



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

0500/02

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended)

For Examination from 2012

SPECIMEN READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the reading passages for use with all questions on the Question Paper.

You may annotate this Reading Booklet Insert and use the blank spaces for planning. This Insert is **not** required by the Examiner.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.



Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2** on the Question Paper.

Passage A

In this extract Redmond O’Hanlon describes a journey into the jungle by canoe. James, a poet, has been eventually persuaded to accompany Redmond.

Into the heart of Borneo

At midday we climbed into our dugout canoe and set off upriver towards the interior. After about ten miles the fields gave way to well-established secondary forest, and then the primeval jungle began.

The river seemed to close in on us: the 60-metre-high trees crowded down the slopes of the hills, almost to the water’s edge, an apparently endless chaos of different species of tree, every kind of green, even under the uniform glare of a tropical sun. Parasitic growths sprouted everywhere, ferns fanned out from every angle in the branches, creepers as thick as legs gripped each other and tangled down to the surface of the water, their tips twining down in the current like river-weed.

The river itself began to twist and turn too, the banks behind us appearing to merge together into one vast and impenetrable thicket, shutting us in from behind. At the same time, the trees ahead stepped aside a meagre pace or two to let the river swirl down ahead. The outboard motor set on a wooden frame at the stern of the canoe pushed us past foaming little tributaries, islets, shingle banks strewn with huge rounded boulders, half hidden coves scooped round by whirlpools. Here the river was clear, deep green from the reflection of the trees. We really *were* voyaging upriver! I thought it was an optical illusion, but the canoe was actually climbing up a volume of water great enough to sustain an almost constant angle of ascent, even on the stretches of water between the jagged steps of the rapids.

We stopped by a pile of driftwood to hide a drum of petrol to be retrieved a few days later on the return journey. A monitor lizard, reared up on its front legs, watched us for a moment with its dinosauric eyes and then scuttled away between the broken branches. A Brahminy kite, flying low enough for us to hear the rush of air through the primary feathers of its wings, circled overhead watching us, its flecked-brown belly white in the sun. Then the bird soared away, mewing its shrill call.

Further up, the rapids began to become more frequent and more turbulent and, at each one, heavy waves of water would crash over and into the boat. James, sitting opposite me onto the boards in the centre of the canoe and facing upstream, was reading his way through the poems of the 18th century writer Swift, a straw boater on his bald head, his white shirt buttoned at the neck and at the wrists.

‘Some of these poems are pretty feeble,’ James would mutter, displeased.

‘Quite so, but – er – James?’

‘Yes?’

‘Rapid 583/2, Green Heave, strength six-out-of-ten, is approaching.’

With a second or two to spare, James would shut his book, mark his place with a twig, slip it neatly under the edge of the tarpaulin, sit on it, shut his eyes, get drenched, open his eyes, squeeze the water from his beard with his right hand, retrieve his book and carry on reading.

Every 450 metres or so, a lesser fish-eagle would regard us with its yellow eye, flying off only as we drew almost level, flapping gently just ahead of the canoe to the limit of its territory.

James, his huge head laid back on the hump of our kit under the tarpaulin, was having one of his five-minute snoozes. The vein on his right temple was throbbing, a sure sign that his brain was awash with extra dissolved oxygen, and that some piece of programming, vital to the production of a future poem, was in progress.

‘James!’

An eye opened.

‘What is it?’

‘Just this – if you *do* see a log floating *upriver*, let me know.’

‘Crocodiles?’

‘Well, not the one that attacks you. Not up here. But an old book I read said we might see the freshwater species. The four-and-a-half-metre one with the one-and-a-half-metre snout and all those teeth.’

‘Really, Redmond,’ said James, raising himself on an elbow and looking about, ‘you’re absurd!’

Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully and re-read **Passage A**. Then answer **Question 3**, which is based on both passages. Answer on the Question Paper.

Passage B

In this passage the writer explains why animal life in the rainforest is not what one might expect.

Animals of the Amazon forest

When I tried to think of all the animals I wanted to see, those old travellers’ tales kept flooding into my thoughts, the tales of weird and dangerous creatures everywhere in the forest. But reality is not like this. In the forests, most animals are small. The problem of moving through trees when danger threatens has prevented any really large animals surviving for long within the forest proper, particularly anywhere far from water. Most animals are highly camouflaged, which creates a problem of its own: how does each recognise its mate? Moving around in daytime would make the camouflage useless, so most animals stay motionless during the day and only move about at dusk. Then it is more difficult to be seen, but they can be heard. That is why the forest is hushed by day but noisy with recognition signals by night.

On my first afternoon I walked through the Amazon forest, along an overgrown trail which would eventually return to the river. I reached a fork in the path and, as the way to the right seemed to move towards higher forest, I followed it. It was not far from a stream, and knowing that there was more likelihood of seeing animals a bit larger than insects the closer to the water I got, I trod carefully and stared intently into the dark middle distance. My intentness was rewarded. Something about 50 centimetres long darted out from the right and raced ahead of me into the dark forest. It was a rodent, a paca, unmistakable with its brown flanks spotted with white. I must have walked close to its daytime hide-out and frightened the creature. Pacas are right to be fearful, for their meat is very tasty and they are hunted by Indians for food.

I looked around me and saw hundreds of trees, a few of the many millions in the forest. I had seen just one paca. That, I thought, would be that, for the rest of the walk. The chances of seeing anything larger were exceedingly slim. The reason for this lies in the extraordinary adaptations that all creatures have been forced to evolve to survive in this waterlogged forest.

What would be simple ground beetles in other parts of the world here have comb-toothed claws to cling to tree leaves, since heavy rain and flooding demand a means of escape upwards into the trees. In the Amazon, birds whose Old World relations spent a long time on the ground are adapted to perching and have long, curved claws to ensure a solid grip on the branches. Frogs, which in other lands hatch out as tadpoles in ponds, find no such still waters here and instead lay their eggs in the bromeliad flower. Here there is the only fully aquatic marsupial in the world, the water opossum, with webbed feet for swimming (the female's pouch somehow protects her young as she swims).

Then there are the monkeys, which seem more at home in the trees than monkeys anywhere else – indeed many never come down to the ground at all. They are different from Old World monkeys and some have developed an amazingly useful fifth limb, a prehensile tail. On the underside is a patch of sensitive skin, like the palm of the hand, which turns these animals into super-acrobats of the trees.

Copyright Acknowledgements:

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Question 3 © Adapted: Tom Sterling; *The Amazon – The World's Wild Places*; Time-Life Books; 1973.

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