Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/12**

Paper 1 Reading **May/June 2025**

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.

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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

Text A: *Food trucks*

This text is about food trucks. A food truck is a vehicle (such as a van or trailer) equipped to prepare, cook, serve and sell food.

Found on city streets from London to La Paz, food trucks offer an easy, fun and affordable way both for locals to sample delicacies from around the world and for tourists less interested in conventional options to get involved in a city's food scene. The very first food trucks were known as 'chuckwagons' and originated in Texas in the 1800s to serve cattle-ranch workers out on the trails.

Unlike modern versions that are exclusively food and beverage outlets, chuckwagons would be stocked with medical supplies as well as food, water, coffee, and various other goods and utensils. The 'cookie' running the chuckwagon would often act as barber, dentist and banker, way beyond the responsibilities of the professional chefs running mobile restaurants today. Chuckwagon food typically included easy-to-preserve items such as beans and sourdough biscuits. Back then, there were no fresh fruit or vegetables available. A further evolution, the 'lunch wagon', was credited to an American entrepreneur, who cut windows into his covered truck and parked it outside a newspaper office to sell sandwiches and coffee to journalists.

The modern resurgence of food trucks was born from nostalgia and fuelled by street food becoming more fashionable and innovative with technological advances. When Jay Siri first saw the utility truck that would become her first food truck, it was covered in red dust. Now cleaned up, it serves up food as it tours festivals, markets and events. 'I've always loved cooking for people,' Jay explains, 'but with a food truck, you can focus on perfecting a few menu items to make a name for yourself. Investing heavily in a permanent restaurant location compared to the option to test the market was never going to be my choice.' Most trucks have websites with their locations listed so customers can find them easily wherever they are parked.

Successful food truck concepts reflect their owner's interests with just about every food option covered now. Keen to offer a unique experience, entrepreneurs look for something eye-catching to attract customers, leading to some weird, mostly wonderful, but increasingly expensive, conversions: there are already former horsebox trailers, taxis and shipping containers operating as food trucks. Vintage buses are popular, offering lots of space for preparing, cooking and serving food. Perhaps my favourite's a former fire engine serving stone-baked pizza. It has a working water cannon, a rooftop kitchen and a photo booth. Pizzas come down a slide when they're ready!

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

Text B: *Clever uses for old buses*

We love buses, but know they can't be buses forever and eventually have to be permanently parked. That's not to say they're no longer useful. We've seen some great planet-friendly ideas for reusing buses long past their glory. It's amazing what can be done. The creativity in pushing the boundaries of what former buses that are still roadworthy can be is fascinating – bringing arts to communities via mobile libraries, theatres or museums.

What better way to recycle an ageing bus than use it to educate, raise awareness and maybe even save a life or two along the way? Volunteers behind one upcycled bus doing just that travel the streets of its home city, stopping in zones where homeless people tend to gather. They provide clothing, hot meals and someone to talk to.

You'll often hear from volunteers working with buses that other people want to get involved. 'After renting a 1970s disco-bus for a party, we had an idea,' explains Chris who now runs musical events for elderly people suffering memory loss. 'We got friends together onboard the bus to meet and explained how they could help. It's great fun and proves that working together can make a difference.'

And talking of making a difference: enter the 'tiny house movement' (defined as people building houses less than 37.5 m^2). Looking to limit their carbon footprints still further, they're turning instead to reusing something that already exists – former school minibuses! Masterfully renovated to accommodate up to four adults, complete with cooking facilities and a bathroom, one is even available as a holiday home.

Launching a new product? Here's where the bus in business can really come in! One company will 3D-paint your advertisement all over their vintage vehicle and drive around to make sure it gets noticed. Another will install you a pop-up shop on a double-decker bus, then drive it straight to your customers. Know someone who now works from home, but misses taking the bus to work every day? How about hiring space for them on an old public bus that's been transformed into an office and café? Perfect.

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

Text C: *Our big red bus ride*

This text is about a journey that started in 1971 and went around the North American continent.

Gradually, out of the shimmering heat, a vehicle appeared – a big, red intrusion into the barren landscape. As it approached, a curious spectator would see a bus, a double-decker, bigger and noisier than the single-deckers they sometimes saw in that part of the world. It threw up clouds of dirt and dust as it passed. It shouldn't have been there, thousands of kilometres from England.

This is the story of that big, red double-decker bus. This isn't a children's story, and if you try reading it to children, they'll soon lose interest in the increasingly petty details of our daily life. In one early letter to my parents, I wrote: 'We had yet another meeting yesterday to sort out grievances.' This latest inquest had been into who'd drunk someone's orange juice from the fridge. The devastated owner knew some had been 'stolen' because he'd marked the level of the liquid in the bottle.

I did try to write a children's story one morning but was interrupted by shouts and a collision with something overhead. Group leader Roger had decided on buying a 'high-decker' (taller than average) and initially we left a trail of damaged overhead bridges, power cables and telephone lines wherever we went. This bus, our bus, had already covered many kilometres of faithful service before Roger purchased it second-hand. We'd each answered Roger's advert to travel around the world on this bouncing beast. We all had regular professions back home – a chef, a nurse and so on – and had come together to share an experience. We'd taken delivery of a 1955 green double-decker and decided to paint it red, the typical image of English buses. The bus company remained very supportive, including sending spares out whenever we encountered a mechanical crisis.

It's difficult to envisage how cut off from our previous lives we were back then. Mobile phones and emails weren't yet invented. There was no internet linking different countries and cultures. To phone home was expensive and public phones weren't easy to find. I was away two years and managed to phone home twice.

Our world was inside that double-decker bus – an overloaded display case of rattling glass and metal on wheels. People stared in; we gazed out. The interior of the bus had been completely gutted, its normal entrance and exit doors sealed up. We gained access squeezing through the emergency door at the rear. Roger's new friend, Vic, was a skilled carpenter, magicking snug bunk beds and ingenious storage seats downstairs around an almost adequate kitchen area/table. The seats were removable – disappearing to reveal various emergency supplies, spares and snacks nestled secretly beneath. No sliver of space escaped!

That bus traversed deserts and climbed mountains – setting an altitude record of 4000 metres for such a vehicle. Rumbling across continents, only lack of money for diesel threatened to halt its determined march. Beforehand, we'd hoped to sell advertising space on the side of the bus, but that didn't happen. Our targets each day were to make enough money from manual work – mostly fruit picking – to cover growing expenses, and to overcome any lumps, bumps and obstacles that lay ahead. A double-decker bus is a heavy, awkward vehicle. On uneven or wet ground, it's less manoeuvrable than a whale in quicksand, but ever heard the expression 'You could get a double-decker bus through there?' Well, events proved that we could (until that fateful last day when it sank on a raft crossing a river – don't ask!).

We needed luck and to work together. Most of all we needed the bus to overcome conditions that it had never experienced in years of commercial service. The six of us who lasted the whole trip were two years older when we returned. Looking back, we displayed breath-taking naivety in assuming that we'd not be left stranded somewhere with no money and no hope of getting home.

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