UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/32**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2013**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passage for use with **Section 1**, **Question 1** on the Question Paper.

You may annotate this Insert and use the blank spaces for planning. This Insert is **not** assessed by the Examiner.

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Read the following article carefully, and then answer Question 1 on the Question Paper.

Who is *really* influencing your child? By Rachel Cheng

This summer, once again, the talk is of exam results. We parents worry about our children's grades, and we worry about how our children are being educated. Yet we are overlooking a crucially important aspect of our children's growing up, and one which can determine those exam grades: the enormous power of peer pressure.

Close friends can fire ambition, boost confidence, inspire vision – or lead the way to failure, a criminal record, or self-destruction. The gang your child belongs to, the closed circle which dazzles and impresses them and makes them desperate to be accepted, will not just shape their academic performance in school, and their behaviour out of school, but often their career choice too. Lifelong friendships are formed at this age, but what if they are not positive ones?

Peer pressure starts very young, and it is expensive for parents. Your child is obsessed with having the latest clothes and technological gadgets; they care far more about what their friends think of them than what you and the rest of their relatives think of them. Being 'in with' their peers is all that counts with an adolescent, and common sense and moderation go straight out of the window. They are the victims of emotional blackmail but cannot see it, and will not believe you when you point this out. So often we parents insist, 'It doesn't matter what *other* people have, do or believe', but this falls on totally deaf ears. To young people with an image to uphold, it matters very much how they are viewed by their peer group; in fact it matters more than anything in the world, and the wrong kind of trainers or mobile phone is a matter of social life or death.

You will recognise peer pressure at work when your child comes home with a pierced nose or the CD of a band you've never heard of. It is a law of nature that the things you most disapprove of will be those your child will be most attracted to. The very fact that you disapprove of smoking or staying out late or listening to noisy music will drive your child into these very habits, and your attempts to introduce them to what you consider to be appropriate friends, diet, clothing, or television viewing will drive them even further in the direction you don't want them to go. They would do anything rather than listen to your advice.

At their age they just don't care about further education, sensible jobs and good pensions. They don't even care that much about exam grades. What they most want is to get off the railroad of conformity and enjoy being young and adventurous – even if it means taking risks and living dangerously – rather than be wrapped in the cotton wool of the older generation's wisdom. Your desire to be a good parent is in direct conflict with the desire of teenagers to be teenagers. They want to do things differently from us, and try to prove that they are not really related to us at all; we are the enemy and have to be defeated – and, ironically, with our own money!

The only consolation and comfort is that you were once like this yourself, and you tortured your parents in exactly the same ways. You turned out all right, didn't you?

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