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

(b) Later the writer publishes another article which describes another unusual meeting in another remote part of the world. Write the opening of the article (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and language of the original extract. [10]

The rumor was a wild one, and it seized Marcelo dos Santos with the power of a primary myth.

*There's an Indian living in the woods around here, some local ranch hands were saying in 1996. He wears no clothes. Get near him, and he vanishes. He is utterly alone ...* 5

The rumor's trail led to a logging operation near a cattle ranch. Marcelo and Altair, careful to sneak past the boss, found the company cook.

"Yeah, I've seen him," the cook told them, "and I know where he lives. Do you want to see?"

Before they followed the cook to the sharply drawn border between pasture and forest, they had their doubts about the story. Couldn't the Indian have been a wandering member of the Akuntsu tribe, who also customarily wore no clothes? 10

Wasn't the idea of an essentially self-sufficient man living in unbroken communion with nature practically impossible now, more than five hundred years after conquistadors,\* prospectors, slavers, missionaries, rubber tappers and scientists started penetrating the Amazon's depths? 15

But when they stepped into the forest with the cook, they walked straight into an epic quest that would obsess, delight and terrify them for more than a decade. It would send them dodging arrows and would incite pitched battles with landowners that would upend lives forever. They would become detectives, piecing together the clues of a murder case that would ultimately offer them a glimpse of fathomless solitude. 20

On the constricting edge of one of the last truly wild places on Earth, one man's unlikely existence would show them what true survival meant and would underscore the value of mystery in a world with little room left for the unknown.

Altair, clutching his rifle with one hand, twisted through a tangle of ferns. It was the peak of the dry season in 1998. They called this a rain forest, but it hadn't even sprinkled here in sixty days. Insects swirled within the streaming bars of light that penetrated the canopy of jatoba trees. A papery rustle accompanied each footstep as he hiked deeper into the forest. 25

Purá stiffened and motioned to the others – he'd heard something behind him. 30

"Quiet!" Marcelo whispered to the others.

They stood still and listened. Amid the ever-present chorus of bird song, they heard a rustling. The Indian was near the trap that they'd just discovered. They walked toward him, but he disappeared – it was as if he'd found a crack in the deep green curtain of foliage behind him and quietly slipped offstage. They spread out at random angles, until Altair saw something about 200 yards off the trail: a small thatch hut, the same kind that they had found hastily abandoned elsewhere in the forest. 35

This time, the Indian was inside. They approached very slowly.

"Hi, my friend," Altair said. There was no response, but, through a slight gap in the thatch, Altair could see the man's eyes. 40

"He's there," Altair said to the others, "standing inside the hut."

Vincent aimed his video camera as Altair inched closer. Something was

protruding through the thatch wall, twisting in place.

“Look,” Altair said. “An arrow inside.”

45

It was a fluted bamboo arrow, sharpened to a deadly point. Purá nervously decided to speak up: “Mampi no,” he said in the Kanoe tongue. *Don’t shoot*. The man didn’t react and continued to twist the arrow.

Altair again stepped slowly toward the hut, and he saw the Indian draw his bow. Altair slowly backed up, showing the man his palms, meaning no harm. The Indian lowered his bow. Altair, hands still up in the air, slowly took another step forward; the man drew his bow again. Altair got the message: the Indian was drawing an imaginary line in the dirt about ten feet around his hut, saying, *Keep your distance*.

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For nearly six hours, they maintained the standoff. They built a small fire, offered the Indian food and tools, gifts they thought might convince him that they were friendly.

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“Here, this axe is yours,” Altair said, tossing it toward the hut. “This water yam, too.”

The Indian eventually took the food that Altair dangled in front of the hut’s opening on the end of a long stick. Then he tore it to shreds and tossed it back outside, uneaten.

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At one point, Vincent moved a little closer with his camera to get a clear view of the Indian’s face through an opening in the hut’s wall of leaves. The Indian was looking beyond Altair, directly eyeing the camera.

“Watch out, Vincent!”

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An arrow whizzed past Altair toward Vincent, missing the cameraman’s chest by inches.

\**conquistadors*: Spanish invaders

2 The following passage was written by Queen Marie of Romania in 1923. In it she presents her thoughts and feelings about the First World War (1914–1918) in which Romania became involved.

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

(b) Later in her account, the Queen describes how peace was restored to her country. Write this section of her account (between 120–150 words), although you do not need to bring it to a conclusion. Base your answer closely on the style and language of the original extract. [10]

I look back and see visions of my country as for twenty-three years I have known it, peaceful, blooming, full of abundance, its vast plain an ocean of waving corn amongst which diligent peasants move to and fro gathering in the harvest, the land's dearest pride.

I see its humble villages hidden amongst fruit trees, I see the autumn splendour of its forests, I see the grand solitude of its mountain summits, I see its noble convents, corners of hidden beauty, treasures of ancient art, I hear the sound of the shepherd's horn, the sweet complaint of his ditties.\* 5

I see long roads with clouds of dust rising from them, many carts in a file. I see gaily clad peasants flocking to market. I see naked plains and long stretches of sand by the sea. 10

I also see our broad, proud river Danube rolling its many waters past quaint little villages and boroughs inhabited by motley crowds of different nationalities, past towns of which the rising industries are a promise of future wealth. I see our port of Constanza with its bustle, its noise and its hopes. 15

Then on August 27, 1916, the call to arms – War!

I see the ardent faces of my young soldiers going off gaily to battle – I see the trains leaving, the flowers that decorate the cannons, horses and men – I hear the tramping of passing regiments, shouts of enthusiasm, words of exultation.

I see the first wounded in the hospitals of Bucharest, white beds, many faces all turned towards me, eager hands helping; I inspect everything, go everywhere. I have my own hospital in our palace, I too am full of hope. 20

For a while, a very short while, the news received from our armies is good, awakes wild enthusiasm, awakes dreams of glory in many a breast. Then the first ill tidings, a shadow on the expectant faces – a shadow over the town in spite of the blue sky above! 25

After that there are still days of hope and confidence, days when the first illusions seem to take form once more, but through it all I have the strange presentiment that my country will have to drink to the dregs the bitterest of cups.

Airships and Zeppelins become a haunting dread by night and by day; our country being narrow, the ground is good for such cruel sport. Death is poured down from the skies into the streets, women and children are slaughtered without number, and as though in defiance of the laws of God, the days they choose for their death-raids are the days when heaven is bluest and the sun shines most brightly. 30

Having been designed by the enemy as principal culprit, it is the house out of town where I live with my children that they single out for special punishment, and on a glorious autumn morning they throw seventy-two bombs upon the dwelling and garden where it is known that my little ones are usually to be found. But on that day God did not wish another crime to be added to their lists! 35

Ever darker are the clouds gathering around our heads. With anxiety we look for the help that was promised us. Surely this proud little country must learn its lesson and be laid low in the dust. And as in the time of the great flood, our small, struggling country is threatened from all sides at once. 40

Our frontiers are endless. Without reinforcements our own resources are too small, we begin to realize the inevitable results if help does not come soon enough. 45

But my cup is not yet full – amidst all the turmoil and growing anxiety, my youngest child sickens and all our efforts cannot save his life. During three mortal weeks we struggle to keep him, but Death rules supreme over the world. It is not to be.

On All Souls' Day, my last born, my little Mircea, passes away – and the voice of the cannon sounds closer every day. 50

After that, for a while all becomes dark. I grope about as one who has lost her way. Only one thing remains to me, the intense desire to alleviate suffering around me, to go there where despair is greatest, to drown my own grief in the grief of others, to move in places where my own tears can be shed without shame.

So I begin wandering about in all parts of the country that have remained to us. 55  
On all sides I hear the dreaded voice of the cannon calling out its message of death and destruction.

I penetrate as far as they will allow me to go, I hunt up those freshly brought in from battle; as in a ghastly dream, I move from bed to bed.

\**ditties*: songs

3 The following passage describes the writer's experience of going fishing for salmon with his father in Canada.

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

(b) The local tourist board decides to publish a brochure to promote the area and the exciting opportunities it provides. Write the opening of the brochure (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

The river was what a river should be, wild and remote, cold and clear, forest and mountains rising from its banks. August but cool, the clouds shouldering in close, the Arctic not far away. Bears nearby, and moose, and wolf. Caribou and even wolverine and lynx. Creatures improbable, the salmon kin to them in size, monsters passing near us invisible for the light reflected on the surface. The feeling was of entering waters inhabited. We waded out carefully from the bank in our hip boots. The river not deep, which made the king salmon all the more improbable. 5

My father lived only for these moments, for entering wilderness. This was mystery to him, the world come alive. We didn't speak. It would have been sacrilege to speak. We moved carefully through the water, and he nodded when it was time for me to cast. Salmon roe cured and tied up in red netting, and a particular drift, a bouncing along the bottom. Cast high, let the bait bounce down along the deepest part of the river, hold it back, keep tension as it slipped below us, and on one of these casts into the void a tremendous pull on my line. I yanked back on the pole as I had been taught, set the hook, and then felt fear. The line sang out at an unbelievable pace, the rod bent over in a full bow, and I was being pulled away into the deeper water. 10 15

I was unable to speak, unable to call out for help. But I felt my father's hand then, on the back of my braces, claiming me, holding me back from the deeper current, and then I felt his other hand on the rod, helping to fight against the salmon. I heard his whoop that he let out only when the battle was on. It was the two of us now, against the fish. 20

Our lives, for the most part, do not become animate. But this thin line can connect us to the unseen, to the natural world as a force directly to contend with. Water is what suggests. We come to water, congregate all along its banks, because water is imagination. Anything is possible in the depths, in what is concealed beneath the surface. What might exist in the world, but also who we are, our life in dreams, our subconscious, our dooms and fate, our possibility. When we hook a monstrous fish and feel its terrible weight on the other end of that line, we communicate with what is most hidden in ourselves. And we communicate, also, with death, because this battle is about no less than that, the fish's death and a shadow of our own inevitable passing. 25 30

What makes this real, what makes it more than metaphor or hyperbole, is the length and scale of the battle. My father and I fought this king salmon together for no less than 45 minutes. This is what I hope you'll experience, far from crowds and boats and civilisation. That time is an immensity. There were many stages to the battle. Initial excitement and thrill and fear, then a deeper fear as the power of this fish became known, as I was pulled farther down the river. All the way around the far bend, and still the fish pulled hard enough that my feet were worthless. My heels would catch in rock and gravel underwater and then I was yanked forward again into water, weightless, helpless to stop, and I could feel my father digging in behind, but then he was pulled forward, also, both of us swimming, holding onto the pole, entering the one element. I really feared we might drown, and I also feared who this creature was, whether the line might suddenly slack and he might rush forward, invisible, and come to battle us directly. There was no separation. We were not in a boat or on the bank. I found myself whimpering, shaking, calling out for my father. The fight became grim. 35 40 45

When we hit shallower water again and were able to get our legs under us and keep the rod high, we still were pulled downstream. Soaked and shivering but not from the icy water, not from cold. We still hadn't seen him. We were so hyped up on adrenaline, we couldn't feel pain in our arms, but I know I was no longer doing much to hold the pole. My arms no more than stumps. Fatigue and thrill at the same time, and this went on for what felt like epochs. Splashing and stumbling over larger boulders and the fallen trunks of trees, other deadfall at the shore, my father worried about snags, about the fish getting the line wrapped around something. Don't let him skunk us,\* he told me. Keep the pressure on him. Keep the tip high. I was reeling in line, not much, but occasionally, with my father's help, gaining. Then the fish would run again, all the line gone.

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And then he leaped.

\**skunk us*: defeat us

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