Cambridge Assessment International Education

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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/12**

Paper 1 Reading **May/June 2023**

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 **Text A**, and then answer **Questions 1(a)–(e)** on the question paper.

Text A: ***Working a winter season at a ski resort***

A great way to really enjoy winter is to work at a ski resort. Not all jobs require prior knowledge of skiing or skill in snowboarding, though enthusiasm and a sense of adventure are essential. If you have decided to work a season in the snow, the next step is the planning; you are probably wondering where to start.

While some resorts will hire throughout the entire season as staff quit, more well-known resorts tend to fill posts quickly before the season starts. When job opportunities are advertised, the earlier you start applying, the broader the variety of positions and your choices of location will be.

If you have your heart set on a particular resort, you will need to comply with their hiring dates and be careful to put in your application in time. For northern hemisphere resorts, job advertisements go up as early as July for a December start. For southern hemisphere resorts, jobs typically go up around February for June. Check out the individual resort's website for further information on their specific hiring dates.

How long you want to stay may affect the visa you need to apply for, but the first consideration is which part of the world you want to work in. Locations known for quality powder (snow) or exhilarating slopes attract massive foreign crowds.

There's no point denying it: powder is the best snow to ride. Dry and light, it does not bind – you can't make a snowball with loose powder snow. It can be great for learning on and generally practising new ski or snowboard techniques without any unexpected bumps. It's often packed in thick layers that form a pillow for any crashes you decide to take! It allows you to push yourself to 'stomp that new trick' and 'hold your edge'. Fresh powder falls during cold weather with small snowflakes.

Online guides can help you choose which job you'd like to apply for. You may also want to investigate some of the recruitment organisations that source jobs for you. Some are pretty effective. For an admittedly hefty fee they will bring employers to your home country and set up an interview for you (basically guaranteeing a job unless you put in an exceptionally poor interview) and give you priority access to staff housing. Most of this you can do yourself, although saving money beforehand often means arriving without a job: that intervening period can be quite costly. As always, the earlier the better when booking flights.

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Read **Text B**, and then answer **Question 1(f)** on the question paper.

Text B: *Seasonal work*

Looking for a part-time job or full-time career? Have you considered seasonal work?

You could find work at a resort during the tourist season (think skiing or camping) or pick berries or other produce. You could work with kids at summer camps or help out at a local festival. There are seasonal jobs to fit every different season.

But here's the question: are they worth it? Perhaps. For instance, let's say you are looking for work as a retail manager, but you don't have much experience. Two months working as a cashier could fill that gap. Just make sure that you're thoughtful in how you present your seasonal job on your résumé.

Most seasonal jobs don't require much previous knowledge and suit any talent level, they also tend to be low-paying. If you're currently out of work, there's minimal downside. If you're looking for a little extra spending cash to save up for a trip, it could also be a good move.

However, if you're working on your career, you might need to consider whether or not the extra hours make sense. Do you have a family who needs your time? Are you already exhausted from your job or studies? Low pay can be a deal breaker and you'll probably be working a tough schedule. Holiday retail seasonal help as well as tourist-based jobs tend to be heaviest on evenings and weekends.

Don't expect to get hired for a seasonal job and get some good, detailed training before you start. Due to the short nature of the season (whatever season it may be) you can expect to get a quick how-to speech at best. For this reason, choose a seasonal job where you already have some rudimentary knowledge. If your goal is to find out about the business, you may have to learn on the job.

Whatever, seasonal jobs offer opportunities. It's your choice, but hurry: those seasonal jobs won't last long.

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Read **Text C**, and then answer **Questions 2(a)–(d)** and **Question 3** on the question paper.

Text C: *Wanaka*

Tony has been travelling the world doing seasonal work for the past year and has just started a new job working as a liftie (ski-lift attendant) for the first time near Wanaka, New Zealand.

Training commenced with a slideshow about every different job at the fashionable resort, presumably to underline the fact that we'd got the worst of the outdoor ones. Indoor employees, personal chefs and private ski-instructors lodged free on-site; 'outsiders' battled for reasonably priced accommodation with hordes of backpackers travelling through; wealthier guests stayed in the hotels.

Everyone was asking questions I didn't understand. 'What about rules on quick-laps?' 'What's the back-country policy?' 'How deep's the base?' 'How much snow do you make?' I was clearly in over my head. Again! This time in snow, which gave the appearance of being soft – but which, as any snow-sports fanatic will tell you, was more dangerous than it looked.

Here are the answers:

- No 'quick-laps' in week one. Apparently, they're a trick used by experienced lifties who take turns to run the lift they're working on – each person doing two people's jobs, while their partner takes the lift to the top and skis or snowboards back down again. It's a great way to get a sneaky bit of extra riding in, and generally overlooked by bosses – providing each person crewing the lift is capable of running it on their own. I wasn't.
- 'Back-country' was everything outside the marked boundaries of the ski-area (avoided for fear of avalanches).
- The base (snow-depth) was two metres, sometimes rising to four (requiring much digging-out of cars and buildings).
- 'Snow' was 'made' nightly. Gigantic cannons shot this granular substance skywards ensuring the mountain could be open for skiing whether it snowed naturally overnight or not.

Our Lift Supervisor ('Boss') marched us around every lift in the ski-field. 'So now you know the lifts,' he informed us. 'See you all bright and early tomorrow!'

And that was it: training was over! I'd never pushed a button, had only the flimsiest concept how a ski lift even worked, much less how to fix one if something went wrong, didn't know how to test the equipment, use the radio in case of emergency or assist guests on and off the lift. Ski lifts spin all day, every hour transporting skiers and riders of all ability levels up the mountain. I didn't know how many things I didn't know about my new job – but suspected there were plenty.

Next morning, we assembled indoors, armed ourselves for combat and headed out again. Our opponents were the lift chairs, which overnight had turned into fantastic frozen sculptures. Relentless weather, coupled with dramatically sub-zero temperatures, transformed these humble steel and wooden frames into a series of massive ice-monoliths, layered and carved by snow and wind into intricate abstract shapes. They were breathtakingly beautiful, and a pain to clear before we could ride them to our allocated stations at given points up the (inventively named) Giant Ski Slope.

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Walking back down from there took forever – experienced lifties snowboarded. It got cold up top; when the weather closed in, I'd sit shivering in my tiny control-booth, fantasising about life as a cleaner inside the ski-rental building.

One Wednesday, rumour had it we'd be closing early. Halfway up Giant Ski Slope, it seemed mildly surprising we hadn't already. The wind was raging, buffeting chairs and customers alike. All afternoon a slushy drizzle had been slowly working its way through my layers. The bus back from the mountain crawled out of the car park and attempted the descent, but it was a total white-out. The huge windscreen filled with snow faster than the wipers could clear it. We crunched into the uphill side of the mountain and stuck there. Gusts of wind, revealing and concealing the narrow road ahead, confirmed that drifts of snow had blocked it completely. Our driver radioed in to report our situation; we waited.

At 02:45, I staggered, still soaked to the skin, chilled, and exhausted, into my room.

'That was nothing!' crowed Boss the next day.
'You should've been here for the Great Storm …'

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