Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/33**

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 speech carefully, and then answer Question 1 on the Question Paper.

The following passage is a speech given to a group of local headteachers, from the owner of Extreme Challenge.

Good morning, headteachers and pupils. My name is Andrew Jones and I run my own company, Extreme Challenge. I'm here to tell you what we can do for your pupils and your schools. Let me explain how by giving you an example – myself! I left school ten years ago with high grades and went on to get a good degree. I'd worked hard, achieved outstanding academic results and made my parents and teachers proud. A 'model student', you might say. But I'd always felt daunted by new challenges, like many of my friends, and later we found ourselves applying for 'safe', low level jobs where we could blend in with the corporate crowd. Some of my friends, despite their academic credentials, are still wasting their talents in such jobs – and that can't be good for them or for our economy, can it?

My company, Extreme Challenge, takes your cleverest kids out of their classroom comfort zones, and tests their mettle in a range of extreme sports. Sofia, for instance, was an exemplary student from a local school, but was so shy and anxious she wouldn't even apply for university. She came to us for a week and we taught her to kayak in the most difficult terrain. As with all our course members, Sofia's basic fitness level was tested before she was accepted, to ensure that we could safely push her to her limits and beyond. By the end of the week, a strong, confident girl returned to school, ready to face anything after tackling mountainous rapids on her own, even with a minor foot injury and in pouring rain. 'It was exhilarating!' she told us. 'I had no idea I could do anything like that.'

And it's not only the typically studious kids who can benefit. Sam's teachers knew he had tremendous potential, but he was easily distracted and restless in class. He was even beginning to disrupt lessons, just to make life more interesting! We wouldn't take seriously disruptive students, obviously, but Sam was bored and cooped up all day. We took him out of school, taught him to challenge himself rather than his frustrated teachers, and gave him the freedom to pit his wits against frighteningly high obstacles on a Free Running course. We don't claim to have completely changed his attitude to learning, but sitting at desks all day doesn't work for every student. Sam had to pass a written test on safety procedures after the first day, before we let him loose on the high roofs and walls. Ironically, that was one test he passed with flying colours, proving he could apply himself when he needed to.

The physical benefits of exercise are well-known, but the number of overweight children is still worryingly high. When stress levels in exam years reach their peak, students can become depressed, or worse still, relieve their anxiety in all the wrong ways. Your most able students are often the least willing participants in school sports, not wanting to 'waste their time'. Our one-off courses are no substitute for regular physical exercise, but a customised, personal challenge which demands physical commitment and perseverance improves more than fitness. Studies have shown that physical activity stimulates the brain and sharpens the senses, while keeping both weight problems and adolescent depression in check. Adam, a high-achieving 16-year-old, was overwhelmed by schoolwork and his father was concerned about how isolated he had become. On a demanding coasteering course, which combined cliff climbing and ocean swimming, Adam made friends with kids he didn't know – and our policy of banning mobile phones made sure he had to!

Our experienced instructors teach young people that they *can* take risks, and parents need not worry that they'll come to harm. The real harm is done by never allowing their children to experience a thrill – such as Base Jumping, Sky Diving or Gorge Walking – for fear that a week out of school in the summer months will hold them back. The real risk is that stressed, bored and unfit students will leave school with an array of good grades but low self-esteem and crippling anxiety about life beyond the classroom.

Of course, our methods don't work for every child and the school will need to share the cost of courses with parents. Kids today need both grades and guts. Extreme Challenge will promote healthy risk-taking and a zest for life – that's an investment in our best young people and in our country's future. Thank you for your time.

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