LRN International GCSE: English Language (2031)

Candidate Name	
Candidate Number	
Centre Name	
Centre Number	

Paper 1: Reading and Writing **Sample Paper**

(2 hour)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- You must write your name, candidate number, centre name and centre number in the designated spaces.
- Attempt all the questions using a dark blue or black pen.
- You may use a soft pencil for rough work.
- Do not use correction fluid.
- Avoid writing on any bar codes.

INFORMATION:

- This paper has a total of 60 marks.
- The number of marks assigned for every question or its parts is indicated within brackets [ ].
- Rough work must be completed on this question paper.

Exercise 1

Read the article about safety and space travel, and then answer the following questions.

When standards are compromised

The American space agency, NASA, has recently been celebrating the maiden use of the Dragon spacecraft to convey astronauts to and from the International Space Station (ISS). However, some people may ask if this test flight really was the most dangerous, or whether the real problems will be faced later, when such flights are routine. History suggests routine leads to complacency and more risks being taken.

For example, on the 28th January 1986 the Space Shuttle Challenger lifted off from its launch pad, beginning mission STS-51-L. This was the 27th Shuttle operation, and the 10th flight of the Challenger, and was not high in the public consciousness. It possibly wouldn't have attracted the attention that it did, except that its crew included a schoolteacher, Christina McAuliffe. For NASA, this "novelty" passenger demonstrated how normal space travel had become.

Crowds cheered as the spacecraft soared into the sky, and then again as they thought they saw two boosters separate from the shuttle as they had done many times before. In fact, the shuttle had exploded. Mission STS-51-L had lasted a mere 73 seconds and ended with the deaths of all seven astronauts aboard.

A subsequent investigation was conducted by a panel that included the first American woman in space, the first man to walk on the moon, and the first human to break the sound barrier. It also included the outstanding physicist, Richard Feynman. The experts concluded that the accident had resulted from failure in some seals called O-rings.

It wasn't easy to get officials to admit this problem. Feynman famously demonstrated in one of the investigation hearings how the O-rings, which to work had to be pliable, became hard and rigid after only a few seconds in a glass of cold water. The seals ought not to have been used in temperatures below 10^0C. It had been 2^0C on the morning of the launch. Feynman had been tipped off that this was the problem by engineers and astronauts who were wary of speaking publicly. Managers listened to managers, these informants said, not them.

The flaw had been known about since 1977, but shuttles flew and returned without incident. Rather than redesigning the joint, NASA came to define the problem as an acceptable flight risk. Even when it became more apparent how serious the issue was, no one considered banning further launches until a solution could be implemented. On the contrary, managers waived launch constraints related to the O-rings. Meeting launch targets had become more important than observing the strict safety margins of test flights.

Some argue this happened because of financial considerations. STS-51-L was carrying two very expensive satellites, one of which had a time-sensitive mission to intercept a comet that only came near Earth once every 75 years. The mission had been cancelled a number of times and was many months late. So, corners were cut. The more standard spaceflight becomes, the more likely it is that the rigours applied to test missions will be compromised.

1 What is the main idea of the passage? **Write one full sentence**.

..... [1]

2 What recent event pleased NASA? **Write one full sentence**.

.....[1]

3 Why was there public interest in STS-51-L? **Write one full sentence**.

.....[1]

4 How long was the flight of STS-51-L?

.....[1]

5 Apart from Richard Feynman, identify **two** people who were part of the investigation panel.

.....

……..[2]

6 What advice was given about when the seals could be safely used? **Write one full sentence**.

.....[1]

7 What is meant by “an acceptable flight risk”? **Write one full sentence**.

.....[1]

8 What does the author think NASA should have done when the gravity of the problem became more obvious? **Write one full sentence**.

.....[1]

9 Why was one part of the mission “time sensitive”? **Write one full sentence**.

……..[1]

[Total: 10]

Exercise 2

The text below about the Dollars Trilogy has *five (5)* paragraphs numbered A-E. Read the text, then answer questions (i) to (x) that follow.

A

The so-called Dollars trilogy has always been a source of personal fascination. They are consistently rated as being three of the best western movies ever made. As a child, I was captivated by the way some people's mouth movements didn't match their words, while others did. As I learned more about the films, more oddities emerged. Not so unusual was that these were movies set in America made by an Italian but shot in Spain. It is surprising that the director, Sergio Leone, never intended the movies to be a trilogy. I am going take further liberties here, and present something of a personal interpretation of the films. In particular, it will be suggested that, as with the cinema hit Star Wars, the production order does not reflect the chronology of the narrative.

B

The initial movie produced was A Fistful of Dollars in 1964. Clint Eastwood portrays a character who finds himself in a troubled town on the Mexico–United States border. He encounters two rival families, the Rojos and the Baxters. Eastwood, as the Man with No Name, decides to play the families against each other by collecting prizes for giving information, capturing prisoners and killing men. Although he is presented as a mercenary, Eastwood's character also helps a woman and her family, held captive by the Rojos, to escape. He gains nothing from this. In fact, when he is discovered by the Rojos, he is tortured for his efforts. He escapes, helped by the local innkeeper. The Rojos massacre the unarmed Baxters while searching for him. The anonymous man returns when the innkeeper is about to be hanged. He saves the innkeeper, kills the Rojos, and departs from the now peaceful town. It is a fairly straightforward story, albeit one that is well-told.

C

The sequel, For a Few Dollars More (1965), shows the man (here nicknamed "Manco") as a bounty hunter killing bandits for money. We also meet Colonel Douglas Mortimer (Lee van Cleef), a more elder bounty hunter pursuing the same criminals. Both searching for a psychopathic criminal known as "El Indio", who has escaped from jail and been reunited with his gang. The pair of bounty hunters initially rival each other, but then understand that, in order to kill El Indio they must work in unison. Eventually, the man discovers that Mortimer's hunt for El Indio is personal, and lets the Colonel kill the bandit in a duel. Mortimer lets the Eastwood character keep all the money. Very rich, the man rides away. It is a very satisfactory conclusion to the narrative started in the first movie. Eastwood's character has sided with and been rewarded for supporting law and order.

D

This brings us to the third movie, The Good, The Bad and The Ugly (1966). The story is too complex to describe here. We know when it is set (during the American Civil War around 1863), but is this a sequel or a prequel to the previous movies? For the first two films, Eastwood's character is dressed in a distinctive cape or poncho. In this third movie, he wears a raincoat until the end, when he gives it to a dying soldier and starts to wear a poncho instead, literally taking on the mantle of the character in the first film perhaps? It is easy to see Mortimer in the second film as an ex-civil war officer. This third movie is an origin story, telling us how the Eastwood character came to be.

E

A further observation: van Cleef, who was a hero in the second film, appears in the third as a psychopath as bad as El Indio, a mirror image of his previous character. Other actors from the previous movies also appear as characters that are reflections of their previous roles. Eli Wallach's debut character is a much nicer version of El Indio, one you might cheer for. Is any of this significant? The orthodox view is that it is all just a co-incidence or the result of pragmatic necessity, but it is hard to watch either movie without seeing these things as important.

Questions (i) to (x)

Which paragraph, **A-E**, does the following?

Write **ONE LETTER ONLY, A, B, C, D or E** next to questions (i) to (x).

(i) identifies where in a country one of the movies is set?

..... [1]

(ii) names an actor whose role is positive in one movie and negative in another?

..... [1]

(iii) describes a selfless act of liberation?

..... [1]

(iv) gives a moniker by which Eastwood's "Man with No Name" is called?

……..[1]

(v) names the person by whom the films were directed?

.....[1]

(vi) describes how the hero's acts change the character of a location?

..... [1]

(vii) speculates on the meaningfulness of casting decisions?

..... [1]

(viii) compares the trilogy to another movie?

..... [1]

(ix) explains why there is a change in a character's costume?

…… [1]

(x) describes how characters come to co-operate with each other?

…… [1]

[Total: 10]

Exercise 3

Read the article about a type of music album. Then, write a summary about concept albums. Your summary should be about 80 words long (and no more than 90 words long). You should use your own words. You may use *brief* quotations. You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your summary and up to 6 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

In days gone by, when we used to buy our music on large, round black vinyl discs, a popular idea was the concept album. Bands and artists would put together collections of songs that were connected in some way. Concept albums were fun. Artists and audience could pretend they were doing something deep and meaningful. Long discussions could be held about the true message of the album and the hidden meaning of particular lyrics. And as concept albums went to concert and from there to film, we could delight at the absurd stunts used to support the music. The few examples of concept albums described here all tried to tell stories. Allegedly! There isn't space here to describe the stories in full. That's the excuse: space. Not because the stories were weak, illogical or obscure, and so often band members themselves couldn't really explain what was going on.

Some people think that Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band by the Beatles is a concept album, perhaps the first concept album. It is respectfully submitted that they are wrong. Firstly, because there are earlier albums with a better claim to that title – Rick Wakeman suggests a 1940s album by folk musician Woody Guthrie. A further reason is that there isn't really a linking theme, story or idea in Sgt Pepper's. It is just, as music writer Carys Wyn Jones suggests, universally good. A better example of the concept album is Rick Wakeman's The Six Wives Of Henry VIII (1973). As its title suggests, it has six tracks, each one intended to describe the character of one of Henry's wives. Or we can think about Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon from the same year. Except for one track – Money – none of the songs really work on their own.

Another classic concept album is The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway, by Genesis and released in 1973. The story, frankly, is anybody's guess, although its composer, Peter Gabriel, promises that there is one. Genesis performed the album in concert with a stage show that involved three backdrop screens that displayed 1,450 slides, designed by Geoffrey Shaw, from eight projectors and a laser lighting display. Gabriel used a lot of theatrics and costumes. Although highly respected, Lamb cost Genesis a lot of money, caused tensions in the band and probably contributed to Gabriel's departure.

Ah, those were the days! The reader will note that most of these albums date from the 1970s, which was the heyday of the concept album. It has been suggested that it is MTV and iTunes with their emphasis on singles that have killed the concept album. Maybe! Or maybe audiences became too cynical and less inclined to accept the pomposity of artists who thought their personal preoccupations were so important. Or maybe it just happens in cycles. Vinyl records are coming back into fashion, maybe we will see a return of the concept album too.

Give a suitable title to this passage and summarise it below in between 80 to 90 words. The title is not included in the word count.

Title……...

Summary (80-90 words)

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[Total: 12]

Exercise 4

Write an article for a college magazine

Background

In class, you have been discussing whether employers are right to look at the private social media accounts of employees.

Here are some comments from your classmates:

- Social media may reveal attitudes not wanted by the employer.
- What I do or say outside of work has nothing to do with my employer.
- An employee may be bringing the company into disrepute.
- Using social media can be a way of releasing work stress.

Write an article for your college magazine.

You should describe the range of views indicated above, but you should also express your own opinion.

Your article should be between 150 and 200 words long.

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[Total: 14]

Exercise 5

Write an email to a friend.

Background

You recently auditioned for a part in a local amateur dramatics production. Yesterday, you were finally notified that you have been chosen for the role you wanted.

Write an email to a friend telling them about this.

In your email, you should:

- explain what you had to do in the audition
- describe the role that you wanted and why you want it
- say how you felt after the audition

Your email should be between 150 and 200 words long.

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[Total: 14]