UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH** **0500/23**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2013**

**2 hours**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passages for use with all questions on the Question Paper.

You may annotate this Insert and use the blank spaces for planning. This Insert is **not** assessed by the Examiner.



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## Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2** on the Question Paper.

### Passage A

*In this science fiction passage, set in the twenty-second century, a mother reluctantly travels to visit her son.*

### The Great Benefactor

She was painting an elaborate stylised flower onto her cheek when the holo-phone illuminated. She had silenced the device so as not to be interrupted, but once the flashing light caught her attention she could not ignore it, and in any case her concentration had been broken.

She looked around the small and perfectly square one-roomed apartment, without colour and identical to those of the hundred stacked above hers, as if putting off having to speak to the holo-caller. The walls were of satin steel, with a myriad of tiny halogen lights embedded in the ceiling to create a shimmering effect as they spotlighted the shiny floor composed of grey metal squares.

Apart from the flashing communicator, the apartment was featureless; all the furniture and devices she needed were mentally activated and would materialise soundlessly from the wall and floor as needed. Sighing with annoyance, she put the magenta paint-stick down and looked directly at the holo-phone, bringing it to life with her focused gaze.

'I hope I am not disturbing you, Mother.'
'Actually, Son, I was engaged in a most delicate process.'
'Mother, there is something I want to discuss with you...' His voice tailed off. The hologram of his face seemed to lose clarity.
'Well, what is it?' she asked impatiently.
'Mother, I am not happy.'
There was a shocked silence.
'That is impossible! The Great Benefactor provides for all our needs. You have every amenity that can be imagined. How can you not be happy?'
'Mother, it is too difficult to explain by image transfer. I need you to come to me, so that I can tell you of my yearnings, my need to cross the boundaries.'

She felt numb. To even think this thought was treason. She realised that, distasteful as it was, she needed urgently to visit her son before the Monitors detected him. Touching the channel selector, she ordered a transporter module to her transit platform.

She had not left EurekaBubble for many months. There was no reason to – the surviving population of what had once been called America now all lived in the same bubble. She hated travelling to other bubbles on other continents – where her son had been at the time of the Enclosure – because seeing the ravaged surface of the planet reminded her of the Time of Pain. This was before the Great Benefactor had ended the continuous warfare by unifying the planet under his generous and gracious command, bringing about peaceful and protected life in the bubbles, with no need for work or to ever leave one's apartment. And now here was her own son – her only permitted child – talking in a way which could bring the Monitors to her door to enforce the Rules.

The transporter module whisked her silently to the hoverport. The sleek hoverplane sat on the burnished aluminum launchpad, its door open. It closed as she sat in the single, pearlescent, polyacrylic armchair in the empty cabin. The machine rose vertically, slipped through the brief opening of the dome roof, and she was discharged into the toxic atmosphere beyond.

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At first the surface below was featureless and flat, like a monochrome grey carpet, all details erased by the hyper-nuclear weapons which had obliterated civilisation in this area. Once the Wide Water had been crossed, the old continent of Europa appeared: what had once been bustling, magnificent cities now spoke only of desolation and desertion, their tall, broken buildings, with shards of concrete and glass hanging from stark skeletons of steel, like pointing fingers pleading with the indifferent sky. As the plane crossed over a mountain-range that looked like a cake frosted with white icing, she closed the portal blind in disgust. Her meal of lobsterite and chilled mandrake juice slid out of a hatch.

Without warning, the plane descended vertically towards a gigantic, glistening silver dome.

'You are arriving at PhantasmaBubble. Thank you for travelling with HoverAir,' intoned a disembodied voice.

The door slid noiselessly open to reveal her son waiting on the landing platform. It was the first time she had seen him in the flesh for five sun-cycles. She felt an unaccustomed feeling of foreboding. His face looked anxious and flushed, and had it not been impossible for the past three lifetimes, she would have said that he looked unwell.

'Oh, Son, what have you done?' she cried.
'Mother, I must leave the bubble. I must travel the Old World. I must see and feel and breathe the surface of our planet, or I shall die.'

## Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully, and re-read **Passage A**. Then answer **Question 3**, which is based on both passages. Answer on the Question Paper.

### Passage B

*This passage describes the space mission to land on the moon in 1969.*

### Apollo 11

On the morning of July 16, 1969 a 60-ton Saturn 5 rocket was given a thorough inspection on launch pad 39-A at the Kennedy Space Center. On board were four and half tons of fuel and a spider-shaped spaceship covered with foil. It was the mission NASA had been preparing for almost a decade.

Seventy-six hours after lift off, the crew of Apollo 11, Michael Collins, Buzz Aldrin, and Neil Armstrong, entered lunar orbit, something only two crews before them had done. Every orbit brought them closer to the Sea of Tranquillity, a flat surface near the Moon's equator that would be lit by the Sun when the final approach began. On the 13th orbit, the three men began their voyage into uncharted territory.

On Sunday July 20th, Aldrin and Armstrong climbed through the tunnel connecting the Command Module to the lunar lander and entered the spaceship they called the Eagle. With the flick of a switch, Collins detached the Eagle from the mother ship Columbia, and the Moon landing had begun.

The Eagle rounded the corner to the far side of the Moon. The crew had a series of manoeuvres to perform during their final lunar orbit. Radio signals were lost while the ship was on the other side. All the ground crew could do was wait for a signal from the Eagle. If it came just a few seconds too soon or too late, it meant that Aldrin and Armstrong had not achieved the proper orbit and the mission might fail. Communications were re-established exactly on time, which meant the Eagle was on course.

In order to hit their landing site, Armstrong and Aldrin would have to begin their descent 16 minutes from the time they rounded the far side of the Moon. The ground crew had only minutes to check

the systems and, more critically, the vital communication link between Earth and the spaceship was breaking up.

The lunar landing was becoming exactly what NASA did not want it to be – dramatic and problematic. But the crew on board the Eagle wasn't worried about the communication problem. They ran through their checklist, as they had done hundreds of times in a simulator, and right on time they fired the thruster that would slowly lower their spaceship to the Moon's surface.

The landing was going smoothly, and millions of people were watching the event around the world. They would have to wait another six-and-a-half hours to see a man walk on the Moon. Aldrin and Armstrong had many preparations to make, which could not be rushed. Once outside the spaceship, they carried out scientific experiments, collected 20 kilograms of rocks, and took hundreds of pictures of the surface. With their moonwalk behind them, all that was left for the astronauts to do was sleep, blast off, and link up with the command module.

Of course, nobody had ever blasted off from the surface of the Moon before, and if there was some kind of failure, there were few options for the two men, who were now almost 400,000 kilometres from Earth. However, both astronauts had confidence in the spaceship that would take them from the Moon's surface, and believed that a successful docking with the command module was guaranteed.

Next morning, 22 hours after Aldrin and Armstrong had landed on the Moon, the world once again held its breath. The three astronauts were reunited in space. All they now had to do was return to Earth, and claim their place in history.

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