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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/21**

Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition **October/November 2022**

INSERT **2 hours**

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INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading texts.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Read **both** texts, and then answer **Question 1** on the question paper.

Text A: Finding the perfect gift

This article was written by a manager of a successful chain of shops.

Gift-giving is an important part of human interaction. It has been documented throughout human history, across all cultures, as a unique pastime that has helped to define relationships and strengthen bonds between family, friends, workers and many more groups.

Most people expect to receive a quite high standard of gift, which can put pressure on the individual who gives the present. Every gift has to be better than the last.

There is an enormous sense of satisfaction when seeing the joyful expression on the face of someone you've given a gift to, and gift-giving really comes into play when you're missing someone or working away from home. Now, it's a lot easier to order a gift online and send it. It can be a replacement for not being there with the person. The right gift brings a little slice of happiness.

Coming up with creative gift ideas is somewhat of an art form. And just like any other type of art, some of us just aren't that good at it. But if you want to avoid the dreaded silence that comes after someone opens the worst gift ever – your gift – put in a little extra time and effort. Purchase practical, quality gifts that the person will actually use and will last a lifetime.

The gift of a carefully chosen ornament displayed in the home for many years can be a source of happiness to both giver and receiver.

Vintage gift ideas are very popular at the moment – unique and much sought-after items to be treasured. Who can resist a gift that will hold, or even increase its value – a piece of antique jewellery, a stylish photo frame perhaps?

Save money and reduce packaging waste by making your own gifts such as baked goods in reusable containers, homemade soaps or homemade jewellery. Instead of buying cards, either make your own using recyclable paper or send an e-card. There are lots of great websites where you can make personalised, animated or traditional cards sent right to your friends' and family's inbox.

And if you're unlucky enough to have gift givers who often get it wrong, why not host a gift-swap party with friends, family, or colleagues? It's a great way to find a home for your unwanted gifts.

Text B: Experience days and gift experiences

This online blog was written by the owner of a company which sells gift vouchers for experience days and activities.

Things no longer matter. Experiences do.

Why? Because in the modern day, the need to own things is dissipating. We don't need DVDs, CDs or vinyl records anymore because we all have subscriptions to streaming platforms for music, film and TV. We don't need photo albums, calendars or books because everything exists in environmentally friendly, digital form.

The media want us to think that buying things for ourselves and each other will make us happier. A simple look at the facts shows us this isn't the case, and it seems we have figured that out.

Recent surveys prove that experiences elicit more happiness than buying material things.

Yan Young of online adventure company, bestdaysever.com, explains, 'Even your most treasured possessions remain separate from you. Experiences become embedded in your memory: they're part of you.'

After all, would people rather hear about your new shoes or the time you took a ride in a hot-air balloon over mountains?

Many of our parents didn't have the ability to travel as much as we do, or the freedom to easily change jobs, relocate or start a business like you can in today's world. Therefore, they valued things – jewellery, cars, houses – signs of prosperity and stability. Things showed you were successful, they thought, but things can be lost, stolen or damaged.

Most of us have way too much stuff. One survey found that 1 in 7 Americans has a room in their home that they can't get into because it's filled with things they rarely use. And the more things we accumulate, the more miserable we become. Lifestyle gurus call it 'Stuffocation'. Meanwhile, the trend towards 'no ownership' advocates investing in experiences that improve life and don't need wrapping.

Online companies offer a range of experience gifts at increasingly competitive prices: cooking classes, tickets to festivals, goat yoga (part exercise class, part petting zoo and 100 per cent adorable), race-car driving, foreign travel, escape room (you're locked in a room and forced to find your way out by solving dozens of puzzles before the timer runs out), even a house-cleaning service (an experience I'll probably gift to myself).

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