

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE**  
**Joint Examination for the School Certificate**  
**and General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**                      **1115/2, 1120/2, 1123/2**  
**PAPER 2**    **1124/2, 1125/2**

**INSERT**

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER SESSION 2001**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

This insert contains the passage for comprehension.

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**This insert consists of 4 printed pages.**

(Laurens, the author of the following passage, describes how he and his companion, Tickie, set out through African territory, making for the coast. Their mission is to spy on criminals who have been illegally smuggling guns by sea into Africa.)

- 1 The first stage of our march lay through desolate and dangerous country called the Dead Land. No one lived there, for it was home to the tsetse fly, the murderous enemy of man and cattle alike. Too many bites from that insect and the fearful sleeping sickness was upon you. And beyond the Dead Land? Then came the blackness of the Great Forest, so thick and impenetrable, the locals said, that once inside it, blind fear took over and your heart beat quick and fast. 5
- 2 All that day we marched, swatting the sinister flies that attacked us, until at last the dying sun told us it was time to stop for the night. But it wasn't the tsetse fly that now assailed us. No sooner had we set up camp than the mosquitoes came at us in great swarms, thirsty for blood, and with a wild din. We crept under our mosquito nets, praying for some sort of a breeze to drive them away. 10
- 3 Next morning we set out, following the direction our map and compass dictated. Before long, the Great Forest loomed ahead. Immediately, we found our way hopelessly blocked, for the outskirts of the forest were defended by an intricate system of thorns of all kinds, so hooked and closely interlocked that no way could be found through it. In vain we tried to break into it with our knives and rifles, but each time the forest hurled us back. 15
- 4 'It's no good,' I said. 'Don't let's try any more. We've already wasted precious time.' I decided to take a chance and follow a different route along the side of the forest, trusting that we wouldn't find ourselves having to go a long way round. 20
- 5 Soon the track began to climb, until eventually, after about two hours, my ears picked up a sound I knew well.  
'Listen,' I said to Tickie. 'Listen carefully.'  
'What is it?' Tickie whispered.  
'You ought to know it,' I told him, 'for you've heard it often enough. It's the sea.' 25
- 6 I dropped my voice. 'From now on we must be very careful. This is the very place where the smugglers may be operating.' We walked stealthily on until we caught sight of a river below and a harbour close by. A ship lay at anchor. Stopping by a little clearing, I whispered to Tickie. 'Wait here, and keep under cover. I'm going on to see what's ahead.' I hadn't gone very far when I heard the confused murmur of people talking; I was dangerously near a camp of sorts. I crawled forward into the bush and sure enough soon spotted an open patch of ground, recently and deliberately prepared. Then in the distance a dozen men appeared, obviously coming from the direction of the sea below, and carrying long, heavy wooden boxes slung between their broad shoulders. There could be no doubt as to what the boxes contained. 30 35
- 7 I was just about to make my way back to Tickie when deep from the surrounding bush came the sound of rifle-fire. In an instant men in grey uniforms came running out of the camp, and disappeared in the direction of the gun-fire. *Tickie*, I thought. *Someone's found Tickie*. Sick with anxiety, I crawled quickly back to where I'd left him. But there was no sign of him. The clearing was empty. All around, the bushes were torn, and the ground deeply marked, as though heavy boots had thundered around it. They'd found him all right. Suddenly there came a soft whisper. 'Laurens, Laurens.' I looked round and there was Tickie, hidden in the bush like some veteran jungle fighter. He pointed towards bright red spots on the ground, like the newly-fallen leaves of some crimson flower. Nearby, slumped against a tree, lay a uniformed corpse. I looked at Tickie. His eyes were no longer those of a young man; he'd passed into a painful maturity in his perilous encounter with death. I'd no need to ask questions. 40 45

- 8 The man Tickie had killed was a sign of danger on a much larger scale, I knew only too well. If we could only avoid detection in the dark woods until nightfall, or until the rain came in the afternoon, we had a chance of getting away. We set about covering up traces of our brief presence in the clearing, although I realised that our only hope was for wind and rain; they alone could really wipe out our tracks. As soon as we'd finished, we crawled towards some low-growing thorn trees, and hid ourselves beneath their ground-sweeping branches. We lay so still and silent that the birds came and pecked unconcerned among ferns at our feet. Time dragged slowly by. Then I noticed that other birds were gathering in the tops of trees round about us. This was enough to make our nerves tingle. Instinct had made these little creatures retreat warily in our direction. We lay flat on our stomachs, our guns cocked and ready. 50
- 9 'Laurens!' Tickie whispered, soft and slow. 'People! Many people! On your side.' I looked round and there, just coming into view, were the same grey uniforms that I'd seen earlier. I uttered a heart-felt prayer for rain, and, as if in answer, a deep rumble of thunder rolled across the sky. But rain was still far off. 55
- 10 'Tickie,' I murmured, 'don't move or make one sound. We'll lie here until they find us – and they'll have to come close before they do so. We'll fire at and around them so fast that they'll be bewildered, and at that moment you and I will slip out of cover. If I'm killed or wounded I don't want you to linger with me. I count on you to get back with news of what we've discovered.' Even as I spoke, fresh evidence of the progress of our enemies was coming onto the scene. A little deer dived over a bush in front of me without a backward glance. Hard behind, another one bounded lightly after her. A sharp flash of lightning cut through the sky. Automatically I began counting the seconds between the flash and the first note of thunder. On the eleventh, a long roll of sound swept over us. That meant the thunder was about three kilometres away. I peered at the clouds, looking anxiously for the first blur of rain. 60
- 11 At that moment, a whistle went up from the bush beyond, loud and clear, and was swiftly answered by a series of crisp, urgent cries; the whole bush broke out into the sound of men crashing through it, without effort at disguise. I was certain they were on the final phase of their search. It seemed that Tickie and I had little chance of escape, unless the rain broke almost at once. I looked at the sky but the rain seemed no nearer than before. I put my hand in my pocket and laid another five rounds of ammunition on the soil in front of me. 65
- 12 Hardly had I done so when men came pouring past us, bounding over the smaller bushes as easily as well-trained athletes over hurdles, so close that I could hear their breathing and smell their acid sweat. Yet somehow they didn't see us because their eyes and ears were distracted by that sharp summons whistled from beyond. 70
- 13 A drop of rain hit a twig beside me, followed by another. I peered up, and saw that the dark clouds were now releasing their burden against a backdrop of crackling lightning and rolling thunder. I knew our immediate danger was over. At the same moment, I believe that our enemies, too, came to this conclusion. Commands began to ring out from the direction of their camp up ahead. Both of us lay there motionless until the noise of falling rain, the crackling of lightning and rumbling of thunder overwhelmed the shouts. Soon they began to fade into the distance. I turned round to face Tickie. 'Well, that's that, Tickie,' I said, trying to speak quite normally. 'We can get ready to go now.' 75

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