UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/22**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2010**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.
Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.

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Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2**.

Passage A

A Visit to Rataia

In this story, the writer travels on foot to a small seaside town that is untouched by civilisation.

The moment I arrived in Rataia, I knew I could transform this place into a world-class tourist resort.

It was a ramshackle, run-down town with a handful of shops selling essential commodities. The biggest of these boasted the imposing title, 'Emporium'. There was an apology for a hotel, where I was to stay in a cramped little room with a window too high for me to enjoy the sea view. The town square, with its sad, droopy trees, had an atmosphere of yesterday. In one corner, hiding behind a riot of bushes, stood a tiny church, sadly in need of restoration.

So what had made me see the potential of Rataia? The day before, when I had reached the top of the hill behind the town, I was stunned by the natural beauty that lay below. There was the bay with its magnificent stretch of golden sand and the sea glistening in the sun, reflecting the brightness like a sheet of glass. On either side, the mountains fused into a purple haze. Silence was omnipresent, broken only by bursts of magical birdsong around me.

I descended to the tiny, forgotten town. I stood transfixed. Even here the sand was really pure and the water in the rock pools translucent. I gazed at myriads of fish with their dazzling colours darting, cruising or just lazing between the crevices.

As I sat alone, in the one shabby café on the front, my imagination took over. The bay was extensive enough to accommodate thousands of visitors in comparative comfort. Once electricity was brought from the neighbouring towns, there could be five or six hotels, a casino or two, a truly modern water-park. New, superior housing for the well-to-do would spread into the foothills behind the bay.

Such was my entrepreneurial spirit! Finance was of course a major consideration, but just think of the money that my fashionable visitors would bring to my investment! In my mind's eye, handsome people wandered along the spacious promenades, the women vying with each other to display the most charmingly casual or the finest formal clothes. Men would stroll in their smart designer items, or sport full evening dress for their visit to the Grand Theatre or the All Stars Concert Hall. Children would laugh happily as they caught sight of a special park just for them. And perhaps a very special theme park! The name 'Everest' crossed my mind.

The café owner approached, rubbing his hands on his faded apron. He sat down at the next table. 'Not much of a place, is it?' he asked. 'We're cut off from civilisation; there are no jobs here – you're the first customer I've had this morning.'

'Ah,' I answered, 'but the climate … what a perfect temperature! What sunsets!'

'I suppose so,' said the café owner, looking over the bay. 'Though it's always like this. The only change is every week or so when we have a thunderstorm or a tornado, and then everyone gets wet or blown away.'

'But,' I blurted out enthusiastically, 'I know a way to bring thousands of rich people here. Just think of that guy who takes you to the islands in his boat. He could buy a bigger boat and make his fortune.'

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The owner looked at me hard and long. 'Now,' he said, 'we had someone like you a year back. Wanted to make the place some sort of paradise. He gave up quickly enough. You'll never interest the people here. They prefer it the way it is. They may be poor and have no television or internet, but they like the simple life. You build a new road over the hills or tempt walkers with a chair-lift up the mountains and you don't know what you'll let loose. Just ask anyone here. Those islands you mentioned are real nature reserves – birds and animals few of us have ever seen. What would you do with our fish? Put them in some huge aquarium?' He got up, wiping his hands on his apron. 'I'm sure you're a good man, but I wouldn't even think of it if I were you.'

1 Imagine a meeting between the writer and the town mayor to discuss the writer's ideas for Rataia. **Write the conversation** that would take place.

Include the views of both speakers on how the changes would affect:

- the town;
- the lives of the inhabitants;
- the natural environment.

Base the conversation on what you have read in Passage A and be careful to use your own words.

Begin the conversation as follows:
Mayor: I hear you've got some grand plans for our town.

Write between 1½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to fifteen marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to five marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

2 Re-read the descriptions of:

(a) the town in paragraph 2;

(b) what the writer experienced from the top of the hill in paragraph 3.

Select words and phrases from these descriptions, and explain how the writer has created effects by using this language.

[Total: 10]

[Turn over for Part 2]

Part 2

Question 3 is based on both **Passage A** and **Passage B**.
Read **Passage B** carefully, and then re-read **Passage A**.

Passage B

A Winter Journey

In this extract, the writer and four other travellers embark on a hard journey, taking a short cut across a lake where people do not normally go.

We depart on the third of March, accompanied through the gate and down the road to the lakeside by an escort of children and dogs. After we pass the irrigation wall and branch off from the river road, taking the track to the right used by no one but hunters and fowlers, our escort begins to dwindle. The sun has risen but gives off no warmth. The wind beats at us across the lake, bringing tears to our eyes. In single file we wind away from the walled town.

For the first three days we plod south and then eastward. To our right stretches a plain of wind-eroded clay terraces, merging into banks and red dust clouds and then into the yellow, hazy sky. To our left is flat marshland, belts of reeds, and the lake on which the central ice sheet has not melted. The wind blowing over the ice freezes our breath, so that rather than ride, we often walk for long stretches sheltered by our horses.

Two of the packhorses are loaded with firewood, but this must be conserved for the desert. Once, half-buried in drift sand, we come upon a spreading, mound-like tamarisk bush which we hack to pieces for fuel; for the rest we have to be contented with bundles of dry reeds.

In these early days of the journey we eat well. We have brought salted meat, flour, beans, dried fruit, and there are wildfowl to shoot. But we have to be sparing with water. The marsh water here in the shallow southern area is too salty to be drinkable. One of the men has to wade into the water to fill the skins, or to break off lumps of ice. Yet even the melted ice is so bitter and salty that it can only be drunk with strong red tea, and that causes stomach problems.

After long marches my bones ache and by nightfall I am so tired that I have no appetite. I trudge on till I cannot put one foot in front of the other; then I clamber into the saddle and wave one of the men forward to take over the task of picking out the faint track. The wind never lets up. It howls at us across the ice, veiling the sky in a cloud of red dust. From the dust there is no hiding: it penetrates our clothing, cakes our skin, sifts into our baggage. We eat with coated tongues. Dust rather than air becomes the medium through which we live.

On the fourth day we begin the crossing of the ancient lake bed that stretches another forty miles beyond the marshes. The terrain is more desolate than anything we have yet seen. Nothing grows on this salty lake floor which, in places, buckles and pushes up jagged crystalline hexagons half a metre wide. There are dangers too: crossing an unusually smooth patch, the front horse suddenly plunges through the crust and sinks chest-deep in foul green slime. The man who leads it stands a moment dumbstruck on thin air before he too splashes in. We struggle to haul them out, the salt crust splintering under the hooves of the flailing horse, the hole widening, a salty stench everywhere.

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After this we push our horses even harder, in a hurry to be off the dead lake. We bow our heads and drive into the sand, picking a way over the jagged salt shards, avoiding the treacherous, smooth ground. When darkness falls we batter the tent pegs into the rock-hard salt; we burn our firewood at an extravagant rate and like sailors pray for land.

On the fifth day we leave the lake floor behind and pass through smooth salt, which soon gives way to sand and stone. Everyone is heartened, even the horses, which have had nothing but a few handfuls of linseed and a bucketful of brackish water. Their condition is visibly deteriorating.

3 Summarise:

(a) the discomforts and dangers caused by the inhospitable place described in **Passage B**;

(b) the disappointing aspects of the town noticed by the writer of **Passage A**.

Use your own words as far as possible.

You should write about 1 side in total, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to fifteen marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to five marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

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