UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **May/June 2011**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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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 **all** questions.
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.

This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.

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Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2**.

Passage A

Climbing the Nose of El Capitan

Dean Potter is a famous rock climber whose speciality is speed. He often refuses to use any climbing equipment, relying only on his agility and lack of fear. This is Rob Buchanan's account of watching Dean and his partner O'Neill climb one of the most difficult mountain faces in America.

"Three, two, one, go!" Dean Potter punches a button on a plastic wristwatch looped around his climbing harness. His partner leaps at the rock before him, jamming freshly taped fingers into a slender crack. Above them, soaring into an azure sky, is the great, granite, curved wall of the most famous climb in Yosemite Valley (or indeed the world): the Nose of El Capitan. Climbers either fear or loathe it, but all of them respect anyone who has the ability to negotiate its incredibly difficult layout. After a gruelling vertical climb of over 2,000 feet, the rock face begins to curve out above the climbers – indeed like the underside of a large nose – and they must attempt to overcome this overhanging shelf in order to get to the top.

Potter often climbs without the benefit of ropes or protection, but on this late autumn day their goal is speed, so the two are carrying hardware. Still, by any sane standard, they're ridiculously under-equipped: no packs, no shirts, no food and no water. A single 200-foot length of rope between them, plus a handful of spring-loaded devices to be placed in cracks for protection, are their only concessions to safety. Even Potter's climbing harness is minimalistic: a homemade thing fashioned from 11/16 inch webbing and stitched together with dental floss.

Potter doesn't wait for his partner to reach the safety of the permanent metal peg at the top of the first stage, but instead starts climbing straight away. This is a risky procedure, but it's the fastest way to climb. Five minutes later, the two are already 200 feet up, and my neck is sore just from watching them. As I back away from the Nose to get a better view, I hear it – a horrible scrabbling of hands and feet on rock, followed by a desperate yell: "Falling!" Looking up, I see O'Neill dropping through space, arms flailing, legs splaying like a manic puppet out of control. Suddenly, he jerks to a stop. This puppet now looks as though someone, out of pity, has cut all of his strings except one, and he hangs there, stunned, after plunging more than 25 feet. I can't believe he hasn't hit the bottom.

There's a moment's silence. Potter has arrested his partner's fall by holding on to the rope from his position 70 feet below. The bass boom of his voice echoes off the great sounding board of El Capitan. "Go!" he yells. "Get back on it! Go! Go! Go!"

The intensity is startling. Potter is normally a very calm person, slow talking and sometimes painfully shy. One man who knows him well, his promotions manager, calls him 'a gentle giant'. In Patagonia, he has a different nickname: Tarzan. Potter says that's because of the monosyllabic way he speaks Spanish when he's on an expedition in Argentina. Maybe, but the name seems to capture a lot of Potter's other qualities too. With his wide-set brown eyes, prominent and slightly battered-looking nose, tumbling mane and barrel chest, he could be the original Tarzan come back to life: a brooding inhabitant of the wild who is occasionally roused to fantastic bouts of action and daring stunts.

Whether propelled by Potter's war cry or his own desire to get back on solid ground, O'Neill surges his way upward, simultaneously pulling himself hand over hand and 'walking' up the cliff.

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Tiny, distant figures now, Potter and O'Neill swarm up the face. Sometimes they almost seem to be running, gaining speed with each step, springing past obstacles that every rock climber knows by heart. A little before noon they reach the final wall, rhythmically snapping their metal clips to the last string of metal pegs placed by Warren Harding on his laborious 45-day first ascent completed in 1958. A minute later they disappear over the top.

"Three hours and twenty four minutes," I mutter to myself as I look at my watch in disbelief. "Incredible!"

1 Imagine that you are the reporter, Rob Buchanan. You interview Dean Potter after the climb and ask the following questions:

- Incredible! How did you manage to climb the face so quickly?
- How do you answer people who say that what you do is foolish?
- Can you tell us about your relationship with your climbing partner, O'Neill?

Write the words of the interview.

Base your interview on what you have read in Passage A and be careful to use your own words.

Write between 1½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

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

[Total: 20]

2 Re-read the descriptions of:

(a) O'Neill's fall in paragraph 3;

(b) Dean Potter in paragraph 5.

Select words and phrases from these descriptions, and explain how the writer has created effects by using this language.

[Total: 10]

[Turn over for Part 2]

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Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully and re-read **Passage A**.
Then answer **Question 3**, which is based on both passages.

Passage B

Paintballing – a birthday treat?

Recently, for my birthday, my teenage children ceremoniously handed me an ordinary envelope and urged, "Open it quick!" A postcard-sized coupon dropped out, and on it was an invitation to 'Come Along and Blast Your Cares Away!', accompanied by a cartoon drawing of a person in combat uniform, armed with a large rifle. The image unsettled me. Had my offspring signed me up for the army as a birthday treat? I looked at their laughing faces as the eldest declared, "It's a morning's paintball session, Mum! Don't worry. Dad will explain everything on the way to the venue this afternoon." I was soon to discover what this birthday 'treat' was all about, and pretended to play along enthusiastically with everyone else's excitement.

"Don't worry, I've already checked this place out," my husband said, once we were in the car. "Paintball is good fun, but it's also a game of action and skill. Families, friends and even work colleagues are organised into teams. Each team has a different colour paint to fire at their opponents, and the object of the game is a make-believe battle where everyone tries to 'hit' the other side whilst avoiding getting hit themselves. The winner is the last person standing."

'What else could I be doing on my birthday?' I thought, as we sped on.

Arriving at the paintball site, a sprawling area of woodland with a log cabin used as an office, we were ushered in and had to fill out medical forms which checked we were fit and healthy. Then we were given our protective clothing and headgear, which included an eye mask. Our guide told us, "Every manufactured paintball mask must be made to withstand a paintball travelling at least 300 feet per second – that's about 205 miles per hour – so you don't have to worry." I was already wondering how much a paintball travelling at that speed would hurt the rest of my body and began to regret my earlier bravado. Reading my thoughts, my husband started quoting details of the sport that were pinned to the wall.

"Listen to this, Zena. The paintballs aren't like bullets, they are gel capsules – made of gelatine and food colouring – and they are completely edible. There are paintball eating contests all the time at tournaments and events."

"Great, if we get hungry we can lunch on a yellow one," I replied, still unconvinced.

Once we were ready, we were quickly introduced to our instructor, Ravi, who was an enthusiastic mine of information. "It is my job to guarantee that you have an enjoyable and safe experience," he began. "Paintball has regulated itself. We have developed rules and guidelines, and all paintball facilities in the world adhere to them strictly. You must keep your masks on at all times, including the introductory session inside. You must make sure that your marker, which is what we call the rifle, is shooting under the legal speed limit, as we shall demonstrate later. Our company and players also ensure that the equipment is in good shape and well maintained." I must have looked worried because he turned and said, "Some people associate this sport with 'war games' but, believe me, it's really enjoyable out there and the only danger you might encounter is falling over a tree root! There are more injuries reported from basketball and baseball than from paintball in any given year. Once you get out there you will become totally immersed in a 'friendly fight'. Go on and enjoy yourself – you'll be surprised!" With that he led us to the indoor demonstration area.

Two hours later, I emerged smiling, my overalls spattered in bright crimson and my face a healthy glow. I felt like a child who had been out playing in the countryside and was now, reluctantly, being called in for supper.

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3 Summarise:

(a) the ways in which paintballing is a safe sport, as described in **Passage B**;

(b) the reasons why climbing the Nose of El Capitan and the way Dean Potter makes this climb are dangerous, as described in **Passage A**.

Use your own words as far as possible.

You should write about 1 side in total, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

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

[Total: 20]

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