Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2014**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

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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. The Insert is **not** assessed by the Examiner.

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** on the Question Paper.

Passage A

In this passage a variety of tourists set out on a week-long trip.

The Tour Bus

The company's brochure promised a captivating tour, beginning with a visit to a magnificent mountain range. The tour started in pre-dawn darkness in the dingy, back-street waiting room of the company's office, where there was barely room for the motley collection of travellers and their rucksacks. After several minutes keyboard-tapping, the clerk directed them to a battered, rusting minibus, a last-minute substitute for the usual coach, to which something unfortunate had happened on the last trip. No details were given.

Most of the travellers were too intent on finding comfortable positions around the luggage at their feet to notice the belated arrival of the tour-guide. Before he could squeeze himself into the driver's seat, a large woman rose from the front row where she and her female companion had installed themselves, proclaiming that it was illegal for there to be no seat belts. The driver suggested that she should complain to 'the office' and settled down to eat a croissant.

Elsie Clinch stomped down the steps in sturdy leather boots before sweeping imperiously across the tarmac. Soon she was seen wildly gesticulating, framed by the office window as if in a puppet show. After several minutes she returned looking deflated, clearly defeated by the obstinate attitude she encountered. Her head went up, however, when she spotted the driver's footwear. She launched a second attack, jabbing her finger at the plastic flip-flops, and in a volley of words pronounced them fit only for the beach.

Whilst Elsie had been away, Starsky – the only name offered by the driver – had explained to no-one in particular that the law on seat belts only applied to vehicles under ten years old. He knew this. He was studying Law. This was only a vacation job. Then he crossly turned his back on his passengers. A new distraction had arrived in the shape of three willowy young women, apologising for being late as they rushed to the back of the bus.

Starsky did not bother to respond to Elsie's telling-off. Instead he bombarded the bus with the throbbing sound of heavy rock music as the engine burst into life. Already thirty minutes late, the bus lurched onto the road with all the ponderousness of a tank. Elsie glared at the crumbs Starsky had dropped on the bus floor as she manoeuvred a large sandwich box and flask of tea out of her rucksack.

Unbeknown to most of the passengers, what lay ahead was a two-hundred-kilometre journey across an arid plain before the foothills were reached. Starsky showed some stamina, using the microphone to be disc jockey for over two hours, bouncing rhythmically as the music boomed. Occasionally he allowed the bus to veer across the road to vary the monotony of the highway. The girls on the back seat sang shrilly. There was not much to see: no dwellings, no cafés, no petrol stations – only an empty landscape of stunted shrubs stretching out to the horizon, and an occasional side road shooting off with the name of a settlement partly visible on a dusty sign.

Elsie sat with ear-plugs jammed into her ears, using a guidebook to distinguish one variety of shrub from another. Occasionally she would jerk her head round to catch a name, then consult a large-scale map spread across her lap.

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Eventually, the plains gave way to rocky foothills. Soon the bus was labouring up the road which snaked skywards, clinging to the dizzying sides of a ravine. The road surface deteriorated. Vigorous weeds had thrust their way through the decayed tarmac and the bus was thrown from side to side by protruding rocks. The gradient and the uneven surface finally brought the minibus to a halt. Starsky announced it was time for a break. He instructed everyone to ensure that they had bottled water for the gorge walk they were about to undertake. Elsie and her friend delayed the start by applying insect repellent.

The walk began. In the lead was Starsky, footwear unchanged, and equipped only with a water bottle swinging nonchalantly at his side. Elsie, wearing breathable clothing and a large bush hat, marched behind him, brandishing an enormous camera. Her companion came next, stooping under the weight of a rucksack, strapped to which was a camera tripod. Their intention was to photograph the bird life. The rest of the tourists followed. After only five minutes, the three girls complained that the pace was too fast, that the stones were piercing their feet through their sandals, and that they were hungry. A knot of sympathisers stopped to offer a variety of snacks. Already the group was straggling. Way ahead, Starsky stood astride an outcrop. 'This is going to be one impossible trip,' he thought.

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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

In this passage the writer explores a range of long-distance bus options that have been available at different times around the world.

Getting Around by Bus

The American Greyhound bus company was founded in 1914. Carl Wickman was a desperate car salesman who turned an unsold 7-seater into a bus to transport former workmates between their homes and the mines. Within four years, Wickman had 18 buses in his fleet. Seven years later, these vehicles had gained the nickname 'Greyhound', owing to their grey paint and sleek appearance. Soon Greyhounds were servicing nearly every part of that massive country, with some coverage of Canada and Mexico too.

The heyday of the Greyhound bus in America was the 1930s, the era of the Great Depression. In 1933 the company was selected as the official carrier at the Chicago World Fair. It reserved 2,000 hotel rooms and offered transport to and lodging at the fair in the one ticket.

By the time of the Second World War there were thousands of bus stations and employees in America. In 1942, Greyhound became the major carrier of troops heading to the East and West coasts. There was a decline in the post-war years, owing to increased car ownership and, later, the emergence of low-cost airlines. Nowadays, passengers are more likely to be backpackers and teenagers visiting relocated parents; routes to and from prisons are also very popular.

'It Happened One Night', an award-winning film of 1934, prominently featuring a Greyhound bus, reinforced America's love affair with them. They became a symbol of freedom, a way to travel spiritually as well as physically. Penniless dreamers took a ride to escape to the big city from small-town America, and backpackers got their American experience for just a dollar a day. Greyhounds featured in song lyrics, for example in a famous Simon and Garfunkel song ('We boarded a Greyhound in Pittsburgh...').

They have always had a strong appeal for young, romantically-inclined travellers. Stopping at so many destinations not on the '50 Best Places to See in America' list allows unexpected encounters. The Greyhound can even become the destination in itself. In 1994 a writer chronicled her five-month journey to 47 states on a Greyhound, and began to miss being on board when stuck anywhere for too long.

Less well-known internationally are the Greyhounds of Australia. The company began in 1928 when a service was begun between Toowoomba and Brisbane in response to a rail strike. The founder's Bullnose Whippet car sported a Greyhound radiator cap and he adopted the symbol for his buses. Today, Greyhound Australia covers the entire continent, employs about 500 people and takes more than 1.3 million passengers a year. Various passes are available, some based on kilometres covered, and are valid for a set number of days. Tourists – the main market – can hop on and off as they like, typically over a 60-day period. The scenic hotspots of Cairns and Sydney are linked on the most popular route.

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Europe now has its own version of the Greyhound bus. Started in 1985, a coach organisation began operating international bus routes within Europe and Morocco to over 500 destinations in more than 25 countries. Unlike the American company, Eurolines is a network of co-operating bus companies, offering joint tickets and extensive connections. Coverage is patchy across the continent, being best developed where rail services are limited. In the Baltic States and former Yugoslavia, Eurolines is a major method of travel between neighbouring countries. As well as being popular with backpackers, they are used extensively by temporary workers travelling within the European Union, since they offer reasonable travel time in relative comfort.

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