Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/31**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2015**

2 hours

READING BOOKLET INSERT

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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 Reading Booklet Insert and use the blank spaces for planning.
This Reading Booklet Insert is **not** assessed by the Examiner.

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Read the passage carefully, and then answer **Section 1**, **Question 1** on the Question Paper.

The following passage is an article about a course of computer lessons offered by a charity for elderly people.

Bridging the gap: young people to help the elderly catch up.

A national charity, which works to improve the lives of elderly people, is looking for young volunteers to help bring the over 75s into the digital age. Next month their campaign reaches our town. Will local teenagers rise to this unique challenge?

Age Campaign runs weekly sessions to inspire older people to learn to use and enjoy the computer technology the rest of us take for granted. In a survey last year, Age Campaign discovered that even when older people have access to computers or other digital devices, only a tiny proportion of those over the age of 75 have the confidence to use them.

A common assumption among young people is that their grandparents' generation just don't need to use the internet. Yet in the survey, old people were well aware that they were losing out – relatives abroad rarely bothered to keep in touch by letter and some vital services were only available online. One elderly woman noted: 'Perfectly fit and healthy young people order their groceries online, from the comfort of their homes, while I'm struggling to the shops in all weathers to buy what I need, probably at higher prices!'

Next month, Age Campaign's computer courses are coming to our town. Local businesses have lent premises and computers. They have even supplied refreshments for course participants. A professional trainer will teach the course, but the organisation is recruiting creative and sympathetic young volunteers to ensure that each elderly person's first 'hands on' experience of using computers is an enjoyable one.

These young people don't need to be experts on computing – in fact, the ability to imagine life *without* gadgets might be more useful, as well as the sensitivity to respect the older generation. Older people have skills, experience and knowledge which are often under-valued. A young volunteer at a recent course had some of his preconceptions challenged: 'I was helping an old lady of eighty learn how to save documents when she sighed and said how much more effective a doctor she might have been forty years ago if she'd had a computer.'

Finding out what each elderly person wants to learn can be a subtle process requiring a maturity rarely found in teenagers. Not all old people want to diagnose their ailments online or download knitting patterns! Older people may wish to enjoy the opportunities offered by social networking sites, although they need to understand how to protect their privacy as much as anyone else does. Sharing photographs, sending emails and online shopping commonly feature on old people's 'wish lists', but there have also been requests for help with designing house extensions, comparing prices and managing budgets too. That's why Age Campaign needs young volunteers who are interested in more than downloading the latest pop sensation's video!

Of course, many digital novices in their eighties and nineties will struggle to pick up basic skills which young people seem to learn effortlessly. Old people facing a keyboard for the first time will need patience and perseverance just as much as the volunteer working with them. Deafness and physical frailty make many old people feel incapable of learning new skills. Some old people are suspicious of all teenagers or may view a young person's friendly informality as disrespectful. Age Campaign gives basic training but volunteers will need to bring their own personal qualities to the task as well.

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This experience benefits both young and old, of course. Universities like to see that potential students can do more than pass exams and the young people discover new talents and ambitions as they take on the teacher's role. Paula, a 17-year-old recent volunteer, talked with real warmth about the elderly man she worked with. 'It was a good partnership – after some initial anxiety on both sides, we found a way to learn together.'

Age Campaign is recruiting volunteers now. If you think you've got what it takes, get in touch.

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