



Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge Ordinary Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1123/21

Paper 2 Reading

October/November 2017

INSERT

1 hour 45 minutes

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the two reading passages.



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

Passage 1 – Chocolate

- 1 Chocolate is a delicious food made from the cocoa tree's beans, which have a bitter taste and must be fermented to develop flavour. After fermentation, the beans are dried, cleaned and roasted. The shells are then removed to produce cocoa nibs, which are then ground into cocoa mass, which can be separated into two components: cocoa solids and cocoa butter. While chocolate in its purest form is dark, milk chocolate is manufactured by adding milk powder. White chocolate contains cocoa butter, sugar and milk, but no cocoa solids, and so purists would say that it is not real chocolate, although white chocolate has the best taste of all. 5
- 2 Chocolate was first prepared as a drink 2000 years ago, and indeed there is evidence from a Mexican archaeological site to prove this. Documents dating from 1500 years ago in the Mayan civilisation state that the drinking of chocolate played an important part in cultural ceremonies. By the fifteenth century, the Aztec civilisation had gained control of a large part of Central America and incorporated chocolate into their religion as well as their culture; they associated chocolate with one of their gods who, according to legend, was banished by the other gods for sharing chocolate with humans. Such was the importance of chocolate to the Aztec civilisation that cocoa beans became a form of currency. 10 15
- 3 By the sixteenth century, chocolate had reached Spain when, after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, it was introduced to the elite of that country. Its popularity was increased with the addition of sugar to combat its naturally bitter taste. At first, production was hindered because everything had to be done by hand. Nevertheless, within a century, the chocolate craze had spread to other European countries. The Dutch, English and French created cocoa plantations in Central America, but the local workforce was unfortunately underpaid and their numbers depleted by disease. Chocolate remained a treat for the wealthy until the Industrial Revolution, which brought steam-powered engines to speed up the processing of the cocoa bean; the first of these was built by a French inventor named Dubuisson in the early 1700s. 20 25
- 4 In 1815, a Dutch chemist invented a press which could separate the natural fat from the liquid, which made chocolate cheaper to produce. This press introduced the modern era of chocolate as it facilitated its manufacture in solid form, with the year 1875 seeing the first milk chocolate bar. Around this time a process called conching was invented, which produced a rich taste and a smooth texture; since the process was so important to the finished article, chocolate manufacturers kept the details of their conching process a total secret, as they continue to do even today. 30
- 5 Nowadays, it is widely thought that chocolate can have positive effects on our health by improving circulation. It is also a rich source of antioxidants, which reduce substances that cause damage to cells in the body, thus suggesting that chocolate consumption even works against some types of cancer. Some research suggests that consumption of dark chocolate may reduce cholesterol. Of course, added fats, sugar and, sometimes, milk mean that chocolate has a high calorific content, thus linking it to obesity, and it is important to bear in mind that the benefits in general refer to limited consumption, perhaps one or two squares per day. Some scientists claim that eating chocolate may even boost thinking skills and cognitive function. There is some suggestion that chocolate may be addictive, but once again moderation is the key. 35 40
- 6 Today 50 000 000 people worldwide depend on chocolate for their livelihood; the production of chocolate provides jobs for many people, particularly in the Ivory Coast, where almost half of the world's chocolate is now made. Chocolate production unfortunately has led to unfair treatment of workers and many chocolate buyers nowadays are attracted to Fairtrade chocolate, an international system which ensures fair wages for workers, and thus boosts the popularity of chocolate. 45
- 7 These days, people like to give boxes of chocolates as presents, as a sign of love or friendship, or as tokens of appreciation to a host who has invited them to their home. Additionally, as with the Aztecs all those years ago, chocolate has a symbolic role to play in some religious festivals, such as Christian Easter and Jewish Hanukkah. 50

Passage 2 – Aoife

In this passage a girl called Aoife has a condition called dyslexia. This means that she has difficulty with reading because she is unable to identify, and focus clearly on, the shapes of letters which make up words.

- 1 Every day as Aoife laboured up the stairs of her apartment block, she was aware of the secret she was hiding from others. She never took the elevator. The sign next to where she stood leaning on the handrail would to anyone else have said 'Sixth Floor', but Aoife turned her head away, avoiding it. The printed word was dangerous and not to be trusted. One minute the sign might say 'Sixth Floor', the next minute the letters would have shifted with sickening suddenness into 'Gut Flour'. She could not read. That was her own private truth. Because of it, she had to lead a double life. But nobody knew. Not her friends, not her colleagues and certainly not her family. She had kept it from all of them, feeling herself brimming with the secret of it her whole life. 5
- 2 She had, over the years, perfected a number of implausible excuses to cover up her problem. She said she was short-sighted or had forgotten her glasses or even that her eyes were tired. In restaurants she would shut her menu – never too fast – and ask her companion to order for her. She had a casual way of passing a page to someone next to her and asking for it to be read to her. With a cunning which came out of necessity, she spotted the kind of people who were only too happy for a chance to show off how well they could read. Then she listened carefully and with great concentration. She appeared to the world, she knew, as slightly eccentric, a little detached as she opened up the part of her mind that remembered things so that, if anyone were to question her about the content of the text, she could repeat it back to them flawlessly. 10 15
- 3 Aoife worked in an art store and one day she saw through the shop window the famous photographer Evelyn Nemetov, standing on the pavement as if she were just another member of the human race. Aoife willed her to come into the store, and she did. While Aoife sold her what she needed, they struck up a conversation and she found herself with a job as Evelyn's assistant. She would be going on photography shoots with her; there was no mention of dealing with contracts or answering letters. Aoife couldn't believe her luck. 20 25
- 4 However, on her fifth day at work, Evelyn handed her a contract and asked her to fill it in. Aoife took it and laid it on the table and, when Evelyn had left the room, it was difficult for Aoife to draw breath into her lungs. She scanned the undulating string of letters that made up the words. The white page on the table was crammed with text, impossibly small text, letters which looked to her like lines of ants crawling over the page. They clustered and rearranged themselves before her. Seconds later, in Aoife's eyes the text appeared to change: the letters began moving from horizontal lines going from left to right, until they gradually regrouped themselves into long vertical columns going from top to bottom, like grasses swaying in the wind. Suffocating panic crammed Aoife's throat. She was fighting back tears, knowing that it was over, that this job was doomed like so many other jobs before it, and she was weighing up the pros and cons of just walking out when she heard Evelyn coming back along the corridor. As she came into the room, she said, 'All finished with the contract?' 30 35
- 5 Aoife lifted the contract with only the tips of her fingers. She wasn't aware of the moment in which she made the decision but it felt to her as if the contract radiated toxic material. She slid it into a blue folder and put the blue folder into a box on top of the filing cabinet. Because she wanted this job so badly, she turned round, smiled her confidential half-smile, and said, 'Yes, the work's all done.' Since that day, over the many months she had worked for Evelyn, the blue folder in the box on the top of the filing cabinet had swelled and grown. Every bit of paper she was handed, every letter she opened, every request or contract or application that came through the door, she put in there. Any day now, she thought, she would get down the folder, which was bulging, sides straining, and deal with it. Somehow. 40 45

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