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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Paper 1 Passages for Comment

October/November 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 **two** questions.

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

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.

* 5 5 9 2 5 9 1 7 9 0 *

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



Answer two questions.

1 The passage below is an extract from the autobiography of the singer Victoria Beckham, known as 'Posh Spice'. In it, she describes how Geri Halliwell left the pop group [The Spice Girls] they were both in at one time.

- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) Elsewhere in her autobiography, the writer criticises another singer (real or imaginary) she has worked with. Basing your answer closely on the style of the original extract, write the opening (between 120–150 words) to the passage. [10]

It was a bit like how everyone wanted there to be a sinister reason why Princess Diana was killed – a conspiracy by MI5. Because the truth – that she was killed by a drunk-driver – was just too banal for somebody whose life was a fairy tale. I'm not saying that Geri leaving the Spice Girls was a tragedy like Princess Diana's death, but it was the same in the way that when Geri left everyone wanted there to have been blood on the floor. But there wasn't any. The truth is that Geri left because she wanted to move on. Nobody was to blame for Geri leaving except Geri. 5

Geri really had been under much more strain than the rest of us. It was always harder for her, the only Spice Girl who wasn't a trained dancer. It's not easy getting up there on stage night after night, six days a week. In spite of all the extra classes and rehearsals, she still found the pace of doing show after show more difficult to cope with than the rest of us. And she did get criticized for it, and it's horrible when people say you're the one with no talent, which they did. And I should know. 10

But the Spice Girls aren't just successful because they're good singers or dancers. At the original audition, Bob and Chris turned down better singers than us, because you need more than good voices. The Spice Girls are not only successful because of our vocals but because of our personalities. And you could never accuse Geri of not having a personality. 15

I don't know any more than anyone else, but the more I think about it, the more it seems to me that she had it all planned to the last detail: she would disappear for a while, then there would be that time when she appeared to be feeling bad, paying her debt to society if you like, working for the UN, keeping a high public profile while behind the scenes recording her solo album. And then there would be the sock-it-to-them comeback. 20

I remember seeing her on *Parkinson* in that Salvation Army grey suit, with the nice-looking ponytail and no make-up, looking really dull and boring, saying how Ginger Spice is no more, Ginger Spice is dead. Blah blah blah. And I thought, you might fool Parkinson but you can't fool me. I know what you're going to do. 25

So her first single comes out and it's Goodbye Miss UN-Nice-as-Pie. Instead it's Geri the Vamp, with these hideous long extensions – I don't know what she thought she was doing, but it was vile. Bad-taste Geri was back. And then in the video there was a big car with a wreath on it that said Ginger. The Spice Girls have got a lot of young fans, and I thought that was so not right to do. Yet no one will criticize her for her music – at least the media won't – because they need her. People in the music industry are a different matter. Geri knew that, because her singing wasn't the best singing in the world, and her dancing wasn't the best dancing in the world; for her music to be accepted she had to get on a public sympathy jag so that everybody would be thinking nicely of her. 30 35

Geri tries to completely dismiss everything that she's done in her past. She tries to forget there was ever a Ginger Spice. Yet at the end of the day, we all know that we wouldn't be where we are if it wasn't for the Spice Girls. Yes, it can sometimes irritate me when I walk down the street and someone yells out, 'Oi, Posh'. I don't like it any more than someone walking down the street likes being called their professional name. Imagine – 'Oi, Builder' or 'Oi, Receptionist'. Because Posh Spice is my job. She's what made me. And for Geri to pretend otherwise is just arrogance.

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In her autobiography she said we knew she was leaving. Perhaps she thought we were mind-readers. We didn't know. Why she said that I have no idea; perhaps because it made her look better, because otherwise it was like admitting she had left us in the lurch. Which, of course, was exactly what she did. Geri Halliwell had left us totally in the lurch.

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We did the Lottery then went straight to Heathrow where we caught a plane to Oslo well before midnight.

The official Virgin line was to be: 'Geri is suffering from nervous exhaustion.' Yeah, right.

We knew that the place would be rammed with media in Oslo hoping to see us fall flat on our faces, just like they did after we sacked Simon. Then it was Svengali Spice who the Spice Girls couldn't survive without. Now it was Ginger Spice we couldn't survive without.

55

Everything was negative. History is against them, they wrote, going on about how the Supremes never recovered from Diana Ross going. We didn't care about history being against us, history said a girl band couldn't conquer America. What we didn't need was the press being against us.

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We only had a few hours to re-stage everything. We had stand-in dancers, but nobody had thought to have a stand-in Spice Girl. Choreography-wise there wasn't a problem. As any dancer will tell you four is easier than five any day. An odd number always leaves somebody in the middle, at the back or the front. Even vocally, four is easier than five and we worked through the songs one by one. For me, there was one big plus. For the first time ever I got to sing on 'Wannabe'.

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Once on stage we had to keep our wits about us. We could hardly go on clutching a piece of paper with our notes about who was singing what line. We just had to remember. And there was the odd glitch, the odd silence when whoever was meant to be singing Geri's line just forgot. It was a lot to cope with, and it was such an emotional time.

70

- 2 The passage below describes the search made by an architect for a church organist.
- (a) Basing your answer closely on the style and language of the original passage, continue the story (between 120–150 words) maintaining its atmosphere of mystery and suspense. You do not have to bring the story to a conclusion. [10]
- (b) Compare the style and language of your piece with those of the original passage. [15]

In a minute he had made up his mind to go to the church. As resident architect he possessed a master key which opened all the doors; he would walk round, and see if he could find anything of the missing organist before going to bed. He strode quickly through the deserted streets. The lamps were all put out, for Cullerne economized gas at times of full-moon. There was nothing moving, his footsteps rang on the pavement, and echoed from wall to wall. He took the short-cut by the harbour, and in a few minutes came to the old warehouse. 5

The shadows hung like black velvet in the spaces between the brick buttresses that shored up the wall towards the quay. He smiled to himself as he thought of the organist's nervousness, of those strange fancies as to someone lurking in the black hiding-places, and as to buildings being in some way connected with man's fate. Yet he knew that his smile was assumed, for he felt all the while the oppression of the loneliness, of the sadness of a half-ruined building, of the gurgling mutter of the river, and instinctively quickened his pace. He was glad when he had passed the spot, and again that night, as he looked back, he saw the strange effect of light and darkness which produced the impression of someone standing in the shadow of the last buttress space. The illusion was so perfect that he thought he could make out the figure of a man, in a long loose cape that flapped in the wind. 10 15

He had passed the wrought-iron gates now – he was in the churchyard, and it was then that he first became aware of a soft, low, droning sound which seemed to fill the air all about him. He stopped for a moment to listen; what was it? Where was the noise? It grew more distinct as he passed along the flagged stone path which led to the north door. Yes, it certainly came from inside the church. What could it be? What could anyone be doing in the church at this hour of night? 20

He was in the north porch now, and then he knew what it was. It was a low note of the organ – a pedal-note; he was almost sure it was that very pedal-point which the organist had explained to him with such pride. The sound reassured him nothing had happened to Mr Sharnall – he was practising in the church; it was only some mad freak of his to be playing so late. 25

He took out his key to unlock the narrow gate, and was surprised to find it already open, because he knew that it was the organist's habit to lock himself in. He passed into the great church. It was strange, there was no sound of music; there was no one playing; there was only the intolerably monotonous booming of a single pedal-note, with an occasional muffled thud when the water-engine turned spasmodically to replenish the emptying bellows. 30 35

'Sharnall!' he shouted – 'Sharnall, what are you doing? Don't you know how late it is?'

He paused and thought at first that someone was answering him – he thought that he heard people muttering in the choir; but it was only the echo of his own voice, his own voice tossed from pillar to pillar and arch to arch, till it faded into a wail of 'Sharnall, Sharnall!' high up in the tower. 40

It was the first time that he had been in the church at night, and he stood a moment overcome with the mystery of the place, while he gazed at the columns of the nave standing white in the moonlight like a row of vast shrouded figures. He called again to Mr Sharnall, and again received no answer, and then he made his way up the nave to the little doorway that leads to the organ-loft stairs.

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