



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

Paper 2 Reading Passages

0500/02

May/June 2007

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.

Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

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.

This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.



Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2**.

Passage A

This is a description of a most peculiar public speaker and the ways in which he attempts to influence his audience.

Dr. Zinc

My friends had advised me, if I was at a loose end and required entertainment, to wander down to the public gardens to see Dr. Zinc in action. When I got there I saw a bizarre, cadaverous figure, gesticulating wildly at a small audience that had gathered around him. He behaved in a theatrical manner, intoning some well-prepared soliloquy and throwing himself around like a tree in a gale. He wore a melancholy expression and his straggly hair hung down untidily. I joined the crowd to hear what this eccentric fellow had to say.

‘Be sure, that at half past three on some day in the near future, the world will come to a sorry end. The sun will burn us up and behold, at this very moment, oh, horrible to relate, a fiery asteroid is bearing down upon us. In the great continents there will be interminable droughts, and the people will perish for lack of water. We can do nothing, for this process has already started.’

At this point, Dr. Zinc paused and gasped noisily, before gulping down some of the earth’s last water supply. When he started again, he seemed to have lost his thread as well as his voice as, with some hoarseness, he described the deadly illnesses that would cover the earth, and he treated his audience to lurid descriptions of new and peculiar diseases. He shed several tears to communicate his great love for the animals which were the origin of these frightening diseases, and which would, no doubt, be experimented upon and tortured by scientists in white coats.

‘But worst of all, oh terrible, terrible,’ he resumed, ‘will be the wars that will consume us all with nuclear destruction. In the hands of evil people, whole nations will be eradicated and the lands rendered infertile and inhospitable.’

I was beginning to find this man the very opposite of entertaining, and certainly his audience was not laughing. I suddenly realised that they believed what he said. Most of them were deathly pale and some clasped their hands together. The woman next to me twitched uncontrollably. So this was the magic of rhetoric, and I saw how easily one person could influence a group of gullible citizens. As he continued to describe the activities of unspeakable criminals, his audience appeared to lean towards him as if he might be their protector. Every now and again they moaned and sobbed like pet dogs left at home too long by their owners. It seemed that their predicament might be eased by making a handsome contribution to Dr. Zinc’s funds. Cheerful givers were always loved by those who controlled things like the rainstorms and thunderbolts which, he observed, were likely to happen over the public gardens later that afternoon. At this point, some untidy and threatening individuals appeared with plastic buckets and started to demand donations.

‘Friends,’ he continued, ‘it is with a heavy heart that I make these predictions. I am a lover of green fields and the happy, innocent families that pass through them.’ Here he paused to shed more tears and to mumble something incomprehensible about the subversive evils of the media that poisoned all honest minds. His picture of ultimate destruction was, as he had hoped, too much for the audience who wailed and lifted their hands to the not-so-blue skies. Some clasped their cell phones to their ears and made final calls to their loved ones.

An elderly woman in the crowd suddenly jumped up in anger and shouted at the top of her voice, ‘Rubbish, you are talking absolute nonsense!’ But it was a waste of breath. In the panic that ensued, no one could hear a word she said.

3

- 1 Your school or college has a group for older students, which debates matters of general interest and current affairs. Imagine that you are a member of this group and have been asked to attend Dr. Zinc's talk in the public gardens.

Write a report to the committee that organises the group. In your report give your reasons whether or not Dr. Zinc should be invited to speak at one of the debates.

Use ideas and details from the passage to support your views.

Write between 1 ½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 15 marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to 5 marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

- 2 Re-read the descriptions of:

(a) Dr. Zinc in paragraph 1;

(b) his audience in paragraphs 5 and 6.

Explain the effects the writer creates by using these descriptions. Support your answer by selecting words and phrases from these paragraphs.

[Total: 10]

Part 2

Question 3 is based on **Passage A** and **Passage B**.
Read **Passage B** carefully and re-read **Passage A**.

Passage B

In this short essay, the writer argues against always thinking that the worst will happen.

Doom and Gloom

It has always been fashionable to predict doom and gloom. After all, it attracts more attention than good news. Many have feared the wrath to come from anything from angry deities to asteroids. While some of these predictions may have come true, many of the world's problems have actually been solved by human ingenuity. The trouble is that dangers suddenly emerge without warning and fill the media with news that spreads unease.

At the present time, many of these dangers occur because our world appears to have grown much smaller. Yet it is precisely because of this that so many good things have happened. Take transport, for example. Nowadays it takes so little time to visit relatives in another country, and, for many people, it is comparatively cheap. Students can spend time in new places, learning to live with new friends all over the globe. They can share each other's cultures and benefit from education and the undertaking of important projects.

On a larger scale, politicians are beginning to face their responsibilities towards the world as a whole. No longer can they turn their backs on poverty wherever it may occur. They are slowly realising that one country's pollution is another's poison and that emissions of greenhouse gas are linked to their economies and affect all of us. This process of facing up to reality may be frustratingly slow, but it marks a small step forward in human progress.

We also hear daily of new cures for diseases. Yes, it is true that as we find easy ways of controlling diseases like polio, new viruses and bacteria break out, but with our rapidly increasing knowledge of medical science, exciting forms of treatment are just around the corner. In a generation's time, we can look forward to cures for cancer and diabetes.

So we muddle our way towards some sort of progress. We are a vast anthill of tribes all struggling to live on a tiny planet. We have marvellous inventions such as television to help us share our knowledge of each other, and to prevent the isolation that builds barriers between us. The internet allows us to communicate quickly and efficiently with each other. It provides us with a vast encyclopaedia of knowledge and the means to buy and sell goods in an electronic market. International sport reaches more countries whose people share the pride of competition and victory. Think how many people now have the opportunity to 'attend' concerts where before they were too isolated ever to have heard and seen a live performance.

With all these good things to help us, the best news is that it lies within all of us to further solutions to the world's problems and to cooperate in making life acceptable for everyone. With increasing knowledge and education we can, if we have the will, oblige our leaders to move forward, not to stagnate in a world of pessimism and fear.

3 Summarise:

- (a)** the encouraging aspects of life in the 21st century, according to the writer of **Passage B**;
- (b)** the warnings about the future of the world as given by Dr. Zinc in **Passage A**.

Use your own words as far as possible.

You should write about 1 side in total, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 15 marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to 5 marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

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