Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2016**

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** the 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: Stranded

In 1703, Selkirk, a pirate and buccaneer who was part of a crew sailing the South Seas looking for gold and treasure, was deliberately left marooned on a remote island and forced to remain there as a castaway.

In October, Stradling gave the orders to sail onwards. Selkirk advised the crew to refuse. In his view, in this ship none of them would go anywhere but to the ocean floor. Worms had infested the bottom of the ship and devoured its oak timbers and there was no point in continuing their voyage. Stradling mocked his caution. Selkirk responded with fists and rage and Stradling accused him of mutiny. He told him he could stay on the island: it was better than he deserved.

Selkirk's concern about the ship was justified, but no one elected to stay with him, nor did the others attempt to overrule Stradling's decision. They had waited long enough and although the ship leaked, it was their one chance of achieving their dream. Stradling ordered Selkirk's sea-chest, clothes and bedding to be put ashore. Selkirk watched from the beach as the men prepared to leave; he had not wanted this. He begged Stradling to forgive him, to let him rejoin the ship. He promised he would comply. Stradling told him he could be food for vultures for all he cared. He hoped his fate would be a lesson to the other men.

Selkirk watched as the small boats prepared to leave the shore. He lumbered over the stones and tried to get on board but was pushed back. He waded into the water pleading. He watched as the anchor was drawn and the ship headed to the open sea. The sound of the oars dipping into the water, the calling of orders, the little silhouettes of men as they unfurled the sails, were all imprinted on his mind. The ship slipped behind the cliff face and from his view.

All courage left him when the ship was gone. The sea stretched out endlessly. The thinly-pencilled line of the horizon was, he knew, only the limit of his sight. The sea that had once beckoned freedom and fortune now locked him in. He stayed by the shore, scanning the ocean. Whatever their fate, he now wanted to be with them. Without them the island was a prison and he was a mariner without a ship, a man without a voice. The day grew cool, the wind ruffled the water and for a moment a rogue wave or cloud looked like a billowing sail. He did not leave the shore. He clambered over the stones to the western edge of the bay, wanting a wider view of the ocean, but he was trapped in the bay by sheer cliffs.

The sun dipped down, the air cooled, the mountain darkened and the moon cut a path across the ocean. All night the seals howled; they were the monsters of the deep. He fired a bullet into the air. For a minute the bay seemed quiet. Then it started again, a croak, a howl. This island was a place of terror; there was fear in the dancing shadows of night. A hostile presence sensed his every move. The wind surged through the valley; the wind, he was to learn, was strongest when the moon was full. It uprooted trees. They swished and crashed. The sound merged with the breaking waves and the calling seals.

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Days turned into weeks and months. Whatever the island had, he could use; whatever it lacked, he must do without. Activity dispelled depression. He kept busy. On a day when the sky was clear and the valley still, his mood lifted. He felt vigorous, reconciled. He grilled a fish in the embers of a fire, ate it with pimentos and watercress and forgot to deplore the lack of salt. Around him humming birds whirred and probed. Mosses, lichens, fungi and tiny fragile ferns covered the trunks of the fallen trees.

He resolved to build a dwelling and gather stores. He chose a glade in the mountains a mile from the bay, reached after a steep climb. Behind it rose wooded mountains. This glade had the shade

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and fragrance of adjacent woods and a fast, clear stream and overhanging rocks. From it he watched mist fill the valley, then dissipate with the morning sun. White campanulae grew from the rocks and puffins nested by the ferns. A little brown and white bird swooped for insects. Clumps of parsley and watercress grew by the stream.

He was right about the ship. After a month, it sank near a small barren island off the Peruvian coast. Stradling and thirty-one men got onto two rafts. The others drowned.

Part 2

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

Passage B: The Ship-Breakers

I was warned that it would be difficult to get into Bangladesh's shipbreaking yards. 'It was a tourist attraction,' locals told me. 'People coming and watching men tear apart ships with their bare hands; they don't let outsiders in anymore.' I walked a few kilometres along a road that parallels the Bay of Bengal, where 80 shipbreaking yards line an eight-kilometre stretch of coast. Each yard was secured behind high fences topped with razor wire. Guards were posted, and signs warned against photography. Outsiders became unwelcome after an explosion killed several workers, prompting claims that the owners put profits above safety. 'But they can't block the sea,' the local said.

One afternoon, I hired a fisherman to take me on a tour of the yards. At high tide the sea engulfed the rows of beached oil tankers and containerships, and we slipped in and out of the deep shadows cast by their towering smokestacks and superstructures. Some vessels remained intact, as if they had just arrived. Others were reduced to skeletons, their steel skin cut away to reveal their cavernous black holds. The rising cost to insure and maintain ageing vessels makes them unprofitable to operate. Now their value was contained in their steel bodies.

Most workers had left for the day. The ships stood silent, except for the occasional echo of metal clanking. The air hung heavy with the odour of diesel fuel. Suddenly, a shower of sparks rained down from the stern several storeys above us. A head appeared over the side: 'Move away! We're cutting this section,' a man yelled down. 'Do you want to die?'

The life-span of such ships is only 25–30 years, after which they need to be broken up. But ocean-going vessels are not easily taken apart. They're designed to withstand extreme forces, and they're often constructed with toxic materials, such as asbestos and lead. In Bangladesh 194 ships were dismantled in 2013, and the industry remains extremely dirty and dangerous.

The aim is to recycle more than 90 per cent of each ship. The process begins after a ship-breaker acquires a vessel from an international broker. A captain who specialises in beaching large craft is hired to deliver it to the breaker's yard. Once the ship is mired in the mud, its liquids are siphoned out, including any remaining diesel fuel and engine oil, and are immediately resold. Then the machinery and fittings are stripped. Everything is removed and sold to salvage dealers – from enormous engines, batteries, generators, and lengths of copper wiring, to the crew bunks, portholes and lifeboats. After the ship has been reduced to a steel hulk, swarms of labourers use acetylene torches to slice the carcass into pieces. These are hauled off the beach by teams of loaders, then melted down for use in construction.

In the sprawling shantytowns that have grown up around the yards, I met dozens of unskilled workers: the men who cut the steel and haul it off the beaches. Many had deep, jagged scars. Some men were missing fingers. A few were blind in one eye.

In one home, I met a family whose three sons worked in the yards. The oldest, Mahabub, 23, spent two weeks as a cutter's helper before witnessing a terrible fire when his torch sparked a pocket of gas below deck. His brother, Alamgir, 20, had been assisting a cutter when he fell through a hatch on a tanker, plunging about 30 metres into the hold. Miraculously, enough water had seeped into the bottom to break his fall. The youngest brother, Amir, 16, still worked as a cutter's helper, but was scared by his brothers' experiences.

As we talked, a thunderclap boomed, shaking the tin roof. I looked outside, expecting to see a violent monsoon, but the sun was shining. 'It's a large piece falling from a ship,' said the boy. 'We hear this every day.'

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