

# Cambridge International AS Level

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**ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER**

**8021/22**

Paper 2 Comprehension

**October/November 2020**

INSERT

**1 hour 45 minutes**

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**INFORMATION**

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



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This document has **8** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

## Material for Section A

### Background

Juno was once a superstar, appearing in the most popular evening soap operas and featuring regularly in the gossip columns of national newspapers and on television chat shows. Life used to be nothing but a glamorous whirlwind of social events after long hours in front of the cameras. However, this is no longer the case as Juno has become, in recent times, a washed-up has-been. The offers of acting roles have dried up, the telephone no longer constantly rings and Ingrid, her agent, has become desperate. On the plus side, Ingrid is very well respected in her field and has called in a couple of favours owed to her by casting directors of two reality television shows, *Dancing Heaven* and *Help Me – I Can't Take Any More!* They have both offered Juno a slot in this year's shows.

### Part of a conversation between Juno and Ingrid

Ingrid: (*very upbeat*) Fantastic news, Juno. Twisted the arms of the casting directors and got you invitations to appear in either *Dancing Heaven* or *Help Me – I Can't Take Any More!* Isn't that brilliant? Aren't you excited? Raring to go?

Juno: (*sounding relieved*) Wow! Can't believe it, Ingrid. You are the best agent anyone could ask for. Thanks so much. Wow!

Ingrid: So, I was thinking that you'd accept *Help Me* because ...

Juno: (*in a doubtful tone*) Hey, wait a moment. Won't *Dancing Heaven* be more my thing – it's so glamorous. I'll be using my acting ability to project a story to the audience and I'll be learning a new skill. I'm sure I have good rhythm and am fit enough. I'm pretty sure I've got an ear for music. My husband used to say I was a good dancer in the disco when we were teenagers.

Ingrid: (*finally managing to stem the flow and get a word in edgewise*) Mmm, not so sure about all that. Don't forget that *Help Me* will pay lots more money because of the dangerous nature of some of the tasks set and because its sponsor is fabulously wealthy. And the viewing figures are the highest in television. Surely, it's a no-brainer, Juno – you must do it! People will be able to see a different side to you – a grittier you, a more determined you, a you not afraid to eat the most revolting things imaginable – insects, for example. It will show directors that you have more of a range. Not just a soap star. And, anyway, I've just read online that your old friend Davida is going to be in *Dancing Heaven* this year.

### Part of a conversation between Juno and Laya, her sister

Juno: (*sounding worried*) Ingrid is really pushing *Help Me*, but it scares me. I'll look a fool in front of millions of viewers. I know I will.

Laya: Well, put your foot down then and insist on doing *Dancing Heaven*. You're the boss here, surely.

Juno: (*unconvincingly*) Yes, you're right, of course.

Laya: You are so lucky. I so envy you.

### Additional information

1. This year Help Me is to be filmed in the Sahara Desert over three months (November to January), though, if voted out by viewers, participants' commitment to the programme is over.
2. Laya has long dreamed of being in the studio audience of Dancing Heaven.
3. Previous winners of Dancing Heaven have ended up starring in award-winning theatre shows on Broadway, New York, and the West End in London.
4. Dancing Heaven averages 20.5 million viewers per programme, with 28 million watching the finale; Help Me averages 22 million viewers per programme, with 26 million watching the finale.
5. There is an audition for a Hollywood film that Juno would love to be in taking place in early January.
6. Ingrid has always wanted to do a camel trek across a desert.
7. Dancing Heaven participants have to commit to nearly five months of filming (August to mid-December) as, even if they are voted out, clips of these participants commenting on the remaining participants' progress are included in subsequent programmes – and everyone appears in the final show.
8. Juno's husband is so supportive of her that he never criticises her in any way.
9. Dancing Heaven pays each participant \$250 000 for taking part; Help Me pays \$400 000.
10. Next year Help Me will be filmed in the Amazonian jungle as part of its twentieth anniversary celebrations.
11. Previous winners of Help Me have gone on to present daytime television programmes.
12. Juno has always spent Christmas at home with her children, and her husband cherishes this family time, especially.
13. As an agent, Ingrid takes a 20 per cent cut of her clients' earnings.
14. Davida and Juno were great friends at drama college, but fell out in their final year when Davida beat her to a part in a daytime radio soap opera.
15. The dress designers, make-up artists and hairdressers working on Dancing Heaven are amongst the best in the country.

## Material for Section B

An article in Yale Scientific by Taryn Laubenstein

### Mythbuster: The Truth about the Great Pacific Garbage Patch

From above the Pacific Ocean, all is calm. Blue water meets blue skies, each reflecting the other's pure, infinite depths. But now a white scrap meanders by; not the reflection of a cloud, but a bobbing polystyrene cup. Soon it is joined by two, now three, now ten, now fifty others, all jostling for space. They start to stack, forming hills, mountains. They support their plastic brethren: discarded bottles, packaging materials, webbed fishing nets. Worn-out tyres pile atop one another forming rubber towers, while flimsy shopping bags flutter like flags in the breeze. It is an island of plastic the size of Texas, floating in the middle of the Pacific. 5

This is the image that comes to mind when people hear of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch: a massive, floating heap of debris. However, while it is true that trash does find its way into the oceans, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is not a floating island in the traditional sense. Instead, the Garbage Patch is composed of tiny plastic bits that linger unseen beneath the surface, ranging in size from a few square centimetres to barely visible specks. 10

Captain Charles Moore was the first to notice the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in 1997. Then a racing boat captain, he was sailing from Hawaii to southern California when he stumbled upon 'plastic [ ... ] as far as the eye could see'. In an article he wrote for Natural History, he described 'plastic debris floating everywhere: bottles, bottle caps, wrappers, fragments'. Seeking to quantify the extent of the debris, he towed fine-mesh nets behind his boat, collecting the plastic bits along with plankton in the water. He found that the mass ratio of plastic to plankton was an astonishing 6:1. 15 20

Moore explained that the garbage patch was formed by a system of ocean currents. In large ocean basins between continents, currents tend to move in a circular pattern, known as a gyre. These wind-driven currents push water towards the centre of the basin. This means that any pollution that enters the Pacific will eventually be pushed to the centre of the gyre, where it begins to accumulate. Of course, the Pacific gyre is not the only ocean gyre – all of the world's oceans have circular currents like these. This means that there is not just one garbage patch, but many; the two next-largest ones are found in the Northern Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. 25

While Moore's description of ocean gyres holds true, his initial description of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch has recently come into question. He claimed to 'never [have] found a clear spot' in the ocean, perhaps leading to the hyperbolic tale of the floating island of garbage. In 2008, seeking to debunk the myth, Dr. Angelique White of Oregon State University set off on a voyage through the heart of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. White's team towed nets behind their boat, just as Moore had, but their data told a different story. Yes, tonnes of plastic were floating in the Pacific, but the vast majority of these plastic bits were tiny, with 90 per cent of them spanning less than 10 millimetres in diameter. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, therefore, is less of an island and more of a whirlpool filled with plastic confetti. 30 35

Despite the small size of the plastic bits, they can still have hugely negative impacts on the marine ecosystem. While larger plastics like six-pack rings can strangle marine animals, smaller plastics harm animals from the inside. The plastic waste is small and transparent, and it floats in the water column\* – just like plankton, which is a vital food 40

source for fish and marine animals alike. Animals cannot digest plastic and if enough of it accumulates in their stomachs, they can die. Plastic can also contain toxins like DDT and PCBs. Once ingested, these chemicals do not break down, but build up in an organism's body fat. As these organisms are consumed by larger and larger organisms, the levels of toxins increase dramatically, until those at the top of the food chain, including humans, are eating fish and fowl with dangerously high levels of toxins. 45

Although the myth of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch as a floating plastic island has been busted, the remaining facts are grim. Three ocean basins are rife with plastics, marine organisms consume plastic instead of plankton, and toxins climb up the food chain to humans. Is there a solution in sight? Scientists like Moore and White hope so. Researchers like them are currently working to understand the full scope of the garbage patches. Still, consumers should take note: it is only by drastically reducing plastic waste that the ocean gyres can hope to be cleaned for good. By choosing products wisely and recycling, consumers can take small steps to make the Great Pacific Garbage Patch into the Pacific that it should be: calm and quiet, where blue water meets blue skies. 50 55

\* A water column is a vertical section of water from the surface to the bottom of a sea, lake, river, etc., and is a way of describing the different features found in water at different depths.

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