Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

CANDIDATE NAME									
CENTRE NUMBER						CANDIDATE NUMBER				

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE **0510/12**

Paper 1 Reading and Writing **May/June 2025**

2 hours

You must answer on the question paper.

No additional materials are needed.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Use a black or dark blue pen.
- Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the boxes at the top of the page.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided.
- Do **not** use an erasable pen or correction fluid.
- Do **not** write on any bar codes.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Exercise 1

Read the article about butterflies, and then answer the questions.

Butterflies

Butterflies are probably the most easily recognisable of the million or so known species of insects, mainly because of their often-colourful wings. As well as being beautiful, some butterflies have large spots on each wing, which look like the eyes of a bigger creature. These wing patterns can confuse animals that feed on butterflies. Scientists who study butterflies have so far identified around 17 500 types. These are split into six groups according to their physical characteristics and behaviour, with the largest two groups each containing around 5000 species.

The Queen Alexandra's Birdwing is the largest known butterfly, with wings that measure around 28 centimetres across. Although it faces few threats from other creatures due to its size, the destruction of its rainforest home and its appeal to collectors of rare insects have led to a rapid decline in numbers. It was once common, but currently appears as endangered on the Red List of Threatened Species – an international list that monitors the numbers of plant and animal species worldwide.

By contrast, numbers of the world's smallest butterfly, the Western Pygmy Blue, have grown in recent years. They are normally found in North and Central America, but populations have been discovered recently in Hawaii and Saudi Arabia. Scientists suggest that the main reason these butterflies survive in these areas is because they adapt well to different climates, rather than the fact that food is widely available. Despite their name, most of them are not blue at all, but brown: this plain colour makes them difficult to spot, which keeps them safe from hungry creatures hunting for a meal.

Many butterflies fly from place to place in search of warmer weather and food, but the species called Painted Lady travels the furthest of all. Every year it makes its way from Mexico to Canada, which is a huge distance. Butterflies can fly quite fast – a useful skill when trying to avoid becoming food for birds – but even so, the journey takes several months. You might assume, therefore, that Painted Ladies have the longest life of any butterfly, but actually, many are born and die along the route. Painted Ladies, together with several other species, store toxic chemicals in their bodies as another defence. These make the butterflies taste unpleasant, so animals whose diet consists of insects avoid them.

Butterflies mainly drink nectar, the sweet liquid produced by flowers. Some butterfly species, however, such as the Zebra Longwing and the Harvester, prefer some variety. As well as nectar, the former eat pollen, a powder produced by flowers, while the latter, strangely enough, consume mud, which appears to provide them with what they need to survive.

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Question 1

View solution

How many species of butterfly have been found up until now?

..... [1]

Question 2

View solution

How are Queen Alexandra's Birdwing butterflies described on the Red List of Threatened Species?

..... [1]

Question 3

View solution

Why do scientists think Western Pygmy Blue butterflies are spreading to new locations?

..... [1]

Question 4

View solution

What record does the Painted Lady hold among all the species of butterfly?

..... [1]

Question 5

View solution

What is unusual about the diet of Harvester butterflies?

..... [1]

Question 6

View solution

What features do different butterflies have that protect them from being eaten?

Give **three** details.

.....

.....

..... [3]

[Total: 8]

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Exercise 2

Read the article about four young people (**A–D**) who write their own songs. Then answer **Questions 7(a)–(i)**.

Four young songwriters

A Hideko

I've written songs for about two years. I'm in a band with three other members, who write songs too, but we tend to be more creative when we work independently than when working together. At band practice, the person who's written the song plays it to the others and teaches them the structure and notes. My songs almost always start with the lyrics – I'm not quite sure why – and then I think of a tune for both them and the guitars. I used to just wait for inspiration to arrive when I was younger, hoping that if I went for a walk in the fields near my home, ideas would arrive. This method was far from successful though, as I couldn't use most of what came into my head, so now I have fixed times during the week when I write, which is a pretty unusual approach.

B Dimitri

My songs are quite varied, with some being fast and loud and others quiet and slow. What they all have in common, however, is that the idea for the song most probably formed while I was watching a wildlife documentary or seeing an astonishing landscape. This may seem a bit odd, but at least I know what to do if I suddenly can't think of anything to write about. My songs always progress in the same way, with that first moment of creativity providing me with the beginnings of a tune, which I'll then add words to and develop into something that sounds like a song. Following this, I'll use my laptop to record myself singing the tune, so I don't forget it. I find it exhausting, but once I've got my energy back, I'll then have the courage to play the song to others, to see what they think.

C Marie-Laure

I've been writing songs for a long time now. Musically, I'm into everything from jazz to rock to hip-hop – and what I find amusing is to re-record a piece I've written in each of the styles I love. I wish I could report that truly important things like the environment and nature are what give me the majority of my ideas for songs, but it's more often something trivial, like a story I've read about in the local newspaper. The software I use for composing songs is absolutely wonderful and has meant that I've never needed to learn an instrument. Ideas tend to flow more readily if there's a group of us working on a song together, so I can't call many of my compositions truly my own. I hope I never get tired of creating songs, as it's something I'd like to develop into a career.

D Hassan

My early attempts at writing songs were all produced using a special program on my parents' computer. There was something unsatisfactory about that, though, so I decided to learn to play the piano and soon became good enough to create music on it. I'm not the most confident songwriter, so whenever some lyrics or a tune come into my head which I think might one day be used in a song, I always ask a few friends whether they think it's worth continuing with them. I hate giving up the ones they don't like, as experience has taught me that it might be several months before the next inspiration comes. Many musicians record their own songs in several different ways – I can't say that's ever been my thing, though, and I rarely get tired of hearing or playing my songs in the form they were originally written.

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For each statement, write the correct letter, A, B, C or D, on the line.

Question 7

Which person …

View solution

(a) gets their greatest inspiration from nature? ..... [1]

View solution

(b) has phases when ideas for songs disappear? ..... [1]

View solution

(c) has included writing songs in their regular routine? ..... [1]

View solution

(d) writes best when they're with other people? ..... [1]

View solution

(e) usually writes the words before the music? ..... [1]

View solution

(f) makes several different versions of the same song? ..... [1]

View solution

(g) feels tired after spending time working on a song? ..... [1]

View solution

(h) shares their initial ideas before developing them? ..... [1]

(i) creates their work entirely on a computer? ..... [1]

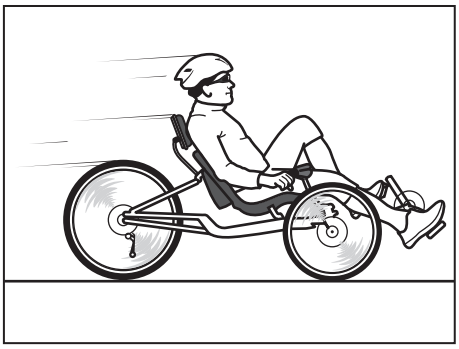
[Total: 9]

View solution

Exercise 3

Read the article about a type of bicycle called a recumbent bike, and then complete the notes.

Recumbent bikes



Bicycles are one of the most popular forms of transport, and have been for many years, but have you ever heard of, or seen, a recumbent bike? Recumbent bikes are extremely comfortable to ride compared to standard bicycles. Instead of sitting upright with legs going straight down, the rider lies back with their legs pointing forward to pedals which are in front of them.

Traditional bicycles have changed little in their overall appearance for well over a hundred years; a bicycle from the 1920s looks surprisingly similar to one you might see around town today. You might think recumbent bikes are a recent development of a standard bicycle, but they were actually invented a long time ago. However, apart from a brief period of popularity in the 1930s, they have never really become a common sight on our roads and cycle paths.

So why is this the case? Well, that's harder to answer than you might imagine, as recumbent bikes have a lot to offer and there are only a handful of disadvantages associated with them. For example, they require relatively little effort to ride, thanks to the sitting position of the rider. The large seat that makes this possible, however, means that they weigh a lot, which does put some people off. Despite this, when riders that are new to cycling on recumbent bikes have got used to their machines, they find that they are very rapid, at least along flat roads. It's a different story on slopes, though, because one thing riders of recumbent bikes notice is that it's tricky to cycle up hills on them. This is because it's impossible to stand up on the pedals, which you can do when riding a traditional bicycle.

Experts have compared the physical effects on riders of using recumbent bikes and traditional bicycles. Their conclusions were that the levels of fitness that can be achieved by the rider are exactly the same for both. However, riding recumbent bikes puts less stress on the body, due to the position of the rider.

Anyone considering purchasing a recumbent bike needs to bear a few things in mind. Firstly, recumbent bikes are not a practical choice for cycling through busy city streets. So if that is your aim, then it's probably best to get a traditional model rather than a recumbent. The reason for this is that although they can be stopped very quickly, which is often a requirement for staying safe in urban environments, it's difficult for motorists to spot recumbent bikes, even if they're checking reasonably carefully for other road users. Whichever kind of bicycle you finally decide to buy, be sure to get plenty of advice, preferably from an experienced bicycle dealer, before making that final choice.

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Imagine you are going to give a talk to your classmates about recumbent bikes.

Use words from the article to help you write some notes.

Make short notes under each heading.

View solution

Question 8

The advantages of recumbent bikes:

- .....
- .....
- .....
- ..... [4]

View solution

Question 9

The disadvantages of recumbent bikes:

- .....
- .....
- ..... [3]

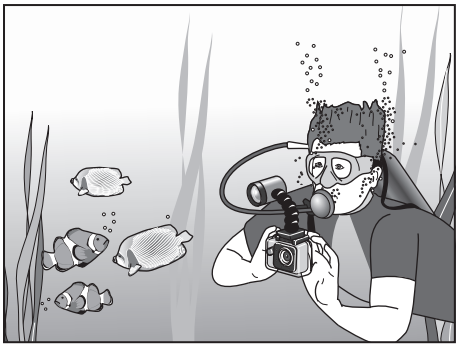
[Total: 7]

Exercise 4

Read the article about a photographer called Ahmed Ibrahim, who takes pictures of life under the sea, and then answer the questions.

Underwater photography

by Ahmed Ibrahim



I work as an underwater photographer, taking pictures of life beneath the surface of our oceans. I've always been fascinated by both photography and the underwater world, so it's no surprise I've ended up doing what I do. Although my mother and father's preference was painting rather than photography, my sister and I were always encouraged to discover our own individual ways of expressing ourselves, rather than simply sharing in their passion. I'm sure that if they'd pushed us in a particular career direction, I wouldn't be as content with life as I am now.

The first thing I became obsessed with was filmmaking, saving up for a whole year to buy a video camera! I was always rather dissatisfied with each film I made, though, and it took me a while to realise why. I'm the sort of person who likes everything to be perfect – if something isn't absolutely right, I never feel at peace. In a 20-minute video, however expertly it's filmed, I would be sure to find something I wasn't totally happy with. A photo, on the other hand, is taken in an instant, and if it's no good, I just delete it and try again. So I changed to photography, even though I had to invest in a different camera.

What started as a hobby is now a full-time profession, which I've been lucky enough to do worldwide. Although it's an incredibly difficult place to work, the region I return to most often is Antarctica. I've finally learned how to prevent my cameras freezing when it's –30°C, but the wind can unexpectedly go from 10 to 100 kilometres per hour in just a few minutes, often accompanied by snow, something I'll never get used to. Antarctica is vast, so I can spend most of a three-week project looking for the whales I've come to photograph without seeing a single one. But a single high-quality image of a whale underwater makes it all worthwhile.

I also love hot places and my family and I have recently made our home on the Caribbean island of Bonaire after living in New York for many years. My wife's in the same profession as me, and we're both drawn to the fast pace of city life. Coming up with original proposals for potential photography work was actually quite hard, though, because we were so cut off from the natural world. Living on Bonaire has solved that problem, although it now takes longer to reach the locations we're working in.

So what do I hope to achieve through my photography? Well, it's my belief that a large proportion of the world's population is losing touch with nature, partly through increased numbers living in urban, rather than rural, environments. If my photos help to restore those links for just one person, then I've succeeded. After all, the more people there are who respect nature, the less damage they'll do to it. There are some extraordinary creatures living in our seas that deserve to be known about and protected.

I'd therefore be delighted if anyone reading this decided to become an underwater photographer too. I'll save you some time looking for underwater photography courses by informing you that, apart from a few very basic qualifications, there are none. Taking pictures underwater is, by its very nature, far riskier than taking them on shore. So put your time initially into making sure you're totally comfortable operating in challenging underwater environments; it's your ability to manage there that'll keep you out of danger and eventually allow you to take memorable photographs.

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For each question, choose the correct answer, A, B or C, and put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

View solution

Question 10

What does Ahmed suggest about his childhood?

A He is grateful for being raised in a creative household. ☐

B He tended to ignore any careers guidance he was given. ☐

C He felt inspired by the example his parents set. ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 11

Ahmed changed from making films to taking photographs because photography

A would be cheaper in the long term. ☐

B was less technically challenging. ☐

C suited his character better. ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 12

Ahmed says the most demanding aspect of taking photos in Antarctica is

A coping with sudden changes in weather. ☐

B keeping equipment in working order. ☐

C finding the intended subjects. ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 13

Why did Ahmed and his family recently move from a city to a tropical island?

A It provided easier access to filming opportunities. ☐

B It offered more inspiration for ideas for projects. ☐

C It matched better with their preferred lifestyle. ☐

[1]

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Question 14

View solution

What does Ahmed say is the main goal of his photography?

A to show people things they've never seen before ☐

B to rebuild contact between people and animals ☐

C to illustrate the harm people are doing to the planet ☐

[1]

Question 15

View solution

Ahmed recommends that anyone wanting to become an underwater photographer should first

A complete training with a qualified professional. ☐

B develop their photography skills on land. ☐

C ensure that they are experienced divers. ☐

[1]

[Total: 6]

Please turn over for Exercise 5.

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Exercise 5

View solution

Question 16



You recently went away for the weekend with your family. However, there was a problem during your weekend away.

Write an email to a friend telling them about your weekend away.

In your email you should:

- say why you were going away
- describe what the problem was
- explain how the problem affected you and your family.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your email and up to 9 marks for the language used.

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[Total: 15]

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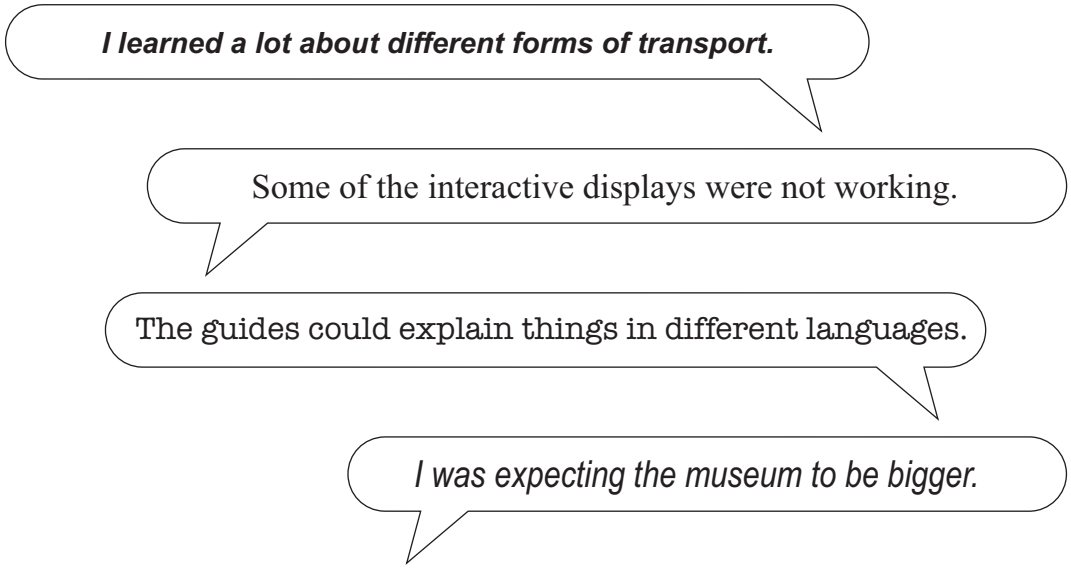
Exercise 6

View solution

Question 17

A new transport museum has just opened near where you live. You recently visited it with some friends and decide to post a review of your visit on the transport museum's website.

Here are some comments:



Now write a review of your visit to the new transport museum.

The comments above may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your review and up to 9 marks for the language used.

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[Total: 15]

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