Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2015**

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.

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Part 1

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

Passage A: A change of direction

Two men who work for a magazine are returning to the busy capital, Helsinki. They are on their way back from an interview in a rural area of Finland.

Two harassed men were driving down a lane. The late setting sun pained their eyes through the dusty windscreen. It was midsummer, but the landscape along this sandy by-road was slipping past their weary eyes unnoticed; the beauty of the Finnish evening was lost on them both. They were a journalist and a photographer, out on an assignment: two dissatisfied, cynical, middle-aged men. The hopes of their youth had not been realised – far from it. They were husbands, stomach ulcers were on the way, and many other worldly worries filled their days.

They'd just been arguing. Should they drive on to Helsinki or spend the night in the quiet village through which they'd just come? Now they weren't even speaking. Sulking like schoolboys, they motored on mindlessly through the lovely summer evening. Hunched and withdrawn, as self-absorbed as two cantankerous crustaceans, they sat in the stagnant silence of the car. The air between them hung heavily, thick with unspoken resentment as their stubborn journey dragged on.

On the crest of a hillock, an immature hare was rehearsing its leaps across the lane ahead. Giddy with summer, it pranced and twirled, forgetful of itself, then perched upright on its hind legs, framed by the red sun. Too slowly the dull brain of the photographer reacted. He saw the little creature, just as his dusty city shoe slammed hard on the brake, too late. The startled animal leaped as if a spring had snapped, making for the cover of the forest. There was a muffled thump as it hit the corner of the windscreen, and disappeared from view.

'That was a hare!' the journalist said.

'Good thing it didn't bust the windscreen.' The photographer pulled up. The journalist got out and ran back. The photographer wound down the window and left the engine running.

The journalist tracked distractedly into the forest. He jumped a ditch, and looked hard at a patch of grass in the clearing. He could see the hare. Its left leg was broken. The cracked shin hung pitifully – too painful for the animal to run. The journalist picked up the hare and held it in his arms. It was terrified and panting. He snapped off a piece of twig and splinted its leg with strips torn from his handkerchief. The creature nestled its head between its little forepaws, ears trembling with the thumping of its heartbeat.

Back on the road there was an irritable revving, two tetchy blasts on the horn, and a shout:
'Come on out! I can't wait about here forever because of some stupid hare! We'll never get to Helsinki if you hang around in this wilderness!'

There was no reply. The journalist continued nursing the injured animal in his arms. It was gradually calming down. The photographer got out of the car and looked furiously into the forest, but could see nothing of his companion. He yelled: 'Stay there, then! Goodbye, nutcase!' He stormed back into the car, revved so that the gravel spat under his wheels, and shot off. In a moment the car was out of sight. The journalist remained on the edge of the ditch, cradling the hare in his lap, lost in thought. The noise of the car engine faded away. The sun set.

The journalist placed the hare down on the ground. For a moment he was afraid it would try to escape; instead it waited quietly in the grass. When he picked it up again, it showed no sign of fear at all. 'So here we are,' he said to the hare. 'Alone.' That was the situation: he was sitting alone in the forest, truly abandoned. Perhaps he should have responded to the photographer's shouts, he thought. Now maybe he ought to wait for the next car, hitch a lift, and get back to the city.

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The idea was very unappealing. The journalist looked in his wallet to check how much money he had. There were a few banknotes, his press-card, a photograph of his wife, a bunch of keys, and a health-insurance card in the name of Kaarlo Vatanen, aged 42.

Vatanen got to his feet, gazed at the sunset's last redness through the trees, and nodded to the hare. He picked the hare up off the grass and put it tenderly in the side-pocket of his jacket. He looked in the direction of the city but made no move that way, heading back instead along the darkening lane.

Part 2

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

Passage B: Rabbits and hares

My aunt, as she told me, was an expert on hares. She called me her little leveret, the name for a young hare. 'You're no rabbit,' she said. 'Those ears are too large and you're way faster.' I would have rather been one of her rabbits, her bunnies, as she called my cousins. They were rarely on their own, whereas I spent lots of time sitting solitary in the field – just like a hare, my aunt smiled.

Her knowledge of hares convinced me I had nothing to be ashamed of after all – like me and my cousins, rabbits and hares look somewhat alike but they are very different creatures and hares usually grow larger. I couldn't wait for that to happen.

The hares in her stories were shape shifters and tricksters, capable of outrunning hunters with dogs, and independent from a young age. Unlike rabbits, hares are born fully furred, with their eyes open and so are able to fend for themselves soon after birth. The mother hare separates out her little family when they are still young to keep them safe and calls them back to feed in the evenings, my kind aunt explained.

My school project that term was about endangered animals – there was only one obvious choice for me. Rabbits weren't in need of protection. 'You're right, it couldn't be a rabbit for that now, could it?' agreed my aunt. 'There are way too many of them nibbling my vegetables.' Satisfied, I nodded – though herbivores too, hares prefer hard food like bark and buds.

'Used to be more hares round here when I was a girl,' my aunt went on. 'You'd always see pairs of them boxing in the field in spring. We thought they were young bucks competing, but it turns out it was more likely the doe fending him off until she was ready. Rabbits don't do that. Hares don't get on well with modern farming methods, I reckon. They don't hop straight off like rabbits when danger threatens. They lie still and wait for their chance to go. Not much chance against a combine harvester.'

I checked her facts in an old encyclopedia – hares and rabbits on every continent of the world except Antarctica, tick; bucks (males) and does (females) the same as rabbits, tick. She was wrong about bunnies though – the correct term for the young of rabbits was kittens. I made a note.

Similar in appearance to rabbits, with their divided upper lip and short tails, hares are generally larger, and have longer ears I confirmed. Even their skulls are different. Hares also differ from rabbits in that they do not reproduce below ground in burrows but in a shallow depression or flattened nest of grass called a form. Some hares change the colour of their coats in winter, lighter or darker according to which part of the world they are in, to match the landscape and be able to conceal themselves. Hares have generally not been domesticated, whereas rabbits are kept as house pets. They also leap rather than hop.

My talk to the class was brilliant – until my very last words. Hares, I assured my classmates are shape shifters and tricksters. Alarmed, my teacher coughed gently; perhaps those are more stories, she

suggested. I was not to be put off though – there were no stories of rabbits being cunning. In fact, no stories of rabbits at all. I was sure of it.
'What about Brer Rabbit?' shouted one boy.
'Or Bugs?' said another.
'Or the Easter Bunny?'
The list continued. Under attack, I flattened and waited for my chance to outrun them when school ended.

Later when my aunt found me concealed amongst the corn in a field nearby, she was smiling. 'Try looking on your new-fangled internet,' she said with a wink. 'I'll wager those story rabbits all started out hares…'

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