

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

8693/01

Paper 1 Passages for Comment

October/November 2004

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

Answer two questions

- 1 In the passage below the writer describes his travels in Southern Arabia and how he shares the experiences of his travelling companions from the Bedu people.
- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) A publisher has asked you to write the 'blurb' (information about the content and style of the book on the back or inside cover) for the writer's forthcoming work *Journeys Through Southern Arabia*. Basing your answer closely on the extract, write the 'blurb' (between 120–150 words). [10]

They were miserable days. It was maddening to ride along drenched to the skin and watch the driving rain soak into the sand, for although I was bitterly cold I was also thirsty. We had no idea where we should find more water, and were again rationing ourselves to a pint a day. We had nothing with us, except a few small pots, in which to catch the rain, not that we could afford the time to stop. My companions were worried about the camels, and warned me that we might wake up any morning and find some of them dead, killed in their weakened state by the ulcers which were eating into them. Each morning I looked anxiously to see if they were still alive. 5

One night there was a terrific storm, which started soon after dark and revolved around us until dawn. On that bare plain there was no sort of shelter. We could only lie covering on the ground while the lightning slashed through the darkness of driven clouds, and the thunder crashed about our ears. I had placed my rug and sheepskin over my sleeping-bag. On other nights these had kept me fairly dry, but tonight the weight of water was too great to be turned aside. It flowed over me like an icy torrent. Sometimes the rain stopped and I peered out to see, silhouetted against the night by the almost continuous flashes of lightning, the dark shapes where the others lay beneath their coverings, like grave-mounds on a wet seashore; and the group of sodden animals, squatting tail to storm. Then I would hear the muffled drumming of the rain as it came down once more. I was certain that some of our camels would die that night, but in the morning they were still alive. 10 15 20

Next day was fine and sunny and our spirits rose as the sun dried our clothes and warmed our bodies. My companions sang as we rode across sands which looked as if they had been uncovered by an outgoing tide. They were Bedu and it had rained, not scattered showers, but downpours which might well have covered all the desert. 'God's bounty' they called it, and rejoiced at the prospect of rich grazing that would last for years. As I rode across these interminable naked sands it seemed incredible that in three months' time they would be covered with flowering shrubs. Eskimos enduring the cold and the darkness of the arctic winter can count the days till the sun appears, but here in southern Arabia the Bedu have no certainty of spring. Often there is no rain, and even if there is, it may fall at any time of the year. Generally the bitter winters turn to blazing summers over a parched and lifeless land. Bin Kabina told me now that he only remembered three springs in his life. Occasional springtimes such as these were all the Bedu ever knew of the gentleness of life. A few years' relief from the anxiety of want was the most they ever hoped for. It seemed to me pathetically little and yet I knew that it was magnificently enough. 25 30 35

As we rode along, the others spoke of years when it had rained, and bin Kabina told me that never in his life had he known such rain as this. Then inevitably they spoke of the great flood in Dhaufar of sixty years ago. I had myself seen palm-trunks which had been jammed by this flood eighteen feet up among the rocks in the cliffs of the Wadi Aidam, where the valley was more than a thousand yards wide. We speculated as to how many days it must have rained to produce this flood, which had occurred in summer when it was warm. I wondered how long a man could survive such rain in winter before he died of exposure. It rained again in the evening and continued to do so intermittently for the next three days. 40 45

2 The passage below is the closing section of a speech by Nelson Mandela.

- (a) In the style of the original piece, write the opening to a speech (between 120–150 words) in which you campaign for a particular social or moral issue.
- (b) Compare the style and language of your piece with those of the original extract. [15]

Poverty and the breakdown of family life have secondary effects. Children wander about the streets of the townships because they have no schools to go to, or no money to enable them to go to school, or no parents at home to see that they go to school, because both parents (if there be two) have to work to keep the family alive. This leads to a breakdown in moral standards, to an alarming rise in illegitimacy, and to growing violence which erupts not only politically, but everywhere. Life in the townships is dangerous. There is not a day that goes by without somebody being stabbed or assaulted. And violence is carried out of the townships in the white living areas. People are afraid to walk alone in the streets after dark. Housebreakings and robberies are increasing, despite the fact that the death sentence can now be imposed for such offences. Death sentences cannot cure the festering sore. 5 10

Africans want to be paid a living wage. Africans want to perform work which they are capable of doing, and not work which the Government declares them to be capable of. Africans want to be allowed to live where they obtain work, and not be endorsed out of an area because they were not born there. Africans want to be allowed to own land in places where they work, and not to be obliged to live in rented houses which they can never call their own. Africans want to be part of the general population, and not confined to living in their own ghettos. African men want to have their wives and children to live with them where they work, and not be forced into an unnatural existence in men's hostels. African women want to be with their menfolk and not be left permanently widowed in the Reserves. Africans want to be allowed out after eleven o'clock at night and not to be confined to their rooms like little children. Africans want to be allowed to travel in their own country and to seek work where they want to and not where the Labour Bureau tells them to. Africans want a just share in the whole of South Africa; they want security and a stake in society. 15 20 25

Above all, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans. This makes the white man fear democracy.

But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division, based on colour, is entirely artificial and, when it disappears, so will the domination of one colour group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs it will not change that policy. 30 35

This then is what the ANC is fighting. Their struggle is a truly national one. It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by their own suffering and their own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live.

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die. 40

- 3 The passage below is an extract from an essay which describes a popular tourist attraction.
- (a) The local tourist board has published a leaflet to promote the hill of Mercury in an attempt to persuade visitors of its attractiveness and facilities. Basing your answer closely on the extract, write the opening section of the leaflet (between 120–150 words). [10]
- (b) Compare the style and language of your piece with those of the original extract. [15]

It was Sunday, and very hot. The holiday-makers flocked to the hill of Mercury, to rise two thousand feet above the steamy haze of the valleys. For the summer had been very wet, and the heat covered the land in hot steam.

Every time it made the ascent, the funicular¹ was crowded. It hauled itself up the steep incline, that towards the top looked almost perpendicular, the steel thread of the rails in the gulf of pine-trees hanging like an iron rope against a wall. The women held their breath, and didn't look. Or they looked back towards the sinking levels of the river, steamed and dim, far-stretching over the frontier. 5

When you arrived at the top there was nothing to do. The hill was a pine-covered cone; paths wound between the high tree-trunks, and you could walk round and see the glimpses of the world all round, all round: the dim, far river-plain, with a dull glint of the great stream, to westwards; southwards, the black, forest-covered, agile-looking hills, with emerald-green clearings and a white house or two; east, the inner valley, with two villages, factory chimneys, pointed churches and hills beyond; and north, the steep hills of forest, with reddish crags and reddish castle ruins. The hot sun burned overhead, and all was in steam. 10 15

Only on the very summit of the hill there was a tower, an outlook tower; a long restaurant with its beer-garden, all the little yellow tables standing their round disks under the horse-chestnut trees; then a bit of rock-garden on the slope. But the great trees began again in wilderness a few yards off. 20

The Sunday crowd came up in waves from the funicular. In waves they ebbed through the beer-garden. But not many sat down to drink. Nobody was spending any money. Some paid to go up the outlook tower, to look down on a world of vapours and black, agile-crouching hills, and half-crooked towns. Then everybody dispersed along the paths, to sit among the trees in the cool air. 25

There was not a breath of wind. Lying and looking upwards at the shaggy, barbaric middle-world of the pine-trees, it was difficult to decide whether the pure high trunks supported the upper thicket of darkness, or whether they descended from it like great cords stretched downwards. Anyhow, in between the tree-top world and the earth-world went the wonderful clean cords of innumerable proud tree-trunks, clear as rain. And as you watched, you saw that the upper world was faintly moving, faintly, most faintly swaying, with a circular movement, though the lower trunks were utterly motionless and monolithic. 30

There was nothing to do. In all the world, there was nothing to do, and nothing to be done. Why have we all come to the top of the Merkur? There is nothing for us to do. 35

What matter? We have come a stride beyond the world. Let it steam and cook its half-baked reality below there. On the hill of Mercury we take no notice. Even we do not trouble to wander and pick the fat, blue, sourish bilberries. Just lie and see the rain-pure tree-trunks like chords of music between two worlds. 40

The hours pass by: people wander and disappear and reappear. All is hot and quiet. Humanity is rarely boisterous any more. You go for a drink: finches run among the few people at the tables: everybody glances at everybody, but with remoteness.

There is nothing to do but to return and lie down under the pine trees. Nothing to do. But why do anything, anyhow? The desire to do anything has gone. The tree-trunks, living like rain, they are quite active enough. 45

¹funicular – cable-car railway

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