



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH**

**0500/01**

Paper 1 Reading Passage

**May/June 2007**

**1 hour 45 minutes**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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**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.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.



**Read the following extract carefully, and then answer all the questions.**

*The story is set on a Caribbean Island and describes some children visiting a beach called Exeter Rocks. The children are riding ponies.*

The sun was still red and large: the sky above was cloudless, and blue, but close over the ground a dirty grey haze hovered. As they followed the lane towards the sea they came to a place where, yesterday, a fair-sized spring had bubbled up by the roadside. Now it was dry. But even as they passed, a kind of gout of water gushed forth; and then it was dry again, although gurgling inwardly to itself. But the group of children were hot, far too hot to speak to one another: they sat on their ponies as loosely as possible, longing for the sea. 5

The morning advanced. The heated air grew quite easily hotter, as if from some enormous furnace from which it could draw at will. Bullocks only shifted their stinging feet when they could bear the soil no longer; even the insects were too lethargic to pipe, the basking lizards hid themselves and panted. It was so still you could have heard the least buzz a mile off. The ponies advanced because they must. The children ceased even to think. 10

They all very nearly jumped out of their skins; for close at hand a large bird had trumpeted once, desperately. Then the broken silence closed down as flawless as before. They perspired twice as violently as a result of the sudden noise. Their pace grew slower and slower. It was no faster than a procession of snails when at last they reached the sea. 15

Exeter Rocks is a famous place. There is a semi-circular bay of the sea, guarded by the coral reef. There is a narrow, sloping beach of white sands and behind that an expanse of grass. About half way along the bay a shelf of rocks juts out right into the water – fathoms deep. Within the stronghold formed by these rocks is a small pool or miniature lagoon, fed by sea water which enters through a small channel. In this pool, safe from sharks or drowning, the children meant to soak themselves all day, like turtles in a pen. The water of the bay was as smooth and immovable as stone, yet perfectly pure and clear: nevertheless, the swell muttered a mile away on the reef. The water within the pool itself could not be smoother. No sea-breeze thought of stirring. No bird trespassed on the inert air. 20

For a while they had not energy to get into the water, but lay on their fronts and looked down, down, down, at the corals, the black and yellow schoolmaster-fish, the rainbow-fish – all that forest-like growth which is a tropical sea-bottom. Then they stood up, jumped in and were floating suspended in water like drowned ones, only their noses above the surface, under the shadow of a rocky ledge. 25

An hour or so after noon they clustered together, puffy from the warm water, in the insufficient shade of a Panama fern. They ate as much of the food they had brought as they had appetite for; and drank all the water, wishing for more. Then a very odd thing happened. As they sat there they heard the most peculiar sound. It was a strange, rushing sound that passed overhead like a gale of wind – but not a breath of breeze stirred, that was the odd thing; it was followed by a sharp hissing and hurtling, like a flight of rockets, or gigantic swans on the wing. They all looked up: there was nothing at all. The sky was empty and lucid. Long before they were back in the water again all was still. Except that after a while John noticed a sort of tapping, as if someone were gently knocking the outside of a bath you were in... 30 35

- 1 (a) What **phrase of three words** in the first sentence of the passage shows that the weather conditions were not entirely clear? [1]
- (b) Explain, using your own words as far as possible, what the writer says about the spring in paragraph 1. [3]
- (c) Re-read the lines 'The morning advanced...ceased even to think' (lines 7-11). Choose **three** details which the writer uses to suggest a sense of extreme heat. Explain how each of these words and phrases suggests this sense. [6]
- (d) Give **two** words from paragraph 4 which suggest that the reef protected the children. [2]
- (e) What were the first things the children did after dismounting from their ponies? [2]
- (f) What did the children see in the water (lines 25-27)? Explain, using your own words as far as possible. [3]
- (g) Why do you think the writer repeats the word 'down' in line 26? [2]
- (h) Explain, using your own words, what the writer means by:
- (i) 'It was no faster than a procession of snails' (lines 14-15); [2]
- (ii) 'the swell muttered a mile away on the reef' (lines 22-23). [2]
- (i) Re-read lines 1-18 ('The sun...fathoms deep') and then write a summary of what the children would have seen on their way to the beach and at the beach itself. Write a paragraph of about 50-70 words. [7]

**[Total: 30]**

- 2 You are one of the children in the passage. A friend who lives in another country has written asking you if the 'paradise island' on which you live is really as good a place to visit as people say. Write a reply in which you tell your friend about:
- the good and bad aspects of the island
  - the weather
  - the experience you had when you went to Exeter Rocks

You should base your ideas on what you have read in the passage, but do not copy from it.

You should write between 1 and 1 ½ sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

**Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 10 marks for the quality of your writing.**

**[Total: 20]**

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Question 1                      © Richard Hughes; *A High Wind in Jamaica*; Vintage; 1976.

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