
ENGLISH LANGUAGE (US)

8287/11

Paper 1 Passages

October/November 2015

2 hours 15 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions: Question 1 **and either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

You should spend about 15 minutes reading the passages and questions before you start writing your answers. You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

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

This document consists of **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

Answer Question 1 **and either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

1 The following text is taken from a newspaper article. In it, the writer describes how a mother and father take a very keen interest in their son's application to university.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to present the mother and father's behavior. [15]

(b) Later, in another newspaper article, the same writer describes how the couple shows further enthusiasm about another important moment in their son's life.

Write a section (between 120–150 words) of the article. Base your answer closely on the style and features of the writing in the original extract. [10]

At the beginning of the new year, my wife has recommenced her haunting of various online student forums, trying to gain insight into university places on behalf of our eldest son. It is not a form of torture in which the boy has shown much interest. I find my wife in her office, scrolling through one thread after another.

"Any news?" I say. 5

"People are beginning to hear," she says.

"Really?" I say.

"Yes, but for other subjects," she says. "Don't try and jump on the bandwagon now."

"I won't," I say. "I think it's weird that you're pretending to be your own son."

"I'm not pretending to be him. I have my own persona." 10

The next day she is still there. She doesn't look up from the screen when I come in.

"Anything?" I ask.

"A couple of rejections," she says. "Nothing major."

"So what are you doing now?" I ask.

She turns to glare at me. "These people," she says, "are my friends." 15

Over the course of the next few days, my wife's obsessive monitoring begins to affect me. I have trouble concentrating. At odd moments, my guts twist for no reason, until I remember the reason.

On the morning of the day the letters are meant to arrive, my wife gets up at 5.45am to check her computer. Fifteen minutes later, she throws herself on the bed. 20

"What's happening?" I ask.

"Nothing is happening!" she hisses. "It's six o'clock in the morning! I'm hysterical!"

Before he leaves for school, my wife secures the eldest one's permission to monitor his emails all day, even though, according to the latest information, we are not expecting an email. By 10am we are both in a state of advanced panic. 25

“Oh my God!” I hear my wife shriek.

I find her at her computer. “People are getting offers,” she says. “Apparently you can tell from the weight of the envelope.”

“You need to breathe,” I say.

“What time does the post actually come?” she says. For the first time in many months, my wife looks at me as if I might be in possession of useful information; I have been working from home for fifteen years. 30

“I think it varies.”

At 12.30pm the letter box snaps. We both race to the front door in time to fight over a pizza delivery leaflet. As we retreat back up the stairs panting, my wife turns to me. “We should probably start preparing for both outcomes,” she says. “What if it’s bad news?” 35

I spend twenty minutes looking out of the window in the direction I’ve always assumed the postman originates from. As far up as I can see, the street is deserted. Finally, I go to my office to compose an overdue email. When I hit send, I find the screen has frozen. I am holding down several keys at once in an attempt to remedy the problem when the post hits the mat. 40

I bolt from the room, but I can already hear my wife’s heels striking the hall tiles hard; she must have jumped from the landing. By the time I’ve turned the corner between flights, I can hear an envelope being rent in strips. And then, from directly below me, my wife lets out a blood-curdling scream. 45

By the time I reach the kitchen, my wife’s blood-curdling screams have subsided. She is still scrutinising the letter from the university that hit the mat not twenty seconds before. The envelope, addressed to the oldest one, lies in shreds at her feet.

“He got in?” I say. 50

“Of course he got in,” she says. “Didn’t you hear me screaming?”

We stand side by side reading the letter in silence.

“It’s actually quite boring,” I say, “once you get past the first two lines.”

“Oh my God,” my wife gasps. “It’s like someone is telling me I’m pretty!” With her free hand she is texting the oldest one over and over. We are struggling to make sense of page two when her phone finally pings. It’s a text from the boy. 55

“I’m in a lesson,” it says.

“GET OUT OF THE LESSON,” my wife writes.

Much later, and when the boy has gone out with friends, I find my wife at the kitchen table with the letter, her phone and an open address book. 60

“What are you doing?” I ask.

“I’m just ringing people to tell them about my brilliant achievement,” she says.

2 The following text is taken from an online magazine. In it, the writer, Anna, describes her experience of buying a car.

- (a) Comment on the ways in which the writer uses language and style to portray her experience of obtaining the car and her relationship with it afterward. [15]
- (b) Later, Andrei publishes a biography about Anna. In one chapter, he recalls his memories of her and the car.

Write a section of the chapter (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

Our first car was a beige Zaporozhets made in Russia. I was eligible for a model with manual controls because I had a problem with my leg. Getting the car was rather simple: tests on a treadmill, proof that my leg acted weirdly, a certificate proving that I had good eyesight and was mentally stable, and, above all, coming to terms with the woman in charge. 5

To this person, who dealt out these cheap monstrosities to humiliated invalids, I fell into none of the standard categories. She had never approved a young woman with a husband, but without a bribe. And so she started yelling at the top of her lungs. There was ‘no way, no reason, no right’ for people like me. I’ve had extensive experience dealing with such women, both in everyday life and at work and outside. So I humbly asked her for a sheet of paper and, right there at her desk, I addressed my complaint to her superiors about her incompetence and performance at this cushy job. Realizing I knew how to act in such situations, the woman looked embarrassed, her eyes sparkled, and then she fawned on me. Finally, she started to cry and complained about a woman’s hard lot, blaming fatigue for her inability to think straight ... after which she filled out papers with the speed of a jet plane. The invalids who witnessed all this looked sideways at me, as if I were a knight who had chopped off the three heads of a dragon. 10 15

The victory was intoxicating. And so, in that state, my husband, our friend the journalist Andrei Fadin and I rushed off to get the car. Neither my husband nor I could drive, so Andrei generously took us under his wing. 20

‘You’ll learn to drive, get around in Moscow, bash the car here and there, then buy a better one,’ explained Andrei. ‘I started with a Zaporozhets too.’

When we entered the extremely icy forecourt crowded with new Zaporozhetses, we were rather taken aback. Every single car was missing parts. The boss of the icy garage reluctantly informed us that that’s how they came, though the address of the missing parts was written on his face. 25

‘OK, man, it’ll get you as far as home and then you can take it in for service and they’ll install what’s missing,’ the boss of the lot advised. ‘The car is a winner! It’s better than a tank for fishing. Of course, it’s your choice. But then again, there won’t be any other cars until these go. Meanwhile, some other parts will be stripped – it can’t be helped.’ 30

‘Fine, I’ll drive,’ said Andrei to the guy. ‘If I hit something, you’ll need a lawyer!’

‘Then don’t hit anything,’ winked the guy.

Since the forecourt was a virtual ice rink, there was no point asking how invalids could exit, when first you had to figure out how they could enter to reach a car. 35

'To tell you the truth, your car isn't missing much. Compared to the rest here, you've got a real Mercedes. And be happy you've got wheels from old stock,' said the boss of the frozen forecourt as we were leaving.

To say that a Zaporozhets is noisy is to say nothing: it howls like a wounded rhinoceros. To say that it jolts, is also to say nothing: a motorcycle, with a sidecar, going down a country road is a luxury liner in comparison. To say that sitting in it is uncomfortable is to say nothing at all. 40

We arrived without hitting anything ... But all my efforts to tame this iron friend of invalids were unsuccessful. 45

'Andrei,' I complained after each driving lesson, 'this isn't working. The car and I have no feel for each other. Maybe I'm not enough of an invalid to master this thing.'

'Evidently, me neither,' he would shrug.

When my attempts at intimacy with the car resulted only in our mutual torture, I realized that we simply were biologically incompatible. Moreover, this biological incompatibility spread to all the members of my family. Neither my husband nor either of my sons displayed any interest in this marvel of technology. All family discussions boiled down to: *Let's give it away to someone!!!* 50

But the Zaporozhets would not give in. Not we, nor the car, nor potential owners were lucky – something would always stand in the way. We tried everything: to set a low price, to give it away, to forget about it, to facilitate its theft ... Nothing worked; it stood peacefully for about five years in front of our house, tenderly referred to as *our real estate*. 55

Years passed; the car lived on its own, not belonging to anyone except the street cats sitting on it. 60

3 The following text is taken from a magazine article. It describes a well-traveled writer's thoughts and feelings about the place of his birth.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to create a sense of mood and place. [15]

(b) The writer later lives for some years in another place in your own country – and, after an absence, visits it again. He writes an article about the changes that he sees.

Write a section of the article (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

I leave the dance floor and step outside. A tent covers the garden, and a log fire burns in the night. I walk away, around my uncle's house, a house built when we were teenagers, and into the great lawn that curves around what was my grandfather's house. My body steams in the cold air. We played here as children, we cousins. There were more than enough of us at Friday family lunches for any sport that came to mind. 5

It is February, not long after the kite-fighting festival of Basant. Lahore's winter fogs have given way to the clear nights of spring, but there is still a chill in the air. I sit down on a bench, and shut my eyes. This is the passage of time. I am a grown man now, 31, and I am in a place that will always be sacred to me as the place of my childhood. I feel an allegiance to this house, this family, this city, this country. It makes my eyes burn. I do not want to leave. But I know I am a wanderer, and I have no more choice but to drift than does a dandelion seed in the wind. It is my nature. It is in my soul, in my eyes. 10

Still, Lahore touches me. I am doing well in my career abroad, and I am able to visit often. But there is something about Lahore, something that makes me want to be part of this city's story. Even though I have moved away, this is where I evolved, where my basic notions of love and friendship were formed. A snow leopard can be taken to zoos in other places; it can perhaps even be well fed and content, but it will always wear a coat designed for the Himalayas. I see Lahore when I look in the mirror, and I feel the strength of my attachment at this moment, as my cousin prepares to marry. 15 20

My sister and I had arrived on a flight from London that morning. She busied herself with the many errands of the wedding: flower arrangements, tent and lighting designs, food preparations. I, typically and lazily, claimed exhaustion and jet lag as an excuse to go straight to bed. When I woke it was evening. I climbed up onto the roof of my parents' house to watch the sun set and to look out upon my city. 25

Lahore had changed and was changing. From this rooftop, where I spent many hours struggling to get kites aloft, one used to see only trees and the rooftops of other houses. Now bald patches had emerged where trees had died, and tall office buildings had risen up not far away, almost uniformly hideous in their architecture but robust and healthy signs of life, of growth. I watched them warily and wondered what my house would one day become. A shop perhaps. Or maybe a small museum. 30

As I dash from one friend's house to the next, avoiding wedding chores while catching up with people I haven't seen in a long time, I can't help thinking of Lahore as the girl I first fell in love with. I have fallen in love with other cities since: with New York, the girl I will always lust for but who left me exhausted; and with London, the 35

girl who bored me at first but whose company I have come to savour. But my heart will always have a special place for my first love, for Lahore, the love of my childhood and teens and early 20s. 40

She has hardened, become more cynical, angrier. She has lost some of her looks. She is less complacent than she was then, less sure of her enduring centrality in her universe. But Lahore is still a charmer, and she is more urbane and cosmopolitan than she was in the days when the opening of a new ice-cream parlour was enough to get her excited for months. Lahore is speckled with Internet cafés, with billboards offering broadband connections, with advertisements for health clubs featuring personal trainers. 45

No, Lahore is no longer the same girl she was when we parted ways. And I am no longer the same boy. But even after all these years, even with the scars and frown lines she has acquired, she still makes my heart race, and I can't help wondering what would have happened if we hadn't broken up, what would have happened if I had stayed. 50

This is the magic of Lahore. Maybe because of the heat or the big families or the social restrictions or the relative lack of money, Lahore is a place where bands of friends tend to form and hold together. I would not trade this evening in my long-disused study for a party in the coolest nightclub. There is far more pleasure and sustenance to be had here, and I gorge myself on it tonight. 55

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