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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/22**

Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2022**

INSERT **2 hours**

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INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading texts.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

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Read **both** texts, and then answer **Question 1** on the question paper.

Text A: We need more wilderness in education

In the following text the writer discusses a different approach to education.

Instead of obsessing about introducing the latest technology to schools and adopting the most fashionable teaching methods, we should focus on wellbeing and encourage children to connect with the natural world. Children have become cogs in a box-ticking machine.

This matters to me a great deal since becoming a father. I don't want my children to feel the same sense of failure I did if they don't do well in a conventional classroom.

For some, our minds crumbled under pressure; classroom-based learning left me feeling worthless and destroyed my confidence. The worse I did, the more pressure I felt. Eventually, when I was rejected by my university choices, I spiralled into depression.

The wilderness rescued me. I have been shaped by my experiences in the great outdoors. Feeling comfortable in the wild gave me back my confidence. There is a natural simplicity to nature; it is far more tactile and tangible than the classroom. It's a leveller; it strengthened my character and set me back on track.

I'm not suggesting the abolition of the current system of education, but we could certainly allow more time for children to explore the world around them. It doesn't need a huge investment either. Even if you don't have easy access, wilderness camps and schools work with inner-city children. Part of the beauty of wilderness schooling is that the overheads are low. You want a classroom? Build a shelter from nature's store. You want to eat? Forage for it. There are plenty of places where children can roam freely or permission from the landowner can be sought.

There's evidence that shows connecting with nature really works. It's good for social and emotional development, improves self-awareness, and makes young children more co-operative. There is also evidence that the wilderness can reduce hyperactivity and has a soothing effect on children. German visionary Kurt Hahn was one of the early pioneers of outdoor education. His educational vision encompassed craftsmanship, community service, outdoor pursuits and physical skills.

Scandinavia has led the way in this field, teaching by topics rather than subjects, such as nature's life cycle. Wilderness schooling involves team-work, working together in nature, not sitting in rows while teachers lecture. Lessons are collaborative, geared towards improving communication, character and resilience rather than staring through the window in boredom.

As my own children step onto the conveyor belt, I am determined to give them a rounded education. We all have a responsibility to ensure every child has access to the same life-enhancing opportunities. It's time to turn everything on its head and to turn classrooms inside out.

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Text B: Outdoor learning – a good idea or another educational fad?

The following text discusses outdoor learning in schools.

Apparently, many people find the arguments for taking children out of the classroom and into the great outdoors compelling. 85 per cent of parents in the UK, and many elsewhere too, say they believe that young children should spend more school time away from their desks and learning outdoors. Not that they necessarily want to give their children these experiences themselves, but schools should do it. And not just taking your books outside to sit on the grass on a sunny day either. The majority of a child's school day, rain or shine, should be spent outdoors, building their self-esteem by log-jumping or developing team-work skills by literally building bridges.

It's true that most young kids like being outdoors. There's evidence to show that even working in a classroom with a view of greenery outside is better for their wellbeing. The argument that the social and physical benefits of an outdoors education will sustain children as they grow older is, maybe, convincing. But whether it's the extremes of weather or the need to prove yourself to universities and employers, there are limitations to adopting a whole-scale outdoors education model, especially beyond the early years of schooling. What about the bookish kids, or those with allergies or disabilities? What about the shift of resources from books and new technology to outdoor spaces? There will have to be risk assessment processes and teacher retraining. How can the same ethos of outdoor learning be maintained as pupils transition from one school to another? Those same parents who wanted more outdoor learning for their young offspring might wish they'd settled for a few more plants in the classroom instead.

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