Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/11**

Paper 1 Reading Passages (Core) **October/November 2015**

READING BOOKLET INSERT

1 hour 45 minutes

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READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

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

You may annotate this Reading Booklet Insert and use the blank spaces for planning.
This Reading Booklet 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: Heading for the Shore

In the following passage the narrator describes being in a small boat that is caught in rough seas off the coast of Florida, and which is starting to sink.

'She's going to sink for sure!' said the captain, 'All we can do is to get as near to the beach as possible, and when she sinks, pile out and scramble for the shore.'

The steersman took the oars, scanned the surf and swung the boat around as we stared at the lonely and indifferent shore. The monstrous waves heaved the boat high and revealed the white sheets of water surging up the slanted beach.

'We won't get very close,' said the steersman. I watched the others and saw that they were not afraid. There were no hurried words, no pale, terrified faces, no agitation. The men simply looked at the shore. I was too tired to grapple with the reality of death, but it occurred to me that if I should drown it would be a great shame.

'Remember to get well clear of the boat when you jump,' said the captain.

Seaward the crest of a wave suddenly fell with a thunderous crash and came roaring down upon the boat.

'Steady now,' said the captain. Everyone was silent. We turned our eyes from the shore to the wave and waited. The boat slid up the incline of the wave, leaped at the furious top, bounced over it, and swung down the long back. Some water had come into the boat and the cook tried to bale it out.

But then another tumbling, boiling, white wave caught the boat and whirled it almost perpendicular. Water swarmed in from all sides. The little boat, unsteady with this weight of water, reeled and snuggled deeper into the sea.

'The next one will sink us, for sure,' said the steersman.

'Remember to jump clear of the boat,' shouted the captain.

The third wave moved forward, huge, furious, implacable. It fairly swallowed the boat, and almost simultaneously we tumbled into the sea. A piece of life-belt lay in the bottom of the boat and as I went overboard I grabbed hold of it.

The January water was icy, and seemed colder than I expected to find it off the coast of Florida. To my dazed mind the coldness of the water was sad; it was tragic. It seemed a proper reason for tears.

When I surfaced I was conscious of little but the noisy water. I saw my companions struggling in the sea. The steersman was ahead in the race. He was swimming strongly and rapidly. Off to my left, the cook's great white hat bulged out of the water, and behind him the captain was hanging with his one good hand to the middle of the overturned boat.

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There is a certain immovable quality to a shore; I wondered at it amid the confusion of the sea. It seemed very attractive, but I knew that it was a long journey and paddled leisurely. I was kept afloat by the piece of life-belt and sometimes whirled down the incline of a wave as if I were on a surf board. But then I arrived at a place in the sea where I could move no further. I tried to continue swimming but was unable to do so because of the current in which I was caught, and my progress ceased.

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Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully, and then answer **Question 3** on the Question Paper.

Passage B: Mysterious Sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald

Controversy surrounds attempts by diver Frederick Shannon to recover the bell from the wreckage of the sunken freighter SS Edmund Fitzgerald.

The wreckage sits 160 metres below Lake Superior's surface. There are two large, intact sections at either end, but the middle was broken into pieces. The ship sank 27 kilometres from Whitefish Point in November 1975, during a storm.

It's one of thousands of shipwrecks that dot the Canadian Great Lakes, but it's easily the most famous, thanks in large part to singer/songwriter Gordon Lightfoot's 1976 ballad, *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*.

The cause of its sinking is unclear. There are multiple theories, including giant waves, UFOs and sabotage. The uncertainty even prompted Lightfoot to alter his lyrics. After watching a documentary on the accident that suggested a rogue wave was to blame, he removed a reference to a hatchway failure and any suggestion of human error.

One thing is clear: the storm that battered the Fitzgerald was a monster, whipping the freighter with hurricane-force winds and massive waves. Frederick Shannon believes structural failure was the cause. "It had a lengthy record of maintenance problems," he says of the ship. "There's a lot of doubt about its seaworthiness."

Shannon is one of the few divers who have seen the Fitzgerald wreckage. The number is likely to remain small because authorities in Canada have placed strict protections over the site to limit access. Although the official record lists the Fitzgerald's resting place in Canadian waters, Shannon contends part of the wreckage is in the USA. Some people believe that crewmembers knew the ship was in trouble before it sank, raising doubts about claims that the ship sank suddenly. Shannon says he believes the ship broke apart on the surface.

As another anniversary of the Fitzgerald's sinking approaches, Shannon says he now has a better appreciation of the pain felt by the crew's relatives. "Removing the bell from the Fitzgerald will bring solace to the families," he says. "I think they need a physical object for closure, and what better than the heart of the ship, which is the bell."

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