Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **May/June 2014**

2 hours

READING BOOKLET INSERT

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passages for use with all questions 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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Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2** on the Question Paper.

Passage A

In this passage an 18-year-old back-packer receives a surprise visit from her parents while she is a long way from home.

An Unwelcome Appearance

In September, Sacha Wilkie breathed a sigh of relief when she waved goodbye to her parents in the airport before the 15-hour flight signalling the start of her gap year before university; her mother, in particular, was too controlling. Yes, Sacha promised to phone and email regularly, but she could be economical with the truth.

By February, however, the novelty had worn off. There had been great times, but everything had proved expensive, so Sacha was unable to go on many of the tempting mini-excursions on offer. She was, therefore, grateful to find a top bunk bed in a dormitory at 'Sammy's Place', a hostel in a city on her itinerary. A few weeks' cheap living in a run-down area might avoid the shame of returning home early.

Luckily, Sacha had persuaded her mother to top up her bank account on the pretext that she wanted to do a sub-aqua course. In fact, she needed the cash simply to live. A chaotic and over-crowded information board in the common room of the hostel displayed some scrawled notices of work available to back-packers. She just needed to acquire the right visa, but Jed, the so-called manager, said he would help her get one.

The busy travelling season was imminent, however, and Sammy said she could do a few hours' work a week there, like laundry and mopping floors. Sacha didn't much relish the prospect of this, but noticed that the other part-time workers didn't really exert themselves. Maybe she could make enough to buy a share in one of the old cars that were advertised in the hallway. In any case, there were always notices about lifts on offer to exotic, distant locations, requiring only a contribution to fuel costs. At the very least, she'd be able to afford to go on some of the bus tours which picked up people at the hostel each day.

Her dormitory was actually rather unpleasant. The bunks with thin, worn mattresses were crammed together. There was no shade on the light bulb which flickered spasmodically. Although everyone was meant to take turns doing basic cleaning and emptying bins, this rarely happened. The window frame seemed welded shut, its surface encrusted with years of dead flies. The surface of the sink in the corner looked like a relief map, with river-like cracks meandering from tap to plug hole and mini-mountain ranges moulded from toothpaste.

A great thing about Sammy's Place, however, was the cheap internet access. When she'd first arrived, a fortnight before, she'd been able to catch up on emails home and update her blog.

One Saturday night Sacha was really enjoying herself. After a long session chatting online with her friends back home, she rummaged through the free-food box in the fridge and found some pasta sauce only a few days out of date. Having eaten, she crammed some bulging pots of yogurt back into the box, deposited her plate in the overflowing sink, then wandered out to the courtyard where a newly-arrived Norwegian had loaded up some cool music on the sound system. Jed, who was meant to be on reception, joined the gathering and soon the place was throbbing with music and laughter.

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Later that evening, Sacha suddenly became aware that her parents had appeared in the courtyard. Her initial shock was replaced in quick succession by shame, guilt and annoyance. Mrs Wilkie hurled her luggage to the floor, and with eyes blazing drew back her shoulders in readiness for battle. In a thunderous voice she demanded to know, 'Who's in charge? Why is there no-one at reception?' Her mother's laser eye soon pin-pointed Sacha, who was trying to shrink back into the shadows, and she launched herself across the space to demand, 'What on earth are you doing in a place like this? I thought you were staying somewhere decent!' She wheeled around and commanded, 'You young people should be in bed! It's late.'

The events of the next two hours were a blur to Sacha. The room in that same hostel which her parents had booked from home over the internet was dirty, her mother caught the heel of her shoe in the threadbare carpet, and a pillow was brought down to reception held aloft between thumb and forefinger for fear of disease. Mrs Wilkie was assured that the overwhelming smell of gas was normal, and was probably from a neighbouring establishment. She insisted that Sacha and Jed clear the kitchen sinks and take out the leaking rubbish bags, not realising that there were no tea towels and nowhere outside that was free of rats.

Finally, recognising that this sorry state of affairs could not be remedied, Mrs Wilkie made Sacha pack her things and ordered a taxi to take them all to a luxury hotel. 'End of gap year!' thought Sacha, miserably.

Part 2

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

Passage B

In this passage the writer describes some developments in youth hostelling.

International Youth Hostels

In 1912 Richard Schimmann created the first permanent 'youth hostel' in Altena Castle, Germany, with the aim of giving poor city youngsters opportunities to breathe fresh outdoor air. The young people were to run the hostel themselves as much as possible, doing chores to keep down costs and build their character, as well as being physically active outdoors. One feature of most hostels until very recently was that they shut down in the middle of the day. Nowadays, prescribed chores beyond washing up after self-catered meals are rare.

Schimmann's idea of hostels rapidly spread overseas and today Hostelling International is an organisation of more than 90 Youth Hostel Associations (YHA) with over 4,500 hostels in more than 800 countries. There are also many independent hostels.

Some HI (Hostelling International) hostels cater mostly for school-aged children, for example through school trips, whereas others are targeting the needs of those wanting to travel and experience new cultures. This is particularly true in major cities and popular tourist destinations where HI hostels can be very large. The Pakistan YHA is starting a scheme called 'Hostelling for Citizenship'; young people from rural areas will be selected to visit historic cities and meet their counterparts from other regions, their board paid for by the Government. There are many other hostels world-wide that provide accommodation for outdoor pursuits like hill-walking, windsurfing and bike touring. Such hostels are likely to be smaller and in more remote, even isolated, locations.

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In response to competition and a change in the type of traveller using them, some hostels – called ‘boutique’ – have trendy interiors. Some have chefs who produce unusual meals, whilst others have artwork in the rooms. Mobile hostels are becoming popular; these have no fixed location and might be a campsite or a temporary building; they often sprout up at large festivals and events like the Football World Cup.

Even established hostels may occupy unusual buildings, some of which allow for special activities. On the rugged California coast, about 25 miles south of San Francisco, sits a fog signal and light station. Built in 1875 and now restored, it is used as a hostel to attract visitors who want to enjoy the unique marine environment, especially the annual migration of the grey whale. One castle in Scotland was built for a duchess and the original guests were wealthy, influential people. It has a large art collection, particularly of Italian marble statues. In Ireland is a hugely spacious hostel dug into the hillside. The 30-metre structure is aligned to the dawns and dusks of both the summer and winter solstices, when sunbeams light up the central hall. Guests stay in dormitories circling the round hall, which is used for yoga and meditation. An old tea plantation in Malaysia has a farmstay hostel where guests are able to learn specialist agricultural techniques.

In the early 20th century, accommodation was always in dormitories where possessions were stowed under the bunks. Today there are private rooms with free internet access and safety deposit boxes available. Hostelling has indeed undergone a transformation.

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