UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/31**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2010**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

2819810386

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: **Question 1 (Section 1)** and **one** question from **Section 2**.
Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

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.
All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

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

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Section 1: Directed Writing

1 Playing computer games is an enjoyable activity for many teenagers.

However, some parents and teachers are concerned by the amount of time spent on these games and by the hostile content and violence contained in some of the video games.

Mrs Catarina Calvet has written a personal reflection on the internet – a blog – outlining her worries about her own teenage children's 'unhealthy' interest in computer games.

Kofi, aged sixteen, has decided to respond to the blog, and gives his views on the subject.

Read what **CatCal** [Mrs Calvet's web name] and **KofiBreaks** [Kofi's web name] have to say in their blogs on the opposite page.

You are a journalist. Write an article on the subject of young people's interest in computer games.

In your article you should:

- discuss the positive and negative aspects of playing such games;
- persuade readers to take a balanced view towards the use of computer games.

Base what you write on the texts you have read.

You should write between $1^1/_2$ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 15 marks for the quality of your writing.

[25]

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CatCal

Tuesday, May 2010

Reply/Link

I have left my teenage son slumped in front of the television screen, a blinking lizard utterly motionless except for his hands which twitch and jerk as though he is desperately trying to knit a sweater before bedtime. Instead of such harmless activity, however, he is absorbed in murderous games on a grand scale. This bleeping, zapping, explosive carnage of 'baddies' dying, cars blown to pieces and blasted buildings trap him in a zombie gaze for hours. I want to pull the plug on these destructive devices. Video and computer games have stolen our children and made them addicted to the world of fantasy, demons and violent criminals.

There is a multi-million dollar industry capitalising on this addiction. The games created now – some so expensive that the money paid would feed a family of four for a week – are so realistic, the graphics so lifelike, that 'shooting' one of the characters is more like murder than the innocent games of cowboys our children used to play outside in the fresh air. Now, and I blame myself in many ways, children as young as seven are glued to their game consoles before and after school. It may be convenient for parents not to have to worry about where they are or if they are getting up to mischief, but they *should* be worrying about the extra weight their children are putting on as they only stop for chocolate bars before blowing up another villain on the screen. My daughter, in a separate room, is busy building a cyberspace life with an alternative family, friends and pets, whilst *our* family only meets briefly for meals.

What has happened to reading a good book, and using imagination rather than responding to ready-made images on a screen? These 'games' teach our youth nothing. I worry about our young people. I see a future where their hands are crippled with arthritis, their eyes permanently glazed, their minds saturated with violence, and chances of a good education are thrown away. I want to say 'Stop' – but is it too late?



KofiBreaks

Friday, May 2010

Reply/Link

Why all the doom and gloom, CatCal? It's time to join the twenty first century and realise that computer skills are an *essential* part of growing up in this technological world. Who do you rely on when you have a problem with your mobile phone or the internet or your computer? Your son and daughter, I bet. We young people are quick to acquire computer skills and these skills are essential for any job we may want to do in the future. We interact when we play on our consoles; it's not as simple as 'killing baddies' or sitting passively in front of the television as you do! Children have always played at 'cops and robbers' but computer games involve lots more. We learn how to problem solve, negotiate tactics, and while our fingers 'twitch' it means that our reactions are quicker, better and so jobs that require these skills will be easier for us.

There are so many different types of game too. What about the new 'virtual' pet games that you can give to younger children? These can give them a sense of responsibility and caring. There are other interactive games that give young people a taste of a career, such as a teacher or a doctor. Research has shown that at school more and more young people learn better via a computer, not because it's easier to 'play' but the opposite: it's more challenging. Why don't you try some of the group console games where a whole family can get fit together, play in a band, go skiing, or even try some Olympic sports in their own living room? Forget the TV couch potatoes of yesterday; the future is now. Embrace it, CatCal!

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Section 2: Composition

Write about 350–450 words on **one** of the following:

Argumentative/discursive writing

2 **(a)** Some people claim to have seen UFOs (unidentified flying objects) such as flying saucers. Do you believe it is possible for such things to exist? What might be the consequences for us if they do? [25]

OR

(b) Do you think criminals are treated too harshly or too leniently? [25]

Descriptive writing

3 **(a)** Describe a time and place (real or imaginary) when you felt so embarrassed that it still makes you uncomfortable to this day. Describe how you felt and how other people reacted. [25]

OR

(b) You are walking home alone when you notice signs of a storm gathering around you. Describe what happens and how you feel as you make your way to shelter. [25]

Narrative writing

4 **(a)** "Alex was someone who liked to live life 'on the edge' for too long, barely managing to survive. Now, in desperation, s(he) would do *anything*…". Use this quotation as the start of a story. [25]

OR

(b) Write a story in which fire plays an essential part. [25]

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