



# Cambridge International AS Level

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ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/22

Paper 2 Comprehension

May/June 2024

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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. Any blank pages are indicated.

## Material for Section A

### Background

At Columbio College, every class elects a class representative at the start of the academic year. Then, for that year, these class representatives attend monthly council meetings to put forward their classmates' suggestions or concerns about any aspect of college life. The morning after the council meeting, they report back to their classmates the details of what was discussed and the resulting decisions made by the council.

### Election process

During the first week of term, up to three students in each class can put themselves forward for election by producing a leaflet explaining why they should be elected. In addition, each candidate must face a 15-minute question-and-answer session with their classmates.

During the second week of term, a ballot box for each class is placed in the college reception so students can cast their votes.

The following Monday, each class teacher counts up the votes and announces to their class the name of the student elected, who then attends the first council meeting of the year that afternoon.

### Mr Beppe's Year 13 class (final-year students)

Only two students in Mr Beppe's class have decided to put themselves forward: Elisavetta and Armando. Mr Beppe tried to persuade Olivia to put herself forward too, but she refused emphatically.

## Extracts from the leaflets

Elisavetta



Hi Everyone!

Well, I've made it to the final year at Columbio. Yay!  
And a million thanks to Brianna for being a brilliant  
class representative last year. What a girl, that  
Brianna! So you're probably thinking, what's this girl  
got that would make me vote for her? Three great  
reasons!

- ♥ You've known me for years. I've never let any of  
you down when it comes to getting things done.
- ♥ You know I'm not afraid to speak up or call out  
things if something's unfair. I'm not afraid of  
anyone.
- ♥ You all know that you can come to me anytime,  
anyplace, and I'll take the time to listen to you.

Armando

**A message to my classmates:**

I am standing for election as I would regard it as an honour and a privilege to represent you. I would carry out all the duties to the best of my ability. I feel I have the necessary credentials for you to be confident enough to vote for me.

- ◆ Firstly, I have been a member of the Debating Society for three years, so I am exceptional at winning arguments.
- ◆ Secondly, as a contributor to the college newspaper, I am used to working fast to provide articles to tight publishing deadlines.
- ◆ Thirdly, I have an excellent attendance record, so you have my guarantee that I shall be at all the meetings to represent you.

**Extracts from the question-and-answer sessions**

*Elisavetta's session*

Classmate 1: What do you think about the punishment system here? I don't think it's fair.

Elisavetta: (*confidently*) Yeah, really agree with you. We do need to change it, don't we?  
(*a minute's silence, during which Elisavetta looks uncomfortable*)

Classmate 1: And how do you suggest doing that? What would you say at the council meeting?

Elisavetta: (*looking unsure*) Well, haven't thought about that ... but ... (*suddenly regaining confidence*) thinking about it now, let's get rid of all punishments. Don't think they do any good. (*looking happy with herself*)

Classmate 2: (*looking surprised*) You believe that students should be allowed to do anything, then?

Elisavetta: (*uncomfortable again*) Er ... well ...

*Armando's session*

Classmate 1: What do you think about the college's system of punishments? It's unfair, I think.

Armando: (*seriously*) I see what you mean as we do have a long list of punishments. I do feel some are necessary for the well-being and smooth running of the whole college, but I can see a case for some petty ones to be abolished. Have you got any particular ones in mind?

Classmate 1: (*gratefully*) Yes, I think it's silly we're punished for being a minute late to lessons when corridors are packed and your next lesson might be the other side of college.

Classmate 2: (*looking pleased*) Agreed – that rule needs getting rid of immediately.

**Additional Information**

1. Council meetings are held every month on Monday after lessons finish.
2. Elisavetta once found a classmate in tears, but told the girl that she was too busy to stop and talk.
3. Mrs Eriksson, Deputy Principal, attends every council meeting to ensure students follow the rules when discussing matters and voting on resolutions.
4. One of the class representatives takes notes at the meeting, then publishes them within 48 hours for the whole college.
5. During his time in the Debating Society, Armando has been on the winning side 35 per cent of the time.
6. In exceptional circumstances, a class teacher can overturn an election result.
7. Olivia is hoping to achieve top grades in both her ballet and piano examinations this year.
8. Armando and Brianna have been good friends for years.
9. Elisavetta realised recently that she had not taken part in any extracurricular activities to write about on any university application form.
10. If any class representative cannot attend a meeting, they must arrange for a deputy from their class to attend instead.
11. Armando is keen to go to a top-ranking university.
12. Elisavetta was supposed to help Brianna organise a charity event two years ago, but kept making excuses instead.
13. The Debating Society meets on the third Monday of the month after lessons finish.
14. Mrs Eriksson's first face-to-face encounter with Elisavetta occurred recently, when Elisavetta drove into the college car park and collided with Mrs Eriksson's car.

## Material for Section B

An article by Polly Humphris

### Checkmate

The big and small screens have given life to many an old favourite. The film *Toy Story 2* is said to have introduced a new generation to the 1960s children's drawing toy *Etch A Sketch*. More recently, it was the turn of Netflix to hog the limelight or, rather, the game of chess, which is at the heart of the streaming service's runaway success *The Queen's Gambit*. Some 62 million households tuned in to watch the series during the month after its debut in October 2020, which says a lot for a game often associated with old men, sour looks, hours of boredom and genius levels of memory and logic. 5

Those in the know, however, are aware that chess has been popular for more than 1000 years and is played by people of all genders, ages and abilities. Echoing the determination of *The Queen's Gambit* producer and co-creator Allan Scott (it took 30 years, 8 different directors and 9 rewrites to get the series on television), chess is as much to do with perseverance and commitment as anything else. Some trace the origins of the game to a tragic sixth-century tale from the Gupta dynasty in India. The tale goes that after the youngest prince of the realm was killed on the front line of battle, his brother relayed the scene to their grieving mother on an eight-by-eight board, which at the time was used for a game called Ashtāpada. Throughout its history, the game has been linked to many disciplines, including military strategy, politics and religion, but in modern times, its psychological boost is also being appreciated. 10 15

'The cognitive\* benefits of chess are perhaps the most obvious,' explains Elena Touroni, a consultant psychologist. 'Expert players have to memorise many complex combinations of moves and their possible outcomes. While playing chess helps improve memory and problem-solving skills, there are also other psychological benefits, including increased self-esteem and empathy. It also helps the players enter a flow state – a rewarding sense of total involvement in a task.' 20

The fictional chess prodigy in *The Queen's Gambit*, Beth Harmon, speaking in the series, would seem to agree: 'Chess is an entire world in just 64 squares. I feel safe in it. I can control it. I can dominate it.' This feeling also reflects the game's ability to impart a sense of achievement by providing the chance to master a skill. 'Mastery is when you achieve or accomplish something that makes you feel good about yourself,' says Elena. 'It makes you feel competent and confident and can also help you feel more in control. Building mastery is an important skill. It can help you become more resistant to negative emotions and can even be used to treat depression.' 25 30

In fact, today's game seems far more connected to well-being and mental health than it does to the military strategy of the past. Being able to control your moves – and sometimes your opponent's – on a board when other areas of life are uncertain can be a reminder that you can plan, direct and, in the long term, benefit from choices you make now. 35

Jon McKnight, 45, from Scotland, is a lifelong chess player. 'It's about control and sacrifice,' he says. 'Aged nine, I played in a national tournament and could work out five moves ahead in every direction. Now I can do three, which is enough to defeat most people. In terms of sacrifice, I love it when I know which moves I want to sacrifice in order to get my desired outcome. My opponent will think they are winning a match, but they'll be so preoccupied with my apparent mistake, they'll miss my true motive. I'm an aggressive player, but that attitude stays firmly on the board. I've made some really good friends through playing chess.' 40

As Jon explains, the aim is not to control other people but to anticipate what your opponent might do, which is an effective way to see things from the other person's perspective. Elena calls it 'the theory of mind', which is useful for expressing empathy and maintaining healthy social relationships. The power of chess to enable people to open up and build on relationships is so strong that it is now used in therapy sessions, to establish trust in the relationship between therapist and patient. Called chess therapy, participation helps to nurture a less formal environment in which emotions, thoughts and feelings can be more easily and indirectly expressed. It has proven to be effective in helping neurobehavioural\*\* conditions. In some ways, art imitates therapy in *The Queen's Gambit* when the janitor Mr Shaibel passes on many life lessons as he teaches Beth how to play the game. 45

Netflix might be the channel that brought chess into living rooms around the world, prompting an increase in the game's popularity – sales of sets and timers have surged, and chess federations and online chess forums have reported a dramatic rise in the number of players – but the appeal of chess is based in psychology. The series, with its young female character who overcomes obstacles and triumphs in a man's world, conveys the message that focus, forethought, determination and, sometimes, a sprinkling of luck can win the day. 50

'In chess, as in life, every move has consequences and it pays to think ahead,' says Elena. 'Each chess game is an opportunity to learn from past experience and to apply those lessons learned to your next game. The same is true of many situations encountered in life.' 60

\*relating to or involving the processes of thinking and reasoning

\*\*relating to the relationship between the action of the nervous system and behaviour

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