UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/31**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2012**

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 **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.

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UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE International Examinations

[Turn over

Section 1: Directed Writing

1 Read the following transcript of a radio interview with two students who discuss their views on taking a year out between school and university.

Write an article for your school or college publication in which you consider the value of taking a gap year.

In your article you should:

- identify and evaluate the different views expressed by Mali and Teri about gap years
- use your own ideas to support your comments.

Base your ideas on what you have read in the transcript. Be careful to use your own words.

Write between 1½ 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]

Transcript of interview entitled 'Mind the Gap'

Host: Tonight we have in the studio 18-year-old twins, Mali and Teri, who have come along to share their experience and views on the topical issue of gap years. Mali, you went straight to university after school. Would you like to share your views first?

Mali: It never entered my mind to take off around the world as I wanted to continue with my studies to become a doctor. It takes a long time to qualify and I had a place at a respectable university. Two of my school friends were also going there and I didn't want to feel left behind.

Teri: As for me, I was sick of studying, exams, talking about careers and the future. I was exhausted after my final exams at school. I've always enjoyed my own company and I wanted to find out more about who I was and what I enjoyed working at. You see, that's the thing about studying: it's all theoretical, not practical, so how do you know if you're going to like doing something in 10 years' time if you don't get some experience before committing to a long course like medicine or teaching? I didn't think I liked children or teaching until I was asked to help teach English in a small school in Thailand.

Host: Don't identical twins usually think alike?

Mali: We used to, but people change, especially in their late teens. I don't regret going straight to university, but when Teri came back after her year away, she was more mature and invigorated; she had grown up!

Teri: Yes, but others who took a year off didn't do anything productive. I came back and saw that a couple of my friends had just been taking advantage of their parents by lying on their sofas every day, eating pizza and not considering what they wanted to do. However, I was able to put my work experience on my CV and get on an excellent teaching course, in spite of my exam results not being straight As. In my interview they said I sounded as if I was keen to learn and that I knew what I wanted, and I did.

Host: Mali, did you not envy Teri just a little bit?

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Mali: Well, if I'm honest, there was a point in my third year when I was finding studying difficult. My confidence deserted me and I did think of leaving university, but you know you don't have to go thousands of miles away for so-called experience. Students have long breaks so I did some voluntary work that summer in the local hospital, and that refreshed me. I, too, discovered I loved children and now I'm going to become a paediatrician, as little ones are frightened and helpless in hospital and I know I can put them at ease.

Host: Didn't you find it an expensive year off, Teri?

Teri: For me, I worked my way to Thailand as part of my gap year. I learned the value of money and being there was a great reward at the end of six months' work. Our parents are not wealthy, but I do know other friends whose parents simply bought a package from one of the many companies out there, for them to go thousands of miles to volunteer for a project where they weren't really needed. However, I learned practical skills along the way. I can speak a new language and gained relevant career skills, and I grew to love Thailand, the people and the culture.

Mali: Teri had a plan, but too many teenagers just think that they want to escape for a year. They have already been accepted by good institutions and they think they will be able to slot back into studying when they return from what they think of as a long holiday. But it doesn't work like that.

Host: You have both travelled down different roads and yet you both seem to know what you want.

Both: It's called having a plan!

[Turn over for Section 2]

Section 2: Composition

Write about 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting, on **one** of the following:

Argumentative/Discursive Writing

2 **(a)** Does music divide or unite people? Give your views. [25]

OR

(b) 'People should give up their cars to save the earth.' Do you agree with this statement? [25]

Descriptive Writing

3 **(a)** You are in a crowd of people waiting to see a total eclipse of the sun. Describe what you witness from the moment the moon starts to move across the sun to the point when it is light again. Include your thoughts and feelings throughout and the reactions of the crowd. [25]

OR

(b) Describe the character of someone who has had an effect on your life. [25]

Narrative Writing

4 **(a)** You have travelled backwards or forwards in a time machine. Begin your story with the opening of the machine door after you have arrived in the past or the future. [25]

OR

(b) Write a story that starts with the opening of a door to a room you are not supposed to enter. [25]

Copyright Acknowledgements:

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