Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/32**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition **October/November 2014**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passage for use with **Section 1**, **Question 1** 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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Read the following letter carefully, and then answer Section 1, Question 1 on the Question Paper.

This letter is addressed to Elena, who gives advice to readers in a magazine.

Dear Elena,

I am writing to you in desperation since I do not know where else to turn. My husband and I have devoted our lives to giving our only son, Jacob, a happy and decent upbringing. We have sacrificed our own pleasure and money to give him a good education and to ensure that he has had everything that he wanted. My husband owns a small farm, so we never know what our income is going to be, and we always put Jacob's interests before our own. We cannot remember when we last had a holiday.

You'd imagine that Jacob at the age of 20 would be mature enough to be grateful, but what has he done? He has met a girl who has persuaded him to marry her and leave the farm for the capital city, 70 kilometres away. We are not getting any younger. We're both nearly 55-years-old, and my husband needs Jacob to help him run the farm. We have only two other workers, who have been with us for years. If Jacob stayed we could make the farm more efficient, buy some new machinery, and take on new workers; but Jacob says he must get away. He says that he can't make a profitable life as a farmer and that his future lies elsewhere, where he can carve out a living for himself and his family. He's an expert on computers, and he says there are not enough opportunities where we live in the country.

We are distraught because we shall lose all communication with our only child. My life is full of memories of when he learned to walk and talk, and of his first day at school. Now he will be gone. There will be grandchildren, but I shall never be able to see them, talk to them or hold them in my arms.

I blame myself for spoiling him and for the fact that we had only one child. If there had been a sister for him, he would not have turned into someone who only thinks about himself. He keeps on saying, 'I don't want to let you down, but I have to live my own life'. There is no need for him to go. We are always there for him, and he can go on living his comfortable life in the farmhouse. I suppose we could make some room for his family when he gets married. We could even get used to having children crawling around the farmhouse once more.

We wonder where our life has gone. What with work on the farm and looking after Jacob, there's been no time for friends. I suddenly realise that I am going to be very lonely when he has gone. We both have brothers and sisters, but they live far away too and we do not hear much from them. Although we do have email and the internet we are not very good with electronic things – Jacob takes care of that. We know the local farmers well enough, but we never have time to socialise. We are beginning to feel that we are growing old. It is Jacob who has kept us young and given us our direction in life.

Now he is about to leave, probably for ever. How can he be so selfish and heartless and not repay the love we have given him and the money that we spent on his education? How can he cut himself off from the only life he has ever known? How can he risk his future when he has one here that is secure?

I am counting on you to give me the advice I so badly need and to tell Jacob what he needs to do.

Yours sincerely,

Freya

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