Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/31**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2014**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

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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.

This document consists of **2** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

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

'Too kind to animals?'

People nowadays get so worked up about matters concerning animals, but to be honest, a lot of it is hot air. This programme is *not* about using animals for experiments: that's a separate issue and a very important one. No, this is about two groups of people, conservationists and what I call 'sentimentalists', people who would protect the rights of animals at all costs.

The conservationists' first argument is about the dangers of extinction – what will happen if there are no more, let us say, lesser-spotted wombats left in far-flung jungles? The fact is that animals have always faced extinction, and not just because of hunters and poachers. We no longer enjoy the company of sabre-toothed tigers or woolly mammoths, and a good thing too. Maybe in the future there will be no more tigers in the wild, but that doesn't mean that they have to face extinction. Nowadays, animals are farmed or kept in zoos and safari parks for everyone to see without having to travel thousands of miles. How many of us have the opportunity or the money to see animals in their natural habitat anyway? Even if you are among these 'lucky' ones, I bet you only see animals at a distance. All of them are chronicled in intimate detail in countless natural history films, available to all.

The conservationists' second argument concerns 'the balance of nature'. They argue that European forests, for example, should contain an abundance of animals – deer, wild boar, wolves and bears, all necessary to the woodland environment. What they forget is that if a family decides to take a stroll through the forest, they may be attacked by predatory wolves or come face to face with an angry bear, and have no chance to protect themselves adequately.

The truth is that there are a lot of us, and our needs are diverse. D.H. Lawrence, a famous novelist, wanted to sacrifice many humans for the sake of a single mountain lion, and the composer Edward Elgar, faced with the deaths of thousands in the First World War, was concerned only with the fate of the horses. These are sentimental attitudes that we cannot logically accept.

Conservationists are only too ready to forget the needs of people. Villagers in India are at the mercy of marauding tigers, Spanish farmers lose their lambs to wolves, and US citizens are intimidated by bears that come out of the forest and forage aggressively for food. Presumably, taxpayers' money goes towards funding government measures to protect the animals that cause these nuisances.

At least the conservationists have some philosophical and scientific logic on their side. The sentimentalists have a more romantic view of animals. They protest violently about matters that they do not fully understand. Different people in different parts of the world have their own traditions and customs. Examples of this are bull-fighting, the medicinal use of various parts of animal bodies, the practice of hunting, the culling of non-endangered species, earning a living through poaching, and so on. These practices are understood and accepted in countries where they take place, and we should question the right of outsiders to interfere. These are the same sentimentalists who criticise cat owners because their cats catch birds, and who oppose a cull of badgers although some scientists claim that they promote the spread of tuberculosis in cattle.

My argument is not against a sensible debate on the subject. It is hard to keep a balance, and we have to accept that times are changing rapidly, but the needs of people have to come first. We also need to protect ourselves against the extreme views of those who frankly do not see the whole picture.

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